

A TRANSLATION OF YUN-T'AEK YI'S *FAUST IN BLUE JEANS*

A Thesis Presented

by

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ABSTRACT

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SEPTEMBER 2012

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In this thesis, I present a translation of Yun-T'aek Yi's *Faust in Blue Jeans* accompanied by an introduction discussing my decision making process. Yun-T'aek Yi's eighth play for the theater, *Ch'ōngbajirŭl ibŭn p'ausŭt 'ŭ*, is a Korean adaptation of Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust*, set in twentieth-century Korea with contemporary Korean characters. Given the English title *Faust in Blue Jeans*, I consider this text for purposes of a staged performance and point out the difficulties in the replacement of one culture by another, especially in consideration of my personal situation as a Korean born translator living in the United States. I discuss strategies and choices in translation with reference to scholarly works in the fields of translation studies and dramaturgy. I also offer a glimpse into my translation process by attaching a literal crib of the opening act, a preliminary step taken before further shaping the translation for the stage, and a graph comparing my first draft to its revision after a staged reading. Often referred to as a "cultural guerilla" in South Korea for his active work as playwright, producer, writer, and poet, Yun-T'aek Yi colorfully portrays South Korean society and culture of the eighties in this play and I strove to preserve the dynamicism and vitality of the original. The playwright's foreword, in which he discusses his reasons for creating an adaptation of Goethe's work, and a brief excerpt on the motif and summary of the play as told by the South Korean playwright have also been translated.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO FAUST IN BLUE JEANS

Ch'ōngbajirŭl ibŭn p'ausŭt'ŭ [Faust in Blue Jeans]

Yun-t'aek Yi's adaptation of the legend of Faust is intriguing because it was created for a very specific audience, i.e., South Korean intellectuals of the same generation as the playwright, who are most likely to respond to *Ch'ōngbajirŭl ibŭn p'ausŭt'ŭ* because of the specific cultural and historical context in which the story of *Faust* is cradled. I discuss this further in the section titled Personal, Cultural, and Historical Context.

Ch'ōngbajirŭl ibŭn p'ausŭt'ŭ was written and premiered for the experimental theater group Street Theater Troupe in 1995. One of Yi's earlier works for the theater, *Faust in Blue Jeans* is a loose adaptation of Goethe's *Faust*. This play, while keeping the crucial elements identical, alters many aspects. The characters are played by Koreans, more specifically, Koreans in their forties, with shadows of the past, a very unique and specific past looming over their present lives. That past involves these same Korean characters in the play as college students experiencing a boisterous college life as active transitions to democracy took place in the eighties in South Korea. The main characters of the play, Faust, Mephisto, and Gretchen, are therefore modeled after college students during this transitional era. Although Faust achieves high social status and becomes a university professor while Mephisto becomes a social outcast and leaves the country, they both had boycotted the student demonstrations at the time. Gretchen, on the other hand, is at first depicted as a brave feminist who fought as a student activist until the end,

but is later shown running a tavern, which is frowned upon in Korean culture due to illegal practices that are associated with the setting. Women working at venues selling alcohol are sometimes forced to become prostitutes. Such characters would have been very familiar to college graduates in their late thirties and forties in 1995, when the play was staged. Yun-T'aek Yi cast celebrities to play these roles to gain publicity, but it was precisely for the specificity of the roles they played that the production of this play received so much attention even before its first performance.

Yun-T'aek Yi is known for his lucrative endeavors, as were many of his productions that came after *Ch'ōngbajirūl ibūn p'ausūt'ū*. His productions may be comparable to Hollywood blockbusters in South Korean theater: fast, vivid, and dynamic. By infusing into the classical story of Faust a contemporary yet popular theme familiar to the South Korean audiences, he anticipated success of the story on stage. Such an audacious change in setting helps Yi bring back memories of a significant time in Korean history under the premise of entertainment. Imbedded in this script are concepts and jargon only familiar to a generation heavily devoted to the pro-democracy movement, which which may have helped the play gain popularity. Yi uses the degrading term “*woenom*” to describe the Japanese, and his use of the metaphor “steel rainbow” is taken from a Korean poem by Yi Yooksa, a well-known poet for his resistance to Japan during their occupation of the Korean peninsula. “Steel Rainbow” is a representative nationalistic poem, in which the metaphor of “steel rainbow” describes the poet’s conflicted opinion on the situation on the Peninsula at the time: steel, because of the impenetrable and hopeless situation, but rainbow, to express a strong determination to see a brighter future for his country. Yi also introduces names of real people, such as Hyōnse

Yi, Suhyŏn Kim, and Sugŭn Yi: Hyŏnse Yi is a famous cartoonist, Suhyŏn Kim is a popular writer, and Sugŭn Yi is a North Korean spy from the sixties, who was eventually sentenced to death. By mentioning such names, the playwright closes the gap between the story of Faust and the new setting, confirming the Korean Faust's location for a contemporary audience.

Faust, based on a plot that introduces Western philosophy and Christian theology, is a tragic story of a man who falls into his own trap as a result of a thirst for vast amounts of knowledge. The Christian idea of good and evil serve another basis for the story when Faust can no longer handle his insatiable desire to know more: in Suffolk University's 2011 production of *Doctor Faustus*, another example of an adaptation of *Faust* by Christopher Marlowe, Faust's negotiations and encounters with Lucifer is depicted as an illusionary world, into which Doctor Faustus entered when his curiosity created his own mental derangement. While a mix of an intellectual and spiritual dilemma serves as the theme for most adaptations or translations of *Faust*, Yi's version, conveyed to the Korean audience in a domesticated form of both setting and character, shifts the focus to a more down-to-earth, realistic dilemma of whether to conform to or resist the expectations of the society; and in the later scenes, the dilemma of whether to accept and take back Gretchen for who she is, or reject her for what she has become. Conflicts arising in Yi's script almost eliminates issues arising from theological philosophy altogether and instead makes an issue out of morality and ethics. But to the South Koreans, this is all still worth pondering, considering its semi-Confucius cultural trend of a desire and commitment to conform to societal expectations. The depiction of homosexuality, the idea of an optimal marrying age, and prideful and arrogant attitudes

expected of public officials all point to this trend in the South Korean culture, a desire to conform to the “norm.”

Yun-T’aek Yi

Yun-T’aek Yi, born in Pusan in 1952, was initially a reporter for seven years at Pusan Ilbo, a local newspaper in the southern region of South Korea. He left his position to pursue a career as a film director, but quit in less than a year because he did not find any “poetic” quality in the making of films. Since establishing the Street Theater Troupe in 1986, he has since been a prolific writer and director of many plays, both original and adaptations.

A director, playwright, and poet, Yun-T’aek Yi was also appointed Dean of the College of Culture Technology (CT College) in 2009 at Youngsan University in Yangsan, South Korea. Apart from not only founding and serving as artistic director at the Street Theater Troupe, he served as faculty to Youngsan University’s Department of Acting and Musical, Dongguk University’s Division of Theatre, Sungkyunkwan University’s Department of Acting for Theater, Film & TV, Dongseo University’s College of Film and Performing Arts, Musical Division, and Seoul Institute of the Arts’ Department of Playwriting. Such appointments in academic institutions, his appointment as dean in particular, have significance considering his own educational background. A college dropout in his twenties, Yi’s highest level of education was a bachelor’s degree in Child Education, which he acquired in his forties through independent study at an online university established in South Korea. In essence, his works have earned him these positions, as they were acknowledged by both a South Korean and international audience. Although there have been cases of practicing professionals appointed to stand on

academic podiums, Yi's appointment as dean is unprecedented. Considering the South Korean society in which prestigious names and authorizing institutions are highly prioritized, Yi is living proof that excellence is eventually recognized without the diplomas to validate it. Some of the tension between knowledge acquired through academia versus that acquired via everyday human encounters is reflected in the play *Faust in Blue Jeans*.

The Playwright's Work and Reputation

In South Korea, Yun-T'aek Yi is referred as a "cultural guerrilla" for his prolific work across literary genres of poetry, drama, and prose, and for his active work in the performing arts, mainly for the theater, but also for cinema and television. His most notable work is with the Street Theater Troupe he founded in 1986, in which his work includes playwriting, directing, actor training, and directing staging techniques. Some of his more recent adaptations produced include *The Merchant of Venice*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Hamlet*; he also re-staged some of his original scripts for *Ogu – Ritual of Death*, his most renowned play, and *Yi Sunsin*, a creative musical piece in the same year.

His productions received positive reviews by international audiences, one of his greatest achievements being *Ogu – Ritual of Death*, in which Ogu refers to a shamanistic ritual performing exorcism. The story of Ogu begins with an old mother asking her son to perform a shamanistic ritual for her, which is the title of the play, in anticipation of her own death. While her son grants her wish, the stage is transformed into a mourner's house. The death of an old widowed mother who complains about her hard life, raising her children without a husband, arouses pity in the audience, but the weight of such a sorrowful atmosphere is made lighter and seasoned with humor by the mother's comic

expressions and body gestures. After her death, the traditional ceremony is also made to have a comical effect, to reduce or eliminate the distance between life and death on stage.

The play elevates a feeling specific to Koreans, often referred to as *han*. Although words such as ‘resentment,’ ‘sorrow,’ or ‘regret’ have been used to describe this feeling of *han*, this term an explanation at length, perhaps with one or two anecdotes from Korea’s history. This is the kind of emotion that might be found in a black person living in the United States during times of racial segregation; this may also be the kind of emotion that caused the Pilgrims to move away from Great Britain to find another place of abode. On a smaller scale, *han* is a sentiment that is often created in a repressed, domesticated, or abused woman who is helpless and scared by her situation. This is a sentiment that builds up in an individual or a group of people due to oppression and lack of freedom because of an inequitable power relationship in which the individual or the group forms a part. *Han*, therefore, is not an emotion that is fleeting and experienced on a one-time basis, but an emotion that develops, expands, and comes to being with time and recurring experiences of offence and insult. The feeling is not always clear even to the one who experiences it, as one might think, due to what W.E.B. Du Bois calls a double consciousness, that is, having two perceptions of oneself, one of which conflicts with how others perceive oneself and therefore seems to justify negative treatment of that person. Experiences are sometimes relived later or remembered, when one realizes that the resentment, anger, or sorrow, has been exacerbated. The deep conflictual feeling of *han* is much present throughout *Faust in Blue Jeans*.

From the days of a skewed brotherhood with the neighboring nation of China to reoccurring invasions of Japan, to further becoming a site for ideological tug-of-war

between of the Soviet Union and the United States in the 1950s, and even to this day, with the U.S. Army supporting South Korea's national guard against their very own blood brother to the North, South Koreans have imbedded in them this sentiment. Throughout history, due to both internal and international conflict with regard to differing ideologies, this feeling of suffocation, of a stifled freedom, of a bottling up of expression is for some individuals, relatable. Such historical context from the Korean viewpoint makes this feeling specific to Koreans and thus may prove to be one of the most difficult aspects to translate.

Ogu was successfully performed at other international venues, including the International Theatre Festival in Tokyo (1990) and the Theater und Philharmonie Essen-Germany (1991), but most remarkable is its achievement as the longest running play in South Korea since 1989. *Ogu* was eventually made into a movie in 2003. Yi's works have received countless national awards; in 1989, he received the Outstanding Artist Award conferred by the Korean Association of Theatre Critics for *Ogu*. For *Ch'ōngbajirūl ibŭn p'ausūt'ŭ*, he received the Dramaturg's Award at the Seoul Theater Festival. Yi has been invited to participate in theatre festivals all over the world, including the two previously mentioned, plus the LaMaMa Experimental Theater Company in New York, Foster Theatre in Los Angeles, Japan's Alice Festival, New York's Kampo Cultural Center, Assitej Russia, Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, Taganka Theater in Russia, Beseto Festival, and Shanghai Oriental Art Center Opera Hall in China. Although he has staged many of his own works, his success also comes from adaptations or loose translations, such as *Faust in Blue Jeans*, loosely adapted from

Goethe's *Faust*. Recently, he has shown more interest to Shakespearean plays, namely, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Hamlet*.

As with the original Korean script of *Faust in Blue Jeans*, Yi's versions of Shakespearean plays were also altered to reflect the playwright's creativity. Conspicuous changes were made in the setting, depiction of characters, and in portraying various scenes. While *Faust in Blue Jeans* takes place in contemporary South Korea where the characters act and think with minds influenced by South Korean culture and conventions, the antagonist Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* is not so much the antagonist in Yi's play, diluting notions of anti-Semitism evident in Shakespeare's original. Yi's *The Merchant of Venice* is no longer a morality play delivering the distinctive message that ill-willed men face and deserve certain consequences; instead, Shylock is portrayed as a funny and clumsy character to lighten his flagrant demands as an alternative to repay the debt. Rather than emphasizing the cruelty of a request resulting in a person's death, Yi convinces the audience to feel sorry for Shylock, for his stupidity of having made such a request in the first place. In place of two-dimensional characters perceived to be good and evil, Yi's Shylock is viewed by the audience as an ordinary human being trying to earn a living, as opposed to Antonio, the impudent fellow who secures his friendship to Bassanio by way of monetary favors. Yi says in an interview with Yonhap News in 2009, "to make Shylock the villain is an imperialist view; he needs to be reevaluated." In casting for his play, Yi deliberately casts an actor with a macho build and arrogant demeanor for Antonio, and a weak, skinny old man to play Shylock. Yi effectively displaces the impression of the original characters by manipulating stereotypical outer appearances with the support of the actors' actions and lines. In *Faust in Blue Jeans*, Yi

also revisits certain characters, notable Gretchen, who has become a barmaid and prostitute, to challenge the audience's identifications and enhance the dramatic effect of Faust's dilemma.

Yi's *The Merchant of Venice* [*Penisŭŭi sangin*] ends with Shylock shouting "this is a scam, all a scam!" coming back on stage after the curtains have already come down, as if to complain of an injustice. While in the original Shakespearean play, audiences leave the theater under the impression that justice was served, Yi's play ends leaving the audience to feel sympathy for Shylock. Yi's creative perception and new analysis of Shylock's character helps achieve this change for *The Merchant of Venice*. As radical as are the changes he makes, Yi has been deeply fascinated and inspired by Shakespeare during the past decade and mentions the importance of Shakespearean plays for the twenty-first century audience. Yi's *Hamlet* has perhaps received the highest praise among all of his works with Shakespearean plays; here, his creativity takes the audience through directly contrasting sentiments for the same scenes in the original, through which the distinction between life and death is as unclear as it were in one of his original works, *Ogu – Ritual of Death*. For example, he creates a comical monologue for the funeral scene in describing the irony of how suicide and murder both bring about the same result, and in contrast, a tragic atmosphere for the wedding. One can see traces of *Hamlet* and his conflict between duty and love in the Faust character in *Faust in Blue Jeans*, also made more evident with the overlap of Ophelia's character in Gretchen.

While Yi's recent interests have leaned heavily on Shakespearean plays, his attempts have also been to shed new light on Korean history by retelling stories of historical figures, culture, and traditional rituals. His portrayal of the traditional Korean

funeral in the comical play *Ogu – Ritual of Death* is, as mentioned above, his greatest success so far. This play, by incorporating dynamic musicality to the Korean ritual, is interesting because the traditional Korean funeral has such different notions of death and afterlife. Concepts of the angel of death, how the living have to please this angel so that he may take good care of the dead on their way to the next world, have their similarities but also differences with the Western-centered Christian ideas on afterlife. Ironically, as most funerals in Korea at present are conducted in a Western style, this play is probably less familiar to the Korean audience. However, it is interesting because it tells the story of how older generations perceived death and afterlife, also making the audience aware of specific rhetoric as used by different religions in appealing to South Koreans. For example, the word “angel” in the Christian Bible is translated as the common term for “the angel of death (*saja*)” in the Korean Bible, as a form of domestication. In *Faust in Blue Jeans*, differences between Western and Eastern notions of the afterlife complicate the translation considerably.

