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Pathogen Textures

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[See table of contents](#)

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Pathogen Textures

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The parasite —
made gardens of cadavers
built fences around the motherland
reparations for good science.

A gangrene gardener, planting its sick
inside the calabash, wilting walls,
a passport's emblem.

banned from entry

She lifts the temperature gun from its holster
raises it to my forehead — I feel warm
a muffled voice behind the blue mask
you're good to go!

I pat my fro
the phantom bullet dissolves
into my smallest details.

When the hospitals denied
us a chance to wash the wilted cadaver
we prayed the most merciful would accept
her sodden soul regardless.

the West moves the bar
clamps you in a corner
builds a glass house,
watches through hazmat suits
as Johannesburg burns.

At Kotoka airport
a British Airways flight
full of fuming passengers
rush past a row of commandos
refuse to wait another hour for swab results
more parasites arrive in the Commonwealth.

We stay inside
alone with our thoughts;
the veiled, bearded onyx,
an undesirable roommate.

He pokes at your growing gut
through intravenous screens
feeds you footage of your genocide
waters the plastic begonias
obsessively scrubs your insecurities
with Clorox.

The parasite painted
over exposed whites
barely visible blacks.
Tried to erase a larger sickness
more gangrene, way more infectious.