

HELLBENT

A play in two acts

By Jeff Dunne

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## CHARACTERS

- LENA Lena, short for Angelina, is a hyper-observant, extremely clever young woman. She is rebellious, and thoroughly unmotivated to make anything of her life.
- DEVLIN Devlin is smart, yet seemingly incapable of making a reasonable decision when it comes to dating. He has a passion for all things nerdy, but balances it out with a healthy dose of eastern philosophy.
- LACEY Lacey is the child of two goth, demon-worshipping parents. While she is equally into the whole demon-worship scene, she rebels against her parents through a preoccupation of all things bright and pretty. She is strongly attracted to women, but unable to accept this about herself, and gravitates towards the most feminine men she can find.
- OPHISTOPHELES Ophistopheles is a minor demon who causes suffering in people through the timely degradation of all manner of office equipment. He is shrewd, driven to increase his lot in (eternal) life, but not really the leader that he would like to believe he is.
- AHMENAHMENON Ahmenahmenon is a demon who causes suffering in dieters by making them hungry (generally for junk food) in the middle of the night. He is pleasant, well-meaning, but also very conflicted because he feels that he is a demoness trapped in a demon's body.
- INCUBETH Incubeth is a demoness responsible for causing suffering in humans by influencing them into bad dating decisions. She hates the selfless nature of her job, and really would prefer to be an angel so she could get some appreciation from time to time. While not stupid, she believes herself to be smarter than she really is.

- FEZDEMONA** Fezdemonia is the demoness responsible for all hat-based suffering (and a few other things too). She does not technically appear in the play, however, because she has been kidnapped by Cassiel. Ergo, this role is really Cassiel pretending to be Fezdemonia. As a result, the character is a strong-willed, stubborn man attempting to pass himself off as a timid, introverted woman.
- ROBERT** Robert, who was once Major Henry Martyn Robert, is best known for his book, “Robert’s Rules of Order”. For the last 120 years, however, he has been an honorary demon causing difficulties for every thinking thing in hell. He is a whiney, obnoxious coward who annoys everyone and takes great delight in ruining anything he can get his hands on.
- LUCIFER** Lucifer is the fallen archangel who rules in hell. He is cool, collected, and totally in control at all times. He knows that his job is to dole out just the right amount of suffering to help people grow, and does his best to keep the demons from getting too preoccupied with other matters. He is an extremely good judge of character.
- CASSIEL** Cassiel, when not pretending to be Fezdemonia, is an archangel who has been hanging around hell and trying to tear down the whole human suffering system. He is rather full of himself, and proud to be the patron of the oppressed, the down-trodden, the impoverished, the enslaved, the unjustly persecuted, and orphan children. Although he does believe he is doing the right thing, he also doesn’t see any problem with people adoring him for it.

SETTING

With a few short exceptions at the beginning and end, this play takes place in a chamber in hell (the fifth level, to be specific).

TIME

Modern day

ACT I

Scene 1	A park somewhere on Earth
Scene 2	A chamber in hell

ACT II

Scene 1	A chamber in hell
Scene 2	Any place people can sit and drink coffee

## NOTES

There are significant components of this play that are communicated to the audience through reactions and other non-verbal clues. The below “God’s Eye” overview is provided to help the director and actors understand what is happening not only in the characters’ minds, but also in locations unseen by the audience.

### UNDERSTANDING DEMONS AND ANGELS

Hell is populated by demons. Audiences will be okay with this, even expect it to be the case. Demons cause human suffering. Audiences should be fine with this too. Beyond these two points, however, they could be in for a bumpy ride. For example, demons love people. A lot. They cause suffering primarily to help people grow, although there is a selfish aspect as well: the more suffering a demon causes, the more lucre gets deposited into their demonly “bank account”, and consequently their power and influence rises. There is a complex magical system in place that keeps track of all of that demon mojo, and it hinges on the Nesphaniasis, a magical gem that sorts suffering into the appropriate bank accounts. Yes, this is relevant.

In contrast, angels are nice. Extremely helpful, they do whatever they can to minimize human suffering, even though it actually limits (or, in extreme cases, stalls or even reverses) human development. From this we see that there is an important distinction between “nice” and “good”. In fact, angels are really only motivated by the adoration of humans received when one steals away their growth potential in their pursuit of feeling good. Basically, angels are powerful, winged hedonists who like humans for the appreciation and approval they provide. Yes, this is relevant too.

It is also worth noting that the governance body of demons, referred to as the Congress of Chaos, is a remarkably ordered affair. They follow Robert’s Rules of Chaos, Infernally Revised, which is a derivative product of Robert’s Rules of Order. In fact, the only real difference was to change the phrase “Point of Order” to “Point of Chaos”. The author, Mr. Robert, was deemed to have caused so much suffering as a result of this work that he was made an honorary demon and brought down to live in hell for all eternity. This did not turn out to be all it was cracked up to be for the fellow. Yes, this too turns out to be relevant.

