

Adagio Ma Non Troppo

“the last master of resounding song, the gracious mouth by which music spoke has ceased to be.”

—Vienna, March 26, 1827

Thousands marched at the funeral
and Anschutz gave his eulogy,
but who will remember Andreas Wawruch,
physician to the Maestro in his last illness?

Six years before his passing,
I studied his sonata in A flat major,
followed the notes
into the depths of the man.

And there, in the intermezzo,
these instructions,
“Adagio ma non troppo.”
Had he only followed them!

But no—
quarrels with housekeepers,
noble friends, his publishers, the court.
Then, the apologies. I knew it all.

His final days will forever be engraved on my
heart—
jaundice, the fluxes, his bloated abdomen.
Thrice I called Seibert to tap him.
Beethoven knew too well theseappings
only palliative.

Finally, I had to write the words
I had feared—
“You are dying. Whom should I call for?”
Next day, he was gone.

The funeral, the crowds
left behind, I returned home
to my Erard, again played his music—
notes fading into darkness.

Richard Bronson, MD

