

John Faustus

By Ryan Stevens

Written as part of a MA Thesis for the University of South
Carolina, and in response to, among other things, the 2016
Presidential election and its fallout.

Cast of Characters

<u>John Faustus:</u>	Mid-twenties
<u>Mother:</u>	Late forties. Also plays Greed.
<u>Father:</u>	Late fifties.
<u>Mephistopheles:</u>	Any age. Any gender. Any race.
<u>Lucifer:</u>	Any age. Any gender. Any race.
<u>Angel:</u>	Any age. Any gender. Any race.
<u>Roy:</u>	Mid twenties. Also plays Envy
<u>Estelle:</u>	Mid twenties. Also plays Pride
<u>Henry:</u>	Mid twenties. Also plays Lust
<u>Maria:</u>	Mid twenties
<u>Jane:</u>	Mid twenties. Also plays Wrath
<u>Simon:</u>	John Faustus' brother. Early twenties
<u>Toni:</u>	Mid thirties. Also plays Sloth.
<u>The "President":</u>	Also plays Gluttony.
<u>Judas:</u>	
<u>Helen of Troy:</u>	
<u>Advisors, Cops, Demons:</u>	

Scene

America, particularly the South, with a few scenes in the DC area

Time

2016 - 2017

"The real damage is done by those millions who want to "survive." The honest men who just want to be left in peace. Those who don't want their little lives disturbed by anything bigger than themselves. Those with no sides and no causes. Those who won't take measure of their own strength, for fear of antagonizing their own weakness. Those who don't like to make waves -- or enemies. Those for whom freedom, honor, truth, and principles are only literature. Those who live small, mate small, die small. It's the reductionist approach to life: if you keep it small, you'll keep it under control. If you don't make any noise, the bogeyman won't find you. But it's all an illusion, because they die too, those people who roll up their spirits into tiny little balls so as to be safe. Safe?! From what? Life is always on the edge of death; narrow streets lead to the same place as wide avenues, and a little candle burns itself out just like a flaming torch does. I choose my own way to burn."

--Sophie Scholl

A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

If this play is ever done with an all-straight/white/physically typical cast, so help me God.

The characters of THE "PRESIDENT" and TONI are not meant to be sympathetic at all. The people they're based on sure aren't. TONI is an amalgamation of several people in the current administration, particularly Kellyanne Conway and Tomi Lahren, but feel free to add any others to the character's mannerisms.

PROLOGUE

Members of the company, all except FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHELES, enter in Tableau.

Sound of breaking glass, screaming, feet pounding pavement, distorted "patriotic" music. A movement sequence suggesting struggle and riot in the country's history.

Finally the music builds to a crescendo and the movement ceases.

MARIA:

Not abroad, bleeding on some foreign shore, will you find the man.

ESTELLE:

Nor is he standing in some tower of glass, looking down on all he can survey.

ROY:

The man whom we today gather for in memory --

MOTHER:

Mercurial as he was --

FATHER:

As prone to his particular brand of fancy --

JANE:

With all the heat his hellish fires can bring --

LUCIFER:

Shall walk again tonight and trace his life. Expect no feats of daring.

SIMON:

But let our charms convince you of what you see.

HELEN OF TROY:

One man. Alone.

MARIA, HENRY, JANE, ESTELLE, ROY:

Not quite alone.

LUCIFER:

Alone in his head.

ANGEL:

Alone before God.

FATHER:

Alone in death.

HELEN OF TROY:

That's right. Alone.

THE "PRESIDENT":

He's coming home. From studying abroad.

TONI:

A prodigal son who left his home behind.

HENRY:

But now he's coming home.

MOTHER, FATHER:

Our son is coming home.

LUCIFER, ANGEL:

The man is coming to us.

FATHER:

Around us you will see the world re-made, and see our
Faustus do as he must.

Sounds from off.

JANE:

We will carry you with us -- if you will come.

THE "PRESIDENT":

When tyranny sits sleeping sound as a swan on the
lake...

SIMON:

When evil men can show their colors in comfort --

ANGEL:

When the soul has no choice but the warm dark --

LUCIFER:

Faustus will reveal his inner way.

MOTHER:

He's coming!

*MOTHER swats the air and tells everyone to hide.
They dash off.*

ACT IScene 1

FAUSTUS' home.

Low lights.

JOHN FAUSTUS enters, looks around, turns on a light.

He has two large suitcases with him and looks jetlagged.

When he turns the light on, MOTHER, FATHER, HENRY, JANE, ESTELLE, ROY, and SIMON jump out and shout "SURPRISE!!"

FAUSTUS:

(startled)

Christ!

MOTHER:

Aw, look at his face -- Eric, look at his face --

FATHER:

Hey slugger, long time no see...

FAUSTUS:

Hey, uh, everybody...

ROY:

Welcome home John!

FAUSTUS:

Ah, you guys didn't need to do this for me...

ESTELLE:

Welcome back to America, John.

JANE:

What's left of it.

MOTHER:

Hey, now, none of that. This is a party.

FAUSTUS:

(re: the suitcases)

I'm gonna put these down. Is that cake --

MOTHER:

It's chocolate, just like I know you like.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER:

Lemme get those.

FATHER takes FAUSTUS' bags.

HENRY:

So how was jolly Germany, huh?

FAUSTUS:

Warmer than you'd think. I took a lot of pictures, as instructed --

MOTHER:

Good.

SIMON:

God, I wish I could've gone. The history you must have been around. The heritage.

FAUSTUS:

Simon, hey. Been awhile, huh. Like the new hair.

SIMON:

Yeah? Thanks brother.

ROY:

Smuggle any kinder eggs back?

FAUSTUS:

Sorry, Uncle Sam wanted to make sure I didn't bring any dangerous candy back.

MOTHER:

The TSA's just doing its job.

SIMON:

Mom's right, John.

FAUSTUS:

Dangerous words.

JANE:

So how's Germany holding up? Got any tips for us? From one country with a history of nazis back to one with a future --

MOTHER:

Let's not discuss politics --

FAUSTUS:

Can you guys believe that idiot? I kept forgetting and re-remembering on the plane. This country was actually stupid enough --

(CONTINUED)

MARIA:

Well, not really, the majority didn't vote for him --

HENRY:

It's almost like the country doesn't care about its people.

SIMON:

Uh-oh, didn't realize pessimism was catching.

MOTHER:

Why can't we just have a nice positive party for John, huh? Politics are so -- unpleasant. If we can't agree on anything, why bring it up?

FATHER:

(distraction)

You go see any museums over there?

FAUSTUS:

Yeah, a couple.

MOTHER:

Did you meet any nice German girls?

FAUSTUS:

I mean...the weird part about studying abroad --

FATHER:

What was her name?

FAUSTUS:

Ha ha. But the weird part is they expect you to study too. So I didn't have too much free time...but yeah. I met some nice people.

MOTHER:

Any pictures of her?

FAUSTUS:

None worth noting. Just people.

SIMON:

Didn't try to smuggle any in, did you? Immigrants being what they are.

FAUSTUS:

Simon, who the fuck wants to get *in* to the United States now? No one jumps on the sinking ship.

SIMON:

But only rats run away from one.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

So you admit the ship is sinking?

HENRY:

(re: Simon)

Is this guy for real?

MOTHER:

Boys, behave. I thought I said I didn't want to hear about these things. Your generation seems to have forgotten you can just turn the tv off, you know. Not everything has to be news news news! I want to hear about Germany. Tell us about Germany.

FAUSTUS:

I mean, we covered all the basics. Kant, Goethe, Schiller, Justinian. The Greeks. I can set your broken arm and tell you about how maybe none of us are even alive anyway. I've read books the size of tires and written essays longer than maybe every sentence I've ever said. I drank a lot of beer. I smoked a lot of weed (sorry Mom). And then I got to stay up through the night to watch my country get turned over to the loudest idiot, the biggest racist, a literal rapist.

(a pause)

They had fish on the plane, that was nice.

MOTHER:

(straining to ignore him)

And you had fun? Are you glad you went?

FAUSTUS:

Of course I'm glad I went. I'm gladder I voted absentee.

SIMON:

For all the good it did?

ROY:

We did win the popular vote.

SIMON:

Uh-huh. And?

FATHER:

Simon. We drove all the way up here to see our firstborn son, I will not have it ruined by the state of the world!

(to FAUSTUS)

We wanted to welcome you back.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

Thanks for that. Really.

MOTHER:

Well apparently you'd rather just stew and stay mad.
Welcome home. Call us if you feel like being happy ever
again, Mr. Rebel.

MOTHER makes to exit, SIMON going with her.

FATHER:

Give us a call if you --

MOTHER:

Eric.

*MOTHER snaps her fingers at FATHER and he follows
with her. MOTHER, FATHER, and SIMON exit.*

*FAUSTUS shakes his head and helps himself to some
cake.*

ROY:

Can't choose family, huh.

MARIA:

Sorry about that John --

FAUSTUS:

Sorry? Don't be sorry. I'm glad they're gone. I was
dreading seeing them all the way back.

HENRY:

But you had fun?

FAUSTUS:

God it was amazing. Sitting in a library older than
your country -- it felt so...powerful. All that
history. All that knowledge. All that time under you.
(a pause)

And then I have to come back to this.

ESTELLE:

We've been working on that, actually.

FAUSTUS:

yeah?

ROY:

Just where we can. We've been organizing marches,
protests --

(CONTINUED)

JANE:

No riots.

ROY:

(pointed; to JANE)
We're hoping there won't be.

HENRY:

It's what we can do. Right now.

MARIA:

Getting people in touch with their representatives...

ROY:

Registering people to vote for the primaries -- cut 'em out sooner than later -- that's been my pet project.

MARIA:

It's all been Roy, don't let him fool you.

JANE:

It's not much, comparatively.

ROY:

But it's what we can do.

FAUSTUS:

So you guys have been, what...the civilest of civil disobedience?

ROY:

If you want to be pat about it, yeah.

MARIA:

It's more about Direct Action.

FAUSTUS:

No, I love it, don't get me wrong. Could I help? Of course I want to --

HENRY:

Absolutely, man --

ESTELLE:

Yeah, please --

ROY:

We're working to establish a network. We'll build in efficacy as we go. Don't think your friends have given up.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

Tough sell, southern city like this.

HENRY:

You would be surprised.

JANE:

Not that surprised.

HENRY:

Somewhat surprised.

MARIA:

Sure.

ROY:

Not to bumrush you as soon as you got off the plane --
but if it's on your mind.

FAUSTUS:

Yeah, no, of course. I am there for you guys. Give me
the numbers and I'll call them. Tell me where a march
is and I'll pick up a sign.

ROY:

Thanks John. Good to have you back.

FAUSTUS:

Wish I could say it's good to be back...but hearing you
guys -- makes it better.

MARIA:

We'll get out of your hair then -- see you around John.

ESTELLE takes FAUSTUS by the hand.

ESTELLE:

Welcome home.

FAUSTUS:

Thanks.

*ESTELLE, MARIA, ROY, and HENRY start to exit. JANE
stays behind.*

JANE:

You're right, of course. We'll need to move bigger.
Escalate. Strike fast if we want any change.

FAUSTUS:

You've brought it up with Roy?

JANE:

No one else wants to. They're too scared.

FAUSTUS:

These are scary times.

JANE:

They should be scary for the other side too.

(a pause)

It is good to have you back, man.

FAUSTUS:

Yeah. Uh. Thanks.

JANE smirks, nods, and exits.

Scene 2

FAUSTUS' home.

FAUSTUS sits and faces the audience, watching TV. THE "PRESIDENT" and TONI stand apart behind, alternating as he flips back and forth between channels.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Thank you. Thank you very much, everyone. Sorry to keep you waiting. Complicated business, complicated. Thank you very much.

I've just received a call from Secretary Clinton. She congratulated us. It's about us. On our victory, and I congratulated her and her family on a very, very hard-fought campaign.

TONI:

A game where black fans cheer next to white fans. A game where teammates work together as one regardless of race. A celebration of diversity rooted in a common bond. BUT FORGET THAT. These privileged Hollywood entertainment types are really something. Beyoncé didn't reference the Black Panthers to bring about some sort of positive change. She did it to get attention. Good for you, you made headlines. You're just like President Obama, Jada Pinkett-Smith, Al Sharpton and so many others just can't let America heal.

THE "PRESIDENT":

I mean that very sincerely. Now it is time for America to bind the wounds of division, have to get together. To all Republicans and Democrats and independents across this nation, I say it is time for us to come together as one united people.

(CONTINUED)

TONI:

Take it all the way back to childhood. Kids are taught that everyone gets a trophy. By virtue of being born, you're a winner. That's part of the problem. They've been taught competition is bad, red pens are derogatory, and hurt feelings are the end of the world.

THE "PRESIDENT":

I want to tell the world community that while we will always put America's interests first, we will deal fairly with everyone, with everyone.

TONI:

Millennials, that little voice in your head that tells you to keep going - listen. Don't listen to Bernie or Hillary tell you free things are your incentive to apply for college or vote. Your incentive doesn't come from the government, it comes from your brain, your heart, your family, and your creator. That's something we all have in common. Don't distribute my wealth, distribute my work ethic.

Those of us who have been taught enough history know that capitalism works. The message that goes along with that is distribution of wealth doesn't. Let's face it: those who are rooting for Hillary or (especially) Bernie are those who want everyone to be equal, the class system dissolved, and, ultimately, free stuff. But please, be honest with yourself.

FAUSTUS:

Unbelievable.

ANGEL appears.

ANGEL:

Careful, Faustus.