Approach in Translating an Adaptation

Ch’ōngbajirŭl ibŭn p’ausŭt’ŭ is a theatrical work with a dual attraction: a rekindling of feelings experienced by the young during a tumultuous period in Korean history and a revisiting of a classical Western text. Such an arrangement of elements made it paramount for the intellectuals of the generation to see this play. If Yi’s *Ch’ōngbajirŭl ibŭn p’ausŭt’ŭ*, which I have translated as “Faust in Blue Jeans,” gained popularity with its audience due to the clever combination of Korean culture/history and a well-known story in the West, my translation into English anticipates its reception by the audience from a different angle. My translation intends to achieve a particular

purpose: to introduce an intense era of South Korean history, its culture and mentality to a U.S. audience through the medium of a Western motif. Therefore, while both Yi's original adaptation and my translation have elements of the domestic and the foreign, they come from different sources: for the Korean audience, the cultural context will be domestic while the storyline is foreign; for the non-Korean audience, the culture embedded into the play is foreign while the plot may be closer to home.

Consequently, a different target audience demands changes to the play and its production. The transference of the source text into English calls for a dynamic change of literary scenery: emphasis will be put on different words and at times, on entire sentences; and emotions will be carried differently. An English-speaking audience will naturally zoom in on specific aspects while blurring others. This is not only because the text is a translation, but also due to the actors' interpretation of the text and how it is staged. This will be further discussed in considering performability. In Yi's adaptation, the intense focus on the drama between good and evil undergoes subtle shifts, with Mephisto's role as a villainous character made lighter while Faust's serious commitment to reputation, society, and family values weighed more heavily. Whereas in a more contemporary Western society, Faust's decision to stand up for and love Gretchen would not have been a questionable one; with different audiences, such as a more traditional Korean one, the play's emphasis is put elsewhere. Whereas audiences of written literature, written plays included, have ample time to form a response or reaction, an oral theatrical production is unique for its real-time feed, which makes the script more vulnerable to immediate reactions, an aspect taken into consideration in my translation.

Although Korea's national status has risen in terms of economic advancement and is therefore more visible as a national entity, the country's independent cultural identity is still weak compared to those of China and Japan. Korea has been striving for a cultural presence by promoting its unique culture via presentation of food culture, the dissemination of Korean media, and finally and most recently, the introduction of Korean literary works. However, by and large, Korean literary works have received little recognition, mostly due to the insufficient supply of competent translators to bridge Korean literature to the rest of the world. I exclude the emerging Korean-American writers and their works, as the Korean-American immigrant culture, I believe, belongs to a different cultural realm. Korean-American immigrant culture evolves differently under the influence of contemporary American society but within a fairly stagnant Korean culture. Korean-American culture can be compared to a museum exhibit that endures because there is no influx of contemporary movement and migration, resulting in a past version of mainland South Korea. As Korean immigrants within the United States in the nineties were inclusive, forming communities of their own, it was easy for them to stay unaffected by any influx of other cultures, whether evolved internally or coming from elsewhere. Literature by Korean-American writers, therefore, often describes extreme cases of Korean culture, which, although they are known to exist, may also be considered relics of the past which today have virtually disappeared. In literature by South Korean writers, we find paint a portrait of South Korean culture very much alive and growing, affected by all sorts of influences both from within the society and from the outside due to the influx of foreign cultures or customs.

Personal, Cultural, Historical Context

Faust in Blue Jeans cannot be discussed without the mention of very specific personal, cultural, and historical items, as they are also a source of conflict for the drama. In order to understand this play and to understand where the sources that the playwright draws upon for his humor, drama, and conflict, it is important to note the rhetorical devices he employs as well as the subject matter and people/character he introduces to his audience. The reference to Hyönse Yi, Suhyön Kim, and Seotaeji, for example, reveals the playwright's personal position in the play. All three are prolific, successful artists, each in their own genres. Hyönse Yi is a cartoonist and Suhyön Kim is a scriptwriter for South Korean TV dramas. The mention of these names as such, particularly in the framework of sub-antagonistic roles, seems to suggest a message in itself. As the Korean Faust struggles to resist the works of these artists, he also admits to the impact that both of their works have had on him. The first example I give is Faust's reaction to Hyönse Yi's work, where he cannot help but laugh at what he had deemed a work that has no literary value:

FAUST

Making people laugh with run-on sentences, incorrect grammar. What nonsense! I can see uneducated fools or monkeys laughing at this. Are you a primitive monkey? Are you?

...

FAUST

Crazy fellow. Just what kind of book is this? (*licks his finger and turns the page*) Ehem. (*lets out a dry cough, looks around once again, and gets closer to the book. snickers some more. book trembles in his hands*) This is making me laugh—mindless fellow... (*throws the book on the desk and leans back in the*

chair. takes off his shoes and then his socks, which he puts in the drawer. puts his feet on the desk. shaking his body to make sure he is positioned comfortably, he picks up the book again. lying sideways, he fervidly reads the book, turning the pages quickly.) (Act 1, 59)

Faust is again devastated to see that the TV dramas his wife watched received more response than his own lectures:

FAUST

Students no longer pay attention to my lectures. None of the books I publish sell, so most of them go out of print after the first edition. What's become of this world? People don't think anymore. The world's controlled by television talkshow hosts. If they run for office, they're elected. (*sighs*) The world no longer needs scholars like me. Unless I become a television talk show host or write lyrics to a popular song and become like the famous singer Seotaeji. Even so, how can I be associated with them?

What's more devastating is my family. When I retreat to this so-called home and sit at my desk, my wife changes the television channel. It's time for her daily soap, of course. She doesn't sit quietly in front of the television either. Crying, laughing, gasping—"oh" or, "oh no!" "oh my god!"—while she lets out bursts of exclamations, these, these knots, from God knows where, start to form in my stomach. I go mad! Once, I wanted to know what was getting her all worked up, and watched with her—boy, this was good stuff. It's not even anything important, just about everyday people in everyday life. Kim Suhyun, she writes pretty well. I was speechless. (*sighing feebly*) Our world's come to an end. No focus whatsoever. No scholarly pursuits, no one in search of the truth—so what do we do now? That is the question. (Act 1, 75)

Faust's dilemma and devastation are significant in a personal, cultural, and historical context: personal in that Yun-T'aek Yi projects his own dilemma and devastation onto Faust, as a playwright himself faced with the realistic difficulties of a literary artist; cultural, in that the names that provoke his anxiety are celebrities in South Korea who critically influence its culture; and historical, in that the dilemma is shared by a writer in South Korea living in the twentieth century was just as much a dilemma for a Faust in

another part of the world, in a different era. Yun-T'aek Yi's personal position is at stake, intertwined in the dilemma of the Korean playwright within the play whether to please the public, or to write for personal accomplishment.

Other cultural and historical contexts are less personal but nevertheless deserve mention. In the opening scene, Dooley Jang says that he is "unfortunate" to be father to a daughter as opposed to a son:

PRODUCER

And the same to you, Mr. Jang. I hear you have a new baby boy now?

DOOLEY

A baby girl, unfortunately. (Opening Act, 47)

This preference of male offspring is not entirely void twenty years later, but the root of this phenomenon goes back many centuries and has existed for most patriarchal Asian countries. With women not being able to work, inherit, or carry the family legacy, male offspring were more desired than females. Because of the influence of Confucianism, a philosophy that values filial duties, children were expected to take care of their parents in old age. This was another reason boys were preferred over girls, who would no longer be considered a member of the family once she found a husband. Although South Korean society has reached more balanced levels of gender equality and this way of thought is no longer encouraged, I consider this a figurative style used by the playwright throughout the play to highlight remnants from the past in contemporary Korean culture. My reading of the Korean play gives me the overall impression that Yi uses forms of rhetoric and

speech that do not require strenuous levels of concentration to listen to, in other words, the characters speak in a style that a South Korean would hear in everyday conversation. But in doing so, he is more effective in exposing the inner space of the South Korean society, at a very intimate level.

The Translator's Challenges

1. Personal Situation

Unlike technical translations, literary translations involve many more complexities in terms of translating rhetoric, rhythm, and even content; unlike technical translations, which many times would require the simple knowledge of specific jargons or universal terminology, literary translations can be a more liberating process, allowing for, even demanding, more creativity in delivery to the target audience. Technical translations are also limited to information delivery or communication on a two-dimensional level; with literary translation, the process involves a third dimension, meaning the translation of cultural specificities within a historical context. In theater translations, the process will go further into a fourth dimension with the pursuit of performance.

In translating this play, I was faced with a concern for the use of language in my personal situation. I found myself at times unconsciously, and at other times more consciously, translating in a foreigner's voice. My unconscious translations spoke for themselves; I was given the feedback that either there was an inconsistency in register (working negatively toward the overall impression of play) or that the expressions added an eccentricity to the play that I could not see but native speakers of English may

perceive as “proper” English having a “foreign” ring (a positive result for the translation). My intention of adding a unique color to the translation was more successful, ironically, during my less conscious attempts.

As for the more conscious translations, for some early test readers, many decisions worked but at other times were deemed less than successful. Some translations were either so foreign that the message became cryptic and others were thought to be too literal, which led me to reflect on the subjective nature of reactions in response to my translation. Living in the United States as a foreigner—by documentation and as a cultural and social being—I strove to introduce South Korea and its culture through the translation of this play. Thus, instead of a domestication strategy, I leaned more to a foreignization of the text. If I had been working for a South Korean audience, this agenda would have been slightly, if not radically different. However, I wanted to appeal to an English-speaking audience, living in an all English-speaking society. My aim was to have this play be accepted by a theater-going English-speaking audience. The goal was to foreignize the text for the sake of a domestic appeal, but the strategy sometimes backfired, and I ended up hesitant, afraid of straying too far from the original Korean text.

Reflecting on this translation experience, I have come to the conclusion that the translator may fully intend on either foreignizing or domesticating a text, but the outcome may fail to deliver the intention as much as a translator may desire. The translated text takes on a life of its own. In theater translation, this is further complicated when considering the staging of the text, as the written text undergoes further interpretation by the actor, director, producer, and then of course, by the recipient (audience). As between two ends of the extreme lies a spectrum, a translator may attempt to aim for one extreme

or the other, but the final result ends up at some middle point in the spectrum, largely determined by the audience and other cultural factors. This may initially appear as a form of disempowerment of the translator, but it is actually the opposite. By acknowledging that one's goal of the translation may never fully be realized in the way that it is intended, the translator is liberated from formulas, technique, and literary mechanisms, if any, in communicating a text in another language. The translator's work is allowed to reach a level of creativity analogous other literary pursuits.

2. Representation of Sexism, Homophobia, Racism, and Subversion as Sources of Humor

Perhaps the greatest challenge I faced as a translator of this play was the treatment of homosexuality. As with the depiction of the hostility toward the birth of girls in the play, Yi portrays homosexuality as a sinful act in this script. When Wagner meets with Faust for the first time, he is returning from a "hellish" place in which homosexuality has risen out of an unbearable loneliness, as opposed to referring to it as a sexual preference. Wagner further explains homosexuality as a form of corruption in this world. As a translator living in the United States, I faced the difficulty of addressing this issue while taking into consideration prevailing diversity and cultural norms. How does the translator go about negotiating political correctness and the playwright's values? Does the translator have the power to tamper with such notions, either by omitting or revising them? On the one hand, I want to "undress" the original in its bare form and expose the ethically challenged mentality of the playwright; on the other, I do not want to offend the audience. I had the opportunity to gain the playwright's own understanding of homosexuality in an email correspondence. He wrote:

I have no contempt for them. A distrust in others, a feeling of insecurity toward the opposite sex is viewed as having a homosexual tendency, at least, in this play. Please translate from a compassionate humanistic point of view to convey this message, rather than focusing on the appearance of a homosexual individual. (Yi, my translation)

The representation of sexism, homosexuality, racism, and subversion in the play therefore are only to be viewed as a kind of debauchery, contributes to Faust's search for alternative lifestyles, and eventually becomes a source of humor. Yun-T'aek Yi's understanding of homosexuality appears to be irrelevant because, according to the above quote, he is merely using homosexuality as a phenomenon to represent the varieties of human desire. Mephisto, the distorted and malicious antagonist in the play, adheres to the notion of homosexuality as a form of corruption. The distorted view of homosexuals, therefore, as led by a distorted character, undoes the distortion.

Another challenge concerned the translation of historical terms specific to the Korean past. There is first the notion of a national contempt for the Japanese as displayed by Faust's lines in Act 1. Attributed to the painful past of the Japanese occupation in the Korean peninsula, rampant hostility toward the neighboring country was still prevalent in the 90s. Although this view has largely dissipated today, these lines come as no surprise to the Korean population, and remnants from this period haunt some Koreans to this day. For example, there are still Korean women who want to be compensated for their time served as "Comfort Women" to the Japanese army. Comfort Women were conscripted

among Korean women to the Japanese military for sexual gratification during times of war. Most of these women have died of old age, but their stories are still told at schools in history classes and through the media. The Japanese also executed a policy to liquidate the Korean race during the occupation by banning use of the Korean language at the schools and in public arenas; not allowing students to salute the Korean flag or sing the Korean national anthem; and by overall creating a feeling of racial inferiority for Koreans. Casting disparaging remarks toward the Japanese seemed the only way to take revenge upon the Japanese for their attempts to wash the Koreans of their culture and tradition, and it was not uncommon to hear such remarks made by the Korean population of Faust's generation. In other words, the badmouthing of Japanese by Faust confirms Faust's identity as a Korean man in his forties, living in the nineties.

Moreover, there is a subversive quality to the text in relation to theatrical conventions, for which a "meta" treatment of the characters at the beginning of the play creates ample room. In the opening act, the actors come on to the stage as themselves, and this scene is introduced by the producer as a "preliminary step to establish empathy between the actors and audience" (Opening Act, 20). In a Brechtian fashion, the actors come out and talk to the audience first as themselves and not in the roles that they will be playing, breaking the third wall dividing actors and audiences. Additionally, several times throughout the play they come out of character, making themselves visible, reminding the audience that they are performers and that the presentation is mediated, similar to a translation.

Even after having resolved the issue of portraying homosexuality in such a negative light, the convictions of the playwright cause another problem for the translator.

More directly so, when in the opening act, one of the actors comes back from practicing theater in New York, the playwright comments that practicing theater in your hometown beats anything else:

DOOEY

Well, I like my life as it is now. You can go on about global theater, all you want; but a play staged in *my* country, in *my* native tongue—as far as I can tell, that’s what’s real! (Opening Act, 48)

GRETCHEN

... A foreign place, were it heaven, I will not go. I’d rather rot here, like this. To the end, I refuse to make peace with this beautiful spring day. I’d rather be buried here, in hell, a place I can call home. ... (Act 3, 120)

With the given concepts of “home” and “a foreign place,” that it is better to live in a home that is hell than a paradise that is not, the playwright resists the idea of performing in a foreign language and a foreign place. He is subversive by his insular attitude, and I am in turn subversive to his text by translating against the grain. Again, this is a recurrent theme in the play. How does the translator overcome the playwright’s resistance to translation itself?

3. Translating Genre, Cultural Norms, and other Linguistic Challenges

Faust in Blue Jeans is in part a musical: every scene begins with a short musical piece, either instrumental or with an actor singing, which illuminates another cultural specificity by presenting melodies and lyrics alluding to, or directly replicating, South

Korean pop culture. Such musical elements serve to accommodate the South Korean audience, arousing sympathy as well as providing entertainment. Fortunately, the gap between the discrepant cultures was actually not that great in terms of the musical element as contemporary South Korean music is heavily influenced by the West. For instance, Gretchen sings Edith Piaf's "Les Feuilles Mortes" in Act 2, which is just as familiar to a Western audience. Mostly for purposes of foreignization, I will maintain the music used in the original script and use translated lyrics, which are embedded in the script.

