

Doctor Faustus

A Devilish New Musical

Book, Lyrics, and Music by

R. Michael Decker

based on

The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlowe (c. 1592)
and *Faust* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (c. 1808)

Rough Draft 2/28/09, 1/24/14

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Jonathan FAUST, a medical doctor and scholar

MEPHASTOPHILIS, a devil

GRETCHEN, Faustus's wife

MARTHE, a seer

WAGNER [Vahg-ner], Faustus's friend and a college professor

CHRISTOPHER, Faustus's son

ENSEMBLE (townspeople, congregation)

TIME & PLACE

Aurora, IL, USA

Prologue – *Happier times*

Act I – 1932, *the Great Depression*

Act II – 1956, *24 years later*

SONGS

Act I

1. GRETCHEN'S THEME	<i>Instrumental</i>	1:02
0. OVERTURE	<i>Instrumental</i>	
2. GREAT, DEPRESSION	<i>Ensemble</i>	2:28
3. MORE	<i>Faustus</i>	3:00
4. THERE MIGHT BE A WAY	<i>Marthe</i>	2:32
5. FAUSTUS	<i>Mephastophilis, Faustus</i>	3:02

Act II

0. ENTR'ACT	<i>Instrumental</i>	
6. SINNERS DOWN	<i>Mephastophilis, Ensemble</i>	1:48
7. SEVEN	<i>Ensemble</i>	5:10
8. WHERE OFF / WHERE NOW	<i>Gretchen, Faustus</i>	2:08
9. DEVIL OUTTA HERE	<i>Chris, Marthe, Ensemble, Meph./Faustus</i>	2:22
10. GOIN' DOWN TO THE VALLEY	<i>Mephastophilis (a cappella)</i>	2:04
11. THE REAPING	<i>Instrumental</i>	

PROLOGUE

PROLOGUE

ENTER FAUSTUS

In DARKNESS.

FAUSTUS

Lord, I know that I have broken your laws and my sins have separated me from you. I am sorry. I know you hear my prayers. Save me from this sinful life. Bring me to You. Please forgive me. Send your Holy Spirit to help me. Save me. (*Beat.*) How did I get here...?

MUSIC CUE – GRETCHEN'S THEME

LIGHTS UP. A park.

Enter FAUSTUS researching a scholarly book; he busies himself, taking notes.

Enter GRETCHEN, unseen by FAUSTUS. GRETCHEN sneaks-up behind him and covers his eyes. GRETCHEN reveals herself; a moment is shared.

GRETCHEN takes the book, walks away, sets the book on the ground, and turns back to him. FAUSTUS crosses to GRETCHEN and brings her close. They dance.

The dance becomes a continuous, slow turn. FAUSTUS and GRETCHEN are lost in each other. The music slows and stops.

GRETCHEN whispers a secret, unheard by the audience, in FAUSTUS's ear. They resume turning slowly (bringing FAUSTUS's face back to the audience); GRETCHEN rests her head on FAUSTUS's shoulder.

FAUSTUS

I love you too.

Final chord plays. LIGHTS OUT.

MUSIC CUE – OVERTURE

ACT I

ACT I, SCENE 1

ENTER TOWNSPEOPLE

LIGHTS UP. Williams Street.
MUSIC CUE – GREAT, DEPRESSION

ENSEMBLE

THIS IS A LIVING, GOTTA FIND A WAY TO MAKE DUE
WITH EV'RYTHING WE GOT IN THESE TIMES.
SURE, MONEY'S HARD, BUT WE AIN'T FLYIN' FROM THE TOPS OF BUILDINGS.
I SUPPOSE THAT'S A SILVER LINE.
GREAT, DEPRESSION...

LOST ALL THE SAVINGS, ALL THE MONEY, ALL THE WEALTH,
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE'RE COMPLETELY POOR.
STILL GOT OUR FAMILIES, THEY'RE THE ONLY THING WE GOT AND IT'S TOO
BAD WE CAN'T KEEP THEM FED OR WARM.
GREAT, DEPRESSION...

WISH I COULD SAY I KNOW THAT THIS IS ENDING;
JOBS WILL COME BACK AND WE WILL BE FINE.
NO END IN SIGHT, WE'RE PINCHING ONTO OUR LUCKY PENNIES,
HOLDING OUR BREATH, TRYING TO SURVIVE...

NO CONTROL OVER ANY OF THIS SITUATION.
NO WAY TO BE SURE THAT WE GET BY.
RELYING ON THE KINDNESS OF OUR FELLOW BEGGAR, TRYING
NOT TO BE FIRST TO STEAL OR LIE.
GREAT, DEPRESSION...

WISH I COULD SAY I KNOW THAT THIS IS ENDING;
JOBS WILL COME BACK AND WE WILL BE FINE.
NO END IN SIGHT, WE'RE PINCHING ONTO OUR LUCKY PENNIES,
HOLDING OUR BREATH, TRYING TO SURVIVE...

THIS GREAT DEPRESSION...
THIS GREAT DEPRESSION...

Music fades away. LIGHTS OUT.

LIGHTS UP. A university lecture hall, WAGNER at the head.

WAGNER

The universe is likely infinite. If not infinite, we know that it is enormous – very, very big and certainly farther than we can see. Now, if we apply the rules of probability, it is incredibly likely that, somewhere out there, there are other planets like Earth. And a great number of planets *exactly* like Earth. The lands, the animals... and people – human beings. In an infinite universe, there are planets exactly like Earth where history has or will play out virtually identical to our own.

Now consider the vastness of the universe and the variations of human kinds. If the biology and environment of another Earth are identical to our own: what is the role of free will or choice? It is possible that every single decision and every single choice that will be made here has already taken place and decided by individuals billions of light years away. It's something to consider.

This brings us to the multiverse theory where, not just our Earth, but our universe is not alone. A theory in which many universes co-exist simultaneously and parallel to each other. Scientists debate whether or not parallel universes exist, but it IS possible – and I'm certainly not going to rule out a theory just because the subject is too big to observe. If these parallel universes do exist, even fewer physicists believe that that it is possible to contact or travel to them. But I'm an optimist. If we apply the rules of probability to the multiverse theory, who's to say what is and isn't possible. If you travel far enough into space, you could return home. You could run into yourself. Fall down the rabbit hole into a real life Wonderland... Anything and everything is possible.

A bell tolls.

Thank you for your attention. Remember your assigned reading and I will see you next semester.

FAUSTUS appears.

FAUSTUS

Congratulations, Wagner.

WAGNER

Hello, John. Another semester for the books, yes.

FAUSTUS

Next semester, I mean.

WAGNER

Thank you. Yes, my job is safe for now.

FAUSTUS

Being published again won't hurt your tenure review, I'm sure.

WAGNER

No, I suppose it won't. Unfortunately, the University doesn't regard metaphysics as a vital field of study. I could be a full professor next semester... in the Seminary.

FAUSTUS

What a shame. Sorry to hear it, truly. The Seminary... Jesus Christ...

WAGNER

Your sympathy means the world to me.

FAUSTUS

I don't know what's worse: being a student of the Seminary or having you as a professor.

WAGNER

Whoever subjects himself to Seminary deserves whatever hell they bring.

FAUSTUS

I read it by the way; "Principals of the Multiverse Theory."

WAGNER

What did you make of it?

FAUSTUS

Very interesting speculation.

WAGNER

Ha! Thank you.

FAUSTUS

Very interesting.

WAGNER

And very plausible.

FAUSTUS

Maybe I should become a professor.

WAGNER

You? Do you have the patience or understanding to teach?

FAUSTUS

Someone at this wretched institution needs to challenge minds to grow.

WAGNER

Someone like you?

FAUSTUS

Absolutely. I could write a book and force students to read it just as easily as you.

WAGNER

Simply preaching your own theories will not challenge minds to grow? Who among your pupils will challenge you? They will agree and they will pass your class.

FAUSTUS

Assemblages, Wagner. The connections have to be made on their own. I'm sure there are true scholars among them and they will make relevance for themselves.

WAGNER

But may they challenge your theories?

FAUSTUS

I don't deal in theories. I deal in reality.

WAGNER

May your students disagree with you?

FAUSTUS

They are welcome to. But they'd be wrong.

WAGNER

I do enjoy our chats. You make me feel like a very humble man.

