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**Doctor Faustus Act 1, Scene 1 Summary**

* Meet Faustus. He's busy trying to figure out what in the world he wants to do with his life.
* As he mulls over the options—philosophy, medicine, law—he rejects them all for being too boring and too pointless.
* Of course there's always theology; he's really good at that.
* But no dice. See, the problem is, every time he reads the Bible, Faustus can't help but conclude that man's sins give him no hope of heaven anyways.
* Finally, he makes the call: Faustus decides to study magic, of all things, because a magician is almost like a god.
* Okay, time to get cracking on his plan. He tells his servant, Wagner, to fetch Valdes and Cornelius, his friends, who happen to be a couple of magicians. They should be able to help, right?
* But before they can stop by, the Good Angel enters and tells Faustus to lay the books of magic aside, and to read the scriptures instead. Seriously, dude, magic?
* Ah, never mind him, says the Bad Angel. Faustus should go ahead with his plan, because he'll be godlike, and what's so wrong with that?
* Faustus is totally convinced, and begins to wax poetic about all the things he'll do once he masters magic. He's totally pumped about the whole power thing.
* Valdes and Cornelius enter, and Faustus gives them the good news: Dudes, I want to be a magician! Finally!
* Awesome, says Valdes. He tells Faustus that through their studies of magic, they'll gain the spirits as their slaves, and accumulate unimaginable wealth.
* For his part, Cornelius says that Faustus already knows the basic principles of magic, since he's learned in astrology, languages, and geology. So this'll be a breeze.
* He also says that Faustus will become totally famous for his magic, and totally wealthy, too. Seriously, this magic business is starting to sound like a really good idea.
* Valdes and Cornelius tell Faustus to come with them to a deserted grove, and to bring the books of Bacon, Albanus, and the Old and New Testaments. Hey, whatever you say, guys.
* But first, Faustus invites them to dine with him. You can't do magic on an empty stomach—didn't your mother ever tell you that?

**Doctor Faustus Act 1, Scene 2 Summary**

* A guy named First Scholar wonders what's happened to Faustus, since he hasn't seen him around the school lately.
* He and Second Scholar question Wagner—*where's Faustus?*
* Wagner fesses up that Faustus is chowing down with Valdes and Cornelius.
* Uh oh. First and Second Scholars know what that means: Faustus is lost to the dark arts. After all, Valdes and Cornelius are famous for practicing them. So this little business dinner they're having can't mean anything good for their fellow scholar's soul.
* Ugh, this is sad, sad news. They all feel pretty bad about the danger Faustus's soul is in, and they decide to tell the schoolmaster, hoping that he'll talk their friend down from the dark arts.

**Doctor Faustus Act 1, Scene 3 Summary**

* Let's check in with Faustus and his magical men after dinner.
* Faustus draws a circle and begins an incantation to call the spirit Mephistopheles.
* When Mephistopheles shows up, Faustus thinks the little devil is just too ugly. He wants him to leave and come back when he looks more like a friar. For real.
* When Mephistopheles has finished following these orders, he asks Faustus, *whaddya want?*
* Faust commands Mephistopheles to serve him while he lives, but that's a bit of a problem. See, Mephistopheles has to get the a-okay from Lucifer, whom he serves first and foremost.
* Whatever Faustus thinks happened, Mephistopheles assures him that Lucifer did *not*allow him to appear before Faustus; rather, the devils always gather around a person who blasphemes like, oh, Faustus, in the hopes of winning that person's soul away from God.
* Ah, but guys, Faustus is *already* the devil's servant, and he's not a lick scared of damnation because in Hell, he'll get to chat it up with the pagan philosophers. Yeah, that sounds like a great afterlife…
* Now it's time for the lowdown on the devil hierarchy. See, according to Mephistopheles, Lucifer is the highest-ranked devil. He was once an angel of God but fell on account of his pride. (See [*Paradise Lost*](https://www.shmoop.com/paradise-lost/)if you want Milton's version of events.)
* Then Lucifer joined up with all the other devilish spirits in a conspiracy against God.
* That means that Mephistopheles is always in hell, no matter where he goes, because he's always separated from God and the joys of heaven.
* Instead of, you know, listening to the guy, Faustus just mocks Mephistopheles for being so upset about having lost salvation.
* Since he has already damned himself by blaspheming, Faustus has already made up his mind. The deal is sealed.
* He wants to surrender his soul to Satan in exchange for twenty-four years on Earth with Mephistopheles as his servant.
* Mephistopheles leaves to take Lucifer this message and a very excited Faustus beams at the thought of all the power he'll have, once he hands over his soul.

