

# Dogs *Singing*

A TRIBUTE ANTHOLOGY

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*Devon McNamara*

## Zach Speaks

My love,  
it is sunset  
this is our walk after rain,  
scarlet in muck, azure  
in cow prints, horse tracks,  
the skyey stream where I dunk  
my muzzle, shake out my  
blaze of splash.

    You, in your coat,  
your redolent boots, call  
my name, and I hear but attend  
to the thrill of the smells of  
the evening, sea wrack heaving  
away out there, hare scut in nettles,  
the byre beyond, wild pee on  
this stone, chips in their papery  
slick and a beer, the dark rich stink in  
the ditch. Then I look back,  
waiting, spangled in mist, to  
raise my head to your hand.

What? You think I'm past  
speech and don't love  
how you lie on the floor  
by me talking and stroking?  
Even now, my big, ambery paws  
reach your shoulders, I  
open my breath in your face.

Oh my love, how your hair, wet  
with sky, is my color. Don't cry.  
Our lost words are shining. Turning  
and turning for home, how they glisten  
and sing.

    See how I lift my head golden  
and breathing beside you, the way I will  
always, and you will, deep in your hands  
feel my voice, hear our listening touch.

## Spring Lament

Groundhog Day  
the yellow clay  
flies  
up from  
amber slugs  
the maple roots  
I dig  
the frost line  
delve  
for room  
to lay your limbs  
mine own mastiff  
sweet prince of dogs

"Loyal"  
Bill Matthews  
dogsboddy at the vet  
drives off  
weeping "steadily  
like an adult"

I howl  
and shovel  
tuck you in  
thinking of him  
and Sweeney's yellow dog  
who leaped into the stream  
and swimming after them  
was left  
Sputnik  
called across the road  
then cried for all day long

Oh earth breath  
where we wail and sweat  
bereft  
Oh how this flailing  
sounds like you  
digging  
your bed in summer  
round and round  
sweet timeless grass  
Oh how  
the snuff and whistle  
for the beloved  
rises  
innocent  
the wild scent  
keen, keen