FAUSTUS turns off the TV and TONI and THE "PRESIDENT" exit.

ANGEL:

Down this road lies only toil and pain. Do you not trust a higher power?

FAUSTUS:

All the people who voted for him are going to get what they deserve.

ANGEL:

Distressing yourself like this does no good, Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

And they're going to be *so surprised* when he does it. He's going to rake their healthcare. He's gonna fistfuck social security. But do they care? No. Because it beats being led by a woman. Because a loud white rapist idiot is *more familiar*.

ANGEL:

Language! Faustus, why do you shake like this...your life will not be upended by them. Why so cross, why so worried? You are educated. You are driven. You are safe. You will be cared for.

FAUSTUS:

They *chose* it.

ANGEL:

Can't you appreciate what the Lord has given you? How He's blessed you? What you already have?

FAUSTUS:

It didn't have to be this way...it shouldn't be this way. We didn't vote for him! More didn't vote at all, though...it's like we're not used to having any power. We can't actualize it when we do have it. We get these small, slender moments to prove ourselves in control -- *democratic* -- but what do they do...? Sit at home. Cower. Think it's out of their hands already. What this country could be -- what this world could be -- if we actually did what we could!

ANGEL:

You would throw away what's given you everything...?

FAUSTUS:

If I could take it all from them?

ANGEL:

Oh, Faustus...

FAUSTUS:

I mean it. I'd put my life into it. These greater powers...these institutions, these authorities above us -- there is no way they can save us. And they bind us to them -- so that if they fail, we think we might fail too. And none of them are going to change. Nothing above cares for us below. So if there is any help to be had...it will probably come from down here.

A great rush of wind. The ANGEL disappears.

FAUSTUS's surroundings pulse, shift, seem alive.

Tense strings pluck in the air.

MEPHISTOPHELES appears.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

John Faustus. Good evening. I believe I can offer you some...services.

FAUSTUS:

Uh. Hi.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(bowing)

Mephistopheles. A pleasure to meet you. Can I interest you in my consultation?

FAUSTUS:

What are you here for?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Whatever you would ask of me.

FAUSTUS:

(nervous laugh)

MEPHISTOPHELES waves an arm and produces a small burst of flame.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Anything, Faustus. I come from Hell. Hell itself, yes.

FAUSTUS:

I was just thinking I might want someone with your --

MEPHISTOPHELES:

My skills. My inclinations. Yes.

FAUSTUS:

So what exactly can you do for me? Besides "anything."

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Aid you in some way. Serve by your side. Serve your purpose. Forward your mission -- our mission, if you'll have me. I can offer knowledge -- charms -- travel to anywhere in these worlds -- all for you.

FAUSTUS:

You know what I want, right?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I know you're angry. I know you want to topple your current regime. You want ashes and rubble made of those you oppose.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

Yes.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

You want to be a leader, don't you, John Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

Someone has to be.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

That's what I like to hear. I can help you. Men and women at your command. Your name in the history books. A brighter world than the one you found.

FAUSTUS:

And you'll swear to me?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes, if we're in agreement. I have terms too, you see.

FAUSTUS:

Okay...?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your immortal soul, Faustus, upon your death -- some, say, twenty-four years from this day -- twenty-four years of boundless knowledge, power, and influence -- at the end of that term, Faustus, your soul is mine. You'll be consigned to hell. For ever.

FAUSTUS:

(a pause)

So hell is real then.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes.

FAUSTUS:

Rip that band-aid off quickly, huh?

(a pause)

I suppose there was never really any doubt. Look around this world, how can hell be any worse?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(wry smile)

You have no idea.

FAUSTUS:

Oh yeah?

(a pause)

Twenty-four years.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes.

FAUSTUS:

Starting now?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

The moment we bind the deal.

FAUSTUS:

And you'll help me in any way...to end this? To end them?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

You can end them in any meaning you like.

MEPHISTOPHELES produces a small pearl-handled dagger.

FAUSTUS:

Wow, this is the real deal, huh?

(a pause)

Why'd you come to me, though.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

When my kind hears a soul distance themselves from the God above -- from the powers above themselves -- and admit the breaking down of that great sphere...we can't help but perk our ears. And you -- watching you swear against those bright lights on your TV screen, I saw your verve. Your fervor. Your fury. I saw your potential, John Faustus. I felt you -- reaching out -- pulling me down toward you. I saw you, John, and I saw everything I've ever wanted in humans. I saw someone who could *be something*. I could not refuse. And should you make this deal, I will never be able to refuse you. I want nothing more in this world than to do so, John Faustus. I will take your soul, but first I will give you the whole of creation.

FAUSTUS:

All I want is to burn down some wickedness. But I'll take the whole of creation...

(a pause)

So that's it then.

FAUSTUS takes the dagger, looks at MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUSTUS:

Mephistopheles. You pledge yourself to me?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I do, sir.

FAUSTUS:

Then I do so to you too.

FAUSTUS cuts his palm and sees MEPHISTOPHELES produce a second dagger and cut his own. They join hands.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I am yours. You will one day be mine. But until then.

MEPHISTOPHELES produces a large, worn book.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your knowledge. What would you do with it?

FAUSTUS:

I want to stop him. I want to stop them all. If that means exposing them, fine. If it means fighting them, I'll do so. If it means killing them...well. I'm in it now anyway, aren't I?

I pledge myself to you, Mephistopheles, now take me and give me everything you have.

MEPHISTOPHELES takes FAUSTUS off.

Scene 3

City Street Corner

MARIA, JANE, ESTELLE manning a robust Bake Sale stand, with signs and price lists in front of their table.

ESTELLE:

Fresh baked goods!

MARIA:

Cookies, brownies...what are / these things --

ESTELLE:

Cake Pops --

MARIA:

Cake Pops!

JANE:

Proceeds go to Planned Parenthood! Piss off a sexist with every purchase!

(CONTINUED)

MARIA:

Is it just Planned Parenthood? I mean, not 'just' them
--

ESTELLE:

We're splitting it with the ACLU right?

JANE:

Yeah but that's not as fun to yell.

ESTELLE:

"Piss off a sexist *and* a bigot with each purpose?"

JANE:

Oh, that is pretty good.

MARIA:

Yeah, see?

JANE:

Okay okay.

ESTELLE:

(to a passerby)
Bake Sale! For a good cause!

MARIA:

Did you see what Conway said yester --

ESTELLE:

Don't even get me started on her, Maria.

JANE:

God what I wouldn't do to her with a glass bottle in a
back alley.

ESTELLE:

Jesus, Jane.

JANE:

Just saying.

SIMON enters and approaches them.

SIMON:

Ladies. What do we have here?

MARIA:

(a pause)
Simon. Hi. We've got a bake sale --

SIMON:

Using your skills for some kind of activism, I see --
doing your best, that's nice.

ESTELLE:

(icy)
Can we get you anything?

SIMON:

Well, let's see here...got some cookies...there nuts in
these?

ESTELLE:

(tense)
Some of them. We've got almond, chocolate chip --
sugar, oatmeal raisin --

SIMON:

Who eats those?

JANE:

Oatmeal raisin's good, prick.

SIMON:

Touchy, touchy.

MARIA:

Simon, do you want anything to eat or not?

ESTELLE:

We'd prefer to keep the line moving.

SIMON:

What do you recommend?

JANE:

Leaving.

MARIA:

Jane.

(to SIMON)
Well, the brownies have been selling the best --

SIMON:

And which one of you lovely ladies made them?

ESTELLE:

Our friend Roy, actually.

SIMON:

Tsk tsk. Women can't even make the best thing at a Bake
Sale.

(CONTINUED)

MARIA:

It's all going to the same cause.

SIMON:

Planned Parenthood? The ACLU? Wanna invest in Enron while you're at it? Might as well set the money on fire, ladies.

JANE:

As long as it's your money, that's fine with me.

SIMON:

Yeah, what would you girls do without me here, huh?

MARIA:

So do you want a brownie?

SIMON:

Hmm...

(an uncomfortable pause)

Maybe one of these rice krispy things.

MARIA:

Great, three dollars. Here you go.

MARIA hands SIMON a rice krispy bar on a napkin and SIMON showily, one by one, tosses three dollar bills toward them.

ESTELLE:

Thanks so much.

SIMON takes a bite.

SIMON:

(sotto)

Oh. Damn. That's really good.

ESTELLE:

Thank you...

JANE:

I made those.

SIMON takes a moment to think of something.

SIMON:

Well, I -- I'm glad -- uh -- I'm glad you've got a skill, Jane honey.

JANE:

I'm not your honey, little boy.

(CONTINUED)

SIMON:

Oh, what's the matter, sugar, can't handle some friendliness?

JANE:

You want to get friendly?

MARIA:

Jane, / please.

JANE:

I'll get friendly with you.

ESTELLE:

We hope you enjoyed your treat, have a good day --

SIMON:

You really are just my brother's type, you know, big talk, but a bunch of simpering / little inconvenient...

MARIA:

You know it's funny, for a long time I didn't know John even *had* a brother.

ESTELLE:

Yeah, me neither, almost like he was ashamed of you.

JANE:

And by the way, John made the Cake Pop things. He's a pretty good baker. But he's a great cold caller. How much did he bring in for Planned Parenthood yesterday, Maria?

MARIA:

Twenty-four hundred.

ESTELLE:

And that was just yesterday.

SIMON:

(still eating)

Hmm. Mm. Shame you didn't have him during the election, huh? Could've used a little more cash.

ESTELLE:

Could've used a new excuse if your side had done anything of worth since then. You got the election. Good for you. Now what?

SIMON:

Well, if you'd been paying attention you'd probably know, now we --

(CONTINUED)

JANE:
Don't say it, fella.

SIMON:
What, that we're gonna --

JANE:
I really wouldn't.

SIMON:
Make.

JANE:
Buddy.

ESTELLE:
Jane, come on.

SIMON:
America.

JANE stands up.

MARIA:
Hey, hey...

SIMON:
Great Agai --

JANE punches SIMON in the ear. He feebly swats her away and backs up, dropping his food, nursing his ear.

SIMON:
Dumb cunt! Hit me in the ear!

JANE laughs and sits back with MARIA and ESTELLE.

SIMON:
What is wrong with you people! You sore losers -- you -- you crybaby snowflakes!

As he keeps sputtering, SIMON kneels to pick up his rice krispy square.

SIMON:
Can't you -- can't you people have a legitimate debate? Not listening to people like me -- that's why you lost --

JANE:
I had no idea you were Russian, Simon.

MARIA:

(to JANE)

Hey, hey, that's enough.

(to SIMON)

You want to debate? We can debate. What would you like to debate, Simon?

SIMON:

You stupid special snowflakes --

MARIA:

Okay, so that's your opening argument. Well I graduated with a Double Major in Political Science and Criminology. Estelle's going to Kent State next fall to get her doctorate in Psychology, and Jane's, Jane, what's your summer job lined up?

JANE:

State Accounting Firm.

MARIA:

So stupid not so much. Now, special, well, first of all I'm sure we're all flattered --

SIMON:

Quit condescending to me, don't talk like I'm stupid --

MARIA:

Never even thought of that until you said so, Simon. But we're not special. We're just three regular girls. And a lot of people are doing what we're doing. In case you didn't hear, but since your favorite son took office and targeted the ACLU, they got about \$24 million in one weekend. So we're not special. And we're not alone.

SIMON:

That doesn't matter, that money doesn't matter, you --

MARIA:

And in terms of being, ah, what's your favorite word right now again? A "snowflake?" Meaning, what, someone with a fragile sense of self, who cries wolf when moderately challenged, let alone actually being threatened? Well, Simon, you're the one getting bent out of shape at a bake sale.

SIMON:

You can preen and be smug all you want -- that's just like a liberal. That's why you lost, you were too smug for the Rust Belt, for Workers, for us honest God-loving blue collar --

(CONTINUED)

ESTELLE:

Okay okay cut it out.
(to MARIA)
Mind if I...?

MARIA:

Be my guest.

ESTELLE:

Your guy has declared bankruptcy four times. He has no business acumen. He got millions from his Dad and managed to squander that and fall ass-backwards into slightly more money. And he's gonna screw over those Rust Belt workers you're pretending to care about, just like he's screwing over Veterans, who you also like to pretend to care about until they need jobs or healthcare or psychiatric help. Once they're homeless, they go from hero to liability in your eyes.

SIMON:

We don't believe in free rides --

ESTELLE:

Except for business owners, yeah? And hey, whatever happened to support the troops? Money. Money happened. And you know, Simon, you're right. About the Rust Belt, about factory workers and coal miners...they're fucked. And that is bad news. But those industries aren't gonna come back, because A, there's better technology out there, and B, if they do, we'll kill the earth. But your side doesn't want to admit America's been stumbling. You'll never admit we need new ways. You'll just keep bashing the working man's head into a wall and wondering why coins aren't popping out anymore. Legitimate enough a debate for you? Your response please.

SIMON:

You -- you --
(to JANE)
You violent psycho, you oughta be in prison!

SIMON rushes off. They watch him go.

JANE:

You're probably mad, right?

MARIA:

I should be, right?
(a pause)
And yet...

They laugh.

Scene 4

FAUSTUS' home. Day.

FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHELES re-enter.

FAUSTUS consults a list in one hand and holds a phone in the other.

FAUSTUS:

Okay. So that's...all of the private numbers for the
Reps. And...sent.

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

Am I ever going to be tired again? I feel like I should
have been tired by now.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

You can if you want to be.

FAUSTUS:

Maybe later. There's...so much to do.

(a pause)

So, Hell, huh?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes...?

