

Michael Cantor

Perdu

We smoked Gauloises that year
and drove down from Antwerp weekends
Sat in the Deux Magots
squinting,
held the cigarettes just so
emulating Him and Her

Late at night
early in the morning
upstairs in the Hotel Bonaparte
we'd make love and make love and make love
with the windows open
hear the scrapes of chairs
the conversations from the street
smell chestnuts
flowers
and each other

Or maybe it was Gitanes
and Café Flore
perhaps we were just friends
I spent an afternoon at book stalls
while she was with a married boyfriend
Who can remember the details
so long ago

But we were there
and looked at the girls in the streets
their sweater sleeves rolled down and long
good French legs
and a way of holding the head
a bit off to the side
small heads
everything angled
everything croissants dipped in strong coffee
pernod with water

Michael Cantor's work has appeared, in *Margie*, *Raintown Review*, *The Dark Horse*, *The Texas Poetry Journal*, *Umbrella Journal*, *SCR*, *The Atlanta Review* and many other

journals, anthologies and e-zines. Poetry competition honors include both the Gretchen Warren Award and Erika Mumford Awards from the New England Poetry Club, First Prize in the NAA Poetry Competition and the 2006 Ibbetson Street Press Award.