

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 1 G/Tr

Unaccompanied Scene

Setting: Simo's house stage right, nicely kept, fresh paint, a little elaborate in the decorating department; Theopropides' house stage left, cobwebs, darker, a little run down – a bench/small couch to up LOC, head facing down R (tipped on side) –bottles, pieces of clothing lying around L

Grumio (G): (enter from right across to house up left in a huff, screaming toward inside)

Get out of the kitchen, right here, right now, you scum of the earth!

You're oh so slick like the film on the dishes! (picking up a bottle and shaking off drool)

Come on out, get a move on, our master's disaster.

I swear to God, just come down to the farm (gesturing right): I'll get you back good. (some lame fighting gesture)

Out, out, out, no use hiding, I can smell your foul stench anywhere.

5

Tranio (Tr): (enter from house left mad, boldly stepping into entranceway)

What's your problem, dirtbag, screaming out here in the street? (move toward aggressively waving hands)

Were you raised in a barn? Get away from the house! (push downstage right on each of these)

Go to the farm! Go to hell! Get away from our door!

Boo-ya, you want some of this? (beat him around, some silliness) **G:** Ow, ow, why'd you hit me?

10

Tr: Cause you're you. (smug) **G:** Well, hm! Just you wait till our old man gets back.

(prayer raised) Let this one you're consuming in his absence come back safe.

Tr: Stupid you, it's neither true, nor semi-hemi-kinda-true, (trying to act philosophical stepping away proudly to left)

that consumption in absentia can occur, nohow nowhere.

G: Ha, ha ha, you witty city twit, you people's choice, (move left up behind him)

15

Keep making fun of countryboy. You'll see, Tranio,
you'll get wound down and ground down at the mills.

By god, Tranio, in a matter of days,

you'll join our merry country gang...of the chain variety.

Now, while you like that you can, booze and abuse on the house,

20

Corrupt our master's excellent son;

Drink night and day, get as surely, purely, thoroughly Greekified as any Greek can be!

Buy loose women, then let 'em loose; manage morsels for many moochers;

buy all the stuff a professional party planner should.

Did the old man order all this when he went off overseas? 25

Is this his expectation for estate management?

Do you think it the duty of any good slave
to waste his master's resources AND his son?

Cause I think he's pretty wasted in the waste he's enjoying now.

Not a single, young man in all of Attica 30

was ever so modest, frugal or well-behaved,
but now he wins the prize in a 'different' competitive sport,
and all due to your highly effective training methods.

Tr: (cross G down right)

Well, my good douchebag, what's your business with me and my doings?

Could you puleeez (mock country accent), go back to the farm and tend to your heifers? 35

It's fun to drink, love it up and take home some whores,
and this is on my back, no business or concern of yours. (play on the financial pun here)

G: (to audience out, throwing up hands in frustration)

That's some bold talk from him! Well 'foo' to you! (maybe go for something mild sounding so Tr
overdoes reply)

Tr: (back toward left at G)

Jupiter and all the other gods damn you! And go foo yourself. You stink of garlic
and some dog/goat mutant stench, you down-home, home-style country manure 40

from a goat AND a pig sty. **G:** (sniffing self-consciously under pits) What do you expect?
(cross Tr rt) Everyone can't smell of exotic foreign scents,
Or take the choicest spot at the dinner table

Or enjoy such high-falutin' victuals as you live on. 45

You can keep your (snooty nose here) roast squab, fancy courses of fish and fowl
And let me relish my life – WITH LOTS OF GARLIC.

You're living the good life, mine's pretty rough: but I can manage.

So long as in the end mine turns out good and yours winds up bad. (turning away smug) 50

Tr: (taunting)

Why, Grumio, you seem to be just a bit jealous, (slimy approach from behind moving R)

That I do so well and you not so good; that's the way it should be:

I'm grand master of the love parade (big strutting about)—while you just steer the moo brigade.

So I tend to live life large, while your sorry service SUCKS.

G: Oh, perforated punster, which is just what you will be,

55

When you get punched full of holes as you're prodded through the streets.

Tr: Who's to say that's meant for me instead of you? (mock concern, moving farther left)

G: (confident) Cause I've never deserved it, while you have and always will. (Tr brush that off)

So, can I just get the cattle feed I came to get from you,

Or have you eaten it up in there too! (cross up L gesturing to house strongly, Tr. Roll eyes as if to say yes)

Go on, like you've been going, drink, and get your Greek on till you're all Greeked out,

Eat, get stuffed, and gorge till you explode (wild gesture moving down left a bit)

65

Tr: Shut up, back to the sticks, hick. I'm off to the harbor

To get fancy fish for our evening feast. (xing R, G counter downstage LOC)

Your cow chow will be at the farm by tomorrow. (dismissive)

G: Yeah right, you'll see that the crap jobs in life

often need doing way before what you want!

Tr: Could you possibly be more annoying! Shoo, back to your barn

You're a drag on my day - I'm off this way (whistling and some funny exit R! Skip? Vaudeville?)

75

Head down middle aisle and out back)

G: Look at him, trotting off and treating my advice like squat.

Gods, please, see to it, after three years away

That our master returns, before everything is gone,

The house, the farm, there'll only be leftovers left. (hard gestures L - then notice Phil)

80

Oh boy, here's the old man's son now, corrupted,

disrupted from promising youth. It's the country for me! (off R)

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 2 Phlo

Song - “A Man’s Home...”

(Philolaches enter from L, disturbed by)

Contemplating, cogitating, deep inside my head I’ve thought!—

Aggravating, agitating, is my brain a brain or not?

I think the think I think I think /cannot be, /you’ll agree, /merely/ simplistic analogy

That what young men resemble most/ has to be/ patently/ easy/ for everyone here to see:

(gesturing upstage)

(should develop a building theme here, very percussive, staccato to marcato)

A man/when he’s born/what’s he like?

He’s a house that’s newly built,/straight and true,/ spic and span.

Everybody loves the builder;/everybody loves the house,/

Wants a place just like it, / no expenses spared.

Then a lazy, loafer moves in/—what a louse!—

And a pack of yahoos joins him;/ new house needs repaired.

Like his friends, a man’s home is his hassle!

So, wouldn’t you know it:

A storm brews/and batters/the rooftiles/and shutters.

The rain falls,/ the roof leaks,/ the beams rot,/ the walls seep./

All the builder’s work is wasted, though the fault is not his own.

That lazy loser lounges all day long, when repair costs could be cheap.

His house a total wreck, a man’s home is his hassle!

A man/as a child/from the first

Has two parents building him/on a base/strong and firm,

So both high and low admire them/ and they both admire the son,/

For the skills they bought him,/ no expenses spared;

Army service as some uncle’s/ adjutant.

The builders’ work completed:/ is this house prepared?

Living with kin, a man's home is not *his* hassle!
So, shouldn't you know it?
Released from parental/design fundamentals,
My virtue respected/now sorely neglected,
My structure starts to cave and buckle / under hail and savage squalls
That drench my heart and soak my soul, now unprotected – I swear I'm not infected!
His interior exposed, a man's home is his hassle!

So I/as a man/on my own,
Getting doused by storms of love,/love and lust,/ night and day,
have abandoned all my virtues/ and abandoned all my goals.
Leaky roof has left a puddle in my head.
See my life once full of promise,/ now it's full of holes.
I've become nobody—this love will leave me dead.

And like his love, a man's home is his hassle!

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 3.1 Phlm/Phlo/Sc

Unaccompanied Scene + Songs

Noise from women inside house – at least one loud on cue in music before, enter Phlm from house L, with one female slave scrambling behind chasing her with towel, Scapha weighed down – with Phlm’s outer garment, makeup/jewelry kit (inside mirror with metallic handle, little bottles, brushes and styluses), stool and small traveling table. Phlo to up R hiding badly behind a shrub; this vanity set will be set up down LOC

Philematium (Phlm): (bare arms and sexy upper garment; proudly out the door and marching toward ROC with towel in slave’s hand to scrub away last water and toss head and upper body about planted C facing R – have enough water in towel to wring it out on cue)

My god, I can’t remember when I’ve had a more refreshing bath (Phlo tongue out at thought and sight); all that rubbing and scrubbing (get into w/ towel) got me going good, Scapha dear. 160

Philolaches (Phlo): O vivacious Venus,

it’s the storm that ripped the roof off my structural integrity.

