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Euripides

Euripides
EURIPIDES

III
EURIPIDES, SKENE AND DIONYSUS.
RELIEF FROM SMYRNA IMPERIAL MUSEUM, CONSTANTINOPLE.
 EURIPIDES
 WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY
 ARTHUR S. WAY, D.Litt.

 IN FOUR VOLUMES
 III

 BACCHANALS
 MADNESS OF HERCULES
 CHILDREN OF HERCULES
 PHOENICIAN MAIDENS
 SUPPLIANTS

 LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN
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THE BACCHANALS
ARGUMENT

Semele the daughter of Cadmus, a mortal bride of Zeus, was persuaded by Hera to pray the God to promise her with an oath to grant her whatsoever she would. And, when he had consented, she asked that he would appear to her in all the splendour of his godhead, even as he visited Hera. Then Zeus, not of his will, but constrained by his oath, appeared to her amidst intolerable light and flashings of heaven's lightning, whereby her mortal body was consumed. But the God snatched her unborn babe from the flames, and hid him in a cleft of his thigh, till the days were accomplished wherein he should be born. And so the child Dionysus sprang from the thigh of Zeus, and was hidden from the jealous malice of Hera till he was grown. Then did he set forth in victorious march through all the earth, bestowing upon men the gift of the vine, and planting his worship everywhere. But the sisters of Semele scoffed at the story of the heavenly bridegroom, and mocked at the worship of Dionysus. And when Cadmus was now old, Pentheus—his grandson reigned in his stead, and he too defied the Wine-giver, saying that he was no god, and that none in Thebes should ever worship him.

And herein is told how Dionysus came in human guise to Thebes, and filled her women with the Bacchanal possession, and how Pentheus, essaying to withstand him, was punished by strange and awful doom.
ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΒΑΚΧΩΝ
ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΑΓΑΘΗ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Dionysus, the Wine-god, who is called also Bacchus, and Iacchus, and Bromius, the Clamour-king.

Teiresias, a prophet, old and blind.

Cadmus, formerly king of Thebes.

Pentheus, king of Thebes, grandson of Cadmus.

Servant of Pentheus.

Herdman.

Messenger, servant of Pentheus.

Agave, mother of Pentheus, daughter of Cadmus.

Chorus, consisting of Bacchanals, Asiatic women who have followed Dionysus.

Guards, attendants.

Scene: before the royal palace of Thebes.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

"Ηκε Δίως παᾶς τήνδε Θηβαίων χθόνα Δίνυσος, δν τίκτει ποθ' ἢ Κάδμου κόρη Σεμέλη λοχευθεῖσ' ἀστραπηφόρφ πυρὶ μορφήν δ' ἁμείζας ἐκ θεοῦ βροτησίαν πάρειμι Δίρκης νάματ' Ἰσμηνοῦ θ' ὕδωρ. ὁρῷ δὲ μητρὸς μνήμα τῆς κεραυνίας τόδε ἐγχύνσι οἴκων καὶ δόμων ἐρείπτια τυφόμενα Δίου πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαι φλόγα, ἀθάνατον Ἡρας μητέρ' εἰς ἐμὴν ὕδριν. αἰνῶ δὲ Κάδμου, ἀβατον ὃς πέδον τόδε τίθησι, θυγατρὸς σηκῶν. ἀμπέλου δὲ νων πέριξ ἐγώ 'καλυφα βοτρυῶδει χλόη. λιτῶν δὲ Λυδῶν τοὺς πολυχρῦσους γύνας Φρυγῶν τε, Περσῶν θ' ἡλιοβλήτους πλάκας Βάκτρια τε τείχη τῆν τε δύσχημον χθόνα Μήδων ἐπελθών Ἀραβίαν τ' εὐδαίμονα Ἀσίαν τε πᾶσαν, ἢ παρ' ἅλμην ἄλα κεῖται μυγάσιν Ἑλλησί βαρβάροις θ' ὁμοῦ πλῆρες ἔχουσα καλλυπυργῶτοι πόλεις, εἰς τήνδε πρώτον ἠλθον Ἑλλήνων τόλων, τάκει χορεύσας καὶ καταστήσας ἑμᾶς τελετάς, ἵν' εἰρήν ἐμφανής δαίμων βροτοῖς. πρῶτας δὲ Θηβαί τήςδε γῆς Ἑλλήνιδος
THE BACCHANALS

Enter Dionysus.

DIONYSUS

I to this land of Thebes have come, Zeus’ Son
Dionysus, born erstwhile of Cadmus’ child
Semele, brought by levin-brand to travail.
My shape from God to mortal semblance changed,
I stand by Dirce’s springs, Ismenus’ flood.
I see my thunder-blasted mother’s tomb
Here nigh the halls: the ruins of her home
Smoulder with Zeus’s flame that liveth yet—
Hera’s undying outrage on my mother.
Cadmus doth well, that he ordains this close,
His child’s grave, hallowed: with the clustering green
Of vines I, even I, embowered it round.

Leaving the gold-abounding Lydian meads
And Phrygian, o’er the Persian’s sun-smitt tracts,
By Bactrian strongholds, Media’s storm-swept land,
Still pressing on, by Araby the Blest,
And through all Asia, by the briny sea
Lying with stately-towered cities thronged,
Peopled with Hellenes blent with aliens,
To this of Hellene cities first I come,
Having established in far lands my dances
And rites, to be God manifest to men.
So, of all Hellas, Thebes with my acclaim
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἀνωλόλυξα, νεβρίδ’ ἐξάψας χρόος
θύρσον τε δύος εἰς χείρα, κάσσινον βέλος·
ἐπεί μ’ ἀδελφαὶ μητρός, ὥς ἥκιστ’ ἔχρην,
Διόνυσον οὐκ ἐφασκὸν ἐκφύναι Δίος,
Σεμέλην δὲ νυμφευθεῖσαν ἐκ θυτοῦ τινος
εἰς Ζήν’ ἀναφέρειν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν λέχους,
Κάκμου σοφίσμαθ’, ὧν ὑν ἐινεκα κτανεῖν
Ζήν’ ἔξεκαυχώνθ’, ὥτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο.
τοιγάρ νυν αὐτὰς ἐκ δόμων φαστης’ ἐγὼ
μανίας· ὅρος δ’ οὐκούσι παράκοποι φρενῶν·
sκευήν τ’ ἔχειν ἡμάγκασ’ ὅργιων ἐμῶν,
καὶ πάν τὸ θῆλυ σπέρμα Καδμείων ὅσαι
γυναίκες ἃςαν ἐξέμνησε δωμάτων·
ὁμοῦ δὲ Κάκμου παισὶν ἀναμεμιμέναι
χλωραίς ὑπ’ ἐλάταις ἀνορόφους ἤματι πέτραις.
δεὶ γὰρ πόλων τήν’ ἐκμαθεῖν, κεὶ μὴ θέλει,
ἀτελεστὸν οὐσαν τῶν ἐμῶν βακχευμάτων,
Σεμέλῃς τε μητρός ἀπολογήσασθαί μ’ ὑπερ
φανέντα θυτοῖς δαίμον’, ὧν τίκτει Δί.
Κάκμος μὲν ὤν γέρας τε καὶ τυραννίδα
Πενθεὶ δίδωσι θυγατρὸς ἐκπεφυκότι,
ὁς θεομαχεῖ τὰ κατ’ ἐμὲ καὶ σπουδῶν ἀπο
ωθεὶ μ’, ἐν εὐχαίς τ’ οὐδαμοῦ μνεῖαν ἔχει.
ὡν εἰνεκ’ αὐτῷ θεός γεγὼς ἐνδείξωμαι
πᾶσιν τε Θηβαῖοισιν. εἰς δ’ ἄλλην χθόνα,
τὰυθεόνθες θέμενος εὐ, μεταστῆσω πόδα,
δεικνὺς ἐμαυτῶν· ἥν δὲ Θηβαῖοι πόλις
ὄργη σὺν ὀπλοῖς ἐξ ὀροὺς Βάκχας ἀγειν
ζητή, συνάψω μαινάσι στρατηλατῶν.
ὡν εἰνεκ’ εἶδος θυτὸν ἀλλάξας ἔχω
μορφήν τ’ ἐμὴν μετέβαλον εἰς ἀνδρὸς φύσιν.
ἄλλ’, ὃ λυποῦσαι Τμῶλον ἔρμα Λυδίας,
THE BACCHANALS

I first thrilled, there with fawn-skin girt her limbs,
And gave her hand the ivied thyrsus-spear,
Because my mother's sisters, to their shame,
Proclaimed Dionysus never born of Zeus;
But Semele by a man undone, said they,
Charged upon Zeus her sin of wantonness—
A subtle wile of Cadmus! Hence, they vaunted,
Zeus slew the liar who named him paramour.
So frenzy-stung themselves I have driven from home,
And mid the hills with soul distraught they dwell,
The vesture of my revels forced to wear;
And all the woman-seed of Cadmus' folk,
Yea all, I drave forth raving from their homes:
And there, with Cadmus' daughters mingled, these
'Neath green pines sit on crags all shelterless.
For this Thebes needs must learn, how loth se'er,
What means it not to be in my great rites
Initiate, learn that I plead Semele's cause
To men God manifest, whom she bare to Zeus.

Now Cadmus gave his crown and royal estate
To Pentheus, of another daughter born,
Who wars with Heaven in me, and from libations Thrusts, nor makes mention of me in his prayers.
Therefore to him my godhead will I prove,
And to all Thebans. To another land
Then, after triumph here, will I depart,
And manifest myself. If Thebes in wrath
Take arms to chase her Bacchants from the hills,
Leading my Maenads I will clash in fight.
For this cause have I taken mortal form,
And changed my shape to fashion of a man.

Ho, ye who Lydia's rock-wall, Tmolus, left,
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

θίασος ἐμὸς, γυναῖκες, ὡς ἐκ βαρβάρων ἐκόμισα παρέδρους καὶ ἐμπρόσθος ἐμοί, αἴρεσθε τάπιχώρι ἐν πόλει Φρυγῶν τύμπανα, 'Ῥέας τε μητρὸς ἐμὰ θ' εὐρήματα, βασιλεία τ' ἀμφὶ δόματ' ἐλθοῦσαι τάδε κτυπεῖτε Πενθέως, ὡς ὅρα Κάδμου πόλις. ἔγω δὲ Βάκχαις, εἰς Κυθαιρώνος πτυχας ἔλθων, ἵν' εἰσί, συμμετασχῆσω χορῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

'Ασίας ἀπὸ γαίας στρ. α'
ἱερὸν Τμώλον ἀμείψασα θοᾶξο
Βρομίῳ πόνον ἠδύν κάματόν τ' εὐ-
κάματον, Βάκχιοι εὐαξομένα.

τίς ὁδῷ τίς ὁδῷ; τίς ἀντ. α'
μελάθρους ἑκτόπος ἐστώ, στόμα τ' εὐφη-
μον ἀπας ἔξοσιοῦσθω. τὰ νομισθέν-
τα γὰρ ἀεὶ Διόνυσον ὑμήςω.

ὡ μάκαρ, ὡς τε εὐαίμων στρ. β'
tελετὰς θεῶν εἰδῶς
βιοτὰν ἀγιστεῖ
καὶ θιασεύται ψυχάς,
ἐν ὄρεσι βακχεύων
όσιος καθαρμοίσιν.
τά τε ματρὸς μεγάλας ὀρ-
γία Κυβέλας θεμιτεύων
ἀνὰ θύρσου τε τινάσσων
κισσῷ τε στεφανώθεις.
THE BACCHANALS

Women, my revel-rout, from alien homes
To share my rest and my wayfaring brought,
Uplift the cymbals to the Phrygian towns
Native, great Mother Rhea's device and mine,
And smite them, compassing yon royal halls
Of Pentheus, so that Cadmus' town may see.
I to Cithaeron's glens will go, where bide
My Bacchanals, and join the dances there.  
[Exit.

Enter chorus, waving the thyrsus-wands, and clashing their timbrels.

CHORUS

From Asian soil
Far over the hallowed ridges of Tmolus fleeting,
To the task that I love do I speed, to my painless toil
[with greeting.
For the Clamour-king, hailing the Bacchanals' God
(Ant. 1)

Who is there in the way?  [one, sealing
At his doors who is standing?  Avoid!—and let each
His lips from irreverence, hallow them.  Now, in the lay
[pealing.
Dionysus ordains, will I chant him, his hymn out-

O happy to whom is the blessedness given  (Str. 2)
To be taught in the Mysteries sent from heaven,
Who is pure in his life, through whose soul the unsleeping

Revel goes sweeping!
Made meet by the sacred purifying
For the Bacchanal rout o'er the mountains flying,
For the orgies of Cybele mystery-folden,

Of the Mother olden,
Wreathed with the ivy sprays,
The thyrsus on high doth he raise,
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

Διόνυσον θεραπεύει.
ιτε Βάκχαι, ιτε Βάκχαι,
Βρόμον παίδα θεόν θεοῦ
Διόνυσον κατάγουσαι
Φρυγίων ἡ δρέων Ἑλλάδος εἰς
εὐρυχόρους ἀγνιάς, τὸν Βρόμον

ḋόν ποτ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ὁδίνων
λοχίαις ἀνάγκαιοι

πταμένας Δίὸς βροντᾶς
ηὐδοὺς ἐκβολοῦν μάτηρ
ἐτεκεν, λιποῦσ' αἰῶ-
να κεραυνία πλαγά:

λοχίους δ' αὐτίκα νιν δέ-
ξατο θαλάμοις Κρονίδας Ζεύς·
κατὰ μηρῷ δὲ καλύψας
χρυσέασιν συνερέει

περόναις κρυπτὸν ἄφ' Ἡρας.
ἐτεκεν δ', ἀνίκα Μοῖραι

τέλεσαν, ταυρόκερων θεῶν
στεφάνωσέν τε δρακόντων

στεφάνωις, ἐνθεν ἄγραν θυρσοφόροι
Μαινάδες ἀμφιβάλλουνται πλοκάμοις.

ὁ Σεμέλας τροφοὶ Θή-

βαι στεφανοῦσθε κισσᾶ;

βρύετε βρύετε χλοήρει

μίλακι καλλικάρπῳ

καὶ καταβακχιοῦσθε

δρυὸς ἡ ἐλάτας κλάδοις,

στυκτῶν τ' ἐνδυτὰ νεβρίδων

στέφετε λευκοτρίχων πλοκάμων

str. γ'
THE BACCHANALS

Singing the Vine-god’s praise—
    Come, Bacchanals, come!
The Clamour-king, child of a God,
O’er the mountains of Phrygia who trod,
Unto Hellas’s highways broad
    Bring him home; bring him home!—

(ant. 2)

The God whom his mother,—when anguish tore her
Of the travail resistless that deathward bore her
On the wings of the thunder of Zeus down-flying,—
    Brought forth at her dying,
An untimely birth, as her spirit departed
Stricken from life by the flame down-darted:
But in birth-bowers new did Zeus Cronion
    Receive his scion;
For, hid in a cleft of his thigh,
By the gold-clasps knit, did he lie
Safe hidden from Hera’s eye
    Till the Fates’ day came;
Then a God bull-horned Zeus bare,
And with serpents entwined his hair:
And for this do his Maenads wear
    In their tresses the same.

Thebes, nursing-town of Semele, crown
    (str. 3)
With the ivy thy brows, and be
All bloom, embowered in the starry-flowered
    Lush green of the briony,
While the oak and pine thy tresses entwine
    In thy bacchanal-ecstasy.
And thy fawn-skin flecked, with a fringe be it decked
Of wool white-glistening

13
μαλλοίς· ἀμφὶ δὲ νάρθηκας ὑβριστὰς ὁσιοῦσθ᾽· αἰτίκα γὰ τάσα χορεύσει,
Βρόμος εὖ τ᾽ ἀν ἀγῃ θιάσους
εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος, ἐνθα μὲνει
θηλυγενῆς ὀχλὸς.
ἀφ’ ἵστων παρὰ κερκίδων τ’
οἰστρηθεὶς Διονύσῳ.

120 ὦ θαλάμευμα Κουρή-
των ξάθεαί τε Κρήτας
Διογενέτορες ἐναυλοὶ,
ἐνθα τρικόρυθες ἀντροῖς
βυσσότονοι κύκλωμα
τόδε μοι Κορύβαντες ηὔρον·
ἀνά δὲ βάκχια συντόνῳ
κέρασαν ἄυβθόα Φρυγίων
αὐλῶν πνεύματι, ματρός τε Ἄρεας εἰς
χέρα θῆκαν, κτύπον εὐάσμασι Βακχῶν·
παρὰ δὲ μαινόμενοι Σάτυροι
ματέρος ἐξανύσαντο θεᾶς,
εἰς δὲ χορεύματα
συνήψαν τριετηρίδων,
ἀἰς χαίρει Δίόνυσος.

130 ἐποδ.

ἡδὺς ἐν οὐρεσίν, εὖτ᾽ ἂν
ἐκ θιάσων δρομαῖων
πέση πεδόσε, νεβρίδος ἔχων
ἱερόν ἐνυδυτόν, ἄγρεύων
140 αἶμα τραγοκότον, ὁμοφάγον χάριν,
THE BACCHANALS

In silvery tassels;—O Bacchus' vassals,
    High-tossed let the wild wands swing!
One dancing-band shall be all the land
    When, led by the Clamour-king,
His revel-rout fills the hills—the hills
    Where thy women abide till he come
Whom the Vine-god chasing, in frenzy racing,
    Hunted from shuttle and loom.

(Ant. 3)

O cavern that rang when Curetès sang,
    O bower of the Babe.Zeus' birth, [glancing
Where the Corybants, dancing with helm-crests
    Through the dark halls under the earth,
This timbrel found whose hide-stretched round
    We smite, and its Bacchanal mirth
They blent with the cry ringing sweet and high
    From the flutes of the Phrygian land,
And its thunder, soaring o'er revel-shouts' roaring,
    They gave unto Rhea's hand;
But the gift passed on from the Mother, was won
    By the maddening Satyr-band;
And to Semele's child gave the woodfolk wild
    The homage he holdeth dear,
When to feet white-flashing the timbrels clashing
    Are wedded in each third year.

O trance of rapture, when, reeling aside    (Epode)
    From the Bacchanal rout o'er the mountains flying,
One sinks to the earth, and the fawn's flecked hide
    Covers him lying
With its sacred vesture, wherein he hath chased
    The goat to the death for its blood—for the taste
Of the feast raw-reeking, when over the hills
ΒΑΚΧΑΪ

ιέμενος εἰς ὅρεα Φρύγια, Δύδια,
ὁ δ' ἔξαρχος Βρόμιος, εὗοι.

ρεῖ δὲ γάλακτι πέδου, ρεῖ δ' οἶνῳ, ρεῖ δὲ με-
λισσάν
νέκταρι, Συρίας δ' ὡς λιβάνου καπνὸς·
ὁ Βακχεὺς δ' ἔχων
πυρσώδῃ φλόγα πεύκας
ἐκ νάρθηκος αἴσσει
δρόμῳ καὶ χοροῖς ἐρεθίζων πλανάτας
ιαχαίς τ' ἀναπάλλων,
150
τρυφερῶν πλόκαμον εἰς αἴθέρα ρίπτων.
ἀμα δ' ἐπ' εὐάσμασιν ἐπιβρέμει
tοιάδ', ὡ ἵτε Βάκχαι,
ὡ ἱτε Βάκχαι,
Τμώλον χρυσορόου χλιδά,
μέλπετε τὸν Διόνυσον
βαρυβρόμων ὑπὸ τυμπάνων,
εὐία τὸν εὕιον ἀγαλλόμεναι θεὸν
eν Φρυγίας βοαις ἐνωταῖος τε,
160
λωτὸς ὅταν εὐκέλαδος
ἰερὸς ἱερὰ παύγματα
βρέμη, σύνοχα φοιτάσιν
eἰς ὅρος εἰς ὅρος· ἱδομένα δ' ἁρα,
pῶλος ὅπως ἀμα ματέρι φορβάδι,
kόλον ἄγει ταχύτητον σκιρτήμασι Βάκχα.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

170
tῖς ἐν πύλαισι; Κάδμον ἐκκάλει δόμων
'Αγήνωρος παῖδ', ὅς πόλιν Σιδωνίαν
λειτῶν ἐπύργωσ' ἀστυ Θηβαίων τόδε.
THE BACCHANALS

Of Phrygia, of Lydia, the wild feet haste, [thrills
And the Clamour-king leads, and his “Evoë!”
Our hearts replying!

Flowing with milk is the ground, and with wine is it
flowing, and flowing [Araby soars;
Nectar of bees; and a smoke as of incense of
And the Bacchant, uplifting the flame of the brand
of the pine ruddy-glowing,
Waveth it wide, and with shouts, from the point of
the wand as it pours, [and throwing
Challengeth revellers straying, on-racing, on-dancing, 150
Loose to the breezes his curls, while clear through
the chorus that roars
Cleaveth his shout,—“On, Bacchanal-rout,
On, Bacchanal maidens, ye glory of Tmolus the hill
gold-welling, [thunder-knelling,
Blend the acclaim of your chant with the timbrels
Glad-pealing the glad God’s praises out
With Phrygian cries and the voice of singing,
When upsoareth the sound of the melody-
fountain,
Of the hallowed ringing of flutes far-flinging 160
The notes that chime with the feet that climb
The pilgrim-path to the mountain!”
And with rapture the Bacchanal onward racing,
With gambollings fleet [grazing,
As of foals round the mares in the meads that are
Speedeth her feet.

Enter TEIRESIAS.

