

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 20  
 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 Lothario<sup>6</sup> 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! 30  
 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. 35  
 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. 40  
 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 45  
 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: 50  
 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! 55  
 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, 60  
 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 65  
 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. 70  
 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— 5  
 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 10  
 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! 15  
 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 20  
 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, 25  
 Of ordered bounty breathing here

Which, motherly, comes daily to your aid  
 To teach you how a rug is best on tables laid  
 And how the sand should on the floor appear.<sup>7</sup>  
 Oh godlike hand, to you it's given  
 To make a cottage, a kingdom of heaven.  
 And here!

[*He lifts a bed curtain.*]

What raptured shudder makes me stir?

How I should love to be immured  
 Where in light dreams nature matured  
 The angel that's innate in her,  
 Here lay the child, developed slowly,  
 Her tender breast with warm life fraught,  
 And here, through weaving pure and holy,  
 The image of the gods was wrought.

And you! Alas, what brought you here?  
 I feel so deeply moved, so queer!  
 What do you seek? Why is your heart so sore?  
 Poor Faust! I do not know you any more.

Do magic smells surround me here?  
 Immediate pleasure was my bent,  
 But now—in dreams of love I'm all but spent.  
 Are we mere puppets of the atmosphere?

If she returned this instant from her call,  
 How for your mean transgression you would pay!  
 The haughty lad would be so small,  
 Lie at her feet and melt away.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Entering.*] Let's go! I see her in the lane!

FAUST: Away! I'll never come again.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Here is a fairly decent case,

I picked it up some other place.  
 Just leave it in the chest up there.  
 She'll go out of her mind, I swear;  
 For I put things in it, good sir,  
 To win a better one than her.  
 But child is child and play is play.

FAUST: I don't know—should I?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Why delay?

You do not hope to save your jewel?  
 Or I'll give your lust this advice:  
 Don't waste fair daytime like this twice,  
 Nor my exertions: it is cruel.  
 It is not simple greed, I hope!

I scratch my head, I fret and mope—

[*He puts the case into the chest and locks it again.*]

7. Floors were sprinkled with sand after cleaning.

Away! Let's go!—  
 It's just to make the child fulfill  
 Your heart's desire and your will;  
 And you stand and frown  
 As if you had to lecture in cap and gown—  
 As if in gray there stood in front of you  
 Physics and Metaphysics, too.

Away!

[*Exeunt.*]

MARGARET: [*With a lamp.*] It seems so close, so sultry now,

[*She opens the window.*]

And yet outside it's not so warm.  
 I feel so strange, I don't know how—  
 I wish my mother would come home.  
 A shudder grips my body, I feel chilly—  
 How fearful I am and how silly!

[*She begins to sing as she undresses.*]

In Thule<sup>8</sup> there was a king,  
 Faithful unto the grave,  
 To whom his mistress, dying,  
 A golden goblet gave.

Nothing he held more dear.  
 At every meal he used it;  
 His eyes would fill with tears  
 As often as he mused it.

And when he came to dying,  
 The towns in his realm he told.  
 Naught to his heir denying,  
 Except the goblet of gold.

He dined at evenfall  
 With all his chivalry  
 In the ancestral hall  
 In the castle by the sea.

The old man rose at last  
 And drank life's sunset glow.  
 And the sacred goblet he cast  
 Into the flood below.

He saw it plunging, drinking,  
 And sinking into the sea;  
 His eyes were also sinking,  
 And nevermore drank he.

[*She opens the chest to put away her clothes and sees the case.*]

How did this lovely case get in my chest?

8. The fabled *ultima Thule* of Latin literature—those distant lands just beyond the reach of every explorer. Goethe wrote the ballad in 1774; it was published and set to music in 1782 and later inspired the slow movement of Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony*.

I locked it after I got dressed.  
 It certainly seems strange. And what might be in there?  
 It might be a security  
 Left for a loan in Mother's care. 110  
 There is a ribbon with a key;  
 I think I'll open it and see.  
 What is that? God in heaven! There—  
 I never saw such fine array!  
 These jewels! Why a lord's lady could wear 115  
 These on the highest holiday.  
 How would this necklace look on me?  
 Who owns all this? It is so fine.  
 [*She adorns herself and steps before the mirror.*]  
 If those earrings were only mine!  
 One looks quite different right away. 120  
 What good is beauty, even youth?  
 All that may be quite good and fair,  
 But does it get you anywhere?  
 Their praise is half pity, you can be sure.  
 For gold contend, 125  
 On gold depend  
 All things. Woe to us poor!

## PROMENADE

[*FAUST walking up and down, lost in thought. MEPHISTOPHELES enters.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES: By the pangs of despised love! By the elements of hell  
 I wish I knew something worse to curse by it as well!  
 FAUST: What ails you? Steady now, keep level!  
 I never saw a face like yours today.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I'd wish the Devil took me straightaway, 5  
 If I myself were not a devil.  
 FAUST: Has something in your head gone bad?  
 It sure becomes you raving like one mad.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Just think, the jewels got for Margaret—  
 A dirty priest took the whole set. 10  
 The mother gets to see the stuff  
 And starts to shudder, sure enough:  
 She has a nose to smell things out—  
 In prayerbooks she keeps her snout—  
 A whiff of anything makes plain  
 Whether it's holy or profane.  
 She sniffed the jewelry like a rat  
 And knew no blessings came with that.  
 My child, she cried, ill-gotten wealth  
 Will soil your soul and spoil your health. 20  
 We'll give it to the Mother of the Lord  
 And later get a heavenly reward.

Poor Margaret went into a pout;  
 She thought: a gift horse!<sup>9</sup> and, no doubt,  
 Who<sup>1</sup> brought it here so carefully 25  
 Could not be godless, certainly.  
 The mother called a priest at once,  
 He saw the gems and was no dunce;  
 He drooled and then said: Without question,  
 Your instinct is quite genuine, 30  
 Who overcomes himself will win.  
 The Church has a superb digestion,  
 Whole countries she has gobbled up,  
 But never is too full to sup;  
 The Church alone has the good health 35  
 For stomaching ill-gotten wealth.  
 FAUST: Why, everybody does: a Jew  
 And any king can do it, too.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: So he picked up a clasp, necklace, and rings,  
 Like toadstools or some worthless things, 40  
 And did not thank them more nor less  
 Than as if it were nuts or some such mess,  
 And he promised them plenty after they died—  
 And they were duly edified.  
 FAUST: And Gretchen?<sup>2</sup>  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: She, of course, feels blue, 45  
 She sits and doesn't know what to do,  
 Thinks day and night of every gem—  
 Still more of him who furnished them.  
 FAUST: My darling's grief distresses me.  
 Go, get her some new jewelry. 50  
 The first one was a trifling loss.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Oh sure, it's child's play for you, boss.  
 FAUST: Just fix it all to suit my will;  
 Try on the neighbor, too, your skill.  
 Don't, Devil, act like sluggish paste! 55  
 Get some new jewels and make haste!  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Yes, gracious lord, it is a pleasure.  
 [*FAUST exits.*]  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: A fool in love just doesn't care  
 And, just to sweeten darling's leisure,  
 He'd make sun, moon, and stars into thin air. 60  
 [*Exit.*]

## THE NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE

MARTHA: [*Alone.*] May God forgive my husband! He  
 Was certainly not good to me.  
 He went into the world to roam

9. Like the wooden horse in which Greek soldiers entered Troy to capture it; an emblem of treachery. 1. Whoever. 2. Diminutive of the German *Margarete*. She is given this name through much of the play.

And left me on the straw at home.  
 God knows that I have never crossed him,  
 And loved him dearly; yet I lost him. 5  
 [*She cries.*] Perhaps—the thought kills me—he died!—  
 If it were only certified!

[MARGARET enters.]

MARGARET: Dame Martha!

MARTHA: Gretchen, what could it be?

MARGARET: My legs feel faint, though not with pain: 10  
 I found another case, again  
 Right in my press,<sup>3</sup> of ebony,  
 With things more precious all around  
 Than was the first case that I found.

MARTHA: You must not show them to your mother, 15  
 She'd tell the priest as with the other.

MARGARET: Oh look at it! Oh see! Please do!

MARTHA: [*Adorns her.*] You lucky, lucky creature, you!

MARGARET: Unfortunately, it's not meet  
 To wear them in the church or street. 20

MARTHA: Just come here often to see me,  
 Put on the jewels secretly,  
 Walk up and down an hour before the mirror here,  
 And we shall have a good time, dear.  
 Then chances come, perhaps a holiday, 25  
 When we can bit by bit, gem after gem display,  
 A necklace first, than a pearl in your ear;  
 Your mother—we can fool her, or she may never hear.

MARGARET: Who brought the cases and has not appeared?  
 It certainly seems very weird. 30

[*A knock.*]

Oh God, my mother—is it her?

MARTHA: [*Peeping through the curtain.*] It is a stranger—come in, sir!

[MEPHISTOPHELES enters.]

MEPHISTOPHELES: I'll come right in and be so free,  
 If the ladies will grant me the liberty.

[*Steps back respectfully as he sees MARGARET.*]

To Martha Schwerdtlein I wished to speak. 35

MARTHA: It's I. What does your honor seek?

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Softly to her.*] I know you now, that satisfies me,  
 You have very elegant company;

Forgive my intrusion; I shall come back soon—  
 If you don't mind, this afternoon. 40

MARTHA: [*Loud.*] Oh goodness gracious! Did you hear?

He thinks you are a lady, dear!

MARGARET: I'm nothing but a poor young maid;  
 You are much too kind, I am afraid;

3. A type of cupboard in which pressed linens were stored.

The gems and jewels are not my own. 45

MEPHISTOPHELES: It is not the jewelry alone!

Your noble eyes—indeed, it is your whole way!

How glad I am that I may stay!

MARTHA: What is your errand? Please, good sir—

MEPHISTOPHELES: I wish I had better news for her! 50

And don't get cross with your poor guest:

Your husband is dead and sends his best.

MARTHA: Is dead? The faithful heart! Oh dear!

My husband is dead! I shall faint right here.

MARGARET: Oh my dear woman! Don't despair! 55

MEPHISTOPHELES: Let me relate the sad affair.

MARGARET: I should sooner never be a bride:

The grief would kill me if he died.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Joy needs woe, woe requires joy.

MARTHA: Tell me of the end of my sweet boy. 60

MEPHISTOPHELES: In Padua, in Italy,

He is buried in St. Anthony

In ground that has been duly blessed

For such cool, everlasting rest.

MARTHA: Surely, there is something more you bring. 65

MEPHISTOPHELES: One solemn and sincere request:

For his poor soul they should three hundred masses sing.

That's all, my purse is empty, though not of course my breast.

MARTHA: What? Not a gem? No work of art?

I am sure, deep in his bag the poorest wanderer 70

Keeps some remembrance that gives pleasure,

And sooner starves than yields this treasure.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Madam, don't doubt it breaks my heart.

