

## **Walpurgisnacht Intermezzo**

for the RIT Players' production of *OurFaust*  
by Erhardt Graeff

Concept: *The Odyssey* in the style of *Pyramis and Thisbe*

Key Elements: redundant adjectives; versified and stilted dialogue; self-indulgent character introductions; gravely serious delivery of lines; overstressing the iambic rhythm so that it sounds like the words are galloping; and confusion of Romantic versus romantic.

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### Cast (taken from earlier College Bar Scene):

Taten Falsch (stage manager and prologue) a.k.a. Drunk #1  
Schrieber Falsch (brother of Taten, playwright, narrator, and 'stage') a.k.a. Drunk #2  
Odysseus (protagonist-hero) a.k.a. Drunk #3  
Telemachus (son of Odysseus) a.k.a. Drunk #4  
Cyclops & Suitor #2 (antagonist of Odysseus) a.k.a. Drunk #5, the shortest  
Suitor #1 (antagonist of Odysseus) a.k.a. Drunk #6  
Penelope (wife of Odysseus) a.k.a. Bar Wench #1  
Siren #1 & Housemaid #1 a.k.a. Bar Wench #2  
Siren #2 & Housemaid #2 a.k.a. Bar Wench #3

### Costumery (same as from Bar Scene, except where noted):

Taten – sport coat and a necktie (slightly too short)  
Schrieber – fancy neck scarf  
The Players – solid color turtlenecks

### Props (taken from Walpurgisnacht Scene?):

Odysseus – broomstick adorned by a lacey handkerchief  
Sirens – crappy tambourine  
Soldiers – unadorned broomsticks

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[*SCENE: Mephisto is entreating Faust to come see the play. Taten is scurrying by.*]

### **TATEN:**

[*To Faust and Mephisto*] Yes! Yes! The final play should begin any moment now.

[*Stopping to be more polite*]

Hello. My name is Taten Falsch. I am the stage manager and prologue of the final play. [*Sighs as if to catch his breath*] Tis a wonderful play we have prepared, I

think... written earlier this day by my very own brother Schrieber Falsch—a true genius ro-man-tique. [*almost pleadingly*] *Do watch!*

[*SCENE: Schrieber lies belly-down on the ground, near the audience. The amateur players are behind and to the side of Schrieber—Odysseus stage right, other players stage left.*]

[*Faust and Mephisto take up seats in the ‘audience’ on stage right.*]

[*Taten continues his previous trajectory straight to the middle part of the ‘stage’*]

**TATEN:**

[*clears throat*] *Wielkommen: witches, warlocks, demons, and dignitaries!* [*smiles stupidly and breathes excitedly at Faust and Mephisto*] *We—a most humble, but not negligible troop of players—do wish to present you with a play this evening: a play of truly romantic romance and intriguing in-trigue.*

*We ask that you suspend your disbelief, this play is not intended for critics, but made for the explicit pleasure of our audience. Above all, this is a *thinking* play...*

[*he thoughtfully pauses*]

*Without more further ado, here is my brother and *our* humble bard, who is—as you can see—all ready and prominently displayed before you!*

**SCHRIEBER:**

[*waits for Taten to clear the stage behind him*]

[*melodramatically*] *Tonight I am the narrator of an epic... *our* epic—painstakingly translated from Homer’s epic *Odyssey*, and fashioned with the most expertly unscripted elements of improvisation.*

*I am also the set design; as you can see, I am a stage set before you. Upon my foundation, will the power of this play broad-cast. And so, let us begin...*

*In a wooded forest... [to the audience] now please imagine for yourself that I am a wooded forest. [he raises his hand straight up and spreads his fingers—always holding his position] In a wooded forest near Ithaca, two men meet...*

[*ENTER: Odysseus from stage right and Telemachus from stage left.*]

**ODYSSEUS:**

[*standing tall and heroic*]

*I am the one, only, Odysseus*

*With wit and weight as great as Perseus*

I am here for my love, Penelope  
Inspired by the singing Kalliope

**TELEMACHUS:**

*[mimicking Odysseus]*  
I am his son, trusted Telemachus  
Next year, by law, I can worship Bacchus *[solemnly raises an invisible glass]*  
I want to lay waste the swarm of Suitors  
Who infest my home like lazy looters

*[addressing Odysseus]*  
Father, how have you fared these many moons?

