

From the far north the spirits' deadly fangs
 Bear down on you with arrow-pointed tongues;
 And from the east they come with withering pangs 325
 And nourish themselves from your lungs.
 The midday sends out of the desert those
 Who pile heat upon heat upon your crown,
 While evening brings the throng that spells repose—
 And then lets you, and fields and meadows, drown. 330
 They gladly listen, but are skilled in harm,
 Gladly obey, because they like deceit;
 As if from heaven sent, they please and charm,
 Whispering like angels when they cheat.
 But let us go! The air has cooled, the world 335
 Turned gray, mists are unfurled.
 When evening comes one values home,
 Why do you stand amazed? What holds your eyes?
 What in the twilight merits such surprise?

FAUST: See that black dog through grain and stubble roam? 340

WAGNER: I noticed him way back, but cared not in the least.

FAUST: Look well! For what would *you* take this strange beast?

WAGNER: Why, for a poodle fretting doggedly
 As it pursues the tracks left by its master.

FAUST: It spirals all around us, as you see, 345
 And it approaches, fast and faster.

And if I do not err, a fiery eddy
 Whirls after it and marks the trail.

WAGNER: I see the poodle, as I said already;
 As for the rest, your eyesight seems to fail. 350

FAUST: It seems to me that he winds magic snares
 Around our feet, a bond of future dangers.

WAGNER: He jumps around, unsure, and our presence scares
 The dog who seeks his master, and finds instead two strangers.

FAUST: The spiral narrows, he is near! 355

WAGNER: You see, a dog and not a ghost is here.
 He growls, lies on his belly, thus he waits,
 He wags his tail: all canine traits.

FAUST: Come here and walk along with us!
 WAGNER: He's poodlishly ridiculous. 360

You stand and rest, and he waits, too;
 You speak to him, and he would climb on you;
 Lose something, he will bring it back again,
 Jump in the lake to get your cane.

FAUST: You seem quite right, I find, for all his skill, 365
 No trace of any spirit: all is drill.

WAGNER: By dogs that are expertly trained
 The wisest man is entertained.

He quite deserves your favor: it is prudent
 To cultivate the students' noble student. 370

[*They pass through the City Gate.*]

STUDY

FAUST: [*Entering with the poodle.*] The fields and meadows I have fled
 As night enshrouds them and the lakes;
 With apprehensive, holy dread
 The better soul in us awakes.
 Wild passions have succumbed to sleep, 5
 All vehement exertions bow;
 The love of man stirs in us deep,
 The love of God is stirring now.

Be quiet, poodle! Stop running around!
 Why do you snuffle at the sill like that? 10
 Lie down behind the stove—not on the ground:
 Take my best cushion for a mat.
 As you amused us on our way
 With running and jumping and did your best,
 Let me look after you and say: 15
 Be quiet, please, and be my guest.

When in our narrow den
 The friendly lamp glows on the shelf,
 Then light pervades our breast again
 And fills the heart that knows itself. 20
 Reason again begins to speak,
 Hope blooms again with ancient force,
 One longs for life and one would seek
 Its rivers and, alas, its source.

Stop snarling poodle! For the sacred strain 25
 To which my soul is now submitting
 Bestly sounds are hardly fitting.
 We are accustomed to see *men* disdain
 What they don't grasp;
 When it gives trouble, they profane 30
 Even the beautiful and the good.
 Do dogs, too, snarl at what's not understood?

Even now, however, though I tried my best,
 Contentment flows no longer through my breast.
 Why does the river rest so soon, and dry up, and 35
 Leave us to languish in the sand?
 How well I know frustration!
 This want, however, we can overwhelm:
 We turn to the supernatural realm,
 We long for the light of revelation 40
 Which is nowhere more magnificent
 Than in our New Testament.
 I would for once like to determine—
 Because I am sincerely perplexed—

How the sacred original text² 45
 Could be translated into my beloved German.

[*He opens a tome and begins.*]

It says: "In the beginning was the *Word*."³
 Already I am stopped. It seems absurd.
 The *Word* does not deserve the highest prize,
 I must translate it otherwise 50
 If I am well inspired and not blind.
 It says: In the beginning was the *Mind*.
 Ponder that first line, wait and see,
 Lest you should write too hastily.
 Is mind the all-creating source? 55
 It ought to say: In the beginning there was *Force*.
 Yet something warns me as I grasp the pen,
 That my translation must be changed again.
 The spirit helps me. Now it is exact.
 I write: In the beginning was the *Act*. 60

If I am to share my room with you,
 Poodle, stop moaning so!
 And stop your bellow,
 For such a noisy, whiny fellow
 I do not like to have around. 65
 One of us, black hound,
 Will have to give ground.
 With reluctance I change my mind:
 The door is open, you are not confined.
 But what must I see! 70
 Can that happen naturally?
 Is it a shadow? Am I open-eyed?
 How grows my poodle long and wide!
 He reaches up like rising fog—
 This is no longer the shape of a dog! 75
 Oh, what a specter I brought home!
 A hippopotamus of foam,
 With fiery eyes; how his teeth shine!
 You are as good as mine:
 For such a semi-hellish brow 80
 The Key of Solomon⁴ will do.

SPIRITS: [*In the corridor.*] One has been caught inside.

Do not follow him! Abide!
 As a fox in a snare,
 Hell's old lynx is caught in there. 85
 But give heed!
 Float up high, float down low,
 To and fro,

And he tries, and he is freed.
 Can you avail him? 90
 Then do not fail him!
 For you must not forget,
 We are in his debt.
 FAUST: Countering the beast, I might well
 First use the fourfold spell: 95
 Salamander shall broil,
 Undene shall grieve,
 Sylphe shall leave,
 Kobold⁵ shall toil.

Whoever ignores 100
 The elements' cores,
 Their energy
 And quality,
 Cannot command
 In the spirits' land. 105

Disappear flashing,
 Salamander!
 Flow together, splashing,
 Undene!
 Glow in meteoric beauty, 110
 Sylphe!
 Do your domestic duty,
 Incubus! Incubus!
 Step forward and finish thus.

None of the four 115
 Is this beast's core.
 It lies quite calmly there and beams;
 I have not hurt it yet, it seems.
 Now listen well
 To a stronger spell. 120

If you should be
 Hell's progeny,
 Then see this symbol
 Before which tremble
 The cohorts of Hell! 125

Already it bristles and starts to swell.

Spirit of shame,
 Can you read the name
 Of the Uncreated,
 Defying expression, 130

2. That is, the Greek. 3. John 1:1. 4. The *Clavicula Salomonis*, a standard work used by magicians for conjuring; in many medieval legends, Solomon was noted as a great magician.

5. A spirit of the earth. The *salamander* was a spirit of the fire. An undine (*undene*) was a water nymph. A sylph (*sylphe*) was a spirit of the air.

With whom the heavens are sated,
Who was pierced in transgression?

Behind the stove it swells
As an elephant under my spells;
It fills the whole room and quakes, 135
It would turn into mist and fleet.
Stop now before the ceiling breaks!
Lie down at your master's feet!

You see, I do not threaten in vain:
With holy flames I cause you pain. 140
Do not require
The threefold glowing fire!⁶
Do not require
My art in its full measure!

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Steps forward from behind the stove, dressed as a traveling scholar, while the mist clears away.*]

Why all the noise? Good sir, what is your pleasure? 145

FAUST: Then this was our poodle's core!

Simply a traveling scholar? The *casus*⁷ makes me laugh.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Profound respects to you and to your lore:

You made me sweat with all your chaff.

FAUST: What is your name?

MEPHISTOPHELES: This question seems minute 150
For one who thinks the word so beggarly,
Who holds what seems in disrepute,
And craves only reality.⁸

FAUST: Your real being no less than your fame 155
Is often shown, sirs, by your name,
Which is not hard to analyze
When one calls you the Liar, Destroyer, God of Flies.⁹
Enough, who are you then?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Part of that force which would
Do evil evermore, and yet creates the good.

FAUST: What is it that this puzzle indicates? 160

MEPHISTOPHELES: I am the spirit that negates.
And rightly so, for all that comes to be
Deserves to perish wretchedly;
'Twere better nothing would begin.
Thus everything that your terms, sin, 165
Destruction, evil represent—
That is my proper element.

