

There is no cure for being free of mind and will.
 Baxter, my friend, my alter ego.
 Baxter – I love you.
 Go on – being, Baxter.
 (Run amok – remain a dog with pluck.)
 You bark at your side of the wall.
 And I will bark – at mine.



Helen Burke is a poet/artist living in
 YORK, ENGLAND. She has written poetry
 for 40 years, doesn't own a dog –
 but if she did he would be called ZORRO
 and would be fearless but kind.

Visit the Origami Poems website
 to read more of Helen's work.

Baxter, the dog, is being dragged down the lane.
 Again.
 I feel sorry for Baxter, in fact, most days –
 I feel a bit like him.
 Pulled this way and that.
 Someone behind me with a lead that I can't see.
 (Nor have I.)
 Just that he is a dog who takes his time perhaps.
 He investigates.
 Sniffs too long in all the wrong places.
 I can never hear the words –
 just that she is shouting.
 Snapping and Snarling.
 I imagine the teeth are bared –
 the hackles grissly and raised.
 But Baxter I feel is undeterred.
 He will go on being Baxter.
 He will go on, going on.

Baxter's Crime

DRAWING DOGS

Helen Burke



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Origami Poems Project

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 by Helen Burke © 2011**

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Drawing dogs

I have taken to drawing dogs.
 They have begun to seem more like people
 Than people.
 I feel more certain that they will
 Inherit the earth.
 I feel safer when a dog snarls
 Than when a person smiles.
 I can see them deciding not to think of all the answers
 Before they've eaten their dinner.
 I can see they're not bothered if the post is late
 Or if they miss the bus to Fulham Broadway.
 Their faces do not pose when you look at them.
 (And then try and pretend that
 They've just seen you.)
 If they're happy, they're happy – and sad if they're sad.
 If they got begging letters –
 They would answer all of them.
 In their heads, all of them are riding motorbikes
 Across France
 Without a cur in the world.
 And most brilliantly of all –
 they do not write poetry.
 I like dogs.

The Littlest Hobo

I am the Littlest Hobo.
 I am a stray, but not a runaway.
 There was nowhere that I ran from.
 I come into towns from the East
 And leave them from the West.
 I find it's for the best.
 The call of moving on is in my soul.
 If I stay, I can't win. I know this to be true.
 You may see me at your window,
 I'll help you if I can.
 No-one owns me – I belong to no-one,
 Neither woman nor man.
 I board the train for Everywhere, just
 When no-one's looking.
 The call of all the different towns,
 The stories of the people – I NEED to be there.
 I need to see them all.
 Wouldn't you, if you could?
 (Somehow, I think you would.)

The Blind Dog

I do not want to answer the door.
 I want to laze around with a bone
 And not be first all the time.
 No-one asked me if I'm cut out for this –
 Which I'm not.
 I have to wear a harness and a sign
 That says don't talk to me.
 Why couldn't she have been a footballer?
 But running? –
 Makes me go dizzy watching them.
 How does she even know if she's won?
 I'm not allowed to bark in case it
 Distracts them.
 This is no life for a dog.
 I'm going to advertise -
 Get her a pony, a small one.
 She'll never know.