FAUSTUS

You're quite welcome.

WANGER

(Beat.) Are you alright, John?

FAUSTUS

(Beat.) I could become a professor, though. I could teach.

WAGNER

Why would you want to do that? Teaching would substantially disrupt your practice.

FAUSTUS

I've been thinking about giving up medicine.

WAGNER

Ha! You're Doctor Faustus, the renowned physician! There isn't a man or women in this entire city who doesn't know who you are.

FAUSTUS

Well...

WAGNER

And I hate to admit it, but anyone on their deathbed better hope to end up on your table if they want a fighting chance. You can't give that up.

FAUSTUS

I've been giving it serious consideration.

WAGNER

But you have a child on the way. You need the stability your success provides. Especially with the economy in the state is now. Everyone needs a doctor sooner or later.

FAUSTUS

Medicine is a fruitful pursuit. A gamut of miraculous cures and more we have yet to discover. But I've grown tired of it. I do like the fame, but even that satisfaction has waned.

WAGNER

We're all unsatisfied at times, John. That's life.

FAUSTUS

I'll pursue some other type of scholarship.

MUSIC CUE – MORE

I do enjoy logic, but disputing well is the chief end of logic. A skill I already possess. Law is petty. Courts are occupied with trivial matters. Divinity, religion, theology – they offer wider outlooks, but the doctrine is intolerable.

WAGNER

All men sin –

FAUSTUS

– And yet “the reward of sin is Death.” Intolerable. If I want to master a realm of fantasy, I might as well profess something as ridiculous as magic.

SETTLE THY STUDIES AND, FAUSTUS, BEGIN

TO BE DIVINE IN SHOW.

I KNOW ALL THAT I NEED TO KNOW

THAT'S MORE THAN ANY MAN SHOULD KNOW

AND I WANT SOMETHING MORE.

I WANT MORE.

MORE.

I WANT SO MUCH MORE.

MORE.

WANGER

You have more than any man I know, John – a beautiful wife, your first child on the way. You have what every man wants. Maybe you should learn contentedness.

FAUSTUS

HELEN OF TROY AND ALEXANDER THE GREAT –

OF BOTH YOU KNOW YOU KNOW THEIR NAME

DESIRE LED THEM TO THEIR FAME.

I ONLY WISH TO HAVE THE SAME.

I LONG FOR SOMETHING MORE.

I WANT MORE.

MORE.

I WANT SO MUCH MORE.

MORE.

WAGNER
JOHN, WHY CAN'T YOU TAKE A LOOK AROUND AND
SEE YOU HAVE WHAT EVERY MAN LIKE YOU WOULD
WANT AND NEED AND TAKE AS HAPPY AS CAN BE?

FAUSTUS
I WANT MORE.

WAGNER
For what?

FAUSTUS
For Gretchen. For our child. (*Beat*) For myself. It's human nature, Wagner, to aspire to
bigger, better things. To provide for those we love and seek comfort for ourselves.

WAGNER
I worry for you, John. Don't lose sight of what's most important.

FAUSTUS
You think I am?

WAGNER
Don't desire to have more. Aspire to *be* more.

FAUSTUS
Wagner... I will be a *mighty god*.

FAUSTUS
SETTLE THY STUDIES AND,
FAUSTUS, BEGIN TO
BE DIVINE IN SHOW. I
KNOW ALL THAT I NEED TO KNOW THAT'S
MORE THAN ANY MAN SHOULD KNOW
I WANT SOMETHING
MORE. I WANT
MORE.
MORE.
SO MUCH
MORE.

WAGNER
JOHN, WHY CAN'T YOU
TAKE A LOOK AROUND AND
SEE YOU HAVE WHAT
EVERY MAN LIKE YOU WOULD
WANT AND NEED AND
TAKE AS HAPPY AS CAN
BE?

WAGNER
Be cautious of your pursuits, John. Especially if you're seriously consider "magic." You know
what everyone thinks of that crazy woman. That "seer" on Williams Street.

FAUSTUS
(*Beat*.) I'm not alright. (*Beat*.) That woman... Marthe?

WAGNER
Marthe, yes?

FAUSTUS

She stopped me on the street last week. Normally I'm fairly successful at ignoring the beggars on the way to the office, but she got me to stop. "Doctor Faustus!" she said I rounded the corner. Her voice carried urgency. She knew who I was.

WAGNER

Lots of people know who are.

FAUSTUS

She came out of shadow, behind me, and grabbed my arm. I froze for a moment, and turned to see her dirty face looking into my eyes. Her eyes were heavy. They pooled with something to say. Some knowledge. But she stopped. She had something to say, but she couldn't get the words to come out. "I'm so sorry." That's all she said. "I'm so sorry."

WAGNER

(*Pause.*) It's best not to over think it, John. Don't let an insane woman such as her drive you insane.

FAUSTUS

Yes. Yes, you're right. It was a peculiar encounter, though.

A telephone rings. WANGER answers it.

WAGNER

Professor Wagner. – I'm sorry, who is this? – Gretchen?

FAUSTUS

Gretchen?

WAGNER

Are you okay? – Well... yes he's right here, actually. – Yes, I'll put him on.

FAUSTUS takes over the telephone.

FAUSTUS

Gretchen? – Hey, hey! Slow down... what's wrong? – Blood? – How much is there? – Stay right there, I'm on the way. Don't move!

FAUSTUS hangs up the phone. LIGHTS OUT.

LIGHTS UP. A dark part of Williams Street.

MARTHE

*By the dragons light, on this autumn night,
I call to thee to give me your might.*

*By the power of three, I conjure thee,
To protect all that surrounds me,
So mote it be!*

*Protect me with all your might
Goddess gracious day and night!*

*Trice around the circle's bound
Sink all evil into the ground.*

So mote it be!

So mote it be!

(Pause.) Hello, Doctor. (Beat.) I know you're here. No need to linger in the shadows. Just a little incantation to protect us.

FAUSTUS appears.

FAUSTUS

You knew I was coming?

MARTHE

Yes. I knew you were coming.

FAUSTUS

You claim to know many things, don't you?

MARTHE

I know nothing, Doctor. But I do know whatever you're on Williams Street to find, you won't get it from me.

FAUSTUS

That's not what you claim to the passersby. Tarot cards. Palm reading. For a little bit of money you have valuable insights, isn't that right?

MARTHE

I'm sorry, Doctor, but your money is no good here. I have nothing for you.

FAUSTUS

But you thought you did. Last week on this street you stopped me. You had something to tell me, but you didn't.

MARTHE

I said everything I have to say.

FAUSTUS

"I'm so sorry." That's all you had to say.

MARTHE

I mistook you for someone else.

FAUSTUS

You called me by name. Until last week, I've barely acknowledged your existence, and you stopped me to say, "I'm so sorry."

MARTHE

I apologize, good doctor. I'm just a lonely beggar woman. A crazy con-artist. That's how you've always regarded me, is it not? We can return to that state of affairs, surely.

FAUSTUS

I have money.

MARTHE

Your money is no good here, Doctor.

FAUSTUS

I have \$100 on me right now. It's yours if you have anything to say to me. Anything of value.

MARTHE

I'm sorry.

FAUSTUS

(Pause.) I know who you are, Marthe. Marthe Higdon's. Your husband, Rafe Higdon's – *Reverend* Higdon's – was president of the Seminary. A man of the cloth. A man of God. There was a little scandal – a small coo at the Seminary when it was discovered that the Reverend's wife was a Devil worshipper. A Satanist.

MARTHE

You're wrong!

FAUSTUS

Lost his position and died quite suddenly of pneumonia, isn't that right? Left you without a penny to get by and exposed a reputation that would shame any employer.

MARTHE

If this is how you seek help from others, Doctor, you must rethink your tactics.

FAUSTUS

Correct me if I'm wrong.

MARTHE

I am not a Devil worshipper! I was never a Satanist... *(Pause.)* I am what I've always claimed to be. What I still claim to be as I beg on Williams Street. Clairvoyant. Premonitory. Telepathic.

FAUSTUS

I'm sure you are.

MARTHE

My husband was a great man. A kind, generous, loving man. The most respected man of God, and head of one of the finest theological institutions. He always loved. Right up to the end. Still, I hope. Even after the malicious accusations against me were made and he lost his title, he never stopped loving me. And he never resented me for my unique skills nor being found out. We were both God-the-Father worshipping Christians. We believed that I was created exactly how the good Lord intended me to be.