FAUST: You call yourself a part, yet whole make your debut?

MEPHISTOPHELES: The modest truth I speak to you.

While man, this tiny world of fools, is droll 170
Enough to think himself a whole,
I am part of the part that once was everything,
Part of the darkness which gave birth to light,
That haughty light which envies mother night
Her ancient rank and place and would be king— 175
Yet it does not succeed: however it contend,
It sticks to bodies in the end.
It streams from bodies, it lends bodies beauty,
A body won't let it progress;
So it will not take long, I guess, 180
And with the bodies it will perish, too.
FAUST: I understand your noble duty:
Too weak for great destruction, you
Attempt it on a minor scale.
MEPHISTOPHELES: And I admit it is of slight avail. 185
What stands opposed to our Nought,
The some, your wretched world—for aught
That I have so far undertaken,
It stands unruffled and unshaken:
With billows, fires, storms, commotion, 190
Calm, after all, remain both land and ocean.
And that accursed lot, the brood of beasts and men,
One cannot hurt them anyhow.
How many have I buried now!
Yet always fresh new blood will circulate again. 195
Thus it goes on—I could rage in despair!
From water, earth, and even air,
A thousand seeds have ever grown
In warmth and cold and drought and mire!
If I had not reserved myself the fire, 200
I should have nothing of my own.
FAUST: And thus, I see, you would resist
The ever-live creative power
By clenching your cold devil's fist
Resentfully—in vain you glower. 205
Try something new and unrelated,
Oh you peculiar son of chaos!
MEPHISTOPHELES: Perchance your reasoning might sway us—
The next few times we may debate it.
But for the present, may I go? 210
FAUST: I cannot see why you inquire.
Now that we met, you ought to know
That you may call as you desire.
Here is the window, here the door,
A chimney there, if that's preferred. 215
MEPHISTOPHELES: I cannot leave you that way, I deplore:
By a small obstacle I am deterred:
The witch's foot on your threshold, see—

6. Perhaps the Trinity or a triangle with divergent rays. 7. Occurrence. 8. Mephistopheles refers to Faust's substitution of *Act* for *Word* in the passage from John (see line 60). 9. An almost literal translation of the name of the Philistine deity Beelzebub.

FAUST: The pentagram¹ distresses you?
 Then, son of hell, explain to me: 220
 How could you enter here without ado?
 And how was such a spirit cheated?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Behold it well: It is not quite completed;
 One angle—that which points outside—
 Is open just a little bit. 225
 FAUST: That was indeed a lucky hit.
 I caught you and you must abide.
 How wonderful, and yet how queer!
 MEPHISTOPHELES: The poodle never noticed, when he first jumped in here,
 But now it is a different case; 230
 The Devil cannot leave this place.
 FAUST: The window's there. Are you in awe?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: The devils and the demons have a law:
 Where they slipped in, they always must withdraw.
 The first time we are free, the second time constrained. 235
 FAUST: For hell, too, laws have been ordained?
 Superb! Then one should surely make a pact,
 And one of you might enter my employ.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: What we would promise you, you would enjoy,
 And none of it we would subtract. 240
 But that we should not hurry so,
 And we shall talk about it soon;
 For now I ask the single boon
 That you permit me now to go.
 FAUST: For just a moment stay with me 245
 And let me have some happy news.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Not now. I'll come back presently,
 Then you may ask me what you choose.
 FAUST: You were not caught by my device
 When you were snared like this tonight. 250
 Who holds the Devil, hold him tight!
 He can't expect to catch him twice.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: If you prefer it, I shall stay
 With you, and I shall not depart,
 Upon condition that I may 255
 Amuse you with some samples of my art.
 FAUST: Go right ahead, you are quite free—
 Provided it is nice to see.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Right in this hour you will obtain
 More for your senses than you gain 260
 In a whole year's monotony.
 What tender spirits now will sing,
 The lovely pictures that they bring
 Are not mere magic for the eye:
 They will delight your sense of smell, 265

1. A magic five-pointed star designed to keep away evil spirits.

Be pleasing to your taste as well,
 Excite your touch, and give you joy.
 No preparation needs my art,
 We are together, let us start.
 SPIRITS: Vanish, you darkling 270
 Arches above him.
 Friendlier beaming,
 Sky should be gleaming
 Down upon us.
 Ah, that the darkling 275
 Clouds had departed!
 Stars now are sparkling,
 More tenderhearted
 Suns shine on us.
 Spirits aerial, 280
 Fair and ethereal,
 Wavering and bending,
 Sail by like swallows.
 Yearning unending
 Sees them and follows, 285
 Garments are flowing,
 Ribbons are blowing,
 Covering the glowing
 Land and the bower
 Where, in the hedges, 290
 Thinking and dreaming,
 Lovers make pledges.
 Bower on bower.
 Tendrils are streaming;
 Heavy grapes shower 295
 Their sweet excesses
 Into the presses;
 In streams are flowing
 Wines that are glowing,
 Foam, effervescent, 300
 Through iridescent
 Gems; they are storming
 Down from the mountains;
 Lakes they are forming,
 Beautiful fountains 305
 Where hills are ending,
 Birds are descending,
 Drink and fly onward,
 Fly ever sunward,
 Fly from the highlands 310
 Toward the ocean
 Where brilliant islands
 Sway in soft motion.
 Jubilant choirs

Soothe all desires,
 And are entrancing
 Those who are dancing
 Like whirling satyrs,
 But the throng scatters.
 Some now are scaling
 Over the mountains,
 Others are sailing
 Toward the fountains,
 Others are soaring,
 All life adoring,
 All crave the far-off
 Love-spending star of
 Rapturous bliss.

MEPHISTOPHELES: He sleeps. I thank you, airy, tender throng.

You made him slumber with your song.
 A splendid concert. I appreciate this.
 You are not yet the man to hold the Devil fast.
 Go, dazzle him with dream shapes, sweet and vast,
 Plunge him into an ocean of untruth.
 But now, to break the threshold's spell at last,
 I have to get a rat's sharp tooth.
 I need no conjuring today,
 One's rustling over there and will come right away.
 The lord of rats, the lord of mice,
 Of flies and frogs, bedbugs and lice,
 Bids you to dare now to appear
 To gnaw upon this threshold here,
 Where he is dabbing it with oil.
 Ah, there you come. Begin your toil.
 The point that stopped me like a magic hedge
 Is way up front, right on the edge.
 Just one more bite, and that will do.
 Now, Faustus, sleep and dream, till I come back to you.

FAUST: [*Awakening.*] Betrayed again? Fooled by a scheme?
 Should spirits' wealth so suddenly decay
 That I behold the Devil in a dream,
 And that a poodle jumps away?

STUDY

[FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.]

FAUST: A knock? Come in! Who comes to plague me now?

MEPHISTOPHELES: It's I.

FAUST: Come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES: You have to say it thrice.

FAUST: Come in, then.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Now you're nice.

We should get along well, I vow.

To chase your spleen away, allow
 That I appear a noble squire:²
 Look at my red and gold attire,
 A little cloak of silk brocade,
 The rooster's feather in my hat,
 And the long, nicely pointed blade—
 And now it is my counsel that
 You, too, should be like this arrayed;
 Then you would feel released and free,
 And you would find what life can be.

FAUST: I shall not cease to feel in all attires,
 The pains of our narrow earthly day.
 I am too old to be content to play,
 Too young to be without desire.
 What wonders could the world reveal?
 You must renounce! You ought to yield!
 That is the never-ending drone
 Which we must, our life long, hear,
 Which, hoarsely, all our hours intone
 And grind into our weary ears.
 Frightened I waken to the dismal dawn,
 Wish I had tears to drown the sun
 And check the day that soon will scorn
 My every wish—fulfill not one.
 If I but think of any pleasure,
 Bright critic day is sure to chide it,
 And if my heart creates itself a treasure,
 A thousand mocking masks deride it.
 When night descends at last, I shall recline
 But anxiously upon my bed;
 Though all is still, no rest is mine
 As dreams enmesh my mind in dread.
 The god that dwells within my heart
 Can stir my depths, I cannot hide—
 Rules all my powers with relentless art,
 But cannot move the world outside;
 And thus existence is for me a weight,
 Death is desirable, and life I hate.