The issue of translating cultural norms, however, needs to be addressed. Gretchen, the female protagonist, is manager of a tavern. In South Korea, a woman associated with a place selling alcohol is frowned upon by society because many businesses selling alcohol also provide female prostitutes to accompany customers who come in for a drink. To some degree, this connotative meaning may be conveyed to an intelligent audience through the context. Even so, unless the audience is fully aware of the growing problems of such illegal establishments in Korean society today, this bias toward Gretchen that gives dramatic shape to the play is diluted. When considering a staged performance of this play, the shame associated with Korean bars may be represented effectively through stage devices, such as lighting or costumes. Perhaps there can be female extras standing on the sides of the stage, posing as hookers, under red lights. This was also an era in which the social role of women began to shift in South Korea, and many socially aspiring women, such as Gretchen, were coined the "New Women." Gretchen, although having to rely on pleasing men for money, also represented the movement of women progressively seeking equal rights and finding active involvement with society. Gretchen's character in

this adaptation of *Faust* is significant in that she portrays the epitome of a hypocritical state in the 90s of South Korea. How can such an intricate, transitional atmosphere be translated, this pivotal moment in the history of Korea? In this respect, I consider the act of translating drama an incomplete endeavor, as it can only be effectively shown and not easily told. Nevertheless, performable texts do rely on verbal cues to a great extent, and much of what is to be achieved can be done through narration.

There is also the use of metaphors in this play to describe the historical context. The main characters were friends in college of the seventies and eighties, a turbulent era of South Korea's transition into democracy. During this time, many college students were involved in active protests against the government, a government formed after a military coup. A time when active political involvement was a display of patriotic spirit, students who were uninvolved in the protests were condemned as "losers" or "fence sitters," as Mephisto is called in the play (Act 1). Another important term is "spring," or that "spring has come"; in this play, spring refers to the current society Korea has achieved after all the chaos and conflict, a society of better economic status and higher standards of living. "Daehangno," "Kwanghwamun," and "Hyehwa-dong" are all well-known places in Seoul, places of gathering for large crowds on strike, and students would throw stones in their defense, at the combat police who threw tear gas at the crowd. The months of April and May are not only important because they represent spring, but also because these were the months of annual college festivals when students would visit other campuses, making it a good time for students to organize gatherings.

As with almost all translated work, especially in literary translations, there was the challenge of translating puns. The pronunciation of the word "Faust" was the subject

of humor; in the form of a self-degrading humor, “f” is pronounced with a “p,” as many Asians are notorious for not being able to differentiate the pronunciation for the two letters. A Korean audience would laugh, but how would an English-speaking audience react? Would a literal translation be enough to glean the same effect as the original? I end up with a literal translation of it, hoping the humor would be communicated.

Yun-T’aek Yi is known for his terse yet impactful use of language. His communication style for the characters is also very direct and transparent. His honest portrayal of each character in the play was an overall impression I strove for in English. By keeping to a less wordy, colloquial style of communication, I tried to transfer this impression. What was lost in the translation, unfortunately, were the politeness markers or endings, which do not exist in English: when Wagner speaks to Faust, all of his sentences have consistently different endings to show respect for someone older. The same goes for Bunny Girl: she is found speaking with the same endings that Wagner uses, as everyone she talks to in Act 2 are older. But Gretchen speaks also as Bunny Girl, as Wagner does to Faust and Mephisto, initially because she addresses them as guests at her tavern, but even later on when their identities are revealed. Although this seems strange, to many Koreans it seems natural; politeness markers persist in women speaking to men, especially considering the social statuses of Faust and Gretchen. Such linguistic attributes were not conveyed, but in the original Korean, Gretchen’s subordinate, almost submissive demeanor is not only displayed through this form of speech but also reflects her character as being tired and run down from the hardships of her life.

4. Considering Performativity

The most liberating but perhaps also scary notion in translating for the theater is the fact that there are multiple tiers of filters, before the translation reaches an audience. It is liberating in the sense that the script is in no way finished by the translator but also by the actor, producer, and director who shape it for the stage, but scary, as the interpretation by the people involved in the staging process may turn what was once my own work into something radically different from or even unfamiliar to my intention.

I considered this translation for purposes of a staged production and fully utilized colloquial markers such as abbreviations, one-worded questions, and at times, nounless sentences. For the most part, it is just as readable as it is performable, but I also aim for the script to have a greater effect once staged, with proper lighting, costumes and staging devices. Therefore, although the translation that I have is in no way finished for the stage has been considered in terms of performance.

CHAPTER 2

REVISED SCRIPT FOR STAGED READING (from Act 3)

After finishing my first draft of the translation in 2009, I remember the unsettling experience of seeing the text alive on stage when it was first spoken by the actors. I revisited the text immediately afterward, to add and subtract directions that seemed unclear and lines that sounded awkward when said out loud. I have added a chart comparing the original translation to the revised text with additional stage directions. Whereas the afterlife of a text for a reader resides in the reader's personal imagination, the afterlife of a staged text materializes and is visibly stamped in the audiences' memory, evoking personal interpretation or impression of what was seen momentarily. At times, these momentary impressions last longer, and the play is remembered not for what it was, but for how it made the audience feel or what it reminded them of, lingering in their minds for longer periods of time. Here is the excerpt from Act 3 that was used for the staged reading.

Original Translation	Revised Translation/added directions
<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p>So it's come down to this. What a state of utter despair! Honor, self-respect, all taken away from me by one ludicrous gun shot. This is where I end up. At the bottom. Where am I? <i>(to Mephisto)</i> Is this where you wanted me? Was the script written to see that everything I own, everything I've built for myself is destroyed? You knew it all along but still pulled me into this hellhole, didn't you?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p><i>(very emotional)</i> So it has come down to this. What a state of utter despair! Honor to my name, self-respect, all taken away from me by one ludicrous gun shot. This is what I've become. Hit bottom. <i>(pauses, kind of delirious)</i> Where am I? <i>(looking around finds Mephisto, to Mephisto)</i> Is this where you wanted me? Was the script so written that everything I own, everything that I've built for myself up there be destroyed? You knew it was going to end like this, but still pulled me into this cesspool, didn't you?</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p>You're driving me crazy. How could you say such things to a friend of twenty years? Remember, you were the one who wanted to fall in love again.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p><i>(in lackluster manner, removing dirt under his nails)</i> You are driving me crazy. How could you say such things to a friend of twenty years? Remember, you were the one who was tempted to fall in love again.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p>But you put me up to it, about how I have a chance at salvation in this meaningless world.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p><i>(accusingly)</i> But you put me up to it, how I have a chance at salvation in this meaningless world.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p>I thought it was mighty audacious of you to want to fall in love at your age.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p><i>(innocently)</i> I thought it was mighty audacious of you to want to fall in love at your age.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p>You told me that I must first do something about it. Look at me now that I <i>have</i> done something!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p>You told me that I must first do something about it. Look at me now that I have done something!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p>I also told you, you were at high risk.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p><i>(I-told-you-so tone)</i> I also told you that you were at high risk.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p>But you enticed me into it, that there's nothing to be afraid of!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p><i>(angrily, clenching his fist, biting his teeth)</i> But you enticed me, that there is nothing to be afraid!</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p>I told you. If you're going to commit adultery, there's no need to be bothered by your wife. I told you to dream the perfect crime! But you, my friend, were a first time offender.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p><i>(calmly)</i> I told you if you are going to commit adultery, there is no need to be considerate of your wife. I told you to dream the perfect crime! <i>(shaking his head)</i> But you, my friend, were a first time offender.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p>People will point fingers, condemn me as a shameless fellow. Newspaper reporters take great pleasure in other people's misfortune. <i>(Unfolding a newspaper)</i> Look, I'm in the papers. I couldn't get them to print a review for a book I published, but for this, they write a full page article.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p><i>(helplessly)</i> People will point fingers at me, condemning me as a shameless fellow. Newspaper reporters take pleasure in other people's misfortune. <i>(Unfolding a newspaper)</i> Look, I am in the papers. I could hardly get them to print a review for a book I published, but for this, they've spared a full page advertisement.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p><i>(takes the paper and reads)</i> "Manager of local tavern arrested for firing gunshot at her lover when caught in bed with another man. The lover was killed instantly and the other man, known as Professor P of S University, is under investigation by the police."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p><i>(takes the paper from Faust and reads it)</i> "A tavern manager arrested for firing gunshot at her lover after being caught in bed with another man. The lover was killed instantaneously and the other man, known to be S University's Professor P, is under investigation by the police."</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p>This is the end for me.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p><i>(slouching his shoulders, head dropping)</i> This is the end for me.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p>No, there's still hope! Your name was never revealed.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p><i>(eyes twinkling, devilish smile)</i> No, there is still hope! Your name was never revealed.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p>Who do you think S University's Professor P is?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p>S University's Professor P? They've mistaken your name for "Poust." Even the reporters are giving you another chance. All you have to do now is walk back into your office tomorrow morning, innocently, as if nothing happened.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FAUST</p> <p><i>(irritably)</i> Who do you think S University's Professor P is?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MEPHISTO</p> <p><i>(smiling radiantly)</i> S University's Professor P? They've mistaken your name for "Poust!" Even the reporters are giving you another chance. All you have to do now is walk back into your office tomorrow morning, with an air of innocence, as if nothing has happened.</p>
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CHAPTER 3

A WORK IN PROGRESS: LITERAL CRIB

Presented here is an excerpt from the Opening Act, to show the translation process from the original Korean text to a very literal and rough translation, and the third line to show the final output.

PRODUCER

안녕하세요, 윤소정씨

Hello (formal), Yoon So Jung

Good afternoon, Ms. Yoon.

SOJUNG

안녕하세요

Hello (formal)

Good afternoon.

PRODUCER

장두이씨는 이번에 옥동자를 보았다면서요

Jang Dooley this time precious son saw [gave birth to] I heard

And the same to you, Mr. Jang. I hear you have a new baby boy now?

DOOEY

불행하게도 옥동넙니다

Unfortunately precious daughter

A baby girl, unfortunately.

SOJUNG

늦장가 든 기분이 어때요? 뉴욕 뒷골목에서 양아치 노릇할때보다 좋죠?

Late married feeling how? New York back streets Yankee role better than?

So what's it like to be married so late in the years? It must be better than a panhandler's life in the backstreets of New York. (*facing Dooney, knowingly*) Am I right?

DOOEY

글쎄요, 살아 봐야 알겠죠 뭐

Well, live to know I guess

Hmm. I haven't been married long enough to know that.

PRODUCER

살아 보세요. 살아 보면 가족이란거 그거 만만찮아요, 허허 오히려 뉴욕 뒷골목에서 배 굶아가며 연극하던 시절이 그리울걸요

Live it out. Live then family troublesome heo heo rather New York alleys with empty stomach acting days will be missed

Yes, do live it out first. Family life is no easy business. (*laughs*) You may even begin to miss those starved days of a hungry actor in New York, you know.

DOOEY

저는 이런 생활이 좋아요. 세계연극이 어떻구 해도 제 나라에서 제 말로 하는게 제대로 된 연극이지요

I this lifestyle like. World theater whatever that is in my country with my mother tongue is real acting

Well I like my life as it is now. You can go on about globalizing theater all you want; but a play staged in *my* country, in *my* native tongue—as far as I can tell, that’s what’s real!

SOJUNG

그걸 좀 빨리 깨우치시죠 왜

That a bit early realize why not?

Uh-huh. Could have figured that sooner, don’t you think?

DOOEY

글쎄 말이에요. (사이) 그런데 우린 지금 무얼 하죠? 연극도 시작되기 전에 우린 이렇게 무대에 나와 있어요

Well yes. (between) but we now what do? Play begin before we like this on stage out.

(*nodding*) It’s true. (*pause*) But what *are* we doing here? We’re already on stage before the play’s begun.

SOJUNG

단장님이 관객 여러분 앞에서 하실 말씀이 있대요

Producer to audience you all in front of have something to say

(looking straight toward the audience) Our producer has something to say to all of you out there.

PRODUCER

천만의 말씀, 전 대본에 쓰여진 대로 연기하고 있을 뿐이에요

Undeserved compliment I script as written act only

What do you mean? I'm just following the script.

SOJUNG

그럼, 연극은 이미 시작된 건가요?

Then, play already begin?

Does that mean the play's begun?

PRODUCER

그런 셈이죠

That's like so.

(big smile) I suppose so.

DOOEY

그럼, 선생님도 출연을 하신거구요?

Then, teacher appear?

(slowly) With you, as part of the cast?

PRODUCER

그렇게 되나요?

That's so?

Hmm. I believe so.

SOJUNG

그렇담, 선생님은 몇년만에 다시 연극무대를 밟고 계시는거예요?

If then, teacher in how many years again on theater stage stand now?

So how many years exactly? Since you last took a role on stage?

PRODUCER

이게 다 못된 연출가의 농간이지요 뭘. 그리고 보니 제가 년만에 다시 이렇게 무대에 서 있네요, 허허

This all no good director's joke well. Then I in years again here on stage stand, heo heo.

Mind you, this *is* all a part of the director's wicked scheming. (*chuckles*) Let's see now... The last I stood on stage? (*pauses to think*) It must've been __ years ago.

DOOEY

이미 연극은 시작되었고, 선생님은 출연 중이시니까, 우리 일단 단장님의 무대 복귀를

축하하는 의미에서 박수를-

Already, play, begun, teacher, appearing, we, for now, producer's stage return, congratulate, in meaning, applaud-

Well the play's begun and it's been so long since you were last part of any cast. Why don't we give a round of applause to congratulate our producer in his comeback performance? (*Dooey incites audience to do the same.*)

PRODUCER

고맙습니다, 고맙습니다. 이게 다 극장을 경영하는 입장에서 나온 궁여지책입니다. 이해해 주십시오

Thank you, thank you. This, all, theater management standpoint, come, as last resort. Understand please.

(*bowing to applauding audience*) Thank you, thank you. This is the kind of desperate measure we have to take to maintain a playhouse. I'm sure you'll understand.

SOJUNG

정말, 파우스트 원본에 이런 장면이 있나요?

Really, Faust original, this scene, there?

But really, is there such a scene in the original script of Faust?

PRODUCER

이걸 극장에서의 서막이라고 하죠. 단장과 작가 배우가 연극이 시작되기 전에 관객앞에서

공개적으로 토론을 하지요

This, in theater, opening scene. Producer and playwright, actors, play begin before, in front of audience, openly discuss.

Something quite similar. This is what's called the opening scene of a play. The producer, playwright and actors introduce the play to the audience in an open discussion.

SOJUNG

무슨 토론을요?

What discussion?

And what are we discussing?

PRODUCER

예나 지금이나 연극한다는게 참 현실적으로 어려운가봐요.

In old days, or now, doing plays, really, realistically, hard.

(laughs) Being in theater is a challenging reality - it is now, and it was back in the day.

단장이란 작자는 어떻게하든 흥행에 성공해서 어려운 극단 형편을 해결하려 하고, 작가와 연출가는 고자세로 제 예술만 고집하고, 배우는 배우대로 또 연극은 배우예술이다 그러면서 제작에 간섭하고 작가까지 거느리려 하지요

Producer, the so-called, in some way, popularity succeed, hard theater company situation resolve, playwright and director, in overbearing attitude, their own art, insist, actor, as actor, again, play is actor's art, claim, production meddle, even playwright, lead, try to.

The producer is obsessed with making ends meet by reaping profit from a successful performance, while the playwright and director will be stubborn in their artistic ways. Actors insist theater is an actor's art, interfering in production decisions, not to mention trying to manipulate the playwright.

SOJUNG

요즘과 똑 같네요. 이러다가 연극이 어디로 갈지 걱정이예요

Nowadays, same. Keep on, theater, where to go, worry.

Some things never change, do they? What'll become of the world of theater in all this? I worry sometimes.

DOOEY

정말 괴테선생이 파우스트를 쓰던 시대에도 이런 고민을 했어요?

Really, Goethe teacher, Faust writing era, this concern have?

Was this also the kind of concern Goethe had in his time, writing his play?

PRODUCER

그렇다니까요

Yes

It was.

DOOEY

그럼 우리 여기서 원본대로 한번 해 봅시다

Then, we, here, as original script, once, try.

Then let's try to act out the original script here.

SOJUNG

여기서 뭘해요?

Here, what do?

Do what here?

DOOEY

극장에서의 서막 말예요.

In theater, opening scene, [I] say.

I mean the opening scene of the play.