FAUSTUS

And now?

MARTHE

It's harder to find God these days, isn't it Doctor? (*Pause.*) You're familiar with the *Odyssey*, aren't you? In a vision, Theoclymenus saw a shroud of mist about the bodies of doomed suitors and the walls of Odysseus hall collect blood – a vision that came to pass.

FAUSTUS

I hope you have more to share with me than literary quips.

MARTHE

Art imitates life, Doctor, and so I grow to a point. These weren't just stories; they were oral traditions – histories of the world preserved to the letter. Fortune tellers, future seers, they have been recorded as a part of that history and have always existed. I have been blessed – and cursed – as one of them. (*Beat.*) Before my husband departed, I had nightmares, vivid nightmares, of Rafe in a brightly lit chapel among his fellow theologians. They placed him in a chair and lifted him above their heads. The people carried him about like a sea. A gentle current that grew monstrous and violent before dumping Rafe from the chair unto the steps outside the chapel. He'd start coughing up sand; so much sand until it covered his body and nothing but sand on the chapel steps remained for the wind to carry away.

FAUSTUS

That must have been frightful.

MARTHE

Not as frightful as watching it come to pass. Or as painful as keeping it secret. We sought the greatest of physican to save him, but even the best couldn't save him. Couldn't save him for a simple pneumonia. (*Beat.*) It's called *An Da Shealladh*. "The two sights." I am always intuitive, Doctor; but I don't always have visions. Not unless I am affected and the circumstances are substantial.

FAUSTUS

You know something –

MARTHE

– about Gretchen?

FAUSTUS

(*Beat.*) Yes.

MARTHE

I claim to know nothing. But, yes, Doctor Faustus, I have been having visions about your wife.

FAUSTUS

Please...

MARTHE

Very little *happens* in the vision, but the scene is grotesque and unambiguous. It is seared vividly into my memory every time it reoccurs. Your wife, Gretchen, lay naked... diseased in a great pool of blood. (*Pause.*) Perhaps that is all that needs to be said, Doctor.

FAUSTUS

If there is any merit in what you have to say, please give me all of it.

MARTHE

(*Beat.*) She bleeds from every available place – the blood pools continuously. And on her bosoms lay a naked infant child struggling to survive... a baby boy covered in his mother's own blood.

FAUSTUS

A baby boy.

MARTHE

Your son, Doctor...

FAUSTUS

My son... (*Beat.*) Gretchen's anemic. Never has been before and it baffles us – myself and the best doctors I consult. All her life, she's been as healthy and vital as any, and suddenly she's anemic. The small cut fails to clot. She bleeds. And she bleeds. I close the wounds myself, but on their own, her bleeding does not stop. I tell her that it's an external matter – cuts to the skin – not internal or bodily. I don't actually know, though.

MARTHE

I'm sorry.

FAUSTUS

How did you know that?! How did you know about her condition?!

MARTHE

Doctor...

FAUSTUS

What can I do? How can I prevent Gretchen's death?

MARTHE

Doctor!

FAUSTUS

How do I save you save her life? Haven't you any magic?

MARTHE

I'm not sure I...

FAUSTUS

I can pay you! \$100 tonight – and more!

MARHTE

Sir...

FAUSTUS

I love her, Marthe. Just as Rafe loved you and you him, I love Gretchen. (*Beat.*) If what you say is true, please, don't let another terrible vision come to pass. (*Beat.*) I love her...

MUSIC CUE – THERE MIGHT BE A WAY

MARTHE

THERE MIGHT BE A WAY OF WHICH I CAN HELP
BUT YOU MUST REMAIN MINDFUL AND PROTECT YOURSELF
FOR I HAVE A TOOL, ONE THAT YOU MAY USE
ONLY BECAUSE I THINK THAT YOU'RE NOT A FOOL.
LESSER MEN CAN'T HANDLE THIS RESPONSIBLY.

THIS TOOL IS A BOOK, A BOOK FULL OF SPELLS,
A BOOK THAT SUMMONS DEMONS FROM THE DEPTHS OF HELL.
THE MAGIC'S NOT YOURS, BUT THEIR'S IF THEY CHOOSE
AND IF YOU AFFORD SOMETHING THAT YOU CAN LOOSE.
BE CAREFUL, THEY'RE ALWAYS LOOKING OUT FOR THEMSELVES.

I KNOW YOU THINK THAT I'M CRAZY,
BUT I WON'T CHANCE THIS COURSE MYSELF.

SO THAT IS THE HELP THAT I CAN PROVIDED
IF THAT IS WHAT IT TAKES TO KEEP YOUR WIFE ALIVE.
TAKE FROM ME THIS BOOK. TAKE IT OFF MY HANDS,
YET HEED MY PLEA, IT IS MY FINAL DEMAND.
KNOW WHAT YOU CAN LOSE. WHAT TO EXCHANGE
AND WHERE YOU DRAW THE LINE THAT YOU WILL NOT CROSS.

THIS WILL GET YOU JUST WHAT YOU WANT.
FOR THIS BOOK IS THE LAST RESORT.

MARTHE gives FAUSTUS a book.

FAUSTUS

Thank you, Marthe.

FAUSTUS begins to exit, but stalls.

The Odyssey; the suitors suffered their terrible fate: Did they heed the warning?

MARTHE

(*Beat.*) I can't recall.

FAUSTUS

(Pause.) I remember Rafe. Pneumonia. Simple enough, but there was nothing I could do.

(Beat.) I'm so sorry.

MARTHE

(Beat.) I know.

FAUSTUS exits. LIGHTS OUT.

LIGHTS UP. A crossroad. A distant church bell tolls the four quarters, then twelve chimes. Simultaneously, FAUSTUS enters with the book to prepare the space and conjure. After the last chime:

FAUSTUS

Midnight... Jehovah's name is within the circle... Orion leaps from the Antarctic. The spirits are enforced to rise. Be resolute. (*Collects himself, then:*)

Throughout the following recitation, lights will begin to subtly flicker. A soft, droning hum may be slightly audible. Both grow in intensity throughout the conjuring.

*Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex
Jehovoe! Ignei, aerii, aquatani spiritus, salvete!
Orientis princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha,
et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat
Mephistophilis. Quid tu moraris? per Jehovam, Gehennam,
et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque
crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc
surgat nobis dicatus Mephistophilis!*

Strangely colored lights flash like lighting accompanied by loud, cacophonous thunder, roaring lions, and other twisted, beastly sounds. If possible, there is wind on stage. These effects give the impression of a presence: the disembodied MEPHASTOPHILIS.

Mephistophilis! I charge thee – change thy shape!

Effects fade. A moment of chilling silence.
MUSIC CUE – FAUSTUS THEME (BRIEF)
Enter MEPHASTOPHILIS.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Doctor Faustus, what would'st thou have me to do?

FAUSTUS

You know who I am?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Of course I do, Doctor. It is written on your soul. I know who you are and you know who I am.

FAUSTUS

You can read my soul?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

As plain as any book your eyes can read.

FAUSTUS

Huh...

MEPHASTOPHILIS

“Huh” indeed. I appreciate your lack of words, but the devils have a busy evening. Let’s keep this short and sweet. What would'st thou have me to do?

FAUSTUS

I would have you converse with me a bit longer.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

If I could be flattered, I am sure I would be. But I’m not here for idle conversation. More importantly, I’m not in the habit of providing something for nothing. (*Beat.*) You, sir, Doctor Jonathan Faustus, identify yourself as a doctor of medicine, a mildly fascinating although equally trivial field of study as any. You are wedded in holy matrimony to Gretchen Marlowe-Faustus. The once-love... still-love? It’s a bit hazy... ah, yes ... the love of your life... among persons at least and apart from yourself. You are expecting your first child and – here’s where it get’s interesting – she will not survive the birth. You know it, she doesn’t. Her ailment is not morning sickness, and you both know that. Now, you desire this conference between us because you need a miracle to save her. Why? Undying love? Enormous arrogance? Stubborn ignorance? I’ll let you work that out for yourself. But here we are, we know what’s at stake, and you’re not gonna get an offer anywhere else. You can ask me for the miracle you need, which is no small feat, or, given the cost, we can do much, much more. Now, if I you as well as I think I do, Faustus – and I am completely sure I do – I already know how this ends. Let’s not be coy, Doctor, you have a tall order for me\.