MEPHISTOPHELES: And yet when death approaches, the welcome is not great.

FAUST: Oh, blessed whom, as victory advances,
 He lends the blood-drenched laurel's grace,
 Who, after wildly whirling dances,
 Receives him in a girl's embrace!
 Oh, that before the lofty spirit's power
 I might have fallen to the ground, unsouled!

2. In the popular plays based on the Faust legend, the Devil often appeared as a monk when the play catered to a Protestant audience and as a noble squire when the audience was predominantly Catholic.

MEPHISTOPHELES: And yet someone, in that same nightly hour 50
 Refused to drain a certain bowl.
 FAUST: You seem to eavesdrop quite proficiently.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Omniscient I am not, but there is much I see.
 FAUST: As in that terrifying reeling
 I heard the sweet familiar chimes 55
 That duped the traces of my childhood feeling
 With echoes of more joyous times,
 I now curse all that would enamor
 The human soul with lures and lies,
 Enticing it with flattering glamour 60
 To live on in this cave of sighs.
 Cursed above all our high esteem,
 The spirit's smug self-confidence,
 Cursed be illusion, fraud, and dream
 That flatter our guileless sense! 65
 Cursed be the pleasing make-believe
 Of fame and long posthumous life!
 Cursed be possessions that deceive,
 As slave and plough, and child and wife!
 Cursed, too, be Mammon³ when with treasures 70
 He spurs us on to daring feats,
 Or lures us into slothful pleasures
 With sumptuous cushions and smooth sheets!
 A curse on wine that mocks our thirst!
 A curse on love's last consummations! 75
 A curse on hope! Faith, too, be cursed!
 And cursed above all else be patience!

CHOIR OF SPIRITS: [*Invisible.*] Alas!
 You have shattered
 The beautiful world 80
 With brazen fist;
 It falls, it is scattered—
 By a demigod destroyed.
 We are trailing
 The ruins into the void 85
 And wailing
 Over beauty undone
 And ended.
 Earth's mighty son,
 More splendid 90
 Rebuild it, you that are strong,
 Build it again within!
 And begin
 A new life, a new way,
 Lucid and gay, 95

3. The Aramaic word for "riches," used in the New Testament of the Bible. Medieval writers interpreted the word as a proper noun, the name of the Devil, as representing covetousness or avarice.

And play
 New songs.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: These are the small
 Ones of my thralls.
 Hear how precociously they plead 100
 For pleasure and deed!
 To worldly strife
 From your lonely life
 Which dries up sap and sense,
 They would lure you hence. 105

Stop playing with your melancholy
 That, like a vulture, ravages your breast;
 The worst of company still cures this folly,
 For you are human with the rest.
 Yet that is surely not to say 110
 That you should join the herd you hate.
 I'm not one of the great,
 But if you want to make your way
 Through the world with me united,
 I should surely be delighted 115
 To be yours, as of now,
 Your companion, if you allow;
 And if you like the way I behave,
 I shall be your servant, or your slave.

FAUST: And in return, what do you hope to take? 120
 MEPHISTOPHELES: There's so much time—so why insist?
 FAUST: No, no! The Devil is an egoist
 And would not just for heaven's sake
 Turn into a philanthropist. 125
 Make your conditions very clear;
 Where such a servant lives, danger is near.

MEPHISTOPHELES: *Here* you shall be the master, I be bond,
 And at your nod I'll work incessantly;
 But when we meet again *beyond*,
 Then you shall do the same for me. 130

FAUST: Of the beyond I have no thought;
 When you reduce this world to nought,
 The other one may have its turn.
 My joys come from this earth, and there,
 That sun has burnt on my despair: 135
 Once I have left those, I don't care:
 What happens is of no concern.
 I do not even wish to hear
 Whether beyond they hate and love,
 And whether in that other sphere 140
 One realm's below and one above.

MEPHISTOPHELES: So minded, dare it cheerfully.
 Commit yourself and you shall see

My arts with joy. I'll give you more
 Than any man has seen before. 145

FAUST: What would you, wretched Devil, offer?
 Was ever a man's spirit in its noble striving
 Grasped by your like, devilish scoffer?
 But have you food that is not satisfying,
 Red gold that rolls off without rest, 150
 Quicksilver-like, over your skin—
 A game in which no man can win—
 A girl who, lying at my breast,
 Ogles already to entice my neighbor,
 And honor—that perhaps seems best— 155
 Though like a comet it will turn to vapor?
 Show me fruit that, before we pluck them, rot,
 And trees whose foliage every day makes new!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Such a commission scares me not,
 With such things I can wait on you. 160
 But, worthy friend, the time comes when we would
 Recline in peace and feast on something good.

FAUST: If ever I recline, calmed, on a bed of sloth,
 You may destroy me then and there.
 If ever flattering you should wile me 165
 That in myself I find delight,
 If with enjoyment you beguile me,
 Then break on me, eternal night!
 This bet I offer.

MEPHISTOPHELES: I accept it.

FAUST: Right.
 If to the moment I should say:
 Abide, you are so fair—
 Put me in fetters on that day,
 I wish to perish then, I swear.
 Then let the death bell ever toll,
 Your service done, you shall be free,
 The clock may stop, the hand may fall,
 As time comes to an end for me.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Consider it, for we shall not forget it.

FAUST: That is a right you need not waive.
 I did not boast, and I shall not regret it. 180
 As I grow stagnant I shall be a slave,
 Whether or not to anyone indebted.

MEPHISTOPHELES: At the doctor's banquet⁴ tonight I shall do
 My duties as a servant without fail.
 But for life's sake, or death's—just one detail: 185
 Could you give me a line or two?

FAUST: You pedant need it black on white?
 Are man and a man's word indeed new to your sight?

4. The dinner given by a successful candidate for a Ph.D. degree.

Is not my spoken word sufficient warrant
 When it commits my life eternally? 190
 Does not the world rush on in every torrent,
 And a mere promise should hold me?
 Yet this illusion our heart inherits,
 And who would want to shirk his debt?
 Blessed who counts loyalty among his merits. 195
 No sacrifice will he regret.
 And yet a parchment, signed and sealed, is an abhorrent
 Specter that haunts us, and it makes us fret.
 The word dies when we seize the pen,
 And wax and leather lord it then. 200
 What, evil spirit, do you ask?
 Paper or parchment, stone or brass?
 Should I use chisel, style, or quill?
 It is completely up to you.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Why get so hot and overdo 205
 Your rhetoric? Why must you shrill?
 Use any sheet, it is the same;
 And with a drop of blood you sign your name.

FAUST: If you are sure you like this game,
 Let it be done to humor you. 210

MEPHISTOPHELES: Blood is a very special juice.

FAUST: You need not fear that someday I retract.
 That all my striving I unloose
 Is the whole purpose of the pact.
 Oh, I was puffed up all too boldly, 215
 At your rank only is my place.
 The lofty spirit spurned me coldly,
 And nature hides from me her face.
 Torn is the subtle thread of thought,
 I loathe the knowledge I once sought. 220
 In sensuality's abysmal land
 Let our passions drink their fill!
 In magic veils, not pierced by skill,
 Let every wonder be at hand!
 Plunge into time's whirl that dazes my sense, 225
 Into the torrent of events!
 And let enjoyment, distress,
 Annoyance and success
 Succeed each other as best they can;
 For restless activity proves a man. 230

MEPHISTOPHELES: You are not bound by goal or measure.
 If you would nibble everything
 Or snatch up something on the wing,
 You're welcome to what gives you pleasure.
 But help yourself and don't be coy! 235

FAUST: Do you not hear, I have no thought of joy!
 The reeling whirl I seek, the most painful excess,

Enamored hate and quickening distress.
 Cured from the craving to know all, my mind
 Shall not henceforth be closed to any pain,
 And what is portioned out to all mankind,
 I shall enjoy deep in my self, contain
 Within my spirit summit and abyss,
 Pile on my breast their agony and bliss,
 And thus let my own self grow into theirs, unfettered,
 Till as they are, at last I, too, am shattered.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Believe me who for many a thousand year

Has chewed this cud and never rested,
 That from the cradle to the bier
 The ancient leaven cannot be digested.
 Trust one like me, this whole array
 Is for a God—there's no contender:
 He dwells in his eternal splendor,
 To darkness we had to surrender,
 And you need night as well as day.