단장님은 예전에 햄릿에다 파우스트역까지 도맡아 하신 분이니까, 어디 우리 원본대로 한번 해 봅시다, 바루 여기서

Producer, before, from Hamlet to Faust role, take over all, the person, where we as original script, once, try, exactly here

Since our producer was known to have monopolized all the roles of Hamlet as well as Faust in his day, we should attempt the original script, right here.

SOJUNG

좋아요, 그럼 전 배우 역할을 맡지요

Good, then I actor role take

Okay. What if I play the actor's role?

DOOEY

그럼, 전 덜떨어진 작가네요

Then, I'm stupid playwright

Then I'll have to be the not-so-excellent playwright.

CHAPTER 4

THE PLAYWRIGHT'S FOREWORD, MOTIF AND SUMMARY

Finally, I have translated the playwright's foreword and summary to the play to supplement my translation.

Foreword

I was determined to rewrite "Faust" because of an inner crisis and a sweeping skepticism toward the world we live in today. One could also understand it as a desperate act to break free from the torpor of the nineties, in which all tension has been dismantled, in people and their surroundings. Racing to the end of the twentieth century, Korea's society appears no longer to want the humanist in the classical sense of the word. No longer does society allow the intellectual to exist as who he is, nor is he accepted with what he has to offer. Literature, too, in the classical sense, is either consumed by mass media's inundating popular lingo, or can only defend its condescending existence by isolation.

Either that or one must choose the path of self-disintegration, by throwing oneself into the disorderly and corrupt world as a form of sacrifice. In the mass industrial society in which we live, literature must suffer a degree of indignity, for any or all reasons of distortion, transformation, or compromise. Such secularization of literature does not apply only to news reporters and broadcasters but also to writers of plays like myself. Do we endure being marginalized by the masses, or do we make sacrifices for the sake of making works entertaining? If it is neither one nor the other, is there a third artistic

alternative? As I determined to rewrite the story of Faust, I chose this third alternative. The intent of my bringing Faust into our contemporary lives is a willful attempt to meet with the audience of our time. The purpose of my choosing the script of Faust can be understood as an effort to somehow bring today's audience, indulging in empty self-consumption and transient entertainment, into the world of theater. I hope a deep insight into people and the world, as embedded in the story of Faust, can serve as ignition for an upgrade in the quality of life for those schizophrenics of our contemporary age.

Motif and Summary of the Play

This play was written about the here and now, in the nineties, in the post-ideology era and postmodern reality, in the indiscriminate influx of mass industrial society and a spreading of excessive selfishness, for the self-reflection of the humanist elitist, lost in skepticism. While the original story of Goethe's *Faust* was set in late eighteenth-century Europe, in a transitional era of chaos and conflict, with the introduction of new prose and poetry, *Faust in Blue Jeans*, restructured in Korea's society 200 years since Goethe's time, reflects the chaos and lethargy of a knowledge-based society in the late twentieth century. The main characters consist of three college classmates of the seventies, reuniting in the capital of South Korea, Seoul, 24 years after their graduation. Faust is a university professor, uninvolved in any movements toward social change, only faithful to his scholarship and family—but with the overwhelming overflow of mass culture, he experiences an existential crisis. At this time, Mephisto, a classmate of his, comes to visit.

Condemned as a turncoat or fence sitter among his classmates, Mephisto had fled to the United States. As they recapture memories of their past, they embark on the memories of an attractive mutual girlfriend, Gretchen. They both claim that they loved Gretchen, and in the end, they decide to escape their boring reality by going out in search of this past flame, Gretchen.

But the Gretchen they find is in a miserable state. Gretchen manages a tavern called “Walpurgis.” At first, Faust is uncomfortable about this, but he realizes that Gretchen is still the beautiful woman he remembers and decides to pursue her heart for the second time. Mephisto hits on the young Bunny Girl, while Gretchen’s younger lover Valentin interrupts Faust and Gretchen’s rekindled love. Here Gretchen pulls the trigger and kills Valentin, causing the downfall of Faust by putting him in a perplexing situation.

Caught in the middle of the murder of his old flame’s younger lover, Faust finds himself in a serious plight. Can he get out of it to save his social status and honor? Despite Mephisto’s suggestion to get him out of the fix, Faust stands as a witness to the murder.

Here Faust learns about the hardships Gretchen had to endure, and deeply regrets how he abandoned Gretchen to succeed in life. While Faust escaped into his books and Mephisto went abroad, Gretchen went to jail, endured torture, suffered a miscarriage, failed at marriage, and became a hostess at a tavern. As Faust chooses a new beginning with his damaged first love, the door to salvation opens up—this judgment to salvation can probably be seen only as a spirit of the times, with an end to the last 30 years of a military-based government, and an effort to acknowledge and to break free from the

present state of consumerism. (my translation, Yi, Ch'öngbajirül ibün p'ausüt'ü,
<http://starmotion.co.kr/fsboard/fsboard.asp?id=scriptdata&mode=view&idx=145&srhctgr=author&srhstr=starmotion&page=6>. 7 Jul. 2011)

CHAPTER 5

FAUST IN BLUE JEANS: A TRANSLATION

Faust in Blue Jeans

Author: Yun-T'aek Yi

Translation: Yonjoo Hong

Characters in Opening Act

Producer

Actress Sojung Yoon

Actor Doeey Jang, also as playwright

Characters (in order of appearance)

Faust

Wagner

Mephisto, also playwright in opening act

Bunny Girl

Valentin

Gretchen

Opening Act

Setting: A veteran actor who is also the current producer heading an experimental theater troupe comes onto the stage with another actor and actress (Dooey Jang and Sojung Yoon). Exchanging greetings, they each sit in chairs prepared for them on the stage. This is a place of interaction with the audience: a preliminary step to establish empathy between the actors and audience for all parties to ease into the performance. Easy and colloquial, a conversational tone is recommended.

PRODUCER

Good afternoon, Ms. Yoon.

SOJUNG

Good afternoon.

PRODUCER

And the same to you, Mr. Jang. I hear you're a father now, to a baby boy?

DOOEY

A baby girl, unfortunately.

SOJUNG

What's it like to be married at such a late age? It must be better than a panhandler's life in the backstreets of New York. (*facing Dooey, knowingly*) Am I right?

DOOEY

Hmm. I haven't been married long enough to know.

PRODUCER

Yes, do live it up first. Family life's no easy business. (*laughs*) You may even begin to miss the old days, of a hungry actor in New York, you know.

DOOEY

Well, I like my life as it is now. You can go on about global theater, all you want; but a play staged in *my* country, in *my* native tongue—as far as I can tell, that's what's real!

SOJUNG

Uh-huh. Could have figured that sooner, don't you think?

DOOEY

(*nodding*) True. (*pause*) But what *are* we doing here? We're already on stage before the play's begun.

SOJUNG

(*looking straight toward the audience*) Our producer has something to say to all of you, out there.

PRODUCER

What do you mean? I'm just following the script.

SOJUNG

Does that mean the play's begun?

PRODUCER

(*big smile*) I suppose so.

DOOEY

(slowly) With you as part of the cast?

PRODUCER

Hmm. I believe so.

SOJUNG

How many years, exactly? Since you last took a role on stage?

PRODUCER

Mind you, this *is* all part of the director's wicked scheming. *(chuckles)* Let's see now... the last I stood on stage. *(pauses to think)* It must've been __ years ago.

DOOEY

Well, our play's begun and it's been so long since you were last part of any cast. Why don't we give a round of applause to congratulate our producer on his comeback performance? *(Dooey incites the audience to applaud)*

PRODUCER

(bowing to applauding audience) Thank you, thank you. This is the kind of last resort we take to maintain a playhouse. I'm sure you'll understand.

SOJUNG

But really, is there such a scene in the original script of Faust?

PRODUCER

Something quite similar. We call this the opening scene of a play. The producer, playwright and actors introduce the play to the audience in an open discussion.

SOJUNG

So what are we discussing?

PRODUCER

(laughs) Being in theater is challenging in reality - it is now, and it was back in the days. The producer is obsessed with making ends meet, trying to reap a profit from a successful performance, while the playwright and director are stubborn in their artistic ways. Actors insist theater is an actor's art, interfering in production decisions, and manipulating the playwright.

SOJUNG

Some things never change, do they? What'll become of the world of theater in all this? I worry sometimes.

DOOEY

Was this also the kind of concern Goethe had in his time, writing his play?

PRODUCER

It was.

DOOEY

Then let's try to act out the original script here.

SOJUNG

Do what here?

DOOEY

I mean the opening scene of the play. Since our producer is known to have monopolized all the Hamlet roles as well as Faust in his day, we should attempt the original script, right here.

SOJUNG

OK. What if I be the actor?

DOOEY

Then I will play the not-so-excellent playwright.

PRODUCER

(standing up) Both of you have been so supportive when our theater group was going through tough times. How successful do you think we'll be in Germany? I want to entertain EVERYONE in the audience! When they have fun, our pockets profit. The stage is ready with all the lighting and props in place: the performance is just about to begin. The audience raises their eyebrows, anxiously awaiting a shocking story to unravel. I know how to win the hearts of an audience, but a full house doesn't always mean it's a masterpiece. How are we going to attract audiences and perform our art at the same time? I'm perplexed. To entertain, yet leave a satisfying sensation at the end of the play. A play that allows for self-reflection, and at the same time, contributes to some contemplation about our society. That's the kind of work I'd like to see.

DOOEY (as playwright)

Please, let's not consider the audience for once. The mere sight of them chases away the playwright's muse. There's nothing more fickle than an audience. If we were to make them laugh and cry, do you know what they say as they walk out the door? *(facetiously)* "What nonsense. Some idea for a play, trying to arouse another tear from the audience." Or, *(pointing upward his index finger and shaking it)* you work to your wit's end for a script but when it's staged, you hear snoring from the seats. If we're going to be discussing audience, I'm... not so sure. Their whims simply cannot be trusted!

SOJUNG

Nothing stands in the way, as long as we can get them to laugh and cry. And the more people in the audience, the better. It is, after all, we actors who face them in the end.

PRODUCER

In any case, we must do what we can to add spice the plot. The audience wants to see something in return for their money.

DOOEY (as playwright)

They pay a price to see what the playwright wants to deliver through the play. They don't simply come to see *something*.

SOJUNG

Stop putting on airs! You're dreaming. Theater is like sweet love: it's where people bored with life gather together. It's our job to prove that life can be fun. Write something intoxicating, give people joy and life, make them high.

PRODUCER

She's right. You're trying to pour all your worries of the world into the script. Find the right words and mix them well, but don't forget the humor and song.

DOOEY (as playwright)

Do you know how miserable it is for a writer to have to resort to such formalities?

PRODUCER

Take a good look at who you're writing for! The audience—how else can I put this? For them, coming to the theater is like going to some costume party after a scrumptious meal. They're certainly not here to listen to you go on and on about your concerns. Your job is to spark their curiosity. Borrow Cupid's arrow if you have to! That's what makes a great playwright and that's how you become a popular one.

SOJUNG

He's right. Stop being a snob and invest your literary talent in people who are wearied by reality. See for yourself what they want on stage. You're too hardheaded! I'm not telling you to become a sycophant. Don't ever make them laugh and cry out of politeness to you. These people put in time and money to come here, it's a sin for a play to be so boring they cannot help but squirm in their seats and yawn. Go into the audience yourself and

find what they're looking for. What is it that truly frustrates them, makes their eyes well up, but also helps them realize that life is still worth living in the end? Move and make them fall into a trance, that is our responsibility.

DOOEY (as playwright)

What power do I have to move the hearts of so many people? Who am I to come up with a formula to put them in a trance? All I have are my thoughts and my feelings...and a heart that beats for my soul.

PRODUCER

I give credit to that genuine heart of yours. But we'll fill that heart with harmony, and bring a sacred order to your scattered soul.

SOJUNG

My role as an actor is to make rain or storm out of your words, color them with sentiments... Come, let's open the act. I can't wait to dive into the script! Though this world looks like a hell, today, like any other day, the curtains go up when the audience is in the house, and they await a paradise. May God bless a world that dreams ...

PRODUCER

I hear it now. Back in the day, the faint sound of the traveling circus's trumpet. My heart still yearns for the sweet fantasy. Oh, the joy and suffering in so many memories! I let go of those beautiful days, living in this grave world, but here again, I'm about to reveal those days through the fantastical remedy of theater. OPEN THE CURTAINS! Desires grappled by the hand may just as easily slip through the fingers, but a play that moves the soul is remembered forever.

(Three clowns sound the fanfare and producer and actress exit the stage, waving. Dooley as playwright plays the guitar and begins his monologue. The monologue is a combination of rhapsody, song and dialogue, between the playwright and Mephisto, played by the same actor, Dooley.)

A poem of dedication

(Beginning of music: rhapsody)

DOOEY

(as playwright)

Now close the book and come down into the world,

Faust is in the study

Sitting at the desk he is free from fear of falling,

But his mind still lingers in a misty alley,

Buried in the sound of a whistle, with no alibi

(song)

What kind of house did you build and where did you start a family?

Did you find a wife that April and have a baby?

If you've moved, keep in touch,

My yearning for you wanders, with nowhere to go.

Faust! Let's go back into the world of chaos

In a hot air balloon, consider flying the sky!

With an unquenchable passion for love --

(soliloquy)

Faust! Alas, I'm through with this threadbare world. Death and boredom pushed me over the edge. People say we're living a beautiful spring day, but how can we tell? I don't see any enemies to fight, and the world grows more hopeless every day.

(song)

Faust! Let's set afire this beautiful spring day~

Let's set ablaze this unenlightened world~

(Dooley switches role to Mephisto)

MEPHISTO

What's that? I'm always complaining about the world, you say? Well you're right. I simply don't like what I see in this world. Try persuading me with your hackneyed sermons, see if I take it. We still live in a mess, in a whorish world. How's the world changed in any way? One day I come back and see friends grown old, people in the city suffering from amnesia and homesickness. I refuse this spring day! Who called this day beautiful? I'm willing to fight it. But first, let me bring you your faithful servant, Faust, on to the stage, so to give him a dose of reality.

(song)

Those afraid of despair,
Don't know the power it has
You who praise the yellow flowers of springtime,
You who are oblivious to the goodness of disquiet,
If you forget what it is to despair,
If you forget how to write poems of disquiet,
I with pleasure will play the Devil.
In the name of the Devil, oh Faust!
I lure you out of your fetid books
And throw you into the waste bins of the city.
Hiho, heho, hiho –
Dingadinding, dingding, dingadinding, dingding
(end of song)

(With the end of Mephisto's song, curtains go up. Grave and heavy atmosphere)

A tragicomedy

Act 1: Reunited in twenty years

Setting: A study with three walls plastered in books and a big old desk. Under the lamplight, a gray-haired Faust sits with his eyes half-closed, chin resting in one hand. He languidly watches his assistant Wagner laboring on the computer.

FAUST

What're you doing?

WAGNER

(typing frantically, hovering over the computer screen) It's a television game show called "Maze Finder." I have to send in the script for it by six tonight.

FAUST

All this nonsense, writing for a television station. When're you going to write your dissertation?

WAGNER

I have plenty of time.

FAUST

Plenty of time? Killing precious time like you do! You might as well ask the broadcast company to hire you full time.

WAGNER

Me? Oh, they won't hire me, prof.

FAUST

And why not?

WAGNER

Do you know how hard it is to get a job at a big-time TV network? I only dare dream it.

FAUST

But you dare to dream of getting a doctoral degree?

WAGNER

Well, if it doesn't happen, then so be it.

FAUST

What did you just say? You're sure to get one with that attitude.

WAGNER

Why are you getting so upset?

FAUST

I'm too tired even to get upset at you. My assistant writes scripts for variety shows on television. *(taking the bookmark out of the comic book)* What's this?

WAGNER

It's a comic book by Yi Hyönse. It's really funny, professor.

FAUST

Bringing comic books into my study! *(throws it)* Get out of here, fool!

WAGNER

(quickly picks up the book, slightly nervous) You're upset when you haven't even looked at it yet.

