

# 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 Dogtown  
The 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 Dogtown  
There'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 Dogtown  
And 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 sand  
He 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 waves  
Sitting 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 try  
My 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 hound  
I'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 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  
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