FAUST: And yet it is my will.

MEPHISTOPHELES: It does sound bold.

But I'm afraid, though you are clever,
 Time is too brief, though art's forever.
 Perhaps you're willing to be told.
 Why don't you find yourself a poet,
 And let the gentleman ransack his dreams:
 And when he finds a noble trait, let him bestow it
 Upon your worthy head in reams and reams:
 The lion's daring,
 The swiftness of the hind,
 The northerner's forbearing
 And the Italian's fiery mind,
 Let him resolve the mystery
 How craft can be combined with magnanimity,
 Or how a passion-crazed young man
 Might fall in love after a plan.
 If there were such a man, I'd like to meet him,
 As Mr. Microcosm I would greet him.

FAUST: Alas, what am I, if I can

Not reach for mankind's crown which merely mocks
 Our senses' craving like a star?

MEPHISTOPHELES: You're in the end—just what you are!

Put wigs on with a million locks
 And put your foot on ell-high socks,
 You still remain just what you are.

FAUST: I feel, I gathered up and piled up high
 In vain the treasures of the human mind:
 When I sit down at last, I cannot find
 New strength within—it is all dry.

My stature has not grown a whit,
 No closer to the Infinite.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Well, my good sir, to put it crudely,

You see matters just as they lie;
 We have to look at them more shrewdly,
 Or all life's pleasures pass us by.

Your hands and feet—indeed that's trite—
 And head and seat are yours alone;
 Yet all in which I find delight,
 Should they be less my own?

Suppose I buy myself six steeds:
 I buy their strength; while I recline
 I dash along at whirlwind speeds,
 For their two dozen legs are mine.

Come on! Let your reflections rest
 And plunge into the world with zest!

I say, the man that speculates
 Is like a beast that in the sand,
 Led by an evil spirit, round and round gyrates,
 And all about lies gorgeous pasture land.

FAUST: How shall we set about it?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Simply leave.
 What torture room is this? What site of grief?

Is this the noble life of prudence—
 You bore yourself and bore your students?
 Oh, let your neighbor, Mr. Paunch, live so!
 Why work hard threshing straw, when it annoys?

The best that you could ever know
 You may not tell the little boys.
 Right now I hear one in the aisle.

FAUST: I simply cannot face the lad.

MEPHISTOPHELES: The poor chap waited quite a while,

I do not want him to leave sad.
 Give me your cap and gown. Not bad! [*He dresses himself up.*]

This mask ought to look exquisite!
 Now you can leave things to my wit.

Some fifteen minutes should be all I need;
 Meanwhile get ready for our trip, and speed!

[*Exit FAUST.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*In FAUST's long robe.*]

Have but contempt for reason and for science,
 Man's noblest force spurn with defiance,
 Subscribe to magic and illusion,

The Lord of Lies aids your confusion,
 And, pact or no, I hold you tight.—

The spirit which he has received from fate
 Sweeps ever onward with unbridled might,
 Its hasty striving is so great

It leaps over the earth's delights.
 Through life I'll drag him at a rate,
 Through shallow triviality,
 That he shall writhe and suffocate;
 And his insatiability,
 With greedy lips, shall see the choicest plate
 And ask in vain for all that he would cherish—
 And were he not the Devil's mate
 And had not signed, he still must perish.
 [A STUDENT enters.]
 STUDENT: I have arrived quite recently
 And come, full of humility,
 To meet that giant intellect
 Whom all refer to with respect.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: This is a charming pleasantry.
 A man as others are, you see.—
 Have you already called elsewhere?
 STUDENT: I pray you, take me in your care.
 I am, believe me, quite sincere,
 Have some odd cash and lots of cheer;
 My mother scarcely let me go,
 But there is much I hope to know.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: This is just the place for you to stay.
 STUDENT: To be frank, I should like to run away.
 I cannot say I like these walls,
 These gloomy rooms and somber halls.
 It seems so narrow, and I see
 No patch of green, no single tree;
 And in the auditorium
 My hearing, sight, and thought grow numb.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: That is a question of mere habit.
 The child, offered the mother's breast,
 Will not in the beginning grab it;
 But soon it clings to it with zest.
 And thus at wisdom's copious breasts
 You'll drink each day with greater zest.
 STUDENT: I'll hang around her neck, enraptured;
 But tell me first: how is she captured?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Before we get into my views—
 What Department do you choose?
 STUDENT: I should like to be erudite,
 And from the earth to heaven's height
 Know every law and every action:
 Nature and science is what I need.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: That is the way; you just proceed
 And scrupulously shun distraction.
 STUDENT: Body and soul, I am a devotee;
 Though, naturally, everybody prays

For some free time and liberty
 On pleasant summer holidays.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Use well your time, so swiftly it runs on!
 Be orderly, and time is won!
 My friend, I shall be pedagogic,
 And say you ought to start with Logic.
 For thus your mind is trained and braced,
 In Spanish boots it will be laced,
 That on the road of thought maybe
 It henceforth creep more thoughtfully,
 And does not crisscross here and there,
 Will-o'-the-wisping through the air.
 Days will be spent to let you know
 That what you once did at one blow,
 Like eating and drinking so easy and free,
 Can only be done with One, Two, Three.
 Yet the web of thought has no such creases
 And is more like a weaver's masterpieces:
 One step, a thousand threads arise,
 Hither and thither shoots each shuttle,
 The threads flow on, unseen and subtle,
 Each blow effects a thousand ties.
 The philosopher comes with analysis
 And proves it had to be like this:
 The first was so, the second so,
 And hence the third and fourth was so,
 And were not the first and the second here,
 Then the third and fourth could never appear.
 That is what all the students believe,
 But they have never learned to weave.
 Who would study and describe the living, starts
 By driving the spirit out of the parts:
 In the palm of his hand he holds all the sections,
 Lacks nothing, except the spirit's connections.
 Encheirisis naturae⁵ the chemists baptize it,
 Mock themselves and don't realize it.
 STUDENT: I did not quite get everything.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: That will improve with studying:
 You will reduce things by and by
 And also learn to classify.
 STUDENT: I feel so dazed by all you said
 As if a mill went around in my head.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Then, without further circumvention,
 Give metaphysics your attention.
 There seek profoundly to attain
 What does not fit the human brain;

5. The natural process by which substances are united into a living organism—a name for an action no one understands.

Whether you do or do not understand,
 An impressive word is always at hand.
 But now during your first half-year, 425
 Keep above all our order here.
 Five hours a day, you understand,
 And when the bell peals, be on hand.
 Before you come, you must prepare,
 Read every paragraph with care, 430
 Lest you, forbid, should overlook
 That all he says is in the book.
 But write down everything, engrossed
 As if you took dictation from the Holy Ghost.
 STUDENT: Don't say that twice—I understood: 435
 I see how useful it's to write,
 For what we possess black on white
 We can take home and keep for good!
 MEPHISTOPHELES: But choose a field of concentration!
 STUDENT: I have no hankering for jurisprudence. 440
 MEPHISTOPHELES: For that I cannot blame the students,
 I know this science is a blight.
 The laws and statutes of a nation
 Are an inherited disease,
 From generation unto generation 445
 And place to place they drag on by degrees.
 Wisdom becomes nonsense; kindness, oppression:
 To be a grandson is a curse.
 The right that is innate in us
 Is not discussed by the profession. 450
 STUDENT: My scorn is heightened by your speech.
 Happy the man that you would teach!
 I almost think theology would pay.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I should not wish to lead you astray. 455
 When it comes to this discipline,
 The way is hard to find, wrong roads abound,
 And lots of hidden poison lies around
 Which one can scarcely tell from medicine.
 Here, too, it would be best you heard
 One only and staked all upon your master's word. 460
 Yes, stick to words at any rate;
 There never was a surer gate
 Into the temple, Certainty.
 STUDENT: Yet some idea there must be.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: All right. But do not plague yourself too anxiously; 465
 For just where no ideas are
 The proper word is never far.
 With words a dispute can be won,
 With words a system can be spun,
 With words one can believe unshaken, 470

