Of Guilt, Suffering, and Cornbread

by Luna Corvus

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I

In the toilet
my pee
is blood.
It has a ghastly odor
like New Orleans
in a flood.

I am male white,
it is all my fault:
and worse.
From above the Dixie line,
they say
"You are a racist, you hate women,
Mexicans, teddy bears, Catholics
and cats"
"You deserve to suffer
and be locked in a vault

II

My table creaks
under the weight of poisonous crude
Everything is tainted
with FDA approved food.
My plate is filled with cholesterol
fat and toxin
I am too far gone
for Pravacol.™

I have cancer.
Today it is in my skin.
Yesterday it filled my liver
which is rotten with it.
And the day before
my stomach
ached from it
there is no real answer.

My heart can hardly pump the thick blood
saturated with fat
and yellow plaque.
There are bubbles in it
filled with caustic compounds
so profound
that only an exotic test
will reveal its secrets.

On my bones.
nodules appear and disappear.
This has gone on for at least
a hundred and forty years.
It is a form of sarcoma
usually seen in
African-American males
sooner or later
my kidneys will fail.

My hair is falling out
from the disease in my
leukocyte tissue,
PBS had a show
about it.
The treatment is
a controversial issue.
No one survives; but if I do,
The Poverty Law Center
will sue.

III

There is a new pill
made from uranium
mono-phosphate crystals
extracted from Saddam Hussein's
weapons program and other
deadly toys.
It will cure much disease
and power

interstellar missiles; but
too valuable to give
to Southern boys.

I breathe racial hate
against cockatiels and parsnips, it is said.
Dixie men are all guilty
that is my certain fate.
Sealed in the genes along with tobacco smoke
turning my lungs to slate

IV

On TV I saw a woman cry
about her illness for
which there was no therapy.
In this country
the government
won't approve it anyway.
She will surely die.

It is my fault,
of this I know.
I owe,
reparations,
you see my ancestors wore fur
robbed banks
and fought for secession.
Now (they say) there is no tithe
for the cure
or dispensation
to be sure.

While the flesh is sick, pile it on
there is no end,
point the finger
at me and my kin,
The mind is pensive,
memories linger,
waiting for dawn around the bend

About the Author

Mr. Corvus is a descendant of Continental Celts and Indigenous Americans. Although his ancestors originally came from the area near Basse-Yutz, they migrated north and west ahead of the Roman advance, living in Ireland for a time then the mountains of western Virginia. Today he is a poet and lives with his wife in the Oklahoma hills not far from Younger Bend.