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## Pale Imitation of a Rusty Old Night Club Performer

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# Trigonis: Pale Imitation of a Rusty Old Night Club Performer

## PALE IMITATION OF A RUSTY OLD NIGHT CLUB PERFORMER John T. Trigonis

I play this ragged piano every night, and every night you waltz away to  
the beat of another song, leave me scenting the stale surround

for your fish-bone embrace. I become a paler imitation of Tom Waits, drunk  
and broken-souled, watching brokenhearted itineraries slow

dance on shattered bottles of rusty Bud, each escorted by a crushed-smoke  
concerto filtering its memories into the ceiling fan of this small,

downtown night club ticking and tocking for a bridge that may never come.  
The rusted cheeks of loneliness, that sour milk taste of leftover

jazz, open mic amnesia peacocking amidst the barflies and brooders; here,  
I remember each menthol-laced word you'd ever lit up against my

coarse, matchbox heart. Yet this piano is a ransomed Polaroid alibi tossed  
into the musical ashtray wasteland, lost, and all I can do is play

for my soft, blue winter, switchblade romance; my sacrificial requiem, my  
blacked-out supermarket conversations (with no one in particular);

my turbulent zoot-suit detective, half-eaten Joan of Arc; my wet dream on  
the edge of a razor; my dirty protection, want of stability, of

rekindled peace; this, my one more encore performance invoking your sweet  
animus home for more and more of our old, replayable war.