

**CHAMPIONSHIP 14 yrs/Under**

**(Not Subject to Copyright)**

**OWLS**

**Leonard Clark**

They stare at you  
these ugly phantoms of the night,  
and do not seem to care  
if you stare back at them,  
All day they perch, half asleep,  
in lonely ruins, dark church towers,  
not liking the sun,  
dozing, and dreaming with stupid face,  
of scurrying mice, fat beetles, baby birds,  
swallowed greedily in one cruel gulp.

At twilight they come out.  
Like floating paper glide along lanes,  
noiselessly dipping over hedges,  
or fanning their ghostly way  
around the houses, down the avenues  
ears and eyes set for the kill.  
Then, gorged with fresh meat,  
they sag back home.  
the moon's eye watching them,  
hooting in the wind,  
waiting for the next raw victim.

I do not like owls.  
I shiver when I hear them  
screeching at the bottom of the garden,  
invading the darkness,  
glad I'm not a mouse,  
small bird or beetle.

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