**Walking the Dog**

Two universes mosey down the street  
Connected by love and a leash and nothing else.  
Mostly I look at lamplight through the leaves  
While he mooches along with tail up and snout down,  
Getting a secret knowledge through the nose  
Almost entirely hidden from my sight.  
  
We stand while he's enraptured by a bush  
Till I can't stand our standing any more  
And haul him off; for our relationship  
Is patience balancing to this side tug  
And that side drag; a pair of symbionts  
Contented not to think each other's thoughts.  
  
What else we have in common's what he taught,  
Our interest in shit. We know its every state  
From steaming fresh through stink to nature's way  
Of sluicing it downstreet dissolved in rain  
Or drying it to dust that blows away.  
We move along the street inspecting shit.  
  
His sense of it is keener far than mine,  
And only when he finds the place precise  
He signifies by sniffing urgently  
And circles thrice about, and squats, and shits,  
Whereon we both with dignity walk home  
And just to show who's master I write the poem.

Howard Nemerov