

The Rainwalkers
by Denise Levertov

An old man whose black face
shines golden-brown as wet
pebbles
under the streetlamp, is walking
two mongrel dogs of dis-
proportionate size, in the rain,
in the relaxed early-evening
avenue.

The small sleek one wants to stop,
docile to the imploring soul of the trashbasket,
but the young tall curly one
wants to walk on; the glistening sidewalk
entices him to arcane happenings.

Increasing rain. The old bareheaded man
smiles and grumbles to himself.
The lights change: the avenue's
endless nave echoes notes of
liturgical red. He drifts

between his dogs' desires.
The three of them are enveloped--
turning now to go crosstown--in their
sense of each other, of pleasure,
of weather, of corners,
of leisurely tensions between them
and private silence.