FAUSTUS:

What exactly am I headed for there?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

There is no 'there,' Faustus. Hell is...anywhere and
everywhere. Just beyond you and me, even now, just out
of focus. I can stretch my arm through Hell right here
as easily as I cut the air. The realm we call Hell is
everywhere there is no rest. There is no limit to it.
Wherever pain might stretch -- wherever one is in pain
-- the world lost to them -- through hate or pain or
death -- that's Hell.

FAUSTUS:

Sounds like we're already hip-deep in it.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Being out of heaven -- opening your eyes from the
gentle peace they give you there -- the sun stings your
eyes. The dust bites your skin...everywhere.

FAUSTUS:

Guess I'm up to that.

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(dry laugh)

Oh, Faustus, shall I remind you you said this when your time at last comes? Look at me. Look in my eyes. You see me here. Fled from Hell. You think I flee something anything short of horrible?

FAUSTUS:

But it's all around us, isn't it? By your own admission.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes. Very.

FAUSTUS:

So then what good does fleeing do?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(a pause)

The act is enough. The luxury of fleeing -- enjoy it before it's gone, John Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

I'm not going to run from anyone. Certainly not anyone here.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

The Noble King John Faustus. The Brave President John Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

No, no, not like that.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Don't you intend to bring them down? Crack your enemies' skulls open and build an empire over their bones?

FAUSTUS:

Yeah. But I can do all that without leading. I know what I am, Mephistopheles, I'm angry, I'm smart, and with you I'm unbeatable, but I'm not a ruler.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

You could be, John.

FAUSTUS:

I mean. I've thought of it. Who wouldn't think of it. If someone could be that stupid, and get elected...imagine what someone smart could do. Someone with the right look. Someone who looked familiar, but, could actually make some progress...I've thought about it.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

John, far be it for me to suggest any --

FAUSTUS:

If not me, then. Roy. Or Maria maybe. But they'll need help. Someone to clear a path for them...maybe hold the wheel while they get prepared...

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes...?

ANGEL appears.

ANGEL:

Repent, John Faustus. This road leads only to terror.

FAUSTUS:

M -- Mephistopheles. Why is...?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I cannot address them. Listen only to me, John.

ANGEL:

You will hurt your family, Faustus. Think what they will say of you!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Think of your promise, John.

ANGEL:

Think of your friends!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Think of what they need, John! What they all need.
Think of your future!

FAUSTUS:

Let me -- let me think, huh.

ANGEL:

The world of God is constructed to his will! Would you overwrite him?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

What G -- G -- G -- what father would wish this for his children?

ANGEL:

What child can overtake his Father?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

You promised me, John!

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL:

Repent! Admit your wrongs and all is undone.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

You gave your word! For the future! For our future!

ANGEL:

For your immortal soul! Leave this transient world be!

FAUSTUS:

Can you leave! Can you please -- both of you -- LEAVE?!

The ANGEL disappears. MEPHISTOPHELES starts to exit but resists.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

John. Your word.

FAUSTUS:

I know. I know, I know, I -- I just...

(a pause)

You can do anything for me, yes?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Only limited by your imagination. May I stay?

FAUSTUS:

Yes. Stay.

(a pause)

Show me the Northern Lights.

MEPHISTOPHELES waves a hand and an Aurora Borealis dances in the air.

FAUSTUS:

I want a big sword.

MEPHISTOPHELES produces a glistening saber, jewels in the hilt, and kneels.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

My honored Lord.

FAUSTUS takes the sword and examines it in the light.

FAUSTUS:

Let me speak to God.

A tense silence.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Don't ask that of me.

FAUSTUS:

You said anything.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Don't ask this of me, please, John.

FAUSTUS:

Are you mine, or not, Mephistopheles?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I am yours!

(a pause)

But there is no way to reach Him. I cannot -- speak --
of -- that. I can not breach
that...that...f-f-f-firmament.

FAUSTUS:

And if you try?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

A tree may easier try to fly -- nothing comes of it.

FAUSTUS:

I feel like this puts an asterisk on the terms of our
agreement.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Anything on this earth your imagination conjures. I can
provide. But you will break me like a plate if you
continue this line of thought.

FAUSTUS is silent for a moment.

FAUSTUS:

Let's try the other way then. Let me speak to your
boss.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

This I *can* do. If you are certain.

FAUSTUS:

I think I'd like it. Put me at ease.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Not usually the elicited response.

MEPHISTOPHELES raises his arm.

Smoke, deep drumming, rumble of thunder.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIFER appears, flanked by two demons with the heads of boars.

LUCIFER:

Mephistopheles, hello...and you must be John Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

It's really you.

LUCIFER:

Son of the morning, here in the daylight. I hear you had a visitor from above...you have to know that's a false promise, John. The minute you get up there, they'd slam those sterling gates in your pert little nose.

FAUSTUS:

So it's a real deal, then? When my time is up --

LUCIFER:

Twenty-three years, forty-eight weeks, four days.

FAUSTUS:

My immortal soul is yours?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

It's just as I explained, John.

LUCIFER:

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

That's okay. Yes, Johnny. Your contract is signed, processed, notarized, and cleared. When the last minute ticks away, you're mine all mine.

FAUSTUS:

Bet you're excited for that.

LUCIFER:

We like to get what we want, don't we Johnny? And we're gonna give you what you want, aren't we, Mephistopheles?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Anything you want --

FAUSTUS:

-- On earth. Right?

LUCIFER:

Yes. That. Don't think of it as a bug so much as a feature. No influence. Besides. They'd have nothing positive for you.

FAUSTUS:

Tell me about Hell.

LUCIFER:

Ah, flipping to the back of the book, huh? Well...it's Hell. Every concept you have of it is, somewhere in there, true. Tell you the truth there are rooms, sections, districts even I haven't been to. Does that mean I'm slacking on my Divine duties, of course not! I'm just being thorough. Due diligence, one area at a time. Truth be told Faustus, you might go millennia without seeing me. But time really -- won't hold much water for you anyway. So don't think about it too hard.

FAUSTUS:

I think I might. It being my immortal soul is all.

LUCIFER:

(an edge)

You looking to back out, Johnny? Buyer beware, it's a little late for that.

FAUSTUS:

No, just -- investigating.

LUCIFER:

Well I'll read you all the fine print you want. *I've* got nothing but time...but is this how you want to use your boon? Going through the Terms and Conditions?

FAUSTUS:

Well let's talk about that boon, huh.

LUCIFER:

Of course, of course.

FAUSTUS:

You have a lot of pull on earth?

LUCIFER:

Loaded question.

FAUSTUS:

Just asking. You meddle in world politics? You jump into a lot of kids these days? White guys who got ignored by one too many girls and have to shoot up a school, is that because of you?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Please, John, speak with respect.

LUCIFER:

No, no, it's fine...although maybe he's on to something Johnny. About respect. But in answer to your question...I hate to break this news, bud, but...no. That is not me. I do not touch politics myself. I mean, my history...my rhetoric had a price tag. And living on earth? Not for me. You people get tired, you get -- winded going up stairs. I'm fine. Now, the school shooters and such -- wouldn't you know it, they never even consider coming to me. They do that all on their own. They think they're too good for Lucifer. No, those bargain bin idiots you're so worried about, I and my associates haven't had word one with them. On this side at least. No, John boy, that's not why I do these deals. That's not why you've got that hell of a toothpick in your hands, or why our mutual friend here is gonna be at the ready for the next two decades-and-change. No, no. I do it -- we do it -- we wait for you to ask out loud -- we wait until you're ready to buy the car, and then we bring the lot to you. And why? For the souls? Well, if you want to be boring about it, sure. But there's no shortage of souls coming down. It isn't much about the cash flow. No, John, I'm *interested*. I want to see what you humans do with what we give you. What's worth your soul to you people? Power? Fame? A lover? It's a lover *like sixty percent of the time*. But it's all in service of a simple goal: I want to see what happens. And I wish, oh how I wish, that one of you would impress me. Maybe that's on me for trying and trying. But I just can't stop, I'm what you might call pathological.

FAUSTUS:

So you're official answer is "To see what will happen?"

LUCIFER:

What better answer is there?

(a pause)

Now, I like you, Johnny, *ooh*, I like you...here's what I'll do. I'll give you a little insight. How to really make the most of what you're given. You're in my company now, John Faustus. And we have some...industry resources...you might like. Have a seat.

LUCIFER, with a flourish, transforms the set into a vibrant, living, pulsing Hell, dangerous but enticing and hypnotic.

THE PAGEANT OF SINS enter: PRIDE, GREED, WRATH, ENVY, GLUTTONY, SLOTH, LUST, then HELEN of TROY and JUDAS ISCARIOT.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIFER:

Feast your eyes, Johnny, on all the greatest tools for the governing of man.

PRIDE:

Good day, Faustus. I'm called Pride. Most potent of our company.

LUCIFER:

(smirking)
It's true, it's true.

PRIDE:

I whisper in our ears to push all others down. We who work so hard and come so far have worked all on our own! Why should others eat of the harvest we alone have toiled for? Stoke this fire -- conjure the allies of your enemies into ticks, into mosquitoes and leeches and pests -- and they will cannibalize themselves in little time. It's easier to bury your friend than bury your embarrassment, Faustus. And you'll also do better to convince them your opponent is beneath them -- Status, though invisible, has held up the frame of oppression for centuries. Turn that suit of sables to your will, and all is yours.

GREED:

Greed comes next, Faustus. You want to know what I know, don't you? All the knowing in the world? You'd pull it out of my head if you could, leaving me drooling on the floor. I don't blame you. I'd do the same thing to you. So would everyone to everyone else. Push comes to shove -- if they think it's going, they'll take it away themselves, strip a supermarket like piranhas on a calf when a scarcity is coming. Never mind that milk and bread spoil in no time, the having is what drives folks.

WRATH:

Don't forget Wrath, John. Once these swords come out, once the tongue tastes its first drop of blood, not all the water in all the frothing seas can quench that thirst. The clatter of steel on steel -- condition one so only that rude music calms their nerves -- manageable as Hindu cows, no matter how their horns will stab the air. Merely point them in the right direction and release. The enemy is here! No, the enemy is there! No, the enemy is all around us! No, the enemy lurks far away but watching, ever watching! The enemy is in your backyard! The enemy is who you used to trust! Spin them round like this and you'll have no debates.

(CONTINUED)

ENVY quietly moves toward FAUSTUS, touching his face.

ENVY:

A lovely face you have, John. What did you do to earn it?

FAUSTUS:

Just, uh, born with it. Or, lucky I guess.

ENVY lunges at FAUSTUS, the other Sins restrain him.

ENVY:

I want it! What did you do to earn it that I didn't do? Fate is unacceptable -- you've cheated me by taking it! And once my eyes land on something not for me -- I will have it, or I will have it destroyed. You call me Envy -- I call you the envious one -- trying to attack me where I dwell. Everything's for you -- to recognize you -- make it easier for you -- I want mine!

GLUTTONY:

That's enough, bud, that's enough. Take a seat. You'll have to excuse my friend, John. I'm Gluttony. He's right though, your face is delightful. I'd love to have it for myself too...I'm accustomed to the finer things, you see. And why not? I deserve them. I deserve the finest foods, the easiest life -- it's hard work getting here! Why not stop -- drink in all we have -- and get more! If it's not for these pleasures, these delicious delights -- symbols of our victory -- then why do it at all? Make your soul Great Again -- and celebrate! Flush yourself on celebration! Thinking -- working -- struggle -- those are for the unsuccessful.

LUST:

Hi there, Mr. Faustus. God, I bet you could really -- mm -- show me a thing or two, huh? I bet you'd like to, too. Wouldn't it be fun? Take me up -- maybe you're in control first -- but then we switch it up. I'm on you. You're mine. It feels so good -- the feeling -- *just feeling* -- being in charge. What I say goes. Huh? Sounds fun, right? God, the high of control -- it's the sexiest sensation. They're yours. You own them, body and -- well. You know. Or you could. Just let a bitch know.

GLUTTONY retires back with the others. SLOTH stumbles forward, distracted.

SLOTH:

They wanted me to talk to you too. But you've probably got it, right? I'm Sloth. You probably had that figured out. The others -- they took care of it. I didn't need to leave home -- I could have just stayed...it's so much easier to let other people fight my fights...the victory we can share -- but if it goes wrong, I didn't have to have any part in it. It's just easier for me, personally. And simpler. And I don't like to talk about such serious topics, isn't it just easier to take it easy?

SLOTH joins the others.

FAUSTUS:

(re: HELEN and JUDAS)

Then who are they? That's all Seven.

LUCIFER:

So glad you asked.

JUDAS:

I am Judas Iscariot, Faustus. Disciple and betrayer of Christ.

HELEN OF TROY:

I am Helen of Troy. The face that launched a thousand ships, and ended countless lives.

JUDAS:

Hear us speak -- on the unspoken underwriting sin.

HELEN OF TROY:

The sin of Passion.

JUDAS:

Like the others, it sneaks in small and slow. Then grows. And swells. And swallows you whole. The man you swear to -- he lacks the verve you hoped he'd have. You want -- *so badly* -- for him to feel the fire in himself he lit in you -- but he doesn't! But there are forces arising -- the pharisees have sway -- something great must happen to light that fire -- if not in him, then in everyone else. So Passion leads you to do what must be done. For the good of the fire. Against him who lit it for you. Against your own self. And against what you really want -- but what you really need. Passion washes all the questioning away -- all the gray is blasted into light.

