

# The White Disease

karel čapek

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in cooperation with

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text revision

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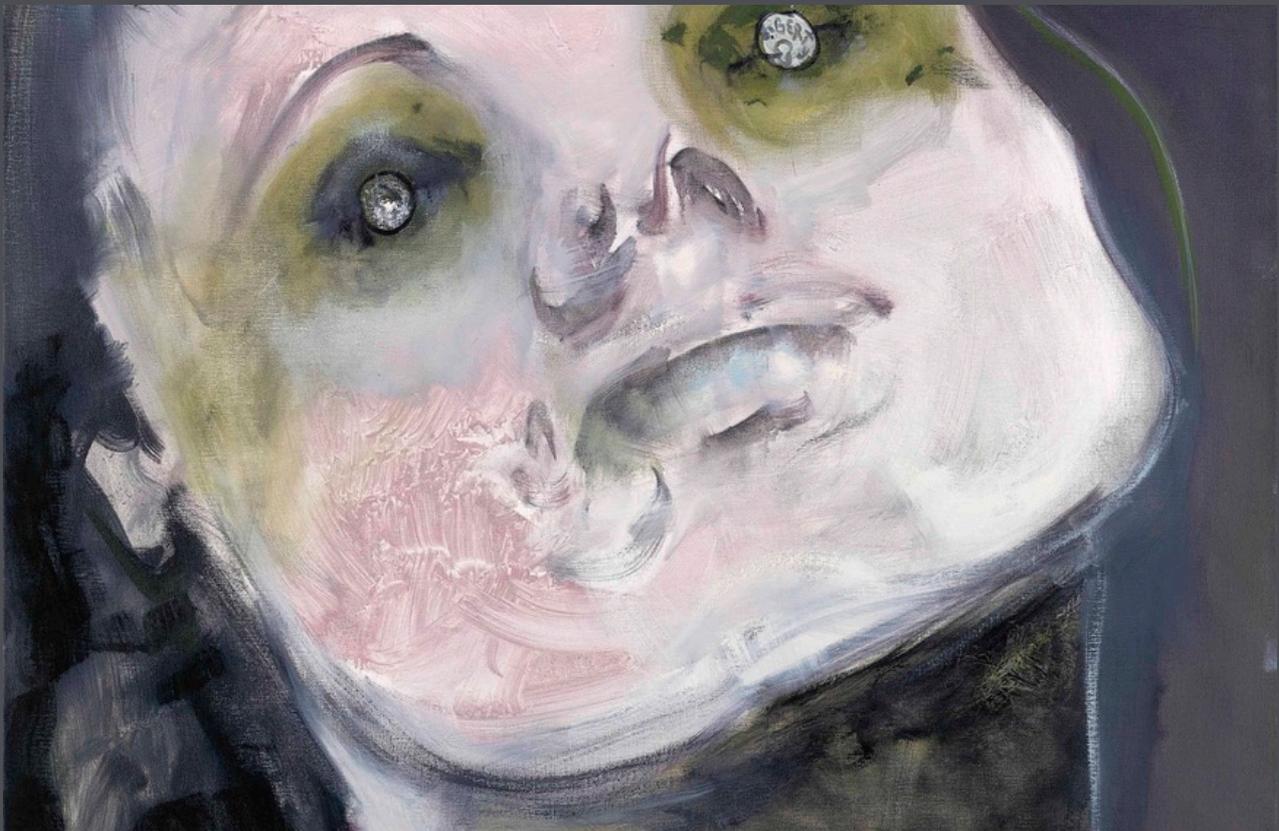
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**THE WHITE DISEASE** (Czech: Bílá nemoc) or **The White Plague** is a play written by Czech novelist Karel Čapek in 1937. Written at a time of increasing threat from Nazi Germany to Czechoslovakia. It was seen as a warning against the dangers of fascism, which was sweeping through Europe at that time. It turned out to be a very prophetic play, as German Nazi forces overran Czechoslovakia the following year. The peculiarity also lies in the fact that Karel Čapek died one year later in 1938 due to epidemic influenza.



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The White Plague portrays the human response to a tense situation in an unnamed country held in the grip of an incurable white disease, a form of leprosy. White plague is spreading in the country and elsewhere in Europe and is selectively killing off people above a certain age. Everywhere, the elderly are terrified. However, the government, led by a dictator **Marshal**, is busy preparing for a war and does not really care. This demagogue uses public hysteria over an epidemic to strengthen his grip on power, with only a humble but brilliant doctor **Galén** standing in his way.

The White Plague has a place in the pantheon of classic Czech literature. Although considered a classic, there have been very few successful revivals of the play. The text simply needs an imaginative director to reinterpret its relevance for a modern audience. I can imagine shifting the primary setting of the play, for example, to the current **coronavirus pandemic**.

A new adaptation of the play might not put the burden of the miraculous cure of the white plague on the shoulders of merely one physician. It may seek to portray other individuals contributing, authentically and uniquely, in mutual cooperation, to the eradication of the disease and its roots. Dedicated individuals who are independent of any political ideology, economic interest or religion. People with nothing but a highly ethical motive to alleviate the suffering of their fellow human beings.

White plague could be seen as a form of arrogant pretence that has within it an element of spiritual pride. The metaphoric white disease always pretends to be something else, assuming the guise of an **altruistic philanthropist**. Like leprosy, it eats away slowly at the person who is affected. The metaphoric white disease secretly and

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silently eats away at the symbolic flesh, tissues and organs of the soul and spirit. The white disease wears a **white veneer** of lies and manipulation, which serve as a covering for the "black" inner parts, the **secret spots**. Those parts are oppressed and constricted, suffocating due to the **lack of oxygen** in enclosed cavities hidden away out of sight.

