

Dogtown

Harry Chapin

Up in Massachusetts, there's a little spit of land
The men who make the maps, yes, they call the place Cape Ann
The men who do the fishing, call it Gloucester Harbor Sound
But the women left behind, they call the place DogtownThe men go out for whaling, past the breakers and the fogs
The women stay home waiting, they're protected by the dogs
A tough old whaler woman who had seen three husbands drown
Polled the population and she named the place DogtownThere's all these gray faced women in their black widow's gowns
Living in this grave yard granite town
Yeah, you soon learn there's many more than one way to drown
That's while going to the dogs here in DogtownAnd she speaks, my father was a merchant all in the Boston fief
When my husband came and asked him for my hand
But little did I know then that a Gloucester whaler's wife
Marries, but the sea salt and the sandHe took me up to Dogtown the day I was a bride
We had ten days together before he left my side
He's the first mate of a whaling ship, the keeper of the log
He said, "Farewell, my darling, I'm going to leave you with my dog" And I have seen the splintered timbers of a hundred shattered hulls
Known the silence of the granite and the screeching of the gulls
I've heard that crazy widow Cather walk the harbor as she raves
At the endless rolling whisper of the wavesSitting by the fireside, the embers slowly die
Is it a sign of weakness when a woman wants to cry?
The dog is closely watching the fire glints in his eye
No use to go to sleep this early, no use to even tryMy blood beats like a woman's, I've got a woman's breast
and thighs
But where am I to offer them, to the ocean or the skies?
Living with this silent dog, all the moments of my life
He has been my only husband, am I a widow or his wife? Yes, it's a Dogtown and it's a fog town
And there's nothing around 'cept the sea pounding granite ground
And this black midnight horror of a houndI'm standing on this craggy cliff, my eyes fixed on the sea
Six months past when his ship was due, I'm a widow to be
For liking this half living with the lonely and the fog
You need the bastard of the mating of a woman and a dogAnd I have seen the splintered timbers of a hundred shattered hulls
Known the silence of the granite and the screeching of the gulls
I've heard that crazy widow Cather walk the harbor as she raves
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