

*Trimalchio also decides to tell a ghost story*

Attonitīs admīrātiōne ūniversīs, “Salvō,” inquit, “tuō ser- 53  
mōne,” Trimalchiō, “sī qua fidēs est, ut mihi pilī inhorruērunt, 54  
quia sciō Nīcerōnem nihil nūgārum nārrāre: immō certus est et 55  
minimē linguōsus. Nam et ipse vōbīs rem horribilem nārrābō: 56  
asinus in tēgulīs. 57

53 **Attonitīs admīrātiōne ūniversīs**: ablative absolute.

**Salvō . . . tuō sermōne**: ablative absolute, *your tale being sound = with all respect to the truth of your tale*; this would usually be said by someone about to correct a statement made by the other person. Trimalchio is instead trying (rather inelegantly) to make a transition to his own ghost story.

54 **sī qua fidēs est**: supply **mihi**, possessive dative, *if I have any credibility*, i.e., if you’ll believe me.

**ut mihi pilī inhorruērunt**: i.e., as I listened to Nicerōs’ story.

55 **Nīcerōnem**: Trimalchio declines the name incorrectly as if the nominative were **Nīcerō** and the genitive **Nīcerōnis**; the correct accusative form is **Nīcerōtem** (see lines 1 and 4 above and the note on **Philerōnem**, II.2.158) (see p. 243).

**nihil nūgārum**: *nothing of idle talk = no idle talk*.

57 **asinus in tēgulīs**: proverbial for a marvel or a portent—like a donkey that succeeded in getting onto the roof! Livy (36.37) records a portent of two head of cattle climbing a stairway to the roof of a house (**bovēs duōs . . . per scalās pervēnisse in tēgulīs aedificiī**).

- 58 **\*\*capillātus, -a, -um**, *having long hair* [**capillus, -ī, m.**].  
**Chius, -a, -um**, *of Chios* (a Greek island).
- 59 **gerō, gerere, gessī, gestus**, *to bear; to behave; to conduct, carry on*.  
**ipsimus, -ī, m.** [superlative of **ipse**, which may be used to mean  
*master = the man himself*], *master*.  
**dēlicātus, -ī, m.**, *favorite slave, sexual pet*.  
**\*dēcēdō, dēcēdere, dēcēssī, dēcēssūrus**, *to go away; to die*.  
**margarīta, -ae, f.**, *pearl; treasure*.  
**margarītum**, vulgar, affected n. for f. (see p. 243).
- 60 **catamītus, -ī, m.** [from Etruscan *Catmite*, from Greek *Ganymedes*,  
Zeus's/Jupiter's cup-bearer and homosexual pet], *homosexual  
pet*.  
**numerus, -ī, m.**, *number; here, pl., the parts that form a whole*.  
**numerus, = numerōrum**.  
**misellus, -a, -um** [dim. of **miser, misera, miserum**], *wretched*.
- 61 **\*plangō, plangere, plānxī, plānctus**, *to strike the breast; to bewail,  
mourn*.  
**\*\*nostrum**, gen. of **nōs**.  
**\*plūrēs, plūrum** [compar. of **multī**], m./f., *more; the majority; here,  
a number of us*.  
**trīstimōnium, -ī, n.** [vulgar, see pp. 244, 246, = **trīstitia, -ae, f.**; cf.  
**gaudimōnium**, line 5], *sadness, sorrow*.  
**\*\*\*subitō**, adv., *suddenly*.  
**strix, strigis, f.**, *screech-owl* (which, according to ancient belief,  
sucked the blood of young children); *vampire, witch*.  
**strīgae**, vulgar first declension variant of **strigēs** (see p. 243).
- 62 **lepus, leporis, m.**, *hare*.  
**\*\*persequor, persequī, persecūtus sum**, *to follow after, pursue*.

