

Worm in Compost

For I will consider the lowly worm,
who shall not want,
for he eats the in-edibles and like an untouchable, his food is put down
outside the walls, yet he molts malevolence,
who is as grateful as a homeless man
whose arms reach out to accept what is given with grace,
who turns his circular mouth and muscular pharynx
to suck what's left of my cucumbers
into his translucent tubule,
who turns down drugs and would drown in Tequila,
preferring fiber filled vegan fare to flesh,
for his body is a temple,
though simple in its design
each secreting segment can turn morsels
into detritus matter,
performing a worthy service and thus
proud to have been made a vermiform, in the image of his god,
who is determined to procreate either asexually
or by divine intervention,
but if it is his destiny, sexually, for it is not his fault he is,
by design, desirous, a creature made for mating
whenever near the waggle of a nubile nematode,
who is hermaphroditic so the feelings are mutual
as well as the goods exchanged,
who never forces his will, choosing to negotiate,
who wriggles through ordinary dirt, stretching and contracting,
undistracted in his diligence like a true disciple,
who aerates the soil as if making patterns in the heavens,
pausing to pray as he passes through
the sacred burial grounds of his ancestors,
fearing no evil for his god is with him,
as he drills deeper into the darkness,
his mucus lubricating each humble path,
Who perceives his duty to be
to sweeten the earth
with deposits of dung rich in organic nutrients
to be used by all bacteria and fungi alike,
who, in reference to his class, Charles Darwin wrote, "It may be *doubted*
whether there are many other animals
which have played so important a part in the history of the world,
as have these lowly organized creatures.

who, each day, carries on his hard and holy work without complaint,
who pokes his tiny pious head above the earth to praise his maker,
swaying from side to side like a gospel choir,
he moves to the rhythms of his natural world,
waving his worm body this way each time it rains
or when someone turns on the sprinklers,
who envisions his god somehow holding a rod and staff
and is comforted all the days of his brief,
but meaningful existence, and
who shall dwell with dignity in the house of his lord forever.