

To A Head of Lettuce

May I venture to address you, vegetal friend?
A lettuce is no less than me, so I respect you,
though it's also true I may make a salad of you,
later. That's how we humans roll. Our species
is blowing it, bigtime, as you no doubt know,
dependent as you are on water and soil
we humans pollute. You're a *crisphead*,
an iceberg lettuce, scorned in days of yore
for being mostly fiber and water. But new
research claims you've gotten a bad rap,
that you're more nutritious than we knew.
Juicy and beautiful, your leaves can be used
as tortillas. If you peer through a lettuce leaf,
the view takes on the translucent green of
the newest shoots. Sitting atop your pile,
next to heaps of radicchio, you do seem
a living head, a royal personage who
should be paid homage. I am not demanding
to be reassured. I just want to know what you know,
what you think your role is—and hear what you
have to say about suffering long denied, the wisdom
of photosynthesis, stages of growth you've passed
through. I can almost hear your voice as I pay
for you at the cash register, a slightly gravelly sound,
like Kendrick Lamar's voice, or early Bob Dylan,
both singers of gruff poetic truth. Nothing less
was expected from you, sister lettuce, nothing less.