TEIRESIAS

Gate-warder, ho! call Cadmus forth the halls,
Agenor’s son, who came from Sidon-town,
And with towers girded this the Thebans’ burg.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ίτω τις, εἰσάγγελλε Τειρεσίας ὅτι
ζητεῖ νῦν ὁδε δ' αὐτὸς ὤν ἥκω πέρι,
ἀ τε ξυνεθέμην πρέσβυς ἄν γεραιτέρῳ,
θύρσους ἀνάπτειν καὶ νεβρῶν δοράς ἔχειν
στεφανοῦν τε κράτα κισσίνοις βλαστήμασιν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὁ φίλταθ', ὡς σήν γῆρυν ἁσθόμην κλύων
σοφὴν σοφοῦ παρ' ἀνδρός, ἐν δόμοισιν ὄν
ἥκω δ' ἐτοιμὸς τήνδ' ἔχον σκευήν θεοῦ.
δεὶ γάρ νῦν ὄντα παῖδα θυγατρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς,
Διόνυσον δς πέφηνεν ἀνθρώποις θεός,
ὅς ποιεῖ θῆμᾶς δυνατὸν αὖξεσθαι μέγαν.
ποὶ δεὶ χορεύειν, ποῖ καθιστάναι πόδα
καὶ κράτα σεῖσαι πολίων; ἔξθηκεν σὺ μοι
γέρων γέροντι, Τειρεσίας. σὺ γὰρ σοφός.
ὡς οὐ κάμοιμ' ἄν οὔτε νύκτ' οὔθ' ἡμέραν
θύρσῳ κροτῶν γῆν' ἐπιλελήσμεθ' ἥδεως
γέροντες ὄντες.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ταῦτ' ἔμοι πάσχεις ἀρα'
κἀγὼ γὰρ ἱβῶ κατηχειρήσω χοροῖς.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκοῦν όχοισιν εἰς ὅρος περάσομεν;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως ἀν ὁ θεὸς τιμὴν ἔχοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

γέρων γέροντα παιδαγωγήσω σ' ἐγώ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὁ θεὸς ἄμοχθι κεῖσε νῦν ήγήσεται.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μόνοι δὲ πόλεως Βακχίῳ χορεύσομεν;
THE BACCHANALS

Go, one; say to him that Teiresias
Seeks him—he knoweth for what cause I come,
The old man’s covenant with the elder-born
To entwine the thyrsi and the fawnskin don,
And crown our heads with wreaths of ivy-sprays.

Enter Cadmus.

Cadmus

Dear friend, within mine house I heard thy voice,
And knew it, the wise utterance of the wise.
Ready I come, thus in the God’s garb dight.
For him, who is my daughter’s very son,
Dionysus, who to men hathshown his godhead,
Ought we with all our might to magnify.
Where shall we dance now, and where plant the foot,
And toss the silvered head? Instruct thou me;
Let e’er guide e’er, Teiresias: wise art thou.
I shall not weary, nor by night nor day,
Smiting on earth the thyrsus. We forget
In joy our age.

Teiresias

Thine heart is even as mine.
I too am young, I will essay the dance.

Cadmus

Come, to the mountain fare we, chariot-borne.

Teiresias

Nay, riding should we honour less the God.

Cadmus

Age ushering age, I will escort thee on.

Teiresias

We shall not tire; the God will lead us thither.

Cadmus

Shall we alone of Thebes to Bacchus dance?
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
μόνοι γὰρ εὖ φρονούμεν, οἱ δ’ ἄλλοι κακῶς.
ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
μακρὸν τὸ μέλλειν· ἄλλ’ ἐμῆς ἔχου χερός.
ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἰδοὺ, ξύναπτε καὶ ξυνωρίζου χέρα.
ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
οὐ καταφρονῶ ’γὼ τῶν θεῶν θυντὸς γεγώς.
ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
οὐδὲν σοφιζόμεθα τοῖσι δαίμοσι.
πατρίους παραδοξὰς ἃς θ’ ὄμηλικας χρόνῳ
κεκτήμεθ’, οὐδεὶς αὐτὰ καταβαλεῖ λόγος,
οὐδ’ εἰ δ’ ἀκρων τὸ σοφὸν ἡφηται φρενῶν.
ἐρεῖ τις ὡς τὸ γῆρας οὐκ αἰσχύνομαι,
μέλλων χορεύειν κράτα κισσώσας ἐμῶν.
οὐ γὰρ διήρηξ’ ὁ θεὸς εἰτε τὸν νέον
ἐχρῆν χορεύειν εἰτε τὸν γεραίτερον,
ἄλλ’ ἐξ ἀπάντων βουλεῖται τιμᾶς ἔχειν
κοινὰς, δι’ ἀριθμὸν δ’ οὐδὲν αὔξεσθαι θέλει.
ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
ἐπεῖ σὺ φέγγος, Τειρεσία, τὸδ’ οὐχ ὀρᾶς,
ἐγὼ προφήτης σοι λόγων γενήσομαι.
Πενθεὺς πρὸς οἴκους ὅδε διὰ σπουδῆς περᾷ,
Ἄχιονος παῖς, ὅ κράτος δίδωμι γῆς.
ὡς ἐπτόθηται· τί ποτ’ ἐρεῖ νεωτερον;
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΖ
ἐκδημὸς δὲν μὲν τήσθ’ ἐτύγχανον χθονός,
κλῦω δὲ νεοχάμα τήνδ’ ἀνὰ πτόλιμ κακά,
γυναῖκας ἣμῖν δόματ’ ἐκκελοιπέναι
πλασταῖσι βακχεῖαις, ἐν δὲ δασκίοις
ὁρεῖ θυατεῖν, τῶν νεωστὶ δαῖμονα
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΥ, ὡστὶς ἔστι, τιμῶσας χοροῖς.
THE BACCHANALS

TEIRESIAS
Yea, we alone are wise; the rest be fools.

CADMUS
Too long we linger. Come, grasp thou mine hand.

TEIRESIAS
Lo there: clasp close the interlinking hand.

CADMUS
Not I contemn the Gods, I, mortal-born!

TEIRESIAS
'Tis not for us to reason touching Gods.
Traditions of our fathers, old as time,
We hold: no reasoning shall cast them down,—
No, though of subtlest wit our wisdom spring.
Haply shall one say I respect not eld,
Who ivy-crowned address me to the dance.
Nay, for distinction none the God hath made
Whether the young or stricken in years must dance:
From all alike he claims his due of honour:
By halves he cares not to be magnified.

CADMUS
Since thou, Teiresias, seest not this light,
I will for thee be spokesman of thy words.
Lo to these halls comes Pentheus hastily,
Echion's son, to whom I gave the throne. [tell?
How wild his mood! What strange thing will he
Enter PENTHEUS.

PENTHEUS
It chanced that, sojourning without this land,
I heard of strange misdeeds in this my town,
How from their homes our women have gone forth
Feigning a Bacchic rapture, and rove wild
O'er wooded hills, in dances honouring
Dionysus, this new God—whoe'er he be.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πλήρεις δὲ θιάσου εἰς μέσουσιν ἐστάναι κρατήρας, ἀλλὰ θ’ ἄλλος’ εἰς ἑρμιάν πτώσουσαν εὐναῖς ἀρσένων ὑπηρετεῖν, προφασίν μὲν ὡς δὴ Μαινάδας θυσικόνοις, τὴν δ’ Ἀφροδίτην πρόσθ’ ἀγεῖν τοῦ Βακχίου. ὅσα μὲν ὦν εἰληφα, δεσμίως χέρας σφίζουσι πανδήμοισι πρόσπολοι στέγαις· ὅσαι δ’ ἀπεισώ, ἐξ’ ὀρους θηράσομαι, Ἰνώ τ’ Ἀγαύην θ’ ἥ μ’ ἔτικτ’ Ἐχίονι, Ἀκταίονος τε μητέρ’, Αὐτονόθην λέγω. καὶ σφάς σιδηραῖς ἁρμόσας ἐν ἄρκυσι παῦσῳ κακούργου τῆς βεκχείας τάχα. λέγουσι δ’ ὡς τις εἰσελήλυθε ἔνος γόης ἐπίφως Δυναίας ἀπὸ χοῦνος, ἕανθοιε βοστρύχοισιν εὐσομῶν κομῶν, οὐνωπός, ὅσοις χάριτας Ἄφροδίτης ἔχων, δι’ ἡμέρας τε κευφρόνας συγγίγνεται τελετὰς προτείνων εὐίους νεάνισιν. εἰ δ’ αὐτὸν εἰσὸν τῆς λήψομαι στέγῃς, παῦσῳ κτυποῦντα θύρσου ἀνασελυτά τε κόμας, τράχηλον σώματος χώρις τεμών. ἔκεινος εἰναὶ φησι Διόνυσον θεόν, ἔκεινος εῦν μηρῷ ποτ’ ἐρράφθαι Δίος, δι’ ἐκπυρωτά ταῦτα λαμπάσιν κεραυνίας σὺν μητρί, Δίοις δοτ’ γάμους ἐφεύσατο. ταῦτ’ οὔχι δεινῆς ἀγχόνης ἐπάξια, ὑβρεῖς ὑβρίζειν, ὅστις ἔστιν ὁ ξένος;

ἀτὰρ τὸδ’ ἄλλο θαῦμα, τὸν τερασκόπον ἐν ποικίλαισι νεβρίσι Τειρεσίαν ὀρᾷ πατέρα τε μητρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς, πολύν γέλων, νάρθηκι βακχεύουντ’ ἀναίνομαι, πατερ,
THE BACCHANALS

And midst each revel-rout the wine-bowls stand
Brimmed: and to lonely nooks, some here, some there,
They steal, to work with men the deed of shame,
In pretext Maenad priestesses, forsooth,
But honouring Aphrodite more than Bacchus.
As many as I have seized my servants keep
Safe in the common prison manacled.
But those yet forth, will I hunt from the hills—
Ino, Agave, who bare me to Echion,
Autonoe withal, Actaeon’s mother.
In toils of iron trapped, full soon shall they
Cease from this pestilent Bacchic revelling.
Men say a stranger to the land hath come,
A juggling sorcerer from Lydia-land,
With essenced hair in golden tresses tossed,
Wine-flushed, Love’s witching graces in his eyes,
Who with the damsels day and night consorts,
Making pretence of Evian mysteries.
If I within these walls but prison him,
Farewell to thyrsus-taboring, and to locks
Free-tossed; for neck from shoulders will I hew.
He saith that Dionysus is a God!
Saiith, he was once sewn up in Zeus’s thigh—
Who, with his mother, was by lightning-flames
Blasted, because she lied of Zeus’s love.
Is not this worthy hanging’s ruthless doom,
Thus to blaspheme, whoe'er the stranger be?

But lo, another marvel this—the seer
Teiresias, in dappled fawnskins clad!
Yea, and my mother’s sire—O sight for laughter!—
Tossing the reed-wand! Father, I take shame
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

τὸ γῆρας ύμῶν εἰσορῶν νοῦν ούκ ἔχον. οὐκ ἀποτινάξεις κισσῶν; οὐκ ἐλευθέραν θύραν μεθήσεις χείρ', ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάτερ; σὺ ταῦτ' ἔπεισας, Τειρεσία. τῶν ἄνθρωποιν εἰσφέρων νέον σκοπεῖν πτερωτοῖς κάμπυρων μισθοὺς φέρειν· εἰ μή σε γῆρας πολιοῦ ἐξερρύετο, καθήσ' ἄν ἐν Βάκχαις δέσμιος μέσαις; τελετὰς πονηρὰς εἰσάγων γυναῖκι γὰρ ὅπου βότρυνος ἐν δαίτι γίγνεται γάνος, οὐχ ὑγιές οὐδέν ἔτι λέγω τῶν ὀργίων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῆς δυσσεβείας. ὦ ξέν', οὐκ αἰδεῖ θεοὺς Κάδμου τε τὸν σπείραντα γηγενὴ στάχυν; Ἐχίνωνος δ' ὣν παῖς καταισχύνεις γένος;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὅταν λάβῃ τις τῶν λόγων ἀνήρ σοφὸς καλὰς ἀφορμὰς, οὐ μέγ' ἔργον εὐ λέγειν· σὺ δ' εὔτροχον μὲν γλώσσαν ὡς φρονῶν ἔχεις, ἐν τοῖς λόγοις δ' οὐκ ἐνεισὶ σοι φρένες.

θρασύς δὲ, δυνατὸς καὶ λέγειν οἷος τ' ἀνήρ, κακὸς πολίτης γίγνεται νοῦν οὐκ ἔχων. οὕτος δ' ὁ δαίμων ὁ νέος ὅν σὺ διαγελᾶς, οὐκ ἂν δυναύμην μέγεθος ἔξειπεν ὅσος καθ' Ἐλλάδ' ἔσται. δύο γάρ, ὁ νεανία, τὰ πρῶτα ἐν ἀνθρώποις: Δημήτηρ θεά· γῆ δ' ἔστιν, ὅνομα δ' ὅποτερον βούλει κάλει· αὐτὴ μὲν ἐν ξηροῖς ἐκτρέφει βροτοῦς· δε δ' ἡλιθ' ἐπετεί, ἀντίπαλον ὁ Σεμέλης γόνος βότρυνος ύγρὸν πῶμ' ἰπρε κείσηνεγκάτο θυτοῖς, ὃ παύει τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτοὺς λύπης, ὅταν πλησθῶσιν ἀμπέλου ῥοῖς.
THE BACCHANALS

Beholding these grey hairs so sense-bereft.
Fling off the ivy; let the thyrsus fall,
And set thine hand free, O my mother's sire.
Thou didst, Teiresias, draw him on to this:
'Tis thou wouldst foist this new God upon men
For augury and divination's wage!
Except thine hoary hairs protected thee,
Thou shouldst amid the Bacchanals sit in chains,
For bringing in these pestilent rites; for when
In women's feasts the cluster's pride hath part,
No good, say I, comes of their revelry.

CHORUS
Blasphemy!—Stranger, dost not reverence heaven,
Nor Cadmus, sower of the earth-born seed?
Son of Echion, thou dost shame thy birth!

TEIRESIAS
Whene'er a wise man finds a noble theme
For speech, 'tis easy to be eloquent.
Thou—roundly runs thy tongue, as thou wert wise;
But in these words of thine sense is there none.
The rash man, armed with power and ready of speech,
Is a bad citizen, as void of sense.

But this new God, whom thou dost laugh to
scorn,
I cannot speak the greatness whereunto
In Hellas he shall rise. Two chiefest Powers,
Prince, among men there are: divine Demeter—
Earth is she, name her by which name thou wilt;—
She upon dry food nurtureth mortal men:
Then followeth Semele's Son; to match her gift
The cluster's flowing draught he found, and gave
To mortals, which gives rest from grief to men
Woe-worn, soon as the vine's stream filleth them.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ὑπνον τε λήθην τῶν καθ᾽ ὁμέραν κακῶν
dίδωσιν, οὐδ᾽ ἐστ᾽ ἄλλο φάρμακον πόνων.
οὕτος θεοὶς σπένδεται θέος γεγώς,
ὡστε διὰ τούτων τὰ γάθ᾽ ἀνθρώπους ἔχειν.
καὶ καταγελᾶς νῦν, ὡς ἐνερράφη Δίως
μηρῷ; διδάξω σ᾽ ὡς καλῶς ἔχει τόδε.
ἐπεὶ νῦν ἡρπασ᾽ ἐκ πυρὸς κεραυνίου
Ζεὺς, εἰς δ᾽ ὁλυμποῦ βρέφος ἀνήγαγεν, θεῶν
"Ἡρα νῦν ἡθελ᾽ ἐκβαλεῖν ἀπ᾽ οὐρανοῦ:
Ζεὺς δ᾽ ἀντεμηχανήσαθ᾽ οἶα δὴ θεός.
ῥήξας μέρος τι τοῦ χθόνι ἐγκυκλουμένου
αἰθέρος, ἔθηκε τόνδ᾽ ὄμηρον, ἐκδιδοὺς
Διόνυσον "Ἡρας νεικεών χρόνῳ δὲ νῦν
βροτοὶ τραφὴναι φασιν ἐν μηρῷ Δίως,
ὁνομα μεταστήσατε, ὅτι θεᾶ θεὸς
Ἡρα ποθ᾽ ὄμηρευσε, συνθέντες λόγον.
μάντις δ᾽ ὁ δαίμων ὅδε: τὸ γὰρ βακχεύσιμον,
καὶ τὸ μανιῶδες μαντικήν πολλὴν ἔχει:
ὅταν γὰρ ὁ θεός εἰς τὸ σῶμ᾽ ἔλθῃ πολὺς,
λέγειν τὸ μέλλον τοὺς μεμηντότας ποιεῖ.
Αρεώς τε μοῖραιν μεταλαβῶν ἔχει τινὰ
στράτων γὰρ ἐν ὅπλοις ὄντα κατὰ τάξει
φόβος διεπτόησε πρὶν λόγχης θυγεῖν
μάνια δὲ καὶ τούτ᾽ ἐστὶ Διονύσου πάρα.
ἐτ᾽ αὐτὸν ὀψει κατὶ Δελφίσιν πέτραις
πηδῶντα σὺν πεύκαιν δικόρυφον πλάκα,
πάλλοντα καὶ σεῖοντα Βακχείου κλάδον,
μέγαν τ᾽ ἄν Ἑλλάδ᾽. ἀλλ᾽ ἐμοί, Πενθεῦ, πιθοῦ.
THE BACCHANALS

And sleep, the oblivion of our daily ills,
He gives—there is none other balm for toils.
He is the Gods’ libation, though a God,
So that through him do men obtain good things.

And dost thou mock him, as in Zeus’s thigh
Sewn? I will show thee all the legend’s beauty:
When Zeus had snatched him from the levin-fire,
And bare the babe to Olympus, Hera then
Fain would have cast his godhead out of heaven. 290
Zeus with a God’s wit framed his counterplot.
A fragment from the earth-enfolding ether
He brake, and wrought to a hostage,¹ setting so
Dionysus safe from Hera’s spite. In time
Men told how he was nursed in Zeus’s thigh.
Changing the name, they wrought a myth thereof,
Because the God was hostage once to Hera.

A prophet is this God: the Bacchic frenzy
And ecstasy are full-fraught with prophecy:
For, in his fullness when he floods our frame,
He makes his maddened votaries tell the future.
Somewhat of Ares’ dues he shares withal:
Hosts harness-clad, in ranks arrayed, sometimes
Are thrilled with panic ere a spear be touched;
This too is a frenzy Dionysus sends.
Yet shalt thou see him even on Delphi’s crags
With pine-brands leaping o’er the cloven crest,
Tossing on high and waving Bacchus’ bough,—
Yea, great through Hellas. Pentheus, heed thou me:

¹ i.e. Gave this counterfeit Dionysus to Hera, as a hostage
against his investing her rival’s child with the honours of
divinity. The argument is based on the similarity of μέρος,
“fragment”; μηρός, “thigh”; διμήρος, “hostage.”
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

310 μὴ τὸ κράτος αὖχει δύναμιν ἀνθρώπους ἔχειν, μηδ’, ἂν δοκήσῃ μέν, ἢ δὲ δόξα σου νοσῆ, φρονεῖν δόκει τι· τὸν θεὸν δ’ εἰς γῆν δέχον καὶ στέψει καὶ βάκχευε καὶ στέφου κάρα. 

320 οὐχ ὁ Διόνυσος σωφρονεῖν ἀναγκάσει γυναίκας εἰς τὴν Κύπριν, ἀλλ’ ἐν τῇ φύσει τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἐνεστίν εἰς τὰ πάντ’ ἄει. 

tούτο σκοπεῖν χρῆ καὶ γάρ ἐν βακχεύμασιν οὐδ’ ἢ γε σώφρων οὐ διαφαρμῆσεται.

330 ὁ πρέσβυ, Φοίβον τ’ οὐ καταψυχόν λόγοις, 

tιμῶν τε Βρόμιον σωφρονεῖς μέγαν θεόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

δ’ παῖ, καλῶς σοι Τειρεσίας παρήνεσέν· 

οἶκει μεθ’ ἢμῶν, μὴ θύραζε τῶν νόμων. 

330 νῦν γάρ πέτει τε καὶ φρονών οὐδὲν φρονεῖς. 

κεῖ μη γὰρ ἐστιν ὃ θεὸς οὕτως, ὅς σὺ φήσ, 

παρὰ σοι λεγέσθω· καὶ καταψυεύδου καλῶς ὡς ἔστι, Σεμέλῃ θ’ ἵνα δοκῆθεν τεκείν, 

ἡμῖν τε τιμῆ παντὶ τῷ γένει προσή. 

340 ὁρᾶς τὸν Ἀκταίωνος ἄθλιον μόρον, 

διν ὧμοσιτοι σκῦλας ἂς ἔθρεψατο 

dieșπάσαντο, κρείσσου ἐν κυναγίαις.
THE BACCHANALS

Boast not that naked force hath power o’er men;
Nor, if it seem so to thy jaundiced eye,
Deem thyself wise. The God into thy land
Welcome: spill wine, be bacchant, wreathe thine head.

Dionysus upon women will not thrust
Chastity: in true womanhood inborn
Dwells temperance touching all things evermore.
This must thou heed; for in his Bacchic rites
The virtuous-hearted shall not be undone.

Lo, thou art glad when thousands throng thy gates,
And all Thebes magnifieth Pentheus’ name:
He too, I wot, in homage taketh joy.
I, then, and Cadmus, whom thou laugh’st to scorn,
Will wreathe our heads with ivy, and will dance—
A greybeard pair, yet cannot we but dance.
Not at thy suasion will I war with Gods.
Most grievous is thy madness, and no spell
May medicine thee, though spells have made thee mad.

CHORUS
Old sire, thou sham’st not Phoebus in thy speech,
And wisely honourest Bromius, mighty God.

CADMUS
My son, well hath Teiresias counselled thee.
Dwell with us, not without the pale of wont.
Thou’rt now in cloudland: naught thy wisdom is:
For, though this God were no God,—as thou sayest,—
God be he called of thee: in glorious fraud
Be Semele famed as mother of a God:
So upon all our house shall honour rest.

Rememberest thou Actaeon’s wretched doom,
Whom the raw-ravening hounds himself had reared
Rent limb from limb in the meads, for that high boast
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

340 'Αρτέμιδος εἶναι κομπάσαντ', ἐν ὄργασιν.
ὄ μὴ πάθης σύ, δεύρο σου στέψω κάρα
κισσῷ· μεθ' ἠμῶν τῷ θεῷ τιμήν δίδουν.

