

# I Am Waiting

BY LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI

I am waiting for my case to come up  
and I am waiting  
for a rebirth of wonder  
and I am waiting for someone  
to really discover America  
and wail  
and I am waiting  
for the discovery  
of a new symbolic western frontier  
and I am waiting  
for the American Eagle  
to really spread its wings  
and straighten up and fly right  
and I am waiting  
for the Age of Anxiety  
to drop dead  
and I am waiting  
for the war to be fought  
which will make the world safe  
for anarchy  
and I am waiting  
for the final withering away  
of all governments  
and I am perpetually awaiting  
a rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for the Second Coming  
and I am waiting  
for a religious revival  
to sweep thru the state of Arizona  
and I am waiting  
for the Grapes of Wrath to be stored

and I am waiting  
for them to prove  
that God is really American  
and I am waiting  
to see God on television  
piped onto church altars  
if only they can find  
the right channel  
to tune in on  
and I am waiting  
for the Last Supper to be served again  
with a strange new appetizer  
and I am perpetually awaiting  
a rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for my number to be called  
and I am waiting  
for the Salvation Army to take over  
and I am waiting  
for the meek to be blessed  
and inherit the earth  
without taxes  
and I am waiting  
for forests and animals  
to reclaim the earth as theirs  
and I am waiting  
for a way to be devised  
to destroy all nationalisms  
without killing anybody  
and I am waiting  
for linnets and planets to fall like rain  
and I am waiting for lovers and weepers  
to lie down together again  
in a new rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for the Great Divide to be crossed

and I am anxiously waiting  
for the secret of eternal life to be discovered  
by an obscure general practitioner  
and I am waiting  
for the storms of life  
to be over  
and I am waiting  
to set sail for happiness  
and I am waiting  
for a reconstructed Mayflower  
to reach America  
with its picture story and tv rights  
sold in advance to the natives  
and I am waiting  
for the lost music to sound again  
in the Lost Continent  
in a new rebirth of wonder

I am waiting for the day  
that maketh all things clear  
and I am awaiting retribution  
for what America did  
to Tom Sawyer  
and I am waiting  
for Alice in Wonderland  
to retransmit to me  
her total dream of innocence  
and I am waiting  
for Childe Roland to come  
to the final darkest tower  
and I am waiting  
for Aphrodite  
to grow live arms  
at a final disarmament conference  
in a new rebirth of wonder



her nearly naked breasts  
throw taut shadows  
when she stretches up  
to hang at last the last of her  
so white washed sins  
but it is wetly amorous  
and winds itself about her  
clinging to her skin  
So caught with arms  
upraised  
she tosses back her head  
in voiceless laughter  
and in choiceless gesture then  
shakes out gold hair  
while in the reachless seascape spaces  
between the blown white shrouds  
stand out the bright steamers  
to kingdom come

## *The Changing Light*

[Lawrence Ferlinghetti](#) - 1919-2021

The changing light at San Francisco  
is none of your East Coast light  
none of your  
pearly light of Paris  
The light of San Francisco  
is a sea light  
an island light  
And the light of fog  
blanketing the hills  
drifting in at night  
through the Golden Gate

to lie on the city at dawn  
And then the halcyon late mornings  
after the fog burns off  
and the sun paints white houses  
with the sea light of Greece  
with sharp clean shadows  
making the town look like  
it had just been painted  
But the wind comes up at four o'clock  
sweeping the hills  
And then the veil of light of early evening  
And then another scrim  
when the new night fog  
floats in  
And in that vale of light  
the city drifts  
anchorless upon the ocean



## NATURAL HISTORY

Winter's back is broken  
The squirrels are out  
                                  in Central Park  
Where  
                  have they been sleeping?

In the Museum of Natural History  
          in its great entrance hall  
                  a dinosaur rears up  
                                  protecting its young  
          one hundred and forty million  
                                  years ago

The hall is thronged  
                  with chattering schoolchildren  
          These mammals of all colors  
                                  pose for pictures  
                                  under the upraised Barosaurus

He's protecting them too  
                                  from the raptors of the world  
No one knows  
                                  what color dinosaurs were  
          nor what happened to them  
                                  or their young

But here they are today  
                                  along with the rest of us

And are we all raptors  
                  or Advanced Humans

(as the museum brochures describe us)  
including President Theodore Roosevelt  
outside the main entrance  
astride a great bronze stallion  
(oxidizing into green)

And he flanked  
by two brave bronze Indians  
(also turning green)

And all striding forward together  
into Central Park West  
into the oncoming traffic  
of the 21st century



## BETWEEN TWO CITIES

Brown stubble cornfields

by a railroad crossing

with sign reading

*Uneven Tracks*

Bare elms

like fans against the sky

Furze with birds in a thicket

about to fly

A genre farm-painting

flashes on my inward eye—

Brown cows by a barn in sun

with a dog at play

The lone and level fields

stretch away. . . .