And you may rest assured, he was no squanderer.

He knew his errors well, and he repented, 75

Though his ill fortune was the thing he most lamented.

MARGARET: That men are so unfortunate and poor!

I'll say some Requiems, and for his soul I'll pray.

MEPHISTOPHELES: You would deserve a marriage right away,

For you are charming, I am sure. 80

MARGARET: Oh no! I must wait to be wed.

MEPHISTOPHELES: If not a husband, have a lover instead.

It is one of heaven's greatest charms

To hold such a sweetheart in one's arms.

MARGARET: That is not the custom around here. 85

MEPHISTOPHELES: Custom or not, it's done, my dear.

MARTHA: Please tell me more!

MEPHISTOPHELES: I stood beside the bed he died on;

It was superior to manure,

Of rotted straw, and yet he died a Christian, pure,

And found that there was more on his unsettled score. 90

"I'm hateful," he cried; "wicked was my life,

As I forsook my trade and also left my wife.

To think of it now makes me die.

If only she forgave me even so!"

MARTHA: [*Weeping.*] The darling! I forgave him long ago. 95

MEPHISTOPHELES: "And yet, God knows, she was far worse than I."

MARTHA: He lied—alas, lied at the brink of death!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Surely, he made up things with dying breath,  
If ever I saw death before.

"To pass the time, I could not look around," he said; 100

"First she got children, then they needed bread—

When I say bread, I mean much more—

And she never gave peace for me to eat my share."

MARTHA: Did he forget my love, my faithfulness and care

And how I slaved both day and night? 105

MEPHISTOPHELES: Oh no, he thought of that with all his might;

He said: "When we left Malta for another trip,

I prayed for wife and children fervently,

So heaven showed good grace to me.

And our boat soon caught a Turkish ship 110

That had the mighty sultan's gold on it.

Then fortitude got its reward,

And I myself was given, as was fit,

My share of the great sultan's hoard."

MARTHA: Oh how? Oh where? Might it be buried now? 115

MEPHISTOPHELES: The winds have scattered it, and who knows how?

A pretty girl in Naples, sweet and slim,

Cared for him when he was without a friend

And did so many deeds of love for him

That he could feel it till his blessed end. 120

MARTHA: The rogue! He robbed children and wife!

No misery, no lack of bread

Could keep him from his shameful life!

MEPHISTOPHELES: You see! For that he now is dead. 125

If I were in your place, I'd pause

To mourn him for a year, as meet,

And meanwhile I would try to find another sweet.

MARTHA: Oh God, the way my first one was

I'll hardly find another to be mine!

How could there be a little fool that's fonder? 130

Only he liked so very much to wander,

And foreign women, and foreign wine,

And that damned shooting of the dice.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Well, well! It could have been quite nice,

Had he been willing to ignore

As many faults in you, or more.

On such terms, I myself would woo

And willingly change rings with you.

MARTHA: The gentleman is pleased to jest.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Aside.*] I better get away from here; 140

She'd keep the Devil to his word, I fear.

[*To GRETCHEN.*] And how is your heart? Still at rest?

MARGARET: What do you mean, good sir?

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Aside.*] You good, innocent child!

[*Aloud.*] Good-by, fair ladies!

MARGARET: Good-by.

MARTHA: Oh, not so fast and wild! 145

I'd like to have it certified

That my sweetheart was buried, and when and where he died.

I always hate to see things done obliquely

And want to read his death in our weekly.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Yes, lady, what is testified by two 150

Is everywhere known to be true;

And I happen to have a splendid mate

Whom I'll take along to the magistrate.

I'll bring him here.

MARTHA: Indeed, please do!

MEPHISTOPHELES: And will this maiden be here, too? 155

A gallant lad! Has traveled much with me

And shows young ladies all courtesy.

MARGARET: I would have to blush before him, poor thing.<sup>4</sup>

MEPHISTOPHELES: Not even before a king!

MARTHA: Behind the house, in my garden, then, 160

Tonight we shall expect the gentlemen.

## STREET

[*FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.*]

FAUST: How is it? Well? Can it be soon?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Oh bravo! Now you are on fire?

Soon Gretchen will still your desire.

At Martha's you may see her later this afternoon:

That woman seems expressly made 5

To ply the pimps' and gypsies' trade.

FAUST: Oh good!

MEPHISTOPHELES: But something's wanted from us, too.

FAUST: One good turn makes another due.

MEPHISTOPHELES: We merely have to go and testify 10

That the remains of her dear husband lie

In Padua where Anthony once sat.

FAUST: Now we shall have to go there. Now that was smart of you!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Sancta simplicitas!<sup>5</sup> Who ever thought of that?

Just testify, and hang whether it's true! 15

FAUST: If you know nothing better, this plan has fallen through.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Oh, holy man! You are no less!

Is this the first time in your life that you

Have testified what is not true?

Of God and all the world, and every single part, 20

4. Referring to herself, not to Faust. 5. Holy simplicity (Latin).

Of man and all that stirs inside his head and heart  
 You gave your definitions with power and finesse.  
 With brazen cheek and haughty breath.  
 And if you stop to think, I guess,  
 You know as much of that, you must confess, 25  
 As you know now of Mr. Schwerdtlein's death.  
 FAUST: You are and you remain a sophist and a liar.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Yes, if one's knowledge were not just a little higher.  
 Tomorrow, won't you, pure as air,  
 Deceive poor Gretchen and declare 30  
 Your soul's profoundest love, and swear?  
 FAUST: With all my heart.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Good and fair!  
 Then faithfulness and love eternal  
 And the super-almighty urge supernal—  
 Will that come from your heart as well? 35  
 FAUST: Leave off! It will.—When, lost in feeling,  
 For this urge, for this surge  
 I seek a name, find none, and, reeling  
 All through the world with all my senses gasping,  
 At all the noblest words I'm grasping 40  
 And call this blaze in which I flame,  
 Infinite, eternal eternally—  
 Is that a game or devilish jugglery?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I am still right.  
 FAUST: Listen to me, 45  
 I beg of you, and don't wear out my lung:  
 Whoever would be right and only has a tongue,  
 Always will be.  
 Come on! I'm sick of prating, spare your voice,  
 For you are right because I have no choice.

## GARDEN

[MARGARET on FAUST's arm, MARTHA with MEPHISTOPHELES, walking up and down.]

MARGARET: I feel it well, good sir, you're only kind to me:  
 You condescend—and you abash.  
 It is the traveler's courtesy  
 To put up graciously with trash.  
 I know too well, my poor talk never can 5  
 Give pleasure to a traveled gentleman.  
 FAUST: One glance from you, one word gives far more pleasure  
 Than all the wisdom of this world. [He kisses her hand.]  
 MARGARET: Don't incommode yourself! How could you kiss it? You?  
 It is so ugly, is so rough. 10  
 But all the things that I have had to do!  
 For Mother I can't do enough.  
 [They pass.]

MARTHA: And you, sir, travel all the time, you say?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Alas, our trade and duty keeps us going!  
 Though when one leaves the tears may well be flowing, 15  
 One never is allowed to stay.  
 MARTHA: While it may do in younger years  
 To sweep around the world, feel free and suave,  
 There is the time when old age nears,  
 And then to creep alone, a bachelor, to one's grave. 20  
 That's something everybody fears.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: With dread I see it far away.  
 MARTHA: Then, my dear sir, consider while you may.  
 [They pass.]  
 MARGARET: Yes, out of sight is out of mind.  
 You are polite, you can't deny, 25  
 And often you have friends and find  
 That they are cleverer than I.  
 FAUST: Oh dearest, trust me, what's called clever on this earth  
 Is often vain and rash rather than clever.  
 MARGARET: What?  
 FAUST: Oh, that the innocent and simple never 30  
 Appreciate themselves and their own worth!  
 That meekness and humility, supreme  
 Among the gifts of loving, lavish nature—  
 MARGARET: If you should think of me one moment only,  
 I shall have time enough to think of you and dream. 35  
 FAUST: Are you so often lonely?  
 MARGARET: Yes; while our household is quite small,  
 You see, I have to do it all.  
 We have no maid, so I must cook, and sweep, and knit.  
 And sew, and run early and late; 40  
 And mother is in all of it  
 So accurate!  
 Not that it's necessary; our need is not so great.  
 We could afford much more than many another:  
 My father left a tidy sum to mother, 45  
 A house and garden near the city gate.  
 But now my days are rather plain:  
 A soldier is my brother,  
 My little sister dead.  
 Sore was, while she was living, the troubled life I led; 50  
 But I would gladly go through all of it again:  
 She was so dear to me.  
 FAUST: An angel, if like you.  
 MARGARET: I brought her up, and she adored me, too.  
 She was born only after father's death;  
 Mother seemed near her dying breath, 55  
 As stricken as she then would lie,  
 Though she got well again quite slowly, by and by.  
 She was so sickly and so slight,

She could not nurse the little mite;  
 So I would tend her all alone,  
 With milk and water; she became my own.  
 Upon my arms and in my lap  
 She first grew friendly, tumbled, and grew up.  
 FAUST: You must have felt the purest happiness.  
 MARGARET: But also many hours of distress.  
 The baby's cradle stood at night  
 Beside my bed, and if she stirred I'd wake,  
 I slept so light.  
 Now I would have to feed her, now I'd take  
 Her into my bed, now I'd rise  
 And dandling pace the room to calm the baby's cries.  
 And I would wash before the sun would rise,  
 Fret in the market and over the kitchen flame,  
 Tomorrow as today, always the same.  
 One's spirits, sir, are not always the best,  
 But one can relish meals and relish rest.  
 [*They pass.*]  
 MARTHA: Poor woman has indeed a wretched fate:  
 A bachelor is not easy to convert.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: For one like you the job is not too great;  
 You might convince me if you are alert.  
 MARTHA: Be frank, dear sir, so far you have not found?  
 Has not your heart in some way yet been bound?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: A hearth one owns and a good wife, we're told,  
 Are worth as much as pearls and gold.  
 MARTHA: I mean, have you not ever had a passion?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I always was received in the most friendly fashion.  
 MARTHA: Would say: weren't you ever in earnest in your breast?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: With women one should never presume to speak in  
 jest.  
 MARTHA: Oh, you don't understand.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I'm sorry I'm so blind!  
 But I do understand—that you are very kind.  
 [*They pass.*]  
 FAUST: Oh little angel, you did recognize  
 Me as I came into the garden?  
 MARGARET: Did you not notice? I cast down my eyes.  
 FAUST: My liberty you're then prepared to pardon?  
 What insolence presumed to say  
 As you left church the other day?  
 MARGARET: I was upset, I did not know such daring  
 And no one could have spoken ill of me.  
 I thought that something in my bearing  
 Must have seemed shameless and unmaidenly.  
 He seemed to have the sudden feeling  
 That this wench could be had without much dealing.  
 Let me confess, I didn't know that there

