

## Unto Temptation

Why is it that the Tempter is,  
Himself, so little tempting? Faust  
He offered youth, and Faust in tights  
To Gretchen; tavern tunes for hymns  
For Luther; Jesus on the heights  
The cided wealth of all the world,  
Which He refused. In human form,  
As thief repentant, rival choice  
For the Beloved Discipleship,  
Might he have scored? The cloven hoof,  
Unsightly horns, both miss the point,  
In that they call for go-betweens:  
Fruit, serpent, knowledge . . . One would think  
That evil pure would have at least  
Vain majesty and bold design:  
A look of Lucifer, in shield  
And shining armor. Uniforms  
Are neither intervention, self,  
Nor truth: are best foot forward, hoof  
In cripple boot; and hornèd head  
Fortunate Fall in Roman helm.  
Hell being waterless, Narcissus'  
Fate is not a threat should Vice  
Give over its so frightful mien  
To be seduction on its own  
By virtue of a visage art  
Avoids, and Milton carefully  
Does not describe. It speaks as might

A looking glass. "Look at me, Cain.  
You see the face of murderers  
Who sleep well, certain of their course;  
See, Judas, years of usury,  
Yourself rich in the countinghouse.  
Salt wife of Lot, see, grain by grain  
Encrypted, segments of your past.  
See, Herod, efficacious, praised,  
The wisdom of infanticide."