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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 Warty
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.