

# how to kill a dragon dead (except)

*by strannikov*

the worm was stabbed where two rivers branch:  
who would slay was slain.  
its headless body a putrid green,  
head lost to the tides.  
already rot oozes from its corpse,  
putrefaction quick—  
a sudden time to erect a fire.

God knows where the evil thing crawled from  
poison ooze its trail  
meandered the peninsula down  
to assail the town  
probably from some sick lowland swamp  
where slimes breed with slimes  
until slimes and molds learn how to crawl.

this worm's poison killed thousands and more,  
gentry, servant both,  
matrons and young girls, boys never shaved,  
grandmas rudely dead—  
this plague of poison crawled through unseen  
under moonless nights  
leaving festering puddles of slime.

the poisons festered for two long months:  
by the third new moon  
curious of its dark approaches,  
we waited in dark:  
and when we thought we saw something glow

under moonless night,  
we aimed our lamps at the giant worm:

a swaying green thing thirty feet long,  
the green a sick lime,  
perplexed perhaps by our lamps' approach,  
so used to the dark—  
studded with poison-dripping red spikes,  
the hideous thing  
writhes on its haunches, sick twisting green.

pitchforks by the dozen pierce its flesh  
and then an axe swings,  
body tossed into its pit ablaze,  
head dispatched to tide.  
the rank stench of its rot hardly moves:  
an infection deep  
of stink this deep will take time to cure.