When I lost my cover, that’s the Love and Lust that rained down on me, (Phlm toss towel on slave)

Soaked my soul, drenched the walls around my heart, and undermined my foundation. 165

(slave time the towel wringing to happen here on the water imagery; Scapha setting up LOC)

Phlm: (shaking head in a kind of modeling way, posing, about to step across puddle, notice and gesture to slave to throw down towel across puddle for you)

Check me out, Scapha (strutting x down L of Sc and back.) Is my outfit fitting? I want to look good For the light of my life, my steady...support system, Philolaches. (Sc readying pallium for her as she passes)

Scapha (Sc): What do you need with lovely adornment, when you’re so adorably lovely.

Lovers don’t love a woman’s wardrobe (patting her down to show features), just the stuff-ing that fills ‘em out. (still Sc primping Phlm, but also smiling proud of her crack, slave finishing setup of stuff LOC)

Phlo: Gods above, that Scapha’s lovely (Scapha hack a bit), a clever con, 170
with her lovely talk about lovers’ affairs and thoughts.

Phlm: Take a good look. How’s this suit me (pallium is now on – modeling).

Sc: Your natural beauty complements any attire...

Phlo: For that kind word, Scapha, today I’m gonna give you a big (leading up to kiss/hug of bush)....someday or other you’ll get more than ‘thanks’ for praising my love. 175

Sc: On my word, by your Philolaches' love for you, you're charming (180)

Phlo: What'd you swear, you skank! By my love for her!?

What about hers for me, where was that? Your gift's as good as gone. 185

Sc: (turning L shaking head in disappointment)

I'm just surprised: you've been expertly trained in wily ways

Not to act so ditzily ditzzy. **Phlm:** Tell me, please, where'd I go wrong?

Sc: You are wrong to wait on that one man, (turning back toward Phlm – gesture to house)

And forsaking all others, to keep yourself for him and him alone.

A one man service plan is for wives, not kept women. 190

Phlo: By Jupiter, what's this disaster that's toppling my house?

All the gods and goddesses can strike me down with the worst they've got,

If I don't strike that old bat with starvation, thirst and deep freeze, kicked out in the cold.

Phlm: But Scapha, I don't want to be schooled in wicked ways. **Sc:** You putz,

to think that he'll forever be your friend and protector. 195

I warn you: he'll abandon you when you're over the hill and he's had his fill. (Phlo fuming)

Phlm: I hope not. **Sc:** (wisely) "The unhoped-for happens more often than your hopes."

Look at my case: who I am, and who I used to be. (thinking, wandering R of Phlm reminiscing)

I was no less loved than you right now; committed to just one man. 200

Damned if he didn't walk right away at the first sight of gray. You'll end, I'm afraid, the same way.

(turn back to her sadly on last line)

Phlo: Damned if I don't exterminate that she-beast with the worst torture I can conjure!

That antique vice-vamp of villainy is corrupting my woman with her horrid ad-vice!

Phlm: But he freed me by paying plenty for my personal partnership;

I think I owe him my undivided attentions. 205

I can never return the thanks he deserves, so don't try to make me think less of him. (turn and walk L)

Sc: Now stop and really think: if you stick with just him in the fresh bloom of youth,
when you're old, you'll have to go manhunting in vain. (turn upstage to tend to beauty table again)

Phlm: I have to be just as grateful, now that I've gotten my prize (turning out to audience) 220

As before when I was getting what I wanted by a daily dose of loving him up (thinking about it)

Phlo: That little exchange would make me free her over and over, and kill Scapha just as dead

Sc: If he's your one and only lifelong love,

better commit to him alone and get your bridal hairdo done. (facetious) 225

Phlm: My good reputation can earn plenty of cash rewards (move L a bit more).

Phlo: I'd sell my father to keep her from lacking a single thing. 230

Sc: And what about rewards from the other men who love you? **Phlm:** They'll love me more
When they see the quality favors I return to one so good to me.

Phlo: Would someone please tell me my father's dead?

I'll disinherit myself right away and make her heir to all my goods.

Sc: But your loverboy's goods will all be spent in food and drink, day and night; 235

His conspicuous consumption leaves no savings in reserve.

Phlo: For you, Scapha, I'll mend the error of my ways and learn to save;

No food or drink for you the next ten days.

Phlm: (turning up toward Sc) Anything nice to say about him? Go ahead! (silly anger here)

But if you talk mean, I'll beat you up - darn you! 240

Phlo: A cash offering to Jove on high wouldn't yield such return

on my investment as the fee I paid for her.

Would you look how she loves me from the bottom of her heart. I'm a lucky man!

I freed a sugar-mama to defend and take care of me.

Sc: Well, if you say Philolaches is your permanent squeeze, 245

I'll give in to your whim before I'll take a beating for him.

(Music begins)

Scene 3.2 Phlm/Phlo/Sc

Accompanied + SONGS

Phlm: Scapha, grab my equipment, my mirror, the tool of my trade,'

So I can get ready before Philolaches, my love, arrives.

Sc: A woman who ages and lets herself go needs a mirror:

What do you want with a tool or equipment like that?

You're already so well equipped with well-tooled equipment.

Phlo: Brilliantly said, Scapha. I'm well equipped too to retool her with my expanded store of goods.

Phlm: How's my hairdo? **Sc:** Heavenly.

Phlm: More powder for whitening?

Sc: You're so fair, that would be like using ink to whiten ivory.

Phlm: Then how 'bout more rouge!

Sc: No. Wise up. Paint over a masterpiece? Don't colorize your glorious youth with pigmentation.

Phlm: (kiss the mirror, hand to Sc)

Manage my equipment. **Phlo:** OH GOD, she kissed the equipment! What a complete tool!

SONG - "Beauty's Duties"

Phlm: Whaddya think? / Should I pour on cologne?

Sc: Why raise a stink? / A girl in the pink / should not smell of scents but of good sense alone.

Nasty old hags rehabbing, refabbing their youthless and toothless exteriors

Waste their time assuming perfuming disguises their bodies' inferiors.

Stinky sweat and sappy sweet scent get all mixed and fixed in your nose

Till the foul smell you smell smells of...god only knows. **Slaves:** God only knows

[Phlm: Do my dress and jewelry look nice enough?

Sc: Not mine to say. Would your man buy you a look he doesn't like?]

A lover like yours, a man among whores, can purchase your service with pricey stuff.

Don't misplay your displays of array when you know he would rather just see them off.

Luxurious purple and gold cover women who're ugly and old;

A beauty is lovelier nude than in crimson.

Makeup's a terrible waste/ for a woman with natural, good taste.

A pretty lady's prettier, prettier, prettier the less she has on.

Phlo: (boldly intruding) How can anyone so lovely / take so long to beautify?

You don't need these potions or lotions (gesturing to Sc to get rid of stuff inside) to grab my attention or catch my eye!

Phlm: I aim to please and make your day. / I like what you like, my sweetiepie.

Phlo: That tiny word's a bargain, my dear, / a mere 2000 drachmai. **Slaves:** 2000 drachmai

[Phlm: A thousand only, please, my love! / Half price special, just for you.

Phlo: That's a thousand credit; balance, please! / Your freedom cost 3000.]

(She gets an attitude with him) Best investment I ever made.

Phlm: Entrusting my love in your stock, keeps my wardrobe from going in hock.

Phlo: Look, now see, our credits and debits agree, since I love you and you love me!