And from a word no tittle can be taken.
 STUDENT: Forgive, I hold you up with many questions,
 But there is one more thing I'd like to see.
 Regarding medicine, maybe,
 You have some powerful suggestions? 475
 Three years go by so very fast,
 And, God, the field is all too vast.
 If but a little hint is shown,
 One can attempt to find one's way.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Aside.*] I'm sick of this pedantic tone. 480
 The Devil now again I'll play.
 [*Aloud.*] The spirit of medicine is easy to know:
 Through the macro-and microcosm you breeze,
 And in the end you let it go
 As God may please. 485
 In vain you roam about to study science,
 For each learns only what he can;
 Who places on the moment his reliance,
 He is the proper man.
 You are quite handsome, have good sense, 490
 And no doubt, you have courage, too,
 And if you have self-confidence,
 Then others will confide in you.
 And give the women special care;
 Their everlasting sighs and groans 495
 In thousand tones
 Are cured at *one* point everywhere.
 And if you seem halfway discreet,
 They will be lying at your feet.
 First your degree inspires trust, 500
 As if your art had scarcely any peers;
 Right at the start, remove her clothes and touch her bust,
 Things for which others wait for years and years.
 Learn well the little pulse to squeeze,
 And with a knowing, fiery glance you seize 505
 Her freely round her slender waist
 To see how tightly she is laced.
 STUDENT: That looks much better, sir. For one sees how and where.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Gray, my dear friend, is every theory,
 And green alone life's golden tree. 510
 STUDENT: All this seems like a dream, I swear.
 Could I impose on you sometime again
 And drink more words of wisdom then?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: What I can give you, you shall get.
 STUDENT: Alas, I cannot go quite yet: 515
 My album I must give to you;
 Please, sir, show me this favor, too.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: All right. [*He writes and returns it.*]

STUDENT: [*Reads.*] Eritis sicut Deus, scientes bonum et malum.⁶ [*Closes the book reverently and takes his leave.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES: Follow the ancient text and my relation, the snake; 520
Your very likeness to God will yet make you quiver and quake.

[*FAUST enters.*]

FAUST: Where are we heading now?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Wherever you may please.

We'll see the small world, then the larger one.

You will reap profit and have fun

As you sweep through this course with ease. 525

FAUST: With my long beard I hardly may

Live in this free and easy way.

The whole endeavor seems so futile;

I always felt the world was strange and brutal.

With others, I feel small and harassed, 530

And I shall always be embarrassed.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Good friend, you will become less sensitive:

Self-confidence will teach you how to live.

FAUST: How shall we get away from here?

Where are your carriage, groom and steed? 535

MEPHISTOPHELES: I rather travel through the air:

We spread this cloak—that's all we need.

But on this somewhat daring flight,

Be sure to keep your luggage light.

A little fiery air, which I plan to prepare, 540

Will raise us swiftly off the earth;

Without ballast we'll go up fast—

Congratulations, friend, on your rebirth!

AUERBACH'S KELLER IN LEIPZIG

[*Jolly fellows' drinking bout.*]

FROSCHE: Will no one drink and no one laugh?

I'll teach you not to look so wry.

Today you look like sodden chaff

And usually blaze to the sky

BRANDER: It's all your fault; you make me sick: 5

No joke, and not a single dirty trick.

FROSCHE: [*Pours a glass of wine over BRANDER's head.*]

There you have both.

BRANDER: You filthy pig!

FROSCHE: You said I shouldn't be a prig.

SIEBEL: Let those who fight, stop or get out!

With all your lungs sing chorus, swill, and shout! 10

Come! Holla-ho!

ALTMAYER: Now this is where I quit.

Get me some cotton or my ears will split.

SIEBEL: When the vault echoes and the place

Is quaking, then you can enjoy a bass.

FROSCHE: Quite right! Throw out who fusses because he is lampooned! 15

A! tara lara da!

ALTMAYER: A! tara lara da!

FROSCHE: The throats seem to be tuned.

[*Sings.*] Dear Holy Roman Empire,

What holds you still together? 20

BRANDER: A nasty song! It reeks of politics!

A wretched song! Thank God in daily prayer,

That the old Empire isn't your affair!

At least I think it is much to be grateful for

That I'm not Emperor nor Chancellor. 25

And yet we, too, need someone to respect—

I say, a Pope let us elect.

You know the part that elevates

And thereby proves the man who rates.

FROSCHE: [*Sings.*] Oh, Dame Nightingale, arise! 30

Bring my sweet love ten thousand sighs!

SIEBEL: No sighs for your sweet love! I will not have such mush.

FROSCHE: A sigh and kiss for her! You cannot make me blush.

[*Sings.*] Ope the latch in silent night!

Ope the latch, your love invite! 35

Shut the latch, there is the dawn!

SIEBEL: Go, sing and sing and sing, pay compliments and fawn!

The time will come when I shall laugh:

She led me by the nose, and you are the next calf.

Her lover should be some mischievous gnome! 40

He'd meet her at a crossroads and make light,

And an old billy goat that's racing home

From Blocksberg could still bleat to her "Good night!"

A decent lad of real flesh and blood

Is far too good to be her stud. 45

I'll stand no sighs, you silly ass,

But throw rocks through her window glass.

BRANDER: [*Pounding on the table.*]

Look here! Look here! Listen to me!

My friends, confess I know what's right;

There are lovers here, and you'll agree 50

That it's only civility

That I should try to honor them tonight.

Watch out! This song's the latest fashion.

And join in the refrain with passion!

[*Sings.*] A cellar once contained a rat 55

That couldn't have been uncouth,

Lived on grease and butter and grew fat—

Just like old Doctor Luther.⁷

6. A slight alteration of the serpent's words to Eve in Genesis: "Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil" (Latin).

7. Martin Luther (1483–1546), German leader of the Protestant reformation, hence an object of distaste for Catholics.

The cook put poison in his food,
Then he felt cramped and just as stewed,
As if love gnawed his vitals.

CHORUS: [*Jubilant.*] As if love gnawed his vitals.

BRANDER: He dashed around, he dashed outdoors,
Sought puddles and swilled rain,
He clawed and scratched up walls and floors,
But his frenzy was in vain;
He jumped up in a frightful huff,
But soon the poor beast had enough,
As if love gnawed his vitals.

CHORUS: As if love gnawed his vitals.

BRANDER: At last he rushed in open day
Into the kitchen, crazed with fear,
Dropped near the stove and writhed and lay,
And puffed out his career.
The poisoner only laughed: I hope
He's at the end now of his rope,
As if love gnawed his vitals.

CHORUS: As if love gnawed his vitals.

SIEBEL: How pleased these stupid chaps are! That's,
I think, indeed a proper art
To put out poison for poor rats.

BRANDER: I see, you'd like to take their part.

ALTMAYER: Potbelly with his shiny top!
His ill luck makes him mild and tame.
He sees the bloated rat go flop—
And sees himself: they look the same.

[*FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES enter.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES: Above all else, it seems to me,
You need some jolly company
To see life can be fun—to say the least:
The people here make every day a feast.
With little wit and boisterous noise,
They dance and circle in their narrow trails
Like kittens playing with their tails.
When hangovers don't vex these boys,
And while their credit's holding out,
They have no cares and drink and shout.

BRANDER: Those two are travelers, I swear.
I tell it right off by the way they stare.
They have been here at most an hour.

FROSCHE: No doubt about it. Leipzig is a flower,
It is a little Paris and educates its people.

SIEBEL: What may they be? Who knows the truth?

FROSCHE: Leave it to me! A drink that interposes—
And I'll pull like a baby tooth
The worms they hide, out of these fellows' noses.
They seem to be of noble ancestry,

For they look proud and act disdainfully.

BRANDER: They are mere quacks and born in squalor.

ALTMAYER: Maybe.

FROSCHE: Watch out! We shall commence.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To FAUST.*] The Devil people never sense,
Though he may hold them by the collar.

FAUST: Good evening, gentlemen.

SIEBEL: Thank you, to you the same.
[*Softly, looking at MEPHISTOPHELES from the side.*]

Look at his foot. Why is it lame?⁸

MEPHISTOPHELES: We'll join you, if you grant the liberty.

The drinks they have are poor, their wine not very mellow,
So we'll enjoy your company.

