



Image from aucharbon

Conrad Gurtatowski

An Afternoon with Eric Satie

To hear Trois Gymnopedies  
transports me to a Parisian café  
on a lustrous Sunday afternoon  
sometime in May

Perhaps it is  
the Forêt Noir with wood beams  
crossing the ceiling, or along  
rue Royale amongst widows and artists

Ripples of sunlight  
fall across the table  
like ruffles on a schoolgirl's petticoat  
as cups of espresso

belligerent and hot  
fuel our desultory conversation  
straining to be heard  
along the Champs-Élysées

above the chattering  
of taxis and bicycles that provide  
a throbbing counterpoint  
to the sweet sound of a piano

notes dropping  
like raindrops on marble  
amidst curls of cigarette smoke  
and the chimerical kiss of absinthe

Women with Lautrec faces  
amble by, folded in Dior,  
framed by a sunset tinted  
like an elegant Beaujolais

And when the music stops  
as it invariably must,  
we revel in Cocteau's whimsy

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Conrad Gurtatowski's poetry has been published in *Blue Collar Review*, *Barbaric Yawp*, *Poet's Art*, *Valparaiso Review*, *Stray Branch*, and other periodicals. In addition, he has worked as a film extra in movies shot around the Chicago area, including *The Dark Knight*.