

Morgan, Edwin, 1920-: [from Collected Poems (1996)]

Volume

The Second Life 1968

Morgan, Edwin, 1920-:

The White Rhinoceros (1990) [from Collected Poems (1996

'Rare over most of its former range'

Webster's Third New International Dictionary

1 The white rhinoceros was eating phosphorus!
2 I came up and I shouted Oh no! No! No!--
3 you'll be extinct in two years! But he shook his ears
4 and went on snorting, knee-deep in pawpaws,
5 trundling his hunger, shrugged off the tick-birds,

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6 rolled up his sleeves, kicked over an anthill,
7 crunched, munched, wonderful windfall,
8 empty dish. And gored that old beat-up tin tray
9 for more, it stuck on his horn,
10 looked up with weird crown on his horn
11 like a bear with a beehive, began to glow---
12 as leerie lair bear glows honeybrown---
13 but he glowed
14 white and
15 bright and
16 the safety-catches started to click in the thickets
17 for more. Run, holy hide---take up your armour---
18 Run---white horn, tin clown, crown of rain-woods,
19 venerable shiner! Run, run, run!

20 And thunders glowing like a phantom
21 through the bush, beating the guns
22 this time, but will he always
23 when his only camouflage
24 is a world of white?

25 Save the vulnerable shiners.
26 Watch the phosphorus trappers.
27 Smash the poisonous dish.