(End song, but continue speaking over accompaniment to end)

Phlo: A valuable pair appraising our mutual worth, objects of some people's good will and others' envy.

Phlm: Come recline beside me. (to slave) Order up the most perfect party possible: drinks, dice, the works.

Phlo: Ah-ha, my dear friend Callidamates is coming with his girl. Our army is almost assembled: soldiers in solidarity seeking spoils.

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 4 –C/D/Phlo/Phlm

SONG – “Party of Four...Make that Three”

C: Philolaches said to meet here at his place,
So I left the boring party I was at.

There the drinking and the thinking and the stinking were disgraceful;
Here the boozing and the cruising and amusing are so tasteful.

Do I look too tit-tit-tit-tipsy,
A bit boob-boob-boob-boozy?

D: I’m used to your stalling and hauling you crawling
From party to party around the city.

C: Can I hug you and hold you and boldly enfold you
All arm in arm in leg—oh god, you’re so pretty.

D: Watch out! Don’t fall! Get up! Don’t crawl!

C: (retching)B-b-b-baby, take me, control me, I’m yours. My honey, my sweet!

D: Oh please, dear, get up, not again in the street;
We’re so close to where a comfy couch awaits indoors!

C: Just let me fall, let me down, let me lie! **D:** Letting go.

C: Oh no, let the finger, the hand, the arm I’m holding join me here on the floor!

D: If you fall, I follow. **C:** If you follow, we wallow,
And some passerby can rescue our party of two ON the road.

D: What a racket, you’re swacked. **C:** What a rack, you’re stacked.

D: I don’t want you hurt! Hand your hand here, hon.

C: Here, handle me handily. Weren’t we going home for some fun?

[**D:** Not quite home, but you practically live there.

Phlo: Sweetie, I gotta play host to the best friend anywhere.]

Back in no time. **Phlm:** No time’s so long.

Phlo: Callidamates, relax here a while.

Where have you been? **C:** Where drunks all belong.

Phlm: Delphium, dear, recline here in style.

Please have some wine. **C:** I'll nap here, meantime.

Phlo: No surprises with him, sleep-it-off mode again.

Let the fun freely flow – grab a cup, here we go.

(Short dance number among these 3 over sleeping Callidamates)

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 5 – Tr/Phlo/Phlm/C/D/Sp
(C & D on couch to up center, Phlo & Phlo to down L of Th's door)

Accompanied scene

Tr: (Enter R panicked)

God almighty, Jove above must want me dead,

Me and my young master, Philolaches, too.

Our hopes are dashed, our shelter smashed. 350

Safety herself couldn't save us—on the off chance that she'd want to;

The harbor's heaped high with hellishly horrible happenstance. (Phlo hears something, sits up)

The old man's back from overseas; doom and gloom for Tranio.

Anybody out there wanna earn a little extra cash? (front of audience by here, moving to stage R)

Any volunteer for my impending crucifixion? A fee for my work at cross purposes? (nervous laugh)

Phlo: Oh, look, it's Tranio, back from shopping at the harbor? 362

Tr: Philolaches! **Phlo:** Yes? **Tr:** You and me(panting)-**Phlo:** You and me? **Tr:** We're done for!

Phlo: (rising) We're what? How? **Tr:** Your father's back. **Phlo:** Come again? (Tr return to R as if to do it over)

Tr: Philolaches! **Phlo:** YES?! **Tr:** Your father's back from abroad, I saw him myself.

Phlo: Yup, I'm dead, if you're telling the truth! **Tr:** What good does it do me to lie? (double take aside to audience, knowing smile) 370

Phlo: (frantic) What do I do, hoo hoo **Tr:** (shake him out of it) Clear out this crap (sniffing R)!

Who's asnooze? **Phlo:** Callidamates. Get him up, Delphium. (Tr go around behind couches)

D: (sweetly) Callidamates, (snappy) Callidamates, wake up. **C:** (drunk – up quickly) I'm up, gimme a drink (leaning back onto couch).

D: Wake up. Philolaches' father's back from abroad? **C:** Hello, father. Where's the broad?

Phlo: Hello, father, Hell, ohhhh me. **C:** Hold you? Aww, I love you too man. (hug, slip out) 375

Phlo: Oh my god, please get up; my father's back. **C:** Your father's back?

Tell him to get lost again. Why'd he come back – and here? (looking around disgusted at the place)

Phlo: What do I do? Father will find me stinking drunk,
His house overrun with partiers and "ladies." 380

Tr: Hey, his head's hit the spot again (on Delphium' chest) – he's out. Get him up!

Phlo: Asleep again? (scrambling to clean) I'm telling you my father's here? **C:** Huh, your father?

(sit up quickly) Get my boots, and my sword. By god, (standing stumbling) I'll kill your dad dead.

Phlo: You're ruining everything. **D:** (to C) Hush, dear, please. **Phlo:** (to slaves) Haul him inside, manhandle him out. 385

C: Damn, can you two spot me a piss pot – cause otherwise you're gonna be it real soon (start carting him off inside) – ooh, too late!

Phlo: Aaaaah **Tr:** Get yourself together: I'll treat your trauma amusingly. (play doctor to sitting Phlo)

Phlo: More aaah. **Tr:** Shhh, I'm considering your condition.

Will it do if I see with your father's arrival

That he not only won't enter the house, but actually gets far away from it? 390

You all, for now, go inside and clear away all this stuff pronto.

Phlo: Where do I go? **Tr:** Where you want to be most, with her (Phlm) and that thing that just left (C) will be with her (D).

D: Shouldn't we just leave. **Tr:** Not at all, Delphium,

You can drink just as much inside as out here

Phlo: Oh boy! When he spouts those free-flowing words I'm drunk with dread. 395

Tr: Can you just keep your head and do what I say. **Phlo:** Uh huh!

Tr: First, Philematium, Delphium, you two get inside.

D: We both graciously honor and obey till death.... **Tr:** Yeah, yeah, God help us all (pushing them out). Now you: First, see that the house is in lock down; 400

Don't let one person inside utter a peep. **Phlo:** Done!

Tr: As if not a living soul lives in the house. **Phlo:** Got it!

Tr: No one can answer when the old man knocks.

And bring me the front door key, so I can lock the house up. 405

Phlo: Tranio, my hopes and I are in your keeping.

Tr: There's not a hair's difference in skill sets from patron to client.

(Music stops)

Worthless is worthless, high class or low 410

Find a man with loads of smarts,

when things are scrambled hopelessly,

to calm things down, no damage done. 415

The storm that's been brewing here, now will be stilled.

No troubles or pains for any of us (Sphaerio enters from Th's house with big key – walking like asst. on a game show)

What are you doing here, Sphaerio? Excellent, yes, 420

Obeying orders. **Sp:** I was told to get you

To scare off his father by all necessary means,

And never let him near his son inside. **Tr:** Tell him,

His father won't dare even glance at his house,

He'll duck and cover, flee in full fright.

Hand me the outdoor key and go lock up inside. (Sp exits inside) 425

The games and plays I host today when the old man's still alive,

Will never be matched by the ones in his honor when he's dead and gone.

I'll keep watch for him from here, and dump a load on his homecoming. (to up R, Left of Simo's

house in the gap between houses) 430

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 6 – Th/Tr

Unaccompanied Scene

Th: (Enter R in Traveling clothes)

Neptune, my undying thanks, that you gave me leave

From sea to shore till I'm home alive – barely!

You've gotten, I trust, all the trust I'll entrust.

If hereafter you hear I've set foot on a wave,

Don't hesitate to do me in the way you almost did.

435

Tr: (aside) Neptune, you blew a perfectly good opportunity. (crossing to house L)

Th: Home from Egypt after three long years; (out to audience)

440

I bet they all can't wait to see me. (trying to open door, unsuccessfully, surprised)

Tr: What they really can't wait for is news that you are dead!

Th: Why are the doors locked during the day?