HELEN OF TROY:

Passion pulls you away from the man who hurts you -- beats you -- calls you his prize. The foreign prince

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HELEN OF TROY: (cont'd)

with gentle hands -- he loves you, he sees you. And you know it will end in pain. You know many will die. Deep down, you even know they'll come and take you back. Your enemy has Achilles -- but you have Passion. And Passion can lure so many obstinate Greeks to their death with its beautiful fire.

JUDAS:

The Sins will coax the minds of your people, Faustus. The sins will court them, yes.

HELEN OF TROY:

But Passion, Faustus, Passion...

JUDAS and HELEN flank FAUSTUS, embracing him on either side. They both kiss him.

JUDAS:

Passion will make people jump to die for you, and never look back.

The SINS, JUDAS, and HELEN OF TROY disappear, though FAUSTUS tries to hold them.

LUCIFER:

Well? How'd that strike you, Faustus?

FAUSTUS turns to LUCIFER.

FAUSTUS:

All that. Out of nothing. Out of a few moments.

LUCIFER:

Your sugar daddy has deep pockets, Johnny. All you have to do is let me let you in.

FAUSTUS drops to his knees.

FAUSTUS:

I'm yours. Help me, and I'm yours.

LUCIFER:

I'll leave you to it...

LUCIFER raises MEPHISTOPHELES' chin and exits.

MEPHISTOPHELES produces his book again. FAUSTUS defiantly opens the book and reads.

FAUSTUS:

No more asking questions, Mephistopheles. No more wondering. I want to *do something*.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Tell me where.

They exit in a flourish.

ACT IIScene 1

FAUSTUS' Parents' Home.

SIMON and MOTHER.

MOTHER:

Have you been eating enough?

SIMON:

I'm eating plenty, Mother. Plenty of tuna and crackers.

MOTHER:

Tuna and crackers? That's it?

SIMON:

Well all my money's getting funneled into the frat,
so...

MOTHER:

Well, you don't *have* to be in a fraternity to enjoy
college, Simon.

SIMON:

So, what, I just give up on my brothers?

MOTHER:

No, you pay for your own fraternity.

SIMON:

Of course.

MOTHER:

You could have to pay for your fraternity *and* your
tuition, Simon. And I think the words you're looking
for now are "Thank you, Mother."

SIMON:

Jeez, it was just a joke.

MOTHER:

I don't find disrespect funny, Simon.

SIMON:

John talks all the shit he wants --

MOTHER:

Language --

(CONTINUED)

SIMON:

Oh, whatever -- he does whatever he wants and you don't say anything.

MOTHER:

Don't compare yourself to John. He and you have your own issues separately and together. There's no need to...

SIMON:

He's a lefty snowflake crybaby and I have to listen to him whine? He should have stayed in Germany with his nose in a book.

MOTHER:

I don't want to hear anymore complaining --

SIMON:

He's a Cuck.

MOTHER:

That's not a word.

SIMON:

Faggot --

MOTHER:

(stern)

SIMON! We do not say that about someone in our family.

SIMON:

You know --

MOTHER:

We know nothing of the sort. Your father and I raised you both Christian -- and I believe somewhere in there you both still are.

SIMON:

I actually go to Church. John's the one running around with atheists and --

MOTHER:

How many times do I have to tell you to stop? How many languages?

SIMON:

I'm just saying, you'd never tell him to pay for all this --

MOTHER:

He did pay for Germany --

(CONTINUED)

SIMON:

Oh, whatever -- that's not the same --

MOTHER:

He got it on scholarship.

SIMON:

It's not the same!

MOTHER:

Simon, you want to keep bringing up John, don't be surprised when the comparison doesn't turn in your favor.

SIMON:

John, John, John -- glad I'm a whole lot of nothing at all to you.

MOTHER:

Simon, I love you, just as much as I love John. Don't be so stupid, of course I love you.

SIMON:

He's gotten weirder. Did you notice. I don't know what they did to him in Germany, but he's weirder and weirder. You seen him lately? Seen what he and his friends have been up to? Protests and bake sales and picketing and petitions -- and collections and -- and demonstrations -- it's obnoxious! He's out there making us all look like idiots.

MOTHER:

He's found something to occupy his time. Even if it is foolish...sometimes you have to let people have their little -- distractions.

(a pause)

How are your frat brothers doing?

SIMON:

Everyone's so tetchy, liberals are all over the place, crawling around every classroom, every building on campus it feels like there's a protest every day. God, why won't they just let it go? They didn't care when Socialist Obama was President, where were those protests?

MOTHER:

It's so unpleasant to talk politics, Simon...

SIMON:

That doesn't stop John!

(CONTINUED)

MOTHER:

No, no it doesn't...and that upsets me too, but you two have to have your say...

SIMON:

It doesn't stop John. And you don't stop him, and Dad doesn't stop him...

MOTHER:

Between you and me, I'm not sure who your father voted for...

Stunned silence.

SIMON:

Not even Johnson?

MOTHER:

He won't tell me.

SIMON:

Even if he didn't vote for -- he had to have at least voted for Johnson, right, not -- ?!

MOTHER:

He might've. After all his talking about God and family -- he might have voted for that abortionist.

SIMON:

Christ, Dad.

MOTHER:

That Jezebel.

SIMON:

Some family, huh.

MOTHER:

And he's worried about John...I mean, I am too, but I just wish he'd give it a rest...

SIMON:

If they'd all just give it a rest.

MOTHER:

Don't talk about your father that way.

SIMON:

Well if he wasted his vote --

MOTHER slaps SIMON.

MOTHER:

That's your father.

SIMON simmers, nursing his face. Finally, he shoves some plates off a table.

SIMON:

You bitch. Don't you tell me how to live.

SIMON storms off. MOTHER watches him go.

Scene 2

The White House.

FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHELES enter.

FAUSTUS:

This is really The White House?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

1600 Penn, Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

Alright. Here we are then. Sword, Mephistopheles.

MEPHISTOPHELES produces the sword and gives it to FAUSTUS.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Oh-ho! Getting right to the end game, I see.

FAUSTUS:

You don't think so?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I like the direct approach, you'll hear no complaint from me.

FAUSTUS:

But is it what you would do?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(a pause)

Don't ask what I would do to mortals.

FAUSTUS:

(a pause)

Okay.

(a pause)

Hmm. Maybe a more...subtle approach.

Voices from Off. MEPHISTOPHELES waves an arm.

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES:

We're invisible.

FAUSTUS:

This is amazing.

THE "PRESIDENT" enters, flanked by TONI and several stuffy advisors.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Did you see that? Did you see them? The them? The -- it was too much. The crowd was -- I liked that a lot, did you like that a lot?

ADVISOR 1:

So much, sir.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Right! Me too. I liked it too. So why -- why is everyone so -- everyone's so angry about it -- if they didn't want to be here -- be President, you know --

ADVISORS:

(rabble)

Yes sir...of course...makes no sense sir...

TONI:

They're just a few whiny snowflakes, sir. They're mad because they didn't get a participation trophy for losing so hard.

ADVISOR 1:

Yes sir, just some snowflakes.

ADVISOR 2:

Just a few million snowflakes.

THE "PRESIDENT":

I tell ya. Lemme tell ya. This is a -- this is a tough gig. I'd like to see someone try to do this as well as I'm -- I'm doing pretty well for how hard they're putting the screws to me.

ADVISOR 3:

We'll bring them to heel, sir.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Yeah, we will. You're fuckin' right about that. I'll sign a few more Execution Orders --

TONI:

Executive.

(CONTINUED)

THE "PRESIDENT":

Don't interrupt me sugartits, you got something to say?

TONI:

Executive Orders, Mr.P -- they're called Executive Orders.

THE "PRESIDENT":

(to ADVISORS)

Get a load of her, huh. Executive Orders. Okay. If you say so. I trust you, so if you say, it's probably -- yeah, why not. We'll go with that.

TONI:

Yes sir. They're lining some up even now -- and we'll have you on the show at 8 tonight. To talk about your new hotel.

THE "PRESIDENT":

To talk about the Hotel, right?

TONI:

Yes sir.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Good.

(to ADVISOR)

Am I still on with Epstein for this weekend.

ADVISOR 4:

Yes sir.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Good, good. I tell ya, standing around all day, with the old ball and chain around -- makes a man's cock wanna fly north for Summer, don't it? She's old, we can talk about it, I ain't blind. Makes me yearn for some younger meat. My daughter --

(to TONI)

Where's she been lately? Miss that piece of ass.

(to room)

Now that's a piece off ass. Oughta call up some of her exes and ask how she tastes. She better taste good, she's coming from top stock. But I gotta get away. I gotta get out to Epstein's place. Those little chicks -- the Kobe beef of pussy, I'm telling you guys. "The Lolita Express!"

(to TONI)

I bet you'd even like it. They got all types.

TONI:

It sounds lovely, sir.

FAUSTUS:

(sotto)
Jesus fucking Christ.

ADVISOR 2:

Did anyone else hear that?

FAUSTUS sucks his teeth. MEPHISTOPHELES walks forward and waves his hand in front of TONI to show it's ok.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Hey, I'm talkin' here, ain't I?

FAUSTUS steps toward THE "PRESIDENT."

ADVISOR 4:

Just a moment, sir --

THE "PRESIDENT":

That's Mr. President, huh? I won the damn thing, can't I get called the right --

FAUSTUS boxes THE "PRESIDENT" on the nose.

ADVISORS freeze.

THE "PRESIDENT":

What the goddamn fuck! Is this ISIS? Was that ISIS?

TONI:

There's no one here.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Which one of you fucking cunts punched me!

ADVISOR 1:

No one touched you, sir.

FAUSTUS kicks THE "PRESIDENT" in the stomach.

THE "PRESIDENT":

Stop that! I'll kill you! I'll shoot you Live on TV!

ADVISOR 3:

Nothing's happening, sir!

THE "PRESIDENT":

YOU DON'T TELL ME WHAT'S REAL, BITCH!

TONI:

But there's really nothing -- you're imagining --

(CONTINUED)

ADVISOR 2:

(to ADVISOR 3; sotto)
I heard Reagan got like this too.

ADVISOR 3:

This soon, though?

ADVISOR 2:

I know...

*MEPHISTOPHELES waves his arm and all the ADVISORS
turn to go.*

ADVISOR 4:

We'll see you later sir!

ADVISOR 2:

Interview at 8!

They exit.

TONI:

Hey! Hey, come back -- don't leave me alone with him --
you know how he gets -- !!

FAUSTUS pulls THE "PRESIDENT"'s pants down.

*MEPHISTOPHELES taps TONI on the forehead. She can
see him now. She screams and runs out.*

FAUSTUS:

You show yourself to her?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Does that anger you?

FAUSTUS:

Not at all man, I love that.

THE "PRESIDENT":

I have money. I can -- you want a Cabinet seat? You
want someone out? Say their name, they're gone. You
want girls?

FAUSTUS:

Be Quiet.

THE "PRESIDENT":

I'll give you everything. You want my wife? You won't
need long, she's got tits like --

FAUSTUS:

I'm serious. Stop talking.

MEPHISTOPHELES raises an arm and THE "PRESIDENT" becomes mute. He struggles to speak, making gagging sounds.

FAUSTUS:

I'm still invisible?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes.

FAUSTUS:

Good.

(to THE "PRESIDENT")

Listen to me.

FAUSTUS kicks him again in the stomach.

FAUSTUS:

I'm everyone you want to hurt. I'm every woman you groped.

Another kick.

FAUSTUS:

I'm every gay person you want to send away.

Another.

FAUSTUS:

I'm here on behalf of every black person you think is a criminal.

Another.

FAUSTUS:

And for all the Mexicans you think are rapists.

Another.

FAUSTUS:

And for every woman who knows you'd know about rapists.

FAUSTUS pulls him by his hair.

FAUSTUS:

More importantly, I want you to know. I want you to die. But not yet. Not until you've proven you know fuck-all about being President. You swindled the country, but you will not stick the landing. You probably can sense that already, even you have to know you're not doing a good job.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS punches him in the stomach.

FAUSTUS:

So you just keep doing your best, you little fascist mosquito. And know that only when it's clear you've nowhere else to fall, when the whole world hates you -- when that happens, I'll come back, and I'll kill you where you stand. You're going to be a disaster of a president. And you're going to die in this office.

FAUSTUS drops him to the ground. He nods at MEPHISTOPHELES, who is beaming with pride. They disappear.

THE "PRESIDENT" worms around and coughs and finally can talk again.

THE "PRESIDENT":

(sputtering)

The President doesn't have to deal with this shit! The President is above this!!

The sound of TV static and a dead channel.

Scene 3

FAUSTUS' home.

Candles and romantic music.

FAUSTUS and HENRY kissing on FAUSTUS' couch. They speak between kisses.

HENRY:

The others will be here soon.

FAUSTUS:

The door's locked, we'll hear them.

HENRY:

That's not what concerns me.

FAUSTUS:

Then what does concern you, Henry?

HENRY:

Having to stop.

FAUSTUS:

That *is* concerning, isn't it.

Long sequence of amorous embrace.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY:

If we keep going, I don't care if the tabernacle choir comes in and stares -- it's gonna be hard to stop.

FAUSTUS:

Hmm.

FAUSTUS pulls away.

FAUSTUS:

Don't think of it as a stop. Think of it as a pause. But we will be coming back to this.

HENRY:

Promises, promises. Wish you could've made it to the Town Hall earlier, Roy gave this incredible speech --

FAUSTUS:

I wish I could have too --

HENRY:

People were clapping every other sentences, "Damn Right" this, and "Let 'Em Know!" that...

