

## THE NEXT TIME WE SAW PARIS

“The next time was the last time.”

One morning we saw de Gaulle  
himself in uniform chauffeured  
alone in an open Peugeot.  
He seemed to dare assassination  
as he did near Notre Dame  
during the Liberation parade.  
On house fronts and doors we noticed  
small bronze plaques with names  
followed by *Victime de Nazis*.  
We'd read reports that *Enfants  
des Boches* reached 100,000  
during the Occupation.

“Horizontal  
Collaborators” were shorn bald,  
spat upon and marched naked  
through the streets.

De Gaulle  
pronounced all executed traitors  
justly punished.

We focused  
on Paris of the postcards: Sacre-  
Coeur, the Eiffel Tower,  
the Champs-Elysees, the Louvre.  
The Folies-Bergere booked sellouts.  
The Bateau Mouche was packed.  
Lounging by the Seine, a fisherman  
propped his rod against  
a bench and smoked a Gitanes

as if catching a fish meant  
little or nothing at all.