

On the Possible Death of Monsieur Smith  
*Patrick Lawler*

He's been trying to tell me he's died. The evidence  
Came in for years, but I ignored it. He lined  
His office walls with burial jars from Egypt.  
I examine his memos for clues of his demise:  
Requiems for a clavichord he composed in secret,  
Passages from a Tibetan book he copied during  
Lunch. His habits confirm this: his desk faces  
The west; a tile removed from the roof is kept  
In a locked drawer. I explore the odds  
And the ends, his jump to conclusion, the dum-de-dum  
Of ledgers written in red ochre. I speak  
To his possible widow about his possible demise. It  
Lets him do the things he does so well unnoticed.