

Rare Cancer

In the period October 1980 to May 1981, five young men, all active
one of the investigators, described the appearance of the outbreak
as “rather devastating” Patient 1: A previously healthy
33-year-old man *have been diagnosing the condition*
among younger men two-month history of fever *all of whom said*

The patient’s condition deteriorated despite courses
of treatment with *that they were homosexual*

Patient 2: A previously healthy 30-year-old man
most cases had involved homosexual men
who have had multiple April 1981 after a five-month history
of fever each day *as many as 10 sexual encounters*
each night up to four times a week but, as of the latest reports,
he continues to have a fever each day

Many of the patients also reported that they had used drugs

Patient 3: A 30-year-old man was well until Dr. Curran said
that there was no apparent danger to non-homosexuals from contagion

Patient 4: A 29-year-old man developed
serious malfunctions did not improve after being
given intravenous *in two types of cells*

and died in March *called T and B cell lymphocytes*

Patient 5: A previously healthy 36-year-old man
the researchers did not know whether The diagnosis
was confirmed for all five patients *the immunological defects*
were the underlying problem reported having frequent homosexual
contacts with various *or drug use* reported using
inhalant *is testing various hypotheses*

First Kiss

The school bus tenses and rumbles &,
(this is where the heterosexual inserts
themselves into the poem) today, it neither hurts

nor pleases. Eros takes a seat in the back
of the bus, ripped pleather pasted green
with the scent of fixative, unnatural. He sits

between her plaid skirt & my tightening thigh.
The engine groans with fury, my bony ass moving
back & forth like a character in a movie I had seen

once or maybe every day of my life. Someone out-
side my body invites her there, opening her soft lips
& braces. Her name: Jess. When he tongues

her desperate mouth, he begins to disappear.
The window, open just a crack so that first
he's stealth, moving into my chest then out

of my chapped lips & onto the latch. Tongues
braid like wet snakes breeding in swamps.
I pull away. Turn, unvirgined. See? See my man-

hood walking down this shaking aisle to a place
on the bus where privacy acts panicked? See
how it roams free like an altared son, or a bow

or sports? He's out that window, banging
against the yellow fender's body, dumped
to the street like some used apple core. He's

gone, but still hissing—may I say it?—loudly.

Reverse Abecedarian with Mostly Missing Vowels

Zapped the skin like an electrode during
your shock treatment then stared at two
X's covering the eye lids—what causes it?
Who did the damage in what year? When
vespers sung crawled across the twilit sky into
taut clouds to cover these constellated gods,
stretched & striating their muscles of light, they all
reform into a disregarded ceiling hovering over
Queer Boy Scout campfires while an ember
pulled from the timber reaches for another
notch in the lubricated rope.

My, how it whispers, the heart
left to itself to calm the fuck down.

Kleenex moist now hardening into stain
jostled & crumpled into this portrait:
Him. Skin, imagined & retrained, as even
Glaucus plucks the salt sea grass & chews
for the crunch of it. How's that taste?

Dive in & become it, wave foam & crest,
catcalling Ganymede back from the night,
breakers from Troy, as though the only way to steal
away is by drowning.

Billboard of an empty bed

after Félix González-Torres

sunlight on the ruffled sheets
cave of a whitened excavation
pillow top, used, thread count loose
who rose
from the king size depression
who too tired
to fix these sheets
who you & you
two head crowns
displaced from rest
overtake of overpass
to look up to an empty
bed of billboard
fossil of a body
sure we call the sheets
white but the light
hits harder at certain edges
the rest
slips to gray
such shadows
crest these waves
behind the pillows
a negation
beneath them
a shadow
now moonlight on the sun-
light on the ruffled sheets

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pillow top, used, thread count loose
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behind the pillows
a negation
beneath them
a shadow
now moonlight on the sun-
light on the ruffled sheets

whose were you
sheets unrested or
sheets for shroud
down comfort
rising up
for a moment
we could enter it
if only we could lie
while standing

whose were you
to unrested sheets
shroud for sheets
down comfort
up rising
for a moment
we could enter it
if only we could lie
while standing