

Medieval Legends. No. II

DR. JOHANNES FAUSTUS

PUPPET PLAY

NOW FIRST DONE INTO ENGLISH

IN FOUR ACTS

LONDON
DAVID NUTT IN THE STRAND

1893

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NOTE:

THIS IS A TRANSLATION OF A PUPPET PLAY
BASED ON THE FAUST STORY. ENCLOSED
HERE ARE A NUMBER OF PAGES WITH
MATERIAL RELEVANT TO OUR DISCUSSIONS.
THEY TAKE ONLY A FEW MINUTES TO READ.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, THEY BEAR ON THE
QUESTION OF WHAT GOETHE DREW ON
FROM TRADITIONAL LORE ABOUT FAUST
AND WHAT WAS NEW AND DISTINCTIVE IN
HIS POEM

ACT I.

SCENE I

FAUST in his study, seated at a table laden with folios.

FAUST.

I've now arrived at such a pitch of learning,
That to a laughing stock for men I'm turning;
All books I've searched, from preface to conclusion
And still, the Philosophic Stone, to my confusion,
I fail to find. My learning is in vain,
My labour brings but hunger, want and pain!
No decent coat is left upon my back.
Of all things bar of debt, I suffer, pinch and lack.
Those sleepless nights, who will repay to me,
That vainly I devoted to Theology?
Away, then, Law and Medicine's idle fancy,
Henceforth I'll put my trust in Necromancy,
And, entering into compact with the Devil,
Learn Nature's secret from the Powers of Evil:
But e'er I reach this consummation tragic,
I must become an adept in the Art of Magic.

VOICE TO THE LEFT.

Would'st thou wise and happy be,
Choose Magic; leave Theology.

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WAGNER.

Then go to the kitchen, and there you'll get what you want.

CASPERLE [*goes off singing*]:

"From turnips and from sauerkraut
And home, I ran away,
Had mother roasted meat, no doubt
She might have made me stay."

ACT II.

SCENE I.

FAUST *alone.* Afterwards SPIRITS.

FAUST.

Strange! The students have disappeared, and are nowhere to be found. All the same, I have their book, and being alone, can herewith begin the study of Magic. [*Opens book and reads.*] Ah! That is how it is done; nothing could be simpler, and yet I have puzzled over it for years! [*Looses his girdle, lays it on the ground in a circle, enters circle.*] Now I will summon the spirits. [*Waves his wand, murmuring unintelligible words; crowd of spirits appear in the form of hairy apes.*] Here they come, thick and fast; but which shall I choose, and how? By their pace, I think! Here! you with the white horns, what is your name?

SPIRIT I.

Vitsliputali!

FAUST.

Say, how swift are you?

VITZLIFUTZLI.

As the snail in sand.

FAUST.

Ha! At that rate I need no spirits. Back whence you came. Apage, Male Spiritus! Next one! Who are you?

SPIRIT II.

Pollmor.

FAUST.

Declare your pace.

POLLMOR.

'Tis that of falling leaves.

FAUST.

At a pinch I could put on that pace myself. Hence! Apage, Male Spiritus! Next one! What name?

SPIRIT III. Asmodeus!

FAUST.

This may be my man! How swift are you?

ASMODEUS.

As falls the rushing cataract, so I fly.

FAUST.

Yet not fast enough! Back! Apage, Male Spiritus! Vivat sequens! Who are you?

SPIRIT IV.

Astarot!

FAUST.

May Nomen be Omen! And pace?

ASTAROT.

I am swift as a bird of the air.

FAUST.

Good ! but yet not enough. Apage, Male Spiritus.
Redhead ! 'Tis now your turn ! Your name !

SPIRIT V.

Auerhahn.

FAUST.

How swift art thou ?

AUERHAWN.

As the bullet, so I fly !

FAUST.

Still better, but not good. Apage, Male Spiritus.
Blue foot, thy name ?

SPIRIT VI.

Haribax !