**Doctor Faustus Act 1, Scene 4 Summary**

* Now we meet Wagner, one of the townspeople.
* He calls over a guy named Robin, merely by saying "boy," to which little Robin takes offense. Wagner wants to know if Robin makes any dough.
* Sure. Robin claims he has "comings in" and "goings out" as well (both income and expenses).
* Yeah right, says Wagner. He knows that Robin is jobless and hungry.
* He offers to bind Robin to him—to make him his apprentice—for a period of seven years, threatening to turn Robin's lice into a chronic problem if he doesn't agree to. Agree, Robin! Agree!
* Lice? No sweat dude, says Robin. He's got lice up the wazoo.
* To try to seal the deal, Wagner gives Robin two coins, but Robin ain't havin' that.
* So Wagner calls two devils to frighten Robin, then sends them away at Robin's request.
* Fine. Robin's down for seven years of servitude as long as Wagner agrees to teach him how to conjure.
* A deal's a deal.

**Doctor Faustus Act 2, Scene 1 Summary**

* Back in Faustus land, our main man wonders if he hasn't made a Big Fat Mistake. Should he return to God?
* Probably not, he thinks. God doesn't love him, and he'll probably be better off continuing to serve the devil instead.
* That pesky Bad Angel encourages him to keep pursuing the dark arts, while Good Angel thinks Faustus should be focusing on heaven.
* But think of the honor and wealth, Bad Angel tells him. At which Faustus's ears perk right up.
* Enter Mephistopheles, who's back with the news that Lucifer has agreed to Faustus's terms, as long as Faustus will sign a legal document giving Lucifer his soul. Oh, and it has to be written in blood. Ouch.
* What's that all about, Faustus wants to know.
* Misery loves company, that's what. Mephistopheles tells Faustus that Lucifer likes to win souls so he can have someone to hang with, down in Hell.
* Sounds about right. So Faustus cuts his arm in an attempt to write the document, but his blood congeals. Gross.
* You know what's a really great idea when you're bleeding profusely from the arm? Fire.
* Okay, that's only a good idea if the blood gushing from your arm has congealed and needs to be melted. Luckily, that's exactly what has happened here. So Meph goes for some fire.
* While he's tracking down some flames, Faustus is left alone with his thoughts. And they aren't good.
* He wonders if the whole blood-congealing-so-he-can't-sign-away-his-soul-in-legalese thing is an omen, or a sign. Maybe his blood doesn't want him to sell his soul.
* Faustus signs the document anyway. Good move, dude.
* A mysterious inscription, *homo fuge*—"man, flee"—appears on his arm. Uh, flee?
* Where exactly is Faustus supposed to flee to? He knows that if he flies to heaven, God will throw him down to hell.
* Well this isn't good. Mephistopheles fetches a parade of devils to distract Faustus.
* Which of course works (our Faustus sure is an easy target). Enchanted by what he has seen, he reads aloud his contract with Lucifer, gives it to Mephistopheles, and asks the devil to tell him the quickest way to hell. And they say men don't like to ask for directions!
* Mephistopheles is all, *duh, dude, hell is where the damned are*. When the world ends, all places that are not heaven will be hell.
* And when Faustus tells good ol' Meph that hell sounds like an old fable to him, Meph's all, hello? I'm a devil. Of *course*hell exists. Where do you think I came from?
* Time to change the subject: Faustus commands Mephistopheles to fetch him a wife.
* Then, when Mephistopheles comes back with a "woman devil" Faustus rejects her, prompting Meph to tell Faustus to forget about marriage in favor of sex.
* Then he gives Faustus a book of magic spells.