FAUSTUS

And you are...?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

– taking customers. (*Beat.*) What would'st thou have me to do?

FAUSTUS

I charge thee, Mephistophilis, wait upon me while I live and do whatever I shall command. Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere or the ocean to overwhelm the world.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Aye – there’s the rub! Doctor, I am a servant, but not yours. I may not follow you without leave of the Boss. I must perform no more than he commands.

FAUSTUS

Did not he charge you to appear to me?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

I came here of my own accord.

FAUSTUS

Did my conjuring raise you?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

It was the cause, but did not raise me. When one racks the name of God, abjures the Scriptures and Christ, I hope to get a glorious soul. Your devout praying to the Prince of Hell has put your soul in danger.

FAUSTUS

In danger of –

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Damnation, Faustus.

FAUSTUS

Of course. Tell me, your boss –

MEPHASTOPHILIS

My Lord...

FAUSTUS

He was an angel once?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

The most dearly loved of God.

FAUSTUS

How did he then become the prince of devils?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

For his insolence and pride, God threw him from the face of Heaven. Those of us who conspired with him also fell – damned forever in Hell.

FAUSTUS

Hell!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Yes.

FAUSTUS

Hell is a myth – a device to control the masses to the will of the Church.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Ha! A device: perhaps. A myth: certainly not. I assure you, Doctor. Hell is quite real.

FAUSTUS

Then how do you stand before me? Have you escaped?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

You think I can escape?! *This is Hell, Faustus. (Beat.)* I saw the face of God. I tasted the eternal joys of heaven, the everlasting bliss. I am tormented with ten thousand hells. But, we're not so different, Doctor.

FAUSTUS

Is that so?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

You face your own eternal death.

FAUSTUS

(Beat.) You want my soul.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Oh yes... but let's not get carried away. I'd like to make a deal.

FAUSTUS

A deal –

MEPHASTOPHILIS

– for exactly what you wish. I'll inform the Boss that you desire me as your attendant. Do whatever you ask, tell you whatever you demand, obey your will. Teach you my ways, slay your enemies, and *aid your loved ones*.

FAUSTUS

(Some consideration.) Yes. Tell him that.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Summon me again at midnight.

FAUSTUS

I will, devil.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Excellent. *(Beat.)* Farewell, Doctor Faustus. *(MEPHASTOPHILIS goes to exit.)* And, Doc... let's keep this short and sweet.

Exit MEPHASTOPHILIS. A beastly roar and thunder is heard.

FAUSTUS

If I had as many souls as stars, I'd give them all.

LIGHTS OUT.

LIGHTS UP. The lecture hall. WAGNER at the head.

WAGNER

Early Greeks saw the universe – the “cosmos” – and imagined laws of nature to explain to it. Later, Stoic physicists identified these laws of nature with laws of God and said both were completely determined. They saw the heavens as perfect, orderly, repetitive motions without change while everything from the moon to Earth was subject to change and decay.

Two thousand years later, Isaac Newton observed accurate laws of motion for the planets and seemed to confirm a deterministic universe. But as Newton knew, we never had observational evidence to support the presumed perfection.

Information philosophy has identified the cosmic processes – “ergodic processes” – that overcome the chaotic tendencies of atomic collisions to create macroscopic, information-rich structures. When these structures are large enough, such as the sun and planets, their motions become very ordered and incredibly stable.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, microscopic DNA has maintained its informational stability for billions of years via error detection and correction.

For us, quantum uncertainty is involved in shaking together our *agenda* items, the real alternative possibilities for thought or action that allow us to say we “could have done otherwise?”

Do we have autonomy, or rather, are our choices predetermined? And what, if anything, does physics have to say about that? Is the fact that you are sitting in this lecture hall a decision you arrived at by your own choice, or was your interest programmed into the universe from the moment it began?

(*Pause.*) Your next assignment: A philosophical essay. Address autonomy and precognition through the perspective of quantum theory. With our understanding of physics, do we have autonomy, or our choices predetermined?

(*Beat.*) Let’s dismiss early today. Essays will be due at the top of class next semester.

WAGNER collects himself. GRETCHEN enters, very pregnant.

GRETCHEN

Wagner.

WAGNER

Gretchen?

GRETCHEN

I saw everyone leave; I thought it’d be okay to come in.

WAGNER

Yeah...

GRETCHEN

I'm sorry, is now a bad time?

WAGNER

No, no. Of course not. Actually, that was my very last class of the term. How can I help you?

GRETCHEN

Do you know where, John is?

WAGNER

Can't say that I've seen him.

GRETCHEN

He didn't come home last night.

WAGNER

Oh...

GRETCHEN

I'm worried about him.

WAGNER

I'm sure he's fine, Gretchen. You know how wrapped up he gets in his studies.

GRETCHEN

I know, but... he's been acting strange lately.

WAGNER

Strange? How so?

GRETCHEN

(*Consideration.*) He's distant... I know, I know he get's "distant"... but, he's hiding something from me. He's keeping a secret from me.

WAGNER

You think so?

GRETCHEN

– You don't know what it could be?

WAGNER

No... I'm sorry, I have no idea.

GRETCHEN

Has he told you anything?

WAGNER

No, not really... He talked a little bit about becoming a professor.

GRETCHEN

Huh?

WAGNER

After closing his practice.

GRETCHEN

Oh? Really...

WAGNER

He hasn't told you?

GRETCHEN

No. Hasn't mentioned a word.

WAGNER

Oh... Well, he said he was only considering it. Probably nothing.

GRETCHEN

Is that so?

WAGNER

He's just grown tired... of medicine. You know John; always needs a new challenge.

GRETCHEN

Wagner... (*Pause.*) You don't think that John's grown tired of me?

WAGNER

No! No!

GRETCHEN

You don't think that he's ~~having an affair~~?

WAGNER

Of course not! Gretchen! Don't even think that! (*Beat.*) How could he possibly do that to you? How could anyone? (*Pause.*) You're an amazing woman, Gretchen. Kind, thoughtful... beautiful. John would have to mad to lie to you like that.

GRETCHEN

Well... he is keeping a secret from me. (*Pause.*) I'm worried, Wagner. My condition's not getting any better.

WAGNER

I'm sorry... It's not getting any worse, though?

GRETCHEN

I don't think so... I accidently opened up my arm pretty bad yesterday. That's why I called.

WAGNER

When John rushed out?

GRETCHEN

Yes.

GRETCHEN reveals a large gash on her arm – the accident.

WAGNER

Oh my...

WAGNER moves to examine it.

GRETCHEN

Be careful! It could pull open and start all over again. John has a remedy to close the skin, but it's really just a temporary fix. An adhesive of some kind. It's going to take a very long time for the skin to heal shut. *(Pause.)* John assures me it is just a skin affliction, but I'm not sure...

WAGNER

Why do you say that?

GRETCHEN

(Pause.) This is going to sound crazy... *(HER eyes look for permission to continue.)* I been having terrible nightmares. About myself... and the baby... Terrifying nightmares. I don't want to go into detail, but *this (Referring to the wound)*, I had this. *Exactly this.* Until yesterday, this wound didn't exist. But I've been having nightmares of this, and ... other parts... pouring blood.

WAGNER

Have you told, John?

GRETCHEN

I don't want to bother him with it. Or worry myself more.

WAGNER

But it does worry you.

GRETCHEN

It does.

WAGNER

If something worries you, you should be able to talk about it with someone who cares for you.

GRETCHEN

(Beat.) I am.

WAGNER

(Beat.) Yes. Yes you are.

A moment is shared.

GRETCHEN

I'm going to head home. Maybe John's there already.

WAGNER

But you're due any day now. You shouldn't be alone. (*Pause.*) Tell you what, as soon as I'm finished here, I'll head over to your place. We'll make some calls. Find out what John's been up to.

GRETCHEN

(*Beat.*) I'd like that. (*SHE starts to exit, stops and turns back to WAGNER.*) Thank you, Wagner...

WAGNER

You're welcome.

GRETCHEN

... for always being there for me.

WAGNER

Of course. Always.