FAUST

Now why would I ever read a comic book?

WAGNER

This is exactly why they say you're hard-headed.

FAUST

Hard-headed?

WAGNER

How can you discuss the principles of this world, locked in your study like this all the time? We know less about the ways of the world than the younger generation who write for television. No tact, no creativity—how are we any better than Yi Hyönse's comic books?

FAUST

Making people laugh with run-on sentences, incorrect grammar. What nonsense! I can see uneducated fools or monkeys laughing at this. Are you a primitive monkey? Are you?

WAGNER

(now upset, takes his TV script and comic book and sets it firmly on Faust's desk) In place of my dissertation, I'm submitting this script for television and the comic book. Just read it. It's really quite funny, professor. Much more edifying than what any dissertation will do for you.

FAUST

You're one to swap wine for vinegar, aren't you? As you wish, I'll accept this as your dissertation and look at it. But I can tell you now, you'll probably have to pack your things and leave this office tomorrow morning.

WAGNER

(letting out an exasperated sigh) That's fine. With a child to look after, it's hard enough to live on an assistant's salary anyway. I'm going to look for another job.

(Wagner leaves the study. Faust glares in Wagner's direction for a while but quickly looks depressed)

FAUST

What has the world come to—a place that considers literature, philosophy, theater—useless. *(sighs)* This wretched head of mine! It's been twenty years, getting a master's degree then a PhD, living off books, rambling on about every worry in the world as if I were the only one who cared, but what is the truth I've realized in all this? That there's nothing I can do about it—is that it? In all the sorrow and disorder, for what can I possibly hope? *(shows open the palms of his hands, exasperatedly)* Nothing—!

(Faust blankly looks at the comic book on the desk. Looking around the room once, he stealthily picks it up and opens it. Arrogantly, he looks around once again, and looks into the book more closely. Snickers)

FAUST

Crazy fellow. Just what kind of book is this? *(licks his finger and turns the page)* Ehem. *(lets out a dry cough, looks around once again, and gets closer to the book. Snickers some more. Book trembles in his hands)* This is making me laugh—mindless fellow... *(throws the book on the desk and leans back in the chair; takes off his shoes and then his socks, which he puts in the drawer. Puts his feet on the desk. Swaying his body back and forth to make sure he is positioned comfortably, picks up the book again. Lying sideways, he fervidly reads the book, turning the pages quickly)*

(Wagner comes into the room again. He laughs at Faust, who is engrossed in the book.)

WAGNER

So? What do you think? It's funny, isn't it?

(Faust slightly embarrassed at being caught reading the book clears his throat.)

WAGNER

Why can't you just be honest for once? I'd appreciate your honesty so much more than your lecture on metaphysics.

FAUST

(taking his eyes off the book) Yes, this is great. In fact, it's even more outrageous than the prophecies of Nostradamus. I now understand why these books become bestsellers. But do you really believe that Japan can start another war, like he says here? And let's just assume that this were to happen. Do you think we can win them? *(hits Wagner's head several times with the book)* That's why this is absurd! Scraps of paper are all this is worth. Doesn't have an ounce of logic to it, nor can you grasp at any scholarly concepts.

WAGNER

That's why it's a comic book.

FAUST

That's right, a comic book. *(begins to read again)* Haha, take a look at this. What a riot! Haha. Well done indeed, burn everything down. Sons of bitches, hate those Japanese. If reunification of the North and South doesn't happen, we must collaborate at the least. Filthy scums. "Hi" "hi," they say, and go making a mess everywhere. They deserve to be thrown into the ocean, wahhaha, hilarious—

WAGNER

Heh heh. Should I get the second book for you too, professor?

FAUST

(steps onto the desk holding the book, barefooted) Reading this I can feel my heartbeat again. My eyes are opened to a new world! Destroy the rigid world of logic and be free. Fill the little people with a heroic spirit, and rekindle the fading spirit of race. *(pausing, throws the book at Wagner)* You go ahead, book two will be unnecessary. It'll probably have a happy ending. The hero Magpie will clean up this wanton syphilitic world in the name of justice. As another matter of fact, a strikingly beautiful woman—and what woman could be more beautiful than an animated Thumbelina—and he will make a loving home together. Refusing all power, honor and wealth, but choosing the one and only, love! He will most certainly choose love.

WAGNER

How do you know all that?

FAUST

That's the formula for melodrama. But real life is not melodrama. Like in the comic book, everyone from time to time feels the urge to love, abandon reality and commit suicide. But not many people are actually that reckless—crying, they hold on for dear life before they finally have to leave it, clumsily. Melodramas often present people suffering from leukemia. How are they so beautiful? Have you seen a real leukemia patient? All their hair falls out and their eyes are sunken, the sight of them makes you lose your appetite.

WAGNER

They're beautiful in comic books, that's all.

FAUST

Precisely. People want to see the world through a comic strip, that's the problem. This world's become a comic book. It's a spring day in this comic book. When people think spring, they dream peace, love and reconciliation. What they forget is how a real spring day can bring on heat waves and weaken your eyesight and cause bronchitis! Families on

spring outings picking forsythias will say “spring, the beautiful spring is coming!” But is it really? Is this the true spring?

WAGNER

Twisted or true, spring, is spring.

FAUST

Indeed, spring is spring. In my time, when spring came, students threw stones. April has finally come, followed by the festivals of May, but why don't I hear the sound of students throwing stones?

WAGNER

There's... nowhere to throw them.

FAUST

Nowhere to throw them? (*more agitated*) Nowhere to throw them? You fool, the person sitting in front of you, me, I'm your enemy. Throw the stone at the elitist professor that prides in his status and PhD degree, cooped up in his study, lying through his teeth! What do you mean, there's no enemy? You're your own worst enemy! What've you done with your youth? Traded it in for computer games and comic books? Hit yourself on the head with a stone and cry, fool. Your generation is not the least bit interested in what goes on in this world. At least when we were young, we'd shiver in unheated dorm rooms, chewing up the dictionary page after page in place of food. A trivial prefix was all we needed to have a discussion. We'd sit around the beat-up heater in the department coffee area with the professor, enraptured by the debate... (*laments*) Come to think of it, those, were the beautiful days. (*poetically, getting carried away in thought*) Come April, we'd gather at the Hyehwa-dong rotary. Someone then said something like this: “Fellow classmates! Let's use this time of our young lives to plant an apple tree.” That early morning in Sungbuk-dong, a beautiful steel rainbow appeared behind the mountains, and the trees lining the streets of Daehangno were shaken up by our passionate outcries. As for me, I fled to my dorm room with a broken shin—didn't follow the crowd. I wrote a letter instead:

Fellow classmates, I choose to stand by my desk, for I fear waking up one early morning in combat. We may burn down all the plants, and leave the common people with only blackened pampas grass for the breakfast table. Please don't forgive this naïve academic in the name of friendship, too cowardly to comply with the rainbow. Rather, why don't we relearn the ways of polite society? With no ears to hear, or a mouth to speak, our

April cannot be properly recorded in history. I'm determined to remain a student until the very end... (*bitterly he watches Wagner dozing off beside him*) and I've been trapped in here since then. To this very day, you fool.

WAGNER

(*wiping the saliva around his mouth*) Fool, fool, fool. You keep calling me that and that's exactly what I've become.

FAUST

(*sighs*) I was referring to myself, this time. You're wrong and yet again. Fool.

WAGNER

(*yawning*) You're putting me to sleep! If you want to talk about the past you can at least do it in the right setting. In this stuffy place? I'm falling asleep. Professor, it's almost nightfall. Why don't we get drunk?

FAUST

If you want a drink, just say so.

WAGNER

There's a new bar in front of the school. It's called, "The Birds Build Nests in the Dusk."

FAUST

I always liked "First Love," for a name.

WAGNER

They have a new manager, the lady's supposed to be something else herself. She'll make you pay up without letting you lay a finger on her.

FAUST

Why don't we change venues and go north of the river for a change. Get some dog meat up in the Sungbuk-dong alley, it's been a while.

WAGNER

Why go for dog meat when there are hot chicks in the Bangbae district?

FAUST

That again? Forget it. The last time I followed you, they looked at me like I was a dried up prune.

WAGNER

That's because you were hitting on the chicks without thinking about your own age—

FAUST

Shut up, damn fool—(*throws the comic book*) Professors are human, too!

(Wagner picks up the comic book and runs off. Faust falls back into a depressed mood and begins a monologue.)

FAUST

(lamenting tone, prayerful soliloquy) Dear God! All this time, I've sought power and authority in logic and scholarship. Knowledge is power *(looking solemnly at the books lined on the wall)* and this is all I've collected. These books are my castle. They represent power, honor and wealth. I've given up everything to guard a futile authority. I didn't participate in the protests, and I've lost sight in one eye from reading too much. But the world today doesn't give my grammar books a second glance. Nonsensical words are made up only to be disposed and replaced. If these writings that I've devoted my entire life to end up being of no use in this world—where do I stand? *(pause)* There's no place for me. *(pause)* And so I *(flopping down in the chair)* sit here, like this. I live in hell. My words gather moss, and I have nightmares of suffocating under a pile of books. Go out into the world! If this world's a comic book, I want to lose myself in it, immerse myself in worldly desires. Dear God! Please send me a devil that will coax me into the empty yet sizzling city life, in the flesh! I give you my soul, amen.

(A knock on the door)

FAUST

Who is it?

(More clear knocking on the door)

FAUST

Damn. What's this ominous sound in the middle of the night? *(loudly)* If you're the devil, come in, but if you're another PhD candidate, leave me alone! I refuse to waste my time reading another doctoral dissertation.

(The door opens silently and the cold air of the night gushes in. Faust hears the sound of music so turns his head toward the door, and finds Mephisto, standing like a portrait, in ragged clothes. Mephisto is carrying a guitar on one shoulder and a nosebag on the other.)

MEPHISTO

Did you call for me, doctor?

FAUST

(turns blue in the face) What's this, in the middle of the night? Are you a fallen angel? Did God drop you down from heaven to corrupt me? *(taking a step back)* If you think it'll be easy to come into my castle, you're mistaken. There are talismans all over this study. That's the truth!

MEPHISTO

I'm a shabbily dressed soul, wandering about, with nowhere else to go. Would you let me stay a night?

FAUST

That'll be up to me. (*looking above, grumbling*) You're certainly quick to answer. I did order the devil but to send him down like this? You'll give me a heart attack.

(*Mephisto slowly walks into the study and looks around*)

MEPHISTO

(*looking around*) This room... this room is somewhat familiar to me. We helped our professor compile that dictionary. (*looks at Faust*) I did hear that you'd taken his office. I suppose a belated congratulations is in order.

FAUST

(*takes a closer look at Mephisto at last*) Who's this? I... know you. Does this mean I was also a child of the devil in my former life?

MEPHISTO

You don't remember me?

FAUST

That's strange. I have in my head an entire library of dictionaries. (*shakes his head*) In fact, it's so heavy I can hardly hold it up when I walk. But I don't store everything in here. Just what's necessary.

MEPHISTO

If you've deleted me from your memory I must mean nothing to you. (*turns away arrogantly*)

FAUST

Wait, you underestimate my memory. I know you.

MEPHISTO

(snickers with his back to Faust) Very well then. Try to remember.

FAUST

You... were my college classmate. Yes. Entering in 1971—*(frowning to remember)* But I can't remember the name. Names are like the husks of life anyway, none worth remembering. What's important is that you still look like you did twenty years ago. Look at me. I've practically become an old man. My hair is grayer every day. I'll probably have a full head of white hair in three years. My eyesight is also in bad shape. I used to be 1.2, 1.5, left and right, but now, they measure 0.1 and minus 0.1. Do you know what it is to have minus vision? *(takes off his glasses)* I can't see a thing. It's as if my eye's been eaten by the bookworm. Haven't reached fifty but they tell me I have bronchial asthma. *(pressing his chest with his fingers)* If twisted lungs aren't bad enough, they're supposed to be clogged with nicotine. When everything clogs up, I'll suffocate. That's not all. Every night, my crotch itches like crazy. They tell me it's growing mold. Tinea in the tubes or some such matter. I'm barely over forty but it's hard to get it up. I'm dead meat, as they say. *(walking around Mephisto, looking intently at him)* Were your last twenty years a two-day weekend trip? How does a man past forty look like this? *(scrutinizing him top to toe)* Worn-out jeans and a straw bag?! Wearing a guitar like a kid, hilarious! Are you not the devil? Or is this a disguise, to look like my rival from twenty years ago?

MEPHISTO

Perhaps I'm still living the memory of twenty years ago. And experiencing stunted development. Hahaha.

FAUST

If that's called a stunt in development, I'm all for it. How can I stop growing older?

MEPHISTO

You've used that head of yours too much. You need exercise.

FAUST

Why, I exercise every morning. (*doing jumping jacks*)

MEPHISTO

That's not enough to maintain a youthful complexion. You need to do more than that.

(Mephisto flies into midair to do several flips, three or four times over. Faust applauds, shouting)

FAUST

Hahaha—you've fallen into my ingenious trap! You *are* the devil! Get out of here—
(*throws the book at him*) How can you jump so high unless you were one, you... devil!

MEPHISTO

(laughing, dodges the books that come flying his way) Yes, I am. You bookworm, you've gone mad at last, buried in all those books. The very one that resolved to be in school forever.

FAUST

That's right, you son of a bitch. How many apple trees did you plant in your day by selling your youth, and where did you hide after dragging all our classmates into the bullet ridden streets of Kwanghwamun? You're a good-for-nothing rabble-rouser.

MEPHISTO

(embraces Faust, who comes running toward him in an attempt to attack) Stop the revolution!

(Faust weeps in Mephisto's arms)

MEPHISTO

We meet again. It's good to see you. (*holding Faust by the shoulders, looking at him*)
Who is responsible for making you grow so old so fast?

FAUST

(*embracing Mephisto again*) Feels warm to be in your arms. It's a good feeling. But if my
assistant saw us now he'd probably call us homos. (*wiggling away*) Let me go.

(*The two stand apart and all of a sudden,
Faust intently stares at Mephisto.*)

FAUST

Where have you been these past twenty years?

MEPHISTO

Spending my youth in hell.

FAUST

Hell? I see you've no intention of hiding your identity, sent from above as the devil's
apostle. What does hell look like?

MEPHISTO

Hell is a whole lot bigger than Seoul, but it has no center. Looters run wild, shooting at
everything and everyone—not the best place for human life. Everyone's escaped to the
suburbs. Remnants of burnt-down buildings stand like ghost houses. Of course, there are
universities and art there, too. I was also doing theater there. Within a year or two, half
the colleagues I worked with died. No one has the will or confidence to start a family so
everyone lives alone, and when they get tired of being alone, they go homosexual.

FAUST

Has AIDS spread there as well?

MEPHISTO

Oh yes. In the morning when you wake up, you see several bodies being carried out of the apartments, all of them AIDS patients. The whole city's corrupt, it feels like you are living in a gigantic dumpster. No one dares to promise a future. Everyone only thinks about having fun and making the most out of the here and now.

FAUST

Have fun and make the most of the here and now? That's it! That's exactly what I want to talk about. You really are the devil.

MEPHISTO

What do you mean?

FAUST

I'm in a state of utter hopelessness and despair.

MEPHISTO

Where does this despair come from?

FAUST

Students no longer pay attention to my lectures. None of the books I publish sell, so most of them go out of print after the first edition. What's become of this world? People don't think anymore. The world's controlled by television talkshow hosts. If they run for office, they're elected. (*sighs*) The world no longer needs scholars like me. Unless I become a television talk show host or write lyrics to a popular song and become like the famous singer Seotaeji. Even so, how can I be associated with them?

What's more devastating is my family. When I retreat to this so-called home and sit at my desk, my wife changes the television channel. It's time for her daily soap, of course. She doesn't sit quietly in front of the television either. Crying, laughing, gasping—"oh" or, "oh no!" "oh my god!"—while she lets out bursts of exclamations, these, these knots, from God knows where, start to form in my stomach. I go mad! Once, I wanted to know what was getting her all worked up, and watched with her—boy, this was good stuff. It's not even anything important, just about everyday people in everyday life. Kim Suhyun, she writes pretty well. I was speechless. (*sighing feebly*) Our world's come to an end. No

focus whatsoever. No scholarly pursuits, no one in search of the truth—so what do we do now? That is the question.