**Doctor Faustus Act 2, Scene 2 Summary**

* Back to Robin. He tells his buddy Dick that he has gotten one of Faustus's conjuring books. Sweet.
* It's too bad for Dick, though, because now that Robin has the book, he's too busy conjuring to help out Dick with the horses.
* In retaliation, Dick mocks Robin's poor attempt at reading. Um, that's not very nice.
* But Robin doesn't take stuff from anyone. So he draws a circle and threatens to conjure at Dick.
* Dick says that if their master comes, he'll conjure at Robin right back, to which Robin replies that he'll just put horns on his master's head. This is getting ugly.
* Ah, well the joke's on you, dude. Dick tells him that his mistress has *already*put horns on him, which is an old timey way of saying she has cheated on him.
* Yeah, with me, implies Robin. Dick is not surprised. Some friends these guys are.
* But all's forgiven (sort of), when Robin tells Dick that he can do just about anything with this conjuring book, including summoning booze from a nearby tavern without paying a penny.
* Well fancy this: Dick is feeling a bit parched, so they both head to the tavern

**Doctor Faustus Act 2, Scene 3 Summary**

* Back with Faustus, we hear him say that when he looks up to heaven, he feels really bad about what he did and curses Mephistopheles for taking away his shot at salvation.
* Not so fast. Mephistopheles reminds Faustus that all he did was do what Faustus asked him to. It's not poor Meph's fault.
* He tells Faustus that heaven isn't really all it's cracked up to be, anyhow. Since heaven was made *for*mankind, mankind is obviously greater than heaven.
* Just when Faustus responds that "if heaven was made for man, 'twas made for me" and he will repent, Good and Bad Angel enter the scene.
* Good Angel encourages him on the repentance front, but of course Bad Angel thinks that's the wrong call. God cannot pity him.
* Once again, Faustus listens to the Bad and not the Good. See, he doesn't want to repent, because all the awesome stuff he gets by conjuring is just too good to pass up. His desire for those things is far more powerful than any shame or guilt or regret he might feel.
* He and Mephistopheles discuss the motions and the number of the planets and stars, but Mephistopheles refuses to tell Faustus who created the world, since the answer would require him to name God. And he doesn't do that.
* He tells Faustus to think about hell instead.
* Good and Bad Angel enter, Bad Angel telling Faustus to despair of heaven, and Good Angel promising it's still not too late for salvation.
* Hmm. Salvation. That sounds tempting. So Faustus calls upon Christ to save him, prompting Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistopheles to appear together to keep his soul for the Bad Side.
* Lucifer tells Faustus that God cannot save his soul, and that Faustus is in Big Trouble for thinking about heaven. That's not part of their agreement.
* He tells Faustus to think about the devil.
* Faustus is all *I will! I promise!*And in return, Lucifer promises the guy all kinds of rewards.
* Beelzebub tells Faustus that they have come from hell to show Faustus a good time.
* First on the program? They'll make the Seven Deadly Sins appear. Oh joy.
* Faustus tells them that the sight will be as pleasant to him as Paradise was to Adam on the day of his creation; Lucifer reminds him to not talk about Paradise or creation, but to just enjoy the show. Seriously, dude, how many times does Lucifer have to remind you?
* The Seven Deadly Sins—pride, greed, envy, wrath, gluttony, sloth, and lust—appear before Faustus, and he has a grand ol' time.
* When he tells these devils that he would like to be able to see hell and come back again, Lucifer promises they'll make it happen—at midnight.
* Then, as a token of his affections (or something), Lucifer gives Faustus a conjuring book that tells him how to transform himself into whatever shape he wishes.
* We're betting that will come in handy.

**Doctor Faustus Act 3 – Chorus Summary**

* The Chorus is back, folks, to give us the skinny on what to expect next.
* They regale us with a tale of Faustus on a journey in which he views the clouds, planets, and stars from a chariot flying above them all. Uh, can we get a ticket on that ride?
* After traveling around the world in this super awesome chariot (did we mention it's drawn by dragons?), he comes back home.
* But no sooner is he home than he hops back on one of those dragons for some more exploring.
* Finally, he ends up in Rome, where he plans to see its wonders (we've heard the fountains are *spectacular*, buddy), and chow down with the Pope.

