

# DOG POEMS



By the World's Greatest Poets



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## To Flush, My Dog

Loving friend, the gift of one,  
Who, her own true faith, hath run,  
Through thy lower nature ;  
Be my benediction said  
With my hand upon thy head,  
Gentle fellow-creature !

Like a lady's ringlets brown,  
Flow thy silken ears adown  
Either side demurely,  
Of thy silver-suited breast  
Shining out from all the rest  
Of thy body purely.

Darkly brown thy body is,  
Till the sunshine, striking this,  
Alchemize its dulness, —  
When the sleek curls manifold  
Flash all over into gold,  
With a burnished fulness.

Underneath my stroking hand,  
Startled eyes of hazel bland  
Kindling, growing larger, —

Up thou leapest with a spring,  
Full of prank and curvetting,  
Leaping like a charger.

Leap ! thy broad tail waves a light ;  
Leap ! thy slender feet are bright,  
Canopied in fringes.  
Leap — those tasselled ears of thine  
Flicker strangely, fair and fine,  
Down their golden inches.

Yet, my pretty sportive friend,  
Little is 't to such an end  
That I praise thy rareness !  
Other dogs may be thy peers  
Haply in these drooping ears,  
And this glossy fairness.

But of thee it shall be said,  
This dog watched beside a bed  
Day and night unwearied, —  
Watched within a curtained room,  
Where no sunbeam brake the gloom  
Round the sick and dreary.

Roses, gathered for a vase,  
In that chamber died apace,  
Beam and breeze resigning —  
This dog only, waited on,  
Knowing that when light is gone,  
Love remains for shining.

Other dogs in thymy dew  
Tracked the hares and followed through  
Sunny moor or meadow —  
This dog only, crept and crept  
Next a languid cheek that slept,  
Sharing in the shadow.

Other dogs of loyal cheer  
Bounded at the whistle clear,  
Up the woodside hieing —  
This dog only, watched in reach  
Of a faintly uttered speech,  
Or a louder sighing.

And if one or two quick tears  
Dropped upon his glossy ears,  
Or a sigh came double, —  
Up he sprang in eager haste,  
Fawning, fondling, breathing fast,  
In a tender trouble.



And this dog was satisfied,  
If a pale thin hand would glide,  
Down his dewlaps sloping, —  
Which he pushed his nose within,  
After, — platforming his chin  
On the palm left open.

This dog, if a friendly voice  
Call him now to blyther choice  
Than such chamber-keeping,  
Come out ! ‘ praying from the door, —  
Presseth backward as before,  
Up against me leaping.

Therefore to this dog will I,  
Tenderly not scornfully,  
Render praise and favour !  
With my hand upon his head,  
Is my benediction said  
Therefore, and for ever.

And because he loves me so,  
Better than his kind will do  
Often, man or woman,  
Give I back more love again  
Than dogs often take of men, —  
Leaning from my Human.

Blessings on thee, dog of mine,  
Pretty collars make thee fine,  
Sugared milk make fat thee !  
Pleasures wag on in thy tail —  
Hands of gentle motion fail  
Nevermore, to pat thee !

Downy pillow take thy head,  
Silken coverlid bestead,  
Sunshine help thy sleeping !  
No fly 's buzzing wake thee up —  
No man break thy purple cup,  
Set for drinking deep in.

Whiskered cats aointed flee —  
Sturdy stoppers keep from thee  
Cologne distillations ;  
Nuts lie in thy path for stones,  
And thy feast-day macaroons  
Turn to daily rations !

Mock I thee, in wishing weal ? —  
Tears are in my eyes to feel  
Thou art made so straightly,  
Blessing needs must straighten too, —  
Little canst thou joy or do,  
Thou who lovest greatly.

Yet be blessed to the height  
Of all good and all delight  
Pervious to thy nature, —  
Only loved beyond that line,  
With a love that answers thine,  
Loving fellow-creature !

MARY OLIVER

## Every Dog's Story

I have a bed, my very own.  
It's just my size.  
And sometimes I like to sleep alone  
with dreams inside my eyes.

But sometimes dreams are dark and wild and creepy  
and I wake and am afraid, though I don't know why.  
But I'm no longer sleepy  
and too slowly the hours go by.

So I climb on the bed where the light of the moon  
is shining on your face  
and I know it will be morning soon.

Everybody needs a safe place.

INSCRIBED BY ALEXANDER POPE

## On the Collar of a Dog

I am his highness's dog at Kew;  
Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?

VINCENT STARRETT

## Oracle of the Dog

Only the dog knows why the moon  
Floats down the night; his raucous tune  
Is urgent with the thing he fears,  
But falls on unbelieving ears.  
If we had only learned to speak  
The tongue of dogs instead of Greek,  
We should be better schooled to fight  
The spells and portents of the night,  
Now at the coming of the dark  
Young fools adrift in street and park  
Yield to an epidemic swoon,  
Abuse the dog and praise the moon.