

After the Night

by Charlotte Hamrick

Let's step down this street right now, washed
bright as our shining faces in the early pre-dawn light.
We'll welcome the cool air of March
on our skin and breathe in the scent of freshly
baking pistolettes as we meander over cobblestones
worn smooth over time by thousands of footsteps.
We'll watch the pigeons pecking for errant crumbs
in the banquette cracks suddenly startled by the passing
of a lone musician, coronet in one hand and fried chicken
leg in the other, home-bound in his wrinkled white shirt,
the echoes of last night's melodies swirling
around his receding image.
Rodrigue blues and Hunter reds will pleasure our eyes
and a heavy spring dew will drip, drip, drip
from the galleries, sparkling like fading moon dust
on the fragrant buds of the tea olives.
We'll step into that coffee shop where steaming mugs
of French roast wait for us as the sun rises
over cloudy slate roofs making them shine
like a brand new life.