I'll knock (vigorous) Yoo-HOOO! Anybody there? Open up (musical quality first)

445

Tr: (broad and melodramatic, weary as if wandering from R) What man has approached our home?

Th: (turning, a bit startled) Well, if it isn't my slave, Tranio. **Tr:** (troubled) Ohh, Theopropides.

Master, welcome, glad you've come home...well (roll eyes to audience).

Th: Are you all unwell? **Tr:** Why? **Th:** Cause you're the only man walking about,

450

and not a living soul at home. With my knocking, I might have broken the door.

Tr: Oh, woe (mock fright) YOU TOUCHED the (gulp) HOUSE? (start to wander) **Th:** Why wouldn't I?

Tr: (mock fright) YOU TOUCHED IT? (start to wander) **Th:** Yeah, I touched it, I knocked **Tr:** Wahhhh!

Oh, god, bad business. **Th:** What's going on? **Tr:** I can't begin to relate

What an awful, dreadful deed you've done, ooh it's baaaaad.

Th: What is it? **Tr:** Run, I beg you, abandon your abode.

460

(frantic move L then R) Run from here (Th moves a little) Run over here, near me. **Tr:** (big, shaking

him) DID YOU TOUCH THE DOOR? **Th:** How could I knock and not touch?

Tr: By god, you've killed—**Th.** What? Who? **Tr:** all of your nearest and dearest.

Th: (xing nervously farther R of Tr –appeal up) All the gods and goddesses avert such doom...

Tr: I'm afraid with all that touching you may not get a good word in at this point for any of you. 465

Th: (biting nails, then suspicious) Hey, why no touching

Tr: (thinking on his toes, cautious approach to house) For seven months none of us has set foot in this house – we moved out. 470

Th: But why? **Tr:** Look all around to see no one overhears our chat. (move in funny ways, looking in weird places past each other). **Th:** (back C) Coast is clear.

Tr: (obviously stalling) Look again. (only Th moves this time) **Th:** No one. Tell me now.

Tr: It was a crime...murder. **Th:** What? I don't understand. 475

Tr: A crime, I tell you, way way back in ancient, olden times.

Th: Ancient? **Tr:** Yes, we just found out of late.

Th: How criminal was it? Who did it? Go on.

Tr: The owner murdered a guest – bare handed (hands around own throat melodramatic), I think the one who sold you the house. 480

Th: Murdered? (scared) **Tr:** He stole the guest's gold, and buried him right there inside. **Th:** How did you get wind of this?

Tr: (thinking hard) I'll... tell you. Your son returned from dinner one night, 485
Everybody went to bed, sound asleep, when suddenly he screamed an awful scream.

Th: Who? My son? **Tr:** Shhhhh, quiet, listen.

He said there came to him in a dream, the dead man himself. 490

Th: (slight relief) So, just in a dream, right? **Tr:** Yes, but listen!

He said the dead said...**Th:** In a dream? (scared again) **Tr:** Well, he'd have a hard time talking to him awake, now wouldn't he? He'd been dead 60 years. You're really pretty dumb sometimes. 495

Th: I'll shut up. **Tr:** So, IN A DREAM, he said (ghosty tone)

"I am the guest Transmarinus from...across the sea (make it sound obvious).

I inhabit here the house designated for my habitat—

for Hades won't admit me to his kingdom underground, 500

since I died before my time, cheated, murdered by my host,
victim of a secret cover-up in his house—without proper burial.

A crime, for gold. Now move from here.

This house is scandal-plagued, its habitation doomed."

I couldn't recount in a year or more the ghoulish happenings here. (laughs inside) 505

(Tr running over to door loudly to inside) – ShHhh, Shhhhh (looking back over shoulder nervously)

Th: By god, what is it? **Tr:** (trying to cover up) The door creaked.

It's HIM – he knocked! (More noise from inside, chair knocked over) **Th:** My blood runs cold;
The dead are dragging me right down to Hades – alive. (clutch heart/head). (Noise again)

Tr: (to audience at L) I'm the one who's dead! Those idiots in there will botch my story line out
here. I really worry what he'll do when he catches on. 510

Th: What are you saying to yourself? **Tr:** (pushing him back R) Get away from the door!

My god, please run! **Th:** Where can I run (in circles – then pause)? Why aren't you running?

Tr: I'm not afraid; the dead and I are at peace. (approaching house confidently)

INSIDE VOICE: Hey Tranio. **Tr:** (loudly whispering to inside) Don't be calling my name! 515

(nervous laugh, then fake confidence to ghost) I don't deserve it and I didn't knock on the door.

Th: What's wrong with you, Tranio? Who are you talking to? **Tr:** (out of fake trance) Did you call
me, sir? Gods forbid, I thought it was the dead guy, 520

Wondering why you knocked on his door. (scared stiff) Why are you still here?

Run, as fast as you can and call for help to Hercules. **Th:** I beseech you, Hercules! (run off R)

Tr: I beseech him too—to give you some bad business. (gesture, moving R toward Tr's exit)

Bad business (proudly), just what I've been transacting today.

7.1

Misargyrides (M): (Enter L jingling an almost empty moneybag on belt)

My loan sharking operations this year have been the most punishing in memory,
Dawn to dusk working the forum all day with less lessees than ever. (occupied counting and
recounting cash on the ground L) 535

Tr: (has heard the clink of coins and looked around now notices M)

Oh GOD, now I'm gone for good; it's the loan shark who fronted us cash

For the girl and the good times; I can't let the old man get a whiff of this. (notices him coming back
R – double take)

UUUUr – why's he back so fast? Did he already hear what's up at home? 540

I'll say hey; this turbulent situation calls for more turbulence.

(Up to Th just getting onstage) What've you been up to? **Th:** I met the guy who sold me the house.

Tr: Did you tell him what I said? **Th:** The whole damn thing.

Tr: (aside) My machinations are mishmashed mush. 550

Th: What'd you say over there? **Tr:** Oh, nothing important.

Did he at least admit the thing about the guest (slit throat). **Th:** No! Denied it. **Tr:** In denial, huh? (a
little louder so M picks up head)

M: Hey, it's Philolaches' slave Trani-OHNO. Those guys never pay up, interest or principal. 560

Th: (Tr moving away L) Where are you going? **Tr:** (ironic) Absolutely nowhere. (to audience)

Some gods have had it in for me from birth, and now I'm getting the business from this side and
that (indicate L then R, eeny meeny miney mo, throw up hand) 565

Here goes. **M:** (rubbing hands) He's coming, oh good,

Money! **Tr:** He sure is happy—not for long! Misargyrides, hi, doin' good?

M: Hi, where's my money? **Tr:** Get out of here, you animal!

Hit me with your best shot there, fire away. 570

M: You're absolutely worthless. **Tr:** ooh, a regular soothsayer.

M: Where is Philolaches? **Tr:** Your timing couldn't be better (through teeth, looking over shoulder
to Th listening closer)

M: None of your tricks. **Tr:** Come on over here (manhandle L). **M:** When do I get my interest?

Tr: Yes, lovely speaking voice, can't place it! Just don't shout so loud! (farther L)

M: God damn it, I will shout. **Tr:** Could you do me a favor? **M:** What favor? **Tr:** Please go home!
(pushing off L, then he comes right back)

M: Go home? **Tr:** Yeah, come back about noon. **M:** Will I get my interest? **Tr:** You'll get it all right:
now go (push) 580

M: Why do all that running back and forth, wasting energy, getting tired?

I'll just stay here till noon **Tr:** Well, damn you, why don't you go....(angry) go! (push)

M: Hey, damn it, I'm gonna call a friend or my assistant goons on you (screaming in ear).

Tr: Yeah wow, and it'll be loud, I guarantee. You got the gift of loud. **M:** I just want what's mine.
You've put me off for days. If I'm such a pain, then pay, and I'll be off. 590

Tr: How bout some of your principal. **M:** No, interest first.

