

**Ministry of Higher Education and
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**Dr .Faustus / Drama
Second Stage
Act 2- Scene 1-3**

By

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2026/2025

Doctor Faustus

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Act 2- Scene 1

Summary: Scene 1

[Faustus](#) begins to waver in his conviction to sell his soul. The good angel tells him to abandon his plan and “think of heaven, and heavenly things,” but he dismisses the good angel’s words, saying that God does not love him . The good and evil angels make another appearance, with the good one again urging Faustus to think of heaven, but the evil angel convinces him that the wealth he can gain through his deal with the devil is worth the cost. Faustus then calls back [Mephistophilis](#), who tells him that Lucifer has accepted his offer of his soul in exchange for twenty-four years of service. Faustus asks Mephistophilis why Lucifer wants his soul, and Mephistophilis tells him that Lucifer seeks to enlarge his kingdom and make humans suffer even as he suffers.

Faustus decides to make the bargain, and he stabs his arm in order to write the deed in blood. However, when he tries to write the deed his blood congeals, making writing impossible. Mephistophilis goes to fetch fire in order to loosen the blood, and, while he is gone, Faustus endures another bout of indecision, as he wonders if his own blood is attempting to warn him not to sell his soul. When Mephistophilis returns, Faustus signs the deed and then discovers an inscription on his arm that reads “Homo fuge,” Latin for “O man, fly” . While Faustus wonders where he should fly Mephistophilis presents a group of devils, who cover Faustus with crowns and rich garments. Faustus puts aside his doubts. He hands over the deed, which promises his body and soul to Lucifer in exchange for twenty-four years of constant service from Mephistophilis.

After he turns in the deed, Faustus asks his new servant where hell is located, and Mephistophilis says that it has no exact location but exists everywhere. He continues explaining, saying that hell is

everywhere that the damned are cut off from God eternally. Faustus remarks that he thinks hell is a myth. At Faustus's request for a wife, Mephistophilis offers Faustus a she-devil, but Faustus refuses. Mephistophilis then gives him a book of magic spells and tells him to read it carefully.

Faustus once again wavers and leans toward repentance as he contemplates the wonders of heaven from which he has cut himself off. The good and evil angels appear again, and Faustus realizes that "my heart's so hardened I cannot repent!". He then begins to ask Mephistophilis questions about the planets and the heavens. Mephistophilis answers all his queries willingly, until Faustus asks who made the world. Mephistophilis refuses to reply because the answer is "against our kingdom"; when Faustus presses him, Mephistophilis departs angrily. Faustus then turns his mind to God, and again he wonders if it is too late for him to repent. The good and evil angels enter once more, and the good angel says it is never too late for Faustus to repent. Faustus begins to appeal to Christ for mercy, but then Lucifer, Belzebub (another devil), and Mephistophilis enter. They tell Faustus to stop thinking of God and then present a show of the Seven Deadly Sins. Each sin—Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, Sloth, and finally Lechery—appears before Faustus and makes a brief speech. The sight of the sins delights Faustus's soul, and he asks to see hell. Lucifer promises to take him there that night. For the meantime he gives Faustus a book that teaches him how to change his shape.

Summary: Scene 2

Meanwhile, Robin, a stablehand, has found one of Faustus's conjuring books, and he is trying to learn the spells. He calls in an

innkeeper named Rafe, and the two go to a bar together, where Robin promises to conjure up any kind of wine that Rafe desires.

Analysis: Scenes 1 & 2

Even as he seals the bargain that promises his soul to hell, Faustus is repeatedly filled with misgivings, which are bluntly symbolized in the verbal duels between the good and evil angels. His body seems to rebel against the choices that he has made—his blood congeals, for example, preventing him from signing the compact, and a written warning telling him to fly away appears on his arm. Sometimes Faustus seems to understand the gravity of what he is doing: when Lucifer, Belzebub, and Mephistophilis appear to him, for example, he becomes suddenly afraid and exclaims, “O Faustus, they are come to fetch thy soul!” . Despite this awareness, however, Faustus is unable to commit to good. ([blood as a symbol](#))

