

**A Mushroom Array**  
**John Grey**

It rains then  
the temperature drops,  
the chills suck mushrooms  
from the earth—  
red-spotted umbrellas,  
grey skulls,  
poke through grass,  
leaf mulch,  
decaying wood,  
tree roots, some edible, some toxic,  
all sudden as wind change  
in New England Octobers—  
the squirrels avoid them,  
birds don't nibble,  
it's left to the humans  
to bend and gather,  
to harvest this abrupt plenty—  
no daily watch  
through changing seasons,  
no wait for more fattening,  
mushrooms don't need to ripen—  
they already are.

John Grey is an Australian poet, US resident. He is recently published in the *Homestead Review*, *Harpur Palate*, and *Columbia Review* with work upcoming in the *Roanoke Review*, the *Hawaii Review*, and *North Dakota Quarterly*.