**Doctor Faustus Act 3, Scene 1 Summary**

* Faustus gives the scoop on his journey to Rome, telling how he traveled over Trier, France, the Rhine River, Naples, the tomb of Vergil, Venice, and Padua.
* Then, to Mephistopheles, he's all, *dude*, where are we? To which Meph tells him: duh, Rome.
* Mephistopheles explains the geography of Rome—how it stands on seven hills with the Tiber River running through it, and how a palace upon the Angelo Bridge sits next to the gates and pyramids that Julius Caesar brought there from Africa. Sounds kind of like [Vegas](http://mapawatt.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/photo_vegas_strip_night.jpg).
* Faustus really wants to let loose and see the sights, but Mephistopheles thinks he should stay where he is in order to catch the Pope's procession and feast.
* Faustus agrees, but tells Mephistopheles that he wants to be an "actor" in the Pope's show. Geez, someone's a diva.
* Mephistopheles agrees, and they make a plan to humiliate the Pope and all his devout buddies.
* The cardinals of France and Padua, bishops, monks, and friars enter in a procession, followed by Pope Adrian, King Raymond of Hungary, and the Archbishop of Rheims.
* They lead a man named Bruno in chains.
* The Pope makes Bruno get down on his hands and knees, then uses his back to mount into his carrier-chair. Classy.
* Bruno remarks that the Pope's position actually belongs to him.
* Then the Pope commands the cardinals to go to his library and read what the [Council of Trent](http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html) says is punishment for the one who unlawfully claims the Pope's position.
* Under Faustus's orders, Mephistopheles follows the cardinals and makes them fall asleep before they can carry out the Pope's orders. Then he tells everyone his plan: he wants to free Bruno. Bruno reminds the Pope that he was elected by the Emperor.
* Oh really? Says the Pope. Well then he'll just have to excommunicate the emperor, maybe even dethrone him while he's at it. The emperor is too big for his britches anyway.
* But, Bruno reminds the Pope, a prior pope, Julius, swore to hold the emperors as their lawful lords.
* The Pope counters that Julius overstepped his bounds in doing so, so his decree isn't valid anyways. In short, bully for you, Bruno!
* He shows Bruno his seven seals, which is another way of saying, [can't touch this](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otCpCn0l4Wo&ob=av3e), Bruno.
* And then he has the nerve to threaten Bruno with his curse.
* Enter Faustus and Mephistopheles, dressed as the Cardinals of France and Padua. Oh, trouble's a'brewin'.
* The Pope asks these—ahem—*Cardinals* what they have decided about Bruno's punishment.
* Faustus answers that Bruno and the German emperor should be considered heretics and disturbers of the Church's peace. Basically, it's time to burn them.
* So the Pope hands over Bruno to Faustus and Mephistopheles. He tells them to take the poor guy to a prison tower, and tells everyone that tomorrow, he'll pass judgment on the heretic.
* Faustus and Mephistopheles leave with Bruno; the Pope says it's time to party and calls for a banquet to celebrate his victory with King Raymond of Hungary.

**Doctor Faustus Act 3, Scene 2 Summary**

* It's grub time. A banquet is brought in.
* Mephistopheles tells Faustus that he has successfully enchanted the Cardinals, and has sent Bruno back to Germany on a magical horse. Well, that was easy.
* Feeling mischievous, Faustus tells Mephistopheles to make him invisible so he can now go play tricks on the Pope. Abracadabra: Faustus disappears.
* The Pope and Cardinals enter, along with King Raymond of Hungary.
* The Cardinal of France asks the Pope if he wants to know what they think about this whole Bruno situation.
* Since he has already heard the judgment Faustus gave when he was disguised as a Cardinal, the Pope is surprised and annoyed by this, and is all, uh dude, didn't you already pass judgment?
* The Cardinal of France says that he's mistaken, but Raymond backs up the Pope's story, adding that the Cardinals took custody of Bruno and his rich crown already.
* When the Cardinals swear that they have seen neither Bruno nor the crown, the Pope sends them to prison. Well that went well.
* Unlike the Cardinals, Faustus is having a grand ol' time. He delights in cursing the Pope invisibly, and stealing his food and dishes as the servant passes them to him.
* The Archbishop of Rheims advises him to have a priest perform an exorcism, since he believes the invisible troublemaker is some soul that has risen out of purgatory.
* The Pope crosses himself, at which Faustus strikes him.
* That's the last straw. The friars perform a humorous exorcism.
* Mephistopheles and Faustus respond by casting fireworks among them all, and then, making like a banana, they split.