ALTMAYER: You seem a most fastidious fellow.

FROSCHE: Did you leave Rippach rather late and walk?

And did you first have dinner with Master Jackass there?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Tonight we had no time to spare.
Last time, however, we had quite a talk.

He had a lot to say of his relations

And asked us to send each his warmest salutations. [*He bows to FROSCHE.*]

ALTMAYER: [*Softly.*] You got it! He's all right.

SIEBEL: A pretty repartee!
FROSCHE: I'll get him yet. Just wait and see.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Just now we heard, if I'm not wrong,
Some voices singing without fault.

Indeed this seems a place for song;

No doubt, it echoes from the vault.

FROSCHE: Are you perchance a virtuoso?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Oh no, the will is great, the power only so-so.

ALTMAYER: Give us a song!

MEPHISTOPHELES: As many as you please.

SIEBEL: But let us have a brand-new strain!

MEPHISTOPHELES: We have just recently returned from Spain,
The beautiful land of wine and melodies.

[*Sings.*] A king lived long ago
Who had a giant flea—

FROSCHE: Hear, hear! A flea! That's what I call a jest.

A flea's a mighty pretty guest.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Sings.*] A king lived long ago
Who had a giant flea,

He loved him just as though

He were his son and heir.

He sent his tailor a note

And offered the tailor riches

If he would measure a coat

And also take measure for breeches.

BRANDER: Be sure to tell the tailor, if he twinkles,

8. By tradition, the Devil had a cloven foot, split like a sheep's hoof.

That he must take fastidious measure;
 He'll lose his head, not just the treasure,
 If in the breeches there are wrinkles.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: He was in silk arrayed,
 In velvet he was dressed,
 Had ribbons and brocade,
 A cross upon his chest
 A fancy star, great fame—
 A minister, in short;
 And all his kin became
 Lords at the royal court.
 The other lords grew lean
 And suffered with their wives,
 The royal maid and the queen
 Were all but eaten alive,
 But weren't allowed to swat them
 And could not even scratch,
 While we can swat and blot them
 And kill the ones we catch.
 CHORUS: [*Jubilant.*] While we can swat and blot them
 And kill the ones we catch.
 FROSCH: Bravo! Bravo! That was a treat!
 SIEBEL: That is the end all fleas should meet.
 BRANDER: Point your fingers and catch 'em fine!
 ALTMAYER: Long live our freedom! And long live wine!
 MEPHISTOPHELES: When freedom is the toast, my own voice I should
 add,
 Were your forsaken wines only not quite so bad.⁹
 SIEBEL: You better mind your language, lad.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I only fear the landlord might protest,
 Else I should give each honored guest
 From our cellar a good glass.
 SIEBEL: Let's go! The landlord is an ass.
 FROSCH: If you provide good drinks, you shall be eulogized;
 But let your samples be good-sized.
 When I'm to judge, I'm telling him,
 I want my snout full to the brim.
 ALTMAYER: [*Softly.*] They're from the Rhineland, I presume.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Bring me a gimlet.
 BRANDER: What could that be for?
 You couldn't have the casks in the next room?
 ALTMAYER: The landlord keeps his tools right there behind the door.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Takes the gimlet. To FROSCH.*]
 What would you like? Something that's cool?
 FROSCH: What do you mean? You got a lot of booze?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I let each have what he may choose.

9. Cursed.

ALTMAYER: [*To FROSCH.*] Oh! You lick your chops and start to drool.
 FROSCH: If it is up to me, I'll have a Rhenish brand:
 There's nothing that competes with our fatherland.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Boring a hole near the edge of the table where FROSCH
 sits.*] Now let us have some wax to make a cork that sticks.
 ALTMAYER: Oh, is it merely parlor tricks?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To BRANDER.*] And you?
 BRANDER: I want a good champagne—
 Heady; I do not like it plain.
 [MEPHISTOPHELES bores; meanwhile someone else has made the wax
 stoppers and plugged the holes.]
 BRANDER: Not all that's foreign can be banned,
 For what is far is often fine.
 A Frenchman is a thing no German man can stand,
 And yet we like to drink their wine.
 SIEBEL: [*As MEPHISTOPHELES approaches his place.*]
 I must confess, I think the dry tastes bad,
 The sweet alone is exquisite.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Boring.*] Tokay¹ will flow for you, my lad.
 ALTMAYER: I think, you might as well admit,
 Good gentlemen, that these are simply jests.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Tut, tut! With such distinguished guests
 That would be quite a lot to dare.
 So don't be modest, and declare
 What kind of wine you would prefer.
 ALTMAYER: I like them all, so I don't care.
 [After all the holes have been bored and plugged.]
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*With strange gestures.*] The grape the vine adorns,
 The billy goat sports horns;
 The wine is juicy, vines are wood,
 The wooden table gives wine as good,
 Profound insight! Now you perceive
 A miracle; only believe!
 Now pull the stoppers and have fun!
 ALL: [*As they pull out the stoppers and the wine each asked for flows into
 his glass.*] A gorgeous well for everyone!
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Be very careful lest it overrun!
 [They drink several times.]
 ALL: [*Sing.*] We feel gigantically well,
 Just like five hundred sows.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Look there how well men are when they are free.
 FAUST: I should like to get out of here.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: First watch how their bestiality
 Will in full splendor soon appear.
 SIEBEL: [*Drinks carelessly and spills his wine on the floor where it turns
 into a flame.*] Help! Fire! Help! Hell blew a vent!

1. A sweet Hungarian wine.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Conjuring the flame.*] Be quiet, friendly element!
 [*To the fellow.*] For this time it was only a drop of purgatory. 230
 SIEBEL: You'll pay for it, and you can save your story!
 What do you think we are, my friend?
 FROSCH: Don't dare do that a second time, you hear!
 ALTMAYER: Just let him leave in silence; that is what I say, gents!
 SIEBEL: You have the brazen impudence 235
 To do your hocus-pocus here?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Be still, old barrel!
 SIEBEL: Broomstick, you!
 Will you insult us? Mind your prose!
 BRANDER: Just wait and see, there will be blows.
 ALTMAYER: [*Pulls a stopper out of the table and fire leaps at him.*]
 I burn! I burn!
 SIEBEL: It's magic, as I said. 240
 He is an outlaw. Strike him dead!
 [*They draw their knives and advance on MEPHISTOPHELES.*]
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*With solemn gestures.*]
 False images prepare
 Mirages in the air.
 Be here and there!
 [*They stand amazed and stare at each other.*]
 ALTMAYER: Where am I? What a gorgeous land! 245
 FROSCH: And vineyards! Am I mad?
 SIEBEL: And grapes right by my hand!
 BRANDER: See in the leaves that purple shape?
 I never saw that big a grape!
 [*Grabs SIEBEL's nose. They all do it to each other and raise their knives.*]
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*As above.*] Fall from their eyes, illusion's band!
 Remember how the Devil joked. 250
 [*He disappears with FAUST, the revelers separate.*]
 SIEBEL: What's that?
 ALTMAYER: Hah?
 FROSCH: Your nose I stroked?
 BRANDER: [*To SIEBEL.*] And yours is in my hand!
 ALTMAYER: The shock is more than I can bear.
 I think I'll faint. Get me a chair!
 FROSCH: What was all this? Who understands? 255
 SIEBEL: Where is the scoundrel? I'm so sore,
 If I could only get my hands—
 ALTMAYER: I saw him whiz right through the cellar door,
 Riding a flying barrel. Zounds,
 The fright weighs on me like a thousand pounds. 260
 [*Turning toward the table.*] Do you suppose the wine still flows?
 SIEBEL: That was a fraud! You're asinine!
 FROSCH: I surely thought that I drank wine.
 BRANDER: But what about the grapes, I say.
 ALTMAYER: Who says there are no miracles today! 265

