

## *MELANCHOLIA*

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Commanded by God, Adam and Eve, marked for eternity,  
shuffled out of the east gate.  
They stopped at a hillock nearby  
And looked back at their garden.

Two archangels descended to guard the gate,  
brandishing flaming swords.  
“Woe to us for what we’ve done,” Eve said.  
“And we lost the favor of our father,” Adam muttered.

Black bile of melancholia,  
Oozing out of the tips of the swords,  
curled into a black vapor  
and rose above trees, hills and mountains.

It floated higher than the clouds,  
to where the blue meets the black,  
settling in between them at the edge of space  
to be on call to mankind for its needs.

Watered by tears of motherless children,  
fed by inaudible groans of toothless, wrinkled old men  
withering in barren rooms, and nurtured by desiccated old  
women sucking on betel leaves,

melancholia fattened, expanding to form a ring  
around the globe. It exuded invisible filaments  
for delivery of sadness and despair to the inhabitants below  
for deepening of their pain and suffering.

Suddenly a thunderclap heralded a heavenly voice.  
“Behold! Behold the first murder!”  
A giant image spread across the firmament.  
“Oh! My God,” Eve cried out, “they are our sons, Cain and Abel.”

A panorama of giant visuals, one after another,  
paraded across the sky:  
men stabbing, beheading, stoning, beating other men,  
no different from themselves.

Children and women were clubbed by men, stampeded by horses,  
houses and places of worship were set ablaze.  
All mayhems were followed by drunken celebrations, grotesque  
debauchery and obscene scenes of grateful sacrifices to God.

Drenched in tears, Adam holding Eve to his bosom, cried out,  
“These all are our children.”  
Looking up at the sky, Eve screamed, “Enough! Enough!”  
“I cannot look anymore.”

Collapsing at Adam’s feet, Eve dissolved in sobs and tears.  
He stood up and raised his voice.  
“Father in heaven, how much longer will our children continue to  
slaughter each other? When will this cease?”

Suddenly, the sky darkened, all sound disappeared.  
A soft and gentle voice was heard from God’s throne.  
“All this slaughter will end when mankind heeds  
Cain’s message.”

**“You are all each other’s keeper!”**