

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

The Albatross

Translated from the French by Sandra Simonds

A lot of times, I think things are really funny, Felix.
Take, for example, the albatross, that vast bird of the ocean.
Every time he goes on a trip, his native land
glistens and I ride far on surfaces of his love.

You can't dispose of that bird, nor can you compose
the haunted rose light around his brutal white tongue.
Leave me alone, Felix. Leave me to my place
on this coast of crystals and sea foam.

Bad, bad trip. I'm talking about these drugs
and that beautiful bird, so comic and light
in the gay air. I want to drink with him all night until
he engulfs every coast in his distant clouds.

Poets are the princesses of the nude and the dark.
I hate my temper and all I seem to have left in my exile
is this dumb laughter bouncing inside a sun of a million hues—
Oh how the crowd beats down on giants.