The society of angels is far less organized. There are very powerful archangels – who have eliminated so much suffering in humans that they basically are like a strange anti-Darwinian force of nature – as well as regular angels. There are no regular angels in this play. Archangels and “normal” angels number far, far fewer than the demons, tend to go off and do their own thing, agree on essentially nothing, and believe that the only appropriate use for Robert’s Rules of Order – regardless of edition or revision – arises most often in the bathroom. This is not so relevant, but seemed worthwhile for rounding out this part of the notes.

## THE BIGGER PICTURE

The whole play can be blamed on the archangel Cassiel (patron of the oppressed, the down-trodden, the impoverished, the enslaved, the unjustly persecuted, orphan children), who reasoned that if he could eliminate the means by which demons track the suffering they caused, they'd give the whole thing up. He would consequently be praised for eliminating suffering on a massive scale, and feel really, really good about himself.

Cassiel grabbed a copy of the Demonomicron, and descended into hell, where he trapped a very minor demoness named Fezdemonia (in a large cube of margarine – definitely not relevant), and subsequently took her form and identity. Through covert investigation, he learned that a demoness named Incubeth was very unhappy with her lot in life, and would have preferred bringing about happiness in humans. In short, she was suffering from angel-envy. Cassiel-now-Fezdemonia hatched a plan. Incubeth would get together with a friend, and they would summon an angel. The angel would “accidentally” get released at the opportune moment, and in the ensuing pandemonium Incubeth would sneak into the Tormentidrome and steal the Nesphaniasis. She would give the gem to Fezdemonia-nee-Cassiel, who would destroy it. Cassiel would gain the adoration of all, and for her role in everything, Incubeth would be transformed into an angel.

This worked great, at least up until the play starts. Incubeth cleverly manipulated the ambitious demon Ophistopheles into “coming up with” a plan to summon and imprison an angel, consequently garnering more suffering-earned lucre for himself. Unfortunately, the ritual for summoning demons (now very nearly modified for summoning angels) presented a few snags. First, the ritual required three individuals to perform instead of two, so they had to bring Ophistopheles' friend Ahmenahmenon into the plan. Second, the ritual required all three performers to have a common goal in mind, something that was, in fact, not the case. Ophistopheles wanted an angel whose capture meant that he would become more powerful. Incubeth deep down wanted to help someone for once, even if it was an angel. Ahmenahmenon, who had always felt that he was meant to be a demoness, wanted to summon someone who could help him explore his feminine side. And third, none of them knew precisely what all those funny symbols in the summoning circle meant.

Instead of summoning one angel who would be trapped, they summoned three distinct humans who were very much not. Ophistopheles' desires were responsible for attracting Angelina; Incubeth's interest in being helpful in matters of dating attracted Devlin, and Ahmenahmenon's need for femininity attracted Lacey.

## SYNOPSIS

The play begins when Lena, a hyper-observant woman with a total lack of motivation to actually achieve anything in life, meets her life-long geeky friend Devlin's new girlfriend, Lacey. Lacey is a rebellious young lady, who strikes out against her Goth, demon-worshipping parents by dressing in bright, cheerful colors and repressing her lesbian nature, but still an enthusiastic endorser of the family religion. Just as they are getting to know each other, however, the three are summoned down into Hell.

The summoning is enacted by three demons: Ophistopheles (the demon responsible for causing suffering by jamming photocopiers, papercuts, and other workplace annoyances), Ahmenahmenon (the demon who tempts dieters to eat junk food in the middle of the night), and Incubeth (the demoness responsible for bad dating decisions). They were trying to summon an angel, and become very flustered when they get humans instead. They are soon joined by Fezdemona (demoness responsible for hat-based suffering), who would seemingly rather have nothing to do with the situation at all.

The situation becomes more frenetic when the humans are discovered by Robert, author of Robert's Rules of Order and the only human to be made an honorary demon as a result of all the suffering he has caused. Robert rushes off to tell Lucifer what is going on.

Meanwhile we discover that while Devlin may still believe Lacey is "the one", she has fallen for effeminate demoness-trapped-in-a-demon's-body Ahmenahmenon, who in turn has fallen in love with Devlin and is devastated when he discovers Devlin's dead body by the coffee machine. His determination to find the murderer is matched in intensity only by Lena's apparent lack of interest in finding the killer. However, when the demons all begin bickering amongst themselves, Lena changes her tune and steps in to unravel the mystery, which takes on a new urgency when a) Devlin shows up freshly resurrected, b) Lena discovers that Fezdemona is really the archangel Cassiel, and c) Lucifer himself appears and demands the return of the Nesphaniasis, a stolen demon artifact that is essential to the operation of Hell itself.

