

# Faust Walks Out on Easter Morning

Royal Opera House Covent Garden, 'Scene from Goethe's Faust' by Edward Henry Corbould, 1852

By [Edward Curtin](#)

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Theme: [History](#)

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"All things transient are but a parable"  
Goethe, *Faust*

These books are killing me he thought.  
The sun has risen, the bells toll eight.  
I've tried to learn before it's late.  
I woke to feel I could not breathe  
So took both dog and my leave.

Been talking loud for hours now  
To no one but the clanging sound  
Of whether I should go or stay  
To hear the lightning have its say.

"Where," it asks, "was I before  
I flashed across the coming day?"

Now that the sun has risen,  
The lightning calls me on a mission  
To shout at authors close to me  
That living is a message riven  
Far beyond your reach, my friends,  
Neatly stretched beside my pens,  
Sitting shelved and self-assured,

Giving off a stately sense, a hint  
That he who probed your print  
Is wise, has learned from you.  
We both know it isn't true.

"Where," the lightning asked again, "was I  
Before I flashed across the darkening blue?"

So I came to the place  
Where the lady lay waiting  
Under the weeping sky.  
Who are you looking for?  
The gardener asked the lady at the tomb.  
But she too could not recognize the living  
Man, the fierce voice speaking  
Those breathtakingly lovely words:  
Do not cling to me.  
Do not cling. Let go  
And tell the others  
That you will not find your truth  
Living among the dead,  
Images and words  
Woven subtly down the page.  
For you, dead letters.

So on and on I walked, asking,  
Where was I before that room  
Where answers were my tomb  
And where I wondered day and night  
Before I wandered lost in fright?

"Where was I," the lightning sighed,  
Before I flashed across the sky?"

Do not cling to me was his reply.

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