

THE SHADOW IN NOVEMBER

Lee Evans

I

Now the charcoal death of Hope
Crushed to ashes, flutters down
From the hangman's church bell rope,
To the cold, dogmatic ground.

Toward the Darkness in the sky,
When the Sun of Judgment dims,
Now concealed, the landfills sigh
In a coarse and grateful hymn.

On the everlasting Rock
Looms the temple that we build.
Daylight reels with seismic shock;
Sunset groans behind the hill.

II

Father Wilson raised his head
To the Crucifix and prayed
For the living, but the dead
Came to haunt him in their place.

Now he'll have no more to do
With the children whom he loved.
"Punishment for sin ensues!"
Screams the Power from above.

Hear the churchyard's wood gate creak
As the Shadow hurries past—
As the congregation speaks
From the dank, discolored grass.

III

Stiff, with nodding heads, we watch
As King Midas counts the time
Into golden coins that catch
Dying glints of futile lives:

Thus on guard each vigil stand,
Gazing starkly at the floor.
Down the street a pair of hands,
Desperate, pounds at each closed door—

While our bodies, damp and hot,
Slumping forward, wait our doom:
When we hear that damning knock,
When it echoes through the room.

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