Doctor Faustus

Scene1

Doctor Faustus is a talented scholar living in Wittenberg, Germany. The play tells the story of a man who grows dissatisfied with the fields of knowledge he has studied before. Faustus reviews the most important intellectual fields of endeavor and feels that he has mastered these areas so completely that there is nothing left for him. First, he considers philosophy, personified in Aristotle, the father of philosophy and logic. The aim of logic, Faustus says, is to debate well. Faustus decides to stop pursuing philosophy since his debating skills have already been gained. Faustus, then, considers medicine, personified in the ancient physician Galen. Faustus is such a skilled physician that he has saved whole cities from the plague, but still has no power over life and death. He decides to stop studying medicine because even an excellent doctor cannot make men live forever or rise from the death. Then, Faustus considers law, personified by Justinian, the codifier of Roman law. Faustus considers law a field with a narrow- minded subject, which is why he decides to give up studying law. After that Faustus considers divinity quoting from Gerome's bible that the reward of sin is death, and that all men sin. He reasons that all men sin and so all men must die, and dismisses the idea of reading the bible anymore. Lastly, Faustus turns to magic. He decides that necromancy is the only world of profit, delight, power, honor, and omnipotence. Consequently, the first scene sets up the conflict between the limitation of human knowledge and the desire to go beyond their position in the universe.

Faustus is brilliant, but that brilliance has made him impatient with human learning, and now he has moved on to magic. The first scene is a revealing introduction to the character. The sin of pride is an important theme of the play, as pride is arguably the mother of all other sins. No form of knowledge is satisfactory to Faustus, and his dissatisfaction comes from pride. This sin is Faustus' greatest violation, replicating the sin of Satan himself. According to the Christian tradition,

Satan originated as one of the angels, but defied God and led a rebellion in heaven. Satan and his angels were defeated and cast into hell. Satan could not have believed that a rebellion against God could succeed. Satan's sin was not that he tried to replace God, but that he sought an independence from God. For Satan, "Better to rule in Hell than to serve in Heaven." Satan seeks an existence apart from God's dominion, even if it means the agonies of hell, foremost of which is separation from God's love.

Faustus' sin parallels that of Satan. He seeks deification, a power apart from God's and not subject to him. Faustus' problem is that he refuses to accept limitation on human potential. He also rejects, on every count, the fundamental values of Christianity. Serving others, e.g. as a physician, is not enough.

Faustus summons Wagner, his servant, ordering him to call Valdes and Cornelius, two German scholars who are well known in practicing magic. In the meanwhile, two angels appear to doctor Faustus, a Good Angel and an Evil Angel. The angels are not real persons but are projections of Faustus mind personified as characters for dramatic purpose. The Good Angel advices Faustus to put aside the book of magic and turn again to God and the bible. The Evil Angel tells Faustus to pursue magic will lead to power on earth. The angels exit.

The appearance of the Good Angel and the Evil Angel is a holdover from the earlier morality plays. The medieval plays often use abstractions as main characters. The appearance of these allegorical abstractions functions to externalize the internal conflict that Faustus is undergoing; they symbolize the two forces struggling for the soul of Faustus. Throughout the play, these angels appear at the moments when Faustus critically examines the decision that he has made.

Faustus thrills at the thoughts of the strange wonders he will perform with his sorcery. Cornelius and Valdes enter. He tells them that their advice has won him over: he will practice the magical arts. He will also pursue magic because he has realized it is the only subject vast enough for his mind. Valdes is delighted, and thinks that Faustus brilliance combined with their experience will make them all

lords of the earth and the elements of nature itself. Cornelius tells him that his learning is sound foundation for necromancy, and with magic, they will be able to find hidden treasure in the seas and earth. Valdes suggests some books, Cornelius suggests method, and Faustus invites them to dine with him. He vows to conjure that very night.

After the departure of the Good Angel and the Evil Angel, Faustus has a vision of what he will accomplish with his new magical powers. Some of his dreams demonstrate his desire for greater insight into the workings of the universe, and others suggest the noble ends for which he will use his power. Those desires should later be contrasted with what Faustus actually does accomplish. After receiving his powers from Mephistophilis, Faustus never does anything but trivial and insignificant acts; he resorts to petty tricks and never accomplishes any of the more powerful or noble deeds.

This first scene is filled with ironies. Basically, Faustus is so confident that his new powers will bring about his salvation, he never realizes that, quite to the contrary, they will bring about his damnation. He even refers to the books of necromancy as being "heavenly," whereas in reality they are satanic. He asks Valdes and Cornelius to make him "blest" with their knowledge. Throughout the scene, Faustus uses religious imagery and language to apply to matters which will finally bring about his own damnation.

Scene 2

Two scholars wonder where Faustus is. They spot Wagner, and ask the location of Wagner's master. Wagner toys with them, mocking the language of scholars, before finally telling them that his master is with Valdes and Cornelius. Wagner leaves. The scholars are horrified, because Valdes and Cornelius are well known to be necromancers. They decide to go to inform the Rector. The First Scholar worries that nothing can help Faustus now, but the Second Scholar says that they must do what they can.

Important Quotes in Doctor Faustus

1. *Philosophy is odious and obscure,*
   Both law and physic are for petty wits;
   Divinity is basest of the three,
   Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile.
   'Tis magic, magic that hath ravished me.

