

In Praise of Donkeys

by [Angela Alaimo O'Donnell](#) in the [November 2023](#) issue

What does a donkey know of consciousness?

The sweet taste of carrots, the soft caress
of a child who loves him, if he is blessed
to be owned by those who know his worth.

One of the innocent creatures of earth
who eats no meat, who sheds no blood,
he walks in peace, through field and mud.

Though burdened by human wish and want,
he does not begrudge it. He is a fount
of patience, pilgrim who knows the way
without a map. He does not stray
from the righteous path. Night and day
he is the self he's meant to be,
dear body he inhabits but can't see.