MEPHISTO

Your devastation is a result of your greed. Just how much more important does your life have to be? Stop feeling sorry for yourself because no one recognizes you, but do what you love most, whether anyone else cares or not. It's the only way to be at peace.

FAUST

You think so?

MEPHISTO

Of course. You've been worrying yourself sick about this world, until every hair on your head has turned white. We must carefully count the days ahead of us, not the days behind us. What do *you* want to do? We must die after having done all the things we've ever wanted to do, with no regrets. That's why I've come back. I'd turned my back on my country for calling me an ignominious, indecisive man, but, perhaps it's only a matter of fact—as I grow older, I miss the human touch.

FAUST

The devil is known to be very human. (*remorseful*) I've hidden desires too. Everyone has a secret. But with a family, a job, a social reputation to uphold, and other ethical reasons, you have to keep it buried, as a long lost desire.

MEPHISTO

That's exactly right. (*thoughtful*) What is your hidden secret desire? That's what you should do.

FAUST

Is it possible?

MEPHISTO

What's not possible about it?

FAUST

I'm at a loss for words—

MEPHISTO

Why do you hesitate?

FAUST

My secret desire is rather immature, even indiscreet.

MEPHISTO

However immature, if you desire it in all sincerity, it's precious.

FAUST

Indeed it's a sincere dream, yes, it certainly is. It was the most resplendent sorrow I can remember from my twenties, my days of youth, and it remains to this day an unforgettable regret...

MEPHISTO

What is it?

FAUST

I—I want to fall in love again. Although I don't know how much love I have left.

MEPHISTO

(clapping his hands) That's a good one, real good! If there were anyone in this meaningless world that could be saved, it'd have to be you. Haha! Fall in love, at your age? A college professor, with a wife and kids?

FAUST

If the rest of the world were to find out about this secret, they'd point fingers and call me a fool.

MEPHISTO

Probably. But, if this is a real desire in you, you must do something about it. You're at high risk, but life is full of danger anyway. Don't be afraid! So where is this present day Gretchen you've singled out? You haven't set your eyes on one of your students, have you? If that's the case, forget it. Even in hell nowadays, professors accused of sexually harassing students are condemned as the most flagrant offenders. It's extremely dangerous.

FAUST

Several professors here have also lost their jobs, for the same reason. Don't worry, my secret Gretchen is a classmate of ours.

MEPHISTO

(dumbfounded) Are you telling me you want to date an old lady past forty?

FAUST

Should I wait a bit longer? If I start after sixty, maybe the condemnation will be less. My wife may also forgive me, thinking I've gone senile.

MEPHISTO

Women take jealousy to the grave. For someone about to commit adultery, you're crazy to be concerned about your wife at all. The only thing that should be concerning you now is the way to the perfect crime. You even have me excited! I came back at just the right time. All I wanted was to take a look around my home country one last time before I kill myself, but you! You're giving me a reason to live.

FAUST

Why do you think of killing yourself?

MEPHISTO

Because I'm lonely. After forty years of living alone, I've had enough. (*changing the subject*) Who is this woman?

FAUST

(*abruptly, in a despising mood*) The same woman who followed you into the gunfire. While you, the real leader, were making your escape, she was put behind bars.

MEPHISTO

Ah—that, that woman...—yes, you loved that woman. She had those huge, deep eyes—the one with the attractive smile, showing her perfect white teeth—you're helping me relive memories I once had—she was not ashamed to hang out with the guys, crying and hollering she would run—a woman of courage—a voracious drinker, never hesitant to laugh out loud—so deeply sympathetic that she can easily tear up—(*crying*) that woman—I remember her. I remember the song she sang so well—(*laughing*) you're too greedy. She was *everyone's* first love.

FAUST

(*resolutely*) She was *my* first love!

MEPHISTO

Then why'd you let her go?

FAUST

She refused an ordinary marriage. She wanted to use separate rooms, take turns cooking, and have both of us earn a living. She wanted the open marriage of Sartre and Beauvoir, so popular in those days. I had no intention of doing that. I wanted a wife who cooks for me, the ordinary happiness everyone else had. I suffered so much studying in college—for four years I worked for my rent as a live-in tutor, eating whatever food scraps that were left on the table. I wanted the everyday kind of happiness.

MEPHISTO

Then you're living your dream now, aren't you?

FAUST

It's true. But what is this tightness in my chest, and why am I so bored all the time?

MEPHISTO

If that's the woman you're after—forget it. She's probably met some great man, having the time of her life. You know better than to ruin a peaceful family.

FAUST

But what if she feels the same way I do now, if she also has a hard time breathing and is bored with life? Wouldn't she also have kept her first love as a hidden but precious memory?

MEPHISTO

I'm not a woman past forty, so I wouldn't know. (*pointing to a woman in the audience*)
Ask her. (*looks intensely at a specific person in the audience*)

FAUST

How do you feel about playing matchmaker? I'm embarrassed to start something at this age, it won't be easy without someone acting as a go-between.

MEPHISTO

I'm neither capable of doing such a thing, nor have the will to do it.

FAUST

That's far from the truth! You've come here entirely capable. After all, you are the devil from hell. We have to move as the playwright has written for us in the script. Whether you're willing or not, you must guide me to that woman.

MEPHISTO

I've come back merely to take a look at the people I so dearly missed. And as long as I've come this far, I plan to shoot one film and perhaps take up roles in a several plays before I disappear again.

FAUST

To kill yourself?

MEPHISTO

Perhaps.

FAUST

You have done quite enough to have lived in this preposterous world. And have you met the people you missed so much?

MEPHISTO

I'm with you now, aren't I?

FAUST

I'm flattered. If you're not a fag, I'll accept that comment as an expression of friendship. Who's the other person?

MEPHISTO

Sad to say, the other person I've missed is the woman who you seem to think is your first love.

FAUST

You're getting me worked up...

MEPHISTO

Maybe that woman loves me instead.

FAUST

Ugh! This is outrageous!

MEPHISTO

Where is that woman and what's she living like now?

FAUST

How would I know?

MEPHISTO

Because you are too busy professing, is that it? Or busy quarreling with your wife at home? Getting your books published? Being the social celebrity that you are? You don't even know how yearning can cut to the heart, and you dare to talk about love.

FAUST

Fair enough. Why don't we find her and ask her? That would solve the problem. Will you join me?

MEPHISTO

Of course.

FAUST

Hold on a minute. Meet her, with you? Looking like this? She'll probably take me for your father. Looking like this, I'm sure to lose. You look too young.

MEPHISTO

You're mad. What are you worried about? A wig will do the trick.

FAUST

I also need to buy a pair of blue jeans.

MEPHISTO

Sounds like a plan. See you in Act 2.

(Change of scene with fanfare)

Act 2: In the tavern

Setting: Stage is an underground lounge called *Walpurgis*. In the back of the stage, Gretchen is sitting indoors, smoking opium. In the middle of the round stage, the young Valentin and Bunny Girl sing and dance.

(Beginning of song; Valentin's song)

Life is trifling and worthless

Living is being in great darkness

Burning up in flames only to disappear

Hiho, hiho, ehho, ehho x 4, ha-
Sons and daughters on earth,
Do not regret the time that was lost
There is still so much time ahead of us
Hiho, hiho, ehho, ehho x 4 ha-
Stop the time!
Life is short, and love is forever
Open the gates, this silent night
Open the gates, leave your house
Open the gates, open the gates, open the gates, open the gates
Run, run, white horse, run
(End of song)

*(Faust and Mephisto come in and listen to
Valentin. Mephisto is cheerful, but Faust
cannot sit still, anxious.)*

MEPHISTO

Look—the world is one big, happy karaoke room. It’s like a hundred pigs squealing as they cross the river, hahaha—

FAUST

Let’s get out of here.

MEPHISTO

What do you mean? This is where you’ll meet your woman. If we’ve come to the right place, she’s here.

FAUST

I don't care. I can't imagine how she'd live in such a rundown place. Dammit, I've looked in every corner of the country. Who would've thought we'd be led to this lewd dump? The dream I've had for so long was only an illusion! I should never have looked up an old flame. Let's go.

MEPHISTO

Then go back to your study and (*snidely*) hide behind your wife's apron, do something else. This is as far as you go? That's fine with me. I am determined to find that woman.

FAUST

(*angrily*) You devilish fool, you have surely come here to see me destroyed. I've left my wife and kids, falling for your temptation, and if that's not enough you insult this scholar's worth. I'll follow you to the end of hell!

MEPHISTO

(*ignoring Faust, flirts with Bunny Girl who passes by*) We're not intruding, are we? Can I buy you a drink?

BUNNY GIRL

You look... out of my league. (*pointing to the table with red lighting*) If you wait over there, I'll call for our madame.

FAUST

(*hurriedly*) No, no, it's all right. As you can see we're very old and prefer the company of younger folk, like yourself.

(*Bunny Girl giggles and leads the two to the table.*)

BUNNY GIRL

(*to Mephisto, who puts down his guitar*) Are you a musician?

MEPHISTO

I'm not very good, but it's a hobby.

BUNNY GIRL

Play me a song.

MEPHISTO

As you wish. (*plucking the guitar strings, begins singing; lyrics*) I want to know you alone. I want to love you alone. Only I, only I want to love you and make you happy forever and ever. (*Bunny Girl sings along midway*)

BUNNY GIRL

(*clapping hands*) Cool, it's an old song.

MEPHISTO

Do you know this song?

BUNNY GIRL

It's our madame's favorite.

FAUST

(*getting up*) I don't think I fit in here. We're going back.

VALENTIN

(*pops open a bottle of liquor*) Welcome, welcome! Welcome to Walpurgis. I'll make sure you realize what beauty and cheer this life has to offer. Now drink this magic love potion! It's been exclusively imported, straight from Spain.

FAUST

I don't like Western liquor. Bring me a couple bottles of soju.

VALENTIN

(frowning) That, you can get at the street stall just outside.

MEPHISTO

You don't have to reject all things foreign. *(putting his nose at the mouth of the bottle)*
The real problem is that this is mostly food additives, a fake.

VALENTIN

Have you come for a drink or to pick a fight? This is specialty liquor, with an added formula that'll put anyone in a state of ecstasy in less than a minute!

MEPHISTO

Probably used to breed pigs when they're mating.

VALENTIN

You're the one with a pig's nose. Maybe I can put a fist in it to make it look more like one.

MEPHISTO

Shut up and get out of here, fag.

FAUST

What's wrong with you? *(to Valentin)* I'm sorry. My friend's had a bit too much to drink.

VALENTIN

You shut up, too, old fag. He's had less than a bottle and is already talking shit.

FAUST

As I always say, the younger generation needs to be taught to speak properly.

VALENTIN

Let's see you learn some martial arts before you teach me anything.

MEPHISTO

Calm down now, brute.

VALENTIN

What'd you say?

(Valentin raises his fist and is about to hit him, but Mephisto kicks him in the shin first)

VALENTIN

Ow!

(Mephisto continues to kick Valentin in the shin and Valentin gets away, hopping, holding his shin)

MEPHISTO

(facetiously) Where are you hopping off to?

FAUST

You bully! What are you doing?

MEPHISTO

What a new and savage world we live in. The rise of civilization is merely a return to the most primitive ways. ... Maybe he's never heard of the survival of the fittest.

FAUST

Please stop your madness. You're supposed to be one of the educated—

(At this time, Gretchen comes onto the stage. Still has huge, deep eyes. She stands slightly upset but maintaining composure. Valentin and Bunny Girl run to her.)

FAUST

Who's this? How could this be?

MEPHISTO

Finally, our love arrives.

GRETCHEN

Who are these strangers?

VALENTIN

They seem to have come from the district office, or from the police. Messing around like that and not even scared.

BUNNY GIRL

They look like runaways, but high class to me...

FAUST

Oh no, fate must be playing tricks on me. That woman should be home, doing household chores. Why is she standing over there like that?

MEPHISTO

A stunning beauty, just as I remember her.

GRETCHEN

I'll meet with them, don't worry. Give them a drink and put some cash in their hands, that'll take care of it.

VALENTIN

Be careful, they won't leave that easy.

BUNNY GIRL

I think those men are cool.

FAUST

Let's go, we're not welcome here! I will never dream again, ever!

MEPHISTO

A world without dreams is a world full of shit.

GRETCHEN

(approaching them) How can I help you, gentlemen?

MEPHISTO

A man grown tired of life has come knocking to find an old lover.

(Gretchen moves her huge eyes to look at Mephisto. She turns her head and stops abruptly. Again she slowly turns her head. Her face lights up.)

GRETCHEN

You've come back, you devil!

(Gretchen opens her arms wide and walks toward him. Mephisto, taking a short glance over to Faust, goes to Gretchen and gives her a hug.)

MEPHISTO

Hold me. I've been a vagabond for so long, my body's grown stiff.

GRETCHEN

(caressing Mephisto's head, sighing) You poor thing... I knew you'd someday come looking for me. *(looking at Faust)* And who's this old man?

(Faust is miserable. Lights go out, and Gretchen begins to sing center stage, Edith Piaff's Les feuilles mortes. The lights come on again as Mephisto applauds. Gretchen joins Mephisto and Faust at their table. Bunny Girl sits with them and serves. Mephisto and Gretchen do most of the talking, and Faust is the wallflower.)

GRETCHEN

This is my life.

MEPHISTO

(clapping his hands) Magnificent! You haven't let me down. I can't begin to tell you how much you let me down when I heard that you were married with kids, working the rice cooker at home. "That's not the life for her, she doesn't have to live like that," I said. Tsk tsk. But you, you were not going to give up. Look how successful you are now, the independent woman. Ha—this calls for a drink!

FAUST

(mumbling to himself) Son of a bitch, who's he trying to screw. *(to the audience)* Men like this have to be arrested for destroying happy families.

GRETCHEN

(sighing) You don't have to try to make me feel better. I've failed. My life's a failure.

MEPHISTO

You've only failed once at marriage. It's certainly not the end of the world.

GRETCHEN

If there's one thing I learned in the twenty years of married life, it's how selfish men are. I can now dare to say that I fully understand the attributes of the male species.

MEPHISTO

I've never been married, so I don't know what to expect of the female species.

FAUST

Haha, they're all the same. While men look for every chance they can get to trample on the women, women cling to our ankles with their claws. No one can do anything, and everyone is out of control. In the end, love and hate are the same—people refer to this as "having stability." A life of stability: that is perhaps the state in which all human thought and feeling are erased, a state of bondage. After all, the happiness of a slave depends on complete confinement. Being anxious when given freedom—that is servility. As long as

you constantly look to your boss, work obediently and keep to your position, you'll be guaranteed a comfortable life. Our women always say, "ask the master of the house."

MEPHISTO

And what do men call the women?

GRETCHEN

They call us their "housewife." By this they mean for us to do nothing but stay home. But if a marriage ends up to be a relationship between master and housekeeper, it can only come to an end.

MEPHISTO

Is that why you terminated yours?

GRETCHEN

Pretty much. My ex-husband still refuses to sign the divorce papers, but I don't care. Look, I've succeeded in building myself a castle.

FAUST

(muttering to himself) This is no castle. It's a tavern for drunkards.

GRETCHEN

What is that man mumbling?

MEPHISTO

Ignore him. For him, this isn't liberating; he'd call it adulterous. Look at him with his wig. Hahaha. To what do we owe the honor of your presence, of such a socially busy celebrity as yourself? Do you, God forbid otherwise, have permission from your lady to be here? *(sneeringly)*

FAUST

Don't make me the tragic figure. This is certainly not the reunion I imagined.

GRETCHEN

It isn't, is it? I no longer am the innocent virgin of the past, unfortunately. What a pity.
(*derisively*) What *shall* we do?

FAUST

(*throwing off the wig*) I'm no spring chicken either, as you'll see!

GRETCHEN

Why have you come here looking like, like that? Did you want to prove just how loathsome we look at our age? Get out of here—now.