FAUSTUS:

He'll be a Senator yet.

A knock at the door.

FAUSTUS:

Who's there?

ROY:

(off)

Us!

FAUSTUS:

It's them.

FAUSTUS waves a hand and the candles all snuff out. He picks up a remote and presses a button, pausing the music.

HENRY goes to the door. ROY, JANE, ESTELLE, and MARIA enter.

MEPHISTOPHELES enters from the other side.

ROY:

(re:MEPHISTOPHELES)

This your new friend?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Michael. Pleasure to meet you all. The things John has told me...I'm very excited to be here.

ROY:

Pleasure to meet you Michael. I'm Roy.

JANE:

Jane.

MARIA:

I'm Maria.

HENRY:

I'm --

MEPHISTOPHELES:

You're Henry, I've definitely heard John say your name before.

(to ESTELLE)

And...?

ESTELLE:

I'm Estelle.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

That's right. Great to meet you all.

FAUSTUS:

Michael's actually -- he's a huge part of what I have for you guys. For what I have to show you. I couldn't have done it without him, really.

ROY:

So what's the big secret?

JANE:

Yeah, you plant a bomb on Air Force One?

ESTELLE:

Jane. We don't -- we don't talk like that.

JANE:

What, you think any of us are bugged?

ESTELLE pulls out her phone and taps it.

ESTELLE:

Just because we don't think we are --

FAUSTUS:

No, we did not plant a bomb on Air Force One.

(CONTINUED)

JANE:

(to ESTELLE)
They hear that?

FAUSTUS:

But we broke into the White House.

ESTELLE:

What?!

MARIA:

John, how? When?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I've got a few tricks for entering places -- the key is walking with purpose.

FAUSTUS:

And while we were there...we punched him. *Him*. 45 right in the face.

HENRY:

What?

JANE:

Bullshit.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Observe.

MEPHISTOPHELES waves his arms and THE "PRESIDENT" and TONI appear Upstage as though on a TV screen. THE "PRESIDENT"'s face is bruised noticeably.

TONI:

It's gotta be the liberal media. The previous administration must have -- rigged up --

THE "PRESIDENT":

It's the goddamn Jews. Big time. Believe me. It's the Jews.

TONI:

Sir --

THE "PRESIDENT":

Mr. President! My name is Mr. President now! Believe me, I like being called by my name, okay? Alright?

TONI:

Yes. Sir. Mr. Pr --

(CONTINUED)

THE "PRESIDENT":

I want to know how he got in. What kind of money he's paying them -- that he paid to get to me.

TONI:

They're scared of you cracking down on them -- they know how tough you are.

THE "PRESIDENT":

I need to think. I need to go play some golf or something, fuck's sake.

THE "PRESIDENT" and TONI disappear.

HENRY:

They're a mess.

FAUSTUS:

Right?

HENRY:

That is incredible. You did that to them?

ROY:

They're...completely unprepared...

FAUSTUS:

See the bruises on his face?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

That's all because of John.

JANE:

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

And what did you bring to this, Michael?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Support. A way in, a way out, nothing much really.

FAUSTUS:

He's being modest.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Oh, *never*.

ROY:

They're really a mess.

MARIA:

This is -- this is like -- an act of terrorism. This is Federal. This is Guantanamo-level.

(CONTINUED)

ROY:

They didn't -- do anything?

ESTELLE:

(to FAUSTUS)

Your knuckles are actually bruised. You really gave it to him.

MARIA:

How is there not a manhunt for you right now, John?

FAUSTUS:

Oh, well, uh --

ROY:

Of course. It's obvious.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Isn't it?

ROY:

They won't put the info out there. It'd be -- such a huge blow. This early -- an assault on the White House -- by some random white guy. Not any of the usual bogeymen. With no visible minority to spin it toward...they just have to sit on it. And stew in it.

ESTELLE:

Still, you might want to watch your back, John, could be a black van following you right now.

MARIA:

Following any of us.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I wouldn't worry. I get the feeling John's going to be on this earth for a good while yet.

MARIA:

You're insane.

JANE:

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

You like the crazy ones, huh?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I just like being useful.

JANE:

Oh, I think we've got some uses for you...

ROY:

Ok. That's enough news for one day. Henry, mind coming back to my place? I want to run some flyer layouts by you. And discuss some other things.

HENRY:

(small pause)

Um -- sure, yeah, no problem.

ROY:

I'll be in touch, John.

HENRY and ROY exit, HENRY checking in with FAUSTUS before leaving.

MARIA:

I mean it. Be *careful*. You're no good dead. None of us are.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Oh, he definitely is not.

JANE:

Think you can help us keep an eye on him?

MEPHISTOPHELES claps a hand on FAUSTUS' shoulder.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

He's not going anywhere on my watch.

JANE:

(to FAUSTUS)

Great to meet your friend, John.

MARIA:

Let us know before you go out and do anything else utterly unprecedented.

FAUSTUS:

Un-presidented. There's an idea.

JANE:

You've had your turn already. Let someone else go next.

MARIA:

Jane.

MARIA and JANE exit.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Good friends you have, John.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

You like them?

ESTELLE:

We'd be happy to have your help, Michael.

FAUSTUS:

Michael's going to be around, aren't you Michael?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Oh, you couldn't keep me away.

FAUSTUS:

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

Mind if we...catch up later?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Hmm?

MEPHISTOPHELES reads the room.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Oh.

ESTELLE:

It was great meeting you.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Right. Okay, let me just, ah...

MEPHISTOPHELES, unsure how to exit a room like a person, awkwardly walks out.

ESTELLE:

Interesting friend you've got there.

FAUSTUS:

I do keep interesting company.

ESTELLE:

Oh?

FAUSTUS:

(smirk)

Yeah.

ESTELLE:

I must be in very rarefied air then, huh? To be with the great John Faustus.

FAUSTUS kisses ESTELLE. They embrace.

FAUSTUS:

You've got me feeling pretty special too. To be in your presence.

ESTELLE:

You think you feel important now...? Just you wait.

ESTELLE and FAUSTUS get intimate as lights come shift.

Scene 4

The next day.

FAUSTUS' apartment, empty.

A fist wrapped in a blanket punches through a window.

The fist unlocks the door from behind, through the window.

The door opens. SIMON enters.

He scours the room.

He finds MEPHISTOPHELES' book, opens it, and smiles.

SIMON:

You idiot...magic? You nutjob. You crunchy hippie idiot.

Voices from off.

MARIA:

John, you...home...?

MARIA and JANE enter, seeing the open door.

SIMON:

Are you two into this too?

MARIA:

What happened to the window?

SIMON:

Is this you all's thing? Oh man. It's a cult. John's in a cult.

MARIA:

What are you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

JANE:

Nice blanket you got there.

SIMON flips through the book.

SIMON:

You all have one of these? This like the Liberal Loony Toon Handbook?

JANE:

You know, if you had your ideal gun rights, we could shoot you right now and get away with it.

SIMON:

You'd like that, wouldn't you, feminazi?

JANE:

You'd know from nazis, wouldn't you.

MARIA:

Simon, if you don't have any reason to be here, which it's looking pretty clear you don't, you need to get out of John's apartment.

SIMON:

Or what, you're gonna sic the demons on me?

(flipping through)

Belial, and uh, and uh, demogorgon? These aren't even words.

MARIA:

What are you going on about?

SIMON:

This! Dear brother's favorite little book. Look at this thing. Where'd he get this? I saw John at this coffee place yesterday -- he would not let this thing go. He *clung to this book*. He was reading like a fiend -- the look on his face --

MARIA:

Why were you at this coffee place, Simon?

SIMON:

Because John was --

(a pause)

Mind your own business! The point is -- I don't know what you all put in his head, but John's never needed any help filling his head with bullshit.

JANE:

Never seen that book before in my life.

(CONTINUED)

MARIA:

Wherever John got that book, he didn't get it from any of us.

JANE:

And whatever it is, it's his.

MARIA:

And not yours.

SIMON:

You liberals aren't very good at reality, are you? Things like who's the president, and who's in charge, and who's the man, and who has John's book...why can't you just accept what's in front of your faces?

JANE:

This coming from the climate change denying race hater who thinks the floating spaghetti monster in the sky prefers primates of his own skin color.

SIMON:

Being hateful is not very attractive in a woman --

JANE:

Aw, shame, I was really gunning for your shriveled choke cherry dick, Simon.

SIMON:

Talk like that and you'll never find a husband.

JANE:

Well Fuck All, where's my worth gonna come from then?

MARIA:

Jane. Easy.

JANE:

What do you suggest we do, Maria, call the Pigs on him? Or escort him out, bloody nose first?

MARIA:

(to SIMON)

Do us all a favor and get out of here, huh?

SIMON:

Maybe in a minute doll. Gotta say, I'm getting curious about this.

(reading; with difficulty)

O magnum d...daemonem se demoni inferni, audite m-m-meh. D- da mihi auditi. Affer mihi in salutem.

MEPHISTOPHELES appears with fire and thunder.

(CONTINUED)

He regards SIMON, JANE and MARIA for a moment.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Oh.

(a pause)

Hello.

(a pause)

This is going to be tedious isn't it.

SIMON:

It -- it works?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Of all the people in all the worlds to stumble on me...

SIMON:

Demon. You are mine now.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Hello Jane.

JANE:

Michael? Is that...are you...?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Michael's more of a...nickname, I must confess.

SIMON:

Do not speak to them -- speak to me only! I am your master!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(small smirk)

You, sir?

SIMON:

My name is Simon Faustus. Kneel to me, your summoner.

MEPHISTOPHELES slowly sinks to one knee.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes, Mr. Faustus.

SIMON:

I brought you here. With my power -- haven't seen John do this.

MARIA:

(to JANE; nervous)

Is this really...?

(CONTINUED)

JANE:

You're...you're really...?

SIMON:

Help me! Please!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

They can't save you, Simon...you're thoroughly in my grip now.

SIMON:

I'll do anything you want! Name it!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Only salvation can save you from me, I'm afraid.

MARIA:

(to JANE)

We need to go.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Jane, what do you think? Does he have a shot?

MARIA:

Jane! Come on!

MARIA exits.

JANE:

You can hurt him like this?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I can hurt him all sorts of ways.

MEPHISTOPHELES waves his arm and the flames cease. Then with another wave he slams SIMON to the floor.

SIMON:

I -- I can give you names -- I have friends doing stuff you wouldn't -- you wouldn't believe -- I can take you to them -- burn them! Set them on fire! I think one of them is gay anyway so --

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Quiet. You'll speak when spoken to.

SIMON:

How did John ever get --

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I said *quiet!*

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES waves an arm and SIMON's jaw clenches shut.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your brother got to meet me because I liked his spirit.
I could size up his potential from worlds away.

(a pause)

Do you think you have that same Faustus spirit?

With difficulty, SIMON nods his head.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Would you care to make a deal, then?

JANE:

Michael...

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Please. Call me by C-C-Christian name. Mephistopheles.
(to SIMON)

Well?

SIMON:

I'll do anything. I'll give you anything.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your soul?

SIMON:

Yes. For the power you've got, anything.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Anything.

SIMON:

Yes.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

The souls of your friends and allies --

SIMON:

Yes.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Any chance at love --

SIMON:

Yes.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your very future.

(CONTINUED)

SIMON:

Yes! Yes! Anything!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Well. I think we have a deal then. You truly want me to give you all I have for you?

SIMON:

If John can do it. I can show him.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Give me your hand.

MEPHISTOPHELES takes SIMON's hand and pulls him up.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

You swear yourself to me?

SIMON:

I do.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Body and soul.

SIMON:

Body and soul.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Then. By the power vested in me by Satan eternal...

MEPHISTOPHELES waves his hand and SIMON bursts into flames again. MEPHISTOPHELES produces a sword.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

May I escort you to your eternal resting place.

SIMON:

What?! We had a deal!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your soul was always in our dominion, Simon. You had nothing to bargain with.

SIMON:

You can't do this! You can't do this to me!

MEPHISTOPHELES raises the blade, falters.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Don't test me.

SIMON:

You can't kill me...you're not...allowed...

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Silence!

JANE:

Anything stopping me?

MEPHISTOPHELES turns to JANE, considers. He offers her the sword.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Do the divine work.

JANE takes the sword.

JANE:

John is gonna love this.

SIMON:

Don't you touch me you psycho slut, you get back --

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your wicked soul will fly down to the shade, Simon. You will scream and scream and no sound will escape your mouthless shape. Your bones will break and break and you'll live inside that breaking forever. As you always would have. As you always will.

JANE:

Say hi to all the other klansmen.

JANE runs SIMON through on the sword. His flames extinguish and he falls over dead.

JANE:

Wow. That was...I've got chills.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

That was thrilling.

JANE:

Right? Wow.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Suppose we should clean this before John gets home.

MEPHISTOPHELES snaps his fingers and a trapdoor in the floor opens and a demon drags SIMON's body down.

MEPHISTOPHELES:
Much better.

Scene 5

FAUSTUS' apartment.

FAUSTUS, MOTHER, and FATHER enter.

FAUSTUS:
Gone? Just gone.

FATHER:
He's up and gone without a trace, son.

FAUSTUS:
You're sure he's not just up in the woods with frat brothers or something?

MOTHER:
He hasn't tried to contact you?

FAUSTUS:
Why would he talk to me?

MOTHER:
You're brothers.

FAUSTUS:
And?

MOTHER:
To some families that means something, John.

FAUSTUS:
Yeah okay. If he comes by ready to finally realize his clock tower dream, I'll send you a text.

FATHER:
We're just worried is all.

