

Ecdysis

Ecdysis is the shedding of the outer layer of skin,
A process that the burlesque dancer
(*Saltator burlesca*) undergoes.
As the dancer approaches this phase,
Her outer skin shines like it's made of crystals.
She basks in the light;
The burlesque dancer actually becomes more active
During the time of ecdysis.
A gleam appears in her eyes, heavily lashed and lined.
It is time for the first piece to be shed.
She bites on her finger to initiate,
A sharp motion, followed by a gentle sliding
Of the skin off one arm, then the other.
She undulates to a rhythm,
Circling her hips
And feeling her body with fingertips.
Scientists hypothesize the contact
Helps with the process.
There is a small opening on her back,
A flap of the old skin.
She tugs until the largest piece comes off.
Then she bends to remove the skin on her legs.
It seems stuck on her foot.
She smiles,
And it pops right off.
No one knows whether the pause was intentional.
As the last pieces are shed,
We see the burlesque dancer in her new skin,
Iridescent and smooth,
Glowing with new life.
She bows and takes her leave
Until she is ready to return
To begin the metamorphosis again.

