

Excerpt from 'Splendid Productions' Dr Faustus' By Christopher Marlowe Adapted by Ben Hales

SCENE 2: FAUSTUS IS UNSATISFIED

Enter Faustus wearing a badge which reads 'Scholar of the Year 1585'

- Faustus** Wagner? I feel unsatisfied.
- Wagner** Really sir?
- Faustus** Do you know, I sometimes feel 'there must be something more'.
- Wagner** Something more, sir? For you, sir?
- Faustus** Yes.
- Wagner** For you, sir, the famous Doctor Faustus, winner of Scholar of the Year 1585?
- Faustus** Quite so. It is, I fear, the very ginormance of my brain that is my problem. Having mastered so many disciplines, upon which one should I concentrate my efforts? What new learning should be Faustus's legacy?
- Wagner** *(giving him a book)* Philosophy?
- Faustus** Ah, Aristotle, dear old Aristotle... Nah, read it. Boring. *(Throws book away)*
- Wagner** Medicine?
- Faustus** Am I not already Doctor Faustus? Famed throughout the land for curing the Plague and straightening teeth? ... But still I am merely a Doctor... Make a man live forever, that would be something! Or raise him up from the dead, that would be worth being remembered for! A modern-day Jesus!
- Wagner** Isn't that a bit blasphemous, sir?
- Faustus** Perhaps... I need something for the soul.
- Wagner** *(proffering another book)* The soul, you say?
- Faustus** *(taking book)* Ah yes, the very thing, Jerome's Bible. What could be higher than the study of God? *(Leafs through pages)* 'The wages of sin is death'! That's a bit harsh... Sin, death, sin, death, is that all it is? No thank you. Bye bye, bible *(throws bible away)*.
- Wagner** *(picking up book of necromancy)* How about this one, sir?

Faustus *(extremely interested)* Necromancy? Mmmm, these metaphysics of magicians and necromantic books are heavenly! Lines, circles, letters, characters! These are those that Faustus most desires. Oh what a world of profit and delight is promised to the studious artisan! The Necromancer's dominion stretches as far as the mind of man can conceive! Truly it is the duty of the greatest mind to fly beyond the mortal realm, to ascend to the level of a God! *(to Wagner, who has been underscoring this speech by singing dramatically)* Do you have to do that?

Wagner I'm sorry sir, it just seemed like a significant speech.

Faustus Wagner! Go to Valdes and Cornelius, my dearest friends, and ask that they come visit me post-haste!

Wagner Valdes and Cornelius, the infamous scholars of the black art of Necromancy, you mean?

Faustus The very same.

Wagner *(to audience, checking that they understand)* So, Necromancy – 'necro' meaning 'dead', 'mancy' meaning black magic. So it's using black magic to control spirits of the dead. *(To Faustus)* Is that what you meant, sir?

Faustus Yes indeed.

Wagner I do hope you're not going to get yourself into any trouble!

Exit Wagner.

Faustus Ah, Valdes and Cornelius. If anyone can help Faustus unlock his true potential, it is they, the infamous scholars of the black art of Necromancy!

Enter Good Angel and Evil Angel.

Good Angel O Faustus, lay that damned book aside
And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul,
And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head:
Read, read the Scriptures; that is blasphemy.

Evil Angel Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art,
Wherein all nature's treasury is contained:
Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements.

Faustus *(rubbing his hands)* Think of it! Magical spirits under my command! The possibilities are endless! Come Valdes! Come Cornelius! Come and teach me all you know!

Enter Valdes And Cornelius.

Valdes Were you looking for us, Doctor Faustus?

Cornelius We came as soon as we could. Congratulations again on winning Scholar of the Year 1585.

Faustus Huh. Philosophy is a waste of time. Law and medicine are only fit for halfwits, and theology is all Commandments and self-denial. I think someone like me, whose award-winning intellect is famed far beyond the walls of Wittenberg, deserves to something a little better, don't you?

Valdes Are you talking about what I think you're talking about?

Faustus Yes! I want to learn the necromantic arts, I understand you have studied it avidly.

Valdes Indeed we have, O great doctor, but so far we have merely stumbled blindly in the foothills. Faustus, with these books, your peerless intellect and our experience, you could rule the Spirits!

Cornelius There would be no limit to your powers!

Valdes The spirits will bring you anything you want!

Faustus Anything?

Valdes & Cornelius Anything!

Faustus Even though I have just thought of it, I am more certain about doing this than anything else in my whole life! Come on, quickly then, show me how to conjure!

Valdes OK, you'll need to find a nice little place where you won't be disturbed, you'll need (*giving him books*) Bacon and Abanus, the Hebrew Psalter, the New Testament, and of course, Harrius Potterus.

Valdes & Cornelius Mysterioso!

Cornelius Valdes, you teach him all the funny words, and then he can try it by himself.

Valdes First will I instruct thee in the rudiments, and then wilt thou be perfecter than I.

Faustus Yes, yes, show me everything. For tonight I shall conjure, even if it kills me! But first, dinner!