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The False Morel's Formula

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The False Morel's Formula

They've isolated the toxin of the False Morel, edible for centuries with only an occasional unexplainable fatality. Picture this crumbly runt of a fungus with its crisp, fried-flour skin and knobby demeanor, looking a little like an apple fritter. The volatile poison (and suspected carcinogen) the same unpronounceable chemical manufactured for Apollo missions to the moon: A rocket fuel.

Consider the mushroom hunter, bypassing the Warted Puffball, the creamy Bear's-head Coral and even
peppery gilled Angel-wings
to nibble, instead,

upon the raw
bonnet of the False Morel.
Bite by bite each custard piece
eases toward the high
threshold of toxicity.
There are no symptoms

until the body's valves and pistons
quicken, and the hapless morel
connoisseur, glutted with manifold oxides,
is propelled,
disgorged and flaming toward
the cold, blank face of night.