Cajun Cream

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In a dark hallway
on Bourbon Street
they shuffle in
one at a time
to drink their fill
in their own private booths,
licking the foam
off their lower lips
like children
with whipped-cream sundaes,
and when they leave
they cast a quarter
or at least a smile
into the glass
for the walnut beauty
who whispers a language
they don’t hear at home
and with downcast eyes
they slip quietly out
onto the crowded street
as if ashamed
for having watched old Joe
making love to her ivory.