ΠΕΝΕΤΕΣ

οὐ μὴ προσούσεις χεῖρα, βακχεύσεις δ' ἱών,
μηδ' ἐξομόρξει μωρίαν τὴν σὴν ἐμοί;
τῆς σῆς δ' ἀνοίας τόνδε τὸν διδάσκαλον
δίκην μέτειμ. στειχέτω τις ὡς τάχος,
ἐλθὼν δὲ θάκους τοῦτ' ἵν' οἴωνοσκοπεῖ
μοχλοῖς τριαίνον κώνατρεψον ἐμπαλιν,
ἀνω κάτω τὰ πάντα συγχέας όμοι,
καὶ στέμματ' ἀνέμοις καὶ θυέλλαισιν μέθες.
μᾶλλον γὰρ νυν δήξομαι δρᾶσας τάδε.
οἱ δὲ ἀνὰ πόλιν στείχοντες ἐξιχνεύσατε
τὸν θηλύμορφον ξένον, ὃς εἰσφερεῖ νόσον
καῖνην γυναιξί καὶ λέχη λυμαίνεται.
καντερ λάβητε, δέσμιον πορεύσατε
deυρ' αὐτόν, ὡς ἂν λευσίμου δίκης τυχῶν
θάνη πικρὰν βάκχευσιν ἐν Θήβαις ἱδων.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὡ σχέτλι', ὡς οὐκ οἰσθα πού ποτ' εἰ λόγων.
μέμνησα ἦδη, καὶ πρὶν ἐξέστης φρενών.
στείχωμεν ἠμεῖς, Κάδμε, κάζαιτώμεθα
ὑπὲρ τε τούτου καίπερ ὄντος ἀγρίου
ὑπὲρ τε πόλεως, τὸν θεόν μηδὲν νέον
δράν. ἀλλ' ἔπου μοι κισσίνου βάκτρου μέτα-
πειρὼ δ' ἀνορθοῦν σῶμ' ἐμον, κἀγὼ τὸ σῶν·
γέροντε δ' αἰσχρόν δύο πεσεῖν ὑπὸ δ' ὅμοις
τῷ Βακχίῳ γάρ τῷ Δίως δουλευτέον.
Πενθείς δ' ὅπως μὴ πένθος εἰσοίησε δόμοις
τοῖς σώζῃ, Κάδμε· μαντικῇ μὲν οὐ λέγω,
τοῖς πράγμασιν δὲ· μῶρα γάρ μῶρος λέγει.
THE BACCHANALS

That Artemis in hunting he excelled?
Lest such be thy fate, let me crown thine head
With ivy: honour thou with us the God.

PENTHEUS
Hence with thine hand! Go, play the Bacchant thou,
Neither besmirch me with thy folly’s stain.
This seer, thy monitor in senselessness,
Will I chastise. Let someone go with speed—

(To an attendant) Thou, hie thee to his seat of augury;
Upheave with levers, hurl it to the ground;
All in confusion turn it upside down;
His holy fillets fling to wind and storm:

For, doing so, I most shall wring his heart
Some—ye, range through the city, and track down
That girl-faced stranger, who upon our wives
Bringeth strange madness, and desfiles our beds.
And if ye catch him, hale him bound with chains
Hither, that death by stoning be his meed,
And so he rue his revelry in Thebes.

TEIRESIAS
Ah wretch, thou knowest not what thou hast said!
Thou’rt stark-mad now, who erst wast sense-bereft.
Let us go, Cadmus, and make intercession
Both for this man, brute savage though he be,
And Thebes, that no strange vengeance of the God
Smite them. Come with me, ivy-wand in hand,
Essay to upbear my frame, as I do thine.
Shame if two greybeards fell!—nay, what of that?
For Bacchus, Son of Zeus, we needs must serve.
Cadmus, beware lest Pentheus bring his echo,
Repentance, to thine house:—not prophecy here
Speaks, but his deeds. A fool, he speaketh folly.

[Exeunt.]

31
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

370 'Οσία πότνα θεῶν,
'Οσία δ' ἂ γατὰ γὰν
χρυσέαν πτέρυγα φέρεις,
tάδε Πενθέως ἁίες;
ἀίεις οὖχ ὀσίαν
ὕβριν εἰς τὸν Βρόμιον,
tὸν Σεμέλας, τὸν παρὰ καλλιστεφάνοις
eὐφροσύναις δαίμονα πρῶ-
tον μακάρων; δς τάδ' ἐχει,
θιασεύειν τι χορόις.

380 μετά τ' αὐλοῦ γελάσαι
ἀποπαίνοι τὶς μερίμνας,
ὄποταν βότρυος ἐλθή
γανός ἐν δαιτὶ θεῶν,
kεισοφόροις δ' ἐν θαλίαις
ἀνδράσι κρατήρ ὑπνον ἀμφίβαλλῃ.

ἀχαλίνων στομάτων
ἀνόμου τ' ἀφροσύνας
τὸ τέλος δυστυχίας:
ὁ δὲ τὰς ἁσυχίας

390 βιότος καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν
ἀσάλευτὸν τις μένει
καὶ συνέχει δόματα· πόρσω γὰρ ὁμος
αἰθέρα ναύοντες ὀρῶ-
σιν τὰ βροτῶν οὐρανίδαι.
τὸ σοφὸν δ' οὐ σοφία
τὸ τε μὴ θυμητὰ φρονεῖν
βραχὺς αἰών' ἐπὶ τούτῳ
δὲ τῆς ἄν μεγάλα διώκον
τὰ παρόντ' οὐχὶ φέροι.
THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS
O Sanctity, thou who dost bear dominion (Str. 1) 370
Over Gods, yet low as this earthly ground,
Unto usward, stoopeth thy golden pinion,—
Hear’st thou the words of the king, and the sound
Of his blast of defiance, of Pentheus assailing
The Clamour-king?—hear’st thou his blasphemous railing
On Semele’s son, who is foremost found
Of the Blest in the festival beauty-crowned?—
Who hath for his own prerogative taken
To summon forth feet through his dances to leap,
When blended with the flutes light laughter’s awaken,
And the children of care have forgotten to weep,
Whensoever revealed is the cluster’s splendour
In the banquet that men to the high Gods tender,
And o’er ivy-wreathed revellers drinking deep
The wine-bowl droppeth the mantle of sleep.

Of the reinless lips that will own no master, (Ant. 1)
Of the folly o’er law’s pale stubborn to stray—
One is the end of them, even disaster;
But the calm life, still as a summer day,
But the foot whose faring discretion guideth,
Their steadfast state unshaken abideth,
And the home still findeth in such its stay.
Ah, the Heavenly Ones dwell far away,
Yet look they on men from their cloudy portals.

O, not with knowledge is Wisdom bought;
And the spirit that soareth too high for mortals
Shall see few days: whosoever hath caught
At the things too great for a man’s attaining,
Even blessings assured shall he lose in the gaining.

VOL. III.
μανωμενων δ' οίδε τρόποι
καὶ κακοβούλων παρ' ἐμοιγε φωτῶν.

ικοίμαν ποτὶ Κύπρον,
vάσον τὰς 'Αφροδίτας,
ἐν ἀ θελξίφρουνε νέμου-
tαι θνατοίσιν Ἠρωτεῖς,
χθόνα ἓ ἀν ἐκατόστομοι
βαρβάρουν ποταμοῦ ῥοῖαι
καρπίζουσιν ἀνομβρόν.
ποῦ δ' ἀ καλλιστέομένα

Πιερία μοῦσειος ἔδρα,
σεμνὰ κλίτως 'Ολύμπου;
ἐκεῖσ' ἀγε με, Βρόμει Βρόμει,
πρόβακχ' εὐιε δαίμον.
ἐκεῖ Χάριτε, ἐκεῖ δὲ Πόθος·
ἐκεῖ δὲ Βάκχας θέμις ὀργιάζειν.

ὁ δαίμων ὁ Διὸς παῖς
χαίρει μὲν θαλασσιν,
φιλεῖ δ' ὀλβοδότειραν Εἰ-
ρήναν, κουροτρόφον θεάν.
ἰσα δ' εἰς τὸν ὀλβιον
τόν τε χείρονα δῶκ' ἐχεῖν
οἴνου τέρψιν ἄλπον
μισεῖ δ' ὃ μὴ ταῦτα μέλει,
κατὰ φάεος νύκτας τε φίλας
εὐαίσων διαζήν.
σοφὸν δ' ἀπέχειν πρατίδα φρένα τε

1 Meineke and Nauck: for MSS. Πάφον.
THE BACCHANALS

Such paths as this, meseemeth, be sought
Of the witless folly that roves distraught.

(St. 2)

O to flee hence unto where Aphrodite
Doth in Cyprus, the paradise-island, dwell,
The sea-ring’d haunt of the Love-gods mighty
To weave the soul-enchanting spell,
Or the fields where untold is the harvest’s gold,
Where the stream of the hundred mouths hath
rolled,
Whereon rain never fell!
But O for the land that in beauty is peerless, ¹
The Pierian haunt where the Muses sing!
On Olympus the hallowed to stand all fearless
Thitherward lead me, O Clamour-king!
O Revel-god, guide where the Graces abide
And Desire,—where danceth, of no man denied,
The Bacchanal ring.

(Ant. 2)

Our God, the begotten of Zeus, hath pleasure
In the glee of the feast where his chalices
shine;
And Peace doth he love, who is giver of treasure,
Who of Youth is the nursing-mother divine.
On the high, on the low, doth his bounty bestow
The joyance that maketh an end of woe,
The joyance of wine.
But he hateth the man that in scorn refuseth
A life that on pinions of happiness flies
Through its days and its nights, nor the good part
chooseth.
Wisely shalt thou from the over-wise

¹ Macedonia; where Euripides composed this play.
βακχαί

περισσῶν παρὰ φωτῶν.
τὸ πλήθος ὅ τι τὸ φαύλοτερον
eνόμισε χρήται τε, τόδ' ἂν δεχοίμαι.

Θεραπών
Πενθεύ, πάρεσμεν τήνδ' ἀγραν ἦγρευκότες
ἐφ' ἂν ἐπεμψας, οὐδ' ἀκραυθ' ὁμμῆσαμεν.
ὁ θερ' δ' ὡδ' ἦμιν πρᾶος οὐδ' ὑπέσπασε
φυγή πόδ', ἀλλ' ἐσώκεν οὐχ ἄκων χέρας,
οὐδ' ὄχρος, οὐδ' ἠλλαξεν οἰνωπὸν γένος,
γελῶν δὲ καὶ δεῖν κατάγειν ἐφίετο
ἐμενε τε, τοµῶν εὑπετές ποιούμενος.
καγώ δι' αίδους εἰπον: ὃ ξέν', οὐχ ἐκὼν
ἄγω σε, Πενθέως δ' ὦς μ' ἐπεμψ' ἐπιστολάις.
ἀς δ' αὐ σὺ Βάκχας εἰρέας, ἃς συνήρτας
καδῆσας ἐν δεσμοίς πανθήμου στέγης,
φρούδαι γ' ἐκεῖναι λελυμέναι πρὸς ὀργάδας
σκιρτῶσι Βρόμμων ἁνακαλούμεναι θεόν.
αὐτόματα δ' αὐτάς δεσμὰ διελύθη πεδῶν,
κλήδες τ' ἀνήκαν θύρετρ' ἀνευ θυντῆς χερός.
πολλῶν δ' ὡδ' ἀνήρ θαυμάτων ἦκει πλέως
εἰς τάσδε Θήβας. σοὶ δὲ τάλλα χρή μέλειν.

Πενθέτε
μαίνεσθε: χειρῶν τοῦδ' ἐν ἄρκνειν γαρ ὅν
οὐκ ἐστὶν ὀὕτως ὁκὺς ὡστε μ' ἐκφυγεῖν.
ἀτάρ τὸ μὲν σῶμ' οὐκ ἀμορφος εἰ, ξένε,
ὡς εἰς γυναίκας, ἐφ' ὅπερ εἰς Θήβας πάρειν
πλάκαμοι τε γαρ σοι τανάσος, οὐ πάλης ὑπὸ,
γένναν παρ' αὐτῆς κεχυμένοις, πόθου πλέως:
λευκὴν δὲ χροᾶν ἐκ παρασκευής ἐχειν,
οὐχ ἢλίου βολαίσιν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ σκιᾶς,
τὴν Ἀφροδίτην καλλονή θηρώμενος.
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι λέξων ὅστις εἰ γένος.
THE BACCHANALS

Hold thee apart: but the faith of the heart
Of the people, that lives in the works of the mart,
    For me shall suffice.

Re-enter Pentheus. Enter servant, with attendants,
    bringing Dionysus bound.

Servant

Pentheus, we come, who have run down this prey
For which thou sentest us, nor sped in vain.
This wild-beast found we tame: he darted not
In flight away, but yielded, nothing loth,
His hands, nor paled, nor changed his cheeks’ rose-hue,
But smiling bade us bind and lead him thence,
And tarried, making easy this my task.

Then shamed I said, “Not, stranger, of my will,
But by commands of Pentheus, lead I thee.”
The captured Bacchanals thou didst put in ward,
And in the common prison bind with chains,
Fled to the meadows are they, loosed from bonds,
And dance and call on Bromius the God.
The fetters from their feet self-sundered fell;
Doors, without mortal hand, unbarred themselves.
Yea, fraught with many marvels this man came
To Thebes! To thee the rest doth appertain.

Pentheus

Ye are mad! Once in the toils of these mine hands,
He is not so fleet as to escape from me.
Ha! of thy form thou art not ill-favoured, stranger,
For woman’s tempting—even thy quest at Thebes.
No wrestler thou, as shew thy flowing locks
Down thy cheeks floating, fraught with all desire;
And white, from heedful tendance, is thy skin,
Smit by no sun-shafts, but made wan by shade,
While thou dost hunt desire with beauty’s lure.
    First, tell me of what nation sprung thou art.
BAKΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
οὗ κόμπτος οὐδείς· ῥάδιον δ’ εἶπεῖν τόδε.
τὸν ἀνθεμώδη Τμώλον οἰσθά ποὺ κλύων.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
οἶδ’, ὅς τὸ Σάρδεων ἂστυ περιβάλλει κύκλῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ἐντευθὲν εἰμι, Λυδία δὲ μοι πατρίς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
πόθεν δὲ τελετᾶς τάδ’ ἄγεως ἐς Ἑλλάδα ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς εἰσέβης’, ὁ τοῦ Διὸς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
Ζεὺς δ’ ἐστ’ ἐκεῖ τις, ὅς νέους τίκτει θεοῦς ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
οὐκ, ἀλλ’ ὁ Σεμέλην ἐνθάδε ζεύξας γάμοις.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
πότερα δὲ νύκτωρ σ’ ἥ κατ’ ὦμμ’ ἡναγκασέν;

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ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ὁρῶν ὀρώντα, καὶ δίδωσιν οργία.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τὰ δ’ ὀργή’ ἐστὶ τῖν’ ἰδέαν ἔχοντά σοι ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ἀρρητ’ ἀβακχεύτοιοις εἰδέναι βροτῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἐχει δ’ ὀνήσιν τοῖς θύονσιν τίνα;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
οὐ θέμις ἀκούσαι σ’, ἔστι δ’ ἄξι’ εἰδέναι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
εὗ τούτ’ ἐκιβδήλευσας, ἵν’ ἀκούσαι θέλω.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ἀσέβειαν ἀσκοῦντ’ ὀργή’ ἐχθαίρει θεοῦ.

38
THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS
No high vaunt this—’tis easy to declare:
Of flowery Tmolus haply thou hast heard.

PENTHEUS
I know: it compasseth the Sardians’ town.

DIONYSUS
Thence am I: Lydia is my fatherland.

PENTHEUS
Wherefore to Hellas bringest thou these rites?

DIONYSUS
Dionysus, Zeus’ son, made me initiate.

PENTHEUS
Lives a Zeus there, who doth beget new gods?

DIONYSUS
Nay, the same Zeus who wedded Semele here.

PENTHEUS
Dreaming or waking wast thou made his thrall?

DIONYSUS
Nay, eye to eye his mysteries he bestowed.

PENTHEUS
Ay, of what fashion be these mysteries?

DIONYSUS
’Tis secret, save to the initiate.

PENTHEUS
What profit bring they to his votaries?

DIONYSUS
Thou mayst not hear: yet are they worth thy knowing.

PENTHEUS
Shrewd counterfeiting, to whet lust to hear!

DIONYSUS
His rites loathe him that worketh godlessness.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τὸν θεὸν ὀρᾶν γὰρ φῆς σαφῶς, ποῖος τις ἦν;
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ
ὁποίος ἦθελ'· οὐκ ἔγω 'τασσον τόδε.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τοῦτ' αὖ παρωχέτευσας εὖ κοῦδεν λέγων.
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ
dόξει τις ἀμαθεὶς σοφὰ λέγων οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖν.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἡλθες δὲ πρῶτα δεῦρ' ἄγων τὸν δαίμονα;
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ
πᾶς ἀναχορεύει βαρβάρων τάδ' ὀργία.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
φρονοῦσι γὰρ κάκιον Ἑλλήνων πολύ.
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ
tάδ' εὖ γε μᾶλλον· οἱ νόμοι δὲ διάφοροι.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τά δ' ἱερὰ νύκτωρ ἡ μεθ' ἡμέραν τελεῖς;
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ
νύκτωρ τὰ πολλά· σεμνότητ' ἔχει σκότος.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τοῦτ' εἰς γυναῖκας δόλιον ἐστὶ καὶ σαθρὸν.
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ
κἂν ἡμέρα τὸ γ' αἰσχρὸν ἔξευροι τις ἄν.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
δίκην σε δούναι δεῖ σοφισμάτων κακῶν.
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ
σὲ δ' ἀμαθίας γε κάσεβοῦντ' εἰς τὸν θεὸν.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ὡς θρασὺς ὁ Βάκχος κοῦκ ἀγύμναστος λόγων.
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ
eἰφ' ὅ τι παθεῖν δεῖ· τί με τὸ δεινὸν ἑργάσει;
THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS
Thou saw'st the God: what fashion was he of?

DIONYSUS
As seemed him good: that did not I enjoin.

PENTHEUS
This too thou hast shrewdly parried, telling naught.

DIONYSUS
Wise answers seem but folly to a fool.

PENTHEUS
Cam'st thou the first to bring his godhead hither?

DIONYSUS
All Asians through these mystic dances tread.

PENTHEUS
Ay, far less wise be they than Hellene men.

DIONYSUS
Herein far wiser. Diverse wont is theirs.

PENTHEUS
By night or day dost thou perform his rites?

DIONYSUS
Chiefly by night: gloom lends solemnity.

PENTHEUS
Ay—and for women snares of lewdness too.

DIONYSUS
In the day too may lewdness be devised.

PENTHEUS
Now punished must thy vile evasions be.

DIONYSUS
Ay, and thy folly and impiety.

PENTHEUS
How bold our Bacchant is, in word-fence skilled!

DIONYSUS
What is my doom? What vengeance wilt thou wreak?
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
πρώτον μὲν ἁβρῶν βόστρυχον τεμῶ σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ιερὸς ὁ πλόκαμος· τῷ θεῷ δ’ αὐτὸν τρέφω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἔπειτα θύρσου τόνδε παράδος ἐκ χερῶν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
αὐτὸς μ’ ἀφαιροῦ τόνδε Διονύσου φορῶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
εἰρκταῖσί τ’ ἐνδον σῶμα σὸν φυλάξομεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
λύσει μ’ ὁ δαίμων αὐτός, ὅταν ἐγὼ θέλω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ὅταν γε καλέσῃς αὐτὸν ἐν Βάκχαις σταθεῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
καὶ νῦν ᾧ πάσχω πλησίον παρῶν ὀρᾶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
καὶ ποῦ ἥστιν; ὦ γὰρ φανερὸς ὄμμασίν γ᾽ ἔμοις.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
παρ’ ἐμοί· σὺ δ’ ἄσεβῆς αὐτὸς ὅν οὐκ εἰσορᾶς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
λάξυσθε· καταφρονεῖ μὲ καὶ Θήβας ὁδὲ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
αὐδῶ μὲ μὴ δείν σωφρονῶν οὐ σώφροσιν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἐγὼ δὲ δείν γε κυριώτερος σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
οὐκ οἰσθ’ ὁ τι ἔξης, οὐδ’ ὁ δράς, οὐδ’ ὀστὶς εἰ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
Πενθεύς Ἀγαύης παῖς, πατρὸς δ’ Ἐχίονος.
THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS
Thy dainty tresses first will I cut off.

DIONYSUS
Hallowed my locks are, fostered for the God.

PENTHEUS
Next, yield me up this thyrsus from thine hands.

DIONYSUS
Take it thyself. 'Tis Dionysus' wand.

PENTHEUS
Thy body in my dungeon will I ward.

DIONYSUS
The God's self shall release me, when I will.

PENTHEUS
Ay—when mid Bacchanals thou call'st on him! 1

DIONYSUS
Yea, he is now near, marking this despite.

PENTHEUS
Ay, where?—not unto mine eyes manifest.

DIONYSUS
Beside me. Thou, the impious, seest him not.

PENTHEUS
Seize him! This fellow mocketh me and Thebes.

DIONYSUS
I warn ye, bind not!—Reason's rede to folly.

PENTHEUS
I bid them bind, who have better right than thou.

DIONYSUS
Thy life nor acts thou know'st, nor what thou art.

PENTHEUS
Pentheus—Agave's and Echion's son.

1 i.e. Never, for you shall not escape to rejoin them.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ἐνδυστυχήσαι τούνομ' ἐπιτήδειος εἰ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΣ
χώρει· καθείρξατ' αυτὸν ἱππικαῖς πέλας
φάτναισιν, ὡς ἄν σκότων εἰσορᾶ κνέφας. 510
ἐκεὶ χόρευε· τάστε δ' ἂς ἄγων πάρει
κακῶν συνεργοὺς ἢ διεμπολήσομεν
ἵ χεῖρα δούσον τούδε καὶ βύρσης κτύπου
παύσας, ἐφ' ἰστοῖς δμωίδας κεκτήσομαι.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
στείχοιμ' ἂν· δ' τι γὰρ μὴ χρεῶν, οὕτωι χρεῶν
παθεῖν. ἀτὰρ τοι τῶν ἀπού ὑβρισμάτων
μέτεισι Διόνυσος σ', ὃν οὐκ ἔσαι λέγεις·
ημᾶς γὰρ ἀδικῶν κείνου εἰς δεσμοὺς ἄγεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

'Αχελώον θύγατερ, ἀπίχθανεν Δίρκα,
πότνι' ἐνπάρθηνε Δίρκα,
σὺ γὰρ ἐν σαῖς ποτε παγαῖς
τὸ Δίος βρέφος ἔλαβες,
ὅτε μηρὶ πυρὸς ἔξω ἄ-
θανάτου Ζεύς ὁ τεκὼν ἦρ-
πασὲ νυ, τάδ' ἀναβοάσας·
ἰθι, Διθύραμβε, ἐμὰν ἀρ-
σενα τάνδε βάθι νυδίν
ἀναφαίνω σε τόδ', ὁ Βάκ-
χιε, Ὑβαίας ὄνωμάζειν.