   In a long soliloquy, Faustus reflects on the most rewarding type of scholarship. He first considers logic, quoting the Greek philosopher Aristotle, but notes that disputing well seems to be the only goal of logic, and, since Faustus's debating skills are already good, logic is not scholarly enough for him. He considers medicine, quoting the Greek physician Galen, and decides that medicine, with its possibility of achieving miraculous cures, is the most fruitful pursuit—yet he notes that he has achieved great renown as a doctor already and that this fame has not brought him satisfaction. He considers law, quoting the Byzantine emperor Justinian, but dismisses law as too petty, dealing with trivial matters rather than larger ones. Divinity, the study of religion and theology, seems to offer wider vistas, but he quotes from St. Jerome's Bible that all men sin and finds the Bible's assertion that "[t]he reward of sin is death" an unacceptable doctrine. He then dismisses religion and fixes his mind on magic, which, when properly pursued, he believes will make him "a mighty god"

2. *MEPHASTOPHILIS: Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.*
   Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
   And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,

Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
In being deprived of everlasting bliss?

This exchange shows Faustus at his most willfully blind, as he listens to Mephastophilis describe how awful hell is for him even as a devil, and as he then proceeds to dismiss Mephastophilis's words blithely, urging him to have "manly fortitude." But the dialogue also shows Mephastophilis in a peculiar light. We know that he is committed to Faustus's damnation—he has appeared to Faustus because of his hope that Faustus will renounce God and swear allegiance to Lucifer. Yet here Mephastophilis seems to be urging Faustus against selling his soul, telling him to "leave these frivolous demands, / Which strike a terror to my fainting soul." There is a parallel between the experience of Mephastophilis and that of Faustus. Just as Faustus now is, Mephastophilis was once prideful and rebelled against God; like Faustus, he is damned forever for his sin. Perhaps because of this connection, Mephastophilis cannot accept Faustus's cheerful dismissal of hell in the name of "manly fortitude." He knows all too well the terrible reality, and this knowledge drives him, in spite of himself, to warn Faustus away from his terrible course.

3. *MEPHASTOPHILIS.: Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed*
In one self-place; for where we are is hell,
And where hell is, there must we ever be.
. . .
All places shall be hell that is not heaven.
FAUSTUS: Come, I think hell's a fable.
MEPHASTOPHILIS.: Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.
. . .
FAUSTUS: Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine

That after this life there is any pain?
Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.

This exchange again shows Mephastophilis warning Faustus about the horrors of hell. This time, though, their exchange is less significant for what Mephastophilis says about hell than for Faustus's response to him. Why anyone would make a pact with the devil is one of the most vexing questions surrounding Doctor Faustus, and here we see part of Marlowe's explanation. We are constantly given indications that Faustus does not really understand what he is doing. He is a secular Renaissance man, so disdainful of traditional religion that he believes hell to be a "fable" even when he is conversing with a devil. Of course, such a belief is difficult to maintain when one is trafficking in the supernatural, but Faustus has a fallback position. Faustus takes Mephastophilis's assertion that hell will be "[a]ll places … that is not heaven" to mean that hell will just be a continuation of life on earth. He fails to understand the difference between him and Mephastophilis: unlike Mephastophilis, who has lost heaven permanently, Faustus, despite his pact with Lucifer, is not yet damned and still has the possibility of repentance. He cannot yet understand the torture against which Mephastophilis warns him, and imagines, fatally, that he already knows the worst of what hell will be.

4. *Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,*
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss:
Her lips sucks forth my soul, see where it flies!
Come Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven be in these lips,

And all is dross that is not Helena!

These lines come from a speech that Faustus makes as he nears the end of his life and begins to realize the terrible nature of the bargain he has made. Despite his sense of foreboding, Faustus enjoys his powers, as the delight he takes in conjuring up Helen makes clear. While the speech marks a return to the eloquence that he shows early in the play, Faustus continues to display the same blind spots and wishful thinking that characterize his behavior throughout the drama. At the beginning of the play, he dismisses religious transcendence in favor of magic; now, after squandering his powers in petty, self-indulgent behavior, he looks for transcendence in a woman, one who may be an illusion and not even real flesh and blood. He seeks heavenly grace in Helen's lips, which can, at best, offer only earthly pleasure. "[M]ake me immortal with a kiss," he cries, even as he continues to keep his back turned to his only hope for escaping damnation—namely, repentance.

5. *Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,*
And then thou must be damned perpetually.
Ugly hell gape not! Come not, Lucifer!
I'll burn my books—ah, Mephastophilis!

The final night of Faustus's life has come, and he tells the scholars of the deal he has made with Lucifer. They are horrified and ask what they can do to save him, but he tells them that there is nothing to be done. Reluctantly, they leave to pray for Faustus. A vision of hell opens before Faustus's horrified eyes as the clock strikes eleven. The last hour passes by quickly, and Faustus exhorts the clocks to slow and time to stop, so that he might live a little longer and have a chance to repent. He

then begs God to reduce his time in hell to a thousand years or a hundred thousand years, so long as he is eventually saved. He wishes that he were a beast and would simply cease to exist when he dies instead of face damnation. He curses his parents and himself, and the clock strikes midnight. Devils enter and carry Faustus away as he screams, "Ugly hell gape not! Come not, Lucifer! / I'll burn my books—ah, Mephastophilis!"

