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Hey there and welcome to our 55th episode of Busy Kids Love Music, a podcast for music loving families. I'm Carly Seifert, the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano, and I'm so happy to have you here with me today as we finish up our final episode in our composer series about the French composer Claude Debussy

In our first episode, we learned a bit about Debussy's life, and in the second episode, we listened and learned about his six movement suite for his young daughter, *The Children's Corner*. Now if you missed out on those episodes, I'll be sure to link to them in the show notes so you can take a few minutes to listen to them. Today we're going to dig deeply into Debussy's most well-known work, "Clair de Lune".

Have you heard this famous masterpiece before? It is performed often and used in famous movie scenes from films such as *Oceans 11* and *Twilight*. The piece is actually part of a suite -- which is a collection of music -- we talked about that word in the last episode because *Children's Corner* is also a suite. The name of the suite from which "Clair de Lune" comes is *Suite bergamasque*, and it contains four movements - "Clair de Lune" is the third in the collection.

The original title of the piece was "Promenade sentimentale" which translates to "sentimental stroll" in English. It was inspired by an 1866 poetry collection by Paul Verlaine called "Sad Landscapes". The poem begins with these words: "The setting sun cast its final rays And the breeze rocked the pale water lilies." Listen again to the opening notes of the piece. Do you think that this music captures the words of the poem?

Debussy wrote this suite when he was just 28 years old and was unwilling to publish the music because he felt it wasn't in his mature style. However, 15 years later, he accepted an offer from a publisher who thought they would be successful, given Debussy's fame in the years that had transpired. Shortly before publication, Debussy changed the name from "Promenade sentimentale" to "Clair de Lune", which, when translated, means "moonlight", after another poem by Verlaine of the same name. Listen to the opening words of the "Moonlight" poem:

*Your soul is a chosen landscape  
Where charming masquerades and dancers are promenading,  
Playing the lute and dancing, and almost  
Sad beneath their fantastic disguises.*

Debussy also wrote two settings of the poem for voice and piano accompaniment.

You can see that this particular setting by the same name -- "Clair de Lune" is much different from the more familiar setting, isn't it? The same words can inspire different images and feelings in a composer.

Debussy composed this piece as a piano solo, but just as with Children's Corner, it was arranged for the orchestra by Debussy's friend Andre Caplet.

When you head to this episode's show notes at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/55](http://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/55), I put together a playlist on YouTube for you that contains several arrangements of Clair de Lune, as well as performances of the other movements from *Suite bergamasque*. Again you can find the link to that playlist at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/55](http://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/55).

Thanks so much for joining me today to finish up our composer series on Claude Debussy. I loved learning more about him and his music with you, and look forward to more musical discoveries with you when our next episode of Busy Kids Love Music airs again in two weeks. Bye for now!