**Doctor Faustus Act 3, Scene 3 Summary**

* Robin and Dick enter, carrying a cup.
* Robin tells Dick that he hopes his devil can get them out of trouble for stealing the cup, since the tavern-keeper follows hard at their heels.
* Sure enough, here comes the tavern-keeper, demanding that these two hooligans hand over the stolen cup.
* In a hilarious moment, Robin and Dick pass it back and forth between themselves as the tavern-keeper searches them. This is funny stuff, Shmoopers, so be sure to check this scene out for yourself.
* Finally, Robin produces the cup, and the tavern-keeper curses them both and demands they hand it over.
* But they've got something else in mind. Robin has Dick draw him a circle, and calls the devils Demogorgon, Belcher, and Mephistopheles.
* Uh oh. Mephistopheles enters, irritated to be summoned by these fools. Don't they know he has bigger fish to fry?
* Robin offers him some supper and a few coins for his trouble, and says they called him as a joke (presumably to freak out the tavern-keeper?).
* A joke? Really? They joked with the devil?
* In retaliation, Mephistopheles transforms Dick into an ape, and Robin into a dog, then returns to Faustus, who's still busy on his European adventures.

**Doctor Faustus Act 4, Scene 1 Summary**

* A guy named Martino instructs a dude named Frederick to be sure the rooms are clear of people, since the Emperor is on his way.
* Frederick asks about the whereabouts of Bruno, their elected Pope, who just arrived from Rome.
* Martino replies that Bruno will be there, too, with his new buddy, the German conjurer Faustus, who has come to show the emperor his stuff.
* Frederick also wants to know what's up with Benvolio and Martino tells him that he's fast asleep with one whopper of a hangover.
* But no sooner has he said that than Benvolio sticks his head out of a nearby window.
* Martino tells Benvolio that Faustus is coming to amaze the court, so he had better come down so he can see the show.
* But Benvolio wants to stay put and watch it all go down from his window.
* Frederick and Martino leave and then re-enter with the Emperor, Bruno, the Duke of Saxony, Faustus, and Mephistopheles.
* The Emperor thanks Faustus for freeing Bruno from the Pope, adding that Faustus will become even more renowned if Bruno eventually becomes Pope in Rome.
* A jolly Faustus says he's totally ready to perform whatever tricks the Emperor wants in order to impress him.
* In an aside, Benvolio mocks Faustus's speech and says the guy doesn't look like much of a conjurer.
* Okay, what's it gonna be, emperor? He asks Faustus to conjure Alexander the Great and his lover.
* Sure thing, buddy. Faustus commands Mephistopheles to fetch them.
* Benvolio expresses his doubt that Faustus will be able to do anything magnificent, to which Faustus responds with a threat.
* Faustus warns the emperor not to try to touch Alexander and his lover, since they're immaterial spirits, after all. Good tip.
* Benvolio announces that he'll turn himself into a stag if Faustus is able to conjure Alexander; Faustus threatens to put horns on him—again. (Snap!)
* Alexander shows up (well done, Faustus), and fights with Darius, killing him. Then he embraces his lover.
* When Alexander salutes the Emperor, the Emperor tries to touch him until Faustus stops him. Dude, don't you listen?
* But the Emperor is so amazed at Faustus's mad skills that he really wants to touch the shapes.
* He also wants to verify the spirits' identities by checking out a mole on the lady's neck (we guess Alexander's lover had a famous mole). Faustus is game, and her identity is proven.
* The spirits exit. Faustus points out that Benvolio, asleep at his window, is now horned. Take that, doubter.
* The Duke of Saxony and Emperor wake him up, and Faustus is all, check out your new look, Benny.
* Then Faustus conjures a pack of hounds to chase him. This guy clearly holds a grudge.
* When the Emperor asks Faustus to stop tormenting poor Benvolio, Faustus does so, telling the Emperor that all he has done to Benvolio has been not for his own hurt feelings, but only to amuse the Emperor.
* Benvolio declares his intention to trust scholars no longer.
* Wise words, buddy.

