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978-1-316-61254-5 — The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus

Christopher Marlowe , Edited by A. H. Sleight

Excerpt

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THE TRAGICAL HISTORY
OF
DOCTOR FAUSTUS

Dramatis Personæ

THE POPE.
 CARDINAL OF LORRAINE.
 THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY.
 DUKE OF VANHOLT.
 FAUSTUS.
 VALDES, } *friends to* FAUSTUS.
 CORNELIUS, }
 WAGNER, *servant to* FAUSTUS.
 Clown.
 ROBIN.
 RALPH.
 Vintner.
 Horse-courser.
 A Knight.
 An Old Man.
 Scholars, Friars, and Attendants.
 DUCHESS OF VANHOLT.
 LUCIFER.
 BELZEBUB.
 MEPHISTOPHILIS.
 Good Angel.
 Evil Angel.
 The Seven Deadly Sins.
 Devils.
 Spirits in the shapes of ALEXANDER THE GREAT,
 of his Paramour, and of HELEN.
 Chorus.

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Enter Chorus.

Chor. Not marching now in fields of Thrasimene,
 Where Mars did mate the Carthaginians;
 Nor sporting in the dalliance of love;
 In courts of kings where state is overturn'd;
 Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds, 5
 Intends our Muse to vaunt his heavenly verse:
 Only this, gentlemen,—we must perform
 The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad:
 To patient judgments we appeal our plaud,
 And speak for Faustus in his infancy. 10
 Now is he born, his parents base of stock,
 In Germany, within a town call'd Rhodes:
 Of riper years, to Wittenberg he went,
 Whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him up.
 So soon he profits in divinity, 15
 The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd,
 That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's name,
 Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes
 In heavenly matters of theology;
 Till swoln with cunning, of a self-conceit, 20
 His waxen wings did mount above his reach,
 And, melting, heavens conspir'd his overthrow;
 For, falling to a devilish exercise,
 And glutted now with learning's golden gifts,
 He surfeits upon cursèd necromancy; 25
 Nothing so sweet as magic is to him,
 Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss:
 And this the man that in his study sits. [*Exit.*]

SCENE I. FAUSTUS'S Study.

FAUSTUS *discovered.*

- Faust.* Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin
 To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess:
 Having commenc'd, be a divine in show,
 Yet level at the end of every art,
 5 And live and die in Aristotle's works.
 Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me!
Bene disserere est finis logices.
 Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end?
 Affords this art no greater miracle?
 10 Then read no more; thou hast attain'd that end.
 A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit:
 Bid Economy farewell, and Galen come,
 Seeing, *Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus:*
 Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold,
 15 And be eterniz'd for some wondrous cure!
Summum bonum medicinae sanitas:
 The end of physic is our body's health.
 Why, Faustus, hast thou not attain'd that end?
 Is not thy common talk found aphorisms?
 20 Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,
 Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,
 And thousand desp'rate maladies been eas'd?
 Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.
 Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
 25 Or, being dead, raise them to life again,
 Then this profession were to be esteem'd.
 Physic, farewell! Where is Justinian? [Reads.
*Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem, alter valorem
 rei, etc.*
 30 A pretty case of paltry legacies! [Reads.
Exhaereditare filium non potest pater, nisi, etc.
 Such is the subject of the institute,
 And universal body of the law:
 His study fits a mercenary drudge,
 35 Who aims at nothing but external trash;

SCENE I

5

Too servile and illiberal for me.
 When all is done, divinity is best:
 Jerome's Bible, Faustus; view it well. [Reads.
Stipendium peccati mors est. Hal Stipendium, etc.
 The reward of sin is death: that's hard. [Reads. 40
Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas:
 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and
 there's no truth in us.
 Why, then, belike we must sin, and so consequently die:
 Ay, we must die an everlasting death. 45
 What doctrine call you this, *Che sera, sera*:
 What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!
 These metaphysics of magicians,
 And necromantic books are heavenly;
 Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters; 50
 Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
 O, what a world of profit and delight,
 Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,
 Is promis'd to the studious artizan!
 All things that move between the quiet poles 55
 Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
 Are but obey'd in their several provinces,
 Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;
 But his dominion that exceeds in this,
 Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man; 60
 A sound magician is a mighty god:
 Here, Faustus, tire thy brains to gain a deity!

Enter WAGNER.

Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends,
 The German Valdes and Cornelius;
 Request them earnestly to visit me. 65
Wag. I will, sir. [Exit.

Faust. Their conference will be a greater help to me
 Than all my labours, plod I ne'er so fast.

Enter Good Angel and Evil Angel.

G. Ang. O, Faustus, lay that damnèd book aside,
 And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul, 70

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And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head!
Read, read the Scriptures:—that is blasphemy.

E. Ang. Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
Wherein all Nature's treasure is contain'd:
75 Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements.

[*Exeunt* Angels.]

Faust. How am I glutted with conceit of this!
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,
Resolve me of all ambiguities,
80 Perform what desp'rate enterprise I will?
I'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the new-found world
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;
85 I'll have them read me strange philosophy,
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;
I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,
And make swift Rhine circle fair Wittenberg;
I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,
90 Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;
I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,
And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,
And reign sole king of all our provinces;
Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,
95 Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge,
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

Enter VALDES and CORNELIUS.

Come, German Valdes, and Cornelius,
And make me blest with your sage conference!
Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius,
100 Know that your words have won me at the last
To practise magic and concealèd arts:
Yet not your words only, but mine own fantasy,
That will receive no object; for my head
But ruminates on necromantic skill.
105 Philosophy is odious and obscure;
Both law and physic are for petty wits;

SCENE I

7

Divinity is basest of the three,
 Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile:
 'Tis magic, magic, that hath ravish'd me.
 Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt; 110
 And I, that have with concise syllogisms
 Gravell'd the pastors of the German church,
 And made the flowering pride of Wittenberg
 Swarm to my problems, as the infernal spirits
 On sweet Musaeus when he came to hell, 115
 Will be as cunning as Agrippa was,
 Whose shadows made all Europe honour him.
Vald. Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience,
 Shall make all nations to canonize us.
 As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords, 120
 So shall the subjects of every element
 Be always serviceable to us three;
 Like lions shall they guard us when we please;
 Like Almain rutters with their horsemen's staves,
 Or Lapland giants, trotting by our sides; 125
 Sometimes like women, or unwedded maids,
 Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
 Than have the white breasts of the queen of love:
 From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,
 And from America the golden fleece 130
 That yearly stuffs old Philip's treasury;
 If learned Faustus will be resolute.
Faust. Valdes, as resolute am I in this
 As thou to live: therefore object it not.
Corn. The miracles that magic will perform 135
 Will make thee vow to study nothing else.
 He that is grounded in astrology,
 Enrich'd with tongues, well seen in minerals,
 Hath all the principles magic doth require:
 Then doubt not, Faustus, but to be renown'd, 140
 And more frequented for this mystery
 Than heretofore the Delphian oracle.
 The spirits tell me they can dry the sea,
 And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks,
 Ay, all the wealth that our forefathers hid 145

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Within the massy entrails of the earth:
 Then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three want?

Faust. Nothing, Cornelius. O, this cheers my soul!
 Come, shew me some demonstrations magical,
 150 That I may conjure in some lusty grove,
 And have these joys in full possession.

Vald. Then haste thee to some solitary grove,
 And bear wise Bacon's and Albanus' works,
 The Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament;
 155 And whatsoever else is requisite
 We will inform thee ere our conference cease.

Corn. Valdes, first let him know the words of art
 And then, all other ceremonies learn'd,
 Faustus may try his cunning by himself.

160 *Vald.* First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments,
 And then wilt thou be perfecter than I.

Faust. Then come and dine with me, and, after meat,
 We'll canvass every quiddity thereof;
 For, ere I sleep, I'll try what I can do:
 165 This night I'll conjure, though I die therefore. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. Before FAUSTUS'S House.

Enter Two Scholars.

First Schol. I wonder what's become of Faustus, that
 was wont to make our schools ring with *sic probo*.

Sec. Schol. That shall we know; for see, here comes
 his boy.

Enter WAGNER.

5 *First Schol.* How now, sirrah! where's thy master?
Wag. God in heaven knows.

Sec. Schol. Why, dost not thou know?

Wag. Yes, I know; but that follows not.

First Schol. Go to, sirrah! leave your jesting, and tell
 10 us where he is.

Wag. That follows not necessary by force of argu-
 ment, that you, being licentiate, should stand upon 't:
 therefore acknowledge your error, and be attentive.

SCENE II

9

Sec. Schol. Why, didst thou not say thou knewest?

Wag. Have you any witness on 't? 15

First Schol. Yes, sirrah, I heard you.

Wag. Ask my fellow if I be a thief.

Sec. Schol. Well, you will not tell us?

Wag. Yes, sir, I will tell you: yet, if you were not dunces, you would never ask me such a question; for is not he *corpus naturale*? and is not that *mobile*? then wherefore should you ask me such a question? But that I am by nature phlegmatic, slow to wrath, it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged the next 25 sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a precisian, and begin to speak thus:— Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak, it would inform your worships: and so, the Lord bless 30 you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren! *[Exit.]*

First Schol. Nay, then, I fear he is fallen into that damned art for which they two are infamous through the world. 35

Sec. Schol. Were he a stranger, and not allied to me, yet should I grieve for him. But, come, let us go and inform the Rector, and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim him.

First Schol. O, but I fear me nothing can reclaim him! 40

Sec. Schol. Yet let us try what we can do. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III. A Grove.

Enter FAUSTUS to conjure.

Faust. Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,
 Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,
 Leaps from th' antarctic world unto the sky,
 And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath,
 Faustus, begin thine incantations, 5
 And try if devils will obey thy hest,

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10 DOCTOR FAUSTUS

Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.
 Within this circle is Jehovah's name,
 Forward and backward anagrammatiz'd,
 10 The breviated names of holy saints,
 Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,
 And characters of signs and erring stars,
 By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise:
 Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,
 15 And try the uttermost magic can perform.—
*Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex
 Jehovae! Ignei, aërii, aquatani spiritus, salvete! Orientis
 princeps Belzebug, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon,
 propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephistophilis,
 20 quod tumeraris: per Jehovam, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam
 quam nunc spargo, signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota
 nostra, ipse nunc surgat nobis dicatus Mephistophilis!*

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;
 25 Thou art too ugly to attend on me:
 Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;
 That holy shape becomes a devil best.
 [*Exit* MEPHISTOPHILIS.
 I see there's virtue in my heavenly words:
 Who would not be proficient in this art?
 30 How pliant is this Mephistophilis,
 Full of obedience and humility!
 Such is the force of magic and my spells:
 No, Faustus, thou art conjurer laureat,
 That canst command great Mephistophilis:
 35 *Quin regis Mephistophilis fratris imagine.*

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *like a Franciscan friar.*

Meph. Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?
Faust. I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,
 To do whatever Faustus shall command,
 Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,
 40 Or th' ocean to overwhelm the world.