**ODYSSEUS:**

*[addressing Telemachus]*  
Tis the tallest of tales. First fell, monsoons...

**SCHRIEBER:**

*[to the audience]*  
Now please imagine to yourself that we are traveling back in time. *[he emphatically waves his hand, which was recently a tree]* I am a ship rocked by a stormy squall. *[he attempts to differentiate between his hand traveling through time and the waves on an ocean]* Odysseus is aboard a ship.

*[EXEUNT: Telemachus leaves stage right.]*

*[One of the other cast members throws Odysseus a broomstick from stage left.]*

**ODYSSEUS:**

*[sweeping the broom like an oar]*  
This peril doth Poseidon prosecute  
Yet still will I Survive this feral route

**SCHRIEBER:**

*[addressing the audience]*  
Now please imagine to yourself that I am an island surrounded by water. *[after circumscribing the air above him, he puts his hand down to straighten himself flat]*  
Odysseus is on an island. He will improvise the presence of sheep.

**ODYSSEUS:**

*[a little confused as to how to lay on the island, he finally collapses with the upper half of his body atop Schrieber, broomstick still in hand]*  
By Zeus, I am ashore a strange is-land  
Surrounding sheep are of the largest brand *[now standing, he awkwardly squeezes invisible sheep littered about the stage]*  
But there, in the distance, my eyes perceive

A one-eyed beast of size hard to believe

[*ENTER: Cyclops from stage left.*]

**CYCLOPS:**

[*holding his hands up like a giant monocle in front of his face*]

I am the great Cyclops of single eye

A hunger haunts me and sheep are small pie

But there below, does my eye spy a man [*he turns his monocle at Odysseus, who is only a couple feet from him*]

**ODYSSEUS:**

[*facing Cyclops, with consternation*]

This troll takes aim, tis time to hatch a plan

Under this ram I can ride most unseen [*lying on his back, he pretends to pick up a sheep and hold it by its undercarriage*]

Until the brute abandons this here green

**CYCLOPS:**

Such a futile fraud does not deceive me

Of your life-force, soon I will relieve thee [*he moves over Odysseus lying on the stage*]

[*ENTER: Taten comes from stage right and signals to the actors and Schrieber to hurry it up.*]

[*Odysseus stabs Cyclops in the monocle with his broomstick handle. Cyclops recoils and falls dead on stage.*]

[*EXEUNT: Taten goes off stage right.*]

**SCHRIEBER:**

[*addressing the audience*]

Now please, infernal demons in our audience do not worry.

[*EXEUNT: Cyclops gets off the floor, bows to the audience, and leaves stage left.*]

See how Cyclops rises—I assure you he will return to old stomping grounds. His death was but an illusionary device for the plot.

[*clears throat*] Now please imagine for yourself that I am again a wooded forest near Ithaca. [*he makes the same arm motion as a tree*] The same two men are still meeting.

[*Odysseus looks around confusedly, then gives a wide-eyed look at Telemachus, who is off stage left.*]

[ENTER: Telemachus comes from stage left, breathing anxiously and looking a bit nervous.]

**ODYSSEUS:**

[addressing Telemachus, with regained composure]  
Many such adventures filled my sojourn  
Sirens even did intone at one turn [he glares first at Taten and then at the Sirens]

[ENTER: Sirens shuffle in from stage left.]

**SIRENS:**

[understanding their purpose, they sing loudly in unison and wave their arms  
exotically]  
oooooOOOOOoooOOOOOooooo oooooo!

[EXEUNT: Sirens shuffle out stage left.]

[Odysseus turns from the sirens to Telemachus and opens his mouth to speak.]

**TELEMACHUS:**

[interrupting Odysseus]  
Truly father your tale is terrific  
But we must remake our home pacific

[Another actor throws Telemachus a broomstick from stage left.]

