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EARTHWORM

Sumana Roy

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Ángeles Martínez Pomata, *Stratified Soil*, 2018. Oil on canvas, 24 x 19 cm.
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Earthworm

From here, life seems like background noise,
speech a fossil from a disobedient time,
cleanliness a bed for the frail and aging.
And light a lazy animal that often stops to rest -
it has no curiosity, it never travels underground.
Without skeleton, like the night,
without colour, like tanned water,
its form seems like a first draft.
Legs would be jail, ears too much to feed,
a resinous responsibility.
Not sun, not moon, not time's gossip,
but the faded dark gives it rhythm,
as if it were soil's translucent twin.
Like a straw it ferries soil,
secreting it as roundlets,
as if they were the earth's fleece.
The soil's saint,
it moves as if life were as
so that when severed into
it dies, almost apologetic for being alive,
hinting that not all parts of us die at the same time.



Sumana Roy is the author of *How I Became a Tree* (2017: German edition, *Wie Ich ein Baum wurde*, published in 2020), *Missing: A Novel, My Mother's Lover and Other Stories* (2019), and two poetry collections, *Out of Syllabus* (2019) and *V. I. P.: Very Important Plant* (2022). She was Carson fellow in June-July 2018 and now teaches at Ashoka University, India.



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