

Susan Hobbs

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Animal Brains Animal Eyes

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A couple enjoys a feast of animal eyes. The man pops an eye from its socket with a small knife, and the woman helps herself from a dish. A servant refills their glasses of wine. The best eyes bulge moderately. They increase the sperm but can cause nausea and sluggish blood. They should be prepared with oregano and salt.¹

Why this painting?

It could be popping the eyes
trigger the brains
to belly the matter
that the heart minds
cinema of holes
plot of dreams
a duration lapsed in
hard or sluggish action

A room intones inertia
oily linen, empty bowls
geological throws cover a present
bogged in the right prefrontal cortex
the undulating nodes
the bulge still moderate
a room expanding into vivid
soundless day

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Bush and tree
ambiently near
a bench contemplating a door
to fold into or
mesmerized by the floor
the horizon of past and future
lying or standing you enter
to lie and suspend the truth
in dreamy contrast
so hazy on rising
lazy ego mistakes
the animal you love
no longer beside.

Another room reminds
pneumatic intimations
of what the painting wants
to be free of this...
colourfully removed
to summon another wall
in the melancholy market
the faculty of expulsion
the daily emergency of
waking up and being seen

1. Alixe Bovey, *Tacuinum Sanitatis: An Early Renaissance Guide to Health*, (London: Sam Fogg/Paul Holberton Publishing, 2005), 64.