

## ***Watching Children of Men***

By Nitin Jagdish

“You know, Cuarón’s use of the long take is very atypical. A typical action film would have sliced this scene into multiple shots.”

2027. I could be dead before then.

Cholesterol: normal. Blood pressure: normal. Blood sugar: normal.

Bone density: normal. Breasts: normal. Cervix: normal.

Still, life guarantees nothing.

2027. I could be dead before then.

If I die before then, let them burn and purge me of life’s stink. Whirling ashes of me would sneak upon English soil. Let one of creamy Clive Owen’s feet, running from revolutionaries, pick up an ash of me. Glued on his shoe sole by the grace of dog dung. The only heaven I would ever need.

“You know, Cuarón’s cinematographer invented a special camera rig just for this movie.”

Anton. Never stops talking. So young.

Estelle’s pancreas killed her. Cancer. She conceived Death as an octopus, jaundiced and pocked, sinking in Time. The dried husks of all the dead dangling from its tentacles, like military medals, like Christmas decorations. Death would come to suction and stick her on a tentacle spot scrubbed fresh for her, her only.

Death does not work that way.

Death works this way. You settle in the suburbs. The divorcee down the road waves when you walk your dog. Children seeking candy wave when coming to your door. The oddball waves when you catch him rubbing your daffodils on his cheeks. A day comes when the divorcee, the children and the oddball meld into a webby waving hand that slaps, slaps and slaps you on the back until you spit up your life, like exhaust from a rattletrap, like pus from a pimple pinched.

“You know, Slavoj Zizek is on the commentary track. His articles for the *London Review of Books* are superb.”

Anton. Pulls me towards him, and I submit. So old.