

Mitosis

(The second lesson in Botany)

ALMA MILLER

The nucleus was resting in her cell;
Membrane, nucleolus, net and gel
In silence lay reposed;
And as she slept, there came a mystic dream
In which a being, from some power supreme,
The facts of life disclosed.

She dreamed her family name was changed to Phase,
That she would many, many offspring raise;
Her eldest son was Pro;
His chromatin had formed a long spireme;
She thought it just a tiny bit extreme,
And sometimes told him so.

Her second son was Meta; he declared
He did not want a spireme, so he paired
His chromosomes. They stand
Together at the spindle like a troop;
The "Mother Chromosomes" he calls this group;
Each fastened to a strand.

Her daughter Ana looked a little jaded,
The cytoplasm around her rather faded;
Her chromosomes were parted;
She called them "Daughters" when they left the spindle;
And then the very fibers seemed to dwindle,
And a cell plate was started.

Now Te and Lo were twins, she called them Telo;
Their chromosomes looked like a mass of jello,
A membrane formed between;
One had each characteristic of the other,
And that they were exactly like their mother
Was plainly to be seen.

And then calamity upon her fell;
She was no longer in a single cell,
Had no identity;
Pro-Meta-Ana-Telophase had changed her
'Til she was like two babies in a manger;
Two nuclei was she.