Tr: You came here for extortion. Do what you like? He owes you zilch, no go!

You won't get a scrap from us. You afraid he'll high tail it out of the city

To dodge interest when he's offering principal. **M:** But I don't want principal,

I'm supposed to get the interest first. **Tr:** You're such a pain. 600

You think you're the only loan shark in town?

M: Interest now, interest, pay me my interest. I want my interest. **Tr:** Interest here, interest there,
He's interested in nothing but interest.

You are easily the most repulsive creature imaginable.

M: By god, you don't scare me with those words you spout (finger in chest or face).

Th: (from across stage) Things are hot over there; I can feel the heat even over here.

What's this interest he keeps asking for? 610

Tr: See, over there, his father's just returned, he'll pay it all

So don't be causing all kinds of trouble with your demands.

Th: (sort of hearing) Say what? **Tr:** (snappy) What do you want? (Th a little cowed) **Th:** Who's he?

What's he want? Why's he upset about my son Philolaches? Why is he all up in your face like that?

What's this debt he's owed? **Tr:** Please, sir, tell me I can

shove money in that foul creature's face, that I can smash and hash him with cold, hard cash. 620

M: No problem, I'll readily accept any strike of silver coins!

Tr: Loan shark, the worst predatory species known to man.

Th: I don't care who he is, what he's like or where he's from:

I only want to hear about this debt accrued.

Tr: It's—uh—Philolaches owes him just a tiny, little bit.

Th: How tiny, little? **Tr:** Oh about – 4000 drachmas,

Not much really, don't you think (to Th)? **M/Th** (together): Yeah, not much!

Th: (exasperated) How much with interest? **Tr:** 4400

Say you'll give it to him, so he'll go away. **Th.** Me? Say I'll pay?

Tr: Let go! Go on and say it! (leading): that's an order (eyebrows to audience) 635

(M figure something to do while you sit and wait (edge of stage)

Th: What happened to the loan money? **Tr:** It's been secured.

Th: Well, if it's safe and sound, you pay up yourselves. **Tr:** He bought... (looking around for insp)

a house. **Th:** A house? Wow, oh boy, Philolaches, that's my boy, all grown up (sentimentally)

(proud) fabulously fatherized venturing in commerce and trade!

Really? A house? **Tr:** Know what kind? (wince, realizes he offered info) 640

Th: How could I? **Tr:** Wow! It's something. **Th:** What? **Tr:** Don't even ask! (thinking)

(now imagining for Th) Pretty as a picture, a real gem—(reaching for descriptor) nice'n...bright.

Th: What'd he pay? **Tr:** Oh, silver talents (making it up; M perks up with mention of money and rises moving in uncomfortably close) same number as one you, plus one me!

Down payment was the 4000 drachmas. (pointing to M and hitting him cause he crept up on you)

He (that is M) fronted us for that. 645

After the happenings at your place—remember what I said?—(hushed, avoiding ghost comments)

He bought another right away. **Th:** Damn good job. **M:** Hey, it's pushing noon (impatient). 650

Tr: Free us please of this hurled up pukewad before he heaves again.

Pay him the whole 4400, interest and principal. **M:** That's all I demand.

Th: Young man, your business is with me, tomorrow. **M:** Tomorrow; good enough. (off L greedy)

7.2

Tr: (trailing M far L gesturing negatively) Gods damn you, al-mostly rattling my plots and plans.

Th: (happy, moving L a bit) So, that house, in which neighborhood did my boy buy?

Tr: (hand to head to aud) Oh no, getting my second wound! **Th:** I asked you a question, do tell.

Tr: I will...but the owner's name...uhhh...uhh...escapes me (hide head in hands)

Th: Surely you can come up with something (look up at audience knowingly; Th freeze, Tr move past to R) **Tr:** What to do? (standing facing Simo's house, light bulb)

Unless...our next door neighbor's house; I'll say his son bought this one.

Damned if cooked up lies aren't best served hot, not half-baked (Proud hugging self) 665

You gotta go with the gifts the gods give ya. (go kiss and hug Simo's house)

Th: (unfreeze) Now (pointing L where Tr was, search and find R, confused)...Any thoughts?

Tr: (moving up to meet part way to C) Yeah, gods damn that guy...(cover, hand to L of mouth toward Th, for aside to audience), really damn that one (gesture to Th secretly)...Your son

Bought this house next door. **Th:** (amazed with delight) If that's the real deal, good! 670

Tr: Well, if you pay our deficit, good, but if you don't, no goods, just a bill of goods.

Th: (xing Tr to house) By god, I'd love a tour inside (start looking the house over)

Tr: (turn to aud, physically disturbed) Sheez! Washed by waves right back on the rocks of ruin!

Th: Knock, call someone outside at once; ask for a look around in there (about to knock himself).

Tr: (Running around to block door with body) Oh my...no... (thinking) there are women...there.

What about their wishes? (pushing him down L far away from the house) **Th:** Well said, that's proper; go, inquire within. I'll wait right here till you return (removing far L to think).

Tr: (turning downstage to far R) Gods and goddesses damn you all to pieces, old man.

Foiling all my lovely plots so foully from all sides. (Simo enter fr. his house, stretch) 685

Tr: (seeing Simo, gleeful) Happy happy joy joy. Sweet! Simo, the master of that house himself, is coming out. (retreating upstage to plant R of Simo's entrance) I'll stay right here and listen in, while I summon my senate in assembly of the soul to study the situation.

The Ghoul Next Door – Scenes 8.1&8.2– Si/Th/Tr (Song/Unaccompanied/Song/Accompanied)

8.1 Song – “Simo’s Escape into Tranio’s Jape”

Si: (entering from house downstage, looking over shoulder)

Dinner was great, /best that I ever ate,/ but wait!

690

Wife did real good, /gave her all with the food,/

Then she slipped into something too comfortable for my good mood.

Ordered me to bed,/ she’d laid out a big spread /—I said,

‘Whoa, no,/ Whoa, no, /bedding after feting is no go!’

And I slipped out of something uncomfortable here in the road.

Hurray! A swollen up angry old wife awaits me at home.

Tr: That poor guy’s evening looks pretty sad;

Being fed to be bed can be dreadfully—bad.

Si: Old wife’s old money /makes life unsunny/—funny!

Bed is no fun,/ no sleeping gets done.

Working that woman by night makes my day job look bright down in the forum.

Tr: The running around our old neighbor is doing

Evading the pleasures of conjugal blis-ters,

Can’t match the old runaround I’m gonna give him;

He’s in for a treat of complete deceit from a magical trick-ster.

Simo, hello. / **Si:** (surprised) And to you, / Tranio.

How’s life in there? (winking, indicating Th’s house and the parties) **Th:** I don’t see / why you care.

(blocking him from house and Th)

Si: You get my drift! / Life is short! / Let ‘er rip! (silly dance/ party moves, Th tries to suppress)

Live a life that’s always full of song and dance;

Lots of food and wine, you gotta give life a chance.

Tr: (dampening the dance mood with a noncommittal step) NO!

That’s the way it used to be, for all and for one;

Living like we liked was fun; that life we used to live is done.

Si: How'd your luck give you the slip?

Tr: Storm blew in and wrecked our ship.

Si: Your pleasure cruise was sailing smooth, fore and aft.

Tr: Someone else's ship came in and smashed our craft.

8.2 (Unaccompanied)

Simo (Si): I'm with you Tranio, but what's the deal? **Tr:** The master's back from abroad.

Si: Sounds like a real pain—for you! **Tr:** (kneeling humbly) I beg you, don't slip him a hint (point).

Si: Don't worry, nothing from me. **Tr:** Thank you, my patron. (ad lib) **Si:** I'm accepting no new clients...of your ilk. **Tr:** My master would like to look around your house. **Si:** But it's not for sale.

