

Mercury

Once a child swallowed the dense poison (his mother must never have told him that this was dangerous) and died. Nothing to cringe at though. It was a death characterized not by lengthiness and agony (the words are synonymous), but by conciseness and wonder. His father had a jarful of it in the garage, amongst the paints, thinners, nails, hammers and cobwebs. The first time dad poured the silver colored mercury into Billy's cupped hands, he was frightened and dropped the thick liquid onto the floor, where it scattered 360° in tiny little balls. But after a few minutes, the chemical element became an object of fascination, and soon, his friend. It was cool as it lay still in the palms of his hands, absorbing the cold temperature in his room like steel. Billy blew into the liquid, creating a tiny whirlpool, careful not to let it overflow, for if it escaped, it could never be retrieved. Billy giggled as he imagined the look on his mother's face when he would greet her with a metallic smile at the end of her hard day. He sunk deep into his carpet and thought of the trees outside and the sour fruits they bore. He turned his head to his right, and saw a good sized spider nearing his eye. He thought "Mercury!" and schemed to put the damn arachnid into the jar where about a tablespoonful of it remained so he could see it suck up destruction.