

Thorny Observation

by Phyllis Papineau

Recently, I pulled a painful thorn from my hand. Why does something as beautiful as a rose have such miserable barbs? And this morning I was picking blackberries, again with those clawing spines. Why does something that tastes so good have thorns? The dictionary explanation is that plants have thorns to protect them from being eaten by animals. However, the Bible suggests something more sinister. The Book of Genesis says that thorns were created as punishment for the sin of Adam and Eve. Another biblical reference is the crown of thorns placed on the head of Jesus at his crucifixion.

When I was young my grandfather told me the story of Androcles who befriended a lion by pulling a thorn from its paw. Today we use the thorn to describe a source of irritation. For example the hijab has become a thorny issue for the government. One might suggest an annoying person is a thorn in one's side. I guess in life we must put up with a little pain in order to enjoy something as beautiful as a rose or savour the flavours of the delectable blackberry.