

Gregory Glenn

DOG

I had finally gone to Hell.
I was very bored,
which surprised me.
I always thought that Hell
wouldn't be boring, or
at least there would be
something for me to do.

But I guess it wouldn't be "Hell" if I was satisfied.

A dog came up from behind me.
He was whistling a familiar tune
kind of like Happy Birthday,
only happier.
I asked him how
he could whistle without lips.
He asked me how
I could smile without being happy.

He was wagging his tail.
A very smug, very good boy.

We talked about how we ended
up in Hell. I explained
how it was a mistake,
how it was funny except
it happened to me.

"That's rough," said the dog.
I laughed—"is it rough?
Or is it ruff ruff ruff?"
"That's really not funny," said the dog,
"and anyway, dogs can't laugh,
so jokes just kind of alienate me."

This really is Hell, I thought.

"Well, how did you wind up down here?" I asked.
"House pets don't have souls," he said, plainly.
"Oh, wow," I said, "I guess

I should have been nicer to my cat.”
 “Fuck cats,” said the dog.

Time wouldn't pass, yet here
 we were
 watching Hell moving before us
 like a sick heart.

After some silence,
 I saw him turn his head
 and then I heard him
 throw up really hard.
 We both got a little uncomfortable,
 sitting quietly,
 pretending for a bit
 that it hadn't happened.

“Hey, sorry about that...” began the dog,
 “I was poisoned accidentally, that's how I died.”
 I patted his head, “are you going to be all right?”
 He looked at me, into my eyes,
 because dogs don't talk,
 and so they know how
 to properly use their eyes.
 “Oh, right,” I said,
 “I guess I forgot where we are.”
 “If I could smile, I would be smiling
 right now,” said the dog.
 “Dogs can't smile, either?” I asked.
 “No, I don't have lips,” said the dog.

“Is that why you kiss with your tongue?” I asked.
 “I'm not kissing my asshole, I'm cleaning it,” said the dog.

“You're pretty dry, for a dog,” I said.
 And he was! He didn't even crack a smile!
 What a delivery!
 But I didn't laugh, or cry, or smile, or anything.
 I was in Hell,
 wondering where do we put these dogs of ours
 after we've put them away?