

Fin

Ralph McTell

My love asked, "Do you remember
French films made in black and white
Late in the fifties, early sixties
Where night is day and day is night
You know those ones that start somewhere
And wander to the middle scene
The only way you knew they'd ended
'Fin' came on the screen"

I used to love them in the darkness
Stumbling from the cinema
Thick mascara and dark glasses
All my roads were boulevards
And best of all, my parents had
No interest in the these story lines
Each mystery and nuance was
For me to ponder, these were mine

I'd watch every actor's gesture
The way they lit each cigarette
The camera looked through cracked glass windows
And focused on a bead of sweat
In dingy rooms whose naked bulbs
Shed light upon the crumpled sheets
On beds in which were newly written
Love letters scrawled in haste and heat

I smoked Gauloises, drank black coffee
My breath smelled "of the night" you soothed
Dusty Springfield, said she thought that
Alan Delon's smile was cool
But I preferred Jean Paul Belmondo's
Crooked grin and his boxer's nose
And all the girls were "a la Greco"
French cars and Italian clothes

There are secrets in the back beat
There is message in the song
And if they thought you liked their music
The kids would have done something wrong
And you don't have to understand
Things no longer black and white
As long as it makes sense to them
The world is turning, it's all right

You either get it or you don't
It's not something you can explain
In the end all paths meet up
Like raindrops down a window pane
And each generation starts afresh
Why don't we speed to France by rail
And sit down at "Le Chat Qui Peche"
Drink slow cognac and eat snails