

## How Poetry Arrived

What if I told you  
Lawrence Ferlinghetti  
gave me his fedora  
back in the early 60's  
at the Rouge et Noir,  
me in my skinny jeans,  
my father's tattered  
gray sweater.

I'd spent sixteen summers  
in Southern California  
waiting, watching...

and there he was on a stool  
six chairs away reciting  
*I am waiting for my case to come up  
and I am waiting  
for a rebirth of wonder...*

I was drawn  
to them all, Allen and Jack,  
Neal, Gregory,  
that naked picture in Tangier,

but it was Ferlinghetti  
who put the hat on my head  
rode my mind to Coney Island  
pages I've turned for fifty years,  
and the spine's still holding.