Were other feelings stirring in me, and they grew;  
 But I was angry with myself, I swear,  
 That I could not get angrier with you.  
 FAUST: Sweet darling!  
 MARGARET: Let me do this! [*She plucks a daisy and pulls out the  
 petals one by one.*]  
 FAUST: A nosegay? Or what shall it be?  
 MARGARET:  
 No, it is just a game.  
 FAUST: What?  
 MARGARET: Go, you will laugh at me. [*She pulls out pet-  
 als and murmurs.*]  
 FAUST: What do you murmur?  
 MARGARET: [*Half aloud.*] He loves me—loves me not.  
 FAUST: You gentle countenance of heaven!  
 MARGARET: [*Continues.*] Loves me—not—loves me—not—  
 [*Tearing out the last leaf, in utter joy.*]  
 He loves me.  
 FAUST: Yes, my child. Let this sweet flower's word  
 Be as a god's word to you. He loves you.  
 Do you know what this means? He loves you. [*He takes both her hands.*]  
 MARGARET: My skin creeps.  
 FAUST: Oh, shudder not! But let this glance,  
 And let this clasp of hands tell you  
 What is unspeakable:  
 To yield oneself entirely and feel  
 A rapture which must be eternal.  
 Eternal! For its end would be despair.  
 No, no end! No end!  
 [*MARGARET clasps his hands, frees herself, and runs away. He stands  
 for a moment, lost in thought; then he follows her.*]  
 MARTHA: [*Entering.*] The night draws near.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Yes, and we want to go.  
 MARTHA: I should ask you to tarry even so,  
 But this place simply is too bad:  
 It is as if nobody had  
 Work or labor  
 Except to spy all day long on his neighbor,  
 And one gets talked about, whatever life one leads.  
 And our couple?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Up that path I heard them whirr—  
 Frolicking butterflies.  
 MARTHA: He is taking to her.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: And she to him. That's how the world proceeds.

[*MARGARET leaps into it, hides behind the door, puts the tip of one  
 finger to her lips, and peeks through the crack.*]

MARGARET: He comes.

FAUST: [*Entering.*] Oh rogue, you're teasing me.

Now I see. [*He kisses her.*]

MARGARET: [*Seizing him and returning the kiss.*]

Dearest man! I love you from my heart.

[MEPHISTOPHELES *knocks.*]

FAUST: [*Stamping his foot.*]

Who's there?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

A friend.

FAUST: A beast!

MEPHISTOPHELES: The time has come to part.

MARTHA: [*Entering.*]

Yes, it is late, good sir.

FAUST: May I not take you home?

MARGARET: My mother would—Farewell!

FAUST: Must I leave then?

Farewell.

MARTHA: Adieu.

MARGARET: Come soon again!

[FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES *exeunt.*]

MARGARET: Dear God, the things he thought and said!

How much goes on in a man's head!

Abashed, I merely acquiesce

And cannot answer, except Yes!

I am a poor, dumb child and cannot see

What such a man could find in me.

[*Exit.*]

WOOD AND CAVE

FAUST: [*Alone.*] Exalted spirit, all you gave me, all

That I have asked. And it was not in vain

That amid flames you turned your face toward me.

You gave me royal nature as my own dominion,

Strength to experience her, enjoy her. Not

The cold amazement of a visit only

You granted me, but let me penetrate

Into her heart as into a close friend's.

You lead the hosts of all that is alive

Before my eyes, teach me to know my brothers

In quiet bushes and in air and water.

And when the storm roars in the wood and creaks,

The giant fir tree, falling, hits and smashes

The neighbor branches and the neighbor trunks,

And from its hollow thud the mountain thunders,

Then you lead me to this safe cave and show

Me to myself, and all the most profound

And secret wonders of my breast are opened.

And when before my eyes the pure moon rises

And passes soothingly, there float to me

From rocky cliffs and out of dewy bushes

The silver shapes of a forgotten age,

And soften meditation's somber joy.

Alas, that man is granted nothing perfect

I now experience. With this happiness

Which brings me close and closer to the gods,

You gave me the companion whom I can

Forego no more, though with cold impudence

He makes me small in my own eyes and changes

Your gifts to nothing with a few words' breath.

He kindles in my breast a savage fire

And keeps me thirsting after that fair image.

Thus I reel from desire to enjoyment,

And in enjoyment languish for desire.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Enters.*] Have you not led this life quite long enough?<sup>35</sup>

How can it keep amusing you?

It may be well for once to try such stuff

But then one turns to something new.

FAUST: I wish that you had more to do

And would not come to pester me.

MEPHISTOPHELES: All right. I gladly say adieu—

You should not say that seriously.

A chap like you, unpleasant, mad, and cross,

Would hardly be a serious loss.

All day long one can work and slave away.

And what he likes and what might cause dismay,

It simply isn't possible to say.

FAUST: That is indeed the proper tone!

He wants my thanks for being such a pest.

MEPHISTOPHELES: If I had left you wretch alone,

Would you then live with greater zest?

Was it not I that helped you to disown,

And partly cured, your feverish unrest

Yes, but<sup>6</sup> for me, the earthly zone

Would long be minus one poor guest.

And now, why must you sit like an old owl

In caves and rocky clefts, and scowl?

From soggy moss and dripping stones you lap your food

Just like a toad, and sit and brood.

A fair, sweet way to pass the time!

Still steeped in your doctoral slime!

FAUST: How this sojourn in the wilderness

Renews my vital force, you cannot guess.

And if you apprehended this,

6. Were it not.



You would be Devil enough, to envy me my bliss. 65  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: A supernatural delight!  
 To lie on mountains in the dew and night,  
 Embracing earth and sky in raptured reeling,  
 To swell into a god—in one's own feeling—  
 To probe earth's marrow with vague divination, 70  
 Sense in your breast the whole work of creation,  
 With haughty strength enjoy, I know not what,  
 Then overflow into all things with love so hot,  
 Gone is all earthly inhibition,  
 And then the noble intuition— [*With a gesture.*] 75  
 Of—need I say of what emission?

FAUST: Shame!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

That does not meet with your acclaim;  
 You have the right to cry indignant: shame!  
 One may not tell chaste ears what, beyond doubt,  
 The chastest heart could never do without. 80  
 And, once for all, I don't grudge you the pleasure  
 Of little self-deceptions at your leisure;  
 But it can't last indefinitely.  
 Already you are spent again,  
 And soon you will be rent again, 85  
 By madness and anxiety.  
 Enough of that. Your darling is distraught,  
 Sits inside, glum and in despair,  
 She can't put you out of her mind and thought  
 And loves you more than she can bear. 90  
 At first your raging love was past control,  
 As brooks that overflow when filled with melted snow;  
 You poured it out into her soul,  
 But now your little brook is low. 95  
 Instead of posing in the wood,  
 It seems to me it might be good  
 If for her love our noble lord  
 Gave the poor monkey some reward.  
 Time seems to her intolerably long;  
 She stands at her window and sees the clouds in the sky 100  
 Drift over the city wall and go by.  
 Were I a little bird! thus goes her song  
 For days and half the night long.  
 Once she may be cheerful, most of the time sad,  
 Once she has spent her tears, 105  
 Then she is calm, it appears,  
 And always loves you like mad.

FAUST: Serpent! Snake!

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Aside.*] If only I catch the rake!

FAUST: Damnable fiend! Get yourself hence, 110  
 And do not name the beautiful maid!

Let not the lust for her sweet limbs invade  
 And ravish once again my frenzied sense!  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: What do you mean? She thinks you've run away:  
 And it is half-true, I must say. 115  
 FAUST: I am near her, however far I be,  
 She'll never be forgotten and ignored;  
 Indeed, I am consumed with jealousy  
 That her lips touch the body of the Lord.<sup>7</sup>  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I'm jealous of my friend when she exposes 120  
 The pair of twins that feed among the roses.<sup>8</sup>  
 FAUST: Begone, pander!  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Fine! Your wrath amuses me.  
 The God who fashioned man and maid  
 Was quick to recognize the noblest trade, 125  
 And procured opportunity.  
 Go on! It is a woeful pain!  
 You're to embrace your love again,  
 Not sink into the tomb.  
 FAUST: What are the joys of heaven in her arms? 130  
 Let me embrace her, feel her charms—  
 Do I not always sense her doom?  
 Am I not fugitive? without a home?  
 Inhuman, without aim or rest,  
 As, like the cataract, from rock to rock I foam, 135  
 Raging with passion, toward the abyss?  
 And nearby, she—with childlike blunt desires  
 Inside her cottage on the Alpine leas,  
 And everything that she requires  
 Was in her own small world at ease. 140  
 And I, whom the gods hate and mock,  
 Was not satisfied  
 That I seized the rock  
 And smashed the mountainside.  
 Her—her peace I had to undermine. 145  
 You, hell, desired this sacrifice upon your shrine.  
 Help, Devil, shorten this time of dread.  
 What must be done, come let it be.  
 Let then her fate come shattering on my head,  
 And let her perish now with me. 150  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: How now it boils again and how you shout.  
 Go in and comfort her, you dunce.  
 Where such a little head sees no way out,  
 He thinks the end must come at once.  
 Long live who holds out undeterred! 155  
 At other times you have the Devil's airs.  
 In all the world there's nothing more absurd  
 Than is a Devil who despairs.

7. When the bread of Communion miraculously turns to the body of Christ. 8. Compare Song of Solomon 4:5: "Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies."

## GRETCHEN'S ROOM

GRETCHEN: [*At the spinning wheel, alone.*]

My peace is gone,  
My heart is sore;  
I find it never  
And nevermore.

Where him I not have  
There is my grave.  
This world is all  
Turned into gall.

And my poor head  
Is quite insane,  
And my poor mind  
Is rent with pain.

My peace is gone,  
My heart is sore;  
I find it never  
And nevermore.

For him only I look  
From my window seat,  
For him only I go  
Out into the street.

His lofty gait,  
His noble guise,  
The smile of his mouth,  
The force of his eyes,

And his words' flow—  
Enchanting bliss—  
The touch of his hand,  
And, oh, his kiss.

My peace is gone,  
My heart is sore;  
I find it never  
And nevermore.

My bosom surges  
For him alone,  
Oh that I could clasp him  
And hold him so,

And kiss him  
To my heart's content,  
Till in his kisses  
I were spent.

## MARTHA'S GARDEN

[MARGARET. FAUST.]

MARGARET: Promise me, Heinrich.<sup>9</sup>

FAUST: Whatever I can.

MARGARET: How is it with your religion, please admit—

You certainly are a very good man,  
But I believe you don't think much of it.

FAUST: Leave that, my child. I love you, do not fear  
And would give all for those whom I hold dear,  
Would not rob anyone of church or creed.

MARGARET: That is not enough, it is faith we need.

