

the naked eye may send

derived from The Mushroom, Edible and Otherwise by M. E. Hard

The spores are the seeds of the mushroom. They are of various sizes and shapes, with a variety of surface markings. They are very small, as fine as dust, and invisible to **the naked eye**, except as they are seen in masses on the grass, on the ground, or on logs, or in a spore print. It is the object of every fungus to produce spores. Some fall on the parent host or upon the ground. Others are wafted away by every rise of the wind and carried for days and finally settle down, it **may be**, in other states and continents from those in which they started. Millions perish because of not finding a suitable resting place. Those spores that do find a favorable resting-place, under right conditions, will begin to germinate by **send**ing out a slender thread-like **filament** or hyphæ, which at once branches out in search of food material, and which always forms a more or less felted mass, called mycelium. When first formed the hyphæ are continuous and ramify through the nourishing substratum from which there arises afterward a spore-bearing growth known as the sporocarp or young mushroom. This vegetative part of the fungus is usually hidden in the soil, or in decayed wood, or vegetable matter. In Figure 3 is a representation of the mycelium of the small pear-shaped puff-ball with a number of small white knobs marking the beginning of the puff-ball. The mycelium exposed here is very similar to the mycelium of all mushrooms. In the pore-bearing genera the hymenium lines the vertical pores; in **teeth**-bearing fungi it lines the surface of each tooth, or is spread out over the smooth surface of the Stereum.

The development of the spores is quite interesting. The young basidia as seen in Figure 2 are filled with a granular protoplasm. Soon small projections, called sterigma (plural, sterigmata), make their appearance on the ends of the basidia and the protoplasm passes into them. Each projection or sterigma soon swells at its extremity into a bladder-like body, the young spore, and, as they enlarge, the protoplasm of the basidium is passed into them. When the four spores are full grown they have **consumed** all the protoplasm in the basidium. The spores soon separate by a **transverse** partition **and** fall off. All spores of the Hymenomycetous fungi are arranged and produced in a similar manner, with their spore-bearing surface exposed early in life by the **rupture** of the universal veil.

the naked eye may send

a lament bearing teeth

to consume the verse

and rupture the veil

ABOUT THE POEM & AUTHOR

“the naked eye may send” was created from *The Mushroom, Edible and Otherwise* by M. E. Hard (1908). About the poem and the process of composing it, Deborah-Zenha Adams writes:

My process for erasure poems is not particularly interesting, and probably not particularly original. I begin by selecting a few pages from any piece of text. I scan them for strong nouns and verbs, and I also look for compound words or words-within-words that might yield an unexpected turn to the poem. There is usually one word or phrase that becomes the core of the work; once I find that, the poem reveals itself. *The Mushroom, Edible and Otherwise* seemed like the sort of text that would veer off in a direction different from fiction works. Sure enough, “naked eye” jumped out immediately.

Deborah-Zenha Adams is the author of *All the Blood Relations* (Ballantine Books 1996), *All the Dirty Cowards* (Silver Dagger Mysteries 2001), and {This Tale is True} (Oconee Spirit Press 2018). Her work has appeared in *Adelaide Literary Magazine*, *Dead Mule School of Southern Literature*, *Orion*, *Sheila-Na-Gig*, *Scapegoat Review*, and elsewhere. She lives in Tennessee and can be found online at deborah-adams.com.

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