MOTHER:
(to FAUSTUS)
He's your family too. You have to worry too.
(a pause)
You been sleeping okay, son?

FAUSTUS:
What?

FATHER:
You're lookin' a little -- wrung out.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

Oh. I mean. You know. Stayin' busy, right?

MOTHER:

Busy doing what?

FAUSTUS:

Reading -- studying -- helping the group out --

MOTHER:

You need to sleep. What are they doing that could be so important?

FAUSTUS:

I don't need that much sleep --

MOTHER:

Don't be stupid. Sleep.

FATHER:

(a pause)

Well anyway. Let us know if you here from him. Or if you need anything.

FAUSTUS:

Yeah, thanks.

(a pause)

Thank you sir.

MOTHER:

And you should call us more anyway. We're your family. We're still here.

MOTHER and FATHER exit.

MEPHISTOPHELES enters.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

John.

FAUSTUS:

Sorry. They're just going on about -- Simon.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I know where he is.

FAUSTUS:

(a pause)

Okay...where?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(a pause)

In Hell.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

(stunned)
He died? He's dead.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(a pause)
Yes.

FAUSTUS:

Oh.
(a pause)
How did he? How did he die?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(a long pause)
Don't ask me that Faust --

FAUSTUS:

Tell me, Mephistopheles.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(struggling)
Jane. Jane killed him. He -- he broke into your house -- read the book we gave you -- summoned me...he threatened Maria and Jane -- and tried to manipulate me -- to use me -- I bound him. And Jane dispatched him. His soul was already bound for us. He tried to bargain anyway. He -- he...

FAUSTUS:

Stop! Be quiet.

FAUSTUS paces a moment.

FAUSTUS:

So that's it then. He's gone.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I can conjure him --

FAUSTUS:

No! Please, no. I don't -- I don't really see why I'd want that.

(a pause)
I guess bringing him back's out the question?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

It is not.

FAUSTUS:

Huh.
(a pause)
Really?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Anything you ask of me on this Earth, Faustus...

FAUSTUS:

Hmm.

(a long pause)

No. No, that's -- not really plausible is it.

No.

Leave him where he is. He chose his life -- this is what he gets.

Besides -- we better save that trick for when we really need it, right?

Yes. I think so.

No, Mephistopheles. Leave Simon in the fire.

FAUSTUS turns to go, turns back.

FAUSTUS:

Jane, huh?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

With my sword.

FAUSTUS:

You two really hit it off, huh.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your circle of friends has very interesting people.

FAUSTUS:

(dry smirk)

Yeah well. We're all in it now, aren't we...

FAUSTUS goes.

MEPHISTOPHELES follows.

Scene 6

FAUSTUS' apartment.

FAUSTUS, HENRY, and ESTELLE drinking.

They're very cozy with each other.

HENRY:

You saw them?

FAUSTUS:

All of them.

(CONTINUED)

ESTELLE:

All of them, all of them how?

FAUSTUS:

Just all lined up. A procession. They spoke to me one by one.

MEPHISTOPHELES enters, silent, invisible to HENRY and ESTELLE.

HENRY:

What did they sound like?

FAUSTUS:

Human.

(a pause)

They sound like they might have been human. At some point.

HENRY:

Damn. That's scary.

ESTELLE:

What did they look like?

FAUSTUS:

...They...they looked...

(struggling for words)

Maybe I can just show you.

HENRY and ESTELLE freeze.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Not the Sins.

FAUSTUS:

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

No?

MEPHISTOPHELES shakes his head.

FAUSTUS:

Why not?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Not at the moment. They're...mercurial.

FAUSTUS:

Is this another asterisk?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I can get them, but they may be...cross.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

(a pause)

Okay then.

(a pause)

But what about the other two?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Them, I can get you.

FAUSTUS:

Thank you.

(to ESTELL and HENRY)

The sins were...too much. But I can show you Judas and Helen.

JUDAS and HELEN OF TROY enter. ESTELLE and HENRY rise and move to them, inspecting them.

JUDAS:

We meet again, Faustus.

HELEN OF TROY:

How goes your Passion?

FAUSTUS:

It -- it certainly goes.

ESTELLE:

(to JUDAS)

You're beautiful.

(to HELEN OF TROY)

And you...Oh my God.

HELEN OF TROY:

Thank you.

HENRY:

You didn't tell us they looked so...

JUDAS:

Forlorn?

HENRY:

Beautiful.

JUDAS:

I forget about beauty sometimes. Down in the dark, in the fog.

HENRY:

Oh.

(a pause)

Well, you've got it.

(CONTINUED)

ESTELLE:

(to HELEN OF TROY)
God, look at this dress...

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Can she stop saying that word?

*THE ANGEL and LUCIFER appear on opposite sides of
the stage.*

FAUSTUS:

Go.

JUDAS and HELEN OF TROY disappear.

ANGEL:

Repent, Faustus.

HENRY:

John, what's wrong.

LUCIFER:

What's going on in your head, Johnny?

FAUSTUS:

I just -- I just need a minute, please.

ESTELLE:

Are you ok?

HENRY:

You want to lie down?

FAUSTUS:

No, no I -- yes. I just to rest for a second -- go
please --

LUCIFER:

What, don't want them to stay and watch? We could have
a real good time.

FAUSTUS:

Please!

HENRY and ESTELLE exit.

ANGEL:

Your hands are stained with brother's blood, Faustus.
It is the eldest crime.

FAUSTUS:

I didn't do that.

LUCIFER:

You're right. You didn't. So quit wringing your hands about it!

FAUSTUS:

I'm not --

LUCIFER:

Don't lie to me, boy, have you forgotten who I am? I can hear every bead of your sweat.

ANGEL:

Your conscience knows your inner truth, Faustus!

LUCIFER:

You're better off without him! You have to know that.
(to ANGEL)
And you have to admit the world is better off too.

ANGEL:

It is against His will all the same --

LUCIFER:

Then who cares about his will? You hear this John, they're asleep at the wheel. Now I don't mean to be a backseat driver, but it looks like you're drifting into the next lane. What do you think, Mephistopheles?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I -- me?

LUCIFER:

You feel properly utilized?

ANGEL:

Repent! Throw yourself upon the sword of His Holiness and you might yet see Heaven!

FAUSTUS:

Can't you two stop? I can't hear myself think.

LUCIFER:

You don't see Him making house calls like me, do you? What does that tell you?

FAUSTUS:

You're both messing me around -- I can't think --

LUCIFER:

Think? Who said anything about thinking?

ANGEL:

Surely you are damned if you don't let this go -- death already follows you?

LUCIFER:

John, you're special, but death being on your shoulder isn't what does it. It's you! Use what makes you special -- and *do something!*

FAUSTUS:

I can't do anything with you both --

A sharp knock at the door.

FAUSTUS:

Go! Both of you!

LUCIFER and ANGEL exit.

MEPHISTOPHELES steps into the shadows.

FAUSTUS answers the door. ROY and Maria enter.

MARIA:

John. We want to talk with you.

FAUSTUS:

What's going on?

ROY:

Maria saw -- she saw what happened to your brother.

FAUSTUS:

What -- happened to him?

ROY:

Don't lie to me John. You know. You know, don't you?

FAUSTUS:

I know he's dead, but --

ROY:

Where is he?

FAUSTUS:

Who?

ROY:

The Demon. 'Michael.'

MARIA:

Mephis -- ? Mephistopheles?

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES enters.

MEPHISTOPHELES:
My lord, I...

ROY:
God *Dammit*. God *Damn* God *Damn* God *DAMN IT*. John, do you have any idea what you've done?

FAUSTUS:
I can --

ROY:
I don't need you to explain! This is a dangerous liability, John. Jane's already burned. She's been radicalized, she's too dangerous for us to associate with --

FAUSTUS:
Wait, Jane's out?

MARIA:
The look in her eyes, John, when Simon was burning...

FAUSTUS:
(to MEPHISTOPHELES)
Burning?

MEPHISTOPHELES:
That's not what *killed* him...

ROY:
You be quiet.

MEPHISTOPHELES:
Pardon me?

FAUSTUS:
Down, Mephistopheles.

MEPHISTOPHELES relaxes.

FAUSTUS:
Why are you two here then?

MARIA:
You're not even sorry, are you?

FAUSTUS:
Sorry, for what?

(CONTINUED)

MARIA:

A demon! A violent literal demon! The body that could be linked to our group!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

There is no body to find --

FAUSTUS:

Fuck's sake, Mephistopheles!

(a pause; to ROY and MARIA)

So is that it? I'm out too? For what, for taking action? For getting *power* to *do something*?

Tense silence.

ROY:

You sure should be out.

MARIA:

We're definitely not happy with you.

ROY:

But...

(a pause)

But.

We need you John. That's the short version. We're -- strapped. For cash, for resources, exposure, mobility...all the things you -- and your *friend* -- can help us with. So much as I want to cut you loose, much as I want to bury you and denounce you and lock you up, honestly...we need you. We don't want you, but we need you.

Another tense silence.

FAUSTUS:

So what, I'm supposed to say thank you. Be so gosh darn joyful to be barely tolerated?

MARIA:

No, John. You're supposed to be sorry. You're supposed to be helping us. You're supposed to be better.

(a pause)

From here on out, you're out of the planning. You go where we want you to go, you say what we want you to say. You're not our brain anymore. You're our face. And that's all you are.

(to ROY)

Come on Roy. Let's go.

ROY:

Either you get it now, or you don't.

(a pause)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ROY: (cont'd)
Please don't make things worse for us.

FAUSTUS:
(a pause)
Yeah. Okay.

ROY and MARIA exit.

Loud static transition.

Scene 7

TONI appears as though on TV.

TONI:
...Terrible and terrifying groups in the South of the country are radicalizing themselves and each other -- and no race or group is safe from their pull.

Elsewhere onstage, JANE enters, crossing the street. A COP approaches her.

COP:
Excuse me Miss.

JANE:
I'm just walking here.

TONI:
Though no ringleader can be identified at this time, our President has succeeded in identifying several key members -- like this nice-looking young man, John Faustus.

MOTHER and FATHER join TONI.

TONI:
I have the young criminal's parents with me today in the studio. Thank you so much for joining us.

MOTHER:
I just don't know where we went so wrong.

COP:
Can I see some ID?

JANE:
Gotta be licensed to walk?

FATHER:
Now hold on a minute, we don't know anything about what John has or hasn't --

(CONTINUED)

TONI:

We know he's been sighted with other members of this terrorist group. And his social media presence -- particularly after this past election -- does not speak of patriotism.

MOTHER:

And I told him that -- I told him -- but he just wouldn't listen.

FATHER:

He was just mad -- he was just venting --

TONI:

His "venting" indicates a clear insubordination and, if we're being honest, a lack of respect. Can we just agree on that?

FATHER:

No! We can't!

COP:

Resisting isn't gonna help you ma'am.

JANE:

Well I'm sure as shit not gonna help you either.

COP pulls out a night stick. More COPS join him around JANE.

TONI:

Your son's radical liberal activities have been a matter of public record.

COP:

I'm gonna count to five.

MOTHER:

He just won't listen to us! He's been too far removed. I knew sending him to the city was a mistake. He should have stayed close, like our other son Simon.

COP:

One.

TONI:

And then there's the matter of his traveling to Germany recently...and staying there for months...

JANE:

Fuckin' do it, pig.

JANE pulls out her phone.

(CONTINUED)

JANE:

Do it live.

COP:

Ma'am. Two.

FATHER:

He was studying abroad!

TONI:

And what was he studying there? Germany has a, um, shall we say, spotty history with respecting freedom?

MOTHER:

I *know*, I told John just that...

FATHER:

When?

COP:

We just want an ID.

JANE:

ID my foot up your ass you hired thug.

COP:

Five.

The COPS beat JANE as she tries to fight back.

TONI:

(to FATHER)

Sir, I hate to point fingers --

FATHER:

What you're doing here is paranoia, this some kind of McCarthy bullsh --

TONI:

Sir this is a family show, and I'm a millennial, I don't like labels, so if you'd please --

COP:

Stay down!

JANE:

Make me, piggy!

JANE pulls out a switchblade and stabs a cop in the side.

COP:
Stupid bitch!

THE COPS subdue JANE and hold her down.

FATHER:
I'm through with this. Our son is not -- he is not a terrorist -- he's just angry is all -- he's not -- he's never been a threat to anyone, he's scared of his own shadow --

TONI:
For someone scared of his shadow, your son is sure spending a lot of time with darker elements of our culture --

FATHER:
Forget it.

FATHER exits.

MOTHER:
Get back here! Where are you going!

COP:
You pathetic cow.

COP kicks the subdued JANE in the head.

COP:
(to other COPS)
Take this bitch away.

COPS exit with JANE.

MOTHER:
You have to understand. I'm a good American. And I have trained myself to love the Lord and love this country. So to watch my son fall so far...it hurts me so much, Toni...it just hurts me so much...

TONI:
I'm sure it does, ma'am. Thank you for coming on today.

MOTHER:
Of course, any time. It was my pleasure.

MOTHER exits.

TONI:
Well, this terrorist cell may be tearing families apart moment by moment, but I'm receiving word that one member has been brought to justice after attempting to
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TONI: (cont'd)
attack a traffic cop in broad daylight. Our President does not believe in glorifying terrorists so this criminal's name will not be released to the public, but Americans can rest easy in their beds tonight knowing one more enemy of liberty has been brought in.

Scene 8

Prison Cell.

JANE, pacing.

JANE:
Fucking fascists! Military nazi stooges!

COP:
(off)
Quiet in there, inmate!