FAUST: Do we?

MARGARET: Oh that I had some influence!

You don't respect the holy sacraments.

FAUST: I do respect them.

MARGARET: But without desire.

The mass and confession you do not require.

Do you believe in God?

FAUST: My darling who may say

I believe in God?

Ask priests and sages, their reply

Looks like sneers that mock and prod

The one who asked the question.

MARGARET: Then you deny him there?

FAUST: Do not mistake me, you who are so fair.

Him— who may name?

And who proclaim:

I believe in him?

Who may feel,

Who dare reveal

In words: I believe him not?

The All-Embracing,

The All-Sustaining,

Does he not embrace and sustain

You, me, himself?

Does not the heaven vault above?

Is the earth not firmly based down here?

And do not, friendly,

Eternal stars rise?

Do we not look into each other's eyes,

And all in you is surging

To your head and heart,

And weaves in timeless mystery,

Unseeable, yet seen, around you?

Then let it fill your heart entirely,

And when your rapture in this feeling is complete,

9. Faust. In the legend, Faust's name was generally Johann (John). Goethe changed it to Heinrich (Henry).

Call it then as you will, 40  
 Call it bliss! heart! love! God!  
 I do not have a name  
 For this. Feeling is all;  
 Names are but sound and smoke  
 Befogging heaven's blazes. 45

MARGARET: Those are very fair and noble phrases;  
 The priest says something, too, like what you spoke—  
 Only his words are not quite so—

FAUST: Wherever you go, 50  
 All hearts under the heavenly day  
 Say it, each in its own way;  
 Why not I in mine?

MARGARET: When one listens to you, one might incline  
 To let it pass—but I can't agree,  
 For you have no Christianity. 55

FAUST: Dear child!

MARGARET: It has long been a grief to me  
 To see you in such company.

FAUST: Why?

MARGARET: The man that goes around with you  
 Seems hateful to me through and through: 60  
 In all my life there's not a thing  
 That gave my heart as sharp a sting  
 As his repulsive eyes.

FAUST: Sweet doll, don't fear him anyway.

MARGARET: His presence makes me feel quite ill. 65  
 I bear all other men good will;  
 But just as to see you I languish,  
 This man fills me with secret anguish;  
 He seems a knave one should not trust.  
 May God forgive me if I am unjust. 70

FAUST: There must be queer birds, too, you know.

MARGARET: But why live with them even so?  
 Whenever he comes in,  
 He always wears a mocking grin  
 And looks half threatening: 75  
 One sees, he has no sympathy for anything;  
 It is written on his very face  
 That he thinks love is a disgrace.  
 In your arm I feel good and free,  
 Warm and abandoned as can be; 80  
 Alas, my heart and feelings are choked when he comes, too.

FAUST: Oh, you foreboding angel, you.

MARGARET: It makes my heart so sore  
 That, when he only comes our way,  
 I feel I do not love you any more; 85  
 And where he is, I cannot pray.  
 It eats into my heart. Oh you,

Dear Heinrich, must feel that way, too.  
 FAUST: That is just your antipathy.  
 MARGARET: I must go.  
 FAUST: Will there never be 90  
 At your sweet bosom one hour of rest  
 When soul touches on soul and breast on breast?

MARGARET: Had I my own room when I sleep,  
 I should not bolt the door tonight;  
 But Mother's slumber is not deep, 95  
 And if she found us thus—oh fright,  
 Right then and there I should drop dead.

FAUST: My angel, if that's what you dread,  
 Here is a bottle. Merely shake  
 Three drops into her cup, 100  
 And she won't easily wake up.

MARGARET: What should I not do for your sake?  
 It will not harm her if one tries it?

FAUST: Dear, if it would, would I advise it?

MARGARET: When I but look at you, I thrill, 105  
 I don't know why, my dear, to do your will;  
 I have already done so much for you  
 That hardly anything seems left to do.  
 [Exit. Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.]

MEPHISTOPHELES: The monkey! Is she gone?  
 FAUST: You spied? 110  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Are you surprised?  
 I listened and I understood  
 Our learned doctor just was catechized.  
 I hope that it may do you good.  
 The girls are quite concerned to be apprised  
 If one is pious and obeys tradition. 115  
 If yes, they trust they can rely on his submission.

FAUST: You monster will not see nor own  
 That this sweet soul, in loyalty,  
 Full of her own creed  
 Which alone, 120  
 She trusts, can bring salvation, lives in agony  
 To think her lover lost, however she may plead.

MEPHISTOPHELES: You supersensual, sensual wooer,  
 A maiden leads you by the nose.

FAUST: You freak of filth and fire! Evildoer!

MEPHISTOPHELES: And what a knowledge of physiognomy she shows. 125  
 She feels, she knows not what, whenever I'm about;  
 She finds a hidden meaning in my eyes:  
 I am a demon, beyond doubt,  
 Perhaps the Devil, that is her surmise.  
 Well, tonight—?

FAUST: What's that to you? 130  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I have my pleasure in it, too.

## AT THE WELL

[GRETCHEN and LIESCHEN with jugs.]

LIESCHEN: Of Barbara you haven't heard?

GRETCHEN: I rarely see people—no, not a word.

LIESCHEN: Well, Sibyl just told me in front of the school:

That girl has at last been made a fool.

That comes from having airs.

GRETCHEN: How so?

LIESCHEN: It stinks!

She is feeding two when she eats and drinks.

GRETCHEN: Oh!

LIESCHEN: At last she has got what was coming to her.

She stuck to that fellow like a burr.

That was some prancing,

In the village, and dancing,

She was always the first in line;

And he flirted with her over pastries and wine;

And she thought that she looked divine—

But had no honor, no thought of her name,

And took his presents without any shame.

The way they slobbered and carried on;

But now the little flower is gone.

GRETCHEN: Poor thing!

LIESCHEN: That you don't say!

When girls like us would be spinning away,

And mother kept us at home every night,

She was with her lover in sweet delight

On the bench by the door, in dark alleys they were,

And the time was never too long for her.

Now let her crouch and let her bend down

And do penance in a sinner's gown!

GRETCHEN: He will surely take her to be his wife.

LIESCHEN: He would be a fool! A handsome boy

Will elsewhere find more air and joy.

He's already gone.

GRETCHEN: That is not fair!

LIESCHEN: And if she gets him, let her beware:

Her veil the boys will throw to the floor,

And we shall strew chaff in front of her door.<sup>1</sup>

[Exit.]

GRETCHEN: [Going home.] How I once used to scold along

When some poor woman had done wrong.

How for another person's shame

I found not words enough of blame.

How black it seemed—I made it blacker still,

And yet not black enough to suit my will.

1. In Germany this treatment was reserved for young women who had sexual relations before marriage.

I blessed myself, would boast and grin—

And now myself am caught in sin.

Yet—everything that brought me here,

God, was so good, oh, was so dear.

## CITY WALL

[In a niche in the wall, an image of the Mater Dolorosa.<sup>2</sup> Ewers with flowers in front of it.]

GRETCHEN: [Puts fresh flowers into the ewers.]

Incline,

Mother of pain,

Your face in grace to my despair.

A sword in your heart,

With pain rent apart,

Up to your son's dread death you stare.

On the Father your eyes,

You send up sighs

For your and your son's despair.

Who knows

My woes—

Despair in every bone!

How my heart is full of anguish,

How I tremble, how I languish,

Know but you, and you alone.

Wherever I may go,

What woe, what woe, what woe

Is in my bosom aching!

Scarcely alone am I,

I cry, I cry, I cry;

My heart in me is breaking.

The pots in front of my window

I watered with tears as the dew,

When early in the morning

I broke these flowers for you.

When bright into my room

The sun his first rays shed,

I sat in utter gloom

Already on my bed.

Help! Rescue me from shame and death!

Incline,

Mother of pain,

Your face in grace to my despair.

2. Sorrowful mother (Latin, literal trans.); that is, the Virgin Mary.

## NIGHT

[Street in front of GRETCHEN'S door.]

VALENTINE: [Soldier, GRETCHEN'S brother.]

When I would sit at a drinking bout  
Where all had much to brag about,  
And many fellows raised their voice  
To praise the maidens of their choice,  
Glass after glass was drained with toasting,  
I listened smugly to their boasting,  
My elbow propped up on the table,  
And sneered at fable after fable.  
I'd stroke my beard and smile and say,  
Holding my bumper in my hand:  
Each may be nice in her own way,  
But is there one in the whole land  
Like sister Gretchen to outdo her,  
Hear, hear! Clink! Clink! it went around;  
And some would cry: It's true, yes sir,  
There is no other girl like her!  
The braggarts sat without a sound.  
And now—I could tear out my hair  
And dash my brain out in despair!  
His nose turned up, a scamp can face me,  
With taunts and sneers he can disgrace me;  
And I should I sit, like one in debt,  
Each chance remark should make me sweat!  
I'd like to grab them all and maul them,  
But liars I could never call them.

What's coming there? What sneaks in view?  
If I mistake not, there are two.  
If it is he, I'll spare him not,  
He shall not living leave this spot.

[FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES enter.]

FAUST: How from the window of that sacristy  
The light of the eternal lamp is glimmering,  
And weak and weaker sideward shimmering,  
As night engulfs it like the sea.  
My heart feels like this nightly street.

MEPHISTOPHELES: And I feel like a cat in heat,  
That creeps around a fire escape  
Pressing against the wall its shape.  
I feel quite virtuous, I confess,  
A little thievish lust, a little rammishness.  
Thus I feel spooking through each vein  
The wonderful Walpurgis Night.  
In two days it will come again,  
And waking then is pure delight.

FAUST: And will the treasure that gleams over there  
Rise in the meantime up into the air?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Quite soon you may enjoy the pleasure  
Of taking from the pot the treasure.  
The other day I took a squint  
And saw fine lion dollars in't.

FAUST: Not any jewelry, not a ring  
To adorn my beloved girl?

MEPHISTOPHELES: I did see something like a string,  
Or something like it, made of pearl.

FAUST: Oh, that is fine, for it's unpleasant  
To visit her without a present.

MEPHISTOPHELES: It should not cause you such distress  
When you have gratis such success.

Now that the sky gleams with its starry throng,

Prepare to hear a work of art:

I shall sing her a moral song

To take no chance we fool her heart.

[Sings to the cither.<sup>3</sup>]

It's scarcely day,

Oh, Katie, say,

Why do you stay

Before your lover's door?

Leave now, leave now!

For in you'll go

A maid, I know,

Come out a maid no more.

You ought to shun

That kind of fun;

Once it is done,

Good night, you poor, poor thing.

For your own sake

You should not make

Love to a rake

Unless you have the ring.<sup>4</sup>

VALENTINE: [Comes forward.] Whom would you lure? God's element!  
Rat-catching piper! Oh, perdition!

The Devil take your instrument!