Faustus's final speech is the most emotionally powerful scene in the play, as his despairing mind rushes from idea to idea. One moment he is begging time to slow down, the next he is imploring Christ for mercy. One moment he is crying out in fear and trying to hide from the wrath of God, the next he is begging to have the eternity of hell lessened somehow. He curses his parents for giving birth to him but then owns up to his responsibility and curses himself. His mind's various attempts to escape his doom, then, lead inexorably to an understanding of his own guilt.

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Scene 3

Faustus decides to try incantation for the first time. He mutters a long passage in Latin which is composed of passages abjuring the trinity and invoking the aid of the powers of the underworld. Faustus succeeds in summoning Mephistophilis, a devil, who appears in an ugly shape. Faustus tells him that he is too ugly. He demands that Mephistophilis disappear and return in the shape of a Franciscan friar. Faustus is excited that he has the power to call up this devil. As soon as Mephistophilis reappears, Faustus finds that it is not his conjuration which brings forth a devil; a devil will appear any time that a person abjures the name of the trinity.

Faustus asks Mephistophilis several questions about Lucifer and learns that Lucifer is a fallen angel who, because of pride and insolence, revolted against God and was cast into hell. When Faustus begins to inquire about the nature of hell, Mephistophilis answers that hell is wherever God is not present. Faustus chides Mephistophilis for being so passionate about being deprived of the joys of heaven, and then sends him back to Lucifer with the proposal that Faustus will exchange his soul for twenty-four years of unlimited power. After Mephistophilis leaves, Faustus dreams of all the glorious deeds he will perform with his new power.

In this scene, Faustus takes the first steps toward his own damnation as he abjures the trinity and appeals to the black powers of hell. Throughout the whole scene, Faustus seems unable to understand the forces with which he deals. When he questions Mephistophilis about hell, he does not understand that hell is primarily a state of the spirit. Mephistophilis is always in hell, even when he appears on earth, because true hell is separation from God. The devil is actually hurt by Faustus' questions, and cannot bear to think of his state: "Oh Faustus, leave these frivolous demands, / Which strike a terror to my fainting soul". The "frivolous demands" are

the curious questions about hell's nature. Like an amateur scholar who collects facts but cannot penetrate his subject deeply, Faustus seeks knowledge about hell; when the devil tells him about it, he does not understand it. He has knowledge, but no wisdom, and prizing the first over the latter is a grave mistake, and a theme of the play. For Mephistophilis, the experience of hell is painful and continuous.

Mephistophilis willingly tells Faustus that his master, Lucifer, is less powerful than God, having been thrown “by aspiring pride and insolence, / … from the face of heaven”. Furthermore, Mephastophilis offers a powerful portrait of hell that seems to warn against any pact with Lucifer. When Faustus asks him how it is that he is allowed to leave hell in order to come to earth, Mephastophilis exposes the horrors of his own experience as if offering sage guidance to Faustus. His honesty in mentioning the “ten thousand hells” that torment him shines a negative light on the action of committing one’s soul to Lucifer. Indeed, Mephastophilis even tells Faustus to abandon his “frivolous demands”.

Nevertheless, Faustus refuses to leave his desires. Instead, he exhibits the blindness that serves as one of his defining characteristics throughout the play. Faustus sees the world as he wants to see it rather than as it is. Again, when Mephastophilis has finished telling him of the horrors of hell and urging him not to sell his soul, Faustus carelessly dismisses what Mephastophilis has said, accusing him of lacking “manly fortitude”.

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Scene 4

Wagner converses with a clown and tries to persuade him to become his servant for seven years. The clown is poor, and Wagner jokes that he would probably sell his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton; the clown answers that it would have to be well-seasoned mutton. After first agreeing to be Wagner's servant, however, the clown rapidly changes his mind. Wagner threatens to cast a spell on him, and he then conjures up two devils, who he says will carry the clown away to hell unless he becomes Wagner's servant. Seeing the devils, the clown becomes terrified and agrees to Wagner's demands. After Wagner dismisses the devils, the clown asks his new master if he can learn to conjure as well, and Wagner promises to teach him how to turn himself into any kind of animal—but he insists on being called "Master Wagner."

The antics of Wagner and the clown provide a comic counterpoint to the Faustus-Mephistophilis scenes. The clown jokes that he would sell his soul to the devil for a well-seasoned shoulder of mutton, and Wagner uses his newly gained conjuring skill to frighten the clown into serving him. Like Faustus, these clownish characters use magic to summon demons. But where Faustus is grand and ambitious and tragic, they are low and common and absurd, seeking mutton and the ability to turn into a mouse or a rat rather than world power or fantastic wealth. As the play progresses, though, Faustus's grandeur diminishes, and he sinks down toward the level of the clowns, suggesting that degradation precedes damnation.

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Scene 5

Faustus, alone in his study, tries to strengthen his own resolution to forget God and dedicate himself solely to Lucifer. The Good Angel and the Evil Angel appear. The Good Angel admonishes Faustus to think on heavenly things, while the Evil Angel emphasizes the value of power and wealth. Faustus decides to think on wealth and summons Mephistophilis, who then tells him that Lucifer will agree to the bargain, but it must be signed with Faustus' blood. Faustus stabs his arm, but as he begins to write, the blood congeals. Mephistophilis rushes to get some fire in order to make the blood flow. As Faustus begins to write again, an inscription, "Homo, fuge!" appears on his arm. Faustus finishes signing the bond and orders Mephistophilis to deliver it to Lucifer.