JANE:
Or what, you'll arrest me? Beat me? Like it's such a shocker.

Silence. JANE sits.

FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHELES enter.

FAUSTUS:
Jane!

JANE:
John? Mephistopheles?

MEPHISTOPHELES:
We're here now. It's alright.

FAUSTUS:
What did they do to you?

JANE:
They did what cops do.

FAUSTUS:
Let's get you out of here.

JANE:
We can't just leave, John.

FAUSTUS:
Jane, let's go. Mephistopheles, take us out of here.

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES:

As you wish, John.

JANE:

You can't seriously suggest we just run away...

COP:

(off)

What's going on down there...

FAUSTUS:

Jane, they're gonna be here soon -- they're gonna check --

JANE:

Look at my face, you two. They can't just get away with it --

MEPHISTOPHELES:

There are ways to repay them...

FAUSTUS:

We don't have time. It's too -- it's...

JANE:

This place is crawling with them. I don't even know if anyone else is arrested in here.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

This is just a waypoint. She's right, John, there's only law enforcement in here aside from us.

JANE:

Not even any real people. We need to hit back, and hard.

FAUSTUS:

We need to talk to the rest of the group --

JANE:

They're cowards, John! They're too scared to hit back -- they just want to talk and write and think and hope, no one else can do anything. Only we can actually act, don't you see!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

What would you have happen here, Jane?

JANE:

Burn them all. Burn them all alive, boil them in their skin.

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(nudging FAUSTUS)

A fine idea...

FAUSTUS:

I don't know, I -- it's just gonna cause more trouble
--

JANE:

Isn't that our whole point, John? Causing trouble?

FAUSTUS:

It might mess with the message -- we don't know how --

JANE:

They've labeled us terrorists, Faustus, we could save
baby Jesus from a tire fire and they'd say we hated
American industry.

FAUSTUS:

That doesn't mean we have to *be* that, though.

JANE:

So how do you propose we beat them, huh, John? With
discourse? Petitions? They don't care. They can't read.
They're animals and they need to be put down.

FAUSTUS:

Jane please, take a minute --

COP:

(off)

There's someone in the prisoner's cell!

(yelling)

Intruder in the cell!

Alarms begin.

FAUSTUS:

Great, we're gonna be arrested for breaking into a
prison.

(to JANE)

We have to go now.

JANE:

They can't just get away with it!

FAUSTUS:

They won't! We'll get back at them later!

JANE:

When, John? When?

(CONTINUED)

Silence.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I can get them for you, Jane.

JANE:

Yeah?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

As easily as snapping my fingers.

JANE:

Then let's do it!

MEPHISTOPHELES produces a small pearl-handled dagger.

FAUSTUS:

Mephistopheles --

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I wanted action -- I wanted someone to make good on my gifts, John -- someone who'd make something of me...

JANE:

I'll do it. I'll make so much out of you, man. I want the sky choked with flames. I want republican skulls lining the road.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes?

JANE takes the dagger and cuts her hand.

JANE:

I want racists cowering in fear. I want oppressors and rapists strung up by their heels. I want to flood the gutters with patriarchal blood.

COP:

(off)

Hands up! Freeze!

FAUSTUS:

Let's do this somewhere else --

JANE:

I want this. And I want it now.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Do you offer yourself to me?

(CONTINUED)

JANE:

Completely.

MEPHISTOPHELES takes the dagger back.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Then I do the same --

COP rushes in, fires, shoots JANE through the head. She falls.

FAUSTUS:

Jane!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

No!

*FAUSTUS waves a hand at COP, who convulses in pain and spits blood, then falls over dead.**Alarms grow louder.*

COP 2:

(off)

Officer down! Repeat, officer down!

FAUSTUS:

Shit shit shit shit...

MEPHISTOPHELES cradles JANE's body.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Wake up! Wake --

FAUSTUS:

Bring her back!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I'm -- trying.

FAUSTUS:

Come on! Bring her back!

MEPHISTOPHELES attempts a charm.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Damn it!

FAUSTUS:

What's wrong?

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Her soul -- it isn't mine -- it's gone to
Heaven...she's gone.

FAUSTUS:

Another asterisk, huh.

*More COPS enter, guns pointed at FAUSTUS and
MEPHISTOPHELES.*

COP 2:

Freeze!

COP 3:

Drop your weapons!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Weak pathetic animals --

FAUSTUS:

We don't have any weap --

A COP shoots FAUSTUS in the chest.

FAUSTUS:

Ah!

FAUSTUS stumbles, but stands.

FAUSTUS:

Um. Mephistopheles?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Your soul is mine at the end of our term, and not a
moment before unless you will it.

COP 3:

What the fuck?

COP 4:

Some kind of freaks!

*COPS unload on MEPHISTOPHELES and FAUSTUS to no
effect.*

FAUSTUS:

Burn them.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

(smirking)

Say that again?

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

Burn them all. Like Jane wanted to.

MEPHISTOPHELES snaps his fingers and the COPS fall over, burning from inside.

FAUSTUS:

No. Burn the whole place down. Bring it down around them.

FAUSTUS lifts JANE's body as MEPHISTOPHELES conjures the room into flames.

FAUSTUS:

Now take us away.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yes, My Lord. We will be gone now.

FAUSTUS:

This is what they wanted, isn't it? This is what God wanted for us all. Burning, blind, dead and wounded.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

If He wished it so...

FAUSTUS:

So be it then.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

How long should they all suffer?

FAUSTUS:

I don't care. Forever. Not at all. I don't care...just kill them.

They vanish as the COPS sputter and die.

ACT IIIScene 1

A flourish of drums. Tense strings.

A group of demons dance around a sulking FAUSTUS on a throne.

ESTELLE, ROY, HENRY and MARIA separated from one another, try to navigate through the demons.

COPS flank through and try to find them.

All but the demons exit separately.

The dance finishes.

FAUSTUS stands. The demons stand at attention.

HENRY enters.

HENRY:

So's this where you're plotting your next move?

FAUSTUS:

What are you doing here, Henry?

HENRY:

This is the spider-hole from which you're gonna blow up the statue of liberty?

FAUSTUS:

Papers are getting creative, huh?

HENRY:

It's some nice light entertainment during these hard times.

(a pause)

We're all in the wind right now, John.

FAUSTUS:

I'm sorry to hear that.

HENRY:

And I'm the only one who wanted to find you. Who wanted to bring you back.

FAUSTUS:

(a pause)

I'm sorry to hear that too. Not surprised...but sorry.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY:

How you been keeping, John? Rested?

FAUSTUS:

Not really.

HENRY:

Yeah, you don't look it.

FAUSTUS:

If you're just here to insult me you have my phone number.

HENRY:

I'm here to get you.

FAUSTUS:

You said you're the only one who wanted --

HENRY:

I am -- and I came! And I'm here to do it.

FAUSTUS:

Jane got hurt because of --

HENRY smacks FAUSTUS.

HENRY:

Jane got hurt because of Jane. You don't get to co-opt her into your guilty orbit.

FAUSTUS:

You know what I can do, right?

HENRY:

I know what you've done in the past, I'm not seeing a lot recently.

FAUSTUS:

Someone got hurt!

HENRY:

Someone *good* got hurt! Your whole point was that some of us were going to get hurt, but we were going to hurt more of them, wasn't it? Am I remembering this wrong? Come back, John...come back. Please.

FAUSTUS moves toward HENRY. He holds him.

FAUSTUS:

I'm sorry.

They kiss.

FAUSTUS:

I can't.

HENRY pushes FAUSTUS away.

HENRY:

You fucking coward.

THE ANGEL appears above HENRY, watching down.

FAUSTUS:

Henry --

HENRY:

I can't believe you talk such a big game -- you're gonna help us, huh? Gonna be our leader? Huh?

FAUSTUS:

I -- I wanted to, but -- I don't...I can't control...

HENRY:

Oh, wah-ha, the poor little scholar isn't in control.

FAUSTUS:

Henry, I never wanted to be in charge --

HENRY:

Yeah, okay. So that's it then. The man who punched the president is too scared to face the cameras. Face some pigs.

(a pause)

Roy said you were dangerous. That you were...what word did he use...explosive. I wish he was. You're a dud, John.

FAUSTUS:

(eyes on ANGEL)

Leave, please.

HENRY:

Have fun rotting out of the sun, John. Thanks for all the false hope.

HENRY starts to exit, turns.

HENRY:

Even under that dust and grime, you're still beautiful, John. You still look great.

(a pause)

And hey, you got to fuck me one last time here, didn't you.

HENRY exits.

FAUSTUS:

You couldn't have given me a little privacy?

ANGEL:

A man in your sorry position can hardly make requests, Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

Oh?

(a pause)

So it's just a sorry position now, huh. No more telling me there's still hope...it's over then isn't it?

ANGEL:

Your actions have led you to this present moment, Faustus. Where would you have expected yourself?

FAUSTUS:

Is that a real question?! Happy! Hopeful! With my friends! With all of them alive!

ANGEL:

Your friend is in paradise now, Faustus --

FAUSTUS:

And don't think I'm not taking that personally.

ANGEL:

You were warned...you were told, foretold, that your actions would bring nothing but ruin and tragedy.

FAUSTUS:

It's easy to say "I told you so"...

ANGEL:

We wanted to save you!

FAUSTUS:

What is this 'wanted,' huh? This past tense?

(a pause)

It's over for me, isn't it.

Even if I wanted to turn back on it all.

The door's shut, isn't it, the gate's...closed...

That's what you want to say, isn't it?

Huh?

Isn't it?!

The ANGEL regards FAUSTUS, silent.

FAUSTUS:

God can't save me anymore. I'm finally -- *finally* -- too far gone. That's the message, right? That's what just couldn't wait -- don't dodge the question, huh, answer me!

(CONTINUED)

If it's all over, and I'm really sealed away for good now, with nothing to show for it, then I deserve to know! I deserve to hear it out loud!

ANGEL:

(a pause)

You have...had every chance...

FAUSTUS:

Say it! Say the words! Tell me I can't be saved -- tell me it's too late!

Say it!

ANGEL:

If you could only have repented sooner --

FAUSTUS:

So that's it then...? Even if I fell to my knees, would give it all back...would drown this book and cry for weeks on end and ask forgiveness...it's too late, isn't it? There's no washing this out of me.

And you...standing there...so forlorn, so heavy-shouldered, what skin do you have in this? What do you care? All you've ever done is pout pout pout, wag your finger, you could've stopped me! You could have stopped any of this! You could've stopped my blood cold before the deal, or moved those cops' hearts to let us go, or turned me into a tree or summoned a bear to eat me, but you didn't, did you, you just stood by and did nothing! And I'm supposed to, what, agree? See your logic? Accept you, Up on High?

You won't even look at me.

Look at me!

I have given it all away -- I have lost everything! My family loathes me, my friends are scared of me, I have pawned my entire world away, for what? For a chance? For a gamble? For a shot I never took?

I repent! I'm sorry! I want to take it all back! I want to give myself away, and undo it -- I want it all unsaid, undone, I want to undo myself, I want it all gone!

Tell me it's gone! I want you to look me in my eyes when you take my soul away --

Tremendous rushing of wind. MEPHISTOPHELES enters and shoos the ANGEL away.

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES:

How dare you.

FAUSTUS:

Leave me alone.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

How *dare* you. I give you everything. I give you worlds.

FAUSTUS:

It's done, Mephistopheles, she's gone.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I'm not talking about her, Faustus, I am talking about you. When I first saw you, Faustus, do you know what drew me to you? Your passion. Your fury. You *burned bright* with potential, like a torch in the cold night...in a country beaten down, in a land as cold and dark as winter's night, you emerged like something in a dream, and I thought, finally, someone to follow! Someone to serve.

You would be worthy. Worthy of my power. You'd show them all, you'd bring these simpering fools to heel and you'd do it for no one but yourself...I *believed in* you. I trusted your vision, your vibrancy...you made me feel alive again, John! You were supposed to lead us all! You were supposed to become something. And what have you become? A shut-in. A coward. A whipped, beaten, bruised, shell of a man.

You are the painted image of a leader, and nothing more.

And when you toil your final hour and finally curl up like an old cat and die, I will spit on you. I won't want your soul anymore. I'll take it like a scrap of garbage and throw it down below.

Sit here. Shiver in the cold wind of your impermanence.

Know you should have been so much better.

Know how deeply you have let me down.

You've let all of us down.

To have killed yourself would have given more meaning, John. I mean that.

MEPHISTOPHELES starts to turn.

FAUSTUS:

You mean that? All of it?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I cannot lie to you, Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

Would you help me? End it?

(a pause)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS: (cont'd)
You just said...

MEPHISTOPHELES:
(small laugh)
I wanted to help you.
I promised I'd help you.
I did give you my word, didn't I.
(a pause)
But if you want to kill yourself, little beetle, you do
it yourself.

MEPHISTOPHELES rushes at FAUSTUS

MEPHISTOPHELES:
But if you look upward for help, John Faustus -- if you
go for the greatest act of cowardice, a deathbed
conversion, I will visit such pain on your living form,
I will hurt you in such acute and nuanced ways, I will
break you and tear you and burn you and scar so
comprehensively that Hell will seem a welcome
reprieve...until you get there.

MEPHISTOPHELES spits in FAUSTUS' face.

MEPHISTOPHELES:
I'll take my leave now. For the moment.

*MEPHISTOPHELES exits. FAUSTUS, trembling, falls to
his knees.*

He feebly raises a hand.

HELEN OF TROY and JUDAS appear.