The Devil then take the musician!

MEPHISTOPHELES: The cither is all smashed. It is beyond repair.

VALENTINE: Now let's try splitting skulls. Beware!

MEPHISTOPHELES: [To FAUST.] Don't withdraw, doctor! Quick, don't  
tarry!

Stick close to me, I'll lead the way.

3. Or zither, a stringed instrument. 4. Lines 63–78 are adapted by Goethe from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* IV.5.

Unsheathe your toothpick, don't delay;

Thrust out at him, and I shall parry.

VALENTINE: Then parry that!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Of course.

VALENTINE: And that.

MEPHISTOPHELES: All right.

VALENTINE: I think the Devil must be in this fight.

What could that be? My hand is getting lame.

MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To FAUST.*] Thrust home!

VALENTINE: [*Falls.*] Oh God!

MEPHISTOPHELES: The rogue is tame.

Now hurry hence, for we must disappear:

A murderous clamor rises instantly,

And while the police does not trouble me,

The blood ban is a thing I fear.

MARTHA: [*At a window.*] Come out! Come out!

GRETCHEN: [*At a window.*] Quick! Bring a light.

MARTHA: [*As above.*] They swear and scuffle, yell and fight.

PEOPLE: There is one dead already, see.

MARTHA: [*Coming out.*] The murderers—where did they run?

GRETCHEN: [*Coming out.*] Who lies there?

PEOPLE: Your own mother's son.

GRETCHEN: Almighty God! What misery!

VALENTINE: I'm dying. That is quickly said,

And still more quickly done.

Why do you women wail in dread?

Come here, listen to me.

[*All gather around him.*]

My Gretchen, you are still quite green,

Not nearly smart enough or keen,

You do not do things right.

In confidence, I should say more:

Since after all you are a whore,

Be one with all your might.

GRETCHEN: My brother! God! What frightful shame!

VALENTINE: Leave the Lord God out of this game.

What has been done, alas, is done,

And as it must, it now will run.

You started secretly with one,

Soon more will come to join the fun,

And once a dozen lays you down,

You might as well invite the town.

When shame is born and first appears,

It is an underhand delight,

And one drags the veil of night

Over her head and ears;

One is tempted to put her away.

But as she grows, she gets more bold,

Walks naked even in the day,

Though hardly fairer to behold.

The more repulsive grows her sight,

The more she seeks day's brilliant light.

The time I even now discern

When honest citizens will turn,

Harlot, away from you and freeze

As from a corpse that breeds disease.

Your heart will flinch, your heart will falter

When they will look you in the face.

You'll wear no gold, you'll wear no lace,

Nor in the church come near the altar.

You will no longer show your skill

At dances, donning bow and frill,

But in dark corners on the side

With beggars and cripples you'll seek to hide;

And even if God should at last forgive,

Be cursed as long as you may live!

MARTHA: Ask God to show your own soul grace.

Don't make it with blasphemies still more base.

VALENTINE: That I could lay my hands on you,

You shriveled, pimping bugaboo,

Then, I hope, I might truly win

Forgiveness for my every sin.

GRETCHEN: My brother! This is agony!

VALENTINE: I tell you, do not bawl at me.

When you threw honor overboard,

You pierced my heart more than the sword.

Now I shall cross death's sleeping span

To God, a soldier and an honest man.

[*Dies.*]

#### CATHEDRAL

[*Service, Organ, and Singing.* GRETCHEN among many people. EVIL SPIRIT behind GRETCHEN.]

EVIL SPIRIT: How different you felt, Gretchen,

When in innocence

You came before this altar;

And from the well-worn little book

You prattled prayers,

Half childish games,

Half God in your heart!

Gretchen!

Where are your thoughts?

And in your heart

What misdeed?

Do you pray for your mother's soul that went

Because of you from sleep to lasting, lasting pain?

Upon your threshold, whose blood?  
 And underneath your heart,  
 Does it not stir and swell,  
 Frightened and frightening you  
 With its foreboding presence?  
 GRETCHEN: Oh! Oh!  
 That I were rid of all the thoughts  
 Which waver in me to and fro  
 Against me!  
 CHOIR: Dies irae, dies illa  
 Solvet saeculum in favilla.<sup>5</sup>  
 [Sound of the organ.]  
 EVIL SPIRIT: Wrath grips you.  
 The great trumpet sounds.  
 The graves are quaking.  
 And your heart,  
 Resurrected  
 From ashen calm  
 To flaming tortures,  
 Flares up.  
 GRETCHEN: Would I were far!  
 I feel as if the organ had  
 Taken my breath,  
 As if the song  
 Dissolved my heart!  
 CHOIR: Judex ergo cum sedebit,  
 Quidquid latet adparebit,  
 Nil inultum remanebit.<sup>6</sup>  
 GRETCHEN: I feel so close.  
 The stony pillars  
 Imprison me.  
 The vault above  
 Presses on me.—Air!  
 EVIL SPIRIT: Hide yourself. Sin and shame  
 Do not stay hidden.  
 Air? Light?  
 Woe unto you!  
 CHOIR: Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?  
 Quem patronum rogaturus?  
 Cum vix justus sit securus.<sup>7</sup>  
 EVIL SPIRIT: The transfigured turn  
 Their countenance from you.  
 To hold out their hands to you  
 Makes the pure shudder.  
 Woe!

5. Day of wrath, that day that dissolves the world into ashes (Latin). This is a famous 13th-century hymn by Thomas Celano. 6. When the judge shall be seated, what is hidden shall appear, nothing shall remain unavenged (Latin). 7. What shall I say in my wretchedness? To whom shall I appeal when scarcely the righteous man is safe? (Latin).

CHOIR: *Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?*  
 GRETCHEN: Neighbor! Your smelling salts! [*She faints.*]

## WALPURGIS NIGHT

[*Harz Mountains. Region of Schierke and Elend. FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES: How would you like a broomstick now to fly?  
 I wish I had a billy goat that's tough.  
 For on this road we still have to climb high.  
 FAUST: As long as I feel fresh, and while my legs are spry,  
 This knotted staff seems good enough.  
 Why should we shun each stumbling block?  
 To creep first through the valleys' lovely maze,  
 And then to scale this wall of rock  
 From which the torrent foams in silver haze—  
 There is the zest that spices our ways.  
 Around the birches weaves the spring,  
 Even the fir tree feels its spell:  
 Should it not stir in our limbs as well?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Of all that I don't feel a thing.  
 In me the winter is still brisk,  
 I wish my path were graced with frost and snow.  
 How wretchedly the moon's imperfect disk  
 Arises now with its red, tardy glow,  
 And is so dim that one could bump one's head  
 At every step against a rock or tree!  
 Let's use a will-o'-the-wisp<sup>8</sup> instead!  
 I see one there that burns quite merrily.  
 Hello there! Would you come and join us, friend?  
 Why blaze away to no good end?  
 Please be so kind and show us up the hill!  
 WILL-O'-THE-WISP: I hope my deep respect will help me force  
 My generally flighty will;  
 For zigzag is the rule in our course.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Hear! Hear! It's man you like to imitate!  
 Now, in the Devil's name, go straight—  
 Or I shall blow your flickering life span out.  
 WILL-O'-THE-WISP: You are the master of the house, no doubt,  
 And I shall try to serve you nicely.  
 But don't forget, the mountain is magic-mad today,  
 And if Will-o'-the-wisp must guide you on your way,  
 You must not take things too precisely.  
 FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and WILL-O'-THE-WISP: [*In alternating song.*]  
 In the sphere of dream and spell  
 We have entered now indeed.  
 Have some pride and guide us well

8. *Ignis fatuus*, a wavering light formed by marsh gas. In German folklore it was thought to lead travelers to their destruction.

That we get ahead with speed 40  
In the vast deserted spaces!

See the trees behind the trees,  
See how swiftly they change places,  
And the cliffs that bow with ease,  
Craggy noses, long and short, 45  
How they snore and how they snort!

Through the stones and through the leas  
Tumble brooks of every sort.  
Is it splash or melodies?  
Is it love that wails and prays, 50  
Voices of those heavenly days?  
What we hope and what we love!  
Echoes and dim memories  
Of forgotten times come back.

Oo-hoo! Shoo-hoo! Thus they squawk, 55  
Screech owl, plover, and the hawk;  
Did they all stay up above?  
Are those salamanders crawling?  
Bellies bloated, long legs sprawling!  
And the roots, as serpents, coil 60  
From the rocks through sandy soil,  
With their eerie bonds would scare us,  
Block our path and then ensnare us;  
Hungry as a starving leech,  
Their strong polyp's tendrils reach 65  
For the wanderer. And in swarms  
Mice of myriad hues and forms  
Storm through moss and heath and lea.  
And a host of fireflies  
Throng about and improvise 70  
The most maddening company.

Tell me: do we now stand still,  
Or do we go up the hill?  
Everything now seems to mill,  
Rocks and trees and faces blend, 75  
Will-o'-the-wisps grow and extend  
And inflate themselves at will.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Grip my coat and hold on tight!  
Here is such a central height  
Where one sees, and it amazes, 80  
In the mountain, Mammon's blazes.<sup>9</sup>

FAUST: How queer glimmers a dawnlike sheen  
Faintly beneath this precipice,

9. Mammon is imagined as leading a group of fallen angels in digging out gold and gems from the ground of Hell, presumably for Satan's palace, as described in Milton's *Paradise Lost* 1.678ff.

And plays into the dark ravine  
Of the near bottomless abyss. 85  
Here mists arise, there vapors spread,  
And here it gleams deep in the mountain,  
Then creeps along, a tender thread,  
And gushes up, a glistening fountain.

Here it is winding in a tangle, 90  
With myriad veins the gorges blaze,  
And here in this congested angle  
A single stream shines through the haze.  
There sparks are flying at our right,  
As plentiful as golden sand. 95  
But look! In its entire height  
The rock becomes a firebrand.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Sir Mammon never spares the light  
To hold the feast in proper fashion.  
How lucky that you saw this sight! 100  
I hear the guests approach in wanton passion.

FAUST: The tempests lash the air and rave,  
And with gigantic blows they hit my shoulders.

MEPHISTOPHELES: You have to clutch the ribs of those big hoary boulders, 105  
Or they will hurtle you to that abysmal grave.  
A fog blinds the night with its hood.  
Do you hear the crashes in the wood?  
Frightened, the owls are scattered.  
Hear how the pillars  
Of ever green castles are shattered. 110  
Quaking and breaking of branches!  
The trunks' overpowering groaning!  
The roots' creaking and moaning!  
In a frightfully tangled fall  
They crash over each other, one and all, 115  
And through the ruin-covered abysses  
The frenzied air howls and hisses.  
Do you hear voices up high?  
In the distance and nearby?  
The whole mountain is afire 120  
With a furious magic choir.