530
σὺ δέ μ', ὁ μίκαιρα Δίρκα,
στεφανηφόρον ὑπωθεῖ
θιάσους ἔχουσαν ἐν σοὶ.
τί μ' ἀναίνει; τί με φεύγεις;
THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS
Yea, fitly named to be in misery pent.

PENTHEUS
Away! Enjail him in the horses' stalls
Hard by, that he may see but murky gloom. [thee, 510
There dance! These women thou hast brought with
Thy crimes' co-workers, I will sell for slaves,
Or make my weaving-damsels, and so hush
Their hands from cymbal-clang and smitten drum.

DIONYSUS
I go. The fate that Fate forbids can ne'er
Touch me. On thee Dionysus shall requite
These insults—he whose being thou hast denied.
Outraging me, thou halest him to bonds.

[Exeunt DIONYSUS guarded, and PENTHEUS.

CHORUS
All hail, Acheloüs' Daughter, 1 (Str.)
Dirce the maiden, majestic and blest!—in thy cool-
welling water
Thou receivest in old time the offspring of Zeus
'neath thy silvery plashing,
When Zeus, who begat him, had snatched from the
levin unquenchably flashing, [the Father cry,
And sealed up the babe in his thigh, and aloud did
"Come! into this, Dithyrambus, the womb of no
mother, pass thou:—
By this name unto Thebes I proclaim thee, O God
of the Bacchanals, now."
Ah Dirce, thou thrustest me hence, when I bring
thee the glorious vision
Of his garlanded revels!—now why am I scouted,
disowned, and abhorred?

1 The river Acheloüs was in legend the Father of all Greek
streams. Dirce was the sacred fountain of Thebes.
BAKXAI

ἐτι ναι ταν βοτρυώδη
Διονύσου χάριν οίνας
ἐτι σοι τον Βρομών μελήσει.

[οίαν οίαν ὄργαν]
ἀναφαίνει χθόνιον
γένος ἐκφύς τε δράκοντος
ποτε Πενθεύς, ὃν 'Εχίων
ἐφύτευσε χθόνιος,
ἀγριωπὸν τέρας, οὔ φῶ-
τα βρότειον, φόνιον ὁ ὀσ-
τε γνώματ' ἀντίπαλον θεοῖς:
δε ἐμὲ βρόχοισι τὰν τοῦ
Βρομώου τάχα ξυνάψει,
τῶν ἐμὸν ἀντοις ἔχει δῶ-
ματος ἦδη διασώταν
σκοτίασι κρυπτὸν ἐν εἰρκταῖς.

ἐσορᾶς τάδ', ὁ Δίδος παῖ
Διόνυσε, σοὺς προφήτας
ἐν ύμίλλασιν ἀνάγκας;
μόλε, χρυσώπα τιμάσσων,
ἀνα, θύρσον κατ' Ὀλυμπὸν,
φονίον ὁ ἀνδρός θεριν κατάσχες.

πόθε Νύσας ἄρα τας θη-
ροτρόφου θυρσοφορεῖς
θιάσους, ὁ Διόνυσ', ἥ
κορυφαῖς Κωρυκίαις;

τάχα δ' ἐν τοῖς πολυδένδρες-
σιν Ὀλύμπου θαλάμαις, ἐν-
θα ποτ' Ὄρφευς κιθαρίζων
σύναγεν δένδρεα μούσαις,
σύναγεν θήρας ἀγρώτας.
THE BACCHANALS

Yet there cometh—I swear by the full-clustered grace of the vine Dionysian—
An hour when thine heart shall accept Dionysus, shall hail him thy lord.

Lo, his earth-born lineage bewrayeth (Ant.) Pentheus; the taint of the blood of the dragon of old he betrayeth,
The serpent that came of the seed of the earth-born Titan Echion. [mortal’s scion, 540
It hath made him a grim-visaged monster, and not as a
But as that fell giant brood that in strife with immortals stood.
He is minded to fetter me, Bromius’ handmaid, with cords straightway: [revel this day,
He hath prisoned his palace within my companion in
Dungeoned in gloom! Son of Zeus, are his deeds of thine eye un beholden,
Dionysus?—thy prophets with tyranny wrestling in struggle and strain?
Sweep down the slope of Olympus, uptossing thy thrysus golden: [refrain.
Come to us, King, and the murderer’s insolent fury
(Epode)

Ah, where dost thou linger on Nysa the mother of beasts of the wold,
Waving thy revellers on with thy wand, or where heavenward soar [fold
Crests of Corycia, or haply where far forest-solitudes
Round the flanks of Olympus, where Orpheus constrained by his minstrelsy-lore
Trees round him adoring to press, and the beasts of the wilderness,
As he harped of yore?

47
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

μάκαρ ὡ Περία,
σέβεται σ’ Εὔνοιος, ἦξει
te χορεύσων ἄμα βακχεύ-
μασί, τὸν τ’ ὠκυρόαν
diabáς Ἀξίον εἰλισ-
σομένας Μαίναδας ἦξει,
Δυσίαν τε, τὸν εὐδαιμονίας
βροτοῖς ὀλβοδόταν
πατέρα τε, τὸν ἔκλυον
εὐππον χώραν ὕδασιν
καλλίστοισι λυπάνειν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἰῶ,
κλύετ ἐμᾶς κλύετ’ αὐδᾶς,
ἰῶ Βάκχαι, ἱῶ Βάκχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τής ὅδε, τής πόθεν ὁ κέλαδος ἀνὰ μ’ ἐκάλεσεν
Εὔλου;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἰῶ ἵω, πάλιν αὐδῶ,
ὁ Σεμέλας, ὁ Δίος παῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰῶ ἵω δέσποτα δέσποτα,
μόλε νυν ἥμετερον εἰς
θλασον, ὡ Βρόμει Βρόμει.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σεῖε πέδου χθονὸς ἐνοσὶ πότυνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄ ᾂ,
tάχα τὰ Πενθέως
μέλαβρα διατινάζεται πεσήμασιν.

48
THE BACCHANALS

Thrice blessèd Pieria-land,  
Evius honoureth thee!—lo, he cometh, he cometh,  
on-leading  
His dances with Bacchanal chants, over Axius’ flood  
swift-speeding  
He shall pass, he shall marshal the leaping feet in  
the dance-rings sweeping,  
The feet of his Maenad-band.  
On shall he haste over Lydias the river,  
O’er the father of streams, the blessing-giver,  
Whose waters fair, as the tale hath told,  
O’er the land of the gallant war-steed rolled,  
Spread fatness on every hand.  

DIONYSUS (within).  
What ho! Give heed to my voice, give heed!  
Ho, Bacchanal-train, my Bacchanal-train!  
(Members of chorus answer severally.)  

CHORUS 1  
What cry was it?—whence did it ring? ’Twas the  
voice of mine Evian King!  

DIONYSUS (within)  
What ho! What ho! I call yet again,  
I, Semele’s offspring, Zeus’s seed.  

CHORUS 2  
What ho! Our Lord, our Lord! What ho!  
Come to our revel-band thou,  
Clamour-king, Clamour-king, now!  

DIONYSUS (within)  
Earth-floor, sway to and fro in mighty earthquake-throe!  
(Earthquake).  

CHORUS 3  
Ha, swiftly shall Pentheus’ hall,  
Sore shaken, crash to its fall!
ΒΑΧΧΑΙ

ο Διόνυσος ἀνά μέλαθρα·
σέβετε νῦν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

590 σέβομεν ὦ.
ἰδεῖτε λάινα κίοσιν ἐμβόλα
diάδρομα τάδε·
Βρόμιος ἀλαλάζειται στέγας ἔσω.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀπετε κεραύνιον αἴθοπα λαμπάδα·
σύμφλεγε σύμφλεγε δώματα Πενθέως.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀ ἄ,
pῦρ οὐ λεύσσεις οὐδ' αὐγάζει
Σεμέλας ἑρών ἀμφὶ τάφον, ἀν
ποτε κεραυνόβολος ἔλιπε φλόγα
Δίον βροντᾶς;

600 δίκετε πεδόσε δίκετε τρομερᾶ
σώματα, Μαινάδες·
ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἀνω κάτω τιθεὶς ἐπεισι
μέλαθρα τάδε Διὸς γόνος.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

βάρβαροι γυναῖκες, οὗτος ἐκπεπληγμέναι φόβῳ
πρὸς πέδω τεπτώκατ' ; ἤσθησθ', ὡς ἐοίκε,
Βακχίου
dιατυνάξαντος τὰ Πενθέως δώματ' . 1 ἀλλ᾽ ἀνί-
state
σῶμα καὶ θαρσεῖτε σαρκὸς ἔξαμενίψασαι τρόμον.

1 Musgrave : for MSS. δῶμα Πενθέως.

50
THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS 4
Dionysus within yon halls is his godhead revealing!
With homage adore him.

CHORUS 5
We bow us before him.

(Earthquake).
Lo, how the lintels of stone over yonder pillars are reeling!
Now doth the Clamour-king's triumph-shout through

DIONYSUS (within).

Kindle the torch of the lev'n lurid-red:
Let the compassing flames round the palace of Pentheus
(A great blaze of light envraps the palace and the monument of Šemele.)

CHORUS 6
Ha! dost thou see not the wildfire enwreathed
Round the holy tomb—
Lo, dost thou mark it not well?—
Which Šemele thunder-blasted bequeathed,
Her memorial of doom
By the lightning from Zeus that fell?

Fling to the earth, ye Maenads, fling
Your bodies that tremble with sore dismay!
For he cometh, our King, Zeus' scion, to bring
Yon halls to confusion and disarray.

CHORUS fall on their faces. Enter DIONYSUS from the palace.

DIONYSUS

Ho, ye Asian women, are ye so distraught with sheer affright [meseems, the sight
That ye thus to earth be fallen? Ye beheld,
When the house of Pentheus reeled as Bacchus shook it. Nay, upraise
From the earth your limbs, and banish from your bodies fear's amaze.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ φάος μέγιστον ἡμῖν εύιον βακχεύματος,
ὡς ἐσείδου ἀσμένη σε, μονάδ’ ἔχουσ’ ἐρημίαν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
eis ἀθυμίαιν ἀφίκεσθ’, ἤμικ’ εἰςεπεμπόμην.
Πενθέως ὡς εἰς σκοτεινᾶς ὀρκάνας πεσούμενος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ οὐ; τίς μοι φύλαξ ἡν, εἰ σὺ συμφο-

ρᾶς τύχοις;

ἀλλὰ πῶς ἥλευθερώθης ἄνδρός ἀνοσίου τυχών;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὸς ἐξέσω’ ἐμαυτὸν ῥαδίως ἄνευ πόνου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδέ σου συνῆψε χείρε δεσμώσωσιν ἐν βρόχοις;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
tαῦτα καὶ καθύβριον αὐτῶν, ὦτι με δεσμεύειν

δοκῶν

οὐτ’ ἐθυγεν ὦθ’ ἰψαθ’ ἡμῶν, ἐπιτίσων δ’ ἐβόσκετο.

πρὸς φάτναις δὲ ταῦρον εὐρών, οὐ καθεῖρξ’ ἡμᾶς

ἀγων,

τῷ δὲ περὶ βρόχους ἐβαλλε γόνασι καὶ χηλαῖς

ποδῶν,

θυμὸν ἑκπνέων, ἱδρῶτα σώματος στάξων ἂπο,

χείλεσίν διδοὺς ὀδόντας: πλησίον δ’ ἐγὼ παρὼν

ἡσυχος θάσσων ἔλευσον. ἐν δὲ τῷ τῷ

χρόνῳ

ἀνετίναξ’ ἐλθὼν ὁ Βάκχος δῶμα, καὶ μητρὸς

πῦρ ἀνήψ’ ὄ δ’ ὡς ἐσείδε, δώματ’ αἰθεθεῖαι

δοκῶν

620

52
THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS
Hail to thee, to us the mightiest light of Evian revelry! [on thee!
With what rapture, late so lonely and forlorn, I look

DIONYSUS
Ha, and did your hearts for terror fail you when I passed within, [Pentheus’ dungeon-gin? 610.
Deeming I should sink to darkness, caught in

CHORUS
Wherefore not? What shield had I, if thou into mischance shouldst fall? [tyrant’s thrall?
Nay, but how didst thou escape, who wast a godless

DIONYSUS
I myself myself delivered, lightly, with nor toil nor strain.

CHORUS
Nay, but bound he not thine hands with coiling mesh of chain on chain?

DIONYSUS
My derision there I made him, that he deemed he fettered me, [empty phantasy.
Yet nor touched me, neither grasped me, fed on Nay, a bull beside the stalls he found where he would pen me fast:
Round the knees and round the hoofs of this he ’gan his cords to cast,
Breathing fury out, the while the sweat-gouts poured from every limb, [watching him 620
While he gnawed upon his lips—and I beside him Calmly at mine ease was sitting. Even then our Bacchus came,
And as with an earthquake shook the house, and lit a sudden flame [he saw his halls
On his mother’s tomb. The king beholding thought
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ησο' ἐκείσε κατ' ἐκείσε, δμωσὶν 'Ἀχελὼν φέρειν ἐννέτων, ἀπας δ' ἐν ἔργῳ δούλος ἦν, μάτην πονῶν.
διαμεθεῖς δὲ τόνδε μόχθουν, ὡς ἐμοῦ πεφευγότος, ζεταί ξίφος κελαίνον ἀρπάσας δώμων ἔσω.
κάθ' ὁ Βρόμιος, ὡς ἔμοιγε φαίνεται, δόξαν λέγω,
630 φάσμα ἐποίησεν κατ' αὐλήν· ο δ' ἐπὶ τοῦθ' ὀρμημένος ἦσε κάκεντει φαεννὸν αἰθέρ', ὡς σφάξων ἐμέ.
πρὸς δὲ τοῦτο ἀυτοῦ τάδ' ἄλλα Βάκχιος ἤμαίνεται:
δώματ' ἄρρηξεν χαμάξε· συντεθράνωται δ' ἀπαν πικροτάτους ἱδοντι δεσμοῦς τοὺς ἐμοὺς· κόπον δ' ὑπὸ
διαμεθεῖς ξίφος παρεῖται. πρὸς θεόν γὰρ ὁμ ἄνηρ
eis máχην ἐλθείν ἔτολμον. ἰσχυὸς δ' ἐκβᾶσι εὐώ
dωμάτων ἦκω πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Πειθέως οὐ φροντίσας.
ὡς δὲ μοι δοκεῖ, ὄρθεῖ γοὺν ἀρβύλη δόμων ἔσω,
eis προνώτι' αὐτιχ' ἦξει. τί ποτ' ἄρ' ἐκ τούτων ἐρεί;
640 ῥαδίως γὰρ αὐτῶν οἶσιν, καὶ πνεύων ἔλθῃ μέγα·
πρὸς σοφοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἁσκεῖν σώφρον εὐοργη-
σίαν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
πέπονθα δεινά· διαπέφευγέ μ' ὁ ξένος,
ὅς ἄρτι δεσμοῖς ἦν κατηναγκασμένος.
ἐὰν ἔα·
668 ὦ̱ ἐστίν ἄνηρ· τί τάδε; πῶς προνώτιοι
φαίνει πρὸς οἴκοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἐξω βεβώς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
στῆσον πόδ' ὀργῇ δ' ὑπόθες ἱσυχον πόδα.
54
THE BACCHANALS

Flame-enwrapped, and hither, thither, rushed he, wildly bidding thralls [toiling there. Bring the water. Now was every bondman vainly Then he let this labour be, as deeming I had 'scaped the snare: [his falchion fell. Straight within the building rushed he, drawing forth Then did Bromius, as to me it seemed—'tis but my thought I tell,— [thereon straightway, Fashion in his halls a wraith: he hurled himself 630 Rushed, and stabbed the light-pervaded air, as thinking me to slay. [pride to pass; Then did Bacchus bring a new abasement of his For he hurled to earth the building. There it lies, a ruin-mass,— [with toil outworn, Sight to make my bonds full bitter to him! Now, Letting drop the sword, he falleth fainting. He, the mortal-born, [passed I through, Dare to brave a God to battle! Then unhindered Recking nought of Pentheus: so from forth his halls I come to you. [fall’s sound there is,— But, methinks,—for there within the house a foot- He shall straightway come without. Ha, what shall he say unto this? [stress; Lightly shall I bear his bluster, whatsoever his fury’s 640 For it is the wise man’s part to rein his wrath in soberness.

Enter PENTHEUS.

PENTHEUS
Foul outrage this!—the stranger hath escaped, Though bound but now in fetters fast as fate. Ha! There is the man! What means this? How hast thou Won forth to stand before my very halls?

DIONYSUS
Stay there, and let thy fury softly tread.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
πόθεν σὺ δεσμὰ διαφυγὼν ἔξω περᾶς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΞ
οὐκ εἴπον—ἤ σὺκ ἢκουσας—ὅτι λύσει μὲ τις;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τίτι; τοὺς λόγους γὰρ εἰσφέρεις καίνοις ἀεί.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΞ
δὲ τὴν πολύβιστρον ἀμπελοῦν φύει βροτοῖς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
* * * * * * * * * * * * *

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΞ
ἀνείδισας δὴ τούτῳ Διονύσῳ καλóν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
κλήειν κελεύω πάντα πύργων ἐν κύκλῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΞ
τί δ'; σὺχ ὑπερβαίνουσί καὶ τείχη θεοί;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
σοφὸς σοφὸς σὺ, πλὴν ἃ δεὶ σ' εἶναι σοφὸν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΞ
ἀ δεὶ μάλιστα, ταῦτ' ἐγώ' ἔφυν σοφός.
κείνου δ' ἀκούσας πρῶτα τοὺς λόγους μάθε,
ὅτε εξ ὁρους πάρεστιν ἄγγελῶν τί σοι·
ήμεις δὲ σοι μενοῦμεν, οὐ φευξούμεθα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Πενθεῖ κρατύνων τήσεθα Θηβαίας χθονός,
ἡκώ Κιθαιρών' ἐκλιπτών, ἣν' οὕποτε
λευκῆς ἀνείσαν χιόνος εὐαγείς βολαί.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἡκεις δὲ πολίων προστίθεις σπουδὴν λόγου;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Βάκχας ποτιώδας εἰσιδών, αἰ τήσεθα γῆς
οἰστροίσι λευκὸν κάλον ἔξηκόντισαν,
THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS
How hast thou 'scapeed thy bonds and comest forth?

DIONYSSUS
Said I not—or didst hear not?—"One will free me?"

PENTHEUS
Who? Strange and ever strange thine answers are.

DIONYSSUS
He who makes grow for men the clustered vine.

PENTHEUS
[Ay—who drives women frenzied from the home!]

DIONYSSUS
'Tis Dionysus' glory, this thy scoff.

PENTHEUS (to attendants)
I bid ye bar all towers round about.

DIONYSSUS
Why? Cannot Gods pass even over walls?

PENTHEUS
Wise art thou, wise—save where thou shouldst be wise.

DIONYSSUS
Where most needs wisdom, therein am I wise.
But listen first to yon man, hear his tale
Who with some tidings from the mountains comes.
I will await thee: fear not lest I fly.

Enter HERDMAN.

HERDMAN
Penteus, thou ruler of this Theban land,
I from Cithaeron come, whence never fail
The glistening silver arrows of the snow.

PENTHEUS
Bringing what weighty tidings comest thou?

HERDMAN
I have seen wild Bacchanals, who from this land
Have darted forth with white feet, frenzy-stung.
ΒΑΚΧΑΪ

ηκω φράσαι σοι καὶ πόλει χρήζων, ἄναξ,
ὡς δεινὰ δρῶσι θαυμάτων τε κρείσσονα.
θέλω δ' ἀκούσαι, πότερά σοι παρρησίᾳ
φράσω τὰ κέιθεν ἡ λόγον στειλώμεθα·
τὸ γὰρ τάχος σου τῶν φρενῶν δέδοικ', ἄναξ,
καὶ τοῦξάθυμον καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν λίαν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΣ

λέγ', ὡς ἀθάνατος εξ ἐμοῦ πάντως ἐσεῖ·
τοῖς γὰρ δικαίοις ὀὐχὶ θυμοῦσαί χρεόν.
ὅσοι δ' ἂν εἴπης δεινότερα Βακχῶν πέρι,
τοσοῦδε μᾶλλον τὸν ὑποθέντα τὰς τέχνας
γυναιξὶ τόνδε τῇ δίκη προσθήσομεν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀγελαία μὲν βοσκῆματ' ἀρτί πρὸς λέπας
μὸσχον ὑπεξήκριζον, ἤνιχ' ἠλιος
ἀκτίνας ἐξίησε θερμαίνον χθόνα.

ὅρῳ δὲ θιάσους τρεῖς γυναικεῖων χορῶν,
ὅπερ ἦρχ' ἐνὸς μὲν Αὐτονόθη, τοῦ δευτέρου
μήτηρ Ἀγαύη σή~, τρίτου δ' Ἰνώ χοροῦ.

ηδὸν δὲ πᾶσαι σώμασιν παρειμέναι,
αἱ μὲν πρὸς ἐλάτης νώτ' ἐρείσασαί φόβην,
αἱ δ' ἐν ὄρυκσ φύλλοισι πρὸς πέδω κάρα
ἐικὴ βαλοῦσαι σωφρόνως, οὐχ ὡς σὺ φῆς
φώνωμένας κρατήρι καὶ λωτοῦ ψόφῳ
θηρᾶν καθ' ὕλην Κύπρων ἡρμομένας.

ἡ σή δὲ μήτηρ ὀλὼν ἔν ἐνδῖσις
σταθεῖσα Βάκχαις, εξ ὑπνοῦ κινεῖν δέμας,
μυκήμαθ' ὡς ἤκουσε κεροφόρων βοῶν.
αἱ δ' ἀποβαλοῦσαι θαλεροῦ ὀμμάτων ὑπνοῦ
ἀνὴξαν ὀρθαί, θαῦμ' ἰδεῖν εὐκοσμίας,
νέαι παλαιαι παρθένοι τ' ἐτ' ἄξυγες.