**Doctor Faustus Act 4, Scene 2 Summary**

* Martino tries to convince Benvolio not to seek revenge on Faustus. That's a seriously bad idea.
* But Benvolio's not having that. He announces his intention to kill Faustus as thanks for totally humiliating him.
* Frederick says he and Martino will stand by him. If they have to.
* Awesome. Okay, so, here's the plan: Benvolio tells them all to hide in a grove, all the better to ambush Faustus. They and the soldiers follow him there.
* Benvolio and Martino station themselves in the grove. Then Frederick arrives to let them know that Faustus is approaching.
* When he enters, Benvolio cuts off Faustus's (fake) head.
* Benvolio, Martino, and Frederick mock the sorry state to which Faustus's head has now fallen, and Benvolio says he plans to nail horns to the head and hang it out his window for all the world to see. Lovely.
* Or how about selling it to a chimneysweeper to use as a broom and using his eyes to button his lips? Even lovelier.
* But then, the body of Faustus rises up. Dun dun dun.
* Faustus tells them that no matter what they do to him, he will rise again until twenty-four years have passed (the length of his servitude).
* He calls his devils, instructing them to drag the three through a thorny briar-patch then tumble them down some rocks.
* The soldiers, hearing the fight, stand forward to fight Faustus, but he conjures up a wall of trees and an army of devils between himself and the soldiers.
* Lesson learned: Faustus does not suffer fools.

**Doctor Faustus Act 4, Scene 3 Summary**

* Benvolio, Martino, and Frederick meet up again, having been dragged through the mud by Faustus's devils.
* And they all now have horns on their heads. Great. How in the world are they supposed to hide *horns*?
* Benvolio has finally learned his lesson; if they attempt revenge on Faustus, he'll probably just add donkey ears to accompany their horns.
* Nope, their only option now is to hang out at a castle in the woods, hoping that their horns might go away with time. Like… acne?

**Doctor Faustus Act 4, Scene 4 Summary**

* A horse-courser asks Faustus to sell him his horse for forty dollars.
* Faustus wants fifty, but finally accepts the courser's offer of forty. He's up for bargaining.
* He warns the horse-courser not to ride the horse over water, and the horse-courser declares himself to be a "made man forever."
* Then Faustus muses about the fact that the time for his own damnation is getting closer and closer. But he's comforted with the thought that Christ forgave the thief as he was dying on the cross. That's his last hope.
* He dozes in his chair. Nothing like a cat nap to assuage your worries of eternal damnation.
* The horse-courser enters again, soaking wet.
* Apparently, he rode the horse over water because he thought Faustus was hiding some good quality the horse possessed.
* Over the water, however, the horse disappeared and he found himself suddenly sitting on a bale of hay instead. Whoops.
* He pulls at Faustus's leg in an attempt to wake him, and it comes off. Um, ew?
* The horse-courser leaves with the leg, promising to throw it in a ditch. Faustus just laughs.
* Then Wagner enters and tells Faustus that the Duke of Vanholt is asking for him.
* Faustus agrees to pay him a visit.

**Doctor Faustus Act 4, Scene 5 Summary**

* Elsewhere, the Carter leads Robin, Dick, and the horse-courser to a tavern.
* Robin tells Dick that he owes the tavern-mistress a lot of money, and right then the hostess reminds Robin of his tab.
* But despite the debt, she agrees to fetch them all some beer.
* The Carter tells them all a story to entertain them as they wait for their beers.
* It's the story of how Faustus asked him for as much hay as he could eat in exchange for some money, then proceeded to eat the whole cartful. Yep, the whole thing.
* The horse-courser then tells them all about his adventure with the vanishing horse, and about how he took Faustus's leg, which he now keeps in his house. Again: ew.
* Robin's got a story, too—about how Faustus's devil turned him into an ape. Remember that one?
* He thinks that the group should enjoy their beers, then confront Faustus.

