Contraband
By Denise Levertov

The tree of knowledge was the tree of reason. That’s why the taste of it drove us from Eden. That fruit was meant to be dried and milled to a fine powder for use a pinch at a time, a condiment. God had probably planned to tell us later about this new pleasure.

We stuffed our mouths full of it, gorged on but and if and how and again but, knowing no better. It’s toxic in large quantities; fumes swirled in our heads and around us to form a dense cloud that hardened to steel, a wall between us and God, Who was Paradise. Not that God is unreasonable – but reason in such excess was tyranny and locked us into its own limits, a polished cell reflecting our own faces. God lives on the other side of that mirror, but through the slit where the barrier doesn’t quite touch ground, manages still to squeeze in – as filtered light, splinters of fire, a strain of music heard then lost, then heard again.