

GYPSY MOTH CATERPILLARS

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We smashed them on the soles of our shoes.
They crawled up and down our steep driveway
leaving the gray-green smear of their feces.
My mom forbade Grandpa his morning walk,
sure he'd slip. All night we heard them
leaf-munch like something out of Spielberg
so smushing them served them right.
We bet on the color of their guts— a pop
of jewel green, ooze of ruby, splat of gray.
Our dads taped adhesive to the tree trunks,
but the lucky ones climbed over the stuck victims.
Only when a lady visited the neighbors
did we all look up with her
at the July branches, bare as winter.