After the bargain has been completed, Faustus begins to ask again about the nature of hell, but while Mephistophilis is describing hell, Faustus becomes skeptical and refuses to believe in hell. Then, all of a sudden, Faustus changes the topic of the conversation and tells Mephistophilis that he wants a wife. Mephistophilis convinces him that he does not want a wife and offers to bring him any courtesan or paramour that he desires. Before Mephistophilis leaves, Faustus demands three books — one for incantations and spells, one for knowledge of the planets and the heavens, and one for understanding plants and animals.

In the first part of this scene, Faustus' mind begins to waver. There is a conflict within Faustus as to whether he should carry out his plan. This inner conflict is then externalized by the appearance of the Good Angel and the Evil Angel. The advice of the Good Angel and the Evil Angel serves to keep constantly before us the struggle which Faustus is facing and reminds the

reader that Faustus is in severe danger of eternal damnation. The problem of salvation and damnation is now central to Faustus' conflict. He is deeply concerned over his own fate. In each appearance, Faustus is more influenced by the advice of the Evil Angel, and thus Faustus centers his thinking on the wealth and power that he is about to receive.

In the contract scene, the bond is presented in legal terms. Lucifer demands the security of having the contract written in blood. There is an old superstition that a contract signed in blood is eternally binding. As soon as Faustus signs with his own blood, he commits himself to eternal damnation. He later realizes that only the blood of Christ could release him from such a bond.

During this scene, two omens appear to indicate to Faustus that he is in dire danger of damnation. The first is the fact that his own blood congeals; the second is the inscription "Homo, fuge!" which appears on his arm. The inscription warns Faustus to flee. He ignores both of these warnings and continues blindly on his way to damnation by insisting on signing the pact. Faustus even believes that his senses are deceived by the signs, but it is not his senses but his reason which is deceived in signing the contract.

At the crucial time in this scene and all through the rest of the play, whenever Faustus begins to ask questions about essential things, the devil or Mephistophilis brings forth something to delight Faustus' mind. Mephistophilis constantly tries to discover things which would divert Faustus' attention away from his search for knowledge. Consequently, however noble Faustus' original plans were, he obviously loses part of his nobility simply by dealing with evil forces. Any association with evil forces causes a person to deteriorate as a result of the association.

Immediately after signing the contract, Faustus begins to question Mephistophilis about hell. Again, the view of hell is essentially the same as expressed in Scene 3. Mephistophilis explains that hell is simply absence from the presence of God. As Mephistophilis tries to describe that he is now in hell because he is away from the presence of God, Faustus is in a state of complete skepticism. Consequently, we see how rapidly Faustus has degenerated. His intellect is so confused that Faustus is unable to believe in anything. He does not even believe that death exists. This is paradoxical since the pact was originally made to escape death. Even though his aim was to conquer death, he also maintains that death does not exist. Marlowe is using this paradoxical situation to show that Faustus' logical or reasoning powers are rapidly dwindling into insignificance as a result of his pact with the devil.

Although Faustus asserts that he wants a godlike power over the world, he spends all of his time satisfying his senses. Instead of noble discussions about the nature of heaven and hell, Faustus suddenly begins to feel lascivious and wants a wife. He now wants to yield to coarse physical desires rather than search for ultimate knowledge.

Faustus does not realize that he is being cheated out of all that he was promised. He is unable to have a wife as he demands for marriage is a condition sanctified by God. Later in the scene, he is also denied knowledge that he was promised. He expected to have all of his questions about the universe answered, but when he asks who made the world, he is refused an answer.

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Scene 6

Faustus begins to repent that he has made a contract with the devil. Mephistophilis tries to console Faustus by telling him that heaven is not such a glorious place and that humans are more wonderful than anything in heaven. The Good Angel and the Evil Angel appear, and each tries to influence Faustus' decision. Faustus is haunted by the thought that he is damned. He thinks that he would have killed himself by now if he had not been able to conjure up Homer to sing and soothe him. Now he asks Mephistophilis to argue about theoretical matters. Faustus is not satisfied with the things that Mephistophilis is able to tell him and maintains that even Wagner knows the answers to such questions. He now wants to know about the power behind the universe and who made the world. Mephistophilis tries to get him to think of hell and other things rather than about these heavier philosophical matters.

Faustus cries out for Christ to save him, and at this moment, Lucifer himself appears. Lucifer reminds him that he is breaking his promise by thinking on Christ. He tells Faustus that he has brought some entertainment to divert him.

The seven deadly sins — pride, covetousness, wrath, envy, gluttony, sloth, and lechery — appear before Faustus in the representation of their individual sin or nature. Faustus is delighted with the show and Lucifer hands him a book and promises to return at midnight. After everyone leaves, Wagner appears and says that Faustus has gone to Rome to see the pope.

In this scene, we see for the first time a definite change in Faustus. He begins to repent of his pact with the devil. In a reversal of their roles, Mephistophilis now chides Faustus for his lack of resolution, whereas in a previous scene, Faustus had to reprimand Mephistophilis for not being resolute enough. The

manner in which Mephistophilis tries to convince Faustus is an instance of logic. He says that humanity is better than heaven because earth "it was made for man, therefore is man more excellent."

Note again that the Good Angel and the Evil Angel appear to Faustus at this point — that is, when he is once again in doubt about his decision. As previously, Faustus follows the path of the Evil Angel. According to the traditional Christian view, Faustus is now tempted by another sin — that of suicide. Faustus' first sin had been to deny God. Then he also fell into the sin of despair, wherein he lost hope for redemption. In this scene, he considers suicide, which is another cardinal sin.