In the end, Lena realizes that Hell is playing an important role in human development, and, to the chagrin of Cassiel, returns the Nesphaniasis to Lucifer.

ACT I

SCENE 1

*(It is a park setting. Devlin and Lacey are standing together with the look and closeness of two people who have recently started dating. Devlin's modest clothing stands in contrast to the bright, in-your-face-girly clothing of Lacey. Her choices are very stylish, but if one were to look carefully one could spot something – whether in clothing or jewelry – of each color of the rainbow has been worked in somehow, )*

LACEY

Is that her? *(Pointing offstage.)*

DEVLIN

*(Looking...)*

No.

LACEY

She's really late.

DEVLIN

Lena's always late. It's kind of her thing.

LACEY

Is that her?

DEVLIN

*(Looking in another direction.)*

No.

LACEY

What does she look like? Is she pretty?

DEVLIN

No one's as pretty as you, Lacey.

LACEY

Aww. But seriously... *(Asking in a subtly hopeful way...)* Is she pretty?

DEVLIN

*(Misreading Lacey's tone...)*

You're not jealous, are you? Lena and I are just friends. She's like a sister to me.

LACEY

How long have you known each other?

DEVLIN

Whoa, pretty much forever. Our parents were friends before we were born, and we kinda just grew up together.

LACEY

You know, I don't even know what your parents do.

DEVLIN

Well, we have only been together for two weeks.

LACEY

Ten days.

DEVLIN

Twelve days, actually. We saw Icehouse on Thursday, and today's...

LACEY

Oh, right. You're right.

*(They do new-couple affectionate things.)*

So what do they do?

DEVLIN

They both teach at the university. My dad's a professor of Eastern Studies, and mom teaches theology.

LACEY

Why doesn't that surprise me?

*(They giggle like they have just shared the world's secrets in a way that only they understand, and make more ga-ga faces. A moment later, Lena enters. She walks up and starts talking directly to Devlin, seemingly ignoring Lacey completely except as noted in her line.)*

LENA

You're not going to believe what I saw just outside the Safeway on Grant Street. *(Glances for just a moment at Lacey to say...)* Hello. *(Turns back to Devlin, then immediately back at Lacey having seen something unexpected, but then covers with...)* Nice earrings.

LACEY

Thank you.

LENA

*(Back to Devlin...)*

Remember that guy who we saw on the bus back from Memphis, the one who was carrying... What?

DEVLIN

This is Lacey.

LENA

Uhh, yeah. And?

DEVLIN

It's polite to greet someone when you first meet them, Lena.

LENA

I did. *(To Lacey...)* I did, right? *(To Devlin...)* So anyway, he's just standing there outside the store when... What??

*(Devlin motions with his head towards Lacey. Lena makes a "Yes? And?" gesture, and then Devlin gives her an even more aggressive look. Lena turns to face Lacey.)*

Hi. I'm Lena. I'm a Capricorn, and my favorite color is mint red with a splash of lemony chartreuse. I once lost a shoe on a train, and someday I want to live in the ocean.

*(Turning back to Devlin...)*

So he's standing there outside the store smoking a cigarette, real tobacco but one that he rolled—

DEVLIN

I'm sorry, Lacey. Sometimes Lena can be *unbelievably rude!* But she's really a nice person when...

*(Lena gives him a surprised look.)*

Well, basically never.

LENA

Parents.

DEVLIN

What?

LENA

Parents. Parents? You know what parents are, right?

DEVLIN

I know what parents are, Lena.

LENA

*Her parents. Three... two... (motions over her shoulder...)*

VOICE FROM OFFSTAGE

Lacey!! Lacey!?

LACEY

I can't believe this. So embarrassing. I'll be right back.

*(Lacey exits, and the moment she's gone...)*

DEVLIN

I can't believe you, Lena! What's the matter with you?

LENA

Oh, come on Devlin. You've got what? Like another week of dating before she dumps you?

DEVLIN

I'll have you know that we share something really special.

LENA

No you don't.

DEVLIN  
Yes, we do.

LENA  
No, you don't.

DEVLIN  
Yes we d— Why are you doing this?

LENA  
She's not the right girl for you, Dev.

DEVLIN  
You don't know that. We could be very happy together.

LENA  
I don't think so. Now I want to tell you about what happened—

DEVLIN  
I think Lacey could be the one.

LENA  
Devlin, it's not gonna last.

DEVLIN  
You don't know that.

