The Long Street

Lawrence Ferlinghetti
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The long street
which is the street of the world
passes around the world
filled with all the people of the world
not to mention all the voices
of all the people
that ever existed
Lovers and weepers
virgins and sleepers
spaghetti salesmen and sandwichmen
milkmen and orators
boneless bankers
brittle housewives
sheathed in nylon snobberies
deserts of advertising men
herds of high school fillies
crowds of collegians
all talking and talking
and walking around
or hanging out windows
to see what's doing
out in the world
where everything happens
sooner or later
if it happens at all
And the long street
which is the longest street
in all the world
but which isn't as long
as it seems
passes on
thru all the cities and all the scenes
down every alley
up every boulevard
thru every crossroads
thru red lights and green lights
cities in sunlight
continents in rain
hungry Hong Kongs
untillable Tuscaloosas
Oaklands of the soul
Dublins of the imagination
And the long street
rolls on around
like an enormous choochoo train
chugging around the world
with its bawling passengers
and babies and picnic baskets
and cats and dogs
and all of them wondering
just who is up
in the cab ahead
driving the train
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if anybody
the train which runs around the world
like a world going round
all of them wondering
just what is up
if anything
and some of them leaning out
and peering ahead
and trying to catch
a look at the driver
in his one-eye cab
trying to see him
to glimpse his face
to catch his eye
as they whirl around a bend
but they never do
although once in a while
it looks as if
they're going to
And the street goes rocking on
the train goes bowling on
with its windows reaching up
its windows the windows
of all the buildings
in all the streets of the world
bowling along
thru the light of the world
thru the night of the world
with lanterns at crossings
lost lights flashing
crowds at carnivals
nightwood circuses
whorehouses and parliaments
forgotten fountains
cellar doors and unfound doors
figures in lamplight
pale idols dancing
as the world rocks on
But now we come
to the lonely part of the street
the part of the street
that goes around
the lonely part of the world
And this is not the place
that you change trains
for the Brighton Beach Express
This is not the place
that you do anything
This is the part of the world
where nothing's doing
where no one's doing
anything
where nobody's anywhere
nobody nowhere
except yourself
not even a mirror
to make you two
not a soul
except your own
maybe
and even that
not there
maybe
or not yours
maybe
because you're what's called
dead
you've reached your station
Descend