

away from it. Cain wandered the face of the earth

until he walked away his anger and his shame.”

“Just walking can do that?”

“So they say,” Gregory said.

“Let’s walk, then,” said Elenor restlessly.

Ramsay



aint Nicholas’ Day. Christmas. Feast of the Holy Innocents. Day after day of cold rain on snow.

“What we have to do,” Elenor told the younger children, tired of being kept inside, “is be mummies. Kill the winter, bring on the spring.”

They scattered, shouting, through the empty halls of Ramsay castle, looking for costumes. Elenor smeared her face with carmine paste. She pestered Carla, the cook, to find the milk goat’s horns, cut off last summer. She stuck these through her hair net and tied them to her head. She stuffed a pillow under her cape at the back of her neck and came limping out as Beelzebub, the devil.

Spring came to Ramsay, and Elenor climbed into the wild plum trees, hiding among the blossoms. All of the children felt the pinch of hunger as winter supplies ran out.