*(Lena gives him a look.)*

You're always trying to ruin my relationships.

LENA  
I never do that. And only the ones that are doomed from the start.

DEVLIN  
I—

LENA  
Which is, admittedly, all of them so far.

DEVLIN  
This one could be different.

LENA

Did you tell her about the Model UN?

DEVLIN

No, but—

LENA

Or your world-renowned comic book collection?

DEVLIN

Some girls really like—

LENA

Come on. Be serious. You're not what she's looking for.

DEVLIN

And what's that supposed to mean? You don't think I'm rugged enough for her?

LENA

Dev, buddy. I mean that you don't have what she wants (*reaching out and honking his non-existent breasts...*) in a companion.

DEVLIN

You're just trying to ruin this for me. Like you did with Marla. And Stephanie.

LENA

They weren't right for you.

DEVLIN

And now we'll never know.

LENA

Look, trust me. Lacey's gay. Do you need me to prove it to you? I'll ask her out.

DEVLIN

*You're* not gay.

LENA

But if it'll prove to you that *she's* gay, it'd totally be worth a date. You think I wouldn't?

DEVLIN

Not after Michelle.

LENA

Trust me. She's a girl's girl.

DEVLIN

Why do you even think that?

LENA

Oh, come on, Dev. Are you telling me that it's a total accident that she's dressed in a freakin' rainbow?

DEVLIN

She's not dres—

*(The following line should be adjusted to match her costume.)*

LENA

Purple highlights in the eye shadow. Blue belt. Green paisleys in her dress. Yellow trim on her shoes, orange gem in the necklace, and... You didn't even notice the necklace, did you? Please tell me you noticed the necklace. It's a big deal to her. You didn't. Honestly, I don't know how you ever get a second date with anyone. Annd the red lipstick. And the nails.

DEVLIN

Just because... just because she happens to be wearing...

LENA

And she was totally checking me out.

DEVLIN

She was not.

LENA

Honestly, Dev. Even if she was totally into you – which she's not—

DEVLIN

She is.

LENA

What is your dad going say when you bring her over?

DEVLIN

Uh, hello?

LENA

Oh, I need to be there for that conversation. Mom, dad, this is my girlfriend, Lacey. She's into fashion and demon worship. I think she may be the one.

DEVLIN

What?

LENA

Are you seriously telling me that you didn't see mister and missus Goth over there?

DEVLIN

Where? (*Looks in the direction Lacey exited.*) Oh my god.

LENA

Like the inverted pentagram tramp stamp wasn't a giveaway.

DEVLIN

She does *not* have a tattoo. (*Pause.*) She doesn't. Does she?

LENA

I'm telling you, this isn't going to last.

DEVLIN

You know what? I don't care. She's great. I'm into her, and she's into me. We have a real connection, and I'm not going to let you or anyone else ruin it. (*Takes a deep, meditative breath.*) So what if she finds demons interesting? There are lots of people who study the occult. Don't shake your head at me. Oh, oh. She's coming back. Would you please at least *try* to be nice for once?

(*Lacey enters.*)

LACEY

Sorry about that. My parents are... you know what? Never mind.

LENA

(*Suddenly very nice.*)

Parents are the worst, aren't they? My parents are always getting on me about everything. Get a job...

DEVLIN

You should.

LENA

...stop changing majors...

Nine times.

DEVLIN

...clean up your room...

LENA

It's embarrassing.

DEVLIN

...and anything else they can think of.

LENA

No one's seen the floor of her room in twelve years.

DEVLIN

Eight.

LENA

Twelve. It was right after the fifth-grade orchestra concert. You cleaned up because you thought you were moving out to attend Jularid.

DEVLIN

Oh, right. *(To Lacey.)* It's been twelve.

LENA

I guess you didn't go to Jularid.

LACEY

She gave up the cello three weeks later.

DEVLIN

Cellos have been known to cause serious injuries... did you hear that?

LENA

Hear what?

LACEY

It sounded like a bell, or a triangle or something.

*(Lena looks at Devlin, who just shakes his head.)*

LENA (CONT)

So what do you do, Lacey? Any special hobbies? You know, occult secrets or...

LACEY

How did you know...

LENA

Tat.

LACEY

Devlin said you didn't miss anything. Yeah, I've been really into... What the... Did you just hear a drum?

DEVLIN

No.

LENA

No. And you didn't hear that *ding* a moment ago?

LACEY

No.

DEVLIN

What was that?

LACEY

What?

DEVLIN

I thought I heard... I could have sworn...

LACEY

What?

DEVLIN

It sounded kind of like a horn or something...

LENA

*(To Lacey...)*

So, women, huh?

LACEY

Women?

