To a Passerby

by Charles Baudelaire
Around me thundered the deafening noise of the street,

In mourning apparel, portraying majestic distress,

With queenly ringers, just lifting the hem of her dress,

A stately woman passed by with hurrying feet.

5    Agile and noble, with limbs of perfect poise.

Ah, how I drank, thrilled through like a Being insane,

In her look, a dark sky, from whence springs forth the hurricane,

There lay but the sweetness that charms, and the joy that destroys.

A flash — then the night... O loveliness fugitive!

10    Whose glance has so suddenly caused me again to live,

Shall I not see you again till this life is o'er!

Elsewhere, far away... too late, perhaps never more,

For I know not whither you fly, nor you, where I go,

O soul that I would have loved, and that you know!