



## Charles Baudelaire's **Fleurs du mal / Flowers of Evil**

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### **To a Passer-By**

The street about me roared with a deafening sound.  
Tall, slender, in heavy mourning, majestic grief,  
A woman passed, with a glittering hand  
Raising, swinging the hem and flounces of her skirt;  
  
Agile and graceful, her leg was like a statue's.  
Tense as in a delirium, I drank  
From her eyes, pale sky where tempests germinate,  
The sweetness that enralls and the pleasure that kills.  
  
A lightning flash... then night! Fleeting beauty  
By whose glance I was suddenly reborn,  
Will I see you no more before eternity?  
  
Elsewhere, far, far from here! too late! *never* perhaps!  
For I know not where you fled, you know not where I go,  
O you whom I would have loved, O you who knew it!

— *Charles Baudelaire*