FAUSTUS:
Good to see you two again...
The face that launched a thousand ships...
The man who sold out Heaven itself...
The finest shapes I've seen yet...

They help him to his feet.

JUDAS:
No one ever said revolution would be easy, John. Or
welcome.

FAUSTUS:
Don't talk. Just let me sit here with you two.

JUDAS:
The world won't wait. Obscurity is easy, John
Faustus...as easy as freezing to death.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN OF TROY:

Don't slip beneath the waves, John.

FAUSTUS:

What do you know about slipping away? You're pretty well known.

HELEN OF TROY:

Our deaths were always to be bloody and painful, Faustus.

JUDAS:

There was never any doubt how we would end.

HELEN OF TROY:

What we did have input on was what came before it.

JUDAS:

We knew what they'd call us. The legacies we'd leave behind for ourselves.

HELEN OF TROY:

We also knew the greater legacies. The stories. The literature. The religions.

JUDAS:

What some might call treachery can cast a long shadow, John.

HELEN OF TROY:

If not for yourself, certainly for someone in your stead...

JUDAS:

My fellow disciples may have hated me, but you do still know their names...

FAUSTUS:

My friends....

HELEN OF TROY:

Make us know their names John.

JUDAS:

Make the bigots of the future fear being called yours.

HELEN OF TROY:

Your soul is Hell's, John Faustus. But your life is, if for a moment or two more, still yours.

JUDAS:

Make it loud.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN OF TROY and JUDAS disappear.

FAUSTUS:
Oh...
Mephistopheles.

MEPHISTOPHELES re-enters.

MEPHISTOPHELES:
Sir.

FAUSTUS approaches him.

FAUSTUS:
I'm yours. You are mine. And I am going to do something
with this life.

MEPHISTOPHELES:
(a pause)
Tell me where.

Scene 2

A safehouse.

ESTELLE, ROY, MARIA and HENRY sit together.

Flashing red-and-blue lights just off.

ROY:
Shouldn't be too long now.

ESTELLE:
Jesus, they're all around us.

HENRY:
We should fight them off.

MARIA:
What?

ROY:
Don't even...we say nothing. We wait until a lawyer's
present. We don't give them the satisfaction.

MARIA:
This is not the time to get violent --

HENRY:
They didn't mind doing it to Jane --

(CONTINUED)

ROY:

It is not an even playing field, Henry, you know it never has been.

ESTELLE:

And we're, what, supposed to be ok with that?

ROY:

No. Of course not. We're supposed to be silent until a lawyer is present.

A silence.

ROY:

Ok. Let's...just...before we do. Let me say. The three of you have -- it's been an honor -- ...shit...

MARIA:

It's okay Roy. It's okay. We fought as much as we could.

ESTELLE:

We're not dead yet.

A silence.

ROY:

Let's go down with our heads up.

They move to a door.

FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHELES enter behind them.

FAUSTUS:

Stop.

MARIA:

What are you doing here?

FAUSTUS:

I can't let you guys take the fall. I did this. These cops -- they're here for my actions. Not yours. Not any of yours.

ROY:

Well that's mighty chivalrous now, John...

ESTELLE:

So what, we're supposed to just stand by and hope the cops leave with you?

FAUSTUS:

No. Mephistopheles and I will send you all somewhere safe. Somewhere far away.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Not Hell, I was told.

FAUSTUS:

Specifically not Hell.

MARIA:

Well forgive us if we're a little skeptical to trust you, John.

FAUSTUS:

Please. There's no other reason for me to do what I'm doing.

HENRY:

Haven't you done enough?

FAUSTUS:

No! Not nearly. Not yet.
(a pause)

Get out. Let me do this thing right.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I will take you far from here. To safety. It's a safehouse just outside of Bristol, Tennessee. Far from anyone who'd be looking.

FAUSTUS:

For every opportunity to do good, I'm going to make it up. Here. Now.

MARIA:

It won't stop here, John. If we all run to Bristol, they'll follow us. It'll just keep happening. Giving us a quick exit doesn't end this.

FAUSTUS:

No. It doesn't. But staying behind does.

ESTELLE:

You can't mean...

FAUSTUS:

They take me, they'll forget all about you.

Silence.

ROY:
He's right. Let's go.

ESTELLE:
Really?

ROY:
Don't give him time to change his mind.

MARIA:
(to FAUSTUS)
Thank you...

MARIA exits past MEPHISTOPHELES and disappears.

ESTELLE:
If there's any way to survive -- any way at all -- take
it. We'll find you.

FAUSTUS:
I'll see what I can do.

ESTELLE exits.

HENRY:
Had to pull one last moment of drama, huh? Classic
John.

HENRY exits.

FAUSTUS:
(to ROY)
Well? Your turn. Anything for me?

ROY:
Oh, no. I'm not going anywhere.
(to MEPHISTOPHELES)
Where are they?

MEPHISTOPHELES:
Bristol. They're safe. I promise you.

FAUSTUS:
He actually means it.

ROY:
I'm so desperate for good news, I believe you.

ROY pulls a handgun out of his waistband.

ROY:
I don't know if this will do anything to you,
but...might be a better way out than a fascist body
bag.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

Roy. Get out alive. Come on.

ROY:

Get over it. Better get ready, they're gonna bust in soon. They only gave us a few minutes.

FAUSTUS:

Mephistopheles.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Give the order, sir, and I am ready.

ROY:

You ruined us, you know that, right?

FAUSTUS:

(a pause)
What?

ROY:

Before you. We were focused. We had initiative. We had -- efficacy. Goals. Long-range strategies. And then you came along and we had parties. Noise. Distractions. And too much attention, all because of our pretty boy John Faustus. So thanks for that.

FAUSTUS:

Roy, I...

ANGEL appears.

ANGEL:

He's right, Faustus. You have doomed this group of idle minds to sin.

FAUSTUS:

Oh, for -- Fuck Off! Just get out of here!

ANGEL:

The agents of the Lord are ever present- Faustus.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

This one bothering you, John?

FAUSTUS:

Shut that thing up please.

ANGEL:

You know what I say is true, Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

Not yet. They're not true yet. I'm not done yet.
Mephistopheles. The cops outside -- are they...

MEPHISTOPHELES:

They're preparing to storm in five...four...

ROY brandishes his gun.

FAUSTUS:

(to ANGEL)

You watching now?

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

Go.

MEPHISTOPHELES raises his arms -- a spell that takes considerable effort, the first of such we've seen.

The earth trembles.

COPS in riot gear enter on the periphery.

The earth shakes.

Trap doors open and bodies emerge:

*African Americans. Native Americans. Gay teens.
Women of color. Women who said 'no.'*

Every type of person unjustly killed by police, or killed in America for no crime, emerges from the earth.

We may not be able to tell who they are as individuals, but the COPS respond in fear, recognizing the bodies.

ROY:

John...? John what have you...

In a movement sequence, the bodies route, kill, and consume the COPS.

They return to the earth.

MEPHISTOPHELES kneels, exhausted.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

There, Faustus. The enemy is -- at rest, as it were.

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL:

Are you so far gone, John?

FAUSTUS:

It's over.

ANGEL:

As long as sin draws breath, it is not over.

ROY:

What the hell are you...?

FAUSTUS:

They're gone. You can go.

ROY:

They're all...those were people!

FAUSTUS:

Those were cops.

ANGEL waves his arms.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

John, incoming.

MOTHER appears.

ANGEL:

Your mother, Faustus.

FAUSTUS:

Get out of here, Mother.

ANGEL:

(to MOTHER)

Guide him.

ROY:

(to FAUSTUS)

Look at me!

MOTHER:

What have you done, John? Do you know what I have to hear every day because of you?

FAUSTUS:

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

Get her out of here.

ANGEL:

He can do no such thing.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

No one asked you.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Should I...?

ROY:

John! Those people!

FAUSTUS:

(to MOTHER)

You shouldn't be here.

MOTHER:

My own oldest son, a criminal. Running around like an idiot -- smashing mailboxes in a pickup truck, you're no better than your brother after all.

ANGEL:

You are not a hero, John. No one reveres you.

MOTHER:

Did you ever once stop to think of me, John? Did you ever once stop to consider what your family would look like -- the parents that raised a rebel? I don't want people thinking this is the kind of parents we are -- we raised you to be better than this!

FAUSTUS:

You didn't raise me at all. You broke my bones and set them wrong, and this is what you get.

MOTHER:

Don't act so victimized -- you did this! Not me!

FAUSTUS:

Well who raised me at all? Want to blame parenting? You've got two suspects!

MOTHER:

You mouthy little bastard -- embarrassing us, running around on the news -- and experimenting like some kind of heathen --

FAUSTUS:

Oh, Mom, those aren't experiments. I know exactly what I'm doing with those guys --

MOTHER slaps FAUSTUS.

MEPHISTOPHELES rushes her, but FAUSTUS gets between them.

(CONTINUED)

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Say that word and she's ashes.

MOTHER:

Are you one of them?

FAUSTUS:

No, no, stop --

ANGEL:

You will always be hated, John. Love is a sacrament not afforded to you.

FAUSTUS:

Will you please stop --

ROY pulls his gun and shoots at FAUSTUS.

MOTHER and MEPHISTOPHELES back off.

FAUSTUS staggers, shot in the neck, blood running down him.

MEPHISTOPHELES waves his hand and ROY's gun flies away from him.

FAUSTUS:

Ga -- guhh...ggg....

MOTHER:

John! What did you do! What have you done now?

ROY:

You can't even die when we need you to?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

I'd weigh my words carefully.

FAUSTUS:

N -- n --

MOTHER flees.

ANGEL:

Only death will stop your terror.

FAUSTUS:

Fffffuck off...

(a pause)

He's right.

(to ROY)

You're right.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

One word, and --

FAUSTUS:

No.

(gesturing to his neck)

This needs to be it.

I have to go. I have to end it. I have to disappear...here. In the wreckage.

THE ANGEL disappears.

FAUSTUS picks up ROY's gun and hands it to him.

FAUSTUS:

Do it again.

ROY puts his gun to FAUSTUS' head.

ROY:

I will. Are you sure?

FAUSTUS:

I'm a liability. I'll fuck up again and again and again...this power is too much.

(a pause)

Tell them it was a nightmare. Tell them I might come back.

ROY:

I will.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Faustus, your term --

FAUSTUS:

Move it up.

(a pause)

I can't fake this. I can't just go into hiding.

Something would bring me back...there's no going back.

(to MEPHISTOPHELES)

Thank you for everything.

FAUSTUS lifts the book MEPHISTOPHELES gave him and tears the pages out.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

John!

FAUSTUS:

Terminate our contract.

ROY fires.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS falls back, and MEPHISTOPHELES catches him.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

The honor was mine, John.

MEPHISTOPHELES takes out the pearl-handled dagger and buries it in FAUSTUS' side.

The ground shakes.

ROY stands back as Hell Itself opens up.

Fire.

Drums.

Demons.

LUCIFER stands, proud, arms wide open.

SIMON, haggard, wounded, and ashen, crawls beside him.

LUCIFER:

Johnny my boy...you're here early.

FAUSTUS:

I'm here to stay, that's what matters, right?

ROY:

John, this is -- this is crazy!

LUCIFER:

You think it's crazy now?
(to FAUSTUS)

You have no idea how much this will hurt, John.

FAUSTUS:

I don't care.

MOTHER re-enters.

MOTHER:

John! My son! My son!

FAUSTUS:

It's done. I'm gone.

MEPHISTOPHELES grabs FAUSTUS by the arm and pulls him. FAUSTUS walks backwards into Hell.

(CONTINUED)

FAUSTUS:

For every good deed I did, I wish I could undo it. If I could live another hour, another day, another year, I'd kill every Red-voting elitist capitalist pig I could. I'd bring the whole world down on those that deserved it...and I would not apologize.

ANGEL re-appears.

ROY holds a hand out to FAUSTUS, withdraws it.

FAUSTUS:

Mephistopheles!

Hell, Demons, SIMON, LUCIFER, MEPHISTOPHELES, and FAUSTUS disappear in a clatter of smoke.

Scene 3

As in the Prologue, music and movement to suggest the passage of time.

MARIA, ROY, ESTELLE and HENRY enter.

ROY:

John Faustus is dead.

ESTELLE:

John Faustus is dead.

MARIA:

John Faustus, the terrorist, the killer, the radical madman, has left us.

HENRY:

He has disappeared in a pillar of ash.

ROY:

Seared away into a nuclear shadow.

ESTELLE:

A terrible end of a terrifying life.

ROY:

He died in pursuit of knowledge --

MARIA:

Of truth --

HENRY:

Of equity and equality and acceptance --

(CONTINUED)

ROY:

All things they tell you we should not have.

MARIA:

For not chasing the brass ring, and for striving for something greater, more sustainable, more powerful -- he has died.

HENRY:

Remember him. Remember what he did, and what it got him.

ESTELLE:

We surely will.

HENRY:

And learn from it.

MARIA:

We surely will.

ROY:

We will not make his mistakes. We will not forget his sacrifice.

MEPHISTOPHELES, silent, enters behind them.

ESTELLE:

His fall has cleared a path. A path we will explore and bring to light.

HENRY:

His fury, cold now, still burns in us.

MARIA:

And for all his faults, his key belief is good:

HENRY:

What Heaven and earth won't give us -- we will take.

ROY:

The hour finishes the day.

ESTELLE:

The hour finishes his work.

MARIA:

Our work is not yet finished.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

But one day it will be.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY:

In Faustus' name we pray.

MARIA, HENRY, ESTELLE, ROY:

Amen.

Curtain