

# MELANCHOLIA

(A Play)

Shortlist, Association of Nigerian Authors Prize for Drama, 2014  
Nominee, Nigeria Prize for Literature, 2018

DUL JOHNSON



Copyright © Dul Johnson, 2018

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, retained or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the author.

ISBN: 978-978-56265-7-5

## SEVHAGE

Suite 8, No 2, Ugbokolo Street, High Level  
Makurdi, Benue State, NIGERIA.

<http://sevhage.org> <http://sevhage.wordpress.com> <http://vershage.wordpress.com>  
[sevhage@gmail.com](mailto:sevhage@gmail.com)

Makurdi. Karu. Abuja. Ibadan.

P.O. Box 2192, Makurdi, Benue State

+234 (0) 807 358 0365; +234 (0) 809 248 7423; +234 (0) 703 028 5995

*Melancholia* by Dul Johnson first published by SEVHAGE in 2014

Casting: Su'eddie Vershima Agema

Cover Concept & Creation: Eugene Odogwu

Cover Reimaging: Servio Gbadamosi

Typeset & Design: Servio Gbadamosi, [www.noirledge.com](http://www.noirledge.com)

## SCENE ONE

It is early in the morning. The living room of DANGIWA, obviously a politician. The number of posters and calendars that adorn the walls of the parlour, mostly outdated, announce this.

Enter MUMUDE BAWA, a middle-aged man, extravagantly dressed. At the announcement of his arrival at the door, we hear the shuffling of feet and other noises from within. Mumude looks at the chairs, undecided on which to sit in. Dangiwa shuffles into the parlour from an interior door and points to a chair. It is obvious to Mumude that his host has been dressing up. There is discomfort on Mumude's face, but more in his voice even as he tries to put his host's mind at rest. Dangiwa is temporarily speechless.

**MUMUDE.** Relax, Uncle. [Dangiwa is staring at him]. Why are you looking at me like that? [Dangiwa stares on]. Don't you know me?

**DANGIWA.** [after hesitating several seconds more]. Mr. Bawa, couldn't you have sent for me?

**MUMUDE.** [smiles sheepishly]. Oh no, I needed to see you personally, and urgently too.

**DANGIWA.** If you sent for me, you'd still have seen me personally. Would have come, straight away.

**MUMUDE.** [poking his face into Dangiwa's, conspiratorial]. 'Urgently', I said. I'm the one who needed to see you. I should come to your house.

**DANGIWA.** I would have come over if you asked me to; because that is not something you have done before. But ... Please, do sit down. [*Points to a seat and takes one himself*] To what do I owe this honour and respect?

**MUMUDE.** [*pauses, then weighs his words carefully*]. You are a respected man in this country.

**DANGIWA.** [*smiling*]. You belong to the rich and powerful. I don't remember when last you came to my house. I'm not sure you can remember it either. Something must be driving you; something that has nothing to do with respect for Dangiwa.

**MUMUDE.** But—you used to come to my house, Uncle.

**DANGIWA.** Until I realized that I was becoming a nuisance and you were avoiding me.

**MUMUDE.** You'll be seeing me everyday from now on... I want to be your servant.

**DANGIWA.** [*with an expressionless face*]. It's too early in the day for such jokes. Some tea? I remember that you didn't go near coffee.

**MUMUDE.** No, dear Uncle. No thanks, although you got it completely wrong. It's the other way around.

**DANGIWA.** I must be getting old. Sorry. Some coffee then?

**MUMUDE.** No, no. Thanks. [*He pauses. Dangiwa waits*] I'm not joking. I need your services.

**DANGIWA.** [*laughs*]. Now you're talking.