As Faustus begins to demand deeper knowledge from Mephistophilis, he desires to know about the primary cause of the world, but Mephistophilis is unable to answer him. At every point when Faustus begins to question the universe or whenever Faustus begins to think about heavenly things, Mephistophilis tells him to "think on hell." Originally, Faustus made the pact in order to learn about the primal causes of the world; therefore, Mephistophilis is unable to fulfill his part of the bargain. Second, whenever Faustus brings up these questions, Mephistophilis tries to divert him because he possibly knows that thoughts of heaven would allow Faustus to break his contract with Lucifer.

It is a highly dramatic moment when Lucifer himself appears on the stage. Faustus maintains that Lucifer looks extremely ugly, and again the implication is that hell is ugly.

At the crucial moments when Faustus wavers, the devils always try to divert him in some sensual manner. When Faustus begins to question Mephistophilis about primeval causes, the devils try to take his mind off these noble questions and force him to think about carnal matters. Consequently, in this

scene the powers of hell divert Faustus by bringing forth the seven deadly sins to entertain Faustus and to remove all these troublesome questions from his mind.

The appearance of the seven deadly sins is a holdover from the morality plays and becomes another type of interlude in the play. Furthermore, the manner in which they describe themselves is somewhat comic. Whereas in a morality play the seven deadly sins would be paraded before the main character as a warning to abstain from evil, in *Doctor Faustus* they are presented to Faustus only to delight and distract him from heavenly thoughts. The seven deadly sins do have a philosophical significance and do carry forward the intellectual meaning of the plot, but they also function to appeal to the general audience, who would find entertainment in the grotesque physical appearance of these awesome creatures.

Immediately after the appearance of these seven deadly sins, Faustus says "O, this feeds my soul!" Previous to this scene, Faustus had used the same metaphor of eating to express his great hunger for knowledge and power, and now this metaphor is used to show how low Faustus has fallen when the dreadful show of the sins can satisfy his soul.

At the end of the scene, Wagner enters and takes over the function of the chorus by making expository explanations, filling in background material, and letting the audience know that Faustus has now flown to Rome, where he will meet with the pope.

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Scene 7

Faustus describes the trip over the Alps and the various cities on the way to Rome. After Mephistophilis tells Faustus that he has arranged to enter the pope's private chamber, he describes the city of Rome. They prepare to go into the pope's chambers and Mephistophilis makes Faustus invisible. When the pope and a group of friars enter, Faustus plays tricks on them by snatching plates and cups from them. Finally, he boxes the pope on the ear. When the friars who are accompanying the pope begin to sing a dirge to re-move the evil spirit that seems to be present, Mephistophilis and Faustus begin to beat the friars and fling some fireworks among them.

The chorus enters and reviews Faustus' career. When Faustus has seen all the royal courts, he returns home, where many of his friends seek him out and ask him difficult questions concerning astrology and the universe. Faustus' knowledge makes him famous all through the land. Finally the emperor, Carolus the Fifth, asks him to come to his court.

The opening of this scene shows the excellent use of Marlowe's mighty blank verse. The first speech does not make any significant thematic statements, but it resounds with the beautiful poetry. The passage establishes the feeling that Faustus has seen the world and has traveled over mighty expanses of land. We feel then the scope of his travels into the mysterious lands of the known world.

By the time the reader reaches this scene, he should be aware that Marlowe is not adhering to the classical unities of time and place. The scenes now move quickly about the world and there is little indication of the exact place where each scene occurs. Even in some of the earlier scenes, the exact

setting was not important. In these short scenes, Marlowe is concerned with sketching in some of the activities of the twenty-four years of Faustus' life and trying to indicate both the passage of time and the manner in which Faustus uses his power.

We must constantly keep in mind that originally Faustus had made his contract with the devil in order to learn more about the essential nature of the universe. In this scene, we must constantly observe how Faustus uses his power. Instead of discussing and learning more about the intelligence behind the universe, Faustus is now misusing his power in order to perform cheap tricks, which indicates that Faustus or any person who begins to make deals with the devil cannot keep a nobility of purpose in mind. Any bargain with the devil will automatically degrade the individual.

The setting of this scene in Rome reminds us again that Faustus is anxious to see the places of great antiquity. He becomes excited about the splendor that was Rome, which is another part of the classical tradition that intrigues him.

The scene with the pope must be viewed as "slapstick" comedy which would appeal to the lowly element in the audience in Marlowe's day. As Faustus snatches cups away and boxes the pope on the ear, the audience in Marlowe's day would be delighted by this satire against the pope and the friars. The dirge that the friars sing is also ridiculous and parodies a Roman Catholic chant.

At the end of the scene, we find out that Faustus has attained a certain amount of fame in the field of astrology. He has also experienced a measure of enjoyment. He is now more concerned with satisfying his immediate pleasure and is no longer interested in being instructed in the good life. By describing

Faustus' return to Germany, the chorus also fills in the transition between scenes and prepares us for the next scene, which will take place in Germany.

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Scene 8

Robin the hostler enters with a book in his hand and reveals that he has stolen a volume from Faustus' library. He intends to learn how to conjure in order to make all the maidens in the village appear before him and dance naked. Rafe (Ralph) enters and tells him that there is a gentleman waiting to have his horse taken care of. Robin ignores him, saying that he has more important things to do: he is going to conjure up a devil with his newly stolen book. He promises to procure the kitchen maid for Ralph, and then they both leave to clean their boots and continue with the conjuring.