FAUST.

And pace ?

HARIBAX.

'Tis the wind's !

FAUST.

Good pace, but yet too slow for me. Apage, Male
Spiritus. Two yet remain. Say ! Sooty Sweep !
Thy name ?

SPIRIT VII.

Megara.

FAUST.

And how swift ?

MEGIRA.

As the Pest !

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FAUST.

Ah, true! The Pest is swifter than the wind, yet sure, the last is best. Ultimus! Declare thy name.

SPIRIT VIII.

Mephistophelus!

FAUST.

How swift art thou?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

As Human Thought.

FAUST.

Done with you! As Human Thought! What more could I desire than to behold shaped in fulfilment my rising Thought? Why God Almighty can no more. *Eritis Sicut Deus!* Will you serve me?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

If Pluto but permit.

FAUST.

And who may Pluto be?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My Master.

FAUST.

Go! ask your Lord to let you serve me eight-and-forty years, hereafter, I will be your bondsman, but come again in human form. I like not apes, and standing in this circle wearies me. Tell your master, too, that I demand to taste of every earthly joy, and to possess fair presence and great fame; true answer, likewise, I must have to every question.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In a moment I am here again. [*Disappears,*

returning in human form, clothed in scarlet garments, covered by a long black cloak, and having a horn on his forehead. FAUST steps out of circle.]

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Your demands are granted by my Lord ; but four-and-twenty years are the longest term of service for which I may engage.

FAUST.

Four-and-twenty years! Sure that means many a happy day and night. Good! I accept!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

If so, give me a little bond—for Life and Death.

FAUST.

If you must have it then, in black and white, fetch ink, for that in my horn has long been dry.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Not black but red on white. Your signature alone is needed; the bond itself is ready written out, *Optimá Formá*, fair and clear; your signature in blood completes it. See! here's a needle, prick your finger with it.

FAUST.

Produce the bond, ere signing, I would read.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mercurius, appear! [*A raven appears with the bond in its bill.*]

FAUST [*takes and reads.*]

I, Johannes, Dr. Faustus, Professor, make the following agreement with Mephistopheles:

- I. To abjure God and the Christian Faith.

Devil as our companion. [*Sofa, with old woman, disappears, other sofa, unoccupied, appears, on which AUERHAHN prepares to take a seat, but CASPERLE coming beforehand, stretches himself full-length on sofa, which carries him off to the clouds, leaving AUERHAHN on stage.*]

AUERHAHN.

The fellow's a match for three of us.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

[*Street in Mainz. Right—House with carved figure of Madonna. Left—Hint, CASPERLE'S dwelling.*]

FAUST alone—after MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

Twelve years have passed away. I've searched the wide world o'er and found no joy, no gladness. The gold I caught at turned to dross when grasped. The foaming bowl of pleasure left bitter dregs behind; and how often was it snatched from my thirsty lips, as though I should here anticipate the tortures of the damned. If for such hollow mockery I bartered my eternal bliss, I was a fool, "a madman." The wide world I could no more endure. Uprooted from my home I seemed to wither and to fade, and now that homesick I return, every

familiar sight is a reproach. Here, I was once a happy child that could believe and pray; and why can I pray no more? Because I cannot believe, cannot? *Must I not believe?* Oh, that I were not forced to do so by an unanswerable proof. If there be a Devil there must be a God; but this God I have denied, abjured! Therefore I cannot pray; for prayer is Heaven's mercy, and for me there is no mercy left. Oh, how I repent! Repentance! Where that is, mercy is also found. Had I but repentance aright, perhaps there might be mercy even for me, a sinner. [*Sinks into meditation, MEPHISTOPHELES touches him on shoulder.*]

FAUST [*Startling*].

