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Ode to Happy Little Men

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Ode to Happy Little Men

Daniel J. King

There is no bronze monument to happy little men,
No soot-swept portrait in a politician's den,
On every marble immortal's frozen face instead,
You'll often find the spilling sigh of the lovely, youngly dead.

Or the plowed barren brow of the long-forgot mystery,
Or the damning glassy glare of the long-ignored history,
Or perhaps a serpent sneer, as if hissing to say,
"Trade your mortal troubles for our pithy passion play.

"And join us now, the muted, the refuted, and the vain,
Scowling from the sky as our cratered memories wane,
Rule the world for a year, or a day, or an hour,
And enjoy the pop-popping of your firecracker power.

"Then gaze down from your mantle at those happy little men,
Who never owned a thousand, but loved their five or ten,
Waking up, making love, and then lying down to die,
And owing no tithe to tortured thoughts of why."