

Rose of Jericho

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Organ Exhibit at Wilson Elementary

Those must be the kind mom has.
Two black turtle shells.
The kind she makes when she
swings on the porch when she
swings in a dress when she swings
with a glass and a book and a
smile and a
Marlboro.

Hallmark

Occasion

Please join us for a formal brunch
so that we may properly thank you
for your invaluable contribution.
Come enjoy croissants, coffee, and
company with the first year hopefuls
who dissected your mother,
your grandfather, maybe even your son

but really just our patient,
zipped inside a plastic bag,
pumped full of embalming fluid,
waxy and bloated and malleable
in death.

Come, get to know the students
who got to know your daughter,
who cut outward from her jugular
in the hollow where her collarbones meet,
then down her sternum, cracking her chest
and spreading her lungs,
peeling back flesh like gift wrap to reveal
the rotting heart that loved you.

Come and pick the brains of the people
who sawed the skull of your father,
icy flecks of bone and blood
that sting their skin while they
discuss a possible name,
a possible cause,
a possible specialty.



Key Terms

DNA:
/noun/, dē en ā/

a template to guide your decay; a template to guide
Your decay

Mother Sequoiias

Key Terms

The visceral creatures encompass the earth,
drawing water and food into their gut tubes,

transforming cold winter light
into sugar that feeds
the bugs and the beasts.

They are widely separated,
ancient and venerable,
but always capable of

affliction,
capable of connection,
Capable of unconscious
and involuntary activities.

Fire Ants Behhead Rival Queen

They scour the dirt for a gelatinous prize,
kidnapping glorified in the hunt

for larvae eggs. They boast of their winnings,
a clear offering that rests on their

exoskeleton, sensory hairs revel
in the weight of the unborn.

Sometimes two colonies team up
for additional protection,

finding strength in numbers
and a shared sense of ruthless villainy

or more accurately primal apathy,
an inability to feel anything

beyond hunger, lust, a mindless pursuit
of survival which really just means power.

Only now they have two queens
and one decision to make—

which mother will lose her head?

Rose of Jericho

Are you still alive when your
metabolism slows down to zero—

offspring stops moving so you
curl into a ball,

hair dries into kindling when
you stop drinking water,

trapped in the sand and the
wind whips you daily,

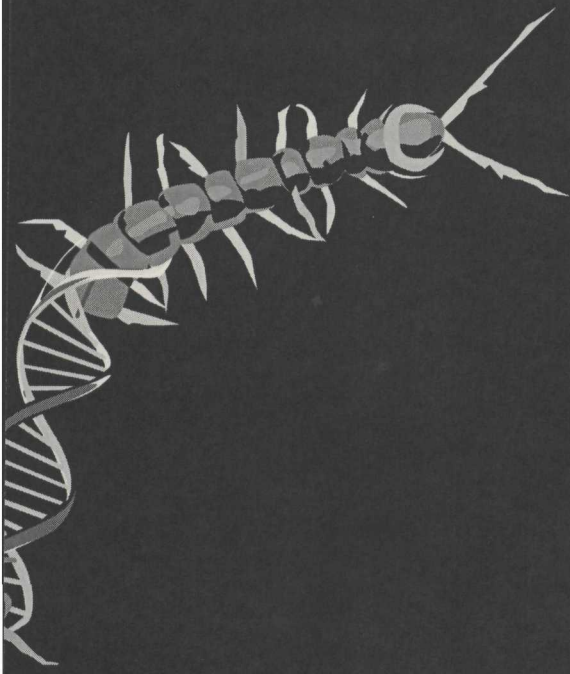
skin sloughs off your body and
you crumble to your bones,

can't move an inch so you lose
track of time?

The answer appears when your
roots find a drop—

You open back up, your hair
grows green and thick,

and you learn to tolerate
obliteration.



Key Terms

DNA:

/noun/, dē en ā/

Unsolicited instructions; you'll be just like her

14 Terrifying Things That Shouldn't Exist in Nature

Spiders that play
dead plants come back to
life leached by the parasite on a
tongue that imitates a human
screech of a barn owl in the
nighttime predators that kill in the sunless
depths of the ocean
currents that sweep away
children diagnosed with terminal
illness from a bullet
ant that attacks full grown
humans that kill
people who hurt
animals that eat
spiders who play
dead.

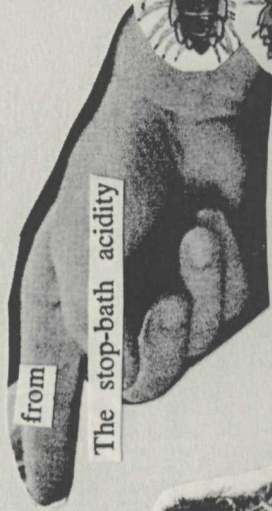
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casts a shadow on

