

Faust Walks Out on Easter Morning

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

By [Edward Curtin](#)

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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