

Dog Full Poem

Writer: Lawrence Ferlinghetti | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Dog Lawrence Ferlinghetti (1919-2021)

The dog trots freely in the street
and sees reality
and the things he sees
are bigger than himself
and the things he sees
are his reality
Drunks in doorways
Moons on trees
The dog trots freely thru the street
and the things he sees
are smaller than himself
Fish on newsprint
Ants in holes
Chickens in Chinatown windows
their heads a block away
The dog trots freely in the street
and the things he smells
smell something like himself
The dog trots freely in the street
past puddles and babies
cats and cigars
poolrooms and policemen
He doesn't hate cops
He merely has no use for them
and he goes past them
and past the dead cows hung up whole
in front of the San Francisco Meat Market
He would rather eat a tender cow
than a tough policeman
though either might do

And he goes past the Romeo Ravioli Factory
and past Coit's Tower
and past Congressman Doyle
He's afraid of Coit's Tower
but he's not afraid of Congressman Doyle
although what he hears is very discouraging
very depressing
very absurd
to a sad young dog like himself
to a serious dog like himself
But he has his own free world to live in
His own fleas to eat
He will not be muzzled
Congressman Doyle is just another
fire hydrant
to him
The dog trots freely in the street
and has his own dog's life to live
and to think about
and to reflect upon
touching and tasting and testing everything
investigating everything
without benefit of perjury
a real realist
with a real tale to tell
and a real tail to tell it with
a real live
 barking
 democratic dog
engaged in real
 free enterprise
with something to say
 about ontology
something to say
 about reality
 and how to see it
 and how to hear it

with his head cocked sideways
 at streetcorners
as if he is just about to have
 his picture taken
 for Victor Records
 listening for
 His Master's Voice
and looking
 like a living questionmark
 into the
 great gramophone
 of puzzling existence
with its wondrous hollow horn
 which always seems
 just about to spout forth
 some Victorious answer
 to everything

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Source: *A Coney Island of the Mind: Poems* (New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1958)