Tr: Yes, I know that, but he wants to build a women's wing in his, 755

Baths, a tree-lined walk and portico. **Si:** Where'd he dream of that?

Tr: He wants his son to bring home a wife—and soon,

Thus the new women's wing; he said some crazy architect 760

Praised to the rafters your house's design.

He wants to copy the plans, unless you object.

He's really wild about copying your...summer shade

which he's heard is superb, at peak sun and all day long. 765

Si: The hell it is, in every other place there's lots of shade,

But mine's always got sun from dawn to dusk,

Like a bill collector always hanging out at your door,

No shade to be found anywhere but down my well.

But, if he wants, he can have a look around, and copy and build

what he likes. **Tr:** Can I call him over? **Si:** Sure.

Tr: They say Alexander the Great and Agathocles of Syracuse were practically tactically 775

the best two at derring-do; shouldn't I be ranked third in line

as the only one to do immortal deeds?

I'm traveling like a muleteer with panniers on his pack-mule, saddled with one old man on either

side. They're both heavily burdened, and haul whatever you load on them. 780

Song – “What’s with This Song?”

Tr: (slyly toward Th) Master, hey, / your faithful slave made quite a save for you today.

Th: Slave, now say, / what’s with this song,... and why so long with your delay?

Tr: Guy next door, / see how he’s standing, so open-handed looking poor? (Simo standing with puzzled imploring look on face trying to get Tr to bring Th over)

Seller’s remorse! / He wants to back out, not to pack out, now of course.

Th: Hell NO! /Hell NO! / You tell that creep all men reap what they sow.

Truth be told, / Truth be told, / if we had bought a pile of rot he would say, “It is sold!” (Scat!)

He should know / it’s finders keepers, losers weepers – X let’s roll! (X=childish taunt sticking tongue out at Simo, lots of business – both roll Mission Impossible style)

Accompanied

Th: (to Tr) This operation’s in your hands! **Tr:** (to Si) Hey, psst, I got your guy.

Si: (shaking forearms in greeting) Good to see you back safe from abroad, Theopropides. 805

Th: Gods be with you. **Si:** He said you wanted to look my place over. (Tr has countered to Th’s L)

Th: If it’s no trouble **Si:** No trouble at all. Go on in, peruse. (Th about to enter stops turns back)

Th: But your women folk—**Si:** Don’t give a second thought to any women.

Walk anywhere you like in the house just as if you own it.

Th: (confused looking over at Tr) As IF? **Tr:** (Tr collect him to speak aside ROC, Si whistling) Oh, don’t go shoving it in his face, in his moment of grief, that you bought his place; See how broken up he is about it inside? (Si looking pretty dumb, nonchalant).

Tr: I do see. **Th:** No laughing or gloating at his expense, then.

Don’t mention again that you bought it. **Tr:** Got it.

Good advice, I think it shows off your human nature (ironic reaction from Tr, moving past Si R toward door on next line).

815

Si: Take all the time you need, to look the place over. **Th:** Thank you kindly.

Tr: (move up, inspect house with grand gestures, then touching) Look at that front entrance, and What a front pathway all tree (touch the pathetic bush, maybe even move it over)-lined.

Th: By god, it's just splendid. **Tr:** And look at those door-posts, so thick and sturdy (knock, hollow, double take) **Th:** Never seen such pretty posts. **Si:** God knows even back in the day they were 820 expensive. **Tr:** (to Th) Hear how he said 'back in the day'? Barely holding back tears!

Th: How much? **Si:** 300 drachmas for the pair, plus delivery.

Th: (inspecting, tapping carefully, looking down) My god, they're a good deal inferior to what I first thought! Both of them infested with termites from the base up. 825

Tr: (barge in looking closely at posts, back and forth between the two guys, scan up and down) Mhm, pretty dilapidated and out of date, if you ask me; that's their problem.

They'll be good as new with a thorough shellacking!

(attending to the doors and hands on the men's shoulders again) No lousy polenta-munching, foreign, I-talian worker made these.

Would you look at how tightly those doors are jambed (indicate doors and men somehow). **Th:** Yes (a little confused at this admiration). **Tr:** See with what tricks of the trade they just lie there and seem clueless. **Th:** (very confused) Clueless? **Tr:** Oh sorry, I meant to say, "How wide shut their eyeholes, their seams glueless." 830

(pointing broadly to indicate the current scene, but also trying to focus Th toward the house)

Do you see the big picture: where a crow is making fun of two vultures?

Th: I see nothing, damn it. **Tr:** Well, I do: a crow standing between two scavengers, squarely skewered.

Look right at me. Now do you see the crow? **Th:** No, no crow. 835

Tr: If not the crow, look right around you two for those vultures.

Th: I don't detect any painted bird anywhere – now buzz off!

Tr: Never mind, I can overlook that: everyone loses sight in old age. **Th:** What I see, I like. 840

Si: (approaching door) It'll be worth your while to look it over completely.

(call inside) Hey, boy, this guy needs a tour of the whole house, each room.

I'd take you round myself, but I've got business in the forum.

Th: I don't need to be pandered to. No leading me on. I'm not easily taken in. 845

Si: (hearing the double entendre) I'm talking about the house. **Th:** I'll go in then.

Tr: (jumping in front of him) Whoa, look out for the dog (stick leg in for chewing) **Th:** (scared) You look

Tr: Aaah, hey, get dog! Back, bad dog, aaahh. Go to hell, dog. Still there. Go, dog, go! Get. 850

(a stuffed lying dog is slowly slipped out the doorway)

Si: She's harmless; docile in her pregnant state like any other. Go on in, you can brave the peril!
(laughs). I'm off to my meeting in the forum (Off L) **Th:** Most congenial, have a nice walk!

Tranio, take care of the dog, clear her from the entrance,

Ferocious or not. **Tr:** Look how calmly she's lying there.

855

Unless you want to seem grumpy and cowardly. **Th:** All right – whatever you think.

Follow me in. (stepping gingerly over the sleeping dog) **Tr:** Don't worry, I won't leave your side

(entering Simo's house)

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 9/10 Phaniscus/Pinacium

Song – “Service with a Smirk (Brown-Noser’s Blues)”

Pha: (coming from off R, Pin very close behind so she hears this slam on the other slaves)

Blameless slaves serve their masters well / out of fear and respect;

Shameless knaves give their masters hell / out of sheer neglect.

Bad slaves buy up heaps of trouble/ with what little good they deserve;

Good ones, like me, get our goods redoubled / for the greater good that we serve.

Picking up our master here, Callidamates, / was the order of the day.

Picking on me was those slaves’ master plan, when I readily obeyed.

(on the quoted line here, we should split it into two vocal parts and have Pinacium begin to sing mockingly as she enters, since she would have been one of these slaves making fun of him)

Those rogues replied, “Not going! Nope! / Giddup, jack ass, out to pasture!”

“Go, eager beaver, hopeless dope, / go service master even faster!”

Pi: Hey, Phaniscus, monkey-boy, master’s mega-munchy mooch.

Your trash talk sure has taken off, since master made you his personal smooch.

Pha: You’re not gonna bait me with those angry barbs. Our master knows me.

Pi: [Well, DUH!] Every man’s familiar with his mattress and his mistress, naturally.

Come on, let’s assault this door and give it a thorough beating.

For getting master up and home, we’ll get no friendly greeting.

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 11 – Th/Tr (Phan/Pin at Th’s door)

Accompanied Scene

Tr: (w/ Th entering from Simo’s house to R, Tr initially on Th’s L) How do you feel now about the real estate deal? **Th:** Ecstatic! (Phan and Pin fiddling with door, go in alley to look for back entrance)

Tr: Doesn’t seem too expensive? **Th:** God no, never have I seen till now 905
a house just given away. **Tr:** What about the women’s wing? The portico? **Th:** This deal’s INSANE.

I think there’s not a public portico bigger. **Tr:** In fact, Philolaches and I went all over 910
Measuring the public porticoes. **Th:** And? **Tr:** Turns out ours is by and large the largest.

