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## *Danaids*

John Gangnagel

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*Danaids*

the tree and tries to hide, but the dogs they got with 'em know he's there. And when the folk get there they tie ropes to the branches and try to pull it over. But the tree's so wide and strong it takes 'em a long time. The Creator, he waits in the tree and just before dawn, when the tree is tiltin' from being pulled on so much, he falls asleep.

He wakes up and he's high above the earth again, lookin' down, thinkin', now where is that town, I'm gonna get rid of it. And when he sees it, he hears the priest tearing into them other folks for their meanness, and the smith tellin' them they was actin' like fools over a stranger who didn't have nuthin'. And the other folks is ashamed, chasin' a naked man into the woods like that. They even had the old tree half over. And the Creator can see into their hearts now, and he sees their tempers, and he holds his own. So instead of takin' that whole town away, he just gently eases that banyan tree back into the ground, slow, so as not to hurt it any. And the town folks think that is just a miracle, and feel scared besides. So for a day or two everyone is real nice to each other, and they try to be extra good. But that don't last too long. But the Creator, he doesn't take the town away even then.

Lucky for us.

## Danaids

by John Gangnagel

With aching arms,  
Shoulders bare and bruised,  
They pour their souls into  
Hades' infinite urn.  
Their murderous hands - blistered,  
Broken,  
And busy with repentance -  
Offering the blood of life  
To eternal want,  
And spending themselves  
Repaying the Styx.

Forty-nine beautiful sinners  
Straining to sip  
That perfect forgiveness.