WITCHES' CHORUS: The witches ride to Blocksberg's top,  
The stubble is yellow, and green the crop.  
They gather on the mountainside,  
Sir Urian<sup>1</sup> comes to preside. 125

We are riding over crag and brink,  
The witches fart, the billy goats stink.  
VOICE: Old Baubo<sup>2</sup> comes alone right now,  
She is riding on a mother sow.

1. A name for the Devil. 2. In Greek mythology, the nurse of Demeter, noted for her obscenity and bestiality.



CHORUS: Give honor to whom honor's due!  
 Dame Baubo, lead our retinue!  
 A real swine and mother, too,  
 The witches' crew will follow you.  
 VOICE: Which way did you come?  
 VOICE: By the Ilsestone.  
 I peeped at the owl who was roosting alone.  
 Did she ever make eyes!  
 VOICE: Oh, go to hell!  
 Why ride so pell-mell?  
 VOICE: See how she has flayed me!  
 The wounds she made me!  
 WITCHES' CHORUS: The way is wide, the way is long;  
 Just see the frantic pushing throng!  
 The broomstick pokes, the pitchfork thrusts  
 The infant chokes, the mother bursts.  
 WIZARDS' HALF CHORUS: Slow as the snail's is our pace,  
 The women are ahead and race;  
 When it goes to the Devil's place,  
 By a thousand steps they win the race.  
 OTHER HALF: If that is so, we do not mind it:  
 With a thousand steps the women find it;  
 But though they rush, we do not care:  
 With one big jump the men get there.  
 VOICE: [*Above.*] Come on, come on from Rocky Lake!  
 VOICES: [*From below.*] We'd like to join you and partake.  
 We wash, but though we are quite clean,  
 We're barren as we've always been.  
 BOTH CHORUSES: The wind is hushed, the star takes flight,  
 The dreary moon conceals her light.  
 As it whirls by, the wizards' choir  
 Scatters a myriad sparks of fire.  
 VOICE: [*From below.*] Halt, please! Halt, ho!  
 VOICE: [*From above.*] Who calls out of the cleft below?  
 VOICE: [*Below.*] Take me along! Take me along!  
 I've been climbing for three hundred years,  
 And yet the peak I cannot find.  
 But I would like to join my kind.  
 BOTH CHORUSES: The stick and broom can make you float,  
 So can pitchfork and billy goat;  
 Who cannot rise today to soar,  
 That man is doomed for evermore.  
 HALF-WITCH: [*Below.*] I move and move and try and try;  
 How did the others get so high?  
 At home I'm restless through and through,  
 And now shall miss my chance here, too.  
 WITCHES' CHORUS: The salve gives courage to the witch,  
 For sails we use a rag and switch,  
 A tub's a ship, if you know how;

If you would ever fly, fly now!  
 BOTH CHORUSES: We near the peak, we fly around,  
 Now sweep down low over the ground,  
 And cover up the heath's vast regions  
 With witches' swarms and wizards' legions.  
 [*They alight.*]  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: They throng and push, they rush and clatter.  
 They hiss and whirl, they pull and chatter.  
 It glistens, sparks, and stinks and flares;  
 Those are indeed the witches' airs!  
 Stay close to me, or we'll be solitaires!  
 Where are you?  
 FAUST: [*Far away.*] Here.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: So far? Almost a loss!  
 Then I must show them who is boss.  
 Back! Squire Nick is coming! Back, sweet rabble! Slump!  
 Here, Doctor, take a hold! And now in one big jump  
 Let's leave behind this noisy crowd;  
 Even for me it's much too loud.  
 On that side is a light with quite a special flare,  
 Let's penetrate the bushes' shroud;  
 Come, come! Now let us slink in there!  
 FAUST: Spirit of Contradiction! Go on! I'll follow him.  
 I must say, it's exceptionally bright  
 To wander to the Blocksberg in the Walpurgis Night,  
 To isolate ourselves to follow out some whim.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: You see that multicolored flare?  
 A cheerful club is meeting there:  
 In small groups one is not alone.  
 FAUST: I'd rather be up there: around that stone  
 The fires blaze, they have begun;  
 The crowds throng to the Evil One  
 Where many riddles must be solved.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: But many new ones are evolved.  
 Leave the great world, let it run riot,  
 And let us stay where it is quiet.  
 It's something that has long been done,  
 To fashion little worlds within the bigger one.  
 I see young witches there, completely nude,  
 And old ones who are veiled as shrewdly.  
 Just for my sake, don't treat them rudely;  
 It's little effort and great fun!  
 There are some instruments that grind and grit.  
 Damnable noise! One must get used to it.  
 Come on! Come on! Please do not fret!  
 I'll lead the way and take you to this place,  
 And you will be quite grateful yet!  
 What do you say? There isn't enough space?  
 Just look! You barely see the other end.

A hundred fires in a row, my friend!  
 They dance, they chat, they cook, they drink, they court;  
 Now you just tell me where there's better sport! 225  
 FAUST: When you will introduce us at this revel,  
 Will you appear a sorcerer or devil?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: I generally travel, without showing my station,  
 But on a gala day one shows one's decoration.  
 I have no garter<sup>3</sup> I could show, 230  
 But here the cloven foot is honored, as you know.  
 Do you perceive that snail? It comes, though it seems stiff;  
 For with its eager, groping face  
 It knows me with a single whiff.  
 Though I'd conceal myself, they'd know me in this place. 235  
 Come on! From flame to flame we'll make our tour,  
 I am the go-between, and you the wooer.  
 [*To some who sit around dying embers.*]  
 Old gentlemen, why tarry outside? Enter!  
 I'd praise you if I found you in the center,  
 Engulfed by youthful waves and foam; 240  
 You are alone enough when you are home.  
 GENERAL: Who ever thought nations were true,  
 Though you have served them with your hands and tongue;  
 For people will, as women do,  
 Reserve their greatest favors for the young. 245  
 STATESMAN: Now they are far from what is sage;  
 The old ones should be kept in awe;  
 For, truly, when our word was law,  
 Then was indeed the golden age.  
 PARVENU: We, too, had surely ample wits, 250  
 And often did things that we shouldn't;  
 But now things are reversed and go to bits,  
 Just when we changed our mind and wished they wouldn't.  
 AUTHOR: Today, who even looks at any book  
 That makes some sense and is mature? 255  
 And our younger generation—look,  
 You never saw one that was so cocksure.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Who suddenly appears very old.*]  
 I think the Judgment Day must soon draw nigh,  
 For this is the last time I can attend this shrine;  
 And as my little cask runs dry, 260  
 The world is certain to decline.  
 HUCKSTER-WITCH: Please, gentlemen, don't pass like that!  
 Don't miss this opportunity!  
 Look at my goods attentively:  
 There is a lot to marvel at. 265  
 And my shop has a special charm—  
 You will not find its peer on earth:

3. That is, he has no decoration of nobility, such as the Order of the Garter.

All that I sell has once done harm  
 To man and world and what has worth.  
 There is no dagger here which has not gored; 270  
 No golden cup from which, to end a youthful life,  
 A fatal poison was not poured;  
 No gems that did not help to win another's wife;  
 No sword but broke the peace with sly attack,  
 By stabbing, for example, a rival in the back. 275  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: Dear cousin, that's no good in times like these!  
 What's done is done; what's done is trite.  
 You better switch to novelties,  
 For novelties alone excite.  
 FAUST: I must not lose my head, I swear; 280  
 For this is what I call a fair.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: This eddy whirls to get above,  
 And you are shoved, though you may think you shove.  
 FAUST: And who is that?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: That little madam?  
 That's Lilith.<sup>4</sup>  
 FAUST: Lilith?  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: The first wife of Adam. 285  
 Watch out and shun her captivating tresses:  
 She likes to use her never-equald hair  
 To lure a youth into her luscious lair,  
 And he won't lightly leave her lewd caresses.  
 FAUST: There two sit, one is young, one old; 290  
 They certainly have jumped and trolled!  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: They did not come here for a rest.  
 There is another dance. Come, let us do our best.  
 FAUST: [*Dancing with the young one.*]  
 A pretty dream once came to me  
 In which I saw an apple tree; 295  
 Two pretty apples gleamed on it,  
 They lured me, and I climbed a bit.  
 THE FAIR ONE: You find the little apples nice  
 Since first they grew in Paradise.  
 And I am happy telling you 300  
 That they grow in my garden, too.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*With the old one.*]  
 A wanton dream once came to me  
 In which I saw a cloven tree.  
 It had the most tremendous hole;  
 Though it was big, it pleased my soul. 305  
 THE OLD ONE: I greet you with profound delight,  
 My gentle, cloven-footed knight!

4. According to rabbinical legend, Adam's first wife; the *female* mentioned in Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." After Eve was created, Lilith became a ghost who seduced men and inflicted evil on children.

Provide the proper grafting-twig,  
If you don't mind the hole so big.  
PROKTOPHANTASMIST:<sup>5</sup> Damnable folk! How dare you make such fuss! 310  
Have we not often proved to you  
That tales of walking ghosts cannot be true?  
And now you dance just like the rest of us!  
THE FAIR ONE: [*Dancing.*] What does he want at our fair?  
FAUST: [*Dancing.*] Oh, he! You find him everywhere. 315  
What others dance, he must assess;  
No step has really occurred, unless  
His chatter has been duly said.  
And what annoys him most, is when we get ahead.  
If you would turn in circles, in endless repetition, 320  
As he does all the time in his old mill,  
Perhaps he would not take it ill,  
Especially if you would first get his permission.  
PROKTOPHANTASMIST: You still are there! Oh no! That's without precedent.  
Please go! Have we not brought enlightenment? 325  
By our rules these devils are not daunted;  
We are so smart, but Tege!<sup>6</sup> is still haunted.  
To sweep illusion out, my energies were spent,  
But things never get clean; that's without precedent.  
THE FAIR ONE: Why don't you stop annoying us and quit! 330  
PROKTOPHANTASMIST: I tell you spirits to your face,  
The spirit's despotism's a disgrace:  
My spirit can't make rules for it.  
[*The dancing goes on.*]  
Today there's nothing I can do; 335  
But traveling is always fun,  
And I still hope, before my final step is done,  
I'll ban the devils, and the poets, too.  
MEPHISTOPHELES: He'll sit down in a puddle and unbend:  
That is how his condition is improved;  
For when the leeches prosper on his fat rear end,<sup>7</sup> 340  
The spirits and his spirit are removed.  
[*To FAUST, who has left the dance.*]  
Why did you let that pretty woman go  
Who sang so nicely while you danced?  
FAUST: She sang, and suddenly there pranced 345  
Out of her mouth a little mouse, all red.  
MEPHISTOPHELES: That is a trifle and no cause for dread!  
Who cares? At least it was not gray.  
Why bother on this glorious lovers' day?  
FAUST: Then I saw—

5. A German coinage meaning "Rump-ghostler." The figure caricatures Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811), who opposed modern movements in German thought and literature and had parodied Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). 6. A town near Berlin, where ghosts had been reported. 7. Nicolai claimed that he had been bothered by ghosts but had repelled them by applying leeches to his rump.