LENA

*(Knowingly, full of sexual innuendo...)*

Women.

LACEY

What about them?

LENA

I see. Too soon.

DEVLIN

Is anyone else feeling like they're going to throw up?

LENA

Look, all I said was—

DEVLIN

Not that. Well, that too. But...

LACEY

*(Suddenly feeling ill...)*

Ooohhh...

LENA

Oh, hell...

*(Lena starts to double over like she's going to be sick.)*

DEVLIN

Yeah.

*(Devlin grabs his stomach like he is about to be sick.)*

LACEY

What the...

DEVLIN

I don't feel so...

*(The lights go out, and we hear the sound of retching as the scene ends.)*

ACT I

SCENE 2

*(It is cavern somewhere in hell. There are three exiting tunnels, and a large summoning circle on the floor. If the audience won't be able to see the floor, the summoning circle should be on a raised platform so that they can tell whether or not someone is in it. Behind the circle is a podium with an ominous black book upon it, and standing behind that is the demon Ophistopheles [Off'-i-stoff'-oh-leeze]. At other points around the circle are Ahmenahmenon [Ah'-meh-nah'-meh-non], a male demon with delicate features, and Incubeth [Ink'-yoo-beth], a female demoness. Incubeth is just finishing crafting the last sigil of the circle.)*

OPHISTOPHELES

You're sure that's what it's supposed to look like?

INCUBETH

Of course I'm sure.

OPHISTOPHELES

Because we really don't want him escaping after he's summoned.

AHMENAHMENON

Why does it have to be a him?

OPHISTOPHELES

What?

AHMENAHMENON

I think we should summon a female angel.

OPHISTOPHELES

Whatever. Male, female, we'll get what we get.

AHMENAHMENON

Definitely summon a female one.

OPHISTOPHELES

It doesn't matter.

Okay. Done.

INCUBETH

And you're *sure* it's right?

OPHISTOPHELES

Yes. Stop asking.

INCUBETH

It's just that you seemed a bit uncertain about the summoning ring...

OPHISTOPHELES

That's because the ritual in the book is for summoning demons, so it had to be modified.

INCUBETH

And you're sure you got *that* right?

OPHISTOPHELES

As sure as I can be. No one's ever tried summoning an angel before.

AHMENAHMENON

We really should try to get a female one.

OPHISTOPHELES AND INCUBETH

Whatever!

AHMENAHMENON

I'm not doing it if we don't summon a female one.

*(Incubeth glares at him, but then goes over and tweaks something in the circle.)*

INCUBETH

There. Happy?

AHMENAHMENON

Yes. Was that so hard?

OPHISTOPHELES

But the important thing is the containment circle. We have to be sure about that, or we're going to be in a whole mess of trouble.

INCUBETH

The one for containing angels is a standard ward. I got it straight from the library. No guesswork there.

AHMENAHMENON

Wait. Then where's *that* book from? (*Pointing to the Demonomicon on the podium.*)

*(Incubeth shrugs and points at Ophistopheles.)*

OPHISTOPHELES

I... uh... Alright, I... found it.

AHMENAHMENON

Found it? Found it where?

OPHISTOPHELES

Look, it doesn't matter where. I found it lying around, and it's legit.

AHMENAHMENON

How do you know it's legit?

OPHISTOPHELES

I just know, okay?

AHMENAHMENON

And what if it's not?

OPHISTOPHELES

Then we're going to very well protected from absolutely nothing.

AHMENAHMENON

Nothing? We're protected from nothing??

OPHISTOPHELES

I mean that nothing will get summoned, so it won't matter.

AHMENAHMENON

But maybe something will get summoned. Maybe we'll summon a... a...

OPHISTOPHELES

A what?

AHMENAHMENON

I don't know.

OPHISTOPHELES

Listen, Ahmenahmenon. You're one of my best friends, so I say this with all respect and everything, but as demons go, you can be kind of an embarrassment. I mean, what do you think we could possibly summon that wouldn't be more scared of us than we are of it?

AHMENAHMENON

An angel.

OPHISTOPHELES

Then we did it right.

AHMENAHMENON

Oh. Yeah. I guess so. Still, we should probably summon a minor angel just in case.

INCUBETH

I'm telling you, the containment circle is foolproof. And just so you know, there's no such thing as minor angels. Just angels and archangels.

AHMENAHMENON

Great. Just great. So if it does manage to get free, it's gonna knock our asses into the tenth circle.

OPHISTOPHELES

It's not going to get free, Ahm. *(Aside to Incubeth...)* It's not, right? Okay, okay. I'll stop asking. *(Pause, then to Ahmenahmenon...)* It won't.

AHMENAHMENON

Oh, thanks. I feel so much better.