WITCH'S KITCHEN

[*On a low stove, a large caldron stands over the fire. In the steam that rises from it, one can see several shapes. A longtailed FEMALE MONKEY sits near the caldron, skims it, and sees to it that it does not overflow. The MALE MONKEY with the little ones sits next to her and warms himself. Walls and ceiling are decorated with the queerest implements of witchcraft. FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES enter.*]
 FAUST: How I detest this crazy sorcery!
 I should get well, you promise me,
 In this mad frenzy of a mess?
 Do I need the advice of hag fakirs?
 And should this quackish sordidness 5
 Reduce my age by thirty years?
 I'm lost if that's all you could find.
 My hope is drowned in sudden qualm.
 Has neither nature nor some noble mind
 Invented or contrived a wholesome balm? 10
 MEPHISTOPHELES: My friend, that was nice oratory!
 Indeed, to make you young there is one way that's apter;
 But, I regret, that is another story
 And forms quite an amazing chapter.
 FAUST: I want to know it.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: All right, you need no sorcery 15
 And no physician and no dough.
 Just go into the fields and see
 What fun it is to dig and hoe;
 Live simply and keep all your thoughts
 On a few simple objects glued; 20
 Restrict yourself and eat the plainest food;
 Live with the beasts, a beast: it is no thievery
 To dress the fields you work, with your own dung.
 That is the surest remedy:
 At eighty, you would still be young. 25
 FAUST: I am not used to that and can't, I am afraid,
 Start now to work with hoe and spade.
 For me a narrow life like that's too small.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: We need the witch then after all.
 FAUST: Why just the hag with all her grime! 30
 Could you not brew it—with *your* head!
 MEPHISTOPHELES: A splendid way to waste my time!
 A thousand bridges I could build instead.²
 Science is not enough, nor art;
 In this work patience plays a part. 35
 A quiet spirit plods and plods at length;
 Nothing but time can give the brew its strength.
 With all the things that go into it,

2. According to folk legend, the Devil built bridges at the request of human beings. As a reward, he caught either the first or the thirteenth soul to cross each new bridge.

It's sickening just to see them do it.
The Devil taught them, true enough
But he himself can't make the stuff.

[*He sees the ANIMALS.*]

Just see how delicate they look!
This is the maid, and that the cook.

[*To the ANIMALS.*] It seems the lady isn't home?

ANIMALS: She went to roam

Away from home,

Right through the chimney in the dome.

MEPHISTOPHELES: And how long will she walk the street?

ANIMALS: As long as we warm our feet.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To FAUST.*] How do you like this dainty pair?

FAUST: They are inane beyond comparison.

MEPHISTOPHELES: A conversation like this one

Is just the sort of thing for which I care.

[*To the ANIMALS.*] Now tell me, you accursed group,

Why do you stir that steaming mess?

ANIMALS: We cook a watery beggars' soup.

MEPHISTOPHELES: You should do a brisk business.

MALE MONKEY: [*Approaches MEPHISTOPHELES and fawns.*]

Oh please throw the dice

And lose, and be nice

And let me get wealthy!

We are in the ditch,

And if I were rich,

Then I might be healthy.

MEPHISTOPHELES: How happy every monkey thinks he'd be,

If he could play the lottery.

[*Meanwhile the monkey youngsters have been playing with a large ball, and now they roll it forward.*]

MALE MONKEY: The world and ball

Both rise and fall

And roll and wallow;

It sounds like glass,

It bursts, alas,

The inside's hollow.

Here it is light,

There still more bright,

Life's mine to swallow!

Dear son, I say,

Please keep away!

You'll die first.

It's made of clay

It will burst.

MEPHISTOPHELES: The sieve there, chief—?

MALE MONKEY: [*Gets it down.*] If you were a thief,

I'd be wise to you.

[*He runs to the FEMALE MONKEY and lets her see through it.*]

Look through, be brief!

You know the thief,

But may not say *who*?

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Approaching the fire.*] And here this pot?

BOTH BIG MONKEYS: The half-witted sot!

Does not know the pot,

Does not know the kettle!

MEPHISTOPHELES: You impolite beast!

MALE MONKEY: Take this brush at least

And sit down and settle!

[*He makes MEPHISTOPHELES sit down.*]

FAUST: [*Who has been standing before a mirror all this time, now stepping*

close to it, now back.] What blissful image is revealed

To me behind this magic glass!

Lend me your swiftest pinions, love, that I might pass

From here to her transfigured field!

When I don't stay right on this spot, but, pining,

Dare to step forward and go near

Mists cloud her shape and let it disappear.

The fairest image of a woman!

Indeed, could woman be so fair?

Or is this body which I see reclining

Heaven's quintessence from another sphere?

Is so much beauty found on earth?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Well, if a god works hard for six whole days, my friend,

And then says bravo in the end,

It ought to have a little worth.

For now, stare to your heart's content!

I could track down for you just such a sweet—

What bliss it would be to get her consent,

To marry her and be replete.

[*FAUST gazes into the mirror all the time. MEPHISTOPHELES, stretching in the armchair and playing with the brush, goes on speaking.*]

I sit here like the king upon his throne:

The scepter I hold here, I lack the crown alone.

ANIMALS: [*Who have so far moved around in quaint confusion, bring a crown to MEPHISTOPHELES, clamoring loudly.*] Oh, please be so good.

With sweat and with blood

This crown here to lime!

[*They handle the crown clumsily and break it into two pieces with which they jump around.*]

It's done, let it be!

We chatter and see,

We listen and rhyme—

FAUST: [*At the mirror.*] Alas, I think I'll lose my wits.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Pointing toward the ANIMALS.*]

I fear that my head, too, begins to reel.

ANIMALS: And if we score hits

And everything fits,
It's thoughts that we feel.
FAUST: [*As above.*] My heart and soul are catching fire. 125
Please let us go away from here!
MEPHISTOPHELES: [*In the same position as above.*]
The one thing one has to admire
Is that their poetry is quite sincere.
[*The caldron which the FEMALE MONKEY has neglected begins to run over, and a huge flame blazes up through the chimney. The WITCH scoots down through the flame with a dreadful clamor.*]
WITCH: Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow!
You damned old beast! You cursed old sow! 130
You leave the kettle and singe the frau.
You cursed old beast! [*Sees FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.*]
What goes on here?
Why are you here?
Who are you two?
Who sneaked inside? 135
Come, fiery tide!
Their bones be fried!
[*She plunges the skimming spoon into the caldron and spatters flames at FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and the ANIMALS. The ANIMALS whine.*]
MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Reversing the brush he holds in his hand, and striking into the glasses and pots.*]
In two! In two!
There lies the brew. 140
There lies the glass.
A joke, my lass,
The beat, you ass,
For melodies from you.
[*As the WITCH retreats in wrath and horror.*]
You know me now? You skeleton! You shrew! 145
You know your master and your lord?
What holds me? I could strike at you
And shatter you and your foul monkey horde.
Does not the scarlet coat reveal His Grace?
Do you not know the rooster's feather, ma'am? 150
Did I perchance conceal my face?
Or must I tell you who I am?
WITCH: Forgive the uncouth greeting, though
You have no cloven feet, you know.
And your two ravens, where are they? 155
MEPHISTOPHELES: For just this once you may get by,
For it has been some time, I don't deny,
Since I have come your way,
And culture which licks out at every stew
Extends now to the Devil, too: 160
Gone is the Nordic phantom that former ages saw;

You see no horns, no tail or claw.
And as regards the foot with which I can't dispense,
That does not look the least bit suave;
Like other young men nowadays, I hence 165
Prefer to pad my calves.
WITCH: [*Dancing.*] I'll lose my wits, I'll lose my brain
Since Squire Satan has come back again.
MEPHISTOPHELES: That name is out, hag! Is that plain?
WITCH: But why? It never gave you pain! 170
MEPHISTOPHELES: It's dated, called a fable; men are clever,
But they are just as badly off as ever:
The Evil One is gone, the evil ones remain.
You call me baron, hag, and you look out:
I am a cavalier with cavalierly charms, 175
And my nobility don't dare to doubt!
Look here and you will see my coat of arms!
[*He makes an indecent gesture.*]
WITCH: [*Laughs immoderately.*] Ha! Ha! That is your manner, sir!
You are a jester as you always were.
MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To FAUST.*] My friend, mark this, but don't repeat it: 180
This is the way a witch likes to be treated.
WITCH: Now tell me why you came in here.
MEPHISTOPHELES: A good glass of the famous juice, my dear!
But I must have the oldest kind:
Its strength increases with each year. 185
WITCH: I got a bottle on this shelf
From which I like to nip myself;
By now it doesn't even stink.
I'll give you some, it has the power.
[*Softly.*] But if, quite unprepared, this man should have a drink, 190
He could, as you know well, not live another hour.
MEPHISTOPHELES: He is a friend of mine, and he will take it well
The best you have is not too good for him.
Now draw your circle, say your spell,
And fill a bumper to the brim. 195
[*WITCH draws a circle with curious gestures and puts quaint objects into it, while the glasses begin to tinkle, the caldrons begin to resound and they make music. In the end, she gets a big book and puts the MONKEYS into the circle, and they serve her as a desk and have to hold a torch for her. She motions FAUST to step up.*]
FAUST: [*To MEPHISTOPHELES.*] No, tell me why these crazy antics?
The mad ado, the gestures that are frantic,
The most insipid cheat—this stuff
I've known and hated long enough.
MEPHISTOPHELES: Relax! It's fun—a little play; 200
Don't be so serious, so sedate!
Such hocus-pocus is a doctor's way,
Of making sure the juice will operate.
[*He makes FAUST step into the circle.*]

