Jewels

Charles Baudelaire

Jewels

The most expensive thing in the world, dear Felix, is nudity.
And nudity knows my heart is a huge, beating, sonorous jewel.
Inside my body, therefore, is something rich,
something happy and full of the slaves of death.

When I dance, something brutal happens. The brilliant world
of metals and stones disappears into my dreaming limbs
and because I love fire things catch on fire,
and then those things, Felix, they pour out light.

She was asleep on the sofa, so I watched her with love.
I didn't want to see her smile or frown, just sleep, profound
and soft as the sea; this is how she came to me in dreams.

Her eyes fixed on mine, like a tiger, resigned to her fate,
and inside the vague, hot air of the room something new appeared,
a metamorphosis of sorts, her arms, her legs, they took the reins,
as if all along she had something clairvoyant about her.

Something ancient and calm like an agent of evil,
sent to trouble my sleep, my soul, and derange
those rocks and crystals, so that I could never be calm
or solitary when that angel was around me.

In that sleep, I swear I saw a new design,
the poles, the antipoles of the earth drunk, busted, resigned,
and that anarchy made me feel huge and superb.

Lamps die. In the room where she slept, there was only
a little light left, a little incense, inundated in song and blood
like a jewel left at the bottom of a cup, a little color
unsteady as the amber shadows.