GRETCHEN exits. WAGNER collects himself. LIGHTS OUT.

LIGHTS UP. The crossroad. Enter FAUSTUS. A distant church bell tolls the four quarters, then twelve chimes as before. Over this:

FAUSTUS

Dear Lord, must my needs be damned? Cannot she be saved? I turn to You and You love me not. I despair in You. I turn to You and You serve your own appetite. Contrition, prayer, repentance! What of them? Illusions. Fruits of lunacy that make foolish men. (*Beat.*) Midnight... When Mephistophilis stands by me, what god can hurt me? Come, devil; bring glad tidings. *Veni, veni, Mephistophile!*

Enter MEPHASTOPHILIS, unseen by FAUSTUS.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Good evening, doctor.

MUSIC CUE – DOCTOR FAUSTUS. Vamps in the musical score loop until dialogue in the book reaches an asterisk (*).

FAUSTUS

God! You scared me.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Watch it. Don't forget who you're dealing business with.

FAUSTUS

My apologies.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

I never want to hear you use that name again. I talked to the Boss.

FAUSTUS

You did?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

He's a very accessible guy; patient too. He's willing to make you a deal.

FAUSTUS

He is?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Didn't take much convincing either; never really does. * He wants to make an exchange. *
DOCTOR FAUSTUS, I'LL BE YOUR SLAVE,
I'LL TEACH YOU MAGIC AND TO YOUR WILL BEHAVE,
BUT IN TWENTY-FOUR YEARS, THAT'S WHEN YOU'LL MEET THE GRAVE,
BE TAKEN TO HELL WITH NO CHANCE TO BE SAVED.
FAUSTUS, FAUSTUS, THE DEAL HERE YOU SEE
IS TWENTY-FOUR YEARS FOR YOUR ETERNITY.
YOU CAN HAVE ALL THE POWER NOW, BUT IT'S NOT FOR FREE,

YOUR TIME WILL RUN AND THEN GO TO HELL BACK WITH ME.

FAUSTUS

That's it, that's the deal?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

That's it.

FAUSTUS

No tricks?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

I don't do tricks. Withal, Faustus, I'm honest.

FAUSTUS

An even exchange?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

A fair exchange. *

DOCTOR SIR, BE ADVISED

THIS IS QUITE A HEFTY COMPROMISE.

IF THE DARK ARTS BE YOUR GREATEST GOAL,

THEN ALL WE ASK IN RETURN IS YOUR SOUL.

I've got the contract right here. (*Hands it to FAUSTUS.*)

FAUSTUS

(*Reading aloud:*) "I, Jonathan Faustus, doctor of medicine, in exchange for the unyielding and continuous service of Lucifer's devil Mephistophilis, agree to yield my soul unto hell upon the conclusion of four and twenty year's time."

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Clear?

FAUSTUS

(*Looking it over.*) Quite.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

FAUSTUS, FAUSTUS, I HOPE THAT YOU SEE

TWENTY-FOUR YEARS IS NOT THE SAME AS ETERNITY.

YOU WILL MASTER ALL THE DARKETST WAYS, THE GREATEST YOU'LL BE

IF YOU CHOOSE TO TAKE THIS FORMAL DECREE.

FAUSTUS

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO

MAKING BARGAINS WITH THE LIKES OF YOU...

MEPHASTOPHILIS

TAKE THE DEAL, OR LEAVE IT ALONE.

FAUSTUS

I'M TRYING TO THINK...

MEPHASTOPHILIS
WELL YOU'RE THINKING TOO SLOW.
LISTEN DOC, I DON'T HAVE ALL DAY
DON'T BE WASTING ALL MY TIME AWAY.
THIS DEAL IS NOT THE MOST IDEAL AND I KNOW THAT'S TRUE,
BUT YOU HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE AND THAT IS ALL UP TO YOU.
I don't mean to rush you, Doc, but this is a limited offer – one that *you* requested. If you deny it now, I'm afraid you won't get a second chance. Perhaps there was a reason you were interested.

GRETCHEN'S THEME is heard in brief reprise. Silence. WAGNER enters, hurried.

WAGNER
John! Gretchen hasn't been able to reach you! It's time – the baby's on the way!

FAUSTUS
How is Gretchen?

WAGNER
... Not good. (*Beat*) John... you know how this ends, don't you?

FAUSTUS
One blessing for another. A new soul to cherish.

WAGNER
John... We have to hurry.

FAUSTUS
I'll be right there.

WAGNER
But John –

FAUSTUS
I'll be right there!

WAGNER
(*Beat, notices MEPHASTOPHILIS.*) Who is this?

FAUSTUS
An old friend.

WAGNER
... John –

FAUSTUS
I SAID GO!

WAGNER reluctantly exits. The FAUSTUS THEME returns.

FAUSTUS
ALRIGHT, DEVIL, I SIGN ON THE LINE?

MEPHASTOPHILIS
A DROP OF BLOOD UPON THE PAGE SHOULD DO IT JUST FINE.

FAUSTUS
I TAKE THE DEAL.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
YOU TAKE IT AND YOU'LL NEVER BE FREE.

FAUSTUS
LIVING A HOLLOW LIFE IS NOT AN OPTION TO ME.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
FAUSTUS, FAUSTUS...

Chord is held and fades to silence. FAUSTUS takes a pin, pricks a finger, drawing blood. He presses his finger to the page, slowly removes his finger, folds the contract and presents it to MEPHASTOPHILIS. The devil takes it.

SEE YOU IN HELL.

WAGNER (off stage)
John!

MEPHASTOPHILIS
You read Latin. Here. Take these.

MEPHASTOPHILIS hands FAUSTUS a folded, sealed parchment and a hex bag.

Keep the bag in your pocket. When you can see your wife, crack the seal on the paper and recite the prose out loud. Out of earshot if you can manage. And before she passes, of course.

WAGNER (off stage)
John!

MEPHASTOPHILIS
It will work.

GRETCHEN screams off stage.

WAGNER (off stage)
JOHN!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Go.

FAUSTUS exits hastily. MEPHASTOPHILIS begins to stroll offstage.

QUE SERA, SERA.

WHATEVER WILL BE, WILL BE.

THE FUTURE'S NOT FOR US TO SEE.

QUE SERA, SERA.

MUSIC CUE – THE TERRIBLE CHORDS
LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT.

MUSIC CUE – ENTR'ACT

ACT II

ACT II, SCENE 1

ENTER "FATHER MEMPHIS"

In DARKNESS.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

My children!

LIGHTS UP on MEPHASTOPHILIS and his "Christian" CONGREGATION in a church.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

The Holy Spirit is a-talkin' to me! Praise-Jesus-Alleluia Praise-Jesus-Amen! The Good Lord's a-lookin' down on our congregation and he's very pleased with the good lives y'all are livin'.

CONGREGATION

(Ad lib) Amen! Alleluia! Praise Jesus!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Well... the lives that *most* of y'all are livin'. Your deeds. Your relationships. Praise-Jesus-Alleluia Praise-Jesus-Amen. No one's perfect. You are human after all. But beyond our parish walls – outside of Father Memphis's church – you're surrounded by temptation. You're surrounded by sin. You're surrounded by sinners. The Holy Spirit is a-talkin' to Father Memphis and the Good Lord wants us to change that.

MUSIC CUE – SINNERS DOWN. Vamps in the musical score loop until dialogue in the book reaches an asterisk (*).

CONGREGATION

(Ad lib) Yes! Amen! Alleluia! Praise Jesus!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

The Lord wants us to be a shining beacon – a community that reflects and spreads the Glory and Graciousness of God – Praise-Jesus-Alleluia Praise-Jesus-Amen – but we are surrounded by adulterers, thieves, and liars. My children, we can change that!

CONGREGATION

*(Ad lib) We can, we can! Amen! Alleluia! Praise Jesus! **

MEPHASTOPHILIS

GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN,
WE GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN.
'CAUSE WE'RE THE RIGHTEOUS ONES,
WE'RE THE ARMY OF GOD,
WE GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN.
GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN,
WE GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN.
'CAUSE WE'RE THE RIGHTEOUS ONES,

CONGREGATION
ALLELUIA!
PRAISE JESUS!

