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Asylum

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Abstract

The Hospital for Idiots and Imbeciles

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Asylum

by Lauro Palomba

The Hospital for Idiots and Imbeciles
once, the guide historically recalls
now scream and shackle free
these doleful corridors
of plaster and tiles
peeling, cracked, worn
rooms emptied of distress
still operable for nightly sport
haunted tours, paranormal fright

in this misnamed refuge
they caged them in
bewilderment, anguish, despair,
wire and stone
for laziness, egotism, greed
(themselves so upright);
for masturbation too
six obsessed variations thereof;
restless sexual manias
added to excitements of the mind
drugs, politics, religion
disappointments, desertions
menstrual derangement
novel reading, oh yes
on and on, demented, delirious
the sorry list of flaws;
a subtle theme, in a nutshell:
dissent and defiance



the correctives dutifully applied
imbalances redressed
egalitarian and liberally
kindly icepick lobotomies
heartfelt jolts of shock
bracing baths to burst the blues

how well they succeeded
at contriving their relief
effacing the afflicted
from house and street
counterfeiting death
never clueing in
where lunacy rooted and resided
where it always has
outside these walls