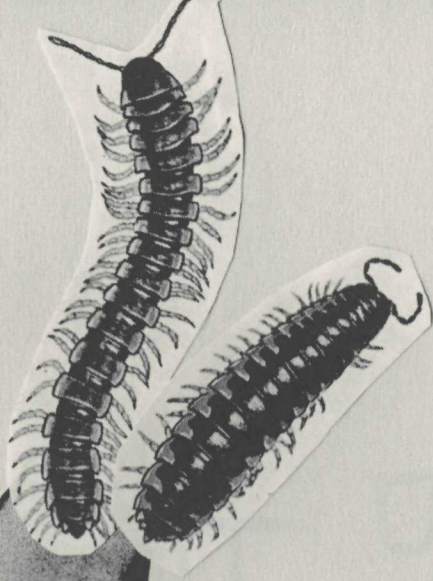
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farth-er and farth-er



from

The stop-bath acidity

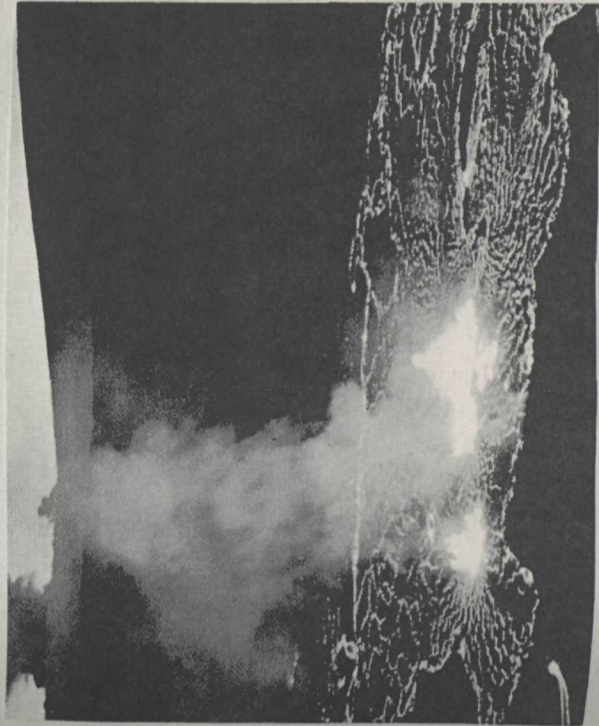


I want to wake up in the morn-ing,

STAR-BELLIED

and

GOLDEN



14 Terrifying Things That Shouldn't Exist in Nature

Feeding Behavior

Tapeworms are the simplest animals with a solid body

and a hollow brain.

They can survive without

a mouth, without eyes, without a circulatory system.

They scavenge for bits of decay, absorbing life directly

from the intestine

of the cow who is

always tired

always thin

always hungry.

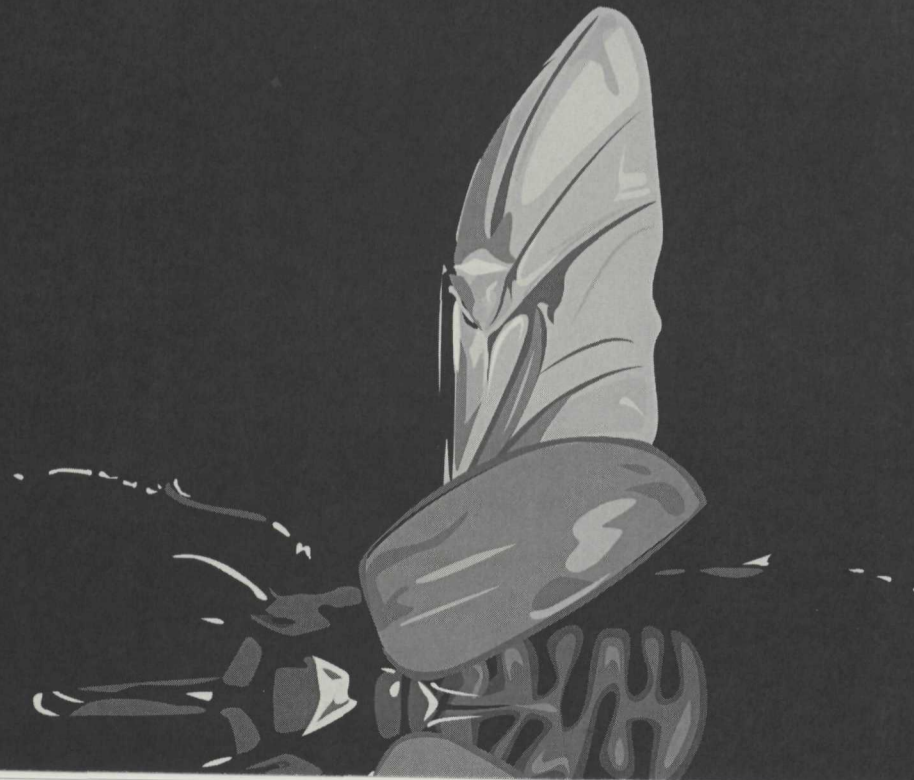
They know to lay their eggs in the waste that is

now on the grass,

where their young can feed on

a plant until another cow grazes.

Key Terms



Key Terms

DNA:

/noun/, də en ā/

twisted life; snaking ladders; coiling commandment

Vision Exam

Key Terms

The outer layer is a tough tissue that forms the whites of the eye— She must have been terrified.

The middle layer is dark and rich, filled with a pigment that determines— Her eyes were so blue.

The inner layer is sensitive to light, an opening in the iris that allows— She had no way of knowing.

The optic disk contains no rods or cones— He was in her blind spot.

The fatty tissue cushions the eye and helps to prevent shock— I can still picture her face.

Rose of Jericho



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