

Just a Little to the One Side of Bohemian At The All-Night Café

At the All-Night Café
super heated milk steam jets
Blows hissing coffee cupids
to the cold atmosphere
A pre-cursor stimulant
fuel to the urban cabaret
that's about to begin
at the All-Night Café
The sad and the electric
gather like ash and dust
get blown into corners
and settled on furniture
ready for action and
in for the night culture
watch politics at play
at the All-Night Café
Johnny is a juggler and
street entertainer with a grant
Wears a bohemian trench coat
with pill box epaulettes
His moods are as sweet
as a black rose to the
destitute off-duty prostitute
who scowls at the mime artist
with absolute dismay
for illustrating his words
and not having a name
At the All-Night Café
there's a mirror at every table
to check in and out from
to make sure that
the mask hasn't slipped
in a moment of weakness
There's an empty stage
and an open mic for improvisation
but don't encourage the sax player
she always shakes her head
says its not cool to be asked
to perform at the All-Night Café
So the torch singer steps up instead
all fishnet seams and basque finesse
has a Jack boot etiquette and skin
like fritillaries sports product hair gel
from a blue bottle as blue as the air
Sings about coats, umbrellas
and one night stands
copping off without judgment
with loners and bands how
lovers and freaks

gather at her door
before she dances alone
on a melamine floor
leaves her life on the spot
to empathetic decay
because it's all gone before
At the All-Night Café
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Dave cracks his knuckles
over xl roll-ups
watches airborne moths
lured with hypnotic will
towards the insecto-kill
He thinks about past encounters
and laughs between flashes
atomising hallucinations
with yesterdays excesses
while the open mouthed waitress
coughs up and practices
yawning and chewing and
spits on the dish cloth
and stirs up a frothy au lait
At the All-Night Café
the juke box flickers in
ecstatic neon expectation
Its buttons wiped away
on Holly and Cochran
It needs another era to play
but they're all too refined
at the All-Night Cafe
Verbal sound-offs and put downs
spew from animated mouths
impatience grows like darkness
when waiting for a shot
at bringing victims down as
stinging cat-call calls ring out
as sour as a Byriani float
sitting on ten pints of export
as sweet as a lip gloss pout
There's nowhere else to go
nowhere else to talk
nowhere else to meet
yet no-one wants to stay
at the All-Night Café

(Taken from The All Night Café and Other Dives)