*It happened when he was still a child.*

“Cum adhūc capillātus essem, nam ā puerō vītam Chīam 58  
gessī, ipsimī nostrī dēlicātus dēcessit, meherculēs margarītum, 59  
catamītus et omnium numerum. Cum ergō illum māter misella 60  
plangeret et nostrum plūrēs in trīstimōniō essēmus, subitō strī- 61  
gae coepērunt: putārēs canem leporem persequī. 62

- 
- 58 **Cum . . . essem**: circumstantial clause with imperfect subjunctive.  
**vītam Chīam**: the Chians were proverbial for effeminacy and soft-  
living.
- 60 **omnium numerum**: genitive of description, (a lad) *of all the parts* =  
a boy of every perfection, one in a thousand; cf. the phrase **om-**  
**nibus numerīs perfectus**, *perfect in every detail*.
- Cum . . . plangeret . . . essēmus**: circumstantial clause with imper-  
fect subjunctives.
- 61 **strīgae coepērunt**: supply **strīdere**, *to screech*.
- 62 **putārēs**: potential subjunctive, *you would have thought*.

- 63 **Cappadox, Cappadocis, Cappadocian** (proverbially husky people).  
 \***validē**, adv., *strongly, mightily, very*.  
**valdē**, syncopated variant (see p. 241).
- 64 **audāculus, -a, -um** [rare dim., see p. 245, of **audāx, audācis, bold**],  
*bold*.  
**quī**, exclamatory adv., *how!*  
**valeō, -ēre, -uī**, *to be strong*.  
 \***bōs, bovis**, m./f., *ox, bull, cow*.  
 \*\***īrātus, -a, -um**, *angry*.
- 65 \***audācter**, adv., *courageously, boldly, confidently*.  
 \***stringō, stringere, strīnxī, strictus**, *to draw* (a sword).  
 \***gladius, -ī**, m., *sword*.  
**extrā**, prep. + acc., *out, outside of*.  
**ōstium, -ī**, n., *door*.  
**prōcurrō, prōcurrere, prōcucurrī, prōcursūrus**, *to run/rush forward*.  
 \***involvō, involvere, involvī, involūtus**, *to roll up, wrap up, cover*.  
 \***sinister, sinistra, sinistrum**, *left*.
- 66 **cūriōsē**, adv., *carefully; in a special way*.  
 \***salvus, -a, -um**, *safe, well, sound*.
- 67 \***tangō, tangere, tetigī, tāctus**, *to touch*.  
 \*\***medius, -a, -um**, *middle, middle of*.  
 \***trāiciō** [trāns- + iaciō, *to throw*], **trāicere, trāiēcī, trāiectus**, *to pierce, stab*.  
**gemitus, -ūs**, m., *groan*.
- 68 \*\***mentior, -īrī, -ītus sum**, *to lie*.

*A slave decides to act.*

“Habēbāmus tunc hominem Cappadocem, longum, valdē 63  
 audāculum et quī valēbat: poterat bovem īrātum tollere. Hic 64  
 audācter strictō gladiō extrā ōstium prōcucurrit, involūtā sinistrā 65  
 manū cūriōsē, et mulierem tamquam hōc locō—salvum sit quod 66  
 tangō—mediam trāiēcit. Audīmus gemitum, et—plānē nōn 67  
 mentiar—ipsās nōn vīdimus. 68

- 
- 63 **valdē audāculum**: the colloquial abuse of diminutives is illustrated here where the diminutive (which has lost any real force) is modified by **valdē**, *very*.
- 64 **quī valēbat**: **quī** is here exclamatory, *how strong he was!*  
**bovem īrātum tollere**: i.e., he could outdo the feat of the legendary athlete Milo of Croton (6th century B.C.), who carried a heifer down the race course.
- 66 **cūriōsē**: *carefully or in a special way*—in either case as a protection against the witches.  
**hōc locō**: Trimalchio touches his chest or stomach.  
**salvum sit quod tangō**: a parenthetical wish to avert any magical effect of his having touched the same place where the witch was struck.
- 67 **nōn mentiar**: potential subjunctive, *I wouldn't lie*.

