

Fields Filled with Strength

Daily I drive past
fields filled with crops
and workers, their half moon bodies
arched over ripened vegetables,
sometimes on the left side of the road,
sometimes on the right.
Some fields reflect metallic strips
littered with sprinkler drops
in the sun. Some fields bristle
with the dark bushy leaves of artichokes,
some wave with the sea-foam green of spinach.
The scent of organic earth fills the air
near freshly-tilled fields;
the pungent smell of fertilizer wafts near others.
Some days one field is crammed with crops,
boxes, and a truckload of port-o-potties;
other days the same field is still,
an empty ghost town,
peacefully producing ripe strawberries.
But every day,
I see fields filled with people.
They seem stone-like as I pass by, unnoticed

while they fill crates with the harvest.
Any who I see standing, stand tall,
seem proud, shoulders straighter
than my own. They stand
taller than the sunflowers lining the fields
with their faces turned towards the ground
as if in mourning. Even when encased
in white protective suits,
carrying silver sticks filled with death,
shrouded in the mist of early-morning fog,
they stand tall.
How tall would I stand
if daily I worked in fields
instead of driving past them?

-Julie Titus