ALL
WE'RE THE ARMY OF GOD.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
WE GOTTA –

ALL
TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
Now it's not gonna be easy. Workin' for the Lord is tough work – but it is *glorious* work. It is satisfying dirty work. For the Lord who suffered so much for you, is it not good and righteous for us to do the same? For the name of God and his justice? You'll get mud on your shoes, blood on your sleeves, and a seat in heaven – Praise-Jesus-Alleluia Praise-Jesus-Amen!

TAKE OUR CRUSADE TO THE STREET;
TAKE THE FIGHT TO EVERYONE YOU MEET.
FORCE 'EM TO SEE THE LIGHT;
ENCOURAGE THEM WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT.

ALL
TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
IGNORANCE IS NO EXCUSE;
THE LORD'S GOOD FIGHT IS OUR ONLY USE.
ACTIONS ARE STRONGER THAN
WORDS AND, OF COURSE, WHAT'S OUR PLAN?

ALL
TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN,
WE GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN.
'CAUSE WE'RE THE RIGHTEOUS ONES,

CONGREGATION
ALLELUIA!
PRAISE JESUS!

ALL
WE'RE THE ARMY OF GOD.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
WE GOTTA –

ALL
TAKE THOSE SINNERS –

CONGREGATION
TAKE 'EM DOWN!

MEPHASTOPHILIS
GOTTA
GO FIGHT
DOWN
TAKE 'EM
TO THEIR KNEES
SEE THE LIGHT AND
ENCOURAGE THEM
WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT
TAKE THOSE SINNERS...

CONGREGATION
TAKE THOSE
SINNERS GOTTA
BRING THEM BRING 'EM
TO THEIR KNEES
FORCE 'EM TO SEE
ENCOURAGE THEM
WITH ALL OUR MIGHT
TAKE THOSE SINNERS



CONGREGATION
GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN,
WE GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN.
'CAUSE WE'RE THE RIGHTEOUS ONES,

MEPHASTOPHILIS
ALLELUIA!
YES, WE GOTTA!

ALL
WE'RE THE ARMY OF GOD.
WE GOTTA TAKE THOSE SINNERS
TAKE THOSE SINNERS
TAKE THOSE SINNERS DOWN!

LIGHTS UP. The crossroads.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

The Great Doctor Faustus!

FAUSTUS

“Father Memphis.”

MEPHASTOPHILIS

(*A satisfied laugh.*) Never gets old. Has such a nice ring to it. How are you on this fine evening?

FAUSTUS

Save your pleasantries.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Come, come now, old friend. I’m gonna miss this just as much as you.

FAUSTUS

Miss this miserable life?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

You’re the greatest doctor that ever was – renowned not just in this country, but the world. Impossible cures, plus miraculous one-offs. And you have the net-worth to show for it! You may not be long for this Earth, but you’ll be written about, studied, and praised for the history of mankind.

FAUSTUS

A lot of good that does me.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Your family, for generations, will never know want. The only thing you’ve ever known!

FAUSTUS

My family...

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Don’t be so hard on yourself! Here we are; hours before make headlines again, and you’re moping around instead of enjoying yourself!

FAUSTUS

The obituaries are hardily headlines.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

They are when you are The Great Doctor Jonathan Faustus. The greatest medical mind... nay, the greatest mind of the twentieth century! (*Beat.*) Come on, let’s see that smile. Come on...

FAUSTUS

Forgive me.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Perhaps you would like to travel the heavens on a dragon-pulled chariot! Your final hours, Faustus – don't stifle your imagination! Anything is still possible! Measure the coasts and kingdoms! Unlock the secrets of astronomy!

FAUSTUS

What is hell like?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Twenty-four years, Faustus, and never wanted to know what hell is like.

FAUSTUS

For twenty-four years, I've imagined the horrors. Think I'm fond to believe that after this miserable life, there is pain?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Hell is not a fable. It's not an old wives' tale. You have no idea how tame your worst imaginings are.

FAUSTUS

Who made Hell?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

The same who made Heaven and Earth.

FAUSTUS

Who is that?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

I cannot say.

FAUSTUS

But – but I've asked you... you must answer!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

The answer is against my kingdom.

FAUSTUS

(Beat.) I see.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

You'll have your answers soon enough. *(Beat.)* I have an idea... since your so consumed by hell, would you'd like to make some friends before you depart?

FAUSTUS

Friends?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Oh yes...

MUSIC CUE – SEVEN. Vamps in the musical score loop until dialogue in the book reaches an asterisk (*).

SINS

FROM THE DEPTHS OF HELL WE RISE, WE THE SINS.
WE HAVE BEEN HELD DOWN FOR TOO LONG NOW,
BUT WE'RE HERE TO INTRODUCE YOU OURSELVES
FOR YOU SHALL SOON JOIN US DOWN IN HELL.
NO NEED TO FEAR, MORTAL, NO NEED TO FEAR.
YOU GET TO MEET US ON EARTH WHILE WE'RE HERE.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Now, Faustus, examine them of their several names and dispositions.

FAUSTUS

What art thou — the first?

PRIDE

I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents. I am like to Ovid's flea: I can creep into every corner of a wench; sometimes, like a periwig, I sit upon her brow; or like a fan of feathers, I kiss her lips; indeed I do — what do I not? * But, fie, what a scent is here! I'll not speak another word, except the ground were perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras. *

FAUSTUS

What art thou—the second?

COVETOUSNESS

I am Covetousness, begotten of an old churl in an old leathern bag; and, might I have my wish I would desire that this house and all the people in it were turned to gold, that I might lock you up in my good chest. O, my sweet gold! *

SINS

WE'RE OUT OF HELL NOW BUT WE ARE NOT FREE.
ESCAPE FROM HELL ONE CANNOT, YOU WILL SEE.

FAUSTUS

What art thou — the third?

ENVY

I am Envy, begotten of a chimney sweeper and an oyster-wife. I cannot read, and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. O that there would come a famine through all the world, that all might die, and I live alone! then thou should'st see how fat I would be. But must thou sit, and I stand! Come down with a vengeance!

FAUSTUS

Away, envious rascal! What art thou — the fourth?

WRATH

I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother: I leapt out of a lion's mouth when I was scarce half an hour old; and ever since I have run up and down the world with this case of rapiers, wounding myself when I had nobody to fight withal. * I was born in hell; and look to it, for some of you shall be my father. *

FAUSTUS

What art thou — the fifth?

GLUTTONY

Who I, sir? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny they have left me, but a bare pension, and that is thirty meals a day and ten bevers,—a small trifle to suffice nature. O, I come of a royal parentage! My grandfather was a Gammon of Bacon, my grandmother was a Hogshead of Claret-wine; my godfathers were these, Peter Pickleherring and Martin Martlemas-beef; * O, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well beloved in every good town and city; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer. Now, Faustus, thou hast heard all my progeny, wilt thou bid me to supper?

FAUSTUS

No, I'll see thee hanged: thou wilt eat up all my victuals.

GLUTTONY

Then the Devil choke thee!

FAUSTUS

Choke thyself, glutton! *

SINS

FROM THE DEPTHS OF HELL WE RISE, WE THE SINS.
WE HAVE BEEN HELD DOWN FOR TOO LONG NOW,
BUT WE'RE HERE TO INTRODUCE YOU OURSELVES
FOR YOU SHALL SOON JOIN US DOWN IN HELL.

FAUSTUS

Who art thou — the sixth?

SLOTH

I am Sloth. I was begotten on a sunny bank, where I have lain ever since; and you have done me great injury to bring me from thence: let me be carried thither again by Gluttony and Lechery. I'll not speak another word for a king's ransom.

FAUSTUS

What are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last? *

LECHERY

Who, I, sir? I am one that loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stockfish; and the first letter of my name begins with L. *

SINS

FROM THE DEPTHS OF HELL WE RISE, WE THE SINS.
WE HAVE BEEN HELD DOWN FOR TOO LONG NOW,

BUT WE'RE HERE TO INTRODUCE YOU OURSELVES
FOR YOU SHALL SOON JOIN US DOWN IN HELL.
NO NEED TO FEAR, MORTAL, NO NEED TO FEAR.
YOUR TIME IS RUNNING OUT BUT IT'S NOT HERE.

PRIDE

Fie, what a scent is here!

COVETOUSNESS

O, my sweet gold!