This scene is another low comic episode on conjuring. We see that Robin intends to use Faustus' books for his own pleasure. The first thing that he intends to do is to make the maidens dance before him stark naked, which is similar to the first thing that Faustus wanted. As soon as he got his new powers, Faustus also began to feel wanton and desired a woman.

In one sense, the tricks that Robin wants to perform are not much different from the tricks that Faustus has just been playing on the pope in Rome. Similar to the earlier comic scenes, this scene contrasts with the preceding scene of the main plot. The language is common and filled with obscene puns. Again a servant-master relationship is established; Robin promises Rafe powers for a condition of service in the same way that Mephistophilis promised Faustus power.

Doctor Faustus

Scene 9

Robin and Ralph appear with a silver goblet that Robin has apparently taken from a vintner. Robin is very pleased with this new acquisition, but immediately the vintner appears and demands that the goblet be returned to him. Robin insists that he does not have the goblet and allows himself to be searched. The vintner cannot find the goblet. Meanwhile, Robin begins to read incantations from Faustus' book. These incantations summon Mephistophilis, who appears and puts some firecrackers at their backs and then momentarily disappears. In fright, Robin gives the vintner back his goblet. Mephistophilis reappears and complains that he has had to come all the way from Constantinople because these irresponsible servants used incantations without understanding them. He threatens to change them into an ape and a dog, and then leaves. Robin and Ralph can only think about how much fun and how much food they might have if transformed into these animals.

This comic interlude, which actually contributes very little to the development of the play, is the second scene in a row between Ralph and Robin. The two scenes belong together in showing the result of the men's desire to practice conjuring. Some critics believe that these scenes were later inserted by another author, and there is some dispute whether Marlowe is the author of any of the comic scenes. Generally, in the present condition of the text, the safest thing to assume is that these scenes filled in the time element and provided a type of low comedy which appealed to the less intelligent members of the audience.

Doctor Faustus

Scene 10

Later at the German court, Emperor Carolus tells Faustus that he has heard reports of his magical powers and he would like to see some proof of Faustus' skill. Faustus responds humbly that he is not as skilled as the rumors report him to be, but he will try to please the emperor. The emperor wonders if anyone will ever attain the stature of Alexander the Great, and he asks Faustus to bring Alexander and Alexander's paramour back to life. As the emperor makes this request, a knight in the court makes several skeptical and sarcastic remarks about Faustus' powers. At Faustus' request, Mephistophilis leaves and returns with two spirits in the shape of Alexander and his paramour. After the emperor inspects a mole on the paramour's neck, he declares that the two spirits are real. Faustus asks that the sarcastic knight be requested to return. When the knight appears, he has a pair of horns on his head. The knight is furious about his situation and abuses Faustus. Then, at the emperor's request, Faustus releases the knight from the spell and the horns are removed. The emperor thanks Faustus for the conjuration and promises to reward him bounteously.

This scene shows no significant development or change in the nature of Dr. Faustus. He is still pleasing himself with his new powers and is still using these powers to satisfy the most trivial demands of other people. This action does not imply that summoning two people from the past is trivial, but rather, that Faustus is trying to impress people with his feats rather than striving to use the powers for noble purposes. Before Faustus made the pact, he had anticipated benefiting humanity and Germany with his newly acquired capabilities. Instead of probing into the mystery of the universe, he simply makes horns appear on the head of a knight.

In the time that has elapsed since the first part of the play, Faustus has gained fame and reputation. Because of his reputation, the emperor himself expresses an interest in Faustus and invites him to the imperial court. But the point, as noted above, is that Faustus does not use his advantage to instruct the emperor, but only to entertain him by simple magical tricks and illusions.

It is ironic that Faustus summons up Alexander the Great — a man who conquered the entire world and performed almost impossible tasks. Faustus has at his command the means to surpass the deeds of Alexander but fails to take advantage of them. Whereas Alexander had sovereignty over the entire known world, Faustus has power to hold dominion over the unknown world. Alexander accomplished the feats he performed only by means of human power, whereas Faustus has had to pay dearly for superhuman capabilities.

The incident with the knight demonstrates how Faustus has become increasingly proud of his occult powers. The knight is presented at first as the unbeliever. Because he is sarcastic and insulting to Faustus, he becomes a type of foil for Faustus. Thus Faustus makes a pair of horns grow on his head. For Marlowe's audience, a man whose wife was unfaithful to him was known as a cuckold and was represented as having a pair of horns growing out of his head. Therefore, besides the comic physical appearance of the knight, there was the added comedy of his being the cuckold or foolish man.

Doctor Faustus

Scene 11

Faustus begins to be concerned that the end of his allotted time is drawing near. Suddenly, a horse-courser enters and wants to know if Faustus will sell his horse for forty dollars. Faustus willingly agrees to sell his horse but warns the horse-courser that he must never ride the horse into water.

When the horse-courser departs, Faustus resumes contemplating that he is condemned to die and then falls asleep. The horse-courser returns in a great fluster and accuses Faustus of cheating him. He thought the horse had some magical quality, so he proceeded to ride the animal into a pond. When the horse disappeared under him, he found himself sitting on a bundle of hay and he almost drowned.

