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Semmelweis to Szent Rókus

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I've seen mankind made new by death and birth,
Yet remain whole, as if we're one great man
Composed of men, like Hobbes' Leviathan.
This hospital—Vienna—or the Earth—
Is as one body. We're its meat and mind,
The corpuscles that form its brawn and bone,
Those who well serve their function left alone,
The rogues dissolved; their husks are left behind.
Is being left the cost of being right?
Like those who burned affirming Earth revolved
You turned on me, and, seeing me a threat,
Consigned me to this social phagocyte
Where—Rókus knows—I won't accede, and yet
I'll be absorbed before I'll be absolved.

Daniel Galef's series
Imaginary Sonnets is
inspired by the 1888
collection of the same title
by Eugene Lee-Hamilton.
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