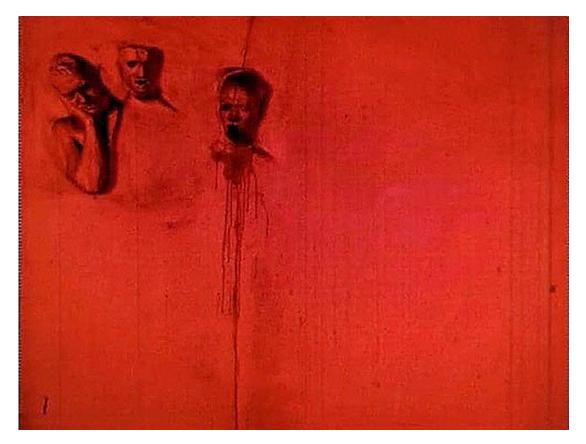
Cancer

by **Guy Walker** (November 2019)



Six Men Getting Sick (still), David Lynch, 1967

In normal times we can expect obedient squadrons, in silent faithfulness, to do their duty in repairing the ingredient that bears the codes; the daily damage to the chains of information that denote us and exactly what we are. Remote from us, forgotten, their activity; they're blithe and automatic over years, intelligencers (docile engineers), all working with a perfect industry.

We can accept our programmed obsolescence

and Hayfleck's limiting when ripeness comes; harder to baulk at such guessed-at senescence when Deaths' promised full-stop resolves our sums and consummates our grammar. A known end, to a parametered-type mind, will lend resistance to (without it, atrophied and shapeless) sense. For not to know we die, to be unparsed, would terrify; to mean at all needs context to succeed.

But when, awry, a strand of DNA, missteps, in absent mind, to lose the plot, then is unleashed (that unknown, secret day) a disinhibited 'immortal.' Not inclined to toe the line this megalo obeys blind evolution's rules, and so runs riot; a renegade, an order-trasher, hell-bent on self-promotion; vandal who, unschooled, conducts a vulgar palace coup, And shows himself a boorish party-crasher.

Abandoning the logos and its codes, illiterate of sense, a tumour juts its snout into a library, discommodes systems of form and information put in order by design. An ignorant Yahoo, gross presence, strayed abroad with scant regard for sense or system, overturning the delicately loaded stacks that house our tales. How guess what world-mistake aroused this blinkered drunk, so wholly undiscerning?

Precarious person is alloyed with flesh,

a farting, salty livestock; animal whose pleasures, intimately, are enmeshed, whose fierce and briny loves, hold us in thrall so joyously. We husband it, our beast, until the siege-craft of this arriviste, mole-like, surprises us inside our keep from unexpected quarters of ourselves; our person's home wherein he delves, to sabotage our balance and to reap

the cruellest harvest from distress. We learn a queasy intuition from this Fifth Column; a knowledge we discern as inescapable and that comes with our plight—when fragile cells are undermined, our selves, and what we like to call our mind's attempted too. There's barely separation between our person and our person. A great miracle being fouled will bring dismay and, in this case, a double consternation.

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