

PITY THE POOR PUFFBALL

Pity the poor puffball, the saddest mushroom of them all.
No pores, no gills, no cap, no stem – nothing but a simple ball –
A mass of dusty spores is all –
They know that when they're found,
They're gonna get kicked around.
Emerging overnight obese and obvious,
Eyed from a distance on a lawn,
Like a magnet the child is drawn,
To the lowly mystery,
Inspiring some curiosity and much disgust,
How sad to suffer children's laughter,
Eliciting the foot response --
Hardly thinking what the beast could be –
And why it appeared so suddenly.
The simple thing is kicked to smithereens,
Sending clouds of spores to the heavens --
An extremely satisfying youthful pleasure.

But maybe the puffball is
The most clever mushroom of them all.
This ball of spores a sneaky trick,
Engorged to be noticed by agents of dispersal,
Like ravaging kids who come along
And kick the bloated organ
So billions of spores find a new rotten home.

We'll never know about the puffball,
A mystery of nature, perhaps not sad at all,
But clever in extreme simplicity,
Its ultimate achievement just to be found.
No matter! – they have survived so long.
Listen to your mother's warning: Be careful!
"Don't get that stuff in your eyes.
It will make you blind."

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