OPHISTOPHELES

Okay, I think we're ready. Incubeth, you have the instruments?

INCUBETH

Over here.

*(Incubeth collects a bell, a small drum, and a horn of some kind and hands them out – the bell to Ophistopheles, the drum to Ahmenahmenon, and keeps the horn for herself.)*

AHMENAHMENON

Can I have the bell instead?

INCUBETH

No. You're at the periseptum, so you get the drum. Ophistopheles has to ring the bell.

AHMENAHMENON

Then can we switch?

OPHISTOPHELES

Sure. If you don't mind casting the ritual.

AHMENAHMENON

I don't min—

OPHISTOPHELES

And being the one that Uncle Louie is going to interrogate if we get caught.

AHMENAHMENON

You know what? (*Taps on the drum experimentally.*) I'm good with the drum.

OPHISTOPHELES

I thought you would be. Now remember. The book is very specific about this. We have to be on the same page here as to what we're summoning...

AHMENAHMENON

An angel.

OPHISTOPHELES

And why. We're doing this to...?

AHMENAHMENON

Why are you looking at me?

OPHISTOPHELES

Because I know you sometimes... get sidetracked, and I want to make sure you remember that we're summoning an angel to...?

*(Ahmenahmenon just looks at Ophistopheles.)*

To immm....? (*No response from Ahmenahmenon.*) To imprissss...

AHMENAHMENON  
...isson it.

OPHISTOPHELES  
To...?

AHMENAHMENON  
Imprison it.

OPHISTOPHELES  
Yes, yes. After that. Imprison it toooo...?

*(Ahmenahmenon just stares at him.)*

INCUBETH  
Come on, Ahmenahmenon. Oh. Hey. That's funny sounding.

AHMENAHMENON  
It's not funny.

INCUBETH  
It is. Offy, you try it.

OPHISTOPHELES  
Come on, Ahmenahmenon. Heh heh. It is. *(Laughs a little, and then stops suddenly, serious again, and we realize he was just humoring her the whole time.)* Okay, now can we get back to the ritual? *(To Ahmenahmenon...)* Why are we trapping an angel?

AHMENAHMENON  
To disrupt the system. We've been over this.

OPHISTOPHELES  
Then why didn't you say it before?

AHMENAHMENON  
Oh. I thought you meant 'where are we summoning the angel to'. And I was thinking 'right here', but that seemed too easy, so I figure it had to be a trick question.

OPHISTOPHELES  
*(Taking a deep breath...)*  
Okay, whatever. So we're all on the same page. We're summoning an angel in order to limit how much the Heavenly Choir can make people happy. Less happiness, more suffering, and we're rolling in the lucre. Got it?

AHMENAHMENON

Uh, sure.

OPHISTOPHELES

That's not convincing, Ahm. I need convincing.

AHMENAHMENON

No, no. I got it. Trap the angel, and more suffering goes into our accounts.

OPHISTOPHELES

You sure you got this? This is really important, Ahm.

AHMENAHMENON

I got it. I do.

OPHISTOPHELES

*(Finally accepting it...)*

And I know I can count on you, Incubeth.

INCUBETH

Umm, yeah.

OPHISTOPHELES

Umm? *Umm* yeah?

INCUBETH

*Yeah* yeah. *(Pause as Ophistopheles looks uncertain.)* You know I'm with you on this.

*(Ophistopheles thinks for a second, then shoves his concern aside.)*

OPHISTOPHELES

Okay. Let's do this.

INCUBETH

Wait.

OPHISTOPHELES

What?

INCUBETH

You remember what you're going to say, right?

OPHISTOPHELES

I'm just going to read it from the b—

INCUBETH

No. After the summoning. These things have to be done according to tradition.

OPHISTOPHELES

What tradition? No one's ever summoned an angel before.

INCUBETH

There's a right way and a wrong way to do these things, Offy. Now let's hear it.

OPHISTOPHELES

Beast most unfoul of the oxygen-deprived heavens, we have summoned you. On your knees! PORRIGO!

INCUBETH

What?

OPHISTOPHELES

What?

INCUBETH

Porrigo.

OPHISTOPHELES

It means, SUBMIT!!

INCUBETH

No. No, it doesn't.

OPHISTOPHELES

It's Latin.

INCUBETH

I know it's Latin. Specifically, it's Latin for 'dandruff'.

OPHISTOPHELES

No it isn't. (*Pause.*) Really? It means 'dandruff'?

INCUBETH

I think you want 'cedo'. Or maybe 'pareo'. Definitely not 'porrigo'.

AHMENAHMENON

What if it turns out that she actually has dandruff?

INCUBETH

Well if that's the case, and you're just trying to embarrass her, then by all means cry out 'porrigo'.

