

THE EVANSVILLE REVIEW



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CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

A Happy Death

Translated by Ned Balbo

In damp earth rich with snails and minerals,
I'd like to dig myself a grave that's deep
where I could stretch out like a shark that trails
through waves, oblivious—where I could sleep.

I don't like wills, or testaments, or tombs.
Before I'd ask a friend to cry for me,
I'd summon crows to land and strip my limbs
of flesh and feeling—fast, efficiently.

The sightless, soundless worms would join me then,
our greeting silent, as if I were kin,
not carrion who shares their dark perspective

on the body's final transformation . . .
The soul? It's gone already, but I have
no doubt about its course or destination.