- 69 **bārō, bārōnis**, m. [vulgar word-formation with ending in **-ō**, see p. 244; probably from Etruscan], *blockhead, simpleton*.  
**intrōversus**, adv., *towards the inside, back inside, within the house*.  
**\*prōiciō** [prō- + iaciō, *to throw*], **prōicere, prōiēcī, prōiectus**, *to throw (forth), hurl*.  
**\*\*lectus, -ī, m.**, *bed*.  
**corpus, corporis**, n., *body*.
- 70 **līvidus, -a, -um**, *leaden-colored, black and blue*.  
**\*quasi**, conj., *as if*.  
**flagellum, -ī, n.**, *whip*.  
**\*\*caedō, caedere, cecīdī, caesus**, *to cut; to strike, beat*.  
**claudō, claudere, clausī, clausus**, *to shut*.  
**clūsō**, vulgar for **clausō** (see p. 240).  
**\*ōstium, -ī, n.**, *door*.
- 71 **\*\*redeō, redīre, rediī, reditūrus**, irreg., *to go/come back, return*.  
**iterum**, adv., *again, a second time*.  
**\*\*\*officium, -ī, n.**, *duty, task*.  
**amplexor, -ārī, -ātus sum**, *to embrace*.  
**amplexāret**, vulgar active for deponent (see p. 243).  
**\*corpus, corporis**, n., *body*.
- 72 **\*\*tangō, tangere, tetigī, tāctus**, *to touch*.  
**maniceolum, -ī, n. or -us, -ī, m.** [unattested variant of **maniculus, -ī, m.**, *handful, bundle*, from **manus, -ūs, f.**, *hand*], *little handful, bundle*.  
**manuciolum**, vulgar variant with *u* instead of *i* and *i* instead of *e* (see pp. 240, 241, 246).  
**strāmentum, -ī, n.**, *straw*.
- 73 **\*cor, cordis**, n., *heart*.  
**intestīna, -ōrum**, n. pl., *guts, intestines*.  
**quisquam, quisquam, quidquam/quicquam**, indef. pron., *somebody, anybody, something, anything*.  
**\*scīlicet**, particle, *of course, certainly, evidently*.
- 74 **\*strix, strigis**, f., *screech-owl* (which, according to ancient belief, sucked the blood of young children); *vampire, witch*.  
**strīgae**, vulgar first declension variant of **strigēs** (see p. 243).  
**\*involo, -āre, -āvī, -ātus**, *to fly at, rush upon (to steal), seize upon*.  
**\*suppōnō** [sub- + pōnō], **suppōnere, supposuī, suppositus**, *to put under; to put in the place of, substitute*.  
**strāmenticius, -a, -um**, *made of straw* [**strāmentum, -ī, n.**].  
**vavatō, vavatōnis**, m. [vulgar word-formation with ending in **-ō**, see p. 244, found only here, see p. 246; based on baby syllables **va, va**], *doll, puppet*.

*But he fails.*

“Bārō autem noster intrōversus sē prōiēcit in lectum, et cor- 69  
 pus tōtum lividum habēbat quasi flagellis caesus. Nōs clūsō ōs- 70  
 tiō redīmus iterum ad officium, sed dum māter amplexāret cor- 71  
 pus filiī suī, tangit et videt manuciolum dē strāmentīs factum. 72  
 Nōn cor habēbat, nōn intestīna, nōn quicquam: scīlicet iam 73  
 puerum strīgae involāverant et supposuerant strāmentīcium va- 74  
 vatōnem. 75

70 **clūsō ōstiō:** i.e., as soon as the door was closed.

71 **ad officium:** i.e., to our task of lamenting the dead boy.

**dum . . . amplexāret:** vulgar use of active for deponent and affected use of the imperfect subjunctive instead of the usual present indicative (see pp. 243, 250).

73 **Nōn . . . nōn . . . nōn:** anaphora (see p. 251).

- 76 \*\*\***oportet**, -ēre, -uit, impersonal + subj. without **ut**, *it is proper/right; ought.*  
 \*\*\***crēdō**, **crēdere**, **crēdidī**, **crēditus**, *to trust; to believe.*  
**plūsscius**, -a, -um [vulgar, found only here, see p. 246; **plūs**, adv., *more + sciō*, **scīre**, *to know*], *who know more (than we do), over-wise, uncanny*
- 77 **Nocturna**, -ae, f., *woman of the night* [**nox**, **noctis**, **noctium**, f.], *witch.*  
**sūrsūm**, adv., *up, upward.*  
**deorsūm**, adv., *down, downward.*  
 \***bārō**, **bārōnis**, m. [vulgar word-formation with ending in -ō, see p. 244; probably from Etruscan], *blockhead, simpleton.*
- 78 **post**, prep. + acc., *after.*  
**factum**, -ī, n., *happening, event.*  
**color**, **colōris**, m., *color.*  
 \***post**, prep. + acc., *after.*
- 79 **paucī**, -ae, -a, *few.*  
**phrenēticus**, -a, -um [Greek loan word], *mad, delirious.*  
**perēō**, **perīre**, **perīī**, **peritūrus**, irreg., *to pass away, die.*
- 80 \***pariter**, adv., *equally; at the same time, together.*  
**ōsculor**, -ārī, -ātus sum, *to kiss.*
- 81 \***Nocturna**, -ae, f., *woman of the night* [**nox**, **noctis**, **noctium**, f.], *witch.*  
 \*\*\***redeō**, **redīre**, **redīī**, **reditūrus**, irreg., *to go/come back, return.*



