
POETRY | FALL 2018

Black is the Color

By **Richard Kravitz**

Anxiety and doctors' appointments
lots of each. I chatter to friends.
I feel like I'm under indictment.

Melanoma, a tumor of black stuff,
the same root as melancholy,
black bile, my sadness pressed into skin.

A thin melanoma, melanoma on a diet
isn't supposed to kill you
unless it's spread too thin
and dispersed
a mote in the eye
a spot on the liver.
Blackness can be beautiful
Blackness can be anywhere
Blackness can kill.

My blackness, my sadness
what am I to do about it?
My viscid oil, so underrepresented
by a skinny mole, an ebony splotch,
wants a full-body hue
an original sunburn,
not a drop of pigmented shame.
I don't want an ink spot
To malign me.

I learn new words
like fascia,
not related to fascism
or fascination,
although I might think about being
bludgeoned or bewitched.
Fascia is the thin sheath covering the muscle
in my forearm. "We'll cut down to the fascia
remove a quarter-size piece of skin,
the entire thickness of skin you understand,

and then cover it with a flap of adjacent skin.”

The thickness of removal is supposed to ensure
that the lethal thinness is fully excised
an overkill by depth and breadth
death prevention
my black interior benign
nothing to worry about.

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