καὶ πρώτα μὲν καθεῖσαν εἰς ὄμοιν κόμας

58
THE BACCHANALS

I come, King, fain to tell to thee and Thebes
What strange, what passing wondrous deeds they do.
Yet would I hear if freely I may tell
Things there beheld, or reef my story's sail.
For; King, I fear thy spirit's hasty mood,
Thy passion and thine over-royal wrath.

PENTHEUS

Say on: of me shalt thou go all unscathed,
For we may not be wroth with honest men.
The direr sounds thy tale of the Bacchanals,
The sterner punishment will I inflict
On him who taught our dames this wickedness.

HERDMAN

Thine herds of pasturing kine were even now
Scaling the steep hillside, what time the sun
First darted forth his rays to warm the earth,
When lo, I see three Bacchant women-bands,—
Autonoë chief of one, of one thy mother
Agave, and the third band Ino led.
All sleeping lay, with bodies restful-strown;
Some backward leaned on leafy sprays of pine,
Some, with oak-leaves for pillows, on the ground
Flung careless;—modestly, not, as thou say'st,
Drunken with wine, amid the sighing of flutes
Hunting desire through woodland shades alone.
Then to her feet sprang in the Bacchanals' midst
Thy mother, crying aloud, "Shake from you sleep!"

When fell our horned kine's lowing on her ear.
They, dashing from their eyelids rosy sleep,
Sprang up,—strange, fair array of ordered ranks,—
Young wives, old matrons, maidens yet unwed.
First down their shoulders let they stream their hair:
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

νεβρίδας τ' ἀνεστείλανθ' ὁσαισιν ἀμμάτων σύνδεσμ' ἐλέυθο, καὶ καταστίκτως δόρας ὅφεσι κατεξώσαντο λιχμώσιν γέννω.

αἱ δ' ἀγκάλαισι δορκάδ' ἡ σκύμνους λύκων ἀγρίους ἔχουσαι λευκὸν ἐδίδοσαν γάλα,

700 ὁσαι νεοτόκιοι μαστὸς ἡν σπαργῶν ἐτὶ βρέφη λιπούσαις. ἐπὶ δ' ἔθεντο κισσίνους στεφάνους δρυὸς τε μίλακος τ' ἀνθεσφόρου.

θύρσων δὲ τις λαβοῦσ' ἐπαίσεν εἰς πέτραν, ὅθεν δροσώδης ὑδατος ἐκπηδᾶ νοτίς.

710 ἄλλη δὲ νάρθηκ' εἰς πέδουν καθήκε γῆς, καὶ τῆς κρήνην ἐξανήκ' οἴνου θεοῦ.

ὁσαις δὲ λευκοῦ πώματος πόθος παρῆν, ἀκρουσὶ δακτύλουσι διαμῶσαι χθόνα γάλακτος ἐσμοῦς ἐίχον. ἐκ δὲ κισσίνων θύρσων γυλκεῖαι μελίτως ἐσταξον ῥοαί.

ὡς', εἰ παρῆσθα, τὸν θεὸν τὸν νῦν ψέγεις εὐχαίσοι ἀν μετήλθης εἰσοδῶν τάδε.

ξυνήλθομεν δὲ θουκόλοι καὶ ποιμένες, κοινῶν λόγων δώσοντες ἀλλήλους ἔρων, ὡς δεινὴ δρῶσι θαυμάτων τ' ἑπάξια.

καὶ τις πλάνης κατ' ἀστυ καὶ τρίβων λόγων ἐξέχειν εἰς ἀπαντᾶς. ὡς σεμνὰς πλάκας ναίσετε ὑρόνων, θέλετε θηρασώμεθα.

720 Πευθέως Ἀγαύη μητέρ' ἐκ βακχευμάτων χάριν τ' ἀνακτὶ θώμεθ', εὑ δ' ἡμῶν λέγειν ἐδοξεῖ, θάμνων ὃ έλπηχίζομεν φοβοῖς κρύφαντες αὐτούς. ἀι δὲ τῇ τεταγμένῃ ὄραν ἐκίνουν θύρσων εἰς βακχεύματα,

Ἰακχόν ἄνθροπος στόματι τὸν Δίος γόνων Βρόμον καλοῦσαι. πᾶν δὲ συνεβάκχευθ' ὄρος
THE BACCHANALS

Then looped they up their fawnskins,—they whose
bands
Had fallen loose,—and girt the dappled fells [while.
Round them with snakes that licked their cheeks the
Some, cradling fawns or wolf-cubs in their arms,
Gave to the wild things of their own white milk,— 700
Young mothers they, who had left their babes, that
still
[heads
Their breasts were full. Then did they wreath their
With ivy, oak, and flower-starred briony.
One grasped her thyrsus-staff, and smote the rock,
And forth upleapt a fountain's showery spray:
One in earth's bosom planted her reed-wand,
And up therethrough the God a wine-fount sent:
And whoso fain would drink white-foaming draughts
Scarred with their finger-tips the breast of earth,
And milk gushed forth unstinted: dripped the while 710
Sweet streams of honey from their ivy-staves.

Hadst thou been there, thou hadst, beholding this,
With prayer approached the God whom now thou
spurnest.

Then we, thine herdmen and thy shepherds, drew
Together, each with each to hold dispute
Touching their awful deeds and marvellous.
And one, a townward truant, ready of speech,
To all cried, "Dwellers on the terraces
Of hallowed mountains, will ye that we chase
From Bacchus' revel Agave, Pentheus' mother,
And do our lord a kindness?" Well, thought we,
He spake, and we in ambush hid ourselves
Mid leaves of copses. At the appointed time
They waved the thyrsus for the revel-rites,
With one voice calling Iacchus, Clamour-king,
Zeus' seed. The hills, the wild things all, were thrilled

61
BAKΧΑΙ

καὶ θήρες, οὐδὲν δ’ ἦν ἀκίνητον δρόμον.
κυρέις δ’ Ἀγαύη πλησίον θρώσκουσά μου
κάγιῳ ἕπτῆδος’ ὡς συναρπάσαι θέλων,
λόχμην κενώσας ἐνθ’ ἐκρυπτόμην δέμας.
ἡ δ’ ἀνεβόθησεν’ ὃ δρομάδες ἐμαῖ κύνες,
θηρώμεθ’ ἀνδρῶν τῶν οὔτ’ ἄλλ’ ἐπεσθεῖ μοι,
ἐπεσθε θύρας διὰ χερῶν ὑπλισμέναι.
ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν φεύγοντες ἐξηλίξαμεν
Βακχῶν σπαραγμῶν, αἱ δὲ νεμομέναις χλόην
μόσχους ἐπῆλθον χειρὸς ἀσιδήρου μέτα.
καὶ τὴν μὲν ἂν προσεἴδες εὐθηλὸν πόρων
μυκωμένην ἐλκουσάν ἐν χερῶν δίχα,1
ἀλλ’ ἂν δὲ δαμάλας διεσφόρον σπαράγμασιν.
eἴδες δ’ ἂν ἦν πλεύρ’ ἡ δίχηλον ἐμβασμ
ῥητόμεν’ ἂνῳ τε καὶ κάτω κρεμαστὰ δὲ
ἐσταί’ ὑπ’ ἐλάταις ἀναπεφυρμέν’ ἀίματι.
ταῦτοι δ’ ἱβρισταί κεῖς κέρας θυμομένου
τὸ πρόσθεν ἐσφάλλουν πρὸς γαῖαν δέμας,
μυριάσι χειρῶν ἀγόμενοι νεανίδων.
θάσσον δὲ διεφοροῦντο σαρκὸς ἐνυτὰ
ἡ σὲ ἐνυνάψα τελεφάρα βασιλείους κόραις.
χωροῦσι δ’ ὡστ’ ὅρνιθες ἀρθέεσαι δρόμῳ,
πεδιών ὑποτάσεις, αἱ παρ’ Ἀσωτοῦ ῥοαῖς
ἐκκαρπὸν ἐκβάλλουσι Θηβαίων στάχυν
’Τσιάς τ’ Ἐρυθρὰς θ’, αἱ Κιθαιρόνος λέπας
νέρθεν κατωρθίκασιν, ὡστε πολέμοιο
ἐπεισπεσοῦσαν πάντ’ ἄνῳ τε καὶ κάτω
διέφηρον ἰρρητάξαν μὲν ἐκ δόμων τεκνα·
ὀπόσα δ’ ἐπ’ ὅμοις ἐθεσάν, ὡς δεσμῶν ὑπὸ
προσείχετ’ οὐδ’ ἐπιπτεῖ εἰς μέλαν πέδων,
οὐ χαλκὸς, οὐ σίδηρος· ἐπὶ δὲ βοστρῦχοις

1 Reiske: for MSS ἐκουσάν . . . δίκα.
THE BACCHANALS

With ecstasy: naught but shook as on they rushed.
Now nigh to me Agave chanced to leap,
And forth I sprang as who would seize on her,
Leaving the thicket of mine ambush void.
Then shouted she, “What ho, my fleetfoot hounds,
We are chased by these men! Ho ye, follow me—
Follow, the thyrsus-javelins in your hands!”
O then we fled, and fleeing scantily 'scaped
The Bacchanals' rending grasp. Down swooped they then
Upon our pasturing kine with swordless hand.
Then hadst thou seen thy mother with her hands
Rend a deep-udder'd heifer-bellowing loud:
And others tore the calves in crimson shreds.
Ribs hadst thou seen and cloven hoofs far hurled
This way and that, and flakes of flesh that hung
And dripped all blood-bedabbled 'neath the pines.
Bulls chafing, lowering fiercely along the horn
Erewhile, were tripped and hurled unto the earth,
Dragged down by countless-clutching maiden hands.
More swiftly was the flesh that lapped their bones
Stripped, than thou couldst have closed thy kingly eyes.
On swept they, racing like to soaring birds,
To lowland plains which by Asopus' streams
Bear the rich harvests of the Theban folk:
Hysiae, Erythrae, 'neath Cithaeron's scuir
Low-nestling,—swooping on them like to foes,
This way and that way hurled they all their goods,
Yea, from the houses caught they up the babes:
These, and all things laid on their shoulders, clung
Unfastened; nothing to the dark earth fell,
Nor brass nor iron; and upon their hair
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πῦρ ἐφερον, οὐδ’ ἐκαίνεν. οἱ δ’ ὄργης ὑπὸ εἰς ὁπλ’ ἑχόρων φερόμενοι Βακχῶν ὑπὸ.

οὔτε τὸ δειμὸν ἢν θέαμ’ ἰδεῖν, ἀναξ.

tοῖς μὲν γὰρ οὐχ ὡμάσσε λογχωτὸν βέλος,

κεῖναι δὲ θύρασις ἐξανείσαι χερῶν

ἐτραμμάτιζον κατενώτιζον φυγή

γυναικεῖς ἄνδρας, οὐκ ἀνευθεῖν τινός.

πάλιν δ’ ἑχόρουν οθεν ἐκλήσαν πόδα,

κρῆνας ἐπ’ αὐτάς ἃς ἀνήκ’ αὐταῖς θεός.

ψαντό δ’ αἶμα, σταγόνα δ’ ἐκ παρηίδων

γλώσσῃ δράκοντες ἐξεφαίδρυν τροός.

τὸν δαίμον’ οὖν τόνδ’ ὅστις ἑστ’, ὁ δέσποτα,

δέχον πόλει τῆδ’, ὡς τά τ’ ἄλλ’ ἐστὶν μέγας,

κάκεινό φασιν αὐτόν, ός ἐγὼ κλύω,

τὴν παυσίλυπον ἀμπελοῦν δοῦναι βροτοῖς.

οἶνον δὲ μηκέτ’ ὅντος οὐκ ἐστὶν Κύπρις

οὐδ’ ἄλλο τερπνὸν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώπωις ἔτι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tαρβω μὲν εἰπεῖν τοὺς λόγους ἐλευθέρους

εἰς τὸν τύραννον, ἄλλ’ ὁμοί εἰρήσεται;

Διόνυσος ἢσσων οὖνδεν θεῶν ἔφυ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΕ

ἡδὴ τὸδ’ ἐγγὺς ὡστε πῦρ υφάπτεται

ὑβρίσμα Βακχῶν, ψόγος ἐς Ἑλληνας μέγας.

ἄλλ’ οὐκ ὅκνειν δεῖ· στείχ’ ἐπ’ Ὡλέκτρας ἰδὼν

πύλας· κέλευε πάντας ἀσπιδηφόρους

ὑπαρ’ τ’ ἀπειναντικαῦτοδων ἐπεμβάτας

πέλτας θ’ ὅσοι πάλλουσι καὶ τόξων χερὶ

ψάλλουσι νευράς, ὡς ἐπιστρατεύσουμεν

Βάκχαιοις· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλ’ ὑπερβάλλει τάδε,

εἰ πρὸς γυναικῶν πεισόμεσθ’ ὁ πάσχομεν.
They carried fire unscorched. The folk, in wrath 
To be by Bacchanals pillaged, rushed to arms: 
Whereupon, King, was this strange sight to see:— 760 
From them the steel-tipt javelin drew not blood, 
But they from their hands darting thrysus-staves 
Dealt wound on wound; and they, the women, turned 
To flight men, for some God's hand wrought therein. 
Then drew they back to whence their feet had come, 
To those same founts the God sent up for them, 
And washed the gore, while from their cheeks the 
snakes 
Were licking with their tongues the blood-gouts 
clean. 
Wherefore, whoe'er this God be, O my lord, 
Receive him in this city; for, beside 
His other might, they tell of him, I hear, 
That he gave men the grief-assuaging vine. 
When wine is no more found, then Love is not, 
Nor any joy beside is left to men. 

CHORUS
Words wherein freedom rings I dread to speak 
Before the King; yet shall my thought be voiced: 
Dionysus is not less than any God. 

PENTHEUS
Lo, it is on us, kindling like a flame, 
The Bacchanal outrage, our reproach through 
Greece! 
We may not dally:—to Electra's gate 
Go thou; bid all my warriors that bear shield 
To meet me, and all riders of fleet steeds, 
And all that shake the buckler, all who twang 
The bowstring; for against the Bacchanals 
Forth will we march. Yea, this should pass all bounds, 
To endure of women that we now endure!
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
πείθει μὲν οὐδὲν, τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων κλών,
Πενθεῦ· κακῶς δὲ πρὸς σέθεν πάσχων ὀμος
οὐ φημι χρήναι σ’ ὁπλ’ ἔπαιρεσθαι θεῷ,
ἀλλ’ ἥσυχάζειν· Βρόμιος οὖκ ἀνέξεται
κινοῦντα Βάκχας εὐών ὀρῶν ἄπο.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
οὐ μὴ φρενώσεις μ’, ἀλλὰ δέσμως φυγών
σώσει τὸδ’; ἥ σοι πάλιν ἀναστρέψω δίκην.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
θύσωι ἄν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον ἡ θυμούμενος
πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζομι θυντὸς ὁν θεῷ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
θύσω, φόνον γε θῆλυν, ὀστερ ἄξια,
πολὺν ταράξας ἐν Κυθαιρώνος πτυχαίς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
φεύξεσθε πάντες· καὶ τὸδ’ ἀσχρόν, ἀστίδαις
θύρσουσι Βακχῶν ἐκτρέπειν χαλκηλάτους.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἀπόρω γε τῶδε συμπεπλέγμεθα ξένῳ,
ὅσ’ οὔτε πάσχων οὔτε ὄρων συγήσεται.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ὡ τῶν, ἐτ’ ἐστιν εὐ καταστήσαι τάδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τί δρῶντα; δουλεύοντα δουλείας ἐμαῖς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ἐγὼ γυναῖκας δεῦρ’ ὄπλων ἀξώ δίχα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
οἶμοι τὸδ’ ἢδη δόλιον εἶς μὲ μηχανᾷ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
πῶιν τι, σῶσαι σ’ εἰ θέλω τέχναις ἐμαῖς;
THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS
No whit thou yieldest, though thou hear'st my words, Pentheus. Yet, though thou dost despite to me, I warn thee—bear not arms against a God; But bide still. Bromius will not brook that thou Shouldst drive his Bacchanals from their revel-hills.

PENTHEUS
School thou not me; but, having 'scaped thy bonds, Content thee: else again I punish thee.

DIONYSUS
Better slay victims unto him than kick Against the pricks, man raging against God.

PENTHEUS
 Victims? Ay, women-victims, fitly slain,— Wild work of slaughter midst Cithaeron’s glens!

DIONYSUS
Flee shall ye all; and shame were this, that shields Brass-forged from wands of Bacchanals turn back.

PENTHEUS
This stranger—vainly wrestle we with him: Doing nor suffering will he hold his peace.

DIONYSUS
Friend, yet this evil may be turned to good.

PENTHEUS
How?—by becoming my bondwomen’s thrall?

DIONYSUS
I without arms will bring the women hither.

PENTHEUS
Ha! here for me thou plottest treachery!

DIONYSUS
Treachery?—I would save thee by mine art!

67
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ξυνέθεσθε κοινῇ τάδ’, ἵνα βακχεύῃ ἦει.

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ
καὶ μὴν ξυνεθέμην τοῦτό γ’, ἵσθι, τῷ θεῷ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἐκφέρετέ μοι, δεῦρ’ ὀπλα’ σὺ δὲ παῦσαι λέγων.

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ

ἀ·
βούλει σφ’ ἐν ὀρεσί συγκαθημένας ἴδείν;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
μάλιστα, μυρίον γε δοὺς χρυσοῦ σταθμὸν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ
tί δ’ εἰς ἐρωτα τούδε πέπτωκας μέγαν;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
λυπρῶς νῦν εἰςίδοιμ’ ἀν ἐξεφωμένας.

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ
δ’ ἰδοὺς ἂν ἠδέως ἂ σοι πικρά;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
σάφ’ ἵσθι, συγγ’ ἡ’ ὑπ’ ἐλάταις καθήμενος.

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ

ἀλλ’ ἐξιχνεύσουσίν σε, κἀν ἔλθης λάθρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἀλλ’ ἐμφανῶς· καλῶς γὰρ ἐξείπας τάδε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ
ἀγωμεν’ ὅυν σε κατειχείρησεις ὀδῷ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἀγ’ ὡς τάχιστα, τοῦ χρόνου δὲ σοι φθονῶ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ
στειλαί νυν ἀμφ’ χρώτι βυσσίνους πέπλους.

68
THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS
Ye have made this covenant, so to revel aye.

DIONYSUS
Nay: know, that covenant made I with the God.

PENTHEUS (to attendants)
Bring forth mine arms!—thou, make an end of speech.

DIONYSUS
Ho thou!
Wouldst thou behold them camped upon the hills?

PENTHEUS
Ay—though with sumless gold I bought the sight.

DIONYSUS
Why on this mighty longing hast thou fallen?

PENTHEUS
To see them drunk with wine—a bitter sight!

DIONYSUS
Yet wouldst thou gladly see a bitter sight?

PENTHEUS
Yea, sooth, in silence crouched beneath the pines.

DIONYSUS
Yet will they track thee, stealthily though thou come.

PENTHEUS
Openly then!—yea, well hast thou said this.

DIONYSUS
Shall I then guide thee? Wilt essay the path?

PENTHEUS
Lead on with speed: I grudge thee all delay!

DIONYSUS
Array thee now in robes of linen fine.

1 From this time Pentheus speaks as one hypnotized.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τί δὴ τόδ', εἰς γυναῖκας εξ ἀνδρῶς τελῶ;
ДЕΙΝΟΣ
μὴ σε κτάνωσιν, ἥν ἀνήρ ὀφθῆς ἐκεῖ.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
εὖ γ' εἴπας αὐτό, καὶ τις εἴ πάλαι σοφός.
ΔΕΙΝΟΣ
Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ἔξεμούσωσεν τάδε.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
πῶς οὖν γένοιτ' ἂν ἂ σὺ με νουθετεῖς καλῶς;
ΔΕΙΝΟΣ
ἐγὼ στελῶ σε δωμάτων εἰσο μολὼν.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τίνα στολήν; ἥ θήλυν; ἀλλ' αίδως μ' ἔχει.
ΔΕΙΝΟΣ
οὐκέτι θεατῆς Μαινάδων πρόθυμος εἴ;
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
στολήν δὲ τίνα φῆς ἀμφὶ χρῶτ' ἐμὸν βαλεῖν;
ΔΕΙΝΟΣ
κόμην μὲν ἐπὶ σῷ κρατὶ ταναὸν ἐκτενῶ.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
tὸ δεύτερον δὲ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τί μοι;
ΔΕΙΝΟΣ
πέπλοι ποδήρεις· ἐπὶ κάρα δ' ἐσται μέτρα.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἡ καὶ τι πρὸς τοῖσδ' ἄλλο προσθήσεις ἐμοὶ;
ΔΕΙΝΟΣ
θύρσουν γε χειρὶ καὶ νεβροῦ στικτὸν δέρας.
ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
οὐκ ἄν δυναίμην θῆλυν ἐνδύναι στολήν.
ΔΕΙΝΟΣ
ἀλλ' αἷμα θήσεις συμβαλῶν Βάκχαις μάχην.

830
THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS
Wherefor? From man shall I to woman turn?

DIONYSUS
Lest they should kill thee, seeing thee there as man.

PENTHEUS
Well said—yea, shrewd hast thou been heretofore.

DIONYSUS
Such science Dionysus taught to me.

PENTHEUS
How then shall thy fair rede become mine act?

DIONYSUS
I will into thine halls, and robe thee there.

PENTHEUS
What robe? A woman's?—nay, but I think shame.

DIONYSUS
Is thy desire to watch the Maenads dead?

PENTHEUS
In what garb, say'st thou, wouldst thou drape my form? 830

DIONYSUS
Thine head with flowing tresses will I tire.

PENTHEUS
And the next fashion of my vesture—what?

DIONYSUS
Long robes: and on thine head a coif shall be.

PENTHEUS
Naught else but these wouldst thou add unto me?

DIONYSUS
Thyrsus in hand, and dappled fell of fawn.

PENTHEUS
I cannot drape me in a woman's robe!

