

## ALL I WANT

I love the dark and solitude, when no one can see me,  
When all the civilised people go, wild beasts my company.  
Creatures that eye me warily, yet show healthy respect,  
They too know that I'm not their kind, I'm different from the rest.

Yet these animals, these insects, don't seem to feel the need,  
To victimise or torture me, bring me to my knees.  
In their eyes there is no sympathy or superior distaste,  
No reason then, to patronise, to ridicule or chase.  
Just natural acceptance of my bent, ungainly form,  
A live and let live attitude, "treat as you find" the norm.

Thirsty, I hobble over to the metal cup on the chain,  
Curl up in the fountain, wonder why I have no name  
Or no one who'd care to use it, to pass the time of the day,  
Or, even if I could form words, or have anything to say.

I settle down to ponder an existence I'll never know  
Where I'm straight and tall and handsome, with a mother who loves me so  
And I conjure up an image of a caring beautiful wife  
I'd never take for granted my perfect, normal life.

Well dressed, well mannered, grateful, I know I'd never be,  
Cruel and disdainful, to unfortunates such as me  
And my perfectly formed children, would know that it's a sin  
To take others at face value, for real beauty lies within  
Academia and etiquette I'd plant firmly in their minds  
Teach them, to themselves and all living things, it's important to be kind.

*Maureen Mallett Liverpool*