

## Remembering the Plague

From Asia, they say, it was born in Death's lair,  
Brought to Europe by midnight air.  
Carried on ships by innocent captains,  
Unaware they were ferrying Death to the masses.

Slowly it crept up the European coast,  
Transporting what all mortals fear most.  
Only needing a small number of hours,  
It sent its victims beneath the flowers.

At mass we were warned: an invisible war was nye.  
Twas God's punishment for all worldly sin.  
All we could do was fearfully wait,  
For the invisible hand to decide our fate.

Peddlers came through the village gates,  
Claiming they had come before it was too late.  
Selling talismans they said would offer protection,  
Petrified serfs greeted them with affection.

It entered villages from out in the fields,  
Quietly slithering through oats and wheat.  
Laboring serfs withered to their knees,  
It showed neither remorse nor an attempt to yield.

My father was the first I knew to be taken.  
With a cough he did awaken.  
Next, arrived the black bile,  
Flowing from him for an eternal mile.

Madness rapidly set in;  
All hope for his recovery quickly turned grim.  
And in the fast fading light,  
He was read his final rite.

With his dying breath he revealed,  
Everything he once tried so hard to conceal.  
When the candle flickered away to nothing,  
We knew his demise was only forthcoming.

More people died with each and every passing hour.  
The bodies piled higher than the castle tower.  
Peasants began to dig mass graves for all the shells,  
Within which a thousand souls used to dwell.

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The screams in streets were the only sound.  
Not a doctor could be found  
To tend to all who were alone,  
Dying without a hand to hold.

I dared not take a breath,  
Knowing anything I inhaled could lead to premature death.  
I staggered back to my cottage in a daze,  
Vowing never again to venture out into that lethal haze.

For months, I watched the people I loved pass away,  
As I was dammed to live another day.  
Soon, however, Death knocked on my door.  
I did not care; I had nothing else to live for.

Up to greet Death I did leap;  
Welcomed him inside out of the cold.  
I then made myself comfortable in wait,  
Everyone knows there is no escape.

Gazing out my window, I watched the setting sun;  
A tear rolled down my cheek as I remembered my loved ones.  
While reminiscing about the past,  
I realized life had all gone much too fast.

Finally, the clock rang out the ultimate chime.  
I said my prayers for the final time.  
Peacefully I drew in my last breath,  
And sat up face to face with Death.

## Bibliography

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