DIONYSUS
Then fight the Maenads—spill thy people's blood.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΣΤ

ὁρθῶς· μολεῖν χρή πρῶτον εἰς κατασκοπήν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σοφότερον γοῦν ἢ κακοῖς θηρᾶν κακά.

ΠΕΝΘΕΣΤ

καὶ πῶς δι’ ἀστεώς εἰμι Καδμείους λαθῶν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

όδους ἐρήμους ἱμεν· ἐγὼ δ’ ἡγῆσομαι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΣΤ

πᾶν κρείσσον ὡστε μὴ γγελάν Βάκχας ἐμοί.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐλθόντ’ ἐς οἶκους ἀν δοκῇ βουλεύσομεν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΣΤ

ἐξέστι· πάντη τὸ γ’ ἐμὸν εὐτρεπὲς πάρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΣΤ

στείχοιμ’ ἂν· ἡ γὰρ ὅπλ’ ἔχων πορεύσομαι

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἡ τοις σοῖς πείθομαι βουλεύμασιν.

γυναίκες, ἀνὴρ εἰς βόλον καθίσταται·

δὲ Βάκχας, οὐ θανῶν δῶσει δίκην.

Διώνυσε, νῦν σὸν ἔργον, οὐ γὰρ εἰ πρόσω.

τισώμεθ’ αὐτόν. πρῶτα δ’ ἔκστησον φρενῶν,

ἐνεῖς ἔλαφραν λύσον· ὡς φρονῶν μὲν εὗ

οὐ μὴ θελήσῃ θῆλυν ἐνδύναι στολήν,

ἐξώ δ’ ἐλαύνων τοῦ φρονεῖν ενδύσεται.

χρήζω δὲ νῦν γέλωτα Θηβαῖους ὀφλεῖν

γυναικόμορφον ἀγόμενον δ’ ἀστεώς

ἐκ τῶν ἀπειλῶν τῶν πρίν, ἀλὸς δεινὸς ἢν.

ἀλλ’ εἰμι κόσμου ὅπερ εἰς Ἁἰδον λαβὼν

ἀπεισι, μητρὸς ἐκ χερῶν κατασφαγείς,

Πενθεῖ προσάψων γνώσεται δὲ τὸν Δίὸς

Διώνυσου, ὃς πέφυκεν ἐν τέλει θεὸς

δεινότατος, ἀνθρώποις δ’ ἡπιώτατος.

72
THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS
Ay, true:—first must I go and spy them out.

DIONYSUS
Sooth, wiser so than hunt thee ills with ills.

PENTHEUS
Yet, how through Cadmus' city pass unseen?

DIONYSUS
By lone paths will we go. Myself will guide.

PENTHEUS
Better were anything than Bacchants' mock!
We will pass in . . . . what fits will I devise.

DIONYSUS
So be it: Howe'er thou choose, mine help thou hast.

PENTHEUS
I go . . . . I shall march haply sword in hand,
Or—or—do haply as thou counsellest. [Exit.

DIONYSUS
Women, the man sets foot within the toils.
The Bacchants—and death's penalty—shall he find.
Dionysus, play thy part now; thou art near:
Let us take vengeance. Craze thou first his brain,
Indarting sudden madness. Whole of wit,
Ne'er will he yield to don the woman's robe:
Yet shall he don, driven wide of reason's course
I long withal to make him Thebes' derision,
In woman-semblance led the city through,
After the erstwhile terrors of his threats.
I go, to lay on Pentheus the attire
Which he shall take with him to Hades, slain
By a mother's hands. And he shall know Zeus' son
Dionysus, who hath risen at last a God
Most terrible, yet kindest unto men. [Exit.

73
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
άρ' ἐν παννυχίοις χοροῖς
θῆσω ποτὲ λευκῶν
πόδ' ἀναβακχεύουσα, δέραν
εἰς αἰθέρα δροσερὸν
ῥίπτουσ', ὡς νεβρὸς χλοεραῖς
ἐμπαιξοῦσα λείμακος ἡδοναῖς,
ἡμίκ' ἂν φοβερὰν φύγῃ
θῇραν ἔξω φυλακᾶς
εὐπλέκτων ὑπὲρ ἀρκύνων,
θωῦσον δὲ κυναγέτας
συντείνη δρόμημα κυνῶν·
mόχθοις τ' ὁκυδρόμοις τ' ἀέλ-
λαίς θρόσκει πεδίον
παραποτάμιον, ἡδομένα
βροτῶν ἐρημίαις
σκιαρκόμου τ' ἐν ἔρνεσιν ὑλαῖς.

tί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον
παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς
ἡ χεῖρ' ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς
τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρείσσον κατέχειν;
ὁ τι καλὸν φίλον ἀεὶ.

ὁρμᾶται μόλις, ἀλλ' ὅμως
πιστῶν τι τὸ θείον
σθένος· ἀπενθύνει δὲ βροτῶν
τοὺς τ' ἀγνωμοσύναν
τιμῶντας καὶ μὴ τὰ θεῶν
αὐξοντας σὺν μαινομένα δόξα.
κρυπτεύουσι δὲ ποικίλως
dαρὸν χρόνου πόδα καὶ
THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS
Ah, shall my white feet in the dances gleam (Str.)
The livelong night again? Ah, shall I there
Float through the Bacchanal’s ecstatic dream,
Tossing my neck into the dewy air?—

Like to a fawn that gambols mid delight
Of pastures green, when she hath left behind
The chasing horror, and hath sped her flight
Past watchers, o’er nets deadly-deftly twined,

Though shouting huntsmen cheer the racing hounds
Onward, the while with desperate stress and strain
And bursts of tempest-footed speed she bounds
Far over reaches of the river-plain,

Till sheltering arms of trees around her close,
The twilight of the tresses of the woods;—
O happy ransomed one, safe hid from foes
Where no man tracks the forest-solitudes!

What wisdom’s crown, what guerdon, shines more glorious
That Gods can give the sons of men, than this—
O’er crests of foes to stretch the hand victorious?
Glory is crown and sum of human bliss!

Slowly on-sweepeth, but unerringly, (Ant.)
The might of Heaven, with sternest lessoning
For men who in their own mad fantasy
Exalt their unbelief, and crown it king—

Mortals who dare belittle things divine!
Ah, but the Gods in subtle ambush wait:
On treads the foot of time; but their design
Is unrelinquished, and the ruthless fate;
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

890 θηρώσων τῶν ἀσεπτοῦ· οὐ γὰρ κρείσσον ποτὲ τῶν νόμων γιγαντίαν χρῆ καὶ μελετῶν.
κούφα γὰρ δαπάνα νομί-ζειν ἵσχυν τὸν ἔχειν,
ὁ τι ποτ’ ἀρα τὸ δαιμόνιον,
τὸ τ’ ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ νόμμουν ἄει φύσει τε πεφυκός.

τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον
παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς
ἡ χεῖρ’ ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς

900 τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρείσσον κατέχειν ;
ὁ τι καλὸν φίλον ἄει.

εὐδαίμων μὲν ὃς ἐκ θαλάσσας ἐπιφάλλει;
ἐφυγε χείμα, λιμένα δ’ ἐκιχεῖν;
εὐδαίμων δ’ ὃς ὑπερθε μόχθων ἐγένεθ’· ἔτερα δ’ ἔτερος ἐτερον
ὁλβῷ καὶ δυνάμει παρῆλθεν.

μυρίαι δὲ μυρίουσιν
ἔτ’ εἰσ’ ἐλπίδες· αἱ μὲν
tελευτῶσιν ἐν ὁλβῷ

910 βροτοῖς, αἱ δ’ ἀπέβησαν·
τὸ δὲ κατ’ ἡμαρ ὁτῷ βίοτος
eὐδαίμων, μακρίζῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σὲ τὸν πρόθυμον δινθ’ ἂ μὴ χρεῶν ὅραν
σπεύδοντα τ’ ἀσπούδαστα, Πενθέα λέγω,
ἔξιθι πάροιθε δωμάτων, ὀφθητὶ μοι

σκευὴν γυναικὸς μαϊνάδος Βάκχης ἔχων,
μητρός τε τῆς σής καὶ λόχου κατάσκοπος;

πρέπεις δὲ Κάδμου θυγατέρων μορφήν μιᾷ.

76
THE BACCHANALS

Quests as a sleuth-hound till it shall have tracked 890
The godless down in that relentless hunt.
We may not, in the heart's thought or the act,
Set us above the law of use and wont.

Little it costs, faith’s precious heritage,
To trust that whatsoe’er from Heaven is sent
Hath sovereign sway, whate’er through age on age
Hath gathered sanction by our nature’s bent.

What wisdom’s crown, what guerdon, shines more glorious
That Gods can give the sons of men, than this—
O’er crests of foes to stretch the hand victorious? 900
Glory is crown and sum of human bliss!

Blest who from ravening seas (Epode)
Hath ’scape to haven-peace,
Blest who hath triumphed in endeavour’s toil and throe.

Some men to higher height
Attain, of wealth, of might, [glow:
Than others; myriad hopes in myriad hearts still
To fair fruition brought
Are some, some come to naught:
Happy is he whose bliss from day to day doth grow.

Enter DIONYSUS.

DIONYSUS
Thou who dost burn to see forfended things,
Pentheus, O zealous with an evil zeal,
Come forth before thine halls: be seen of me
Womanlike clothed in frenzied Bacchant’s garb,
To spy upon thy mother and her troop.

Enter PENTHEUS.

So!—like a daughter of Cadmus is thy form.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
καὶ μὴν Ὠρᾶν μοι δύο μὲν ἡλίους δοκῶ, διὸςσας δὲ Θήβας καὶ πόλισμ’ ἐπτάστομον.
καὶ ταῦρος ἦμιν πρόσθεν ἤγετόσθαι δοκεῖς καὶ σῷ κέρατα κρατὶ προσπεφυκέναι.
ἀλλ’ ἦ ποτ’ ἦσθα θήρ; τεταύρωσαι γὰρ οὖν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ὁ θεὸς ὁμάρτει, πρόσθεν ὄν ὦν εὐμενῆς,
ἐνσπονδός ἦμιν νῦν δ’ Ὠρᾶς ἰ χρῆ σ’ Ὠρᾶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
τί φαίνομαι δήτ’; οὐχὶ τὴν Ἰνοῦς στάσιν ἦ τὴν’ Ἁγαύης ἐστάναι μητρός γ’ ἐμῆς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
αὐτὰς ἔκεινας εἰσορᾶν δοκῶ σ’ Ὠρῶν.
ἀλλ’ ἔξ ἔδρας σοι πλόκαμος ἐξέστηχ’ ὄδε, οὐχ ὡς ἐγὼ νῦν ὑπὸ μίτρα καθήμοσα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἐνδουν προσεῖνων αὐτὸν ἀνασεῖν τ’ ἐγὼ καὶ Βακχιάξων ἔξ ἔδρας μεθάρμισα.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸν ἡμεῖς, οἷς σε θεραπεύειν μέλει,
pάλιν καταστελούμεν ἀλλ’ ὅρθου κάρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
идοῦ, σὺ κόσμει· σοι γὰρ ἀνακείμεσθα δὴ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ζῶναι τέ σοι χαλῶσι κοῦχ ἔξης πέπλων
στολίδες ὑπὸ σφυροῦσι τεῖνοσι σέθεν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
κάμοι δοκοῦσί παρά γε δεξιόν πόδα:
tαυθέντες δ’ ὅρθως παρὰ τένοντ’ ἔχει πέπλος.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ἡ πού με τῶν σῶν πρῶτον ἡγήσει φίλων,
ὅταν παρὰ λόγου σώφροινας Βάκχας ἵδης.
THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS
Aha! meseemeth I behold two suns,
A twofold Thebes, our seven-gated burg!
A bull thou seem'st that leadeth on before;
And horns upon thine head have sprouted forth.
How, wast thou brute?—bull art thou verily now!

DIONYSUS
The God attends us, gracious not ere this,
Leaguéd with us now: now seest thou as thou shouldst.

PENTHEUS
Whose semblance bear I? Have I not the mien
Of Ino, or my mother Agave's port?

DIONYSUS
Their very selves I seem to see in thee.
Yet, what?—this tress hath from his place escaped,
Not as I braided it beneath the coif.

PENTHEUS
Tossing it forth and back within, in whirls
Of Bacchic frenzy, I disordered it.

DIONYSUS
Nay, I, who have taken thy tire-maiden's part,
Will rearrange it. Come, hold up thine head.

PENTHEUS
Lo there—thou lay it smooth: I am in thine hands.

DIONYSUS
Now is thy girdle loose; thy garment's folds
Droop not below thine ankles evenly.

PENTHEUS
Yea, by my right foot so, meseems, it is.
To left, true by the sinew hangs the robe.

DIONYSUS
Me wilt thou surely count thy chiefest friend,
When sight of sober Bacchants cheats thine hopes.
ΒΑΧΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
πότερα δὲ θύρσου δεξιὰ λαβῶν χερὶ
ἡ τῆδε, Βάκχη μᾶλλον εἰκασθήσομαι;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
ἐν δεξιᾷ χρὴ χάμα δεξιῷ ποδὶ
αἱρεῖν νῦν ἀιών ὁ δὲ ὑπὶ μεθεστηκας φρενῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
ἀρ’ ἂν δυνάμην τὰς Κιθαρίνους πτυχὰς
αὐταῖσι Βάκχαις τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὤμοις φέρειν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
δύναι’ ἂν, εἰ βούλων· τὰς δὲ πρὶν φρένας
οὐκ εἰχεῖς υγιείς, νῦν δ’ ἔχεις οἴας σε δεῖ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
μοχλοὺς φέρωμεν; ἡ χεροῖν ἀναστάσω
κορυφαῖς ὑποβαλῶν ὤμον ἡ βραχίονα;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
μὴ σὺ γε τὰ Νυμφῶν διολέσῃς ἰδρύματα
καὶ Πανὸς ἔδρας, ἐνθ’ ἔχει συρίγματα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
καλῶς ἔλεξας· οὐ σθενεῖ νυκτεῖον
γυναῖκας, ἐλάταισιν δ’ ἔμοι κρύψω δέμας.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ
κρύψει σὺ κρύψων ἢν σε κρυφθήναι χρεών
ἐλθόντα δόλιον Μαινάδων κατάσκοπον.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ
καὶ μὴν δοκῶ σφᾶς ἐν λόχμαις ὄρνιθας ὡς
λέκτρων ἔχεσθαι φιλτάτους ἐν ἔρκεσιν.
THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS
This thyrsus—shall I hold it in this hand,
Or this, the more to seem true Bacchanal?

DIONYSUS
In the right hand, and with the right foot timed
Lift it:—all praise to thy converted heart!

PENTHEUS
Could I upon my shoulders raise the glens
Of Mount Cithaeron, yea, and the Bacchanals?

DIONYSUS
Thou mightest, an thou wouldst: erewhile thy soul
Was warped; but now 'tis even as befits.

PENTHEUS
With levers?—or shall mine hands tear it up
With arm or shoulder thrust beneath its crests?

DIONYSUS
Now nay—the shrines of Nymphs destroy not thou,
And haunts of Pan that with his piping ring.

PENTHEUS
True—true: we must not overcome by force
The women. I will hide me midst the pines.

DIONYSUS
Hide?—thou shalt hide as Fate ordains thine hiding,
Who com'st with guile, a spy on Bacchanals.

PENTHEUS
Methinks I see them mid the copses caught,
Like birds, in toils of their sweet dalliance.

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1 Among signs of incipient madness is a failure to discriminate resistance, so that the patient, while raising slight weights (here, the thyrsus), imagines himself to be putting forth strength enough to raise enormous ones.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὔκοιν ἐπ' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀποστέλλει φύλαξ:

λήψει δ' ἰσως σφᾶς, ἢν σὺ μὴ ληφθῆς πάρος.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

κόμιζε διὰ μέσης με Θηβαίας πόλεως.
μόνος γάρ εἰμ’ αὐτῶν ἁνήρ τολμᾶν τόδε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μόνος σὺ πόλεως τῆς τ’ ὑπερκάμνεις, μόνος:
τογάρ σ’ ἀγώνες ἀναμένουσιν οὐς ἔχρην.
ἐπούν δέ πομπᾶς δ’ εἰμ’ ἐγὼ σωτῆρος,
κεῖθεν δ’ ἀπάξει σ’ ἄλλος,—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἡ τεκοῦσά γε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐπίσημον οὖντα πᾶσιν—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐπὶ τὸδ’ ἔρχομαι.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

φερόμενος ἥξεις—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἀβρότητ’ ἐμὴν λέγεις.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐν χερσὶ μητρὸς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ τρυφᾶν μ’ ἀναγκάσεις.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τρυφᾶς γε τοιάσδ’—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἀξίων μὲν ἀπτομαί.
THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS
To this end then art thou appointed watchman:
Perchance shalt catch them—if they catch not thee. 960

PENTHEUS
On through the midst of Thebes’ town usher me!
I am their one man, I alone dare this!

DIONYSUS
Alone for Thebes thou travailest, thou alone;
Wherefore for thee wait struggle and strain foredoomed.
Follow: all safely will I usher thee.
Another thence shall bring thee,—

PENTHEUS
Ay, my mother!

DIONYSUS
To all men manifest—

PENTHEUS
For this I come.

DIONYSUS
High-borne shalt thou return—

PENTHEUS
Soft ease for me?

DIONYSUS
On a mother’s hands.

PENTHEUS
Thou wouldst thrust pomp on me!

DIONYSUS
Nay, ’tis but such pomp—

PENTHEUS
As is my desert.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

δεινός σὺ δεινός κἀπὶ δεῖν' ἔρχει πάθη,
ὅστ' οὐρανῷ στηρίζειν εὐρήσεις κλέος.

ἐκτειν', Ἄγαύῃ, χεῖρας αἱ θ' ὀμόσποροι
Κάδμου θυγατέρες· τὸν νεανίαν ἄγω
τόνδ' εἰς ἄγωνα μέγαν, ὃ νικήσων δ' ἐγώ
καὶ Βρόμως ἔσται· τὰλλα δ' αὐτὸ σημανεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἕτε θοαὶ Δύσσας κώνες ἢ τ' εἰς ὅρος,
στρ.
θίασον ἐνθ' ἔχουσιν Κάδμου κόραι,
ἀνοιστήσατε νῦν

ἐπὶ τὸν ἐν γυναικομίῳ στολῇ

λυσσώδη κατάσκοπον Μαινάδων.

μάτηρ πρώτα νῦν λευρᾶς ἀπὸ πέτρας

ἡ σκόλοπος ὑψεῖται
dοκεύοντα, Μαινάσιν δ' ἀπύσει·
tίς οδὲ Καδμεῖων

μαστήρ ὀρειδρόμων

ἐς ὅρος ἐς ὅρος ἔμολεν, Ο Ἔλληνα;
tίς ἀρα νῦν ἔτεκεν;

οὐ γὰρ ἐξ αἴματος γυναικῶν ἔφυ,
λεαίνας δὲ τινος ὅδ' ἢ Γοργώνων

990

Λύβυσσῶν γένος.
THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS
Strange, strange man! Strange shall thine experience be.
So shalt thou win renown that soars to heaven.

[Exit Pentheus.

Agave, stretch forth hands; ye sisters, stretch,
Daughters of Cadmus! To a mighty strife
I bring this prince. The victor I shall be
And Bromius. All else shall the issue show.  [Exit.

CHORUS

(Stret.)
Up, ye swift hell-hounds of Madness! Away to the
mountain-glens, where fury, to tear
Cadmus's daughters hold revel, and sting them to
Him who hath come woman-vestured to spy on the
Bacchanals there,

Frenzy-struck fool that he is!—for his mother shall foremost descry tree he would spy
Him, as from water-worn scaur or from storm-riven
That which they do, and her shout to the Maenads
shall peal from on high:—

"Who hath come hither, hath trodden the paths to
the mountain that lead,
Spying on Cadmus's daughters, the maids o'er the
mountains that speed,
Bacchanal-sisters?—what mother hath brought to
the birth such a seed?

Who was it?—who?—for I ween he was born not of womankind's blood: [of the wood;
Rather he sprang from the womb of a lioness, scourge
Haply is spawn of the Gorgons of Libya, the demon-
brood."

85
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ίτω δίκα φανερός, ίτω ξιφηφόρος
φονεύουσα λαιμών διαμπάξ
τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος
tόκον γηγενή.

δς ἄδικω γνώμα παρανόμῳ τ’ ὄργα ἀντ.
περὶ σά, Βάκχι’, ὄργια ματρός τε σᾶς
μανείσα πραπίδι

παρακόπῳ τε λήματι στέλλεται,
tάνίκατον ὡς κρατήσων βία.

γνώμαν σώφρον’, ἃ θνατοῖς ἀπροφάσιστος
eἰς τὰ θεῶν ἔφυ,
βροτείαν τ’ ἐχεῖν, ἄλυπος βίος.
tὸ σοφὸν ὑὶ φθόνῳ
χαίρον θηρεύουσα,
tὰ δ’ ἔτερα μεγάλα φανερά τ’ ὄντ’ ἀεί,

ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ βίον
ἵμαρ εἰς νύκτα τ’ εὐαγοῦντ’ εὑσεβείν,
tὰ δ’ ἔξω νόμιμα δίκας ἐκβαλὼν-
tα τιμᾶν θεοῦς.

ίτω δίκα φανερός, ίτω ξιφηφόρος
φονεύουσα λαιμών διαμπάξ
tὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος
tόκον γηγενή.
THE BACCHANALS

Justice, draw nigh us, draw nigh, with the sword of avenging appear: born, and shear
Slay the unrighteous, the seed of Echion the earth-
Clean through his throat, for he feareth not God,
neither law doth he fear.

(ANT.)

Lo, how in impious mood, and with lawless intent,
and with spite he cometh to fight,
Madness-distraught, with thy rites and thy mother's Bacchus—to bear the invincible down by his im-
potent might!

Thus shall a mortal have sorrowless days, if he keepeth his soul control,
Sober in spirit, and swift in obedience to heaven's Murmuring not, neither pressing beyond his mor-
tality's goal.

