

## Sonnets for the City of Broken Hearts

Je fais souvent ce rêve étrange et pénétrant  
D'une femme inconnue, et que j'aime, et qui m'aime...

-Verlaine

In other cities the snow is pure and cleansing.  
But not in our city. Not here.  
In our forgotten city the falling snow  
Only brings the darkness into relief.  
The old women shivering and shuddering outside  
The crumbling churches and darkened shop windows  
Stare through me with glassy eyes.  
Or perhaps they see inside me.  
Late at night the taverns of the city  
Swing their doors out wide and belch  
Bruised and broken bodies onto the sidewalks.  
Why do the streetlamps of this blighted city  
Flicker and sputter and blink and go dark  
When I pass beneath them?

It seems like it was radiant here once,  
Before the mist and snow and ice came in.  
Perhaps not. I can't remember now.  
And O, my love, it seems we had a home  
Somewhere down one of these crooked avenues.  
Now I can't recall which street it was.  
And my love, I think you were beside me  
A moment ago. Where did you go? Vanished.  
Last night, as I passed a crowded café,  
I thought I heard you laugh. Was it you?  
It seems I only hear the sound of your laughter  
When I'm trying not to remember it.  
How were we ever going to find peace  
In a city where everyone has forgotten how to dream?