Mephistophilis cautions the horse-courser to be quiet because Faustus has just fallen asleep for the first time in eight days. The horse-courser pulls on Faustus' legs, awakens him, and demands that Faustus pay him back his money. He is astounded when Faustus' entire leg comes off. He is so frightened that he promises to pay Faustus forty more dollars.

Wagner enters to tell Faustus that the Duke of Vanholt desires his company, and Faustus agrees to see the noble gentleman.

For the first time in many scenes, we see Faustus pondering his ultimate fate. He becomes very aware that time is running out and that his magical powers will soon end. Faustus' consciousness of the passing of time is later dramatized at greater length in the final devastating scene of the play when Faustus watches the minutes and seconds pass.

In his second period of contemplation, Faustus returns to the idea of death itself. Earlier he had rejected the idea of death and thought of ways to escape it. Now he is fully aware of the reality of death that quickly approaches him. At this moment, Faustus also recognizes that he is still a man. In earlier scenes, he had lamented that he was only a man and not a god. In his dealings with Lucifer, he had hoped to acquire a godlike position. But at this period of inward meditation, he realizes he is nothing "but a *man* condemned to die."

The comic scenes again show the tragic waste of Faustus' powers. Whereas earlier he had thought in terms of large and vast sums of wealth and power, here he is concerned with the insignificant sum of forty dollars. Faustus blackmails the horse-courser for an additional forty dollars for attempting to awake him.

Another indication that Faustus is beginning to be conscious of his approaching fate is the fact that he has not slept for eight days. To an Elizabethan, this would indicate the spiritual and mental condition of a person. For example, in Shakespeare's *Macbeth,* Lady Macbeth is not able to sleep when her conscience begins to bother her. Thus, the audience would automatically know that Faustus is deeply troubled by his condition.

Doctor Faustus

Scene 12

At the court of the duke of Vanholt, Faustus asks the duchess, who is with child, if she has a desire for any special dainties. Although it is January, she desires to have a dish of ripe grapes. Faustus sends Mephistophilis after them, and when he returns with them, the duke wonders how this could be accomplished. Faustus explains that he sent his spirit to India for them. The duchess exclaims that the grapes are the best she has ever tasted. The duke promises Faustus that he will reward him greatly for this favor.

Once again this scene shows what insignificant feats Faustus accomplishes with his powers. Faustus performs a magical trick of obtaining fresh grapes at the request of the nobility. The learned doctor spends some of his last fleeting moments providing "merriment" and "delight" for the duke and duchess. Faustus succeeds in temporarily diverting himself and others from important concerns of life.

Doctor Faustus

Scene 13

Wagner enters with the news that Faustus is soon to die because he has given all of his goods and properties to his servants. He doesn't understand why Faustus continues to feast and to carouse if he is so near death.

Faustus enters with scholars discussing who is the most beautiful woman in the world? The scholars think it is Helen of Troy. Because of their friendship for him, Faustus promises to raise her from the dead and let the scholars see her in all her pomp and majesty. Music sounds and Helen passes across the stage. The scholars exclaim wildly about her beauty and thank Faustus for allowing them to see this "paragon of excellence."

As an old man enters, the scholars leave. The old man prevails upon Faustus to repent of "thy most vile and loathsome filthiness" so he can come under the grace and mercy of God and be saved. Faustus fears that hell has him trapped but asks the old man to leave him alone for a while and he ponders his sins.

Mephistophilis then threatens Faustus for disobedience to Lucifer, and Faustus agrees to reaffirm his contract to the devil in blood again. After he writes the second deed, he tells Mephistophilis that he desires Helen for his own paramour. When she appears, Faustus decides that Helen's beauty shall make him immortal and thus, he will not need salvation.

After Faustus exits with Helen, the old man re-enters and expresses his disappointment in Faustus, but he also sympathizes with him because he too has been tempted but has won victory by turning to God.

For the first time since Faustus made his compact with Lucifer, this scene returns us to the central idea of the blood bond in which Faustus bartered his soul. Wagner's opening speech indicates that the time is shortly coming when Faustus will have to face death. At the beginning of the play, Faustus had believed that death did not exist, but now he must face not only physical death but eternal death.

Wagner also comments on the manner in which Faustus faces his forthcoming death. Faustus spends his time in banquets and other physical pleasures. He acts as though he does not know that the final feast is about to come to him.

In this scene, we see that Faustus performs his last act of conjuring. Again at the request of a friend, Faustus conjures up the image of Helen of Troy.

Note the manner in which Marlowe handles the two appearances of Helen of Troy. During the first appearance, Faustus says nothing about her, and only after the three scholars have left do we hear what Faustus' impression is. The comments of the scholars indicate something of her beauty; one calls her the majesty of the world, another refers to her as a paragon of excellence, and the third calls her a "heavenly beauty." Faustus gives the most complete and memorable description of her later in the scene.

The appearance of the old man again brings back into focus the conflict between good and evil that was expressed earlier by the Good Angel and the Evil Angel. Just before the old man's appearance, Helen, who represents the beauty of the classical world, appeared upon the stage. The old man comes to remind Faustus of the faith of the Christian world. The old man, who offers himself as a type of guide who will conduct Faustus to a celestial happiness,

constantly refers to the blood of Christ, which has saved him. This blood contrasts with the blood which was used earlier to sign the contract with Lucifer and the blood which Faustus will use in a few minutes to renew the pact.

