

MATTHEW ROHRER

# The Ants

Nothing is more important to the ant  
whose exoskeleton has been breached  
by mushroom spores that are now  
controlling his nervous system  
and compelling him to climb to a high leaf  
only to die and release the spores  
over the whole forest  
than this poem about his sad plight.

Otherwise his life is meaningless.  
Forage. Chew. Recognize by scent.  
Abdication of the will. A huge wind  
that comes and sweeps his fellows  
off the grass. When he dies up there  
in the treetops the mushroom grows  
right out of his head and breaks open  
lightly dusting the afternoon.

Everything he thought he was here  
on Earth to do has been left undone.  
Through the trees  
the spores move on their sinister ways.  
I put down the science magazine written  
for elementary school kids  
in which I have briefly disappeared.

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