FAUST

Woman, who are you to tell me to leave or come in?!

GRETCHEN

Who're you to call me woman? And when did I tell you to come in? I said get out of here!

MEPHISTO

That's right, perhaps you are confusing your past lover with your present wife?

FAUST

Those glaring eyes, stinging shrill voice. They're all the same! You're exactly like my wife. Of course I should experience a moment of mental instability.

GRETCHEN

House...keeper?! UGH! You make me so angry! How is that man a college professor much less a doctor? You...! (*huffing and puffing*) Are wives only to be a keeper of the house? You don't think I know what goes on in that filthy mind of yours? (*to Mephisto*) Do you know why that man asked me to marry him? He told me he needed a woman to fetch him three meals every day because he practically starved through college.

FAUST

When did I say that? You're lying.

GRETCHEN

You said you wanted to eat homemade meals prepared exclusively for you, by your wife!

FAUST

Love is good, but we all must eat to survive! We do what we do to eat and live after all, no? Does anyone love without eating or shitting—

GRETCHEN

Argh! Get that dog out of my face, immediately! Waaahwahh (*sobs*)

(*Valentin runs in with a kitchen knife.*)

VALENTIN

You cursed manwhores, I'll crush those old brains of yours.

(*Mephisto blocks Valentin's knife with his guitar.*)

VALENTIN

Take my knife!

MEPHISTO

You said it, not me—

VALENTIN

Ahh!

MEPHISTO

Who are you kidding?

(Mephisto hits Valentin's head with the guitar. With a musical bang, Valentin spreads out on the floor. The producer, angry, comes onto the stage.)

PRODUCER

Ruined, everything's ruined! I wanted a breathtaking romance, and this is what you come up with? Where's the playwright? If I have to wring his neck I'll do it, make him rewrite this script.

MEPHISTO

A rewrite won't change a thing. *(Gretchen, flopped on the floor, crying, looks at Faust, who is banging his head against the wall)* Is this not the reality of our lives, in the flesh? You're looking at the truth.

(Lights go out slowly. Mephisto is on his guitar in the dark, singing)

(Beginning of song)

(Mephisto's song)

(rhapsody)

Which way are we going,

How can we live, not caring?

Hohoho, impossible.

Don't want an empty life,

Listening to music of sorrow

(song)

A sad song will not take you to heaven,

When a sad song plays, step forward, turn around,

Come into the center of the world—

There are feet between the world and us

(rhapsody)

God has no feet

Mister J, dance!

In a world full of sad songs, reach out.

MEPHISTO

Wanna dance, sweetheart? (*Bunny Girl smiles innocently and crouches next to him*)

What's your name?

BUNNY GIRL

Mara.

MEPHISTO

(*sings*) When the store closes,

And the organ plays in the metro,

I think of Mara, off to see the world

Mara, in a shabby sweater, wearing glasses

Come show your dance steps.

The weather won't keep us warm

Bring at least a 600 watt kiss! (*Bunny Girl kisses Mephisto*)

God may be all over the universe,

But the stars in the cornfield are ours

(End of song)

(Mephisto gives Bunny Girl a long kiss.)

BUNNY GIRL

You're like Jesus. You look like him.

MEPHISTO

Oh, no, on the contrary. I, in fact, have been cursed by God.

BUNNY GIRL

(stifling a laugh) Jesus is the name of our dog!

(Bunny Girl, laughing, runs off stage into the darkness. Mephisto laughs with a dumbfounded expression on his face. Spotlights on center stage. Gretchen and Faust stand side by side facing the audience.)

GRETCHEN

I'm sorry. I know you remembered me and so have come looking for me. That's why I'm even more upset, and embarrassed. Look at me, this is how I live. Now forget about me and go back to your wife.

FAUST

I've lived thinking my memories of you are my most precious asset, more valuable than anything I own. But this world is below my expectations, such a shallow and indecent place.

GRETCHEN

You're absolutely right.

FAUST

That's why I believed we should all live with a secret dream.

GRETCHEN

But that dream's only a fantasy. Envision the woman in your dreams, and look at me. Now that you found me, your most precious fantasy is shattered. Poor fellow, you, but this is what you asked for. You've always been very ambitious. You've always loved this world, no? I understand your hunger to live for reality. I understood this twenty years ago.

FAUST

Back then, I had nothing.

GRETCHEN

We were all poor. We were in love, but forever feeding the thought of leaving the other. We're old enough to be honest about this now, aren't we? Even though we were dating, there came a time when I became anxious and afraid that you didn't want to start a family with me. You were probably thinking that my stubbornness and liberal ways would get in the way of becoming a good wife.

FAUST

I just didn't want to see my wife deliver my baby in prison. That's how wild you were.

GRETCHEN

That's how crazy were the times. Wasn't everyone pushing their limits? If you were one of the so-called educated, you had to side with the righteous. Men were more cowardly, back then. Where were you when I was lying on the street with a bullet in my body?

FAUST

Studying in the attic I was renting.

GRETCHEN

It would've been much more honorable to do what he did instead: (*pointing at Mephisto*) he shouted "Stop the revolution! I refuse to see one more drop of blood," and left the crowd. He was the one to take me to the hospital the day I was sprayed with tear gas. That was the last thing he did, but at least he was tortured by a guilty conscience for the last twenty years, as a beggar in the back alleys of a foreign country. What were *you* doing all this time?

FAUST

Teaching assistant for eight years, and then became full-time instructor. I married and had my first child, a daughter.

GRETCHEN

And your wife, she bought a decent condo to bring as dowry, didn't she?

FAUST

How did you know? (*nodding*) So you were spying on me the whole time.

GRETCHEN

I was waiting. I simply couldn't believe it, so I waited for you to come back to me.

FAUST

(*holding his head in agony*) Ugh, kill me now. I don't deserve to be called human.

GRETCHEN

Don't worry. I had an abortion and started a new life.

FAUST

You had my child?

GRETCHEN

Yes, and it was a boy. You were punished and ended up with three daughters.

FAUST

You must have hired a full-time detective to follow me around.

GRETCHEN

Physical parting leads to a parting of souls. I lost interest in you a long time ago. I heard stories about you through other people.

FAUST

Who are these other people? They must have nothing else better to do, going around gossiping about me like that.

GRETCHEN

When I started this business, faces I've so long missed came to visit, one after another. They all looked tired of life, grown too old too quickly. They'd bring stories about you as if it were some rite of passage, because they wanted my body. And I'm almost fifty years old.

FAUST

Why I'll—how could they?

GRETCHEN

Because having sex with a friend's lover or his wife—that's supposed to give you the best sexual excitement there is, or so I hear.

FAUST

What are you trying to tell me? Did you sleep with all those people that knew me?

GRETCHEN

Of course I did. When it comes to sex, I've mastered it. My husband was a sexual pervert, after all.

FAUST

Son of a bitch! Kill me now—

GRETCHEN

Take a good, close look at me! Do you hear the noise of your fantasy shattering to pieces? Haha... If you've woken from your wildest dreams, snap out of it and get out of here.

FAUST

Mephisto, where are you? I need your help. The one beautiful memory I had is now shattered—(*weeps miserably*) I think I'll just die, right here, like this.

MEPHISTO

It's your life. You take full responsibility for it.

GRETCHEN

If you want to die, go home and die in your wife's apron.

FAUST

(sobbing) What do you mean, go back? I have no place to go back! I—I can't do wrong to my wife again, I won't do it. I've run away admitting to a loveless marriage—how could I possibly go back to her now? My life was filled with deceit. I was only faithful to myself. I believed that's how it was supposed to be. But I felt emptier with time, that this was not right. *(big sigh)* So I confessed everything to my good wife. That she's been living with a spy all along, for the last twenty years. She told me she already knew. In fact, she was grateful that I was honest with her and let me go. There's no mistress, I told her, but I did tell her about the woman I dated in college, about how she recently got divorced and is running a tavern—how I plan to go and find her.

MEPHISTO

So you *were* determined to find her.

FAUST

My wife also confessed, crying. She'd also been breeding two birds in her nest.

MEPHISTO

What does that mean?

FAUST

She had a secret lover. After forty, my night skills haven't been the most impressive, either.

MEPHISTO

What a mess. In times like this, you just have to start over.

FAUST

That's why I've come here—but that woman is pure vulgarity, dammit—

GRETCHEN

(sigh) You pitiful man. There's no place for you here. Why don't you go back to school and try your luck with younger women.

FAUST

No, as I grow older, I prefer women my own age. Gives me a peace of mind.

MEPHISTO

Heh heh. I'm enjoying watching you play this game! *(to Faust)* My apologies, but I'll have to give up this rivalry. I've always been single, and I'm fast losing interest in all this miserable talk. *(taking Bunny Girl by the waist)* I'm ready for something new. We can always stay young.

*(Mephisto walks off stage with Bunny Girl.
Faust and Gretchen are left by themselves
on stage.)*

FAUST

Can I come back to you?

GRETCHEN

...

FAUST

I've loved you all my life. My love for you may have been unrealistic, but that's probably because it was real. I've never forgotten you. In fact, you left a knot inside me, in the pit of my stomach. Let's untie this knot. Today. *(Faust unbuckles his belt)*

GRETCHEN

What are you doing?

FAUST

I want you.

GRETCHEN

I already told you what kind of woman I am. I'm a whore! Open your eyes and think for a minute.

FAUST

I will. I can't rely on both of my eyes, but I'm looking at you now. Ha, so the devils of this world have been making their way into your body, slicing you into bits and pieces? This is not a problem. Look into my eyes, I'm looking into yours. Your eyes are the same, still beautiful and deep. They're unusually teary and make my heart sink, but I know. You're still beautiful at heart, gentle and delicate. This is coming from years of scholarly intuition—I can assure you, my diagnosis is accurate. (*now only wearing underwear*) I'm ready to dive into the lake I love, oh wait for me—

(Gretchen embraces Faust as he runs to her.)

GRETCHEN

Do you love me?

FAUST

Women always want to affirm a man's love and have him surrender. There are two things I've always found embarrassing to say out loud. The first is that I'm a writer. There's just something funny about telling others that I write for a living. The second, I will say to you. (*dramatically, looking at her*) I love you. It's so short it sounds almost clumsy, but it's the truth. The truth is plain and simple.

(Faust gives Gretchen a long kiss. Valentin comes onto the stage holding a long whip and begins to lash Faust's back.)

FAUST

Ow, ooow!

VALENTIN

Curse you, you repulsive old womanizer!

GRETCHEN

Get back inside! This is none of your business.

VALENTIN

I will not be insulted!

(On saying this, Valentin lashes at Gretchen. Gretchen screeches and takes a step back while Faust stumbles over to protect her.)

FAUST

What's wrong with you?

(Valentin begins to lash with the whip once more. Faust, letting out another cry, flops down to the ground.)

VALENTIN

(in madness) No one dares to touch my woman!

GRETCHEN

Shut up, idiot! You're no more than a hire. Get out of my sight!

VALENTIN

You hired me? A man's not hired by a woman! He just pretends to be. You should've known that sooner. You can mock this world all you like and fool around with a different dog every night, but I'm not putting up with that. I'm not just another sex partner. I was patient with you for far too long, pulling my hair and beating my chest every night. But no more of this! I'll kill 'em all, all—

(Valentin cracks the whip and Faust wavers side to side before collapsing to the floor. The whip blows out a several lights with a static sound. Gretchen flees. Valentin and Faust are left alone on the stage.)

VALENTIN

That goddamn woman, look at her run! *(giving Faust a kick)* You foolish dog, see that? What'd you say to her? Love? What about it? Ha! Get out of here or I'll kill you.

FAUST

(without a word, fumbles through his clothes on the ground and finds his wallet) What do you have to lose, such a young fellow like yourself. Now now, take, take this—I'm afraid I only have 300 thousand won on me. Take it. Go start a new life. You don't have to be in the company of old folk like us. Go now, go.

VALENTIN

(wraps the whip around Faust's neck) Do you want to die? Or were you about to leave?

FAUST

(sound of choking) Here, this is my platinum credit card. You can withdraw up to 750 thousand won in cash from the ATM. It's yours.

VALENTIN

All right, then, I'll just have to kill you.

FAUST

(squirming) I—let me live. I have to—I still need time to, *(chokes again)* to love. I can't die now—*(more choking)*

VALENTIN

Die, old dog, die!

FAUST

Is anyone—anybody there—

(As he says this, the sound of a gunshot is heard piercing the dark stage. Valentin turns around when another gunshot, and then another, are heard. Valentin droops to the ground. Faust, coughing, looks around. Gretchen slowly lowers the gun in her hand)

FAUST

How could you—dear God, you've gone too far this time. If you push me over the ledge like this, I'll have to go back to a life of deceit—my God! How is this life so hard?

Act 3: I'd rather be a wasteland

(interlude: "My Love Geumsoon")

BUNNY GIRL

How was it?

MEPHISTO

How was what?

BUNNY GIRL

Me.

MEPHISTO

You were good.

BUNNY GIRL

You didn't come at first. (*giggles*)

MEPHISTO

(*slightly shy*) I have a hard time with women I meet for the first time.

BUNNY GIRL

Why?

MEPHISTO

Because I'm not an animal. Sex is also psychological. If there's no connection of the soul, it's hard.

BUNNY GIRL

So we were connected.

MEPHISTO

You could say that. If I look into your face, I remember Geumsoon, a girl I knew when I was about ten or so.

BUNNY GIRL

Who's Geumsoon?

(Beginning of song; Mephisto plays the guitar and whistles a tune.)

MEPHISTO

I first learned to whistle when I was seven, in the summer. The sound was so clear. I wanted to seduce the world with my whistling.

(Beginning of song: sings)

Oho—

My seven year old sweetheart,

Her house on the riverside

Keep my eyes open wide at night,

And the tenderness through the sloping road opens up!

(End of song)

When my love Geumsoon played jump rope, I looked under her skirt, into her white vulva, night after night.

BUNNY GIRL

(giggling) You're a pervert.

MEPHISTO

(Beginning of song: sings)

Rain comes down, even in my sleep,

Rain is falling, drop, drop, drop

Oho—

I cry, and cry,

Oh, the memories—

(End of song)

I'm past forty but my love, Geumsoon, still jumps rope.

BUNNY GIRL

There's nothing this world doesn't have or that we can't do. I care only about my freedom. But I'm lonely. And I don't ask for much. (*to Mephisto*) Do you want a relationship? Then let's build a house together.

MEPHISTO

A house? Are you proposing I settle down in this disorderly world? That's a tough one.

BUNNY GIRL

Why?

MEPHISTO

(Beginning of song: sings)

Why can't you,

Build a house in this world

Enjoying this spring day

Why can't I,

Build a white house atop a hill

And bask in the happiness it brings?

Why would I rather be a wasteland...

(End of song)

BUNNY GIRL

Why *would* you rather be a wasteland?

MEPHISTO

Well, why don't we raise the curtain and find out why?

(Curtains rise with fanfare. On stage, there are prison cells: Faust heaves a big sigh behind bars)

FAUST

So it's come down to this. What a state of utter despair! Honor, self-respect, all taken away from me by one ludicrous gun shot. This is where I end up. At the bottom. Where am I? *(to Mephisto)* Is this where you wanted me? Was the script written to see that everything I own, everything I've built for myself is destroyed? You knew it all along but still pulled me into this hellhole, didn't you?

MEPHISTO

You're driving me crazy. How could you say such things to a friend of twenty years? Remember, you were the one who wanted to fall in love again.

FAUST

But you put me up to it, about how I have a chance at salvation in this meaningless world.

MEPHISTO

I thought it was mighty audacious of you to want to fall in love at your age.

FAUST

You told me I must first do something about it. Look at me now that I *have* done something!

MEPHISTO

I also told you, you were at high risk.

FAUST

But you enticed me into it, that there's nothing to be afraid of!

MEPHISTO

I *told* you. If you're going to commit adultery, there's no need to be bothered by your wife. I told you to dream the perfect crime! But you, my friend, were a first time offender.