The old man appears at this point because he, along with Faustus, is approaching death. Faustus at this time still has the body of a young person, owing to the magical incantations, but has a blackened soul. The old man is ugly physically but has a beautiful soul and faith in Christ. As Mephistophilis says of the old man.

After a wavering in his soul, Faustus firmly resolves to keep his contract with Lucifer and offers to sign another bond in blood. We must remember that Faustus has just seen the most beautiful woman in the world and desires her. Thus, he makes the second contract to assure himself of getting Helen as his paramour. Originally, he had wanted power and knowledge, but now he is only interested in satisfying his baser appetites. Furthermore, by having Helen, he thinks that her "sweet embracings may extinguish clean / These thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow." Furthermore, in his moments of despair, there has always been something to divert him so that he will never have to think about his damnation. As the old man tempts him to turn to the paths of righteousness, the memory of the beautiful and desirable Helen intrudes upon his consciousness and causes him to think only of possessing her.

Through the poetic descriptions of Helen, we are convinced that she is the epitome of beauty and the most desirable woman in the world. It is ironic that Faustus thinks that this classical beauty can make him immortal through a kiss more readily than he could achieve immortality through belief in Christ. He thinks that she will be a paradise for him, and ironically he gives up all hope of eternal paradise.

The ending of the scene is a contrast to the final scene. The old man re-enters and announces that he has undergone great temptations during life and has overcome his temptations. He notes that he feels that he has triumphed over Mephistophilis and the fiends. In the final scene, Faustus, who has the same opportunity, fails to triumph over the satanic powers and is carried away to damnation. Thus, the appearance of the old man, who announces his triumph, reminds the audience that Faustus could have repented at almost any point and achieved salvation. The fact that Faustus never does repent suggests that Faustus intellectually wills his own damnation.

Doctor Faustus

Scene 14

Faustus declares to the three scholars who accompany him that he is in a dejected state because of what is about to happen to him. He admits that he has sinned so greatly that he cannot be forgiven. The scholars urge him to call on God, but Faustus feels that he is unable to call on God, whom he has abjured and blasphemed. He says: "Ah, my God, I would weep, but the devil draws in my tears! . . . I would lift up my hands but, see, they hold them, they hold them!" Faustus tells the scholars that he has done the very things that God most forbids man to do: "for vain pleasure of twenty-four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity."

One of the scholars volunteers to stay with Faustus until the last minute, but Faustus and the others admit that no one will be able to help him. He must face the final moments alone.

After the scholars leave, the clock strikes eleven, and Faustus realizes that he has only an hour left before eternal damnation. He suffers because he realizes that he will be deprived of eternal bliss and will have to suffer eternal damnation. As the clock strikes half past eleven, he pleads that his doom not be everlasting. He would suffer a hundred thousand years if at last he could be saved. As the clock strikes twelve, he cries out for God not to look so fierce upon him. Thunder and lightning flash across the stage and the devils arrive to take him away.

It is in this scene that Faustus completely realizes what he has done. Because he wanted to live for vain joys, he has lost eternal life. There is a constant interplay throughout the scene between living and dying. Faustus makes a statement to one of the scholars that "had I lived with them then had I

lived still, but now I die eternally." In spite of all the admonitions, Faustus even at the end makes no real effort to turn to God. As he realizes the magnitude of his sin, he is almost afraid to turn to the God whom he has abjured. He knows that he has committed those very things which God most strictly forbids. Faustus' only excuse for not turning to God is that "the devil threatened to tear me in pieces if I named God, to fetch both body and soul if I once gave ear to divinity." This excuse is not rational. In the previous scene, Marlowe demonstrated the example of the old man who abjured the devil and turned to God.

Consequently, Faustus' explanation is false and empty. All he can finally do is to ask the scholars to pray for him.

Man's limitation is that he lives in time, and in his final speech, we see Faustus fighting against this very limitation. As the clock strikes eleven, he realizes that he has only one hour left to live. He suddenly understands that one power he does not possess is the ability to make time stop; he desires to have more time to live and thus repent of his sins.

The drama of the scene is heightened by this constant awareness of the passing of time. Faustus is almost frantic as his end approaches. But even in this final scene, Faustus cannot remain resolute and call on God or Christ. He tries at one point to invoke the aid of Christ but ends up by asking Lucifer to spare him. He pleads then that his body suffer punishment but that his soul be spared.

As the clock strikes half past, Faustus then asks that he be punished for a hundred thousand years, but finally he requests that his soul be spared from eternal punishment. Furthermore, he begins to question the existing order of things. He wonders why a person must have an eternal soul. It would be better to accept some other theological system where a person's soul could return to

the earth in the form of an animal or simply cease to exist. But Faustus is a man with an immortal soul, and this soul is damned.

As the clock strikes the final hour, we have one of the most dramatic scenes in all of Elizabethan drama. During thunder and lightning, horrible-looking devils appear to take Faustus off to his eternal damnation. His last pleading words are an effective statement of the horror of trafficking in the black arts. His final speech is incoherent and incomplete, as though he were suddenly dragged off in the middle of his plea.

The chorus makes the final and closing comment on the fall of Faustus. They comment that he had tried to go beyond the limitations of humanity and had thus fallen into eternal damnation. The chorus admonishes the audience to take note of Faustus' example and not go beyond the boundary of lawful things. The chorus expresses the medieval view that Faustus' fall resulted from his pride and ambition.