**Learning to Listen Again**

Christian Knoeller

Whittled and whittled as we say

*to the bone*, my father

only weeks beneath

his stone has bequeathed

a lifetime’s listening:

the spirit of Mozart,

Haydn, Schubert, Beethoven

and Wagner whose brooding

arias had always left me cold.

Everyone leaves a legacy–

a melody tracing air.

But this music darts

from grief to glee

ascending such heights

then back to ground.

You taught me as a child

to name sounds in the distance:

the chattering of ancient

insects, the wings of vultures

circling almost silently

to roost on power poles.

To perceive intimacy

in the distance even as

afterglow ignites jet trails

and the idea of night

that never ends

dawns and dawns.