ENVY

Come down with a vengeance!

WRATH

You shall be my father!

GLUTTONY

Bid me to supper!

SLOTH

I'll not speak a word!

LECHERY

An inch of raw mutton!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Away! Away, to hell, to hell!

Exeunt the SINS.

Now, Faustus, how dost thou like this?

FAUSTUS.

O, this feeds my soul!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Tut, Faustus, in hell is all manner of delight. Farewell, Faustus.

FAUSTUS

Farewell, great Mephistophilis.

MEPHASTOPHILIS exits. In a moment, we see FAUSTUS's fear.

LIGHTS OUT.

LIGHTS UP. Ambiguous, isolated settings.

MUSIC CUE – WHERE OFF / WHERE NOW

GRETCHEN

WHERE ARE YOU? WHERE DID YOU GO OFF TO?
THE MAN I LOVED... THE MAN I KNEW... I'M MISSING YOU
OH, JOHN...
ONCE WE LOVED AND HELD
AND DREAMT OF LIFE THAT WE'D SPEND TOGETHER,
BUT NOW WHERE IS THAT LIFE?
WHERE IS THE MAN I USED TO KNOW?
WHERE OFF DID YOU GO?

FAUSTUS

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I AM DOING
BUT I TRY TO KEEP ON MOVING
NOWHERE TO RUN
AND THERE'S NOWHERE TO HIDE.
SOON MY TIME ON EARTH IS ENDING,
I CANNOT KEEP ON PRETENDING
THAT ALL IS FINE.
THIS POWER SHOULD BE MINE.
LOOK AHEAD AND SET A NEW COURSE.
FIND A SHELTER THAT WILL SAVE ME
FROM THIS LIFE FILLED WITH FEAR... SOMEWHERE.
WHERE NOW CAN I GO?

FAUSTUS

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I AM DOING
BUT I TRY TO KEEP ON MOVING
NOWHERE TO RUN AND
THERE'S NOWHERE TO HIDE.
SOON MY TIME ON EARTH IS ENDING,
I CANNOT KEEP ON PRETENDING
THAT ALL IS FINE. THIS
POWER SHOULD BE MINE.
LOOK AHEAD AND
SET A NEW COURSE.
FIND A SHELTER THAT WILL
SAVE ME
FROM THIS LIFE
FILLED WITH FEAR...
SOME-
WHERE.

WHERE NOW CAN I GO?
WHERE NOW CAN I GO?

LIGHTS OUT.

GRETCHEN

WHERE ARE
YOU? WHERE DID YOU
GO OFF
TO? THE MAN I
LOVED... THE MAN I
KNEW... I'M MISSING
YOU.
OH, JOHN...
ONCE WE LOVED AND
HELD AND DREAMT OF
LIFE THAT WE'D
SPEND TOGETHER, BUT
NOW WHERE IS THAT
LIFE? WHERE IS THE
MAN I USED TO
KNOW?
WHERE OFF DID YOU GO?

WHERE OFF DID YOU GO?

LIGHTS UP. Williams Street.

LIGHTS UP

MARTHE (off stage)

Christopher! Christopher!

CHRISTOPHER enters, running.

Christopher! Come back here!

CHRISTOPHER

I'm right here!

MARTHE enters.

MARTHE

You little devil!

CHRISTOPHER

Woah, woah! There's no need for hurtful words, Mad Marthe.

MARTHE

Chris, give it back, right now!

CHRISTOPHER

Why, Mad Marthe, I have no idea what you are talking about...

MARTHE

I'm not playing your childish games! You are twenty-four years old, Mr. Faustus. It's time you started behaving like it!

CHRISTOPHER

Am I twenty-four, already? Thank you, Marthe, I had no idea what my own age was.

MARTHE

Start acting like it! Stealing from lonely old widows? Appalling!

CHRISTOPHER

You'll never see it, but I promise, I am a man rather man rather frequently. Hearing prayers. Helping women find their voice: "Oh God! Oh God!"

MARTHE

Christopher!

CHRISTOPHER

Women much younger than yourself, mind you!

MARTHE

What would your parents, think?

CHRISTOPHER

I don't think they give a good Goddamn what I do.

MARTHE

My bottle!

CHRISTOPHER

Bottle?

MARTHE

Chris!

CHRISTOPHER

Hmmm...

CHRISTOPHER opens a guitar case, pulling out items as he lists them.

Let's see here... guitar picks... picks, picks, guitar strings... rubbers... marvelous inventions, don't you think?... A terrible book... Ah! A bottle of bourbon whiskey! How did this get in here?

MARTHE

That doesn't belong to you...

CHRISTOPHER

Well perhaps we can make a deal.

MARTHE

That book... How did you get it?

CHRISTOPHER

(Picks up the book.) This garbage? What is it to you?

MARTHE

In dangerous hands if you don't return it!

CHRISTOPHER

Well, I believe it was my father's.

MARTHE

It was not for him to give away...

CHRISTOPHER

Fortunately, he didn't.

MARTHE

Christopher, you shouldn't have that.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't think you get to decide that.

MARTHE

Do you have any idea what that is.

CHRISTOPHER

My dear, Watson, this is a book of Latin text. Pretty worthless. But I imagine you know *precisely* what it is. (*Beat.*) I'm not the greatest at reading it, but a very strange thing happens when I speak certain words from it...

MARTHE

Chris...

CHRISTOPHER

What is the phrase? "*Veni...*"

MARTHE

Christopher, stop!

CHRISTOPHER

Veni..." the last one's tough...

MARTHE

Stop!

CHRISTOPHER

"*Mephistophile...*"

MEPHOSTOPHILIS enters.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Good evening, young Faustus.

CHRISTOPHER

Good evening, Father Memphis.

MARTHE

Oh no... God save us...

MARTHE exits in a hurry.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Indeed.

CHRISTOPHER

So long, Mad Marthe!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

I don't appreciate your casual calling me.

CHRISTOPHER

I'm sorry.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Call me so carelessly again, and you'll find yourself cover in ape hair. Or perhaps you'd rather a dog's ears and tail? (*Beat.*) Give me that... (*Referring to the book.*)

MEPHASTOPHILIS takes the book from CHRISTOPHER.

This is not a toy! It is a tool. A powerful tool, you will get much use out of soon. (*Seriously:*) Tonight, you mustn't call for me again. Tomorrow. Tomorrow you will begin on your path to greatness.

CHRISTOPHER

The train!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Better hurry.

CHRISTOPHER

Can't wait to get out of this shithole town!

CHRISTOPHER packs the guitar case.

Bourbon whiskey. Yes, you're on a path to greatness.

CHRISTOPHER exits. LIGHTS OUT.

Ambiguous, isolated settings. LIGHTS UP on WAGNER.

WAGNER

The exam will be nothing to worry about. You're all very capable of doing very well. Nothing like the metaphysics course I used to teach. Be very familiar with the Newtonian laws and equations.

LIGHTS UP on MARTHE.

MARTHE

It's happening again.

WAGNER

The first law of motion: Every object in a state of uniform motion tends to remain in that state of motion – *unless* an external force is applied to it.

LIGHTS UP on CHRISTOPHER.

CHRISTOPHER

"You are twenty-four years old, Mr. Faustus. It's time you started behaving like it!"

MARTHE

The visions! Lord, please no more visions...

WAGNER

The second law: The relationship between an object's mass, its acceleration, and the applied force is force equals mass multiplied by acceleration. This is the most powerful of Newton's three laws, because it allows for quantitative calculations of dynamics: how do velocities change when force is applied?

LIGHTS UP on FAUSTUS.

FAUSTUS

For how long, I knew this night would come...

CHRISTOPHER

I'll show them. I'll show everyone.

MARTHE

Who are they coming for? Why can't I see who they are coming for?

WAGNER

The last one is very simple. Newton's third Law of Motion...

LIGHTS UP on MEPHASTOPHILIS.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

For how long I waited for this night to come!

LIGHTS UP on TOWNSPEOPLE.

TOWNSPERSON 1

Alright everyone, you know what we have to do! Sin is not welcome here!

CHRISTOPHER

– Gotta get outta this shithole town!

MARTHE

– Who are they coming for?

FAUSTUS

– I can stop it...

WAGNER

For every action... there is an *equal and opposite reaction*...

