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Samuel Langhorne Clemens known to the world as Mark Twain devoted his story "Is He Living or is He Dead?" to earthly justice.

The writer came up with a plot in which he introduced the artist who had previously lived in France - Francois Millet. After the death of the painter, speculators took up the paintings of Millet, which first caused great demand, then the hype. Prices for landscapes and even Millet's sketches skyrocketed. However, in the story of Mark Twain, the artist appears as a rich businessman. Friends took care of him, and at the same time of himself. "Yes, this is the only case when the public was not able to first starve a genius and then fill other people's pockets with gold, which was supposed to go to him," says the storyteller.

One of the four poor artists proposed a plan according to which one of them fictitiously dies: "Yes, one of us must die - die in order to save the rest and ourselves. We will cast lots. The one on whom the lot will fall will become famous, and we will all get rich. Hush, hush, don't interfere, I know what I'm saying. The idea is this: within three months, the one who is destined to die should draw day and night, as much as possible increasing the supply of his works - but not paintings, no. These should be small sketches, fragments of sketches, no more than a dozen strokes on each - of course, completely meaningless, but certainly belonging to him and under his signature. He must produce at least fifty pieces a day, and each figure must differ in some characteristic, characteristic of his one, which is easy to recognize. As you know, just such things are valued, and they - after the death of a great man - at fabulous prices are bought by all museums in the world. We will prepare them a whole ton - no less! All this time, the other three will feed the dying man and treat Paris and buyers in anticipation of the coming event, and when it comes to ointment, we will shock everyone with a sudden death and arrange a magnificent funeral." Then three artists began to walk around the neighborhood, then travel and spread rumors (including through the press) about the imminent demise of the "great Francois Millet". Slowly they began to sell his sketches. The first went for 800 francs, although poor Millet himself would have "exchanged it for a pork chop."

Well, then there was a funeral of a wax doll in a coffin. Millet himself carried his own coffin, pretending to be a distant relative of the deceased.

I really liked the story. Thanks to a savvy mind and fantasy, the heroes found a way out of their difficult situation.