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Introduction/Prologue

*Only one of our needs is known to you;
You must not learn the other, oh beware!
In me there are two souls, alas, and their
Division tears my life in two.
One loves the world, it clutches her, it binds
Itself to her, clinging with furious lust;
The other longs to soar beyond the dust
Into the realm of high ancestral minds.
Are there no spirits moving in the air,*

Ruling the region between earth and sky?

Come down then to me from your golden mists on high,

Give me a magic cloak to carry me

Away to some far place, some land untold,

And I'd not part with it for silk or gold

Or a king's crown, so precious it would be!

—Faust, lines 1110–25

Part I

MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH

Chapter 1

Encounter