

Charles Baudelaire
translated from the French by Wendy Nardi

Spleen — LIX

Late winter, furious at the city,
dumps from its urn great waves of dark frigidity
on the pale inhabitants of the graveyard nearby,
and on the foggy outskirts, mortality.

My cat, searching for a toilet on the tiles,
keeps working its meager, mangy frame;
an old poet's soul roams the gutter
sad-voiced, like a shivering ghost.

A death knell laments, and the smoky log
accompanies in falsetto the sickly ticking clock,
but in a reeking deck,

inevitable legacy of a bloated old woman,
the handsome jack of hearts and the queen of spades
slander their dead loves.