*Witches do exist!*

“Rogō vōs, oportet crēdātis, sunt mulierēs plūssciae, sunt 76  
Nocturnae, et quod sūrsum est, deorsum faciunt. Cēterum bārō 77  
ille longus post hoc factum numquam colōris suī fuit, immō post 78  
paucōs diēs phrenēticus periit.” 79

Mīrāmur nōs et pariter crēdimus, ōsculātique mēnsam rogā- 80  
mus Nocturnās ut suīs sē teneant, dum redīmus ā cēnā. 81

77 **sunt . . . sunt**: anaphora (see p. 251).

78 **quod sūrsum est, deorsum faciunt**: i.e., they turn things upside  
down, topsy turvy.

79 **colōris suī**: genitive of description; he never got his color back  
again.

81 **ut suīs sē teneant**: subjunctive in indirect command. **suīs**: that  
they keep themselves *to their own* (and not bother us).

- 1 **diffūsus, -a, -um**, *spread out; loosened; cheered, gladdened.*  
**contentiō, contentiōnis**, f., *contest, dispute.*
- 2 **aequē**, adv., *equally.*  
**lac, lactis**, n., *milk.*  
**lactem**, vulgar m. for n. (see p. 242).  
**bibō, bibere, bibī**, *to drink.*
- 3 \***fātum, -ī**, n., *fate; luck.*  
**fātus**, vulgar m. for n. (see p. 242).  
**opprimō** [ob- + **premō, to press**], **opprimere, oppressī, oppres-**  
**sus**, *to press down, oppress.*  
\*\***salvus, -a, -um**, *safe, well, sound.*  
\*\***citō**, adv., *quickly; speedily, soon.*
- 4 **līber, lībera, līberum**, *free.*  
\*\*\***gustō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus**, *to taste.*  
\*\***ad summam**, *in short, to be brief.*  
\***testāmentum, -ī**, n., *will, testament.*
- 5 \***manū mittō, mittere, mīsī, missus**, *to send by/from the hand, emancipate, set free* (of slaves).  
**Philargyrus, -ī**, m. [Greek word meaning "fond of money, avaricious"], *Philargyrus.*  
**fundus, -ī**, m., *farm, estate.*  
**lēgō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus**, *to leave, bequeath.*  
\***contubernālis, contubernālis, contubernālium**, m./f., *tent-companion; mate* (of a slave, having the relationship but not the legal status of a husband or wife).
- 6 **Cariō, Cariōnis**, m. [Greek name meaning "a little Carian"], *Cario* (a common Greek slave name).  
**īnsula, -ae**, f., *island; apartment house; single apartment.*  
**vīcēsima, -ae**, f., *the twentieth part* [**pars, partis, partium**, f.] *or five percent of the value of a slave* (paid as a tax when a slave was freed).  
\*\*\***lectus, -ī**, m., *bed.*  
**sternō, sternere, strāvī, strātus**, *to spread, prepare, arrange.*
- 7 **Fortūnāta, -ae**, f., *Fortunata* (Trimalchio's wife; the common Latin adjective means *fortunate, lucky, successful; wealthy; happy, blessed*, as of the gods).  
**hērēs, hērēdis**, m./f., *heir/heirress.*  
**commendō** [con- + **mandō, to consign**], **-āre, -āvī, -ātus**, *to entrust, commend.*
- 8 \*\***ideō**, adv., *for that/this reason, therefore.*  
**pūblicō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus**, *to make known, publish, announce.*
- 9 \*\*\***mortuus, -a, -um**, *dead.*