LIGHTS OUT. LIGHT cues illustrate separated parties.

MUSIC CUE – DEVIL OUTTA HERE. Vamps in the musical score loop until dialogue in the book reaches an asterisk (*).

CHRISTOPHER

I GOTTA HURRY OR I'LL MISS THE TRAIN.
GOT MY GUITAR AND NO MONEY TO MY NAME.
GOT ONE SHOT TO GARNER ALL MY FOURTUNE AND FAME.
I GOTTA HURRY, GOTTA GET THE DEVIL OUTTA HERE.

MARTHE

SOMETHING HERE IS NOT RIGHT, I CAN FEEL IT.
SOMETHING MISGUIDED AND OF DARKENED SPIRIT.
IT'S NOT SAFE TO STAY HERE ANY LONGER.
TIME TO GET THE DEVIL OUTTA HERE.

TOWNSPERSON 1

SAVE THE TOWN!

TOWNSPERSON 2

SAVE OURSELVES!

TOWNSPERSON 3

SAVE ALL OF THE SOULS WE CAN!

TOWNSPERSON 1

WICKEDNESS, EVIL SIN DOESN'T HAVE A PLACE 'ROUND HERE.

TOWNSPERSON 2

WON'T STAND FOR IT!

TOWNSPERSON 3

WE CAN FIGHT IT!

TOWNSPEOPLE

WE'LL DO ONE HELL OF A JOB!

TOWNSPERSON 1
HOUR'S NIGH!

TOWNSPEOPLE
TIME TO GET THE DEVIL OUT!

MEPHASTOPHILIS
THE WORK IS ALMOST DONE

MEPHASTOPHILIS
FAUSTUS' TIME IS ALMOST OUT.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
SOON WE'LL BOTH GO BACK TO HELL.

MEPHASTOPHILIS
CAN'T BE STOPPED!
SOON IT WILL BE TIME TO GET THE
DEVIL OUTTA HERE.

TOWNSPERSON 2
NOW'S THE TIME!

FAUSTUS
I HAVE TO GET OUT OF THIS.

FAUSTUS
I HAVE A PLAN.

FAUSTUS
CHANGE THE COURSE!

GONNA GET THAT
DEVIL OUTTA HERE.

MUSIC – After the key change is established, previous CHRISTOPHER,
MARTHE, and MEPHASTOPHILIS/FAUSTUS verses are sung
simultaneously, twice through, adding TOWNSPERSON 1/2/3 on the
repeat.

ALL
DEVIL OUTTA HERE!

The crossroad. FAUSTUS enters to prepare the space and conjure.

FAUSTUS

Midnight... Jehovah's name is within the circle... Orion leaps from the Antarctic.

CHRISTOPHER enters.

CHRISTOPHER

Dad?

FAUSTUS

Chris!

CHRISTOPHER

What are you doing out here?

FAUSTUS

What are you doing here?

CHRISTOPHER

Headed to the train station.

FAUSTUS

At this hour? It's almost midnight...

CHRISTOPHER

Gotta be in Chicago early tomorrow morning.

FAUSTUS

What are you doing in Chicago?

CHRISTOPHER

Not that you care. Gonna be on the radio.

FAUSTUS

The radio?

CHRISTOPHER

Gonna catch my big break!

FAUSTUS

Jesus, Chris... when are you going to grow up and stop this music nonsense?

CHRISTOPHER

Grow up?

FAUSTUS

When are you going to get serious about your life?

CHRISTOPHER

This is my life! You don't understand at all, do you?

FAUSTUS

I understand perfectly. You have no interest in earning a living, making yourself a name.

CHRISTOPHER

Like "Doctor?"

FAUSTUS

That's not what I mean –

CHRISTOPHER

Or "professor," or "lawyer," or "reverend?"

FAUSTUS

Make your way in the world. Find a woman who loves you. Provide for a family.

CHRISTOPHER

Like you ever did? (*Beat.*) What's your excuse?

FAUSTUS

(*Pause.*) Go. (*Nothing.*) I said go!

CHRISTOPHER

No excuse?

FAUSTUS

I'm trying to help you, Chris. I won't be around forever, you know that?

CHRISTOPHER

Looking forward to it.

FAUSTUS

(*Pause.*) *Aspire to be more, Chris.*

CHRISTOPHER starts to exit, stops, turns back.

CHRISTOPHER

I will be a mighty god.

CHRISTOPHER exits. A moment. FAUSTUS returns to summoning position. FAUSTUS searches his pockets.

FAUSTUS

Where...?

MEPHASTOPHILIS appears, holding the book.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Looking for something?

FAUSTUS

God! You scared me.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Can't imagine why.

FAUSTUS rises.

Real cute, Faustus.

FAUSTUS

Cute?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Think you're the first who thought he could send me to hell before collection?

FAUSTUS

I don't know what you're talking about.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

It written on your soul, Faustus! Your soul doesn't lie. (*Beat.*) It is not I you need to fear. I'm not collecting on your soul. That's a job for other demons. I am a servant and a deal maker. And it looks like I'll be on this Earth for a good while longer still.

FAUSTUS

Where did you get that? (*Referring to the book.*)

MEPHASTOPHILIS

You should know. An ambitious... misguided young man.

FAUSTUS

(*Beat.*) Christopher?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

More like you than you know.

FAUSTUS

Stay away from him, devil!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

You've got it backwards, Doctor. It's he who will not stay away. But we will do great things together, him and me.

FAUSTUS

No!

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Relax! His fate will not be the same as yours. Can't claim a soul from a soulless being.

FAUSTUS

Soulless? What do mean?

MEPHASTOPHILIS

Oh, you must've known, Faustus. (*Beat.*) Twenty-four years ago, your dear Gretchen was not long for this Earth – her soul was not long for this Earth. But you “saved” her. Saved her from the kingdom of heaven... But the universe likes balance. When Christopher was born, an extra life came into the world, but not an extra soul.

FAUSTUS

You lie.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

I don't do tricks. Withal, Faustus, I'm honest. (*Beat.*) Christopher will do great, brilliant things.

MARTHE screams and a violent mob is heard offstage.

FAUSTUS

What's that?

Distant fire emerges.

TOWNSPERSON 2 (offstage)

Witch! You'll burn in hell!

MARTHE (offstage)

Please!

TOWNSPERSON 3 (offstage)

Renounce this magic, turn to God!

MARTHE (offstage)

Lord, save me!

Fire grows.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

(*Beat.*) Yes, a little fear goes a long way.

The four quarters of a church bell are heard.

MUSIC CUE – GOIN' DOWN TO THE VALLEY. The asterisks (*), indicate a chime of the church bell following the lyric.

MEPHASTOPHILIS

BOSS MAN IS READY TO COLLECT,
YOU'RE GOIN' DOWN TO THE VALLEY. *
TIRED SOUL YOU'LL NEVER HAVE PEACE,
NOW YOU'RE GOIN' DOWN TO THE VALLEY. *
OH SOUL, SWEET SOUL,
YOU'RE GOIN' DOWN TO THE VALLEY. *

FAUSTUS
Lord, I know that I have broken your laws
and my sins have separated me from you.
I am sorry. I know you hear my prayers.
Save me from this sinful life. Bring me to
You. Please forgive me. Send your Holy
Spirit to help me. Save me. (*Beat.*) How
did I get here...?

MEPHASTOPHILIS
WOAH
WOAH *

WOAH

WOAH *

MEPHASTOPHILIS
HOUNDS ARE A-COMIN' FOR TO RIP YA' TA SHREDS,
THEY'RE STIRRIN' DOWN IN THE VALLEY. *
BLOOD WILL CHAR AND BONES WILL TWIST,
YET YOU'LL NEVER KNOW RELEIF IN THE VALLEY. *
OH SOUL, SWEET SOUL, TIRED SOUL,
YOU'RE GOIN' DOWN... *

MUSIC CUE – THE REAPING. What could be interpreted as the reaping
of FAUSTUS' soul occurs; the final four chimes, making twelve, are heard,
as well as:

FAUSTUS
Ugly hell! Gape not! Lucifer, don't come! I'll burn my books – ah, Mephistophilis!

The stage calms, FAUSTUS and all, have disappeared.
MUSIC CUE – FAUSTUS THEME (BREIF)

BLACK OUT.

END OF SHOW.