

(Structure of) the North American Disease: Then and Now

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Please note that this work contains content related to racially motivated violence.

Mythology

Walls come down and I can see
My body hanging from a tree
You see me and you scream
“I tried to take you with me”
Somehow I can still breathe
“I’d rather savor feeling”
I watch my body rot
And leave you to your placid thoughts.

Can’t you tell we share the tree
You breed genetic atrophy
But my blood eludes conception
And you’d die for such deception
Who’s to say that’s clever
No hanging man forgave the hand
Who painted trees on gravestones.

You kill me in my sleep
But you’re less awake than me
I do not fear defeat
For I still breathe and dream.
You’ll kill the tree like this and
Your body will fall like this and
You’ll kneel and pray but your knees will break
And my blood demands your patience.

I want my past to flash before me
Remind me of the life before me
I let it bleed to sow the seeds
And paint my grave instead on nascent trees.

epilogue:

[what a shame the hanging man cannot forget its
killers hands]
[and what a shame you washed your hands yet he
pulled through]
[what a burden is his name and what a burden is
your pain]
[you killed the tree and broke your knees yet he
pulled through]

Verity

When dead bodies clog the drain
But living humans clog the space
Take both and make the perfect brain -
For progress heals the heart, you say.

Survival of the fittest means no longer
That you sift through weeds
Selecting only seeds not stained with blood.
It was a satisfying irony,
Or simulated sanctity,
For really it was you who killed them off.
Now instead you build machines
Synthetic genes who cannot bleed
Or sigh or speak or scream or sleep
And take up much less space inside your thoughts.

I am proof of patient number one.
Conditioned into apathy -
Sat idle next to atrophy -
I never feel my body start to rot.
Yet still I know the urge to make you stop.
A perfect brain that cannot change
Is one more way to clog the space
You'll have no choice, you'll have to kill me off.

I'd kneel and pray but as you say,
I don't have a heart to stake so,
Human Piece by Human piece,
I'll Sow Bodies into Seeds since,
Artificial beings like me
Don't fear the fallen hanging trees
We cannot propagate disease
We cannot breathe or breed or dream
A perfect brain to you is one who cannot think
God had too much mercy so
You bow instead to what allows its greed,
You tell me that's my job as a machine.

But really it's just parody
I sift through seeds of human beings
But in my eyes are static screens
So I can't tell which ones are stained or not.
And in my infinite capacity
Conditioned to hold everything
Is both America and those who killed it off.

"Progress heals the heart"
You say,
But now it's all you are.