WITCH: [*Begins to recite from the book with great emphasis.*]
 This you must know!
 From one make ten,
 And two let go,
 Take three again,
 Then you'll be rich.
 The four you fix.
 From five and six,
 Thus says the witch,
 Make seven and eight,
 That does the trick;
 And nine is one,
 And ten is none.
 That is the witch's arithmetic.

FAUST: It seems to me the old hag runs a fever.

MEPHISTOPHELES: You'll hear much more before we leave her.

I know, it sounds like that for many pages.
 I lost much time on this accursed affliction
 Because a perfect contradiction
 Intrigues not only fools but also sages.
 This art is old and new, forsooth:
 It was the custom in all ages
 To spread illusion and not truth
 With Three in One and One in Three.³
 They teach it twittering like birds;
 With fools there is no intervening.
 Men usually believe, if only they hear words,
 That there must also be some sort of meaning.

WITCH: [*Continues.*] The lofty prize
 Of science lies
 Concealed today as ever.
 Who has no thought,
 To him it's brought
 To own without endeavor.

FAUST: What nonsense does she put before us?
 My head aches from her stupidity.
 It seems as if I heard a chorus
 Of many thousand fools, no less.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Excellent sybil, that is quite enough!
 Now pour the drink—just put the stuff
 Into this bowl here. Fill it, sybil, pour;
 My friend is safe from any injuries:
 He has a number of degrees
 And has had many drinks before.

[*WITCH pours the drink into a bowl with many ceremonies; as FAUST puts it to his lips, a small flame spurts up.*]

3. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

MEPHISTOPHELES: What is the matter? Hold it level!
 Drink fast and it will warm you up.
 You are familiar with the Devil,
 And shudder at a fiery cup?

[*The WITCH breaks the circle. FAUST steps out.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES: Come on! Let's go! You must not rest.

WITCH: And may this gulp give great delight!

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To the WITCH.*] If there is anything that you request,
 Just let me know the next Walpurgis Night.⁴

WITCH: Here is a song; just sing it now and then,
 And you will feel a queer effect indeed.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To FAUST.*] Come quickly now before you tire,
 And let me lead while you perspire
 So that the force can work out through your skin.
 I'll teach you later on to value noble leisure,
 And soon you will perceive the most delightful pleasure,
 As Cupid starts to stir and dance like jumping jinn.⁵

FAUST: One last look at the mirror where I stood!

So beauteous was that woman's form!

MEPHISTOPHELES: No! No! The paragon of womanhood
 You shall soon see alive and warm.
 [*Softly.*] You'll soon find with this potion's aid,
 Helen of Troy in every maid.

STREET

[*FAUST. MARGARET passing by.*]

FAUST: Fair lady, may I be so free
 To offer my arm and company?

MARGARET: I'm neither a lady nor am I fair,
 And can go home without your care.

[*She frees herself and exits.*]

FAUST: By heaven, this young girl is fair!
 Her like I don't know anywhere.
 She is so virtuous and pure,
 But somewhat pert and not demure.
 The glow of her cheeks and her lips so red
 I shall not forget until I am dead.
 Her downcast eyes, shy and yet smart,
 Are stamped forever on my heart;
 Her curtness and her brevity
 Was sheer enchanting ecstasy!

[*MEPHISTOPHELES enters.*]

FAUST: Get me that girl, and don't ask why!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Which one?

4. The eve of May Day (May 1), when witches are supposed to assemble on the Brocken, a peak in the Hartz Mountains, which are in central Germany. 5. A supernatural being that can take human or animal form.

FAUST: She only just went by.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: That one! She saw her priest just now,
 And he pronounced her free of sin.
 I stood right there and listened in.
 She's so completely blemishless
 That there was nothing to confess.
 Over her I don't have any power.
 FAUST: She is well past her fourteenth year.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Look at the gay Lothario⁶ here!
 He would like to have every flower,
 And thinks each prize or pretty trick
 Just waits around for him to pick;
 But sometimes that just doesn't go.
 FAUST: My Very Reverend Holy Joe,
 Leave me in peace with law and right!
 I tell you, if you don't comply,
 And this sweet young blood doesn't lie
 Between my arms this very night,
 At midnight we'll have parted ways.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Think of the limits of my might.
 I need at least some fourteen days
 To find a handy evening.
 FAUST: If I had peace for seven hours,
 I should not need the Devil's powers
 To seduce such a little thing.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: You speak just like a Frenchman. Wait
 I beg you, and don't be annoyed:
 What have you got when it's enjoyed?
 The fun is not nearly so great
 As when you bit by bit imbibe it,
 And first resort to playful folly
 To knead and to prepare your dolly,
 The way some Gallic tales describe it.
 FAUST: I've appetite without all that.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Now without jokes or tit-for-tat:
 I tell you, with this fair young child
 We simply can't be fast or wild.
 We'd waste our time storming and running;
 We have to have recourse to cunning.
 FAUST: Get something from the angel's nest!
 Or lead me to her place of rest!
 Get me a kerchief from her breast,
 A garter from my darling's knee.
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Just so you see, it touches me
 And I would soothe your agony,
 Let us not linger here and thus delay:
 I'll take you to her room today.

6. The seducer in Nicholas Rowe's play *The Fair Penitent* (1703); hence, figuratively, any seducer. The German reads *Hans Liederlich*, meaning a profligate, since *liederlich* means "careless" or "dissolute."

FAUST: And shall I see her? Have her?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: No.
 To one of her neighbors she has to go.
 But meanwhile you may at your leisure
 Relish the hopes of future pleasure,
 Till you are sated with her atmosphere.
 FAUST: Can we go now?
 MEPHISTOPHELES: It's early yet, I fear.
 FAUST: Get me a present for the dear!
 [*Exit.*]
 MEPHISTOPHELES: A present right away? Good! He will be a hit.
 There's many a nice place I know
 With treasures buried long ago;
 I better look around a bit.
 [*Exit.*]

EVENING

[*A small neat room.*]
 MARGARET: [*Braiding and binding her hair.*]
 I should give much if I could say
 Who was that gentleman today.
 He looked quite gallant, certainly,
 And is of noble family;
 That much even his forehead told—
 How else could he have been so bold?
 [*Exit. Enter MEPHISTOPHELES, FAUST.*]
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Come in, but very quietly!
 FAUST: [*After a short silence.*] I beg you, leave and let me be!
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Sniffing around.*] She's neater than a lot of girls I see.
 [*Exit.*]
 FAUST: [*Looking up and around.*] Sweet light of dusk, guest from above
 That fills this shrine, be welcome you!
 Seize now my heart, sweet agony of love
 That languishes and feeds on hope's clear dew!
 What sense of calm embraces me,
 Of order and complete content!
 What bounty in this poverty!
 And in this prison, ah, what rapture!
 [*He throws himself into the leather armchair by the bed.*]
 Welcome me now, as former ages rested
 Within your open arms in grief and joy!
 How often was this fathers' throne contested
 By eager children, prized by girl and boy!
 And here, perhaps, her full cheeks flushed with bliss,
 My darling, grateful for a Christmas toy,
 Pressed on her grandsire's withered hand a kiss.
 I feel your spirit, lovely maid,
 Of ordered bounty breathing here