

# **The Comical History of Doctor Faustus**

Frank Morlock

# Table of Contents

**The Comical History of Doctor Faustus.....1**  
Frank Morlock.....1  
Act I.....1  
Act II.....4  
Act III.....15  
Act IV.....24  
Act V.....25  
Act IV.....31  
Act V.....33

# The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

Frank Morlock

- [Act I.](#)
- [Act II.](#)
- [Act III.](#)
- [Act IV.](#)
- [Act V.](#)

Etext by Dagny

This Etext is for private use only. No republication for profit in print or other media may be made without the express consent of the Copyright Holder. The Copyright Holder is especially concerned about performance rights in any media on stage, cinema, or television, or audio or any other media, including readings for which an entrance fee or the like is charge. Permissions should be addressed to: Frank Morlock, 6006 Greenbelt Rd, #312, Greenbelt, MD 20770, USA or frankmorlock@msn.com. Other works by this author may be found at

<http://www.cadytech.com/dumas/personnage.asp?key=130>

THE COMICAL HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS  
Based on an anonymous French play

CHARACTERS:

Faustus  
The Devil  
The Devil's wife  
The Scullery Maid (Helen)  
The Waiting Maid  
The Student  
The Police Man  
The Devil's daughter

Four men, four women

TIME: The 15th Century

## Act I.

Dr. Faustus is seated before his table in his study. Faustus is dressed in a long black robe inscribed with magic symbols. On his desk there is a toad sleeping in the midst of a heap of books, horns, alembics, parchments, and magic wands. Near the open window a kettle is boiling over a small lighted furnace. Stewing in the kettle are some toads, some rats, and a ragout of disgusting vegetation. It happens that tonight the only light is from the weak furnace.

**Faustus** (wearily)

I don't understand why I seem to get weaker with each passing day. I can hardly lift an arm or a leg. I can't run, I can't shout. I am only comfortable while I am seated. I wonder if it's because I'm more than a hundred years old? No! That can't possibly be it. A hundred years is a reasonable age. (pondering) A hundred years. Methuselah was

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

a gay blade at that age. Why not Faustus? If I dye my hair a bit, I can at least be more presentable. But this stuff takes a long time to work. I didn't put enough toads in it. For a glossy black, which is what I need, there has to be plenty of toad. Come, let us see how my little brew is doing. (rising pitifully and waddling to the kettle) Ah, ah what an effort! That's not to say I've become old so soon. To the contrary (watching the kettle) There, there. The mixture is very black. (dipping in and putting some on his beard) Put a little on the end of my beard as a test. What, what? The color isn't taking. Bah! Everything's difficult as you get older. Never mind, probably just not enough toads. People believe in my magical powers and I can't even brew up a hair dye. What an Alchemist. So, so, everything has to be done over again. (grabs the toad on his desk and drops it in the pot) Too bad, I liked that toad. Made a good pet. (stirring the kettle, then dipping in) Let's have another go at it. Damn! My beard is just as grey as before. The situation is clearly desperate. The Devil alone could restore my vigor and youth. Yes, the Devil alone. (laughing ironically) But behold, for the last eighty years I've told the world that the Devil is my particular friend, and that he obeys my every command. The whole gullible world believes me. Unfortunately, there's not a word of truth in it. If I'd spoken the truth told everyone that my work was based on my knowledge of science who would have believed me? What a shame, what a shame not to have the Devil at my beck and call.

(Thunder, wind, lightning.)

(The Devil enters.)

### **Faustus**

But who is this who comes in by the window?

### **Devil**

Dear Doctor Faustus, you wanted to see me?

### **Faustus** (alarmed)

Who the Devil are you?

### **Devil**

The Devil, who else?

### **Faustus**

The Devil? Get out! (aside) I am very frightened. (aloud) You look frightful and you smell as if you'd been scorched.

### **Devil** (annoyed)

A nice way you have of greeting me! You, a man who has pretended for nearly eighty years to be one of my intimates.

### **Faustus**

You're some student joker bent on mocking me! Get out or I'll call the police.

### **Devil**

At this hour the police are asleep, as good citizens should be. Don't be a child.

### **Faustus**

Oh at my age!

### **Devil**

Exactly at your age it's perfectly natural for you to be a child. But try, at least make an effort, to be a bit rational! You have lived your life as a sorcerer and boasted of being my dear friend. Now all your lies are about to become

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

reality. Evasion and cowardice are unworthy of both of us. Don't spoil our relationship right from the start.

### **Faustus**

What do you want from me?

### **Devil**

A simple Yes or No answer to a question. NO evasions!

### **Faustus**

Put your question

### **Devil**

Do you want to be young again? Yes or No?

### **Faustus**

I am trembling. Give me time to pull myself together.

### **Devil**

I should be delighted to accommodate you, but I really haven't any time to lose. I came to Earth unbeknownst to my wife. You pick a fine time, I must say, to come to your crisis. So I came immediately, and I have hardly five minutes. Reply quickly. If it is Yes, I will return to Hell, ask my wife for permission to return, and I will be back immediately. It's Yes?

### **Faustus**

Yeahhh that is to say

### **Devil**

That is to say: Yes! We have a contract. Very well then, you will become young again. No more age, no more infirmities. You sell me your soul but I don't get it for a hundred years.

### **Faustus**

Only a hundred years?

### **Devil**

That's a long time. Do you want to live forever? Come on, sign right here.

### **Faustus** (signing)

What an adventure! What an adventure!

### **Devil**

It's a great adventure! The best deal you ever made. You won't regret it a bit. Satisfaction guaranteed. Bye bye. Till we meet again. Arriverderci, a bientot.

(Wind and thunder. The Devil leaves as precipitously as he came.)

### **Faustus**

He's gone! What a funny Devil who cannot do anything without his wife's permission. Is this the power which the whole world dreads? Bah! I was probably dreaming. I think my head is turning. Still, I feel younger by the minute. But who would believe the Devil could be so stupid? I hope I won't live to regret this. What an adventure!

CURTAIN

The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Act II.**

The Gates of Hell. The Devil is knocking at the gate.

**Devil** (anguished)

What's happened? Impossible to open. Hell and Damnation! My wife must have realized I was gone! Now she's shut the gate with a double lock! She's probably taking an evil pleasure in watching me freeze out here! (knocking again) It's me! (teeth chattering) I AM NOT USED TO THE COLD! I'm going to catch my death a chest cold for sure. Earth is never warm enough. How humans stand that ice box I just don't know. No wonder they all wind up being damned. They probably do it just to escape the cold. At least we keep a good fire going down here, nobody has ever complained about that in my little hotel. (teeth chattering) IT'S ME! I love my wife with all my heart but what a nasty disposition. (knocking again)

**Wife** (from within)

Who is it?

**Devil** (coaxingly)

It's mee.

**Wife** (sweetly)

What do you mean mee? That doesn't mean anything. (indignantly) Me, indeed!

**Devil**

It's me, your adored husband.

**Wife**

Adored adored? Where have you been, you shameless old goat?

**Devil**

Shameless old goat! There isn't anyone in Hell more virtuous than I am!

**Wife**

You haven't answered my question snake in the grass!

**Devil**

Snake! What a slander just because once, in the Garden of Eden, I was obliged to assume that form you never let me forget it. That was years ago

**Wife**

Stop prevaricating and tell me where you've been.

**Devil**

Quit simply, on Earth.

**Wife**

For how long have you been gone without my permission?

**Devil**

Only five minutes

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Wife**

Five minutes too long!

**Devil**

A most imperative matter

**Wife**

I know your imperative matters! What was the pretty little sinner's name? I know your tricks. There's no one more clumsy than you. No wonder you lost the battle for Heaven. Even I can see through you.

**Devil**

If you say so! Please open for me. If you don't, I am going to faint.

(The gate opens and the Devil's wife, a slatternly charwoman appears.)

**Wife**

All right. I'll let you in. But only because I would have to take care of you if you fall sick.

**Devil**

Ah, thanks, my sweet, adored help mate. (trying to embrace her)

**Wife**

Hands off! Don't come near me till you explain where you've been.

**Devil**

With an old gentleman.

**Wife**

That's no explanation. And no excuse.

**Devil**

Dearie, my clients are few and far between. We're living in an aggravating, atheistical age. No one even thinks of selling his soul to the Devil anymore. I need some human fuel for my fires. So when an opportunity came to ensnare an old impostor who has been pretending to be one of my company

**Wife**

What's all this? Who is this impostor?

**Devil**

It's the famous Doctor Faustus.

**Wife**

Never heard of him.

**Devil**

What? He's an international celebrity.

**Wife**

I read all the gossip columns. If there was such a man I'd have heard of him. What does he do?

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Devil**

But

**Wife**

Just tell me what he does if he's so famous?

**Devil**

He's a magician. An alchemist.

**Wife**

Go ahead, try to fool me. You'll never pull the wool over my eyes with such nonsense.

**Devil**

You're not being fair!

**Wife**

Not being fair! That's what you think you nasty old goat!

**Devil**

Now, just a minute!

**Wife**

When I think that you gave up a nice job as an angel in Heaven and that from jealousy

**Devil**

The pay wasn't that good, and it had no visibility!

**Wife**

you preferred to be a fallen angel.

**Devil**

At least I have a leading role. It's my first starring role. The job has high visibility. It's got a future.

**Wife**

And me I thought I'd lord it over all my friends, marrying the most feared creature in the world. And look what I got. (passionately) I wish I'd never married an imbecile like you.

**Devil** (his feelings hurt, almost sobbing)

Oh

**Wife**

If mankind knew what you are really like, they'd be so scared, ha!

**Devil**

But they don't, so everything's all right.

**Wife**

But I know the truth, and I am the most unhappy woman in the world!

**Devil**

Listen, my sweet better half

Act II.



## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Wife**

Your sweet better half is broken hearted.

**Devil**

Let's go in. There, that's better. What a nice warmth, here. Everything is going to be just fine. I love it here.

**Wife** (sobbing)

If you meant that, you wouldn't try to leave.

**Devil**

But I only leave on business to scout some new recruits. How else can we keep the home fires burning?

**Wife**

She's probably very pretty your recruit.

**Devil**

It's a man, I tell you.

**Wife**

What about Lucrezia Borgia?

**Devil**

What about her?

**Wife**

You really liked recruiting her, didn't you?

**Devil**

I had to spend a lot of time with her, I admit. But it was all business. Now, be a good girl and pack my trunk.

**Wife**

What you intend to go again?

**Devil**

To bring back Doctor Faustus.

**Wife**

Since when can't they come alone? They have to be escorted?

**Devil**

What do you want? You have to observe the conventions with the rich and famous. I don't want a bad reputation, you know.

**Wife**

You're full of it!

**Devil**

I swear as I am a fallen angel that I am sincere.

**Wife**

A pretty fallen angel. Used horns, a goat's nose, an ass's ears, body as hairless as a chihuahua, and a threadbare

Act II.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

shirt under his coat, and the tail of a sick lion. Ah, why do I waste my time worrying about your escapades? What old wife would want you. Truly, you haven't the least to recommend you in the way of looks.

**Devil** (nettled)

I beg to differ. I have the beauty of Satan.

**Wife**

Conceited ass! One more word and I won't pack your trunk and what's more, I'll shut you outside in the cold! With a double lock!

**Devil**

I'll shut up, I'll shut up, I'll shut up.

**Wife**

Good. Shut up.

**Devil**

I am shut up.

**Wife**

Enough.

**Devil**

Agreed.

**Wife** (exasperated)

Then, shut up.

**Devil**

Right.

**Wife**

Stupid man.

**Devil**

Whatever you say.

**Wife**

Will you shut up?

**Devil**

Yes, to obey you.

**Wife**

Not a word.

**Devil**

Not a syllable.

**Wife**

Damn!

Act II.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Devil**

Damn, indeed. Double damn.

**Wife**

I'm having trouble making myself understood.

**Devil**

Oh, I understand you well enough.

**Wife**

Enough.

**Devil**

What were we talking about?

**Wife**

You infuriate me.

**Devil**

Me! I haven't said a word.

**Wife**

Don't open your mouth.

**Devil**

Right, I'll keep it closed.

**Wife**

CLOSE IT, BUT DON'T SAY IT!

**Devil**

Hmmm.

**Wife**

Ah, did you finally understand? Not a minute too soon. Wait while I get your trunk. But I warn you, if you don't bring back your celebrity your famous Dr. Faustus in twenty-four hours, I am going to lock the door and let you croak of cold.

(She goes in and shuts the gate in his face.)

**Devil**

Ah, what a situation! She wants me to bring him back in twenty-four hours but the contract says he has a hundred years. What a fuss she'll put up if she finds out. I tremble just thinking about it. Better not tell her until after I'm well on my way. I'll write her a letter but not before I get to Earth. Bah! It's no fun being the Devil. I really love my wife, and I never tire of saying so But she complicates my life.

(The Gates open and the Devil's daughter appears. A pretty little she devil of fifteen.)

**Daughter**

My Papa my lovely, darling Papa.

Act II.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Devil**

Here's my little girl! My little biddy–bitch.

**Daughter**

My Papa, my darling little Papa. Mama told me you're going on a trip. Where are you going, my darling little Papa? Tell your daughter who loves you.

**Devil**

I'm going to Frankfurt, then to Mainz, then to Strasbourg.

**Daughter**

Are you going to bring back some presents for you know who?

**Devil** (absently)

Naturally, naturally.

**Daughter**

You could sound more enthusiastic than that!

**Devil** (raising his voice)

Naturally, naturally.

**Daughter** (bursting into tears)

How loud you shout. You seem so angry.

**Devil**

No, no I'm not angry at all.

**Daughter** (tapping her foot)

Yes, you are angry. You are not nice to me.

**Devil**

Shut up. If your mother hears, I'll be in for another scene.

**Daughter** (crying I'll shut up.

**Devil**

Enough

**Daughter**

All right.

**Devil**

Well, shut up then.

**Daughter**

Yes, Papa.

**Devil**

God, you can be so stupid

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Daughter**

Agreed.

**Devil**

Are you going to shut up?

**Daughter**

Yes, to obey you.

**Devil**

Not another word.

**Daughter**

Not a syllable.

**Devil**

Damn!

**Daughter**

Double damn!

**Devil**

I'm having trouble making myself understood.

**Daughter**

Oh, I understand you perfectly.

**Devil**

Enough. You infuriate me.

**Daughter**

But, I didn't say one word.

**Devil**

Don't open your mouth.

**Daughter**

All right I'll shut up.

**Devil**

Shut it, but don't say it. Good. (silence) Now, tell me what you would like. (silence) Answer me. (silence)  
ANSWER ME!

**Daughter**

Hmmm.

**Devil**

I'm tired of all this. Now, what were we talking about? (silence) Why do you stay silent? (silence) TALK! (aside)  
I could easily strangle her!

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Daughter** (in a monotone)

I am being quiet to obey you.

**Devil**

Your mother will be coming back soon. I don't want any more of her scenes. I ask you politely tell me what we were talking about. It's simple, and I don't see why you have to complicate things.

**Daughter**

Papa let me hug you. (throwing herself on him, hugging him) Always hug your Daddy when you ask him to do something.

**Devil**

Easy, easy. You'll tear my shoulders off with your claws.

**Daughter**

You'll get me what I ask you to?

**Devil**

Yes, yes. You know I always do. I am a martyr to your affection. My back is all scratched up.

**Daughter**

I will let you go. But listen closely (hurriedly) I want a pretty white gown with Hungarian stitching, and yellow and rose furbelows for when I get married.

**Devil** (writing in a notebook)

White gown. How do you spell furbelows? Never mind, I know.

**Daughter**

I want a silk dress purple, with white bells on the sleeves for going to balls. I want a dress for wearing everyday red with black braids and stripes made of wool. I want feathers for my hats, slippers for my feet, stockings, corsets, and unmentionables.

**Devil**

But

**Daughter**

That's it for clothes. I want a crystal service from Bohemia and one of porcelain from Saxony. And a French one with country scenes.

**Devil**

I

**Daughter**

That's it for china. I want two armchairs. Modern style with arms made to look like swans. I want a table and a sofa. You pick them out. I want a bed shaped like a dragon ship

**Devil**

But

**Daughter**

That's it for furniture. I want a lot of tasty sauces from Frankfurt, some sauerkraut from Strasbourg because I

Act II.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

love it! I want some pate and salad dressing. I want Munster cheese and some cordials.

**Devil**

I

**Daughter**

That's it for food. I want a harp, a flute, and a hunting horn to give concerts. I don't know how to play these instruments, but I intend to learn. I want a game of checkers and chess, I forgot to tell you that I also want an armoire with glass inlay

**Devil**

I (aside) This will take a century to fill. (aloud) You tire me out.

**Daughter**

Oh, don't refuse. It's so simple for you to get all that. Oh, Papa, I will hug you so, so tight! (hugging him again)

(The Devil screams.)

**Devil**

Whoa! Whoa! I'll bring you everything you ask. Just let me go.

**Daughter** (releasing him)

I almost forgot something important. The most important thing, in fact. I want a husband.

**Devil**

A husband! You're too young.

**Daughter** (crying)

I want one.

**Devil**

But getting married is a serious business.

**Daughter**

I don't want to marry any of the fiends around here.

**Devil**

I know you're too good for them. But I've never even thought about it.

**Daughter**

I know you're returning with the famous Doctor Faustus, he's a celebrity and you've made him young and good looking. I'll go ape over him. I am bored in Hell. Hell is only a rotisserie for unscrupulous persons. There's nothing to do here but attend barbecues. Bring this Doctor Faustus. Pull him along by his ears. I want him at all costs.

**Devil**

But

**Daughter**

Don't interrupt me! If you can't pull him here by the ears push him in front of you and kick him in the ass!

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Devil**

But

**Daughter**

Don't interrupt me or I'll hug you.

**Devil**

Oh, all right. Just don't do that. Do you really want him so much?

**Daughter**

Oh, yes, oh, yes.

**Devil**

Then you shall have him. Did I ever prevent you from having something you wanted?

**Daughter**

Oh, Daddy, Daddy.

(Enter the Devil's wife.)

**Wife** (sourly)

Your trunk is ready. Go to the Devil and good riddance.

**Devil**

Thanks with all my heart, sweetie.

**Daughter** (kissing him)

There. Don't forget the gifts.

**Devil**

Rest assured, baby, rest assured.

**Daughter**

Write it down so you won't forget.

**Devil**

I won't forget a thing! Goodbye, my adored spouse.

**Wife**

Goodbye, goodbye. I won't keep you.

**Devil**

Goodbye, my sweet daughter.

**Daughter**

Bye, Papa, bye. I won't keep you any longer. I can't wait for you to come back with all my presents especially my husband.

**Wife**

Say what! You'd better remember to bring some gifts for me, too.



## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

### **Devil**

That goes without saying.

### **Daughter**

See you soon, Papa.

### **Wife**

Oh no sentiment. It's not worth the trouble. (slamming the door in his face)

CURTAIN

## **Act III.**

The kitchen of an Inn in Germany. Faustus, young again, is pursuing Helen, a slatternly cook.

### **Faustus**

Madame, you please me strangely.

### **Helen** (escaping him)

Thank you. The Herr Doktor is very kind.

### **Faustus** (annoyed by her running away)

Am I not a pleasing person?

### **Helen**

My word the Herr Doktor isn't hard to look at.

### **Faustus**

Your words heat my blood. I am become lyrical:

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships

And toppled the topless towers of Ilium? Fair Helen, angel of sweetness, (kneeling) more beautiful than Venus, come live with me and be my love.

### **Helen** (suspicious, jealous)

Who is this Venus?

### **Faustus**

A goddess, dear angel.

### **Helen** (very suspicious)

This goddess is a woman?

### **Faustus**

No. (aside) I don't understand why I am never attracted to an educated woman. It's so hard to make love to a scullery maid. You have to explain the simplest things.

### **Helen** (puzzled)

What is she then?

### **Faustus**

Act III.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

I will explain to you in the quiet of my room. With silent gestures.

### **Helen**

How are you going to explain to me if you are being quiet? (aside) These savants are fools. Why do they always love me? You'd think they'd want an educated woman as strange as they are. (notching up her stocking) What do they want from me?

### **Faustus**

Dear angel, don't ask so many questions. You will know everything.

(Enter Marguerite, the waitress.)

### **Marguerite**

Three slices of veal and two slices of beef from the students.

### **Faustus**

Why won't they ever leave me alone?

### **Marguerite**

And a dozen sauces compliments of the students.

### **Faustus** (aside, ogling her)

She doesn't look bad at all. (putting his arm around her) Marguerite, for me the happy life.

### **Marguerite**

What! What? Does the Herr Doktor pinch my bottom? (slapping him and boxing his ear) How dare you?

### **Faustus** (aside)

Such are the inconveniences of youth. The ladies never slapped me when I was old. Now, I get no respect.

(Marguerite carries out the plates in a huff.)

### **Helen**

The Herr Doktor loves cheap sluts from what I can see.

### **Faustus**

Only to excite your jealousy, dear angel.

### **Helen**

To excite the inclinations of the Herr Doktor!

### **Faustus**

Don't scold me, sweet thing. Time passes so quickly that we must not wait. Be the companion of my life. Come into the ship of my love, fair **Helena**, and we will sail on the wine dark seas of happiness.

### **Helen**

The way you talk! I'll never leave the country. I don't like to travel by boat. I get seasick.

### **Faustus**

Your refusal agitates me unspeakably. Your refusal exasperates my love. You turn my head to your rightside. (throwing himself on her) I will rape you just as Paris did those many thousand years ago.

Act III.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Helen** (braining Faustus with a skillet)

Ah, Herr Doktor, leave my rightside and my backside alone. I hope I didn't hurt you.

(Enter Marguerite.)

**Marguerite**

A slice of pork and two slices of goose from the students.

**Faustus**

Why am I persecuted by those infernal students?

**Marguerite**

The Herr Doktor likes a dirty frying pan from what I see.

**Helen** (angrily)

A frying pan is better than a cheap dishcloth.

**Marguerite**

Each to his taste. A greasy old frying pan disgusts me.

**Helen**

And a filthy dishcloth disgusts me.

**Faustus**

Come adorable nymphs. No need to fight over me. (to Marguerite, fondling her) There's something about you that interests me.

**Marguerite**

Just try it! I will throw your pork chops in your face!

**Faustus**

There, there don't get so excited.

**Marguerite**

I am not that kind of girl. I am honest!

**Helen**

Honest. She steals money from all the customers.

**Marguerite**

And she she earns money from the customers, if you conceive me. And, besides that she spits in the customers' soup.

**Helen**

Only if I don't like them. And as to earning money, you slut

**Faustus**

How such distinguished ladies as yourselves can say such things

**Marguerite**

I do my duty waiting tables, and I don't let the customers mess around with me or come in my kitchen (picking

Act III.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

up some plates and leaving)

**Faustus**

This is a most regrettable incident.

**Helen**

You are not a serious person.

**Faustus**

It's because of my youth. I lead an agitated life. I am in the whirlwind of pleasures.

**Helen**

Bah! That's not me. I don't find this hot stove too much fun.

**Faustus** (kneeling)

It's but for you, dear friend, to give this furnace up, and come to perfumed halls. Just give ear to my ardent desires. I am burning for you.

**Helen** (pushing her hair out of her eyes)

As if I weren't hot enough with this stove!

**Faustus** (pathetically)

Understand me.

**Helen**

I understand that if the dishrag comes back you'll pinch her ass.

**Faustus**

But I'd rather pinch yours. Do you want money? I'll buy a little twenty room house for you with lots and lots of stoves and you can make as many dishes as you like.

**Helen**

I still have to work with an oven? It's hardly worth the trouble.

**Faustus**

It will be a life of moonlight and honey. A honeymoon, if I may invent such a word.

**Helen**

The moon, the moon. It's all moonshine.

**Faustus**

If you like, you can have a servant.

**Helen**

Naturally moonshine.

**Faustus**

Your resistance is bursting my arteries, my veins, my tendons, my muscles, my stomach, my intestines, my lungs, my nose, my mouth, my ears in short all my organs internal and external! You must give up because of the extraordinary state you have put me in through your attractions. I resent your divine beauty, your matchless eyes, your ivory skin

Act III.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

(The Student puts his head in the door.)

**Student**

Pardon me, may I come in?

**Faustus** (aside)

Will they never leave me in peace?

**Student** (aside)

The famous doktor in luff with a scullery wench!

**Faustus**

What can I do for you my young friend? I tell you now, I am not taking any more apprentices, so don't waste your time asking. I know you'll tell me you'll work hard and I believe you, although they all say that. And I know you'll say, that your respect for me is such that you wish to follow me, forever, as my disciple

**Student**

I

**Faustus**

Perfectly useless to plead with me.

**Student**

I

**Faustus**

My heart is made of iron, young man.

**Student**

May I say I only want

**Faustus**

Oh, I know you only want to sit at my feet

**Student**

A head of cheese.

**Faustus**

What?

**Student**

I came to get a head of cheese.

**Faustus**

Why don't you ask the maid?

**Student**

Gretchen said she didn't dare come in the kitchen. She said: Go if you want to. Let him pinch your ass.

**Faustus**

My dear young friend, you don't imagine that I would take the same innocent freedom with you that I practice on

Act III.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

the wenches?

### **Student**

The whole world loves to joke, Herr Doktor. I don't know why the maid is so afraid of you. After all, you would be doing her ass an honor.

### **Faustus**

Explain that to the cook. She knows ways to inflame me for her.

### **Helen**

What do you want, Herr Doktor? I spend all my time over this blasted oven, and when you talk of burning desires, I hesitate.

### **Faustus**

My young friend, witness the power of love. This sentiment exalts the human species. Me the famous Doctor Faustus, here I am, trembling like a leaf before this wench who cannot make up her mind whether she prefers me or this old oven.

(A bell sounds the curfew.)

### **Student**

Quick my head of cheese. The curfew is sounding. I will hardly have time to eat it before the watch is here to order the dining room closed for the night.

(The Student runs out munching his head of cheese.)

### **Faustus**

Yes or No, my beautiful angel. Will you spend the night with me tonight?

### **Helen**

Well

### **Faustus**

Well what?

### **Helen**

I don't know how to tell the Herr Doktor

### **Faustus**

You're afraid of your virtue, perhaps?

### **Helen**

My word, not at all!

### **Faustus**

Ah, so much the better. I always dread that obstacle. Well why this hesitation that roasts me over a slow fire?

### **Helen**

It's just that

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Faustus** (dying with impatience)  
What is it?

(A Policeman pokes his head in the door.)

**Policeman**  
Excuse me, may I come in?

**Faustus** (whining)  
Why won't they leave me alone?

**Policeman**  
A man here! Helen, who is this man?

**Helen**  
It's the famous Doktor Faustus.

**Policeman**  
**Helen**, do you take me for a fool? If you think that I believe you, you must imagine you can make me believe anything. Would the famous Doktor **Faustus** be prostrating himself with a kitchen wench? You and I, me and you we go together. And this gentleman here cannot be a gentleman or he wouldn't be here. This is a skirt chaser who wants to take you from me. I am going to split his head open with my baton because I am a man of honor.

**Helen**  
Ohh, Maximilian Don't make a scene!

**Policeman**  
Yes, I am going to make a scene!

**Helen**  
Maximilian, take it easy. The Herr Doktor is bigger than you are. Besides, he consorts with the devil. He will make a scene.

**Faustus** (flexing his muscles)  
Exactly. I am big, too. I've been working out a lot, lately. I used to study too much.

**Policeman**  
His arm is not longer or stronger than my nightstick. (threatening **Faustus**)

**Faustus**  
Hey, there, my friend. Just watch what you're doing.

(Faustus seizes the nightstick and takes it away from Maximilian.)

**Policeman** (pulling)  
Release my weapon.

**Faustus**  
Never in your life. I am going to make you eat it.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Policeman**

Sir, you are a coward. You take advantage because I don't know how to use my stick properly.

**Faustus**

Your last hour has struck!

**Policeman**

I am going to scream for help.

**Helen**

Maximilian, don't make any noise. Your fellow police might hear you.

**Policeman**

But he's going to kill me!

**Helen**

Herr Doktor, have pity on my husband.

**Faustus**

What do I hear? Your husband? Is this wretch your husband?

**Helen**

That was what I didn't know how to tell you.

**Faustus**

Why, I have almost committed a sin!

**Policeman** (kneeling)

Sir, have pity on a policeman incapable of any police brutality.

**Faustus**

Infamous coward. You lack honor and courage. The likes of you are charged with protecting the security of citizens!

**Policeman**

I'm peaceable by nature. I got my job through my uncle. I really didn't want to take it, but they forced me. I was just following orders.

**Faustus**

Ah, you are peaceable by nature. You tremble like jelly. Then I hesitate no longer. I have the power. Choose. Either prepare to die or resign your wife to me.

**Policeman**

I choose not to die. (aside) I thought he was going to give me a hard choice.

**Helen**

The great Doktor Faustus is right, Maximilian, you are a coward. I must be strong for both of us.

**Policeman**

Yes, yes, be strong, be strong.



## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

### **Helen**

In prostituting myself to Doktor Faustus, I am only thinking of you.

### **Policeman**

Divine goodness.

### **Faustus**

Ah, dear angel, dear lady, I am going to show you the great life. Youth is wonderful. To have the most beautiful of women at your beck and call. (leading Helen off, aside) After I'm through with this one, I'll come back for Gretchen.

(Exit Faustus and Helen.)

### **Policeman** (getting up and going to the door)

They're gone. What a relief. I've never been so scared in my life. Danger has taught me to take a middle course. I almost wet my pants. This young Doktor Faustus is a roaring lion and I am only a sheep. (opening the door and calling in a soft voice) Gretchen, Gretchen.

(Marguerite comes in stealthily.)

### **Marguerite**

Did you call me, Maximilian?

### **Policeman**

Yes, my sweet. We've just had a piece of good luck.

### **Marguerite**

What is it, Maximilian?

### **Policeman**

I've just made a wonderful arrangement with the famous Doktor Faustus.

### **Marguerite**

Ach?

### **Policeman**

I gave him permission to relieve me of my wife. Now, you and I are no longer encumbered by her presence.

### **Marguerite**

Ah, so much the better! At least you have no taste for a greasy frying pan.

### **Policeman**

Everything happened in the most agreeable way. This Herr Doktor is really quite the gentleman. As a personal favor to me

### **Marguerite**

Quite the gentleman! Hah! He pinched my ass!

### **Policeman**

Gretchen what are you saying? I feel that I am about to roar like a lion. Where's my nightstick it seems he took it. But never mind. I am going to divide this famous Faustus into several parts. First, I'll knock him down, then

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

after he begs for mercy, I'll

**Marguerite**

Oh, Maximilian, don't make scenes!

**Policeman**

All right. For your sake. But I am really furious.

**Marguerite**

He's punished enough. Consider, he has to live with your wife. Come to my arms, Maximilian. You're so handsome in your uniform.

**Policeman** (embracing her)

Ah, I've been waiting for this for so long.

CURTAIN

### Act IV.

Faustus' study, as in the first act. Faustus is old again.

**Faustus**

It's really curious how time flies. To think that it's now over ninety years since I ravished Helen from her police office husband; that it's seventy years since I stole off with Gretchen, that it's fifty years since I took that little haberdasher's wife; that it's forty years since I ran off with the humpbacked lady who made winding sheets for the dead, and that it's nearly thirty years since I ran off with that stinking cowherd girl who lived nearby. Ah, what a fine life! But I have spent my best years. I have had splendid and distinguished amours almost without cease. Not to mention the honors I have won with my alchemy. (pause) Unfortunately, time goes by and I've gotten old again. Yet, I cling tenaciously to life. I still don't permit myself to have a white beard or white hair. I've got a new dye. This time I have the formula more exactly. Let's just dip our beard in the goo again

(Thunder and lightning. The Devil appears again.)

**Devil**

I salute you Herr Doktor Faustus.

**Faustus**

What? Why? Who gave you permission to enter in this way?

**Devil**

Don't you recognize me?

**Faustus**

What brings you here?

**Devil**

Behold this parchment, Faustus. It is signed in your blood, and under seal.

**Faustus**

So? It's only ninety years ago. Time passes quickly, no need to renew it yet.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

### **Devil**

That's not my opinion. A hundred years on Earth is a long time. Some poor Devil could catch his death of cold. I've waited on you. Why, do you never tire of living? What's wrong with you, man? And here I am, freezing. Your sun is a weak light compared to my furnace. I really don't know how you stand it. I offer you nice warm accommodations. Follow me. I must get home immediately my wife is probably already in one of her states. We haven't a moment to lose.

### **Faustus**

Tell me, dear friend, would you consider signing a contract renewing the contract for another hundred years. I promise to sin most abominably. I am sure I can damn myself more irredeemably

### **Devil**

Ah, dear Doktor, I cannot trick you! You've already lived two hundred years. Content yourself. Besides, how can life be so sweet in this cold climate that you always want to start over again?

### **Faustus**

It's not that sweet but one clings to it.

### **Devil**

A contract is a contract. The farce is over.

### **Faustus**

Don't you know that the customer is always right. Don't be inexorable.

### **Devil**

I am only being just. Besides, although I'd like to accommodate you, I cannot be sure my wife will wait a moment longer. I hope you will be honorable enough to come with me willingly.

### **Faustus**

Oh, very well. But I cannot recommend you to any of my friends after this. How do we get there?

### **Devil**

Give me your hand.

### **Faustus** (giving him his hand)

I say your hand's awfully cold, dear fellow. Do you have a chill?

### **Devil**

That's a mere detail. Don't worry. You will see Hell's charms. You will find many agreeable people there. And not a prude in the whole lot. Come on.

(Thunder and lightning. Blackout as the Devil and Faustus disappear in smoke.)

CURTAIN

## **Act V.**

The scene is before the Gates of Hell. Enter the Devil and Faustus. Faustus is too hot, the Devil is feeling better for the first time.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

### **Devil**

Here we are. All we have to do is get in. (knocks silence) Nobody answers. I know there's somebody home. That is not a good sign. (knocks again silence) What a situation. What a situation.

### **Faustus**

Perhaps, if nobody's home we should go back to Earth.

### **Devil** (knocking)

Not on your life! We'll just have to persist.

### **Faustus**

You'll wear yourself out. Why go to so much trouble?

### **Devil**

Damn. I hear a footstep.

### **Faustus**

What a shame.

### **Wife** (sweetly)

Who is there?

### **Devil**

It's us.

### **Wife**

Who is Us?

### **Devil**

Doktor Faustus and your adored husband.

(The door begins to open.)

### **Wife** (sticking her head out)

What? Is this the hour you have chosen to return?

### **Devil**

It's not so late.

### **Wife**

Oh don't talk! You were supposed to return in twenty-four hours and bring back a celebrity.

### **Devil**

I explained in my letter. Here's the celebrity. The world famous Doktor Faustus.

### **Wife**

What? You kept me waiting a hundred years to return with this old fart?

### **Devil**

Patience, my dear spouse.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

### **Wife**

Patience! What do you think we can do with parchment skin like that? He won't keep the furnace lit for five minutes. Won't burn.

### **Faustus**

This is outrageous! What a way for a man of my notoriety to be received.

### **Devil**

Please, calm yourself, Doktor.

### **Faustus**

It's all very well to be damned But must one be insulted? It's not in the contract, sir.

### **Devil**

Don't get upset, Doktor. My wife is a little lively, but at bottom she's an excellent person and you will be the best of friends in no time.

### **Wife**

Not on your life. This old goat is disgusting.

### **Faustus**

Why why, (speechless) madam!

### **Devil**

Don't pay any attention, dear Doktor. It's only a word.

(A bony old maid suddenly comes in. It's the Devil's daughter.)

### **Daughter**

My Daddy, my dearest Daddy. I've waited so long. Show me the presents you promised.

### **Devil**

Who is this old fury?

### **Wife**

Your daughter. Don't you recognize her, you imbecile?

### **Devil**

How can I recognize her? She is unrecognizable. This is a mystery.

### **Wife**

No mystery at all. She's more than a hundred years old.

### **Devil**

Hell and damnation! I see it all now. My daughter has grown into an old woman.

### **Daughter**

Oh, Papa, you are naughty, so naughty.

### **Devil**

Why am I naughty?

Act V.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Daughter**

You are worse than that. You are diabolic.

**Faustus**

I'm sure they'd be surprised by these family horrors on Earth.

**Daughter** (prancing with rage)

Where is the handsome man I've been waiting to marry for a hundred years?

**Devil**

Here he is. The famous Doktor Faustus.

**Daughter**

For what do you take me? Do you think I want to marry this horrible old man?

**Faustus**

Pardon me, miss. You vex me a good deal. What's wrong with me?

**Daughter**

I have an unnatural father.

**Devil**

I am an unnatural father? When I bring a man of an age exactly suited to you?

**Daughter**

But I don't see him. It breaks my heart.

**Faustus**

Ah, this is a little too much, miss. Don't you think my heart is broken at the sight of you?

**Wife**

You have brought a man here who insults your child.

**Daughter**

Yes, a man who joins vulgarity to ugliness.

**Wife**

You are responsible for the misfortune of your own daughter. She's been torn with impatience for more than a century.

**Devil**

I signed a contract for a century. It's a standard form. It's in every contract. What am I to do? A contract has to be respected.

**Wife**

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

**Daughter** (screaming)

Because of a contract, I am a victim. A poor victim!

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Wife** (shouting)

Your father doesn't understand a thing. Come to the arms of your mother, my child.

**Faustus** (mopping his brow)

It's a real inferno here.

**Devil**

To whom are you talking, Doktor?

**Wife**

What are you two mumbling about?

**Faustus** and the Devil We are not mumbling.

**Wife**

Ah, you add perjury to your other sins, eh? You who call yourself Doktor Go to the circle reserved for sorcerers and other impostors.

**Faustus**

Ah, I commence to burn. I beg you, my dear demon, intercede for me with your wife.

**Devil**

Eh? What do you want me to do? She's the boss here.

**Faustus**

A little firmness perhaps?

**Devil**

A little firmness. It's easy to see you don't know anything. I'm only a poor Devil.

CURTAIN

Policeman

I've just made a wonderful arrangement with the famous Doktor Faustus.

**Marguerite**

Ach?

**Policeman**

I gave him permission to relieve me of my wife. Now, you and I are no longer encumbered by her presence.

**Marguerite**

Ah, so much the better! At least you have no taste for a greasy frying pan.

**Policeman**

Everything happened in the most agreeable way. This Herr Doktor is really quite the gentleman. As a personal favor to me—

**Marguerite**

Quite the gentleman! Hah! He pinched my ass!

**Policeman**

Gretchen—what are you saying? I feel that I am about to roar like a lion. Where's my nightstick—it seems he took it. But never mind. I am going to divide this famous Faustus into several parts. First, I'll knock him down, then after he begs for mercy, I'll—

**Marguerite**

Oh, Maximilian, don't make scenes!

Act V.

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Policeman**

All right. For your sake. But I am really furious.

**Marguerite**

He's punished enough. Consider, he has to live with your wife. Come to my arms, Maximilian. You're so handsome in your uniform.

**Policeman** (embracing her)

Ah, I've been waiting for this for so long.

CURTAIN



## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

### Act IV.

Faustus' study, as in the first act. Faustus is old again.

**Faustus**

It's really curious how time flies. To think that it's now over ninety years since I ravished Helen from her police office husband; that it's seventy years since I stole off with Gretchen, that it's fifty years since I took that little haberdasher's wife; that it's forty years since I ran off with the humpbacked lady who made winding sheets for the dead, and that it's nearly thirty years since I ran off with that stinking cowherd girl who lived nearby. Ah, what a fine life! But I have spent my best years. I have had splendid and distinguished amours almost without cease. Not to mention the honors I have won with my alchemy. (pause) Unfortunately, time goes by and I've gotten old again. Yet, I cling tenaciously to life. I still don't permit myself to have a white beard or white hair. I've got a new dye. This time I have the formula more exactly. Let's just dip our beard in the goo again—

(Thunder and lightning. The Devil appears again.)

**Devil**

I salute you Herr Doktor Faustus.

**Faustus**

What? Why? Who gave you permission to enter in this way?

**Devil**

Don't you recognize me?

**Faustus**

What brings you here?

**Devil**

Behold this parchment, Faustus. It is signed in your blood, and under seal.

**Faustus**

So? It's only ninety years ago. Time passes quickly, no need to renew it yet.

**Devil**

That's not my opinion. A hundred years on Earth is a long time. Some poor Devil could catch his death of cold. I've waited on you. Why, do you never tire of living? What's wrong with you, man? And here I am, freezing. Your sun is a weak light compared to my furnace. I really don't know how you stand it. I offer you nice warm accommodations. Follow me. I must get home immediately—my wife is probably already in one of her states. We haven't a moment to lose.

**Faustus**

Tell me, dear friend, would you consider signing a contract—renewing the contract—for another hundred years. I promise to sin most abominably. I am sure I can damn myself more irredeemably—

**Devil**

Ah, dear Doktor, I cannot trick you! You've already lived two hundred years. Content yourself. Besides, how can life be so sweet in this cold climate that you always want to start over again?

**Faustus**

It's not that sweet—but one clings to it.

**Devil**

A contract is a contract. The farce is over.

**Faustus**

Don't you know that the customer is always right. Don't be inexorable.

**Devil**

I am only being just. Besides, although I'd like to accommodate you, I cannot be sure my wife will wait a moment longer. I hope you will be honorable enough to come with me willingly.

**Faustus**

Oh, very well. But I cannot recommend you to any of my friends after this. How do we get there?

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Devil**

Give me your hand.

**Faustus** (giving him his hand)

I say—your hand's awfully cold, dear fellow. Do you have a chill?

**Devil**

That's a mere detail. Don't worry. You will see Hell's charms. You will find many agreeable people there. And not a prude in the whole lot. Come on.

(Thunder and lightning. Blackout as the Devil and Faustus disappear in smoke.)

CURTAIN

The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

**Act V.**

The scene is before the Gates of Hell. Enter the Devil and Faustus. Faustus is too hot, the Devil is feeling better for the first time.

**Devil**

Here we are. All we have to do is get in. (knocks—silence) Nobody answers. I know there's somebody home. That is not a good sign. (knocks again—silence) What a situation. What a situation.

**Faustus**

Perhaps, if nobody's home—we should go back to Earth.

**Devil** (knocking)

Not on your life! We'll just have to persist.

**Faustus**

You'll wear yourself out. Why go to so much trouble?

**Devil**

Damn. I hear a footstep.

**Faustus**

What a shame.

**Wife** (sweetly)

Who is there?

**Devil**

It's us.

**Wife**

Who is Us?

**Devil**

Doktor Faustus and your adored husband.

(The door begins to open.)

**Wife** (sticking her head out)

What? Is this the hour you have chosen to return?

**Devil**

It's not so late.

**Wife**

Oh—don't talk! You were supposed to return in twenty-four hours and bring back a celebrity.

**Devil**

I explained in my letter. Here's the celebrity. The world famous Doktor Faustus.

**Wife**

What? You kept me waiting a hundred years to return with this old fart?

**Devil**

Patience, my dear spouse.

**Wife**

Patience! What do you think we can do with parchment skin like that? He won't keep the furnace lit for five minutes. Won't burn.

**Faustus**

This is outrageous! What a way for a man of my notoriety to be received.

**Devil**

Please, calm yourself, Doktor.

**Faustus**

It's all very well to be damned— But must one be insulted? It's not in the contract, sir.

**Devil**

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

Don't get upset, Doktor. My wife is a little lively, but at bottom she's an excellent person and you will be the best of friends in no time.

**Wife**

Not on your life. This old goat is disgusting.

**Faustus**

Why—why, (speechless) madam!

**Devil**

Don't pay any attention, dear Doktor. It's only a word.

(A bony old maid suddenly comes in. It's the Devil's daughter.)

**Daughter**

My Daddy, my dearest Daddy. I've waited so long. Show me the presents you promised.

**Devil**

Who is this old fury?

**Wife**

Your daughter. Don't you recognize her, you imbecile?

**Devil**

How can I recognize her? She is unrecognizable. This is a mystery.

**Wife**

No mystery at all. She's more than a hundred years old.

**Devil**

Hell and damnation! I see it all now. My daughter has grown into an old woman.

**Daughter**

Oh, Papa, you are naughty, so naughty.

**Devil**

Why am I naughty?

**Daughter**

You are worse than that. You are diabolic.

**Faustus**

I'm sure they'd be surprised by these family horrors on Earth.

**Daughter** (prancing with rage)

Where is the handsome man I've been waiting to marry for a hundred years?

**Devil**

Here he is. The famous Doktor Faustus.

**Daughter**

For what do you take me? Do you think I want to marry this horrible old man?

**Faustus**

Pardon me, miss. You vex me a good deal. What's wrong with me?

**Daughter**

I have an unnatural father.

**Devil**

I am an unnatural father? When I bring a man of an age exactly suited to you?

**Daughter**

But I don't see him. It breaks my heart.

**Faustus**

Ah, this is a little too much, miss. Don't you think my heart is broken at the sight of you?

**Wife**

You have brought a man here who insults your child.

**Daughter**

Yes, a man who joins vulgarity to ugliness.

**Wife**

## The Comical History of Doctor Faustus

You are responsible for the misfortune of your own daughter. She's been torn with impatience for more than a century.

**Devil**

I signed a contract for a century. It's a standard form. It's in every contract. What am I to do? A contract has to be respected.

**Wife**

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

**Daughter** (screaming)

Because of a contract, I am a victim. A poor victim!

**Wife** (shouting)

Your father doesn't understand a thing. Come to the arms of your mother, my child.

**Faustus** (mopping his brow)

It's a real inferno here.

**Devil**

To whom are you talking, Doktor?

**Wife**

What are you two mumbling about?

**Faustus** and the Devil We are not mumbling.

**Wife**

Ah, you add perjury to your other sins, eh? You who call yourself Doktor— Go to the circle reserved for sorcerers and other impostors.

**Faustus**

Ah, I commence to burn. I beg you, my dear demon, intercede for me with your wife.

**Devil**

Eh? What do you want me to do? She's the boss here.

**Faustus**

A little firmness perhaps?

**Devil**

A little firmness. It's easy to see you don't know anything. I'm only a poor Devil.

CURTAIN