OPHISTOPHELES

Okay. I'll make a note. Can we get started now?

*(There is some general 'I guess so' reactions, and they all settle into their appropriate places and take on a very serious demeanor. If possible, perhaps they do a little walking around the circle widdershins, or wave incense, or do some other ritualistic stuff. Eventually, Ophistopheles reads from the book. If the production cannot do anything funny during the incantation, consider removing the third and fourth lines of it...)*

Cum autem de magia media nocte  
Et interiorem voluntatem Dei nostri ranae

Nos terrarum ponte  
Comedamus, et calceamenta pullum

Virtutibus antiquorum invocaverimus

*(Ophistopheles rings his bell.)*

Audi ferrum voluntatem nostrum

*(Ophistopheles points to Ahmenahmenon, who beats his drum.)*

Audi voces nostrorum voca

*(Ophistopheles starts to point at Incubeth, but she has already commenced a resounding blow on her horn.)*

ALL

Adducere ad nos...

*(Ophistopheles says the following as part of the same sentence, but Ahmenahmenon hesitates ever so slightly and gets the word wrong. Incubeth, in a moment of terribly bad luck, sneezes something that sounds mostly like a sneeze, but could almost be 'Devlin' if you listened to it twenty times while playing a Beatles album backwards.)*

OPHISTOPHELES  
Angelena!!

AHMENAHMENON  
Angelayca

INCUBETH  
Ahhh...devlena!!

*(There is a silence, and absolutely nothing happens. Then Ophistopheles and Ahmenahmenon turn to glower at Incubeth.)*

INCUBETH

Sorry. I tried to hold it in, but... When you have to sneeze, it just...

*(The lights flicker, and they all suddenly look around.)*

Was that...?

*(The lights flicker again.)*

That wasn't...

*(Suddenly there is an eruption of smoke in the circle, and the lights go out entirely (or some other special effect as necessary to cover the appearance of Lena, Devlin, and Lacey inside the summoning circle). When the lights come up – or whatever – the demons are staring at the summoned humans, who are on their knees recovering from having just vomited their guts out.)*

OPHISTOPHELES

Well slap my ass and call me Betty, it actually worked!

*(Incubeth shoots him a deadly "what the hell do you think you're doing, this is not what we agreed to" look.)*

OPHISTOPHELES (CONT)

Oh, right right. *(He takes a deep breath, then...)* Beast most unfoul of the... I mean *beasts* most unfoul of... Wait. Unfoul of... of... something heaven... Um. Beasts most unfoul... *(Giving up and jumping to the end.)* On your knees!!

INCUBETH

They're already on their knees.

AHMENAHMENON

*(Pointing at Lacey, quietly...)*

Can I have that one?

OPHISTOPHELES

PORRIGO!

LENA

*(Looking up...)*

What?

OPHISTOPHELES

PORRIGO!!

LENA

What's he saying?

DEVLIN

He's saying you have dandruff.

AHMENAHMENON

No, wait, *(shifting his pointing finger to Devlin...)* that one...

LACEY

Oh my god...

OPHISTOPHELES

SILENZIO!!!

INCUBETH

That's not even Latin.

LENA

Dandruff?

They're demons! LACEY

It's not? OPHISTOPHELES

No. INCUBETH

They're demons!! LACEY

What is it? OPHISTOPHELES

A demon is telling me I have dandruff? LENA

Italian, I think. INCUBETH

No kidding. OPHISTOPHELES

That's what he said. DEVLIN

I can't believe this is happening! LACEY

No, (*switching his finger back to pointing at Lacey...*) that one. AHMENAHMENON

I don't even know Italian. OPHISTOPHELES

No, wait. AHMENAHMENON

What's the Latin? OPHISTOPHELES

Silentium, I think. INCUBETH

DEVLIN

Silentium would be 'silence'. Is that...

LACEY

Oh my god oh my god oh my god...

OPHISTOPHELES

*(To Devlin...)*

Yeah, that's what I wanted. Thanks.

AHMENAHMENON

Can I have both?

OPHISTOPHELES

SILENTIUM!!!

*(Everyone falls silent, and a moment later Fezdemonia enters. She is a small, meek demoness, who struggles to remember that she is supposed to be fairly lowly and meek against a natural inclination to be larger than life.)*

FEZDEMONA

What's all the yelling... Oh. Ohhh. Maybe I should just—

OPHISTOPHELES

Fezdemonia! How nice to see you. Please come in. We're... having a party.

FEZDEMONA

*(In disbelief...)*

Uh huh.

*(Incubeth takes Fezdemonia by the hand and leads/pulls her into the chamber.)*

Looks more like a ceremony than a party. A ritual, even.

