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FARNSWORTH WRIGHT, Editor.

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## THE WORM-KING

by DONALD WANDREI

In a fabulous land, in a fabulous time,  
 There lived and there ruled on a crumbling throne  
 A worm that was born of the deep sea-slime,  
 Whose white fat folds were covered with grime,  
 And it ruled alone.  
 Not a creature lived in all the land,  
 And the little red eyes in the serpent's head  
 Saw only a realm of wet black sand  
 And the slimy things of the slimy dead  
 Of its cold sea-tomb.  
 Not a thing disputed the lordly worm  
 Where it lived and ruled in the endless gloom,  
 Nor ever a hand caressed its fat;  
 Through its foul dead realm were it ever to squirm,  
 All it would find was a plump drowned rat  
 And dead men's bones.  
 As deathless and old as the deathless sea,  
 As deathless as ever a worm can be,  
 And the worm is king for eternity,  
 It reigned on its multiple thrones.  
 But the musty tale can never be told  
 Of the realm that rose from stale sea-waves,  
 Of the white worm-king and the fat white fold,  
 Of the pulpy head that never grows old,  
 For the tale is the grave's.