

**WILLIAM
GREENWOOD**

A Light Paradox

William Greenwood grew up in California where he did literacy and organizing work with farm workers from the 1960s during early unionization through the 1980s. Subsequently, he worked on agricultural and small business projects in Latin America, the Middle East, and Central Asia before returning to his home state. His most recent book is *Landscape/Cityscape* by Word Temple Press.

Fingering sand brings a worm snail
sea shell to light. The tiny mouth
at the end of this milk-colored,
no-more-than-quarter-inch-long

body holds
a grain
of black
sand.

Now, the color black is not nothing
but—as grade school painting
taught me—all colors run together
and so absorbs their light.

Conversely, absence of color makes
the white that bounces light waves off,
which is why you'd wear it,
e.g., for crossing the desert.

Meanwhile, here, I recline,
tropic under the sun while my cross section
of *crepidula fornicata*
(family: *vermatidae*)

the sanding sea rolled
and polished throughout
its animal's afterlife
glows translucent.

This millimetrical body tube
seemingly lit from inside
holds a twin black sand grain,
seed of a new kind of pregnancy.