A new adaptation of the play can also portray a malevolent wealthy magnate who is one of the richest men in the world, someone who regulates global society with his obsessive desire to vaccinate mankind with a white vaccine. He appears as a saviour, but in reality, he has an ulterior motive: his vaccine has been genetically-engineered to reduce the human population on Planet Earth.

A massive campaign advertises his "white plague" vaccination as the only treatment for the white disease. This malevolent magnate uses **public hysteria over an epidemic** to strengthen his grip on power while selling his vaccines for his own profit and his own hidden agenda.

He has already invested a lot in the business of vaccines. He secretly acknowledges, in one scene of the play, that billions of dollars would be wasted on vaccines if his nefarious plan does not pan out. All seven of his factories are operating at full capacity, night and day, churning out thousands and thousands of seven subtypes of white vaccine, which are meant to cover immunologically most of the population. Two other immunological human phenotypes are not covered. In his **white plan**, people belonging to these two "spared" phenotypes will remain unaffected by his white vaccine. They are chosen by eugenics, selected to populate the world under mandated governance. Only a few scientists stand in his way.

An intricate software virus developed by the magnate's company is rampaging on the internet. Research articles revealing the white vaccine to be dangerous and to cause a severe and irreversible **impact on global health** are removed from the internet and all computers. The only mission of this piece of viral software is to search for opposing research articles and opinions and delete them from the network and social media. People are meant to stay blind and uninformed so as to obey the new **global vaccination regulation**. The virus is named **"Blank Screen Black Widows"**, so-called because the white vaccine is engineered to cause male infertility and early and premature death, especially among the male population.

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There could be a covert message in the new adaptation of *The White Plague* for those who feel powerless against the overwhelming disease (of suffocating political or economic power). They could learn to have an impact in society and even the whole world by listening to their true **inner voice**.

To make such a courageous decision to step out from a completely isolated personal **bubble** requires the right impulse and a little bit of encouragement initially. Some advice and guidance or navigation to help orientation may be needed. The transparent bubble around every person separates the inner world from the outside one. It is hindering emotional richness from reaching others. It blocks the inner radiance from sprouting and spreading out into shared living spaces. The bubble may not disappear immediately; still, it can become large enough to accommodate the outer space too.

It is a tremendous difference to be able to open up oneself to the possibility of becoming **visible to others**. It can be regarded as a heroic act. One can offer one's own unique ideas and opinions to society, despite the fact that a concept or skill is still unpolished and unripe. The courage to start listening to one's inner voice, not only within the hidden cave of one's mind, where fundamental goodness radiates and shines, but to open windows and start to sing. Sound and light, rays of personal wisdom and self-empowerment, in conjunction, can reach others. Permission is given to Self to enter the landscape beyond the walls of the mind's castle. One may simply decide to take this step forward. His voice is finally **heard** in the world. The roar, strong enough and accountable by virtue of its **integrity**, echoes across the globe.

It is about to find a secure place, a firm platform beneath the firmament of wandering clouds of self-doubt and torturous self-pity, heretofore preoccupied by one's own inadequacy.

Acknowledging heartfelt wishes and allowing them to be shared among the whole of mankind is to decisively but gently **embrace** his own Self. To stand his ground and proudly **raise his voice** against any form of oppression. To help fight abuses of human rights in his community and across the globe. To create an **audible wave** of pressure to facilitate change against any form of oppression. To conquer white plague symbolically and physically means **expand the chest**, to become **proud of one's own heart** and start to **breathe freely** again.

Der Doctor Schnabel von Rom



Vos Creditis, als eine fabel,  
 quod scribitur vom Doctor schnabel,  
 der fugit die Contagion  
 et autert seinen Lohn darvon.  
 Cadavera sucht er zu fristen,  
 gleich wie der Corvus auf der Misten.  
 Ah Credite, zihet nicht dort hin,  
 dann Romæ regnat die Pestin.

Quis non deberet sehr erschrec  
 für seiner Virgul oder stecken,  
 qua loquitur, als war er stumm,  
 und deutet sein Consilium.  
 Wie mancher Credit ohne zweiffel  
 das ihn tentir ein schwarzen Kuffel  
 Marsupium heist seine Höll,  
 und aurum die geholte seel.

I. Columbina, ad vironi delineavit. Paulus Fürst. Excudit.

**Kleidung wider den Tod zu Rom. Anno 1656.**  
 Also gehen die Doctores Medici dahin zu Rom, wann sie die ander Pest erkrankte Per-  
 sonen besüchen, sie zu curiren und tragen, sich wider den Dufft zu sichern, ein langes Kleid von ge-  
 wärdtem Tüch ihz Angesicht ist verlarvt, für den Xügen halten sie grosse Crystalline Brillen, wider  
 Nasen einen langen Schnabel voll wolriechender Specereij, in der Hände, welche mit Hand schühert  
 wol versehen ist, eine lange Kütze und darmit deuten sie, was man thun, und gebrauchte soll.

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"When the body sinks into death, the essence of man is revealed. Man is a knot, a web, a mesh into which relationships are tied. Only those relationships matter . . ."

— Antoine de Saint-Exupery

"I believe that imagination is stronger than knowledge—myth is more potent than history—dreams are more powerful than facts—hope always triumphs over experience—laughter is the cure for grief—love is stronger than death."

— Robert Fulghum

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| Greig Watson | BBC News | 22 April 2020 |

... THE 'PLAGUE VILLAGE' OF EYAM TEACH US?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-derbyshire-51904810>

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| Marlene Dumas (b. 1953) |

IN GOD WE TRUST (PAYING THE FERRY MAN)

picture - page 2

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| Heartbreak Weather |

BLACK AND WHITE · NIALL HORAN

<https://youtu.be/gKD49UCQKGM>

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