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Origami Poems Project™

INSIDE A DOG'S HEAD
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INSIDE A DOG'S HEAD

HELEN BURKE

Inside a Dogs Head (For Wendy and Pixie)

There are three words
Inside a dogs head. Walk ..Friend and ..Sausages.

Throughout the day when they are not
Devising a better philosophy for the world
These words run in tandem up and down
The field and in and out of the woods.
By the stream when they stop and give you that quizzical look
They are unlearning all that jeopardises and intimidates Happiness.

A dog always hopes that we will see sense and undo
All the harm we somehow inflict upon each other.
They explain the word friend while chasing their tails
Or running for a stick.

But even while they spell it out
We walk back to the car .. not seeing autumn under our feet
In need of scrunching. Not seeing the trees so fearful
Of the white world that soon hangs on the branches.

But inside a dogs head – there will always be another Spring.
Sausages for tea. And. Another friend to make.
Another walk to take – down to the silver stream.

The Kindness of Dogs

You say it and it is true.
Dogs are kind.
They buy small dog treats for each other.
They hold doors open for cats.
They run to the top of the mountain and bark
Bury the sun in the sand and throw sticks
For the stars.
Dogs are kind.
They put paws on your knees on bad days.
They hold a light out to you in their eyes.
"Which stone did you want? which one?"
And race back down with it and
Place it gently at your feet.
Dogs are kind (you say it and it is true).
They bark in all the right places at the theatre
And hide behind the sofa in the scary movie.
They share their ice cream
With you , no questions asked.
Our dog – Zorro—the one we have not met yet
Will be our best chum, best in the whole world.
He will be faithful and strong.

Dogs are kind.
In dreams he runs right up to me, barks and says
"You look a little peaky, why not take a year off
And come with me to Zanzibar.
Stretch your legs and chase your tail.
See all that world out there? -
It's yours for the asking."
And he gives me one of his fleas
As a token of goodwill.
Dogs are kind.
They run into the sun and look amazed that it is wet
But they do not take offence.
They love a thorough breeze in their ears
Hanging out of windows,
A breeze that says they're happy
In all the different continents.
Dogs are good map-readers and they always
Know a better route –
Past the poodle beauty parlour and turn
Right at the Dog and Duck.
Dogs lay their heads beside you and know
Just what you're thinking.
Dogs favourite word is walk.
Dogs are kind.

My cousin it was, became known as
Dances With Dogs.
Always he denied it –
Coming in from the pub and the old dog
Sleeping on the hearth. But –
If the dog were to be believed – the dance it did
Was true. Like a slow foxtrot or a samba –
On its hind legs.
Only after the whiskey –
If the whiskey had been avoided,
All was well. But, if not –
The dog would become Cinderella.
Hoofing round the small front room with
Johnny Cash playing , pretty loud.
Or Petula Clark - Downtown.
And to be fair – it had a natural grace and seemed
To take to the floor with ease.
But next day - there would be no mention of it.
Just behind his back – ourselves –
Twirling like spinning jenny's
And barking and barking.
And him – catching our eye – turning sudden like.
Nothing like as nippy as the dog though.

Dances With Dogs

Does everything with a flourish.
He sighs – it is a huge chewed bone in the air..
He raises his eyes to the wood ceiling..
He will not come when called – he cocks a deaf un..
He chews up clothes and fridge magnets.
He is spectacular in his expressions – they are
Like a piano – a movement in dog major with
Trumpet solo.
He sits with his back to you at the window..
He says his solicitor will be in touch about
The withholding of cookies..
We film him on camera when he is alone
Trying out different poses of dejection and trying on
Your mothers hat.
The sulking dog will come round in the end
And will forget what began it all..
But for now he shambles across to his basket
Puts his arms over his head
And rings his his therapist, Dr Bert.
Dr. Bert advises rest. And muddy walks.
And cookies.
The sulking dog agrees.

The Sulking Dog