MEPHISTOPHELES: What?  
FAUST: Mephisto, do you see  
That pale, beautiful child, alone there on the heather? 350  
She moves slowly but steadily,  
She seems to walk with her feet chained together.  
I must confess that she, forbid,  
Looks much as my good Gretchen did.  
MEPHISTOPHELES: That does nobody good; leave it alone! 355  
It is a magic image, a lifeless apparition.  
Encounters are fraught with perdition;  
Its icy stare turns human blood to stone  
In truth, it almost petrifies;  
You know the story of Medusa's<sup>8</sup> eyes. 360  
FAUST: Those are the eyes of one that's dead I see,  
No loving hand closed them to rest.  
That is the breast that Gretchen offered me,  
And that is the sweet body I possessed.  
MEPHISTOPHELES: That is just sorcery; you're easily deceived! 365  
All think she is their sweetheart and are grieved.  
FAUST: What rapture! Oh, what agony!  
I cannot leave her, cannot flee.  
How strange, a narrow ruby band should deck,  
The sole adornment, her sweet neck, 370  
No wider than a knife's thin blade.  
MEPHISTOPHELES: I see it, too; it is quite so.  
Her head under her arm she can parade,  
Since Perseus lopped it off, you know.—  
Illusion holds you captive still. 375  
Come, let us climb that little hill,  
The Prater's<sup>9</sup> not so full of glee;  
And if they're not bewitching me,  
There is a theatre I see.  
What will it be?  
SERVIBILIS: They'll resume instantly. 380  
We'll have the seventh play, a brand-new hit;  
We do not think, so many are exacting.  
An amateur has written it,  
And amateurs do all the acting.  
Forgive, good sirs, if now I leave you; 385  
It amateurs me to draw up the curtain.  
MEPHISTOPHELES: When it's on Blocksberg I perceive you,  
I'm glad; for that's where you belong for certain.

8. The Gorgon with hair of serpents whose glance turned people to stone. 9. A famous park in Vienna.

WALPURGIS NIGHT'S DREAM  
OR THE GOLDEN WEDDING OF OBERON AND TITANIA

*Intermezzo*<sup>1</sup>

STAGE MANAGER: This time we can keep quite still,  
Mieding's<sup>2</sup> progeny;  
Misty vale and hoary hill,  
That's our scenery.

HERALD: To make a golden wedding day 5  
Takes fifty years to the letter;  
But when their quarrels pass away,  
That gold I like much better.

OBERON: If you spirits can be seen, 10  
Show yourselves tonight;  
Fairy king and fairy queen  
Now will reunite.

PUCK: Puck is coming, turns about,  
And drags his feet to dance;  
Hundreds come behind and shout 15  
And join with him and prance.

ARIEL:<sup>3</sup> Ariel stirs up a song,  
A heavenly pure air;  
Many gargoyles come along,  
And many who are fair. 20

OBERON: You would get along, dear couple?  
Learn from us the art;  
If you want to keep love supple,  
You only have to part.

TITANIA: He is sulky, sullen she, 25  
Grab them, upon my soul;  
Take her to the Southern Sea,  
And him up to the pole.

ORCHESTRA TUTTI: [*Fortissimo.*] Snout of Fly, Mosquito Nose,  
With family additions, 30  
Frog O'Leaves and Crick't O'Grass,  
Those are the musicians.

SOLO: Now the bagpipe's joining in,  
A soap bubble it blows;  
Hear the snicker-snacking din 35  
Come through his blunted nose.

SPIRIT IN PROCESS OF FORMATION: Spider feet, belly of toad,  
And little wings, he'll grow 'em;  
There is no animal like that,  
But it's a little poem. 40

A LITTLE COUPLE: Mighty leaps and nimble feet,  
Through honey scent up high;

1. Brief interlude. Oberon and Titania are the king and queen of the fairies. 2. Johann Martin Mieding (died 1782), a master carpenter and scene builder in the Weimar theater. 3. A helpful sprite, unlike Puck, who is a mischievous spirit.

While you bounce enough, my sweet,  
Still you cannot fly.

INQUISITIVE TRAVELER: Is that not mummery right there? 45  
Can that be what I see?  
Oberon who is so fair  
Amid this company!

ORTHODOX: No claws or tail or satyr's fleece!  
And yet you cannot cavil: 50  
Just like the gods of ancient Greece,  
He, too, must be a devil.

NORDIC ARTIST: What I do in the local clime,  
Are sketches of this tourney;  
But I prepare, while it is time, 55  
For my Italian journey.

PURIST: Bad luck brought me to these regions:  
They could not be much louder;  
And in the bawdy witches' legions  
Two only have used powder. 60

YOUNG WITCH: White powder, just like dresses, serves  
Old hags who are out of luck;  
I want to show my luscious curves,  
Ride naked on my buck.

MATRON: Our manners, dear, are far too neat 65  
To argue and to scold;  
I only hope that young and sweet,  
Just as you are, you mold.

CONDUCTOR: Snout of Fly, Mosquito Nose,  
Leave off the naked sweet; 70  
Frog O'Leaves and Crick't O'Grass  
Get back into the beat!

WEATHERCOCK: [*To one side.*] The most exquisite company!  
Each girl should be a bride;  
The bachelors, grooms; for one can see 75  
How well they are allied.

WEATHERCOCK: [*To the other side.*] The earth should open up and gape  
To swallow this young revel,  
Or I will make a swift escape  
To hell to see the Devil. 80

XENIEN:<sup>4</sup> We appear as insects here,  
Each with a little stinger,  
That we may fittingly revere  
Satan, our sire and singer.

HENNINGS:<sup>5</sup> Look at their thronging legions play, 85  
Naïve, with little art;  
The next thing they will dare to say  
Is that they're good at heart.

4. Literally, polemical verses written by Goethe and Friedrich von Schiller (1739–1805). The characters here are versions of Goethe himself. 5. August Adolf von Hennings (1746–1826), publisher of a journal called *Genius of the Age* that had attacked Schiller.

- MUSAGET:<sup>6</sup> To dwell among the witches' folk  
 Seems quite a lot of fun;  
 They are the ones I should invoke,  
 Not Muses, as I've done. 90
- CI-DEVANT GENIUS OF THE AGE:<sup>7</sup>  
 Choose your friends well and you will zoom,  
 Join in and do not pass us!  
 Blocksberg has almost as much room 95  
 As Germany's Parnassus.<sup>8</sup>
- INQUISITIVE TRAVELER: Say, who is that haughty man  
 Who walks as if he sits?  
 He sniffs and snuffles as best he can:  
 "He smells out Jesuits." 100
- CRANE: I like to fish where it is clear,  
 Also in muddy brew;  
 That's why the pious man is here  
 To mix with devils, too.
- CHILD OF THE WORLD: The pious need no fancy prop, 105  
 All vehicles seem sound:  
 Even up here on Blocksberg's top  
 Conventicles abound.
- DANCERS: It seems, another choir succeeds,  
 I hear the drums resuming. 110  
 "That dull sound comes out of the reeds,  
 It is the bitterns' booming."
- BALLET MASTER: How each picks up his legs and toddles,  
 And comes by hook or crook!  
 The stooped one jumps, the plump one waddles: 115  
 They don't know how they look!
- FIDDLER: They hate each other, wretched rabble,  
 And each would kill the choir;  
 They're harmonized by bagpipe babble,  
 As beasts by Orpheus' lyre.<sup>9</sup> 120
- DOGMATIST: I am undaunted and resist  
 Both skeptic and critique;  
 The Devil simply must exist,  
 Else *what* would he be? Speak!
- IDEALIST: Imagination is in me 125  
 Today far too despotic;  
 If I am everything I see,  
 Then I must be idiotic.
- REALIST: The spirits' element is vexing,  
 I wish it weren't there; 130  
 I never saw what's so perplexing,  
 It drives me to despair.

6. The title of a collection of Hennings's poetry. 7. That is, "Former Genius of the Age"; probably alludes to the journal's change of title in 1800 to *Genius of the 19th Century*. 8. A mountain sacred to Apollo and the muses; hence figuratively the locale of poetic excellence. 9. In Greek mythology, Orpheus's music was said to have the power to quiet wild animals.

- SUPERNATURALIST: I am delighted by this whirl,  
 And glad that they persist;  
 For from the devils I infer, 135  
 Good spirits, too, exist.
- SKEPTIC: They follow little flames about,  
 And think they're near the treasure;  
 Devil alliterates with doubt  
 So I am here with pleasure. 140
- CONDUCTOR: Snout of Fly, Mosquito Nose,  
 Damnable amateurs!  
 Frog O'Leaves and Crick't O'Grass  
 You are musicians, sirs!
- ADEPTS: Sansouci,<sup>1</sup> that is the name 145  
 Of our whole caboodle;  
 Walking meets with ill acclaim,  
 So we move on our noodle.
- NE'ER-DO-WELLS: We used to be good hangers-on  
 And sponged good wine and meat; 150  
 We danced till our shoes were gone,  
 And now walk on bare feet.
- WILL-O'-THE-WISPS: We come out of the swamps where we  
 Were born without a penny;  
 But now we join the revelry, 155  
 As elegant as any.
- SHOOTING STAR: I shot down from starry height  
 With brilliant, fiery charm;  
 But I lie in the grass tonight:  
 Who'll proffer me his arm? 160
- MASSIVE MOB: All around, give way! Give way!  
 Trample down the grass!  
 Spirits come, and sometimes they  
 Form a heavy mass.
- PUCK: Please don't walk like elephants,  
 And do not be so rough;  
 Let no one be as plump as Puck,  
 For he is plump enough.
- ARIEL: If nature gave with lavish grace,  
 Or Spirit, wings and will, 170  
 Follow in my airy trace  
 Up to the roses' hill!
- ORCHESTRA: [*Pianissimo*.] Floating clouds and wreaths of fog  
 Dawn has quickly banished;  
 Breeze in leaves, wind in the bog, 175  
 And everything has vanished.

1. Without care or unhappiness (French).

## DISMAL DAY

[*Field.* FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.]

FAUST: In misery! Despairing! Long lost wretchedly on the earth, and now imprisoned! As a felon locked up in a dungeon with horrible torments, the fair ill-fated creature! It's come to that! To that!— Treacherous, despicable Spirit—and that you have kept from me!—Keep standing there, stand! Roll your devilish eyes wrathfully in your face! Stand and defy me with your intolerable presence! Imprisoned! In irreparable misery! Handed over to evil spirits and judging, unfeeling mankind! And meanwhile you soothe me with insipid diversions; hide her growing grief from me, and let her perish helplessly!

MEPHISTOPHELES: She's not the first one.