Th: By god, I wouldn’t sell this house *out* of hand to a guy with 3 times the price *in* hand.

Tr: (matter of factly, presumptuous) And even if you wanted to accept, I wouldn’t allow it.

(Th grimace @ Tr’s comment, xing Th to R)

I’ll take full *credit* as pusher and squasher-in-chief for getting your son

To go in hock to that loan shark to get down (loses himself briefly in party mode)...to make the
down payment. **Th:** You kept our boat afloat.

So the balance due is, let’s see, (calculating in the air complicated) 8000 drachmas.

Tr: (swooning at thought of money, obvious con job arm around Th)

You could hand me the cash for the payoff. **Th:** If I hand off to you, no doubt there’s a catch for me.

Tr: In my time as your slave, have I *ever* deceived you or given you the flim-flam? 925

Th: (pointing to nose, creates mixed metaphor) No cause I watch you closely. Thank the gods for
my superior brain power.

It’s smart of me to keep an eye on you! **Tr:** I have that same feeling. (Th’s line below is cue for Phan
and Pin to come back through central alleyway and go around L of doorway to look on that side –
must be there before Tr turns up C to exit up the alley, he can’t see you)

Th: Now head for the country house, inform my son I’m back in town.

Get him back here in the city with you lickety split. **Tr:** No problem. 930

(Th turn to look over house happily, Tr move off stage R, then sneaking back across to C)

Now I’ll gather with the gang through the back door;

I’ll tell them things are settled and I’ve managed his removal. (goes off up center and back of Th’s
house as Th turns around happy and moves downstage)

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 12 – Th/Pha/Pi

Accompanied Scene

Pha: (coming back from L of house toward door, ear cupped to door)

No sounds of partying like earlier, no female accompaniment, musical type, I mean, not no one. (Pi starts knocking vigorously – draws Th’s attention)

Th: What’s going on there? What could those guys be looking for at my house? What’s their story?

Pi: I’m gonna keep knocking. (harder now, comical) Hey, open up, hey, Tranio, O-PENNNNN.

We came over to get our master Callidamates.

Th: Hey (calling over), slaves, why are you banging on that house? (they look up startled, turn R surprised)

Pi: Hey, old man, why you sticking your nose in, what’s it to you? 940

Th: What’s it to me? **Pi:** Unless you’re some new type of inspector general, scoping out, snooping, spying and eavesdropping on *other people’s* business.

Th: Are you saying you’re not standing in front of my own house? **Pi:** Say what?

Did Philolaches sell it? (to Phan) This old guy’s trying to trick us!

Th: I’m telling the truth, but what business do you have here. **Pi:** Our master’s inside boozing!

Th: Boozing? Here? **Pi:** ‘swhat I said. **Th:** You’re a bit too sassy, slave. Who’s here?

Pi: OUR MASTER (yelling like he’s deaf). Sheez, how many times I got to tell you?

Th: (Passing Pi to talk to Pha) Nobody lives here, slave, I think I should tell you, since you look respectable enough.

Pha: Young Philolaches doesn’t live here? **Th:** Used to, moved out a while back. 950

Pha: (xing to Pi, crazy sign) This old guy’s a certified nut job. (back to Th) You’re horribly wrong, pops! Cause unless he moved out today or yesterday, I’m sure,

He lives here. **Th:** But no one’s lived here for seven months. **Pha:** In your dreams.

Th: Mine? **Pi:** Yup. Yours. **Th:** (x toward Pi) You stop butting in. Let me talk to this slave.

Nobody lives here. **Pha:** Oh yeah, somebody does, did yesterday, and the day before, and the day before, and a week ago; ever since his dad went out of town, it’s been one unending party.

Th: Say what? **Pha:** Neverending buffet and bar, music girls with talented hands AND lips, you know, the complete Greek party package, Greek till you drop. 960

Th: Who’s been doing this? **Pha:** Philolaches. **Th:** Which Philolaches?

Pha: His father is Theopropides, I think. **Th:** Oh god, OH GOD, I’m a dead man,

(sudden doubt) if he's telling the truth. Slave, I fear you're more foolish than first I felt. 965

Have you been hitting the bottle a bit too hard. **Pha:** What makes you think that?

Th: I'm thinking you've got the wrong house. **Pha:** I know where I'm going and where I am.

Philolaches, son of Theopropides, lives here. And after his father left on a business trip, 970

he paid to free a pretty pipe-player, Philematium. **Th:** How much? **Pha:** 3000 drachmas

Th: Uhhhh...So, you're saying that following his father's foreign foray, Philolaches frivolously fested?

Pha: That's what I'm saying. **Th:** Did he buy the house next door?

Pha: Not saying that. **Th:** And did he pay 4000 drachmas down on it?

Pha: Not saying that either. **Th:** Aaaggggh! You've done me in. **Pha:** No, I think that guy has done his dad in!

Th: Ain't that the truth? **Pha:** Oh, 3000 drachmas is nothing compared to his other over-the-top expenses. Then there's the wickedest slave ever, Tranio; he could squander all that Hercules acquired.

Oh, God, this little lump of coal is gonna give that poor father heartburn. 985

Pi: (gone back to knocking hard) HEY inside, can somebody open up? **Pha:** Why knock when noone's there? They must have taken the party on the road. Let's go now...

Th: Slave! **Pha:** and keep looking. **Pi:** Coming! **Th:** Slave, are you leaving?

Pha: You wear your freedom as a protective outer coating: my fear and care of my master is all that saves my hide. (Both off R)

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 13– Th/Si

Unaccompanied

Tr: I didn't travel to Egypt and back, but to desert lands on far-off shores, 995
Till now I don't know where in the world I am.
(sees Simo off L) Aha, now I'll get some answers, here comes the man who sold
my son the house. (enter Simo, Th goes up to him) Since I just got back from abroad...

Si: (sassily) I'm going out, just in case you think you're having dinner at my place. 1005

Th: (blocking Si's entrance to his own house)
No, God, that's not what I want. **Si:** Well, tomorrow, if no one else
Invites me first, sure I'll have dinner at yours.

Th: No, no that's not it either, but, IF you're not TOO BUSY, I need your help. **Si:** Sure.

Th: It's my understanding you received 4000 drachmas from my son 1010
Philolaches. **Si:** It's *my* understanding, I got not a drachma.

Th: Anything from his slave Tranio? **Si:** Ha! You can't get much less than that!

Th: Didn't he give you a down payment? **Si:** In your dreams.

Th: Oh, Oh, I see, you think you can unmake this deal by playing dumb. 1015

Si: What? **Th:** The bargain my son made with you when I was away.

Si: What deal, what date? **Th:** I owe you 8000 drachmas. **Si:** Damned if you do to me....
(thinking) But...., if you owe me, then by all means pay. A deal is a deal, so don't go renegeing on me.

Th: I'd never default on this debt. But don't you go saying you didn't get the 4000. 1025

Si: What exactly, may I ask, did they say they bought with all this cash? **Th:** Your house!

Si: My house? **Th:** That's why I was inspecting the interior and portico.

Si: (angrily) Tranio told me you wanted your son to get married,
and you were going to build a women's wing like mine in your house.

Th: Oh no, I'm utterly devastated, ruined, neighbor. I don't know what to say. 1030

Tranio has made an ass of me today in the most humiliating ways, for good. 1035

Now please lend me your assistance. **Si:** What would you like? **Th:** Go with me, please. Let me use
some of your slaves and your whips **Si:** You've got 'em. **Th:** I'll tell you more about how he played
me for a fool today in his own inimitable ways. 1040

(both enter Simo's house)

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 14 – Tr/Th

Accompanied Scene

Tr: (Enter determined from alleyway, a little sense of being roughed up)

A scaredy-cat when the going gets tough isn't worth squat,

And with my skillsets I don't know squat about squat.

