



Beethoven's Skull: Dark, Strange, and Fascinating Tales from the World of Classical Music and Beyond

Tim Rayborn

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Beethoven's Skull is an unusual and often humorous survey of the many strange happenings in the history of Western classical music. Proving that good music and shocking tabloid-style stories make excellent bedfellows, it presents tales of revenge, murder, curious accidents, and strange fates that span more than two thousand years. Highlights include:

A cursed song that kills those who hear it

A composer who lovingly cradles the head of Beethoven's corpse when his remains are exhumed half a century after his death

A fifteenth-century German poet who sings of the real-life Dracula

A dream of the devil that inspires a virtuoso violin piece

Unlike many music books that begin their histories with the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, *Beethoven's Skull* takes the reader back to the world of ancient Greece and Rome, progressing through the Middle Ages and all the way into the twentieth century. It also looks at myths and legends, superstitions, and musical mysteries, detailing the ways that musicians and their peers have been rather horrible to one another over the centuries.

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