

Marie Flore

Marie, Marie Flore was a small girl of ten
Whom I met in the south end of France.
Stepping out of the crowd was the daughter
Of someone with flowers for me, we were friends at a glance.
She spoke no English but sat by my side in the car
And pointed out places en route to the village of Arles.

Marie, Marie Flore came to table that night
As I dined in an ancient hotel.
The room was all fitted with things from the seventeenth century
And they suited her well.
She would eat nothing but sat in her chair like a queen
And laughed at my French but seemed always to know what I'd mean.

Marie, Marie Flore came to hear me that night
When I sang for the people of Arles.
She stood back in the shadows of a ruined arena,
Her frame in my mind was never too far.
In the rush that did follow I found she was holding my hand
And ushering me through an evening the elders had planned.

Marie, Marie Flore, I will always remember
Your eyes, your smile and your grace.
The gold that flowed with your laughter remains
To enlighten the image I have of your face.
For I have seen children with faces much wiser than time,
And you, my Marie, are most certainly one of this kind.

Marie, Marie Flore, all the odds say I see you again
By plan or by chance.
But if not you'll be there when I'm dreaming of rain over Paris
Or sun on the south end of France.
Marie, Marie, Marie Flore.