When master sent me to the farm to pick up his son,

I snuck down the alley through the back door,

1045

Swung open the garden gate and led forth my legions, male and female, (vivid retelling)

Every platoon saved from siege; then I collected counsel

in that senate committee of company companions.

They promptly voted me out of the senate; (throw up hands, bewildered)

1050

And when I saw they'd sold me right there in the forum market,

I scrambled like the next guy would when conditions are sticky or stormy,...(surprise twist acting like being pounded by rain, then do mime against the wind)

And stormed right ahead with no chance of let up. (break storm)

I know this can't all be kept under wraps from the old man,

So I'll hunt him down first, anticipate his every action (wily, then suddenly resigned) and strike a

treaty. (overhear Simo's door opening, move L)

1060

Oh, the neighbor's door is creaking, and look, it's my master. (move farther L)

Th: (enter with two goons!) You two stand right there at the door, till I give the order

to pounce, then you slap the cuffs (PROP) on that abusive joker who made me look like an ass;

the joke'll be on him and his sorry ass. (blocking R entrance) **Tr:** Oops, the jig is up! Tranio, think of something

Th: Gotta be clever and crafty to catch that one. Won't give him the hook first,

1070

I'll lead him with a little line (fishing moves), and pretend I know nothing.

Tr: What a guy! No shrewder in Athens! Giving him the old razzle-dazzle will be harder

Than scamming a bag of rocks, and he's dumb as a brick. I'll go say, 'Hey.' **Th:** Sure wish he'd come.

Tr: If you're looking for me, present and accounted for. (Th confused with arrival from L, look R)

Th: Oh, wow (startled), Good, Tranio, what's up? **Tr:** The country crew is on their way.

Philolaches too. **Th:** Such good timing! I see our neighbor is a clever rascal (trying to cover sight of

the goons). Says you never gave him a drachma. **Tr:** Come on! You're such a kidder.

1080

Th: Yeah, yeah, and denies he sold the house to Philolaches.

Tr: Well, says we never paid him, hmm? (turning away concerned). **Th:** Said he'd swear so in court. And would hand his slaves over for truthful testimony under torture. Let's begin the investigation.

(nastily) **Tr:** Let me get that guy! (moving toward house) **Th:** Let me get THOSE GUYS (step aside for goons) 1090

Tr: (cowed, backing) What took you so long? **Th:** First, I'd like a slave inquisition!

Tr: Good idea (nervous), meanwhile I'll reserve this altar (stageL, sits on it) **Th:** Why?

Tr: Umm (dodging) to keep any slaves from seeking refuge here, and thus evade your inquisition (gulp, kiss altar) 1095

Th. Up **Tr:** No way. **Th:** Please, no altar reservation. **Tr:** Why? (singsongy) **Th:** BECAUSE...

I want the slaves to run there,...that will...prove to the judge how much more money I'm due...for a great case (realizes it's lame) **Tr:** Do one thing or the other! Judges can be so intimidating! 1100

Th: Just get up! And come here! (not intimidating, then sneaky) I want your...advice.

Tr: I can advise right here, (acting) so much wiser, sitting, giving and getting better advice in a sacred space.

Th: Get up....(whiny) no more fooling around. **Tr:** I see two sneaky bad boys (looking about and pointing at self and Th). **Th:** You swindled me, God...knows you wiped me clean. (blow nose here on slave) **Tr:** Funny: SNOT a thing on you. (ha ha). **Th:** But I've uprooted all your radical rerouting and I recommend a radically new route of eradication. **Tr:** Not going anywhere today (gets comfortable on tiny altar). **Th:** I'll order up fire and firewood round your altar.

Tr: I'm sure I'd be much tastier boiled than roasted (taste self humorously) 1115

Th: God damn it, I'm gonna make an example out of you. **Tr:** Ooh, THAT good am I? Exemplary?

Th: When I left town, what kind of son did I leave here?

Tr: The kind with feet, hands, fingers, ears, eyes, lips.

Th: That's not what I was asking. **Tr:** No, but it's what I was answering. (notice C coming R).

Look there, your son's buddy Callidamates; why not 'take care of me' with him here? 1120

The Ghoul Next Door – Scene 15 – C/Tr/Th

Accompanied Scene

C: (Enter R, a little hungover)

After putting to rest and sleeping off all my drunk-stupid stupor,

Philolaches told me how his dad was back, and how his slave conned him;

So now he's afraid to face his father, and the gang voted me envoy 1125

To settle peace terms with dad. Look who it is—sweet!

Hello, Theopropides, happy you're back; dinner? Tonight? My place? (clearly sweet-talking)

Th: Thanks for the invitation, Callidamates, but no! **C:** Aw, why not? 1130

Tr: Say yes: or if you don't, I'm free for dinner! (joke about altar again)

Th: You are cruisin' for a bruise, still laughing at me. **Tr:** What? Cause I said I'd take your place for dinner? **Th:** You can't go: you're going to be tied up!

C: Why you so stupidly camped out clinging to that altar? **Tr:** (childish) He scared me! 1135

(To Th) Tell him what I APPEAR to have done: now see we have an arbitrator!

Th: I claim you corrupted my boy. **Tr:** Listen here: Sure, he made some mistakes:

Freed a girl 'friend', took out a loan, spent the proceeds. 1140

Is he really any different from other sons from the right sort of people? (fake genteel).

Th: Ooh, such a sly tongue **C:** I'll be the judge of that. You move, I'll sit there. (toward altar and sit next to Tr)

Th: Yeah, great, you take on his case. **Tr:** There's some catch here! How bout you live in fear FOR me? 1145

Th: I'm just sick of being made fun of. **Tr:** I'm glad I did it, You deserved it.

Old gray heads are supposed to be wise **Th:** What do I do now?

Tr: if you're a friend of the playwright Diphilus or Philemon,

Complain to them how your slave made you an ass, the butt of his jokes; 1150

This sounds like a perfectly knotted plot twist for a comedy (wink to audience) .

C: Shut up (hand over mouth), let me get a word in edgewise (Tr nods head with hand over mouth;

C rise to talk to Th) You know I'm your son's best friend, and I'm here

Because he's too ashamed to face you when he knows you know everything he's done. 1155

Please overlook his foolish youth; he's your son.

You know at that age it's typical to mess around with messing around.

Everything that was done, we did together, and we both behaved badly.

We'll repay the whole loan for the girl, not at your expense, but ours. 1160

Th: (impressed, patting on back) They couldn't have sent a better spokesman.

I'm not angry or upset anymore with anything he did.

Even while I'm around, he can whore, drink and do as he pleases.

It's apology enough, he's ashamed of his exorbitant expenses. 1165

C: (acting) Thoroughly ashamed. **Tr:** While you're at it how 'bout I get a handful of that forgiveness.

Th: You, scum, are waiting in line for a whipping. **Tr:** Even with my shame? (fake it)

C: Grant a general amnesty: forgive Tranio's faults for my sake.

Th: ooh (shaking head) easier said than done; his bastardly cheating demands masterly beatings.

C: Let him off, please. **Th:** (Tr playing behind his back, taunting dancing, and caught). Do you see how that scoundrel stands there all smug?

C: Tranio, give it a rest, if you know what's good for you. **Th:** You (to Call) give it a rest too,

Asking me THAT. **C:** Pretty please **Th:** No begging **C:** By the gods... **Th:** (covering ears) Please, no begging! **C:** (uncovering Th's ears) No use! For one teensy weensy little fault, I ask you.

Tr: (to Th) Why so aggravated? As if I'm not going to really deserve it for some new misdeed tomorrow. Then you can get me back singularly for my double dealings—how convenient!

C: Let me...(Th clamp hand over his mouth, finger in face) **Th:** (reluctant but resigned) Go on, unpunished (gritted teeth). BUT HEY – thank him!

Tr: And, our viewing audience, our play's all done, thank ME (uhhh...Us) with your applause!