What! You here!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What's wrong? Are you turned sick or a monk? Why such a hang-dog mien? Once back again in Mainz I thought the fun would be fast and furious; instead of that, you sink about like a whipped bound. Often as you plagued me, working me to death, paving the way for your carriage, bearing you through the air, breaking through boards and planks, and patching them up again behind you, did I ever grumble at any task, however hard? Now, however, I complain with justice, for you are turning wearisome upon my hands, and a bore the Devil himself cannot abide.

FAUST.

Leave me! Disturb me not!

D

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Take her.

[FAUST *carries away* HELENA
to his house.]

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! Now you are mine. All the
Saints of Heaven were powerless to save you. Ha!
ha! ha! ha! A hot reception truly might I expect
from my Lord did I let slip such easy prey.

FAUST [*bursting in wild frenzy out of the house*].

A curse upon you! A curse, I say! Vile, knavish
arch-deceiver! I clasped a hellish serpent to my
bosom. I would embrace her, and fell sickened and
choked by the noisome pest that she breathed upon
me. Is *that* your faithful service?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! Cheating is my trade. Had
you that yet to learn? Nor is this all; you are
more befooled than yet you know!

FAUST.

Wretch! What would you say?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The time is up. You have but a few hours left
to live. At midnight you are mine.

FAUST.

What are you talking of? Have I not yet twelve
years before me? Our compact was for four-and-
twenty years at 365 days to the year.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Poor dupe! So ignorant of the ways of Hell,

Y

yet daring to enter into compact with it. You've counted but the days. Have I not served the nights as well, and thus in twelve years served the promised twenty-four? At midnight, then, our contract will expire. Notice!

[*Exit MEPHISTOPHELES.*]

FAUST [*alone*].

Low pettifogger's quibble; but what if it should hold? What if the hellish reading read aright?

HOLLOW VOICE FROM ABOVE.

[*Clock strikes Nine.*]

Fauste! Fauste! Praepara te ad mortem.

[*FAUST rushes out, wringing his hands.*]

SCENE III.

[*CASPERLE equipped as night-watch, with cloak, staff and lantern, comes out of hut, whence a scolding voice is heard.*]

CASPERLE.

All right, Gretl, you're wrong. She's just a pattern wife, that of mine. Can't bear me to say she's in the right. And isn't she right? Can't I light my own lantern my own self? [*Lights lantern, sings.*]

" Good morning, pretty Lisa,
The stars shine dark to-day,
So lend me if you please, a
Lantern on my way."

Just so, now I'll sing something else.

[*Sings.*]

stick. But I'll pay her off when the clock strikes :
just wait.

[Clock strikes Eleven, CASPERLE sings.

" Now listen all,
Both great and small,
My wife has beat me sore ;
So he, who's wise,
He lives and dies
A merry bachelor.
Eleven o'clock ! Eleven o'clock !"

SCENE VIII.

FAUST. DEVILS.

FAUST *[alone]*.

I am judged, and being judged, am condemned !
But—to what punishment? How, if it were but to
Purgatory ! Awful hope, and yet a hope !

[Clock strikes Twelve.

HOLLOW VOICE FROM ABOVE.

Fauste ! Fauste ! In aeternum damnatus es !

FAUST.

I am destroyed, annihilated ! Oh, that annihila-
tion were possible !

*[Sinks to the ground, is seized and carried
below by DEVILS in a shower of sparks.
CASPERLE appears before his door.*

SCENE IX.

CASPERLE.

CASPERLE.

What's been going on here? Ugh! what a reek.
Seems to have been an execution of infernal justice
in honour of my old master, I fancy; always thought
it would come to that at last. Pity though, that I
hadn't known a little beforehand, I might have
given him my compliments to take to grandmother.

[Sings.

"Good sirs, don't enter into evil
Communication with the Devil;
For in the end he's sure to cheat you,
And to a twisted neck to treat you.
The clock strikes twelve! The clock strikes
twelve."

Printed by HALLASTYNE, HARMON, & CO.
London and Edinburgh

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21M.013J / 21A.113J / 21L.013J The Supernatural in Music, Literature and Culture
Fall 2013

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