

A Hexalingual Limerick

by Arthur Graham
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C'était un poète maudit.

And how did he die? OD.

Mit Bacchus und Eva

Assenzio beveva.

פלעגן זינגען "לכה דודי."

Line 1, French: "C'était un poète maudit" means "He was an accursed poet." This refers to Paul Verlaine (1844 - 96), a French poet who wrote the critical study *Les Poètes maudits [The Accursed Poets]* in 1884.

Line 2, English: "And how did he die? OD." "OD" means "drug overdose."

Line 3, German: "Mit Bacchus und Eva" means "With Bacchus and Eve."

Line 4, Italian: "Assenzio beveva" means "He drank absinthe."

Line 5, part 1, Yiddish: "Flegn zingen" means "They used to sing."

Line 5, part 2, Hebrew: "I'kho dodi," means "Come, my beloved." These are the first two words of a well-known Sabbath Evening (i.e., Friday Night) hymn, sung during Jewish religious services, dating from the sixteenth century. The entire hymn, translated by Arthur Graham, is "Come, my beloved, with chorus of praise, / Welcome Bride Sabbath, the Queen of the days."