Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) was a pivotal figure in the transition from the Classical period of Haydn and Mozart to the Romantic period of Brahms, Schubert, Wagner, Schumann and others. Among Beethoven's many lasting contributions was his expansion of the piano sonata to almost orchestral dimensions. One of his finest works, the *Sonata Pathétique*, dates from 1798, the year when he first noticed the symptoms of his advancing deafness. The first movement sounds like a titanic struggle, full of *sturm und drang* (storm and stress). The second movement, presented here, has a quality of almost religious solemnity, a welcome respite from the earlier storm.

## Theme from the 2nd Movement of

## Sonata Pathétique



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