**Doctor Faustus Act 4, Scene 6 Summary**

* At the Duke's house, the Duke thanks Faustus for showing him such marvels, including a castle in the air that delighted him more than anything in the world.
* Faustus asks the Duchess what she'd like, and she responds that she would really like some grapes, but the problem is it's the dead of winter.
* Problem? What problem? Faustus sends Mephistopheles to fetch her some grapes, explaining that it's summer in other parts of the word, and ol' Meph sure loves to travel (with speed).
* When she chows down, the Duchess declares the grapes to be the best she's ever had.
* Then, Robin, Dick the Carter and the horse-courser appear at the gate, knocking furiously.
* They demand to speak with Faustus, who asks the Duke to allow them in. He can handle a couple of hooligans (he has before).
* Once in, the motley crew demands beer, which Faustus has fetched for them.
* The horse-courser reminds Faustus about what happened with the horse and asks him if he has both his legs, to which Faustus replies that he does.
* The Carter says he thinks Faustus should have a wooden leg, and the horse-courser asks Faustus if he didn't pull off his leg when he was asleep.
* Faustus responds that he has his leg again, now that he's awake.
* Then Faustus charms all of the company dumb (they're unable to speak) when they try to say what he's done to them, and charms the hostess dumb when she arrives demanding payment for her ale.
* The Duchess and Duke declare themselves beholden to Faustus for the way his art drives sad thoughts away.

**Doctor Faustus Act 5, Scene 1 Summary**

* Wagner enters and says he thinks his master might die soon, because he has willed all of his possessions to Wagner.
* First Scholar says that since their dispute about who's the most beautiful woman ever, he and the other scholars have decided that it is Helen of Troy. Phew. Glad we got that settled.
* Then he asks Faustus to conjure her before them, to which Faustus agrees. He can't resist a good conjure.
* And here comes Helen, walking across the stage.
* Second and Third Scholar seem unable to believe what they have seen, or to judge the beauty of Helen. She's just *too*beautiful.
* After saying they're satisfied, now that they've seen "the pride of nature's work," First Scholar takes off.
* Old Man enters. He tells Faustus to renounce sorcery and repent. Otherwise, he'll be banished from heaven forever. Yowza.
* But it's too late, Old Man. Faustus says that hell is calling him.
* The Old Man says that he sees an angel hovering over his head, ready to pour grace out over him, if only Faustus would ask for mercy.
* Faustus tells the Old Man that his words comfort him, but he wants to be alone so he can ponder their meaning. Excuses, excuses.
* The Old Man leaves, chatting about his fear of the devil as he goes.
* Alone, Faustus is all, oh I feel bad about my sins! I want to be saved! Uh oh.
* Mephistopheles arrives. Yikes. He warns Faustus not to betray the devil, or he the devil will rip his soul to pieces.
* So then Faustus repents in the other direction, apologizing for offending the devil. He offers to re-affirm his vow to Lucifer.
* Faustus asks Mephistopheles to torture the Old Man who offended him.
* Mephistopheles responds that he will torment his body, though he cannot touch the man's soul.
* Then Faustus asks to have Helen of Troy as his lover, and Mephistopheles grants it. Sweet.
* Helen arrives, and Faustus kisses her like crazy, declaring everything worthless except for her.
* He imagines himself as [Paris](https://www.shmoop.com/iliad/paris.html), you know, from the [*Iliad*](https://www.shmoop.com/iliad/)?

**Doctor Faustus Act 5, Scene 2 Summary**

* The devils hover above the scene.
* Lucifer says that they have come to observe the goings on, and to wait for Faustus's soul.
* Mephistopheles says that although Faustus has attempted to escape his pact, his pleasures will be met with pain in the end. Seriously, Faustus, you thought you could get off scot-free?
* Faustus and Wagner enter. Faustus asks Wagner how he likes his will, to which Wagner replies that he likes it very much. As he should—he's getting all of Faustus's stuff, remember?
* Three scholars enter, and Wagner takes off.
* First Scholar tells Faustus he's not looking so good these days. In fact, Faustus looks downright ill. What's wrong, buddy?
* Faustus says that maybe if he had lived with the Scholars, he would have lived rather than dying eternally as he does now.
* Third Scholar thinks maybe Faustus has spent too much time by himself.
* Second Scholar thinks Faustus is just being overemotional, but Faustus assures him—he's damned. He has sinned too much.
* When First Scholar suggests that Faustus look to heaven for mercy, Faustus says that there's just no point. What he has done is unpardonable at this point. He's gone too far.
* He tells the Scholars that he has renounced God in favor of the devil once and for all. They are horrified, for obvious reasons.
* Why didn't Faustus tell them before, when they could have helped the guy?
* Duh. Because his fear of the devil kept him from naming God. Or at least that's what Faustus tells them.
* Well, they guess there's nothing left to do but pray, then. So they retreat to a nearby room to do so.
* Mephistopheles tells Faustus that he has absolutely zero hope of heaven, so all he can do now is despair and think only of hell.
* Faustus accuses Mephistopheles of tempting him from salvation. Gee, you're just now realizing that, Faustus?
* Mephistopheles agrees that he tempted Faustus: when Faustus took up the Scriptures, Mephistopheles led his eyes to the lines that would cause him to despair.
* He's a sneaky little devil, ain't he?
* The Angels are back. And we're not talking about the [ballplayers](http://losangeles.angels.mlb.com/index.jsp?c_id=ana&sv=1).
* Good Angel tells Faustus that if he had only listened to him, he would have had a ton of joys (you know, the heavenly kind), but that Faustus loved worldly things too much. And that's what did him in in the end.
* Bad Angel is stoked that Faustus has listened to him.
* Good Angel questions what good Faustus's earthly pleasures will do him now.
* Bad Angel responds that they will only make the torments of hell more miserable in contrast.
* Good Angel shows Faustus a glimpse of heaven, and tells him that had he only been drawn to God, he would have gained it. But, tough luck, it's too late.
* Bad Angel shows Faustus a glimpse of hell, and particularly the gluttons who now must swallow fire. He tells Faustus that more horrible tortures await him.
* This is starting to sound more and more like a lose-lose situation.
* The clock strikes eleven, and Faustus realizes that he has only one hour to live. Oh, if only time could stand still, so he'd have a moment to repent and save his soul.
* He calls on Christ. No dice.
* He longs to take shelter in the earth, or to be drawn into the clouds as a mist so that he can escape what he knows is coming. No dice.
* The clock strikes eleven thirty.
* Faustus asks that if he must suffer for his sins, let that suffering end at some point.
* There's just one problem: damnation has no end. So now Faustus wishes that he could have been born without a soul in the first place. Then he'd have nothing to lose.
* He wishes that Pythagoras's theory of reincarnation were true so that his soul would simply enter the body of a happy beast, then meet its end in death.
* He curses his parents, himself, and Lucifer, who deprived him of heaven. Hey, what did mom and pop ever do?
* As the clock strikes twelve, Faustus entreats his body to turn to air, and his soul to change to water drops and fall in the ocean. No dice.
* He calls upon heaven. He cries out curses. He asks for a bit longer. He offers to burn his books. He cries "O Mephistopheles!"
* Then the devils arrive.

**Doctor Faustus Act 5, Scene 3 Summary**

* First Scholar asks his scholar cronies to come with him to check on Faustus, since they heard horrible shrieks and cries coming from his room. That can't mean anything good.
* Second Scholar remarks upon how Faustus's limbs are all torn apart. Yikes.
* Third Scholar says that the devils Faustus served tore him to pieces between the hours of twelve and one, when he heard the horrible shrieks and the house seemed on fire with fiends. Ick.
* Second Scholar says that although Faustus's end was horrible to every Christian, they will give him an honorable burial because of how admired he once was for his scholarship.

**Doctor Faustus Epilogue – Chorus Summary**

* The Chorus declares that the branch that might have grown straight and achieved great heights is now cut. (That would be Faustus.)
* They tell the audience to take Faustus's fall as a warning against probing too deep into the dark arts, whose practice is not permitted by the powers that be.