Not their presumptuous wisdom I covet: I seek for mine own—so may be known,
Yea, in the quest is mine happiness—things that not Glorious wisdom and great, from the days ever-
lastings forth-shown,

Even to fashion in pureness my life and in holiness aye, of the day,
Following ends that are noble from dawn to the death Honouring Gods, and refusing to walk in injustice's way.

Justice, draw nigh us, draw nigh, with the sword of avenging appear: born, and shear
Slay the unrighteous, the seed of Echion the earth-
Clean through his throat; for he feareth not God,
neither law doth he fear.

87
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

φάνηθι ταύρος ἡ πολύκρανος ἱδεῖν ἐπφώδ.
δράκων ἡ πυριφλέγων
ὁρᾶσθαι λέων.

1020 ἵθ', ὁ Βάκχε, θηραγρευτὰ Βακχάν
γελώντι προσώπῳ περ' θαλε
βρόχων ἐπὶ θανάσιμων
ἀγέλαν πεσόντι τὰν Μαινάδων.

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὁ δῶμ' ὁ πρὶν ποτ' ηὐτúχεις ἀν' Ἑλλάδα,
Σιδωνίου γέροντος, ὡς τὸ γγενέσ
dράκοντος ἐσπειρ' ὀφεος ἐν γαίᾳ θέρος,
ὡς σε στενάζω, δοῦλος ὁν μέν, ἄλλ' ὧμος
χρηστοῦσι δοῦλοις συμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tί δ' ἔστων; ἐκ Βακχῶν τι μηνύεις νέον;

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Πεύθευς ὀλωλε, παῖς Ἑχίονος πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦναξ Βρόμων, θεὸς φαινεὶ μέγας.

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πῶς φής; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; ἢ πτί τοῖς ἐμοῖς
χαίρεις κακῶς πράσσουσι δεσπόταις, γύναι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

eνάξω ἕνα μέλεσι βαρβάρους
οὐκέτι γὰρ δεσμῶν ὑπὸ φόβῳ πτήσων.

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θήβας δ' ἀνάνδρους ὃδ' ἄγεις* * *
* * * * * * *;

88
THE BACCHANALS

(Epode)
O Dionysus, reveal thee!—appear as a bull to behold,
Or be thou seen as a dragon, a monster of heads manifold,
Or as a lion with splendidors of flame round the limbs

Come to us, Bacchus, and smiling in mockery compass him round
Now with the toils of destruction, and so shall the
Trapped mid the throng of the Maenads, the quarry
his questing hath found.

Enter messenger.

MESSENGER
O house of old through Hellas prosperous
Of that Sidonian patriarch, who sowed
The earth-born serpent's dragon-teeth in earth,
How I bemoan thee! Though a thrall I be,
Their lords' calamities touch loyal thralls.

CHORUS
What now?—hast tidings of the Bacchanals?

MESSENGER
Pentheus is dead: Echion's son is dead.

CHORUS
Bromius my King! thou hast made thy godhead plain!

MESSENGER
How, what is this thou say'st? Dost thou exult,
Woman, upon my lord's calamities?

CHORUS
An alien I, I chant glad outland strain,
Who cower no more in terror of the chain.

MESSENGER
Deemest thou Thebes so void of men, [that ills
Have left her powerless to punish thee?]
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ Δίονυσος ὁ Δίονυσος, οὐ Θῆβαι κράτος ἔχουσ᾿ ἐμὸν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

συγγυνώστα μὲν σοι, πλὴν ἐπ` ἐξειργασμένοις κακοῖσι χαῖρειν, ὦ γυναῖκες, οὐ καλὸν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐνεπέ μοι, φράσον, τίνι μόρφῳ θυήσκει ἀδικός ἀδικά τ ἐκπορίζων ἀνήρ ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐπεὶ θεράπνας τήςδε Θῆβαιας χθονὸς λυπόντες ἐξέβημεν Ἀσωποῦ ῥοᾶς, λέπας Κιθαιρώνειον εἰσεβάλλομεν Πενθεὺς τε καγώ, δεσπότη γὰρ εἴπόμην, ξένος θ᾿ ὁ ἡμῖν πομπὸς ἦν θεωρίας. πρῶτον μὲν ὦν ποιηρὸν ἵζομεν νάπος, τά τ ἐκ ποδῶν συγῆλα καὶ γλώσσης ἀπὸ σφόντες, ὡς ὀρὼμεν οὐχ ὀρὼμενοι. ἦν δ᾿ ἄγκος ἀμφίκρημνον, ὡσὶ διάβροχον, πεύκαισι συσκίαζον, ἐνθα Μαινάδες καθήντ᾿ ἔχουσαι χεῖρας ἐν τερπνοῖς πόνοις. αἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν θύρσουν ἐκλελυμέντα κισσῷ κομήτην αὐθίς ἔξανέστεφον, αἱ δ᾿ ἐκλυποῦσαι ποικίλ᾿ ὡς πῶλοι ξυγὰ βακχεῖον ἀντέκλαζον ἀλλήλαις μέλος. Πενθεὺς δ᾿ ὁ τλήμων θῆλυν οὐχ ὀρὼν ὀχλον ἐλέξει τοιάδ᾿ ὁ ξέν᾿, οὐ μὲν ἔσταμεν, οὐκ ἐξικνύομαι Μαινάδων ὀδοὺς νόθων· ὀχθὸν δ᾿ ἐπεμβὰς ἡ ελάτην ὑψαύχενα ἰδοῖμ· ἂν ὀρθῶς Μαινάδων αἰσχροουργίαν. τούντεθεν ἦδη τοῦ ξένου τι θαύμ᾿ ὀρὼ· λαβὼν γὰρ ἐλάτης οὐράνιον ἀκρον κλάδου
THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS
Dionysus it is, 'tis the King of the Vine
That hath lordship o'er me, no Thebes of thine!

MESSENGER
This might be pardoned, save that base it is,
Women, to joy o'er evils past recall.

CHORUS
Tell to me, tell,—by what doom died he,
The villain devising villainy?

MESSENGER
When, from the homesteads of this Theban land
Departing, we had crossed Asopus' streams,
Then we began to breast Cithaeron's steep,
Pentheus and I,—for to my lord I clave,—
And he who ushered us unto the scene.
First in a grassy dell we sat us down
With footfall hushed and tongues refrained from speech,
That so we might behold, all unbeheld.

There was a glen crag-walled, with rills o'erstreamed,
Closed in with pine-shade, where the Maenad girls
Sat with hands busied with their gladsome toils.
The faded thyrsus some with ivy-sprays
Twined, till its tendril-tresses waved again:
Some, blithe as colts from carven wain-yokes loosed,
Re-echoed each to each the Bacchic chant.
But hapless Pentheus, seeing not the throng
Of women, spake thus: "Stranger, where we stand,
Are these mock-maenad maids beyond my ken.

Some knoll or pine high-crested let me climb,
And I shall see the Maenads' lewdness well."
A marvel then I saw the stranger do:
A soaring pine-shaft by the top he caught,
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

κατήγεν, ἤγεν, ἤγεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον·
kυκλοῦτο δ' ὦστε τόξον ἦ κυρτὸς τροχὸς
tόρνυο γραφόμενος περιφορὰν ἔλκει δρόμον·
ὡς κλών' ὅρειον ὁ ξένος χεροῖν ἀγών
ἐκαμπτεῖν εἰς γῆν, ἔργματ' οὐχὶ θυητὰ δρῶν.

Πενθέα δ' ἱδρύσασ έλατίνων ὄξων ἐπὶ,
ὅρθὸν μεθεί διὰ χερῶν θλάστημ' ἄνω
ἀτρέμα, φυλάσσων μὴ ἀναχαίτισει νυ.
ὁρθὴ δ' ἐσ ὅρθὸν αἰθέρ' ἐστήριζετο
ἐξούσα νότοις δεσπότην ἐφήμενον.

ὑφῇ δὲ μάλλον ἦ κατειδε Μαινάδας·
όσον γὰρ οὕτω δῆλος ἦν θάσσων ἄνω,
καὶ τὸν ξένον μὲν οὐκέτ' εἰσορᾶν παρὴ,
ἐκ δ' αἰθέρος φωνὴ τις, ὡς μὲν εἰκάσαι

Διώνυσος, ἀνεβόησεν· ὁ νεάνιδε,

ἄγω τὸν υἱὰς κάμε τὰμά τ' ὅργια
γέλων τιθέμενον· ἀλλὰ τιμωρεῖσθ' νυ.
καὶ ταῦθ' ἀμ' ἡγόρευε καὶ πρὸς οὐρανὸν
καὶ γαίαν ἐστήριζε φῶς σεμνοῦ πυρός.

σύγησε δ' αἰθήρ', σύγα δ' ὕλιμος νάτη
φύλλ' εἴχε, θηρῶν δ' οὐκ ἀν ἤκουσας βοήν.

ἀι δ' ωσίν ἤχην οὐ σαφῶς δεδεγμέναι
ἐστήσαν ὅρθαι καὶ διήνεγκαν κόρας.

ὁ δ' αὖθις ἐπεκέλευσεν· ὅς δ' ἐγνώρισαν

σαφῆ κελευσμὸν Βακχίου Κάδμου κόραι,

βίβλαν πελείας ὀκτυτη' οὐχ ῥησόνει

ποδῶν ἔχουσαι συντόνοις δρομήμασι,

μήτηρ 'Αγαήν σύγγονοι θ' ὁμόσποροι

τᾶσαι τε Βάκχαι· διὰ δὲ χείμαρρον νάτης

ἄγμων τ' ἐπήδων θεόν πνεοίσιν ἐμμανεῖς.

ὡς δ' εἶδον ἐλάτη δεσπότην ἐφήμενον,

πρῶτον μὲν αὐτοῦ χερμάδας κραταίβολους
THE BACCHANALS

And dragged down—down—still down to the dark earth.
Arched as a bow it grew, or curving wheel
That on the lathe sweeps out its circle's round:
So bowed the stranger's hands that mountain-stem,
And bent to earth—a deed past mortal might!
Then Pentheus on the pine boughs seated he
And let the trunk rise, sliding through his hands
Gently, with heedful care to unseat him not.
Far up into the heights of air it soared,
Bearing my master throned upon its crest,
More by the Maenads seen than seeing them.

For scarce high-lifted was he manifest,
When lo, the stranger might no more be seen;
And fell from heaven a voice—the voice, most like,
Of Dionysus,—crying, "O ye maids,
I bring him who would mock at you and me,
And at my rites. Take vengeance on him ye!"
Even as he cried, up heavenward, down to earth,
He flashed a pillar-splendour of awful flame.
Hushed was the welkin; all the forest-glade
Held hushed its leaves; no wild thing's cry was heard.
But they, whose ears not clearly caught the sound,
Sprang up, and shot keen glances right and left.

Again he cried his hest: then Cadmus' daughters
Knew certainly the Bacchic God's command,
And darted: and the swiftness of their feet
Was as of doves in onward-straining race—
His mother Agave and her sisters twain,
And all the Bacchanals. Through torrent gorge,
O'er boulders, leapt they, with the God's breath mad.
When seated on the pine they saw my lord,
First torrent-stones with might and main they hurled,
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἐρριπτοῦν, ἀντίτυργον ἐπιβάσαι πέτραν,
δἐ τ’ ἐλατίνοισιν ἥκουσίζετο.
ἄλλαὶ δὲ θύρσους ἔσαν δὲ αἰθέρος
Πενθέως, στόχων δύστηνοι. ἄλλ’ οὐκ ἰμνυτοι,
κρείσσον γὰρ υψὸς τῆς προθυμίας ἐχθων
καθήστο τλήμων, ἀπορία λελημμένειν.
τέλος δὲ δρυίνους συγκεραυνοῦσαι κλάδους,
ῥίζας ἀνεσπάρασσον ἀσιθήροις μοχλοῖς.
ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθων τέρματ’ οὐκ ἐξήνυτον,
ἐλεξ’ Ἀγανί. φέρε, περιστάσαι κύκλω
πτόρθων λάβεσθε, Μαινάδες, τὸν ἀμβάτην
θήρ’ ὢς ἐλώμεν, μηδ’ ἀπαγγείλῃ θεοῦ
χοροὺς κρυφαίους. αἱ δὲ μυρίαν χέρα
προσέθεσαν ἐλάτη καζανέσπασαν χθονός.
ὑπὸ δὲ θάσσων ἀψόθεν χαμαιπτήσει
tίπτει πρὸς οὐδας μυρίους οἰμώγμασι
Πενθεύς. κακοῦ γὰρ ἐγγὺς ὧν ἐμάνθηνε.
πρῶτη δὲ μῆτηρ ἤρξει ἱερία φόνου
καὶ προσπόντιει νιν’ ὅ δὲ μῖτραν κόμης ἄπο
ἐρρίψεν, ὡς νῦν γνωρίσασα μὴ κτάνι
τλήμων Ἀγανί, καὶ λέγει, παρηῦδος
ψαῦν. ἔγω τοι, μῆτερ, εἰμί παῖς σέθεν
Πενθεύς, δὲν ἠτέκες ἐν δύμοις Ἑχῖνος.
οὐκετερε δ’ ὁ μῆτερ με, μηδὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς
ἀμαρτίαισι παίδα σὸν κατακτάντης.
ἡ δ’ ἄφρον ἐξείσα καὶ διαστρόφους
κόρας ἐλίσσουσ’, οὐ φρονοῦσ’ ἀρχή φρονεῖν,
ἐκ Βακχίου κατείχετ’, οὐδ’ ἐσείδε νυν.
καβοῦσα δ’ ὑλέναις ἀριστερὰν χέρα
πλευραίσιν ἀντιβάσα τοῦ δυσδαίμονος
ἀπεστάραξεν δ’ ὡμον, οὐχ ὑπὸ σθένους,
ἀλλ’ ὁ θεὸς εὑμάρειαν ἐπεδίδον χερῶν.
THE BACCHANALS

Scalıng a rock, their counter-bastion,
And javelined him with branches of the pine:
And others shot their thyrsi through the air
At Pentheus—woeful mark!—yet nought availed.
For, at a height above their fury’s pitch,
Trapped in despair’s gin, horror-struck he sat.
Last, oak-limbs from their trunks they thundered down,
And heaved at the roots with levers—not of iron.
But when they won no end of toil and strain,
Agave cried, “Ho, stand we round the trunk,
Maenads, and grasp, that we may catch the beast
Crouched there, that he may not proclaim abroad
Our God’s mysterious rites!” Their countless hands
Set they unto the pine, tore from the soil:
And he, high-seated, crashed down from his height;
And earthward fell with frenzy of shriek on shriek
Pentheus, for now he knew his doom at hand.

His mother first, priest-like, began the slaughter,
And fell on him: but from his hair the coif
He tore, that she might know and slay him not,—
Hapless Agave!—and he touched her cheek,
Crying, “’Tis I, O mother!—thine own son
Pentheus—thou bar’st me in Echion’s halls!
Have mercy, O my mother!—for my sin
Murder not thou thy son—thy very son!”
But she, with foaming lips and eyes that rolled
Wildly, and reckless madness-clouded soul,
Possessed of Bacchus, gave no heed to him;
But his left arm she clutched in both her hands,
And set against the wretch’s ribs her foot,
And tore his shoulder out—not by her strength,
But the God made it easy to her hands.
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1130 ἤνω δὲ τάπι θάτερ' ἐξευργάζετο
ῥηγύσα σάρκας, Ἀὐτοῦν ὑ' ὁχλος τε πᾶς
ἐπείχε Βακχών· ἦν δὲ πᾶσ' ὁμοῦ βοή,
ὁ μὲν στενᾶξον ὅσον ἐτύγχανεν πνεύων,
αἱ δ' ἡλάλαζον. ἐφερε δ' ὡ μὲν ὠλένην,
ἡ δ' ἱχνος αὕταίς ἁρβύλαις· γυμνόντο δὲ
πλευραὶ σπαραγμοῖς· πᾶσα δ' ἡματωμένη
χεῖρας διεσφαίριζε σάρκα Πενθέως.

1140 κεῖταί δὲ χωρίς σώμα, τὸ μὲν ὑπὸ στύφλους
πέτραις, τὸ δ' ὕλης ἐν βαθυξύλῳ φόβη,
οὐ ῥᾴδιον ξήτημα· κράτα δ' ἄθλοιν,
ὅπερ λαβοῦσα τυγχάνει μήτηρ χερόν,
πήζασ' ἐπ' ἄκρον θύρσον ὥς ὀρεστέρον
φέρει λέοντος διὰ Κιθαιρῶν μέσου,
λυποῦσ' ἀδελφᾶς ἐν χοροῖς Μαιάνων.

1150 χωρεῖ δὲ θήρα δυσπότῳ γαυρουμένη
teixέων ἐσώ τῶν', ἀνακαλούσα Βάκχιον
tοὺν ξυγκυναγόν, τὸν ξυνεργάτην ἄγρας
tὸν καλλίνικον, ἡ δάκρυνα νικηφορεῖ.
ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τῇ φ' ἐκποδών τῇ ξυμφορᾷ
ἀπεμ'. Ἀγαυὴν πρὶν μολεῖν πρὸς δώματα.
τὸ σωφρονεῖν δὲ καὶ σέβειν τὰ τῶν θεών
cαλλιστον' οἴμαι δ' αὐτὸ καὶ σοφώτατον
θυητοῖσιν εἶναι κτῆμα τοῖσι χρωμένοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἀναχορεύσωμεν Βάκχιον,
ἀναβοάσωμεν ξυμφορᾶν
τὰν τοῦ δράκοντος ἐκγενέτα Πενθέως,
ὅς τὰν θηλυγενὴ στολὰν
νάρθηκα τε πιστὸν "Αἰδαν
ἔλαβεν εὐθυρὸν,
ταῦτον προηγητήρα συμφορᾶς ἔχων.

96
THE BACCHANALS

And Ino laboured on the other side,
Rending his flesh: Autonoë pressed on—all
The Bacchanal throng. One awful blended cry
Rose—the king’s screams while life was yet in him;
And triumph-yells from them. One bare an arm,
One a foot sandal-shod. His ribs were stripped
In mangled shreds: with blood-bedabbled hands
Each to and fro was tossing Pentheus’ flesh.

Wide-sundered lies his corse: part ’neath rough
rocks,
Part mid the tangled depths of forest-shades:—
Hard were the search. His miserable head,
Which in her hands his mother chanced to seize,
Impaled upon her thyrsus-point she bears,
Like mountain-lion’s, through Cithaeron’s midst,
Leaving her sisters in their Maenad dance;
And, in her ghastly quarry glorying, comes
Within these walls, to Bacchus crying aloud,
Her fellow-hunter, helper in the chase
Triumphant—all its triumph-prize is tears!
But from this sight of misery will I
Depart, or ever Agave reach the halls.
Ay, self-restraint, and reverence for the Gods
Are best, I ween; ’tis wisest far for men
To get these in possession, and cleave thereto. [Exit.

CHORUS

Raise we to Bacchus the choral acclaim,
Shout we aloud for the fall
Of the king, of the blood of the Serpent who came,
Who arrayed him in woman’s pall;
And the thyrsus-ferule he grasped—but the same
Sealed him to Hades’ hall:
And a bull was his guide to a doom of shame!
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1160 Βάκχαι, Καδμεία,
tὸν καλλίνικον κλεινὸν ἐξεπράξατε
eἰς γόνον, εἰς δάκρυα.
καλὸς ἄγων, ἐν αἴματι στάξουσαν
χέρα περιβαλεῖν τέκνου.

ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ εἰς δόμους ὀρμωμένην
Πενθέως Ἀγαύην μητέρ' ἐν διαστρόφοις
ὀσσοῖς, δέχεσθε κῶμον εὐίου θεοῦ.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

'Ασιάδες Βάκχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί μ' ὄρθύνεις, ὦ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

φέρομεν ἐξ ὀρέων
ἐλικα νεώτομον ἐπὶ μέλαθρα,
μακάριον θήραν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁρῶ καὶ σε δέξομαι σύγκωμον.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἐμαρφα τὸν' ἀνευ βρόχων
[λέοντος ἀγροτέρου] νέον ήνιν,
ὡς ὀράν πάρα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πόθεν ἐρημίας;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Κιθαίρων—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί Κιθαίρων;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

κατεφόνευσέν νυν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῖς ἀ βαλοῦσα πρῶτα;

98
THE BACCHANALS

O Bacchanal-maids Cadmean,
Ye have gained for you glory—a victory-pæan
To be drowned in lamenting and weeping.
O contest triumphantly won, when a mother in blood
of her son

Her fingers is steeping!
But lo, I see fast hurrying to the halls
Agave, Pentheus' mother, with wild eyes
Rolling:—hail ye the revel of our God!

Enter Agave, carrying the head of Pentheus.

AGAVE

Asian Bacchanals! (Str.)

CHORUS
Why dost thou challenge me?—say.

AGAVE
Lo, from the mountain-side I bear
A newly-severed ivy-spray
Unto our halls, a goodly prey.

CHORUS
I see—to our revels I welcome thee.

AGAVE
I trapped him, I, with never a snare!
'Tis the whelp of a desert lion, plain to see.

CHORUS
Where in the wilderness, where?

AGAVE
Cithaeron—

CHORUS
What hath Cithaeron wrought?

AGAVE
Him hath Cithaeron to slaughter brought.

CHORUS
Who was it smote him first?
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1180

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἐμὸν τὸ γέρας.
μᾶκαιρ’ Ἀγαθὴ κληζόμεθ’ ἐν θνίσοις.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tίς ἄλλα;

ΑΓΑΘΗ
tὰ Κάδμου—
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tί Κάδμου;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

γένεθλα
μετ’ ἐμὲ μετ’ ἐμὲ τοῦδ’
ἔθιγε θηρός. εὐτυχῆς γ’ ἂδ’ ἄγρα.
μέτεχε νυν θοίνας.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

γενόσοι ἢ πρέπει θηρὸν ἄγγελον φόβην.
ΧΟΡΟΣ

οθέδας οὐκότο χύνθει
tὴ γένυν ἕπο κόρυθ’ ἄπαλότριχα
κατάκομμον θᾶλλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ Βάκχιος κυναγέτας
τοῦδε Μαινάδας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἄγρεύς.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἐπαίνεις;
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tί δ’ ἐπαίνῳ.
THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE
Mine, mine is the guerdon,
Their revel-rout singeth me—"Happy Agave!" their burden.

1180

CHORUS

Who then?

