

i learned the common earthworm was not at all common
when i discovered my
first wet soil serpent
in the terraced backyard garden
of my grandmother.

she cut one in half and explained
it was less cruel than her theories on eugenics.

the half with the head always dies
the tail regenerates
a new head
which hopefully is more suited for survival.

i worried about it for four years after i was told worms eat the dead.
i knew if they remembered me they would probably eat me slowly
starting with my toes to make
the torture feast last longer

and because i went to a high episcopalian church
i was often confused by spiritual threats
and thought that i could not rise from the dead if there
was nothing left that could rise.

my grandmother was an aggressive atheist as well...

well if you cannot rise
maybe god will cut you in half
and you can try again.
if he will not i would be
willing to help if
you would stand still.

she did not laugh very often.

the common earthworm.
wf.h.
2024