FAUST: Dog! Abominable monster!—Change him, oh infinite spirit! Change back this worm into his dogshape, as he used to amuse himself in the night when he trotted along before me, rolled in front of the feet of the harmless wanderer and, when he stumbled, clung to his shoulders. Change him again to his favorite form that he may crawl on his belly in the sand before me and I may trample on him with my feet, the caitiff!—Not the first one!—Grief! Grief! past what a human soul can grasp, that more than one creature has sunk into the depth of this misery, that the first one did not enough for the guilt of all the others, writhing in the agony of death before the eyes of the everforgiving one! The misery of this one woman surges through my heart and marrow, and you grin imperturbed over the fate of thousands!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Now we're once again at our wit's end where your human minds snap. Why do you seek fellowship with us if you can't go through with it? You would fly, but get dizzy? Did we impose on you, or you on us?

FAUST: Don't bare your greedy teeth at me like that! It sickens me!—Great, magnificent spirit that deigned to appear to me, that know my heart and soul—why forge me to this monster who gorges himself on harm, and on corruption—feasts.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Have you finished?

FAUST: Save her! or woe unto you! The most hideous curse upon you for millenniums!

MEPHISTOPHELES: I cannot loosen the avenger's bonds, nor open his bolts.—Save her!—Who was it that plunged her into ruin? I or you? [FAUST looks around furiously.] Are you reaching for thunder? Well that it was not given to you wretched mortals! Shattering those who answer innocently, is the tyrant's way of easing his embarrassment.

FAUST: Take me there! She shall be freed!

MEPHISTOPHELES: And the dangers you risk? Know that blood-guilt from your hand still lies on the town. Over the slain man's site avenging spirits hover, waiting for the returning murderer.

FAUST: That, too, from you? A world's murder and death upon you, monster! Guide me to her, I say, and free her!

MEPHISTOPHELES: I shall guide you; hear what I can do. Do I have all the power in the heaven and on the earth? I shall make the jailer's senses foggy, and you may get the keys and lead her out with human hands. I shall stand guard, magic horses shall be prepared, and I shall carry you away. That I can do.

FAUST: Up and away!

## NIGHT, OPEN FIELD

[FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES, storming along on black horses.]

FAUST: What are they weaving around the Ravenstone?

MEPHISTOPHELES: I do not know what they do and brew.

FAUST: Floating to, floating fro, bowing and bending.

MEPHISTOPHELES: A witches' guild.

FAUST: They strew and dedicate.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Go by! Go by!

## DUNGEON

FAUST: [*With a bunch of keys and a lamp before a small iron gate.*]

A long unwonted shudder grips,

Mankind's entire grief grips me.

She's here, behind this wall that drips,

And all her crime was a fond fantasy.

You hesitate to go in?

You dread to see her again?

On! Your wavering waves on death's decree. [*He seizes the lock.*]

[*Song from within.*]

GRETCHEN: My mother, the whore,

Who has murdered me—

My father, the rogue,

Who has eaten me—

My little sister alone

Picked up every bone,

In a cool place she put them away;

Into a fair bird I now have grown;

Fly away, fly away!

FAUST: [*Unlocking.*] She does not dream how her lover at the door

Hears the clanking chains and the rustling straw. [*Enters.*]

MARGARET: [*Hiding on her pallet.*] Oh! Oh! They come. Death's bitterness!

FAUST: [*Softly.*] Still! Still! I come to set you free.

MARGARET: [*Groveling toward his feet.*] If you are human, pity my distress.

FAUST: You'll awaken the guards. Speak quietly.

[*He seizes the chains to unlock them.*]

MARGARET: [*On her knees.*] Who, hangman, could give

You over me this might?

You come for me in the middle of the night.

Have pity on me, let me live!

Is it not time when the morning chimes have rung?

[*She gets up.*]

I am still so young, so very young.

And must already die.

I was beautiful, too, and that was why.

Near was the friend, now he is away.

Torn lies the wreath, the flowers decay.

Do not grip me so brutally. What shall I do?

Spare me. What have I done to you?

Let me not in vain implore.

After all, I have never seen you before.

FAUST: After such grief, can I live any more?

MARGARET: Now I am entirely in your might.

Only let me nurse the baby again.

I fondled it all through the night;

They took it from me to give me pain,

And now they say I put it away.

And I shall never again be gay.

They sing songs about me. The people are wicked.

An ancient fairy tale ends that way,

Who made them pick it?

FAUST: [*Casts himself down.*] One loving you lies at your feet

To end your bondage. Listen, sweet!

MARGARET: [*Casts herself down beside him.*]

Ah, let us kneel, send to the saints our prayers!

See, underneath these stairs,

Underneath the sill

There seethes hell.

The Devil

Makes a thundering noise

With his angry revel.

FAUST: [*Loud.*] Gretchen! Gretchen!

MARGARET: [*Attentively.*] That was my lover's voice!

[*She jumps up. The chains drop off.*]

Where is he? I heard him call. I am free.

No one shall hinder me.

To his neck I shall fly,

On his bosom lie.

He called Gretchen. He stood on the sill.

Amid the wailing and howling of hell,

Through the angry and devilish jeers

The sweet and loving tone touched my ears.

FAUST: It is I.

MARGARET: It is you. Oh, do say it again. [*She seizes him.*]

It is he. It is he. Where, then, is all my pain?

Where the fear of the dungeon? the chain?

It is you. Come to save me.

I am saved!

Now I see the road again, too,

Where, for the first time, I laid eyes on you—

And the garden and the gate

Where I and Martha stand and wait.

FAUST: [*Striving away.*] Come on! Come on!

MARGARET: O Stay!

Because I am so happy where you are staying. [*Careses him.*]

FAUST: Do not delay.

If you keep on delaying,

We shall have to pay dearly therefor.

MARGARET: What? You cannot kiss any more?

My friend, you were not gone longer than this—

And forgot how to kiss?

Why, at your neck, do I feel such dread,

When once from your eyes and from what you said

A whole heaven surged down to fill me,

And you would kiss me as if you wanted to kill me?

Kiss me!

Else I'll kiss you. [*She embraces him.*]

Oh, grief! Your lips are cold,

Are mute.

Where

Is your loving air?

Who took it from me? [*She turns away from him.*]

FAUST: Come, follow me, dearest, and be bold!

I shall caress you a thousandfold;

Only follow me! That is all I plead.

MARGARET: [*Turning toward him.*] And is it you? Is it you indeed?

FAUST: It is I. Come along!

MARGARET: You take off the chain,

And take me into your lap again.

How is it that you do not shrink from me?—

Do you know at all, my friend, whom you make free?

FAUST: Come! Come! Soon dawns the light of day.

MARGARET: I've put my mother away,

I've drowned my child, don't you see?

Was it not given to you and to me?

You, too—it is you! Could it merely seem?

Give me your hand! It is no dream.

Your dear hand!—But alas, it is wet.

Wipe it off! There is yet

Blood on this one.

Oh God! What have you done!

Sheathe your sword;

I am begging you.

FAUST: Let the past be forever past—oh Lord,

You will kill me, too.

MARGARET: Oh no, you must outlive us!

I'll describe the graves you should give us.

Care for them and sorrow

Tomorrow:

Give the best place to my mother,  
 And next to her lay my brother;  
 Me, a little aside, 125  
 Only don't make the space too wide!  
 And the little one at my right breast.  
 Nobody else will lie by my side. —  
 Oh, to lie with you and to hide  
 In your arms, what happiness! 130  
 Now it is more than I can do;  
 I feel, I must force myself on you,  
 And you, it seems, push back my caress;  
 And yet it is you, and look so pure, so devout.  
 FAUST: If you feel, it is I, come out! 135  
 MARGARET: Out where?  
 FAUST: Into the open.  
 MARGARET: If the grave is there,  
 If death awaits us, then come!  
 From here to the bed of eternal rest,  
 And not a step beyond—no! 140  
 You are leaving now? Oh, Heinrich, that I could go!  
 FAUST: You can! If only you would! Open stands the door.  
 MARGARET: I may not go; for me there is no hope any more.  
 What good to flee? They lie in wait for me. 145  
 To have to go begging is misery,  
 And to have a bad conscience, too.  
 It is misery to stray far and forsaken,  
 And, anyhow, I would be taken.  
 FAUST: I shall stay with you. 150  
 MARGARET: Quick! Quick! I pray.  
 Save your poor child.  
 On! Follow the way  
 Along the brook,  
 Over the bridge, 155  
 Into the wood,  
 To the left where the planks stick  
 Out of the pond.  
 Seize it—oh, quick!  
 It wants to rise, 160  
 It is still struggling.  
 Save! Save!  
 FAUST: Can you not see,  
 It takes *one* step, and you are free.  
 MARGARET: If only we were past the hill! 165  
 My mother sits there on a stone,  
 My scalp is creeping with dread!  
 My mother sits there on a stone  
 And wags and wags her head;  
 She becks not, she nods not, her head is heavy and sore, 170

She has slept so long, she awakes no more.  
 She slept that we might embrace.  
 Those were the days of grace.  
 FAUST: In vain is my pleading, in vain what I say;  
 What can I do but bear you away? 175  
 MARGARET: Leave me! No, I shall suffer no force!  
 Do not grip me so murderously!  
 After all, I did everything else you asked.  
 FAUST: The day dawns. Dearest! Dearest!  
 MARGARET: Day. Yes, day is coming. The last day breaks; 180  
 It was to be my wedding day.  
 Tell no one that you have already been with Gretchen.  
 My veil! Oh pain!  
 It just happened that way.  
 We shall meet again, 185  
 But not dance that day.  
 The crowd is pushing, no word is spoken.  
 The alleys below  
 And the streets overflow.  
 The bell is tolling, the wand is broken. 190  
 How they tie and grab me, now one delivers  
 Me to the block and gives the sign,  
 And for every neck quivers  
 The blade that quivers for mine.  
 Mute lies the world as a grave. 195  
 FAUST: That I had never been born!  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*Appears outside.*] Up! Or you are lost.  
 Prating and waiting and pointless wavering.  
 My horses are quavering,  
 Over the sky creeps the dawn. 200  
 MARGARET: What did the darkness spawn?  
 He! He! Send him away!  
 What does he want in this holy place?  
 He wants me!  
 FAUST: You shall live.  
 MARGARET: Judgment of God! I give 205  
 Myself to you.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To FAUST.*]  
 Come! Come! I shall abandon you with her.  
 MARGARET: Thine I am, father. Save me!  
 You angels, hosts of heaven, stir,  
 Encamp about me, be my guard. 210  
 Heinrich! I quail at thee.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: She is judged.  
 VOICE: [*From above.*] Is saved.  
 MEPHISTOPHELES: [*To FAUST.*] Hither to me! [*Disappears with*  
 FAUST.]  
 VOICE: [*From within, fading away.*] Heinrich! Heinrich!