OPHISTOPHELES

I can see how you would make that mistake.

LENA

Excuse me.

OPHISTOPHELES  
SILENZI— Eh, SILENTIUM!! (To Devlin...) Silentium?

*(Devlin nods...)*

SILENTIUM!!

LENA

I don't think so.

OPHISTOPHELES

PORRIGO!!

*(As Lena checks her shoulders for dandruff...)*

INCUBETH

*(Whispering over to Ophistopheles...)*

Pareo.

OPHISTOPHELES

PAREO!!

*(Lena looks at Devlin questioningly...)*

DEVLIN

He's telling you to surrender.

LENA

And why, exactly, would I do that?

OPHISTOPHELES

I have summoned you into this circle, unfoul creature! Creatures. And you will do my bidding!

LACEY

This is *so* cool!

AHMENAHMENON

Definitely that one. No, wait...

OPHISTOPHELES

*(Aside to Ahmenahmenon...)*

You can't take one. They're not pets.

But she's so pretty!

AHMENAHMENON

Aww. Thank you!

LACEY

Are those what I think they are?

FEZDEMONA

Don't worry. We're perfectly safe.

OPHISTOPHELES

Uh huh.

FEZDEMONA

The outer circle is a containment ward.

OPHISTOPHELES

Is it?

FEZDEMONA

Is it?

LENA

And it's foolproof.

OPHISTOPHELES

*(Ophistopheles looks at Incubeth, who nods.)*

Foolproof.

Is it?

LENA

*(Lena takes a step forward, walking out of the circle. There is a moment of silence, and then all hell breaks loose (sorry). Ophistopheles, Ahmenahmenon, and Incubeth start screaming and run out of the chamber in panic, followed a moment later by Fezdemona, who seemed stunned for a bit longer, but then emulates her demon siblings and runs away.*

*After they are all gone, there is a beat and then...)*

LEAN (CONT)

I did not see that coming.

*(Devlin and Lacey step out of the circle, and the three begin to explore the chamber. Over the next series of lines, Lena walks over and pages through the Demonomicron, Devlin examines the musical instruments dropped around the circle, and Lacey just wanders about looking at features of the walls and other demonly furnishings.)*

DEVLIN

So this is hell.

LENA

Apparently.

DEVLIN

Not what I was expecting.

LACEY

Oh... my... god...

LENA

I was hoping for some kind of barbeque.

DEVLIN

Why would they have barbeques in hell?

LACEY

I just...

LENA

Why *wouldn't* they?

DEVLIN

It's not even hot down here.

LACEY

This is just so...

DEVLIN

I mean, it's a little warm, but...

LACEY

I can't believe this is happening to me.

DEVLIN

*(Misreading Lacey's excitement for fear...)*

It's okay, Lacey.

*(He goes towards her.)*

Everything's going to be okay.

LACEY

What?

DEVLIN

Everything's gonna—

LENA

Dev...

*(Devlin gives Lena a "don't interrupt" glare, then continues, putting his arm around Lacey in an attempt to be comforting.)*

DEVLIN

Everything's going to be fine.

LENA

*(Muttering...)*

Captain Clueless strikes again...

DEVLIN

We are going to find a way out of here.

*(Lena shakes her head and starts studying the symbols in the circles. Lacey brushes Devlin's arm off and moves over to the Demonomicron to examine it.)*

LACEY

Why on Earth would I want to do that?

Sorry? DEVLIN

This is so... fucking... awesome! LACEY

I... I just... What!? DEVLIN

I mean, look at this. Do you know what this is? LACEY

No. DEVLIN

This is a copy of the Demonomicron! LACEY

First printing. LENA

The Demonomicron? DEVLIN

Oh my god! It *is* a first printing! Do you know how old this is? LACEY

What's a Demonomicron? DEVLIN

Only the greatest tome ever! It contains all the original rituals for summoning demons. The *original* ones, Devlin. The ones that actually work! LACEY

So why would demons be using it? DEVLIN

I guess they must have been summoning a demon. LACEY

LENA

I don't think so.

*(Lena points to the inner circle.)*

They changed some of the symbols.

*(Lacey comes over and looks at them. She takes out a small reference book from a pocket, purse, or backpack.)*

DEVLIN

What's that?

LACEY

That's what I'm trying to find out.

DEVLIN

No, I mean what's that you're reading?

*(She flashes the cover at him, then keeps flipping pages.)*

Mordehein's Guide to the Demon World?

LACEY

Here it is.

DEVLIN

You have a demon reference manual?

LACEY

Those symbols... oh.

DEVLIN

Oh? What's oh?

LACEY

Whoa.

DEVLIN

What's whoa?