FAUST

People will point fingers, condemn me as a shameless fellow. Newspaper reporters take great pleasure in other people's misfortune. (*Unfolding a newspaper*) Look, I'm in the papers. I couldn't get them to print a review for a book I published, but for this, they write a full page article.

MEPHISTO

(*takes the paper and reads*) "Manager of local tavern arrested for firing gunshot at her lover when caught in bed with another man. The lover was killed instantly and the other man, known as Professor P of S University, is under investigation by the police."

FAUST

This is the end for me.

MEPHISTO

No, there's still hope! Your name was never revealed.

FAUST

Who do you think S University's Professor P is?

MEPHISTO

S University's Professor P? They've mistaken your name for "Paust." Even the reporters are giving you another chance. All you have to do now is walk back into your office tomorrow morning, innocently, as if nothing happened.

FAUST

You son of a bitch! I can't be so brazen about this.

MEPHISTO

Is it such a grave offense, a one-night stand with another woman?

FAUST

My scholarship, my social status, things that have taken me more than twenty years to achieve, all down the drain, all because of a one-night stand?

MEPHISTO

What do you mean one-night stand? You told me this was your greatest desire. Your most precious secret wish.

FAUST

It was an earnest desire. My secret wish. But the love I dreamt did not take place in a filthy cesspool, like this one we're in.

MEPHISTO

Stop with your wild dreams, this is reality. The world, as you can see, is a cesspool, and the love you dreamed, in the eyes of others, is nothing but a trivial one-night stand with another woman.

FAUST

You devil! I had a good life before you came along. I was only a bit bored and sick of life, and wanted something new.

MEPHISTO

(clapping hands in ridicule) Ha! So the truth comes out at last. You wanted your old flame back so you'd be free from boredom. You were like a starved dog, panting to have all your greed for this world your way. But now, all you feel is emptiness. The world doesn't move in the way you want, and all you've accumulated for yourself appears lifeless and temporary. Then you began your whining about love and all that nonsense. Love, love, love. But that was just the beginning of another one of your greedy pursuits, wasn't it? Or was it an outlet for all the complaints you had about this shitty world? Many men in their forties nowadays will keep a mistress on the side. In that respect, you were the smarter one. You went after your old flame, someone in your past. Easy as taking a boat across Han River. Weren't you looking for the safest and most convenient place to unleash your passion? Unfortunately, far from your expectations, your old flame was neither happy nor enjoying the extravagant life. You should never have walked into that tavern to find your old love. You should never have paid lip service to her, issuing a bad check, saying you love her. The moment you realized she had to bear the blame for all the sins of this world, you should've quickly retreated into your safety zone.

FAUST

As soon as I walked into that dark place, I knew it wasn't the place for me. Despite it, you forcefully dragged me in.

MEPHISTO

Oh, it wasn't me. The hidden desire in you was urging you. What is it to have a life of stability? Was it not to live every day in boredom? It was also you that summoned this vagabond spirit with nothing to my name. At your request, I went back in time to those memories of twenty years ago. There, your woman was living like a prostitute. With a younger lover on the side. Why didn't you spit on that filth and walk out?

FAUST

That woman was exactly as I remembered her. The cynical tone, the twisted pride, even the kind heart beneath it all—nothing had changed. What has changed is the time and tide. That woman is no longer a student in college but a manager of a scandalous tavern.

MEPHISTO

No, nothing's changed. That woman is still the love you remember, with those huge, deep eyes. She also lives, cherishing memories of you in every detail. So what's the problem?

FAUST

It's this world that's changed!

MEPHISTO

You're right, what's changed is that you're now a respectable professor and that woman manages a tavern. If you feel this reality gap is too wide, go back to your family this instant! I'll take care of the rest. Ignominious fellow! Screwing around irresponsibly when you could've kept your penis down.

FAUST

How can you take responsibility for all this?

MEPHISTO

I'll be P Professor of S University! Do you understand? This world is not so much interested in who you are as they are in the story of a college professor caught in the middle of a scandalous murder case. I will play Professor P at the scene of the crime.

FAUST

You'll take the blame for my accusations? What a great friend I have.

MEPHISTO

Not quite—remember, we're making a deal. Don't forget how you're getting yourself into a deal with the devil, on the price of your soul.

FAUST

What do you mean?

MEPHISTO

I'll send you safely back to your everyday life. In return, your old love will be mine. Think about it, you now have to stand as a witness to the murder. When you do that, your life's over. Your wife will ask you for a divorce, and your kids will condemn you for your misconduct. And what about your students? The school will convene a faculty meeting where you'll be dismissed from your post. A respectable scholar driven out of this society, with no shame. Do you know where you go after that? (*pause*) To the wasteland. The road that Jesus Christ Superstar walked, the place where King Lear, abandoned by the world, delivered his famous speech, I know the place. It's the place I've been wandering for the last twenty years. Do you know how torturous and lonesome it is in the wasteland? There isn't another hell like it—it *is* hell. That's how I'm the devil. They say the devil was formerly an angel, fallen from heaven. A fallen life—that's what it is. Taking all of this world's condemnation and curse, and fallen—but he is actually liberated. All of this world's rights to possess, taken from him, the devil doesn't strive to please anyone. But he must live life a vagabond, with nothing to his name. Estranged from the world, he's not responsible for anything here nor can he live for attention. You certainly wouldn't choose to live like this? You're afflicted by so many favors and duties of this world. Turn around when you can. You never met me. Cherish your old flame in your heart forever, as the extravagant romance you always imagined it to be. Treasure it in a photo album full of sweet memories. It was never meant to surface into reality! Go back! The woman may tremble at your two-timing betrayal and spit in the direction of your cowardly footsteps. If only she'd never met you again, any sentiments of love or hate she once had for you will remain as an affectionate yearning, to serve some sweet consolation in her loneliness. You have deprived her of whatever memories she had left. Ha! The woman dies twice, in the name of love. The woman pulled the trigger, and in the name of love, she is forever betrayed. Where's this woman to go? Alas, to the wasteland. The place where I live, to that place, she'll be banished. (*heaving a deep sigh*) But, don't worry. I've become so used to this wasteland that the family, study, and publications you so fret over accomplishing are only burdens to me. Give me a makeshift building on earth any day, I won't take it. The only things I crave are all things human. I'm content with a space big enough for two lonely people. I'm going to take that woman back to hell. This is also reason for my return. Goodbye, my eternal rival, now our tedious competition shall also come to an end. You choose this world, and I'll retrieve your memories cherished in secret.

FAUST

Save her! (*pause*) Someone—somewhere—is talking to me. I can hear it—behind these prison cells, where all the doors are closed shut—who can it be?—is it talking to me? Is someone trying to tell me something? Perhaps it's not heard to those fallen from grace, like, like yourself—can it be the voice of God? Or is it an inner voice that speaks, in the

name of love? And if that's not it, I should be suspicious of you. If there's any truth to that long speech of yours, it'll be this: save her! (*opening his arms wide*) Open the doors! I'll throw myself into this filthy world as sacrifice! Yes, ask me—in May of that year, when the azalea blossoms were in full bloom, where were you?! Oh God, I was confessing my love to that woman for the very first time. Then I heard several gunshots go off in the name of allegiance. In the name of love! That woman went to prison, and I've been roaming this tattered earth, not knowing what to do. Please, give me courage. No matter how much condemnation and ruin come my way all at once, I can't let fate play tricks on me, I won't give in. My wife, what ever can I say to you? Perhaps this will serve as a chance for us to free ourselves from the helplessness and callousness of our relationship. Farewell, remarry if you can, and please, raise our children well. If you fear they'll remember their shameless father, you can give them a new family name. And as for my infantile students! If I'm banished from the university and there's no way to find me, although his was an infamous ending stained with sordid rumors, please remember me as the one banished to the wasteland, in the name of love. I'd rather be the wasteland.

MEPHISTO

Ho, what heroic resolutions. But what's with the flowery language and exclamations? You're not writing a will, just going to the witness stand.

FAUST

Let's go, devil. I'll go with you to the end of this earth if I have to. Open this door—all the people in the city, come out and watch!—I'll take on your attacks of criticism. Let's go, in joy of damnation—save her!

(The door opens. A jury sits in the back of the stage, but only their eyes can be seen, peeking out of their masks. Gretchen sits loosely on a wooden chair and sings a folk song in a pathetic tone.)

(Beginning of song: Gretchen's song)

Mother's having an affair,

She ran away from home.

Our father, a villain in all heaven and earth,

Ate me up and so

My sweet younger brother,
Took my bones,
Buried them
Underneath the azalea blossoms.
I become a pretty bird,
And fly far, far away.
(End of song)

FAUST

What kind of song is that? What's wrong with that woman?

MEPHISTO

Damn her, she's gone mad. Mad, I tell you!

GRETCHEN

(listening intently) Someone's coming. Are they my executioners, come to push me off this dark cliff?

FAUST

It's me, I've come to witness your plea for self-defense. Where's the judge? Cameramen, signal standby before taking any pictures. Dammit, if I'm going to have my picture taken, I might as well show some dignity. *(a voice calls out "standby!" and Faust takes up a posture and smiles. Flash lights go off with a sound)*

GRETCHEN

If you too were human, you couldn't leave me like this.

FAUST

I was a jackass. But please, lower your voice. It's embarrassing.

GRETCHEN

(looking around, begins to lose her mind) This is a nice place. What a cozy place.

FAUST

Dammit, we're in court. Each member of the jury has a pair of eyes, and they're looking at us.

GRETCHEN

Why didn't you tell me you had such a nice room? You never let me into your room.

FAUST

All four years of college I lived in other people's homes as a live-in tutor. How could I have invited you to my room?

GRETCHEN

(looks at Faust and smiles brightly) This'll soon be our room, won't it?

FAUST

No, this is not our room, I said.

MEPHISTO

You fool. Tell her it is! The woman is hallucinating. Poor woman. This world was too filthy and cruel for her; she's trying to hide behind a world of her own imagination.

GRETCHEN

Do you love me?

FAUST

I wasn't so sure before, but yes. Regrettably, yes.

GRETCHEN

I like making an impression so deep in a man that he chooses me. That's happiness.

FAUST

That's why I was always suspicious of you. You had too many male friends.

GRETCHEN

You were a selfish man. You were suspicious when I so much as had a cup of coffee with another man, and checked up on me. That's not love, that's obsession. Look. I'm always right in front of you. What makes you so anxious?

FAUST

It was probably a lack of self-confidence.

GRETCHEN

You were timid, that's all. No one can take me away from you.

FAUST

(takes Gretchen's hand) You're right, we loved each other. Our love was my only happiness, more precious than any revolution.

GRETCHEN

Yes, the world is putting their hope on us. But I'm distressed at the thought that something bad might happen to us, that someday, everyone will leave me.

FAUST

Yes, we lived through an age of darkness, where we didn't know what to think about the future. Even all that you went through should be blamed on this savage world! If only they didn't put you in jail, we could have had a room of our own.

GRETCHEN

That's how you're the perfect coward. I know. I know why you left me. You knew what they were doing to me in jail.

FAUST

No, I didn't. That's not the point!

GRETCHEN

You knew! You knew how I was stripped naked in that grimy underground chamber, how I was abused and disgraced.

FAUST

No, I don't know!

GRETCHEN

I pleaded and pleaded. Why are you doing this to me? You have no right to treat me this way. Why do you drag me out at night and disgrace me? I would like a proper court trial. (*sobbing*) Please have mercy on me, spare me. I'm pregnant, I have a man! I'll live here ten years if I have to. But this has got to stop, I beg you! You're trampling on my youth, please! Please stop! I cannot let you ruin my youth like this! (*Mephisto covers Gretchen's mouth with his hand*)

FAUST

Damn, it's excruciatingly hard to listen to a mad woman talk nonsense.

MEPHISTO

You knew. You knew how humiliated this woman was in prison.

FAUST

...

MEPHISTO

That's why you turned your back on her.

FAUST

I was disgusted by such a world, I wanted to vomit. So—I put my head in the books. Such a cruel world, it was revolting and I was afraid—

MEPHISTO

You put your head in the books, and I ran away, in hate of such a cold, uncaring world. In the meanwhile, the woman lived, taking the bull by the horns. Until now. (*lets go of Gretchen's mouth*)

GRETCHEN

(*calmly, as if recovered to her senses*) Lying on the hard prison bed, I watched the blood flow out of my body. My baby was bleeding. I heard my baby's cry through the blood. The cry made its way up the iron bars and into the spring sky, spreading like watercolor. Looking for you. (*facing Faust*) That's when I heard the news that you graduated, moved to another place, and started seeing another woman. While my letters mailed to you were lost, tossed from one house to the next, not knowing where to go, what kind of house did you build for you and your family? When the letters were returned to me with the stamp "UNDELIVERABLE" on them, my eyes didn't well up because I was disappointed that they were never read. I was sad that my dead child's spirit may never find a place of rest, floating aimlessly in the air forever.

FAUST

(*grabbing hold of Mephisto*) I beg you, please, send me to hell right away. My ears cannot bear another word of this.

GRETCHEN

Why did you come looking for me? Did you think the fear of prison cells and the sounds of gunshots are gone with time? Now that the warm spring is here, did those stark memories of winter become an extravagant romance? Perhaps that's why our old classmates come knocking on Walpurgis at night, in the mood for a spring field trip. But there, only a departed soul of the past awaits them, beautifully adorned, with makeup on her broken face. They mix a dose of their own past memories in their drink and become drowsy. Then they say how "those were the rough times," letting out their anger for the past, singing, and come into my body. Haha... Into the uterus that so many black army boots trampled on, where so many dirty cocks have fooled around.

FAUST

(putting his hands over his ears) Ugh! *(throwing himself to the ground)* Your guilty love lies here on the ground. Step all over me, as much as you see fit, for the burden you've had to bear. Make me suffer.

GRETCHEN

(looking down at him) Why so humble all of a sudden? *(in a sarcastic tone)* You can yell at me now for nagging. You say you're disgusted with this world, the world you once held onto so dearly. But why? Does this spring day make you weak? Is that why you have come for me? *(pause)* What do you want from me. You've set foot in the wrong place thanks to a homesick feeling that's short lived. You've ignored holes that have yet to be filled in this world, but there, bitterness and grudge rot, carrying a foul smell. Deep grudges infested with the buzz of dung flies. Do you know what it's like for a woman to smoke opium and lose sleep because of the vindictive spirits who come knocking, night after night?

FAUST

(abruptly gets up and grabs hold of Gretchen's arm) Let's go, come with me to the wasteland! It could be a desert of hot sands for all I care. Let's go there and get naked, burn the pus and the foul odor, too!

GRETCHEN

It's too late. Hope ran out on me long ago. Besides, where could we escape to in this preposterous world? *(looking at Mephisto)* Like him, we too will be eating out of garbage bins in the back alley of a foreign country. A foreign place, were it heaven, I will not go. I'd rather rot here, like this. To the end, I refuse to make peace with this beautiful spring day. I'd rather be buried here, in hell, a place I can call home. The least you can do is engrave an epitaph on my gravestone when I die.

MEPHISTO

(sneeringly innocent) That much, I can do for you. A woman with huge, deep eyes. A woman who innocently let in all the waters of the river, and so became a river herself. With death, may she rest in peace.

FAUST

Shut up! I refuse to be a hopeless romantic like you. I'm going to work hard in this world and build a house. Devils, departed souls, act up all you want—you still don't have any feet. Fly around and do whatever the hell you please, but your feet will never touch the ground. I'm different. As you know, I love this world. I'm practical. *(to Gretchen)* Let's look this prison-like reality in the eye. This is surely our greatest challenge as we enter our forties. If we can move past this, who knows, maybe there's new hope waiting for us there like in our fantasies.

GRETCHEN

Do you really believe a new world will meet us there?

MEPHISTO

(looking up at the platform) Let's ask the jury. What's your verdict?

THE JURY (in unison)

The woman has been saved!

(The jury stands up in chorus and plays the fanfare. Faust embraces Gretchen in his arms and kisses her. Mephisto, bemused, looks absentmindedly at the old couple, then looks toward the audience and flashes a grin. Lights fade out)

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