AGAVE

Of Cadmus—

CHORUS

Of Cadmus what wilt thou tell?

AGAVE

His daughters after me smote the monster fell—
After me! O fortunate hunting! Is it not well?
Now share in the banquet!—

(Anl.)

CHORUS

Alas! wherein shall I share?

AGAVE

This whelp is yet but a tender thing,
And over its jaws yet sprouteth fair
The down 'neath the crest of its waving hair.

CHORUS

Yea, a beast of the wold, by the hair, might it be.

AGAVE

Uproused was the Maenad gathering
To the chase by a cunning hunter full cunningly.

1190

CHORUS

Yea, a hunter is Bacchus our King.

AGAVE

Dost thou praise me?

CHORUS

How can I choose but praise?
ΒΑΧΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

tάχα δὲ Καδμεῖοι—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ παις γε Πενθεύς—

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ματέρ' ἐπανέσεται,

λαβοῦσαν ἁγραν τάνδε λεοντοφυή.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

περισσάν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

περισσῶσ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀγάλλει;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

γέγηθα

μεγάλα μεγάλα καὶ

φανερὰ τάδ' ἁγρὰ κατειργασμένα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεῖξον νυν, ὦ τάλαινα, σὴν νυκτήρον

ἀστοίσιν ἁγραν ἢν φέρουσ' ἐλήλυθας.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὁ καλλιπτυργόν ἄστυ Θηβαίας χονόν

ναίοντες, ἔλθεθ' ὡς ἰδήτε τήνδ' ἁγραν,

Κάδμου θυγατέρες θηρὸς ἢν ἡγεύσαμεν

οὐκ ἀγκυλητοῖς Θεσσαλῶν στοχάσμασιν,

οὐ δικτύοισιν, ἀλλὰ λευκοπήχεισι

χειρῶν ἀκμαίσι. κατὰ κομπάζειν χρεῶν

καὶ λοχχοποιῶν ὀργανα κτᾶσθαι μάτην;

ημεῖς δὲ γ' αὐτή χειρὶ τόνδε θ' εἴλομεν

χωρίς τε θηρὸς ἄρθρα διεφορήσαμεν.

ποὺ μοι πατήρ ὁ πρέσβυς; ἐλθέτω πέλας.

Πενθεύς τ' ἐμὸς παῖς ποῦ στιν; αἱρέσθω λαβῶν

102
THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE
Ay, and full soon shall Cadmus’ race—

CHORUS
And Pentheus thy son—

AGAVE
Yea, I shall have praise of my scion
For the prey that is taken, even this whelp of a lion.

CHORUS
Strange quarry!—

AGAVE
And strangely taken.

CHORUS
Art glad?

AGAVE
I am fain
For the triumph achieved, both goodly and great,
and plain
For the land to see, in the booty mine hands have

CHORUS
Show forth now, hapless one, to all the folk
The triumph-spoil that hither thou hast brought.

AGAVE
Ye, in the fair-towered burg of Theban land
Which dwell, draw nigh to look upon this prey,
The beast we, Cadmus’ daughters, hunted down—
Not with the thong-whirled darts of Thessaly,
Neither with nets, but with the fingers white
Of our own hands. What boots the vaunt of men
Who get them tools by armourers vainly wrought,
When we, with bare hands only, took the prey,
And rent asunder all the monster’s limbs?
Where is mine ancient sire? Let him draw near.
And my son Pentheus where? Let him upraise
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πηκτῶν πρὸς οίκους κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις, ὥς πασσαλεύσῃ κρᾶτα τρυγλύφοις τόδε λέοντος ὅν πάρειμι θηράσασ’ ἐγώ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐπεσθέ μοι, φέροντες ἄθλουν βάρος Πενθέως, ἐπεσθε, πρόσπολοι, δόμων πάρος, οὐ σῶμα μοχθῶν μυρίων ζητήμασι φέρω τόδ’, εὐρὸν ἐν Κιθαιρώνος πτυχαίς διασπαρακτόν, κοῦδέν ἐν ταῦτ’ πέδω λαβῶν, ἐν ὕλῃ κείμενον δυσευρέτω. ἧκουσα γὰρ τοῦ θυγατέρων τολμήματα, ἤδη κατ’ ἄστυ τείχεων ἐσῳ βεβδως σὺν τῷ γέροντι Τειρεσία Βακχῶν πάρα πάλιν δὲ κάμψας εἰς ὄρος κομίζομαι τὸν καθαυνόντα παίδα Μαίναδων ὑπο, καὶ τὴν μὲν ’Ακταίων ’Αρισταίῳ ποτὲ τεκοῦσαν εἴδουν Αὐτοινὸν Ἰνώ θ’ ἄμα ἦτ’ ἀμφ’ ἄρμοις οὐστροπλήγας ἀθλίας, τὴν δ’ εἰπὲ τίς μοι δέφρο Βακχείῳ ποδὶ στείχεων ’Αγαύην, οὖδ’ ἄκρατι ἠκούσαμεν λεύσσω γὰρ αὐτὴν, ὅψιν οὐκ εὐδαιμόνα.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

πάτερ, μέγιστον κομπάσαι πάρεστι σοι, πάντων ἄριστας θυγατέρας στείραι μακρὸ θυντῶν ἀπάθας ἐπον, ἔξοχως δ’ ἐμέ, ἢ τὰς παρ’ ἱστοῖς ἐκλιποῦσα κερκίδας εἰς μεῖξον ἦκω, θήρας ἀγρεύειν χεροῖν φέρω δ’ ἐν ωλέναισιν, ὡς ὅρας, τάδε λαβοῦσα τάριστεία, σοίσι πρὸς δόμοις ὡς ἀγκρεμασθῆ. σὺ δὲ, πάτερ, δέξαι χεροῖν γαυροῦμενος δὲ τοῖς ἐμοὶς ἀγρεύμασι

104
THE BACCHANALS

A ladder's stair against the palace-wall,
That to the triglyphs he may nail this head,
This lion's head that I from hunting bring.

Enter cadmus, with attendants carrying a bier.

CADMUS

Come with me, henchmen, to the palace come,
Bearing this ghastly load that once was Pentheus,
Whose limbs by toilsome searchings manifold,
About Cithaeron's glens all rent apart
I found, and bring—no twain in one place found,
But lying all about the trackless wood.
For of my daughters' desperate deeds I heard,
Even as I passed within the city-walls
With old Teiresias from the Bacchant revel.
Back to the mountain turned I; and I bring
My son thence, who by Maenads hath been slain.
There her who bore Actaeon to Aristaeus
I saw, Autonoë, saw Ino there
Still midst the oak-groves, wretches frenzy-stung;
But hitherward, said one, with Bacchant feet
Had passed Agave, and the truth I heard;
For I behold her—sight of misery!

AGAVE

My father, proudest boast is thine to make,
To have begotten daughters best by far
Of mortals—all thy daughters, chiefly me,
Me who left loom and shuttle, and pressed on
To high emprise, to hunt beasts with mine hands.
And in mine arms I bring, thou seest, this
The prize I took, against thy palace-wall
To hang: receive it, father, in thine hands.
And now, triumphant in mine hunting's spoil,
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

κάλει φίλους εἰς δαίτα: μακάριος γὰρ εἶ, μακάριος, ἡμῶν τοιάδ᾿ ἔξειργασμένων.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὁ πένθος οὖ μετρητόν οὐδ᾿ οίὸν τ᾿ ἰδεῖν, φόνον ταλαίνας χερσίν ἔξειργασμένων. καλὸν τὸ θύμα καταβαλοῦσα δαίμοσιν ἄτι δαίτα Θῆβαις τάσδὲ κάμε παρακαλεῖς. οὐμοι κακῶν μὲν πρῶτα σῶν, ἐπειτ ἐμῶν ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς ἐνδίκως μέν, ἀλλ᾿ ἀγαν Βρόμιος ἀναξ ἀπώλεσο οἴκειος γεγώς.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὡς δύσκολον τὸ γῆρας ἀνθρώπως ἔφυ ἐν τ᾿ ὁμμασί σκυθρωτόν. εἴθε παῖς ἐμὸς εὐθηρος εἴη, μητρὸς εἰκασθεὶς τρόπος, ὅτ᾿ ἐν νεανίασι Θῆβαιοι ἄμα θηρῶν ὄρυγματ. ἀλλὰ θεομαχεῖν μόνον οἴὸς τ᾿ ἐκεῖνος. νουθετητέος, πάτερ, σούστην. τής αὐτὸν δεῦρ ἀν ὄψιν εἰς ἐμὴν καλέσειεν, ὡς ἠδη μὲ τὴν εὐδαίμονα;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ. φρονήσασαι μὲν οἴ τ᾿ ἐδράσατε, ἀλγησετ᾿ ἀλγος δεινών εἰ δὲ διὰ τέλους ἐν τῷ δ᾿ ἅντε μενεῖτ᾿ ἐν ὃ καθέστατε, οὐκ εὐτυχοῦσαι δόξετ᾿ οὐχὶ δυστυχεῖν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τί δ᾿ οὖ καλῶς τῶνδ᾿, ἢ τί λυπηρῶς ἔχει;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

πρῶτον μὲν εἰς τῶνδ᾿ αἴθέρ᾿ ὡμα σὸν μέθες.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἵδοι δ᾿ τί μοι τῶνδ᾿ ἐξυπείπασε εἰσορᾶν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐθ᾿ αὐτὸς ἢ σοι μεταβολὰς ἔχεων δοκεῖ;
THE BACCHANALS

Bid to a feast thy friends; for blest art thou,
Blest verily, since we have achieved such deeds.

CADMUS

O anguish measureless that blasts the sight!
O murder compassed by those wretched hands!
Fair victim this to cast before the Gods,
And bid to such a banquet Thebes and me!
Woe for our sorrows!—first for thine, then mine!
How hath the God, King Bromius, ruined us!—
Just stroke—yet ruthless—is he not our kin?

AGAVE

How sour of mood is greybeard eld in men,
How sullen-eyed! Framed in his mother's mould
A mighty hunter may my son become,
When with the Theban youths he speedeth forth
Questing the quarry! But he can do naught
Save war with Gods! Father, thy part it is
To warn him. Who will call him hitherward
To see me, and behold mine happiness?

CADMUS

Alas! when ye are ware what ye have done,
With sore grief shall ye grieve! If to life's end
Ye should in this delusion still abide,
Ye should not, though unblest, seem all accurst.

AGAVE

What is not well here?—what that calls for grief?

CADMUS

First cast thou up thine eye to yonder heaven.

AGAVE

Lo, so I do. Why bid me look thereon?

CADMUS

Seems it the same? Or hath it changed to thee?
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λαμπρότερος ἡ πρὶν καὶ διπετέστερος.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τὸ δὲ πτοηθὲν τόδ' ἔτι σῆ ψυχῆ πάρα;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

οὐκ οἶδα τοῦτο τοῦτο, γίγνομαι δὲ πως

1270

έννοια, μετασταθείσα τῶν πάρος φρενῶν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

κλύως ἀν οὖν τι κἀποκρίναι' ἀν σαφῶς;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὡς ἐκλέξησμαί γ' ἃ πάρος εἴπομεν, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

eἰς ποῖον ἥλθης οἴκον ὑμεναίων μέτα;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

σπαρτῷ μ' ἐδωκας, ὡς λέγουσ', Ἑκίονι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίς οὖν εὖ οἰκος παῖς ἐγένετο σῷ πόσει;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Πενθεύς, ἐμῆ τε καὶ πατρὸς κοινωνία.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίνος πρόσωπον δὴ ἐν ἀγκάλαις ἔχεις;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λέοντος, ὡς γ' ἐφασκον αἱ θηρώμεναι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σκέψαι νυν ὀρθῶς, βραχὺς ὁ μόχθος εἰσιδεῖν.

1280

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἐὰ, τὶ λεύσσω; τί φέρομαι τόδ' ἐν χεροῖν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἀθρησθον αὐτὸ καὶ σαφέστερον μάθε.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὅρῳ μέγιστον ἄλγος ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ.
THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE
Brighter—more limpid-lucent than erewhile.

CADMUS
Is this delirium tossing yet thy soul?

AGAVE
This comprehend I not: yet—yet—it passes,
My late mood—I am coming to myself.

CADMUS
Canst hearken aught then? Clearly canst reply?

AGAVE
Our words late-spoken—father, I forget them.

CADMUS
To what house camest thou with bridal-hymns?

AGAVE
Echion's—of the Dragon-seed, men say.

CADMUS
Thou barest—in thine halls, to thy lord—whom?

AGAVE
Pentheus—born of my union with his sire.

CADMUS
Whose head—whose?—art thou bearing in thine arms?

AGAVE
A lion's—so said they which hunted it.

CADMUS
Look well thereon:—small trouble this, to look.

AGAVE
Ah-h! what do I see? What bear I in mine hands?

CADMUS
Gaze, gaze on it, and be thou certified.

AGAVE
I see—mine uttermost anguish! Woe is me!
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
μῶν σοι λέοντι φαίνεται προσεικέναι;

ΑΓΑΤΗ
οὐκ· ἄλλα Πενθέως ἢ τάλαυν ἔχω κάρα.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
ψυχωγμένον γε πρόσθεν ἢ σὲ γνωρίσαι.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
τῖς ἔκτανέν νιν; πῶς ἐμὰς ἦλθεν χέράς;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
dύστην ἄλθει', ὡς ἐν οὐ καιρῷ πάρει.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
λέγ', ὡς τὸ μέλλον καρδία πήδημ' ἔχει.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
σὺ νιν κατέκτας καὶ κασίγνηται σέθεν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
ποῦ δ' ὠλετ'; ἢ κατ' ὀίκου; ἢ ποίως τόποις;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
οὐπερ πρὶν Ἀκταίωνα διέλαξον κύνες.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
τί δ' εἰς Κιθαιρῶν' ἦλθε δυσδαίμων οδε;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
eκερτόμει θεόν σὰς τε βακχείας μολῶν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
ἡμεῖς δ' ἐκείσε τίνι τρόπῳ κατήραμεν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
ἐμάνθητε, πᾶσα τ' ἐξεβακχεύθη πόλις.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ὀλεσ', ἀρτι μανθάνω.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
ὑβριν γ' υβρισθείς· θεὸν γὰρ οὐχ ἤγεισθέ νιν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
τὸ φίλτατον ἐκ σῶμα ποῦ παιδὸς, πάτερ;

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THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS
Seems it to thee now like a lion's head?

AGAVE
No!—wretched!—wretched!—Penteus' head I hold!

CADMUS
Of me bewailed ere recognised of thee.

AGAVE
Who murdered him? How came he to mine hands?

CADMUS
O piteous truth that so untimely dawns!

AGAVE
Speak! Hard my heart beats, waiting for its doom.

CADMUS
Thou!—thou, and those thy sisters murdered him.

AGAVE
Where perished he?—at home, or in what place?

CADMUS
There, where Actaeon erst by hounds was torn.

AGAVE
How to Cithaeron went this hapless one?

CADMUS
To mock the God and thy wild rites he went.

AGAVE
But we—for what cause thither journeyed we?

CADMUS
Ye were distraught: all Thebes went Bacchant-wild.

AGAVE
Dionysus ruined us! I see it now.

CADMUS
Ye flouted him, would not believe him God.

AGAVE
Where, father, is my son's belovèd corse?
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
ἐγὼ μόνις τὸδ’ ἐξερευνήσας φέρω.

ΑΓΑθΗ
η πᾶν ἐν ἀρθροῖς συγκεκλημένον καλῶς;

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

ΑΓΑθΗ
Πενθεῖ δὲ τὸ μέρος ἀφροσύνης προσήκ’ ἐμῆς;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
ῡμῖν ἐγένεθ’ ὁμοίς, οὐ σέβασθ’ θεόν.
τοιγὰρ συνήψε σάντας εἰς μίαν βλάβην,
ῡμᾶς τε τόνδε θ’, ὡστε-διολέσαι δόμους
καμ’ ὡστὶς ἄτεκνος ἀρσένων παίδων γεγώς,
τὴς σῆς τὸδ’ ἔρνου, ὡ τάλαινα, νηδύνος
αἰσχιστα καὶ κάκιστα καθανύθ’ ὀρῷ,
ὡ δῶμ’ ἀνέβλεφ’, ὡς συνεἶχες, ὡ τέκνουν,
τούμον μὲλαθρον, παιδὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς γεγώς,
πόλει τε τὰρβὸς ἡσθα’ τὸν γέροντα δὲ
οὐδεὶς ὑβρίζειν ἥθελ’ εἰσορὸν τὸ σὸν
κάρα’ δίκην γὰρ ἄξιαν ἐλάμβανες.

νῦν δ’ ἐκ δόμων ἀτίμοις ἐκβεβλήσομαι
ὁ Κάδμος ὁ μέγας, ὅς τὸ Θηβαῖων γένος
ἐσπείρα κάξημενα κάλλιστον θέρος.
ὡ φίλτατ’ ἀνδρῶν, καὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ’ ὃν ὁμως
τῶν φιλτάτων ἐμοῖν ἀριθμῆσει, τέκνουν,
οὐκέτι γενεῖον τοῦδε θυγγάνων χερί,
τὸν μητρὸς αὐθῶν πατέρα προσπτύξει, τέκνουν,
λέγων τὸς ἄδικεί, τὸς σ’ ἀτιμάζει, γέρου;
τὸς σὴν ταράσσει καρδίαν λυπηρὸς ὁν;
λέγ’, ὡς κολάζω τὸν ἀδικοευτά σ’, ὡ πάτερ.
νῦν δ’ ἁθλίος μὲν εἰμ’ ἐγώ, τλήμων δὲ σὺ,
οικτρὰ δὲ μήτηρ, τλήμονες δὲ σύγγονοι.
Here do I bear it, by hard searching found.

Is it all meetly fitted limb to limb?

[Yea,—now I add thereto this dear-loved head.]

But—in my folly what was Pentheus' part?

He was as ye, revering not the God,
Who therefore in one mischiefwhelmed you all,
You, and this prince, so ruining all our house
And me, who had no manchild of mine own,
Who see now, wretched daughter, this the fruit
Of thy womb horribly and foully slain.
To thee our house looked up, O son, the stay
Of mine old halls; my daughter's offspring thou,
Thou wast the city's dread: was none dared mock
The old man, none that turned his eyes on thee,
O gallant head!—thou hadst well requited him.

Now from mine halls shall I in shame be cast—
Cadmus the great, who sowed the seed of Thebes,
And reaped the goodliest harvest of the world.
O best-beloved!—for, though thou be no more,
Thou shalt be counted best-beloved, O child,
Thou who shalt fondle never more my head,
Nor clasp and call me "Mother's father," child,
Crying, "Who wrongs thee, ancient?—flouts thee
Who vexeth thee to trouble thine heart's peace?
Speak, that I may chastise the wrong, my sire."
Now am I anguish-stricken, wretched thou,
Woeful thy mother, and her sisters wretched!
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ei δ' ἕστιν ὅστις δαμόνων ὑπερφρονεῖ,
eis toûδ' ἀθρήσας θάνατον ἤγείσθω θεοὺς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

to mên sòn ἀλγῶ, Kádme' sòs δ' ἔχει δίκην
paîs paidôs ἀξίαν mên, ἀλγείνην dê sòi.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ω πάτερ, ὁρᾶς γὰρ τάμ' ὅσφ' μετεστράφη

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ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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1330
drákwn γενήσει μεταβαλῶν, δάμαρ tê sê
ἐκθηρισθείσ' ὁφεος ἀλλάξει τύπων,
svn' Ἀρεος ἔσχες Ἀρμονίαν θυητὸς γεγώς.

χον dê móskwv, χρησμὸς ὡς λέγει Διός,
elâs met' álókhov, βαρβάρων ἡγούμενος.
pôllass dê pérseis anarîðmf strateûmatî
tòleis' òtan dê Dôzîon xhrístîrion
diarptásievi, nóston aûlian pálîn
stîsoussì: sê d' ᾽Αρης ᾽Αρμονίαν tê rûsetai
makârwn t' ês aîan sôn kathidrûsei bîon.

1340
tâût' oûkî θυητοῦ πατρὸς ἐκγεγώς λέγω
Διόνυσος, ἀλλὰ Ζηνός' eî dê sôfroneîn
ἐγνωθ', òt' oûk ἦθελετε, tôn Dîos γώνον
nûðaimoneît' ãn sümâchon kektîmênoi.
THE BACCHANALS

If any man there be that scorns the Gods,
This man's death let him note, and so believe.

CHORUS
Cadmus, for thee I grieve. Thy daughter's son
Hath but just doom—yet cruel doom for thee.

AGAVE
Father, thou seest what change hath passed o'er me—

[A large portion of the play has here been lost, containing
(1) the lament of Agave over her son; (2) a few lines, prob-
bly by the Chorus, announcing the appearance, in his
shape as a God, of Dionysus; (3) the commencement of
Dionysus' speech, in which he points out how Pentheus' sin
has proved his destruction, how Agave and her sisters have,
by their unbelief, involved themselves in his punishment,
and will be exiles till death; and how Cadmus himself must
suffer with his house, how he shall wander exiled from
Hellas,—the portion preserved commencing with the pro-
phesy of his weird transformation.]

DIONYSUS
—Thou to a serpent shalt be changed: thy wife
Harmonia, Ares' child, whom thou didst wed
When man, embruted shall to a snake be changed.
Thou with thy wife shalt drive a wain of steers
Leading barbaric hordes, Zeus' oracle saith,
And many a city with thy countless host
Shalt sack; but when they plunder Loxias' shrine,
Then shall they get them bitter home-return.
Thee and Harmonia shall Ares save,
And stablish in the Blessèd Land your lives.
This say I, of no mortal father born,
Dionysus, but of Zeus. Had ye but learnt
Wisdom, what time ye would not, ye had been
Blest now, with Zeus' Son for your champion gained.

1 For preserved fragments of this lost portion, see Appendix.
ΒΑΣΙΛΗ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Διόνυσε, λισσόμεσθά σ', Ἧδικήκαμεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὁψ' ἐμάθεθ' ἡμᾶς, ὅτε δ' ἔχρην, οὐκ ἤδετε.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἐγνώκαμεν ταῦτ' ἅλλ' ἐπεξέρχει λιαν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ πρὸς ύμῶν θεