**Scene IV (In a Street)**

**Summary**

Wagner engages in some banter with a clown, or peasant, by calling him "boy." Insulted, the fellow asks how many "boys" he has seen with beards like his. Wagner then asserts that the fellow looks unemployed and hungry enough to sell his soul to the devil for some meat to eat. He tries to recruit him to become his servant, but the clown seems unwilling. So Wagner threatens him with magic—to turn all the clown's lice into evil spirits that will tear him to pieces. When this fails, he forces money on the fellow that the man tries to return. In frustration Wagner calls up two devils, Baliol and Belcher, who chase the terrified clown. After a few moments, Wagner sends the devils away. Now the clown, impressed by Wagner's demonstration, consents to serve Wagner if he will teach him to summon devils, too, and other feats of magic.

**Analysis**

As the play progresses, an alternating pattern of serious and comic scenes becomes apparent, with the comic scenes offering a parody by providing a mocking imitation of the preceding serious scene. These scenes serve to ridicule the presumed greatness of Faustus's achievements as he masters black magic at the price of his soul. In this scene Wagner demonstrates that even the unschooled can summon devils.

In a bit of comic relief, Wagner's actions once again reflect the previous events involving Faustus. Mimicking his master, Wagner engages a clown (meaning a rustic fellow or peasant) to be his servant. Determined to convince the fellow to serve him, Wagner employs insults, crude logic, and bribery. Traditional means of persuasion prove too weak to be effective. Like his master, Wagner decides that the only way to get what he wants is through magic.

In the previous scene (Scene 3), Faustus conjured a devil. In this scene Wagner conjures Baliol and Belcher to frighten the clown. Just as Faustus hopes to engage the services of [Mephastophilis](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Doctor-Faustus/character-analysis/%22%20%5Cl%20%22Mephastophilis) through magic, Wagner hopes to engage the services of the clown through intimidation by magic. Wagner also mimics the two scholars, the intellectual snobs from [Act 1, Scene 2](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Doctor-Faustus/act-1-scene-2-summary/). While he objected to the pompousness of the two nosey scholars, he now assumes a superior attitude and talks down to the clown, again recalling Faustus's arrogance and sense of entitled superiority.

**Scene V (Faustus discovered in his study)**

**Summary**

Faustus waits in his study for [Mephastophilis](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Doctor-Faustus/character-analysis/%22%20%5Cl%20%22Mephastophilis)'s return. He is troubled by doubts about the choice he has made. On the one hand, he knows he will be damned for delving into magic. One the other, it may be too late to turn to God again—it seems impossible that God could love him. Abruptly, he realizes he would rather fulfill his own ambitious desires anyway, so he may as well continue serving Belzebub. The Good Angel and Evil Angel appear once more to argue for and against repentance. The Good Angel asserts it is not too late for Faustus to renounce magic, repent, and attain heaven. The Evil Angel argues this is an illusion, not to be trusted. He urges Faustus to keep in mind the honor and wealth he will gain through his use of magic.

The angels depart, and Faustus resolves to continue his pursuits, believing that no god can hurt him as long as Mephastophilis is beside him. At that moment the devil returns with the news that [Lucifer](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Doctor-Faustus/character-analysis/#Lucifer) has agreed to Faustus's proposal: he may buy 24 years of service from Mephastophilis and a life of luxury and pleasure for the price of his soul. There is one provision. To demonstrate his commitment to the agreement, Faustus must write and sign the contract in his own blood. When Faustus asks what value his soul has for Lucifer, Mephastophilis replies that it will add to Lucifer's growing kingdom. Asked if he, as a devil who tortures damned souls, suffers pain, Mephastophilis admits that he suffers as much as those human souls. Then to distract Faustus from any misgivings, the devil reminds him of the great rewards tied to a pact with Lucifer.

Slashing his arm, Faustus proceeds to write the contract in blood, but soon the blood congeals, making it impossible for him to continue. Briefly he wonders what this portends. Then Mephastophilis brings hot coals to liquefy the blood again, and Faustus can complete the contract. Signing it, he announces in Latin, "It is finished." Instantly, the words *Homo fuge!* (Fly, O man!) appear, etched on his arm. Though it seems a dire warning, Faustus cannot think of anywhere to go. Certainly God would not offer him a safe haven.

As a diversion, Mephastophilis lavishes crowns and fine clothing on Faustus and swears "by hell and Lucifer" that the doctor shall have everything he desires. As hoped, Faustus confirms the contract, and Mephastophilis accepts it on behalf of Lucifer. Then, at Faustus's first command, Mephastophilis describes the dreadful nature of hell. Nevertheless, Faustus says, "I think hell's a fable," and asserts that he has no fear of damnation.

Changing the subject, Faustus commands that Mephastophilis "fetch" him a wife. The devil returns with another devil dressed as a frightful woman. When Faustus rejects her, Mephastophilis begs him to give up all thoughts of marriage. Instead he can have the most beautiful mistresses, whomever he desires. Then, to gratify Faustus's thirst for learning, the devil gives him an all-inclusive book of knowledge to study about spells and incantations, astronomy and astrology, and the natural sciences.

**Analysis**

In his opening soliloquy, Faustus reveals the corruption that already taints his soul. The doctor is having second thoughts about the path he intends to follow. His initial impulse to turn back to God is overshadowed by despair. Surely God cannot love him. In a moment of self-awareness, he admits that he is ruled by his appetite for the things dark magic can offer. This is the "god" he wants to follow. For the love of Belzebub, he would build "an altar and a church" and ritually murder newborn babies in tribute to him. Turning his back on God in this way, Faustus embraces evil and rejects the divine goodness and mercy he once accepted as a theologian. The battle for Faustus's soul resumes when the Good Angel and Evil Angel return. Faustus joins in their call-and-response but refuses to be persuaded in favor of repentance and redemption. He stubbornly prefers to exchange the spiritual gifts of heaven for earthly honor and wealth. By the time [Mephastophilis](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Doctor-Faustus/character-analysis/%22%20%5Cl%20%22Mephastophilis) shows up, Faustus is mentally and spiritually prepared to enter into the pact with [Lucifer](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Doctor-Faustus/character-analysis/#Lucifer).

Lucifer takes no chances that a scholar such as Faustus will find a loophole in their agreement when the time comes to forfeit his soul. He insists that the pact be written and signed in Faustus's blood. [Blood](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Doctor-Faustus/symbols/#Blood), the body's source of life, represents the soul. Used in a blood oath, it becomes a link between Faustus and Lucifer and binds Faustus's soul to hell. As his soul's representative, the doctor's blood seems determined to prevent him from completing the contract. It congeals so he cannot write. So intent is Faustus on making the dark deal that he only fleetingly worries that this is a bad sign worth heeding. His blood is wiser than he, in another instance of Faustus failing to interpret the information before him correctly if it challenges his desires.

The doctor's final words upon signing the pact echo those spoken by Jesus Christ as he died when crucified on the cross. *Consummatum est* is Latin for "It is finished." From Christ's lips, the phrase meant that he had fulfilled ancient prophesy and the work God, his father, had sent him to do; salvation was assured to those who believed. From the lips of Faustus, however, the phrase means something completely different—his salvation is now firmly in jeopardy and his damnation assured.

Once the pact is finalized, Faustus engages Mephastophilis in a round of questions. The topic is hell, just as it was during their first encounter. Faustus appears fascinated by the subject though skeptical that hell is real. In Act 1 Mephastophilis explained that, because he is damned, hell is all around him. It is wherever he is. This time, instead of describing hell as a psychological state, Mephastophilis provides a more traditional description of a place "under the heavens ... where we are tortured and remain forever." Surprisingly, since he is talking to a devil and has signed his soul over to Lucifer, Faustus says, "I think hell's a fable." This statement from a scholar who has studied the nature of God and religious belief raises questions: Did Faustus ever believe, or did he lose his faith along the way? Is his lust for power so extreme that it has possessed him to the point of shutting out everything else? As the play progresses, Faustus will struggle to deny the reality of hell and the peril to his soul. As the certainty of hell grows, he will fight a desperate but losing battle to find or rekindle his faith and save himself through repentance.