**SCHRIEBER:**

[addressing the audience, a little more hurried than usual]  
Now please imagine for yourself that I am the floor, underfoot, in Odysseus' home in Ithaca. [he brings his hand down flat like for the island setting] Odysseus and Telemachus are at home. They will improvise a highly *un-choreographed* fight to the death.

**ODYSSEUS:**

[shouting heroically at stage left]  
Unveil yourselves, you vagabonds and knaves!

**TELEMACHUS:**

[having taken his father's side, shouting from stage right]  
Tis time to plant your pelts in early graves!  
Thy fate be on the blades of kindred swords!

[ENTER: Suitor #1 and Suitor #2 with broomsticks from stage left.]

**SUITOR #1:**

[addressing Odysseus]

I am the suitor seeking rich rewards

**SUITOR #2:**

*[addressing Odysseus]*

I am the suitor seeking carnal peer

*[alighting from his declaration, he refocuses on Telemachus and grins at Suitor #2]*

Telemachus why these tawdry threats here?

**TELEMACHUS:**

*[addressing Suitor #1 and Suitor #2]*

Far from tawdry, look my father does live!

Together we evict thee by the shiv!

*[Odysseus, Telemachus, Suitor #1, and Suitor #2 ready their broomsticks for battle. And the fight commences in the style of melodramatic fencing. Odysseus scores the first kill on Suitor #1 and then joins Telemachus as they run-through Suitor #2 in unison.]*

*[ENTER: Penelope with Housemaid #1 and Housemaid #2 from stage left.]*

**ODYSSEUS:**

*[still panting, he notices Penelope and reaches out longingly]*

Seest there, my buxom bride before me

Recall the face that so adorest thee!

*[pleadingly]*

Did I not build our conjugal bedding?

**PENELOPE:**

*[finally recognizing Odysseus when he mentions the bed, she fills with emotions and cries out]*

I the widow greatly wrecked by dreading

Am now the wife Penelope reborn

My inner heart no longer needs to mourn

*[Telemachus, Odysseus, and Penelope suddenly notice Housemaid #1 and Housemaid #2 fawning over dead Suitor #1 and Suitor #2.]*

**HOUSEMAID #1:**

*[addressing the heavens and referring to Suitor #1]*

I am the maid who wants a loving mate

But dreams ebb down as he lies here prostrate

**HOUSEMAID #2:**

*[addressing Housemaid #1 and referring to Suitor #2]*

I am the maid who wants a wealthy groom

But dreams lay down in this fresh un-dug tomb

**TELEMACHUS:**

*[addressing Housemaid #1 and Housemaid #2]*

Here is how to re-link whores and lechers  
Offer up their cores as cutlass catchers

*[Telemachus stabs Housemaid #2 and gives an imploring look to Odysseus, who then stabs Housemaid #1.]*

**SCHRIEBER:**

*[addressing the audience]*

Now please, you lovers' of love in our audience do not worry.

*[EXEUNT: Suitor #1, Suitor #2, Housemaid #1, and Housemaid #2 get off the floor, bow to the audience, and leave stage left.]*

See how the suitors and housemaids rise—their habits will still be habitual. Their deaths were but illusionary devices for the plot... which is very nearly at its end! *Do watch!*

**ODYSSEUS:**

*[after waiting politely for Schrieber to finish... addressing Penelope and Telemachus, being sappy, deliberate, and poetic]*

I am the one, only, Odysseus  
Progressive by my acts imperious  
My son and spouse surround this aging heart  
*Meaning for life emotions may impart*

*[There is a pregnant pause to allow everyone time to think. Then, Odysseus gives Penelope a wildly orgasmic kiss, reminding the audience that this is still Walpurgisnacht.]*

**SCHRIEBER:**

*[addressing the audience, in a c'est la vie tone]*

Ah! Love-romantique.

*[he pauses to look back and sigh at Odysseus and Penelope who have each other tightly by the waist... and then raises his hand and wiggles his fingers]*

Now please imagine for yourself that the light which lit this most humble stage and play, at the end, just fades away.

*[As Schrieber's hand slowly falls, All Players slowly bow to the audience, while the House Lights in the Theater actually fade out.]*

*[EXEUNT: All]*