## Beethoven - Child Composer



After Beethoven's father started drinking, the income his young son generated was the family's main source of support. The days were dark, and dreadful, for the young musician.

Sometimes rousing his child from sleep - to perform for his own friends - Beethoven's father could seem more like a fan than a parent.

"You have nothing more to teach me," an exasperated, impertinent Beethoven once told his father.

When her son experienced such personal torment, Ludwig's mother (according to the maestro's biographers) did not step-in to help. That, at least, was the case while her son was present.

Escaping the turmoil in his own house, Beethoven found peace at the home of friends - Eleonore and Stephan von Breuning - whose mother (Helene) understood the growing child was fragile, needing protection. "It's our job," she would say, "to keep the insects off the flower."

In Vienna, to further his studies, Beethoven was summoned back to Bonn. His mother was gravely ill. When she died, Beethoven lost his best friend.

Music lessons in Vienna were put on hold as Beethoven remained in Bonn (where his father's drinking-problem worsened). In order to keep Johann from wasting all his earnings, Ludwig - by now in his late teens - persuaded his father's employer to pay half-salary to him. With those funds, Beethoven kept the family's finances in reasonable shape.

By 1790, Bonn's leaders knew about Beethoven's skills. They selected him to write a cantata commemorating the death of Joseph II, the popular Hapsburg emperor.

The young musician was on his way.

Clip from "Beethoven," a 2005 <u>BBC television</u> production, featuring <u>Charles Hazlewood</u> and starring Paul Rhys as Beethoven.

## Credits:

Clip from "Beethoven," a 2005 <u>BBC television</u> production, featuring <u>Charles Hazlewood</u> and starring Paul Rhys as Beethoven.

Online, courtesy **BBC** Worldwide Channel at YouTube.

## **Director:**

Ursula Macfarlane

## **Key Cast Members:**

Paul Rhys

**Ludwig van Beethoven** 

Jack Shepherd

Joseph Haydn

**David Bamber** 

**Prince Lichnowsky** 

Alice Eve

Countess Giulietta Guicciardi

Nicholas Farrell			
Stephan von Breuning			
Tom Goodman-Hill			
Anton Schindler			
Gareth David-Lloyd			
Older Karl			
Casper Harvey			
Young Karl			
Sarah Hadland			
Johanna van Beethoven			
Christian Coulson			
Archduke Rudolph			
Charles Hazlewood			
Himself - Presenter			
See Alignments to State and Common Core s	standards for this st	tory online at:	

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Beethoven-Child-Composer1

See Learning Tasks for this story online at: <a href="http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Beethoven-Child-Composer1">http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Beethoven-Child-Composer1</a>