On one of my customary morning walks in mid-June, I glimpsed gold through the fine veil of mist enshrouding the forest. I was deeply curious, and I went to see just what had cast such beautiful and pronounced color among the shades of grey.

In a soft clearing, I found what had drawn me in. There stood a small gathering of large, perfect golden mushrooms. As an amateur mycologist, I was able to identify them at a glance as a species of Amanita. After careful research, including a spore print and consultations with others familiar with these mushrooms, I was able to definitively identify them as A. Muscaria var. Guessowii, a species I knew to possess psychoactive effects.

I returned to the place where I had found these mushrooms, and collected them, using a mesh gathering bag. I brought them home, cleaned them thoroughly, and dehydrated them. After dehydration, I kept two large caps, and a smaller cap. The rest, I sealed in plastic and tucked away for future use.

This subspecies of Amanita Muscaria is known to have higher concentrations of muscimol, one of the active chemicals in the mushroom. I searched for days to find a safe method of preparation, and I found that the most common means of preparation is to brew a tea with the dried fragments of the mushroom. I chose this as my method of preparation, as it was reported as the most effective.

One evening a bit later in the month, I set out to make my tea. I used a diffuser, and filtered water over the desiccated fragments of two of the larger caps. This was ineffective; the filtered water had a vague shade to it, though it was nowhere near as dark as it should have been.

I spent some time puzzling out a means of making my tea stronger. I poured the water out of the diffuser, and I placed the now-sodden and wholly unappealing bits of mushroom onto a plate, leaving them as I cleaned my little-used coffee pot, and searched for the old and disused filters I knew to exist somewhere within the darkest recesses of my kitchen.

I eventually found them, and I nestled the fragments of my mushroom within, and I brewed my tea using the coffee pot. I found this to be far more effective. I repeated this process four times, filtering the water through again and again, and, when I was finished, the color was a dark reddish-brown. I poured myself a fair bit of the tea, and scooped out the now-disintegrating mushroom.

The tea tasted pleasant to me; earthy and deep, with a faint bitterness to it. I had no trouble drinking about half of it. After I had finished the greater part of the tea I had poured, I chewed some of the slimy, unappealing bits of mushroom.
After consuming the Amanita, I went to my bedroom, where I arranged things to my aesthetic appeal. I then laid on my bed, and listened to music (my album was In Flames’s The Jester Race; so chosen because I find myself completely comfortable and relaxed when submerged in the majesty captured within these songs).

In the better part of the reports I had read about the effects of this mushroom, nausea was listed prominently. I have been cursed with a weak stomach, so I was preparing to throw up if need be, and preserve my mindset in the unpleasant process. Unexpectedly, I felt little physical illness, and nothing so pronounced as nausea.

From a glance at the clock, about forty minutes had passed from initial consumption. I sat up, slowly. I felt moderate vertigo, which is not uncommon at any time for me.

I felt calm, and high, though very tired and lethargic. I closed my eyes, and I saw CEVs, though not terribly pronounced. The shapes and patterns had an earthy, soft, surreal, almost ‘mushy’ appearance to them, and they shifted only when I moved my physical self, or so it seemed.

I was rather enjoying myself, and I eventually came to the decision that I would voyage to the kitchen to finish what may be left of the tea, and the smaller of the caps; placed conveniently on top of the coffee pot, if need to consume more of the Amanita arose.

As I walked to the kitchen, I found that my depth-perception and balance were badly affected. My surroundings had a distinctly two-dimensional appearance to them, and my peripheral vision had dropped away. I took a moment to rest against the wall, because I felt as though I was going to lose my balance, or possibly consciousness.

In a few minutes time, however, I felt well again, and found myself in the kitchen. It was difficult to think clearly; my mind was enshrouded in impassable fog. It took me some time to realize what I was there for, and, in fact, where I was. I gazed out the screen door, and, I remember feeling as though I all of my senses were heightened, though disorganized. The improbable aroma of lavender hung around me.

I wasted a bit more of my time trailing my hands over the countertop, which felt almost like silk to me. I then finished what was left of the tea, and approximately a quarter of the cap I had left.

I leaned against the kitchen table, entangled in nonsensical thought and unable to perceive my state of mind. I felt the need to lie down again, and I did so.

I was salivating at this point, which was to be expected; it was controllable, and I admittedly found it pleasant. Besides this, drowsiness, minor lethargy, and general discomfort, I felt physically well.

I couldn’t recall bringing myself back to my bedroom, though there I was. I laid on my bed once again, attempting and failing to cling to my thoughts.

I called a close male friend of mine, knowing I should tell him what I had done, as he becomes concerned when I do not speak to him first before partaking in unknown substances. I do not recall what was discussed, only that everything seemed to repeat itself on an endless, maddening loop. It is at about this time that things became deeply unpleasant for me.
I fell into what I am only able to describe as a state of delirious semi-consciousness. I recall little of the events created within my mind, and they are still being revealed to me, in fragments. The visions were, as it was, deeply unpleasant and traumatic, though they remain largely unknown.

It was not until several hours had passed that I awoke, disoriented, badly frightened, and in pain, though in my own mind. My hands and lips were numb, and I continued to have difficulty focusing my vision. I am not eager to have another experience with Amanitas in the near future, as this continues to haunt me months later.

In addition to being traumatic, this experience caused minor physiological problems, including an inability to discern separate tastes well, or focus my vision. These effects, as well as a slight difficulty in regulating my body temperature, especially when cold, have remained since.

I found, a month later when my friend visited, that the call had never occurred. I vaguely mentioned the experience to him, in the context of what was discussed during our phone call (which I could not recall), and he was highly confused. This frightened me, and led me to go into the call log in my cell phone. I had never called him, and he had never called me.

In retrospect, I don’t believe I was entirely prepared for this experience, and I certainly should not have consumed as much as I did; even having cast the tattered remnants of my good judgement into the deepest pools of my mind, I should have known better than to do so.

[Reported Dose: “6.3 grams g ingested in a tea as well as in a desiccated form”]