Amid all these signs, Faustus repeatedly considers repenting but each time decides against it. Sometimes it is the lure of knowledge and riches that prevents him from turning to God, but other times it seems to be his conviction—encouraged by the bad angel and Mephistophilis—that it is already too late for him, a conviction that persists throughout the play. He believes that God does not love him and that if he were to fly away to God, as the inscription on his arm seems to advise him to do, God would cast him down to hell. When Faustus appeals to Christ to save his soul, Lucifer declares that “Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just,” and orders Faustus to cease thinking about God and think only of the devil. Faustus’s sense that he is already damned can be traced back to his earlier misreading of the New Testament to say that anyone who sins will be damned eternally—ignoring the verses that offer the hope of

repentance.[\(Faustus's indecisiveness and the divided nature of man as a theme\)](#)

At the same time, though, Faustus's earlier blindness persists. We can see it in his delighted reaction to the appalling personifications of the Seven Deadly Sins, which he treats as sources of entertainment rather than of moral warning. Meanwhile, his willingness to dismiss the pains of hell continues, as he tells Mephistophilis that "I think hell's a fable / . . . / Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales". These are the words of rationalism or even atheism—both odd ideologies for Faustus to espouse, given that he is summoning devils. But Faustus's real mistake is to misinterpret what Mephistophilis tells him about hell. Faustus takes Mephistophilis's statement that hell is everywhere for him because he is separated eternally from God to mean that hell will be merely a continuation of his earthly existence. He thinks that he is already separated from God permanently and reasons that hell cannot be any worse. [\(The passage quoted above\)](#)

Once Faustus has signed away his soul, his cosmos seems to become inverted, with Lucifer taking the place of God and blasphemy replacing piety. After Faustus has signed his deed, he swears by Lucifer rather than God: "Ay, take it; and the devil give thee good on't". His rejection of God is also evident when he says, "Consummatum est," meaning "it is finished," which were Christ's dying words on the cross. Even Faustus's arm stabbing alludes to the stigmata, or wounds, of the crucified Christ.[\(about sin, redemption, and damnation as themes\)](#)

Meanwhile, the limits of the demonic gifts that Faustus has been given begin to emerge. He is given the gift of knowledge, and

Mephistophilis willingly tells him the secrets of astronomy, but when Faustus asks who created the world, Mephistophilis refuses to answer. The symbolism is clear: all the worldly knowledge that Faustus has so strongly desired points inexorably upward, toward God. The central irony, of course, is that the pact he has made completely detaches him from God. With access to higher things thus closed off, Faustus has nowhere to go but down.

Summary: Scene 3

Faustus appears, recounting to [Mephistophilis](#) his travels throughout Europe—first from Germany to France and then on to Italy. He asks Mephistophilis if they have arrived in Rome, whose monuments he greatly desires to see, and Mephistophilis replies that they are in the pope's privy chamber. It is a day of feasting in Rome, to celebrate the pope's victories, and Faustus and Mephistophilis agree to use their powers to play tricks on the pope.

As Faustus and Mephistophilis watch, the pope comes in with his attendants and a prisoner, Bruno, who had attempted to become pope with the backing of the German emperor. While the pope declares that he will depose the emperor and forces Bruno to swear allegiance to him, Faustus and Mephistophilis disguise themselves as cardinals and come before the pope. The pope gives Bruno to them, telling them to carry him off to prison; instead, they give him a fast horse and send him back to Germany.

Later, the pope confronts the two cardinals whom Faustus and Mephistophilis have impersonated. When the cardinals say that they never were given custody of Bruno, the pope sends them to the dungeon. Faustus and Mephistophilis, both invisible, watch the proceedings and chuckle. The pope and his attendants then sit down

to dinner. During the meal, Faustus and Mephistophilis make themselves invisible and curse noisily and then snatch dishes and food as they are passed around the table. The churchmen suspect that there is some ghost in the room, and the pope begins to cross himself, much to the dismay of Faustus and Mephistophilis. Faustus boxes the pope's ear, and the pope and all his attendants run away. A group of friars enters, and they sing a dirge damning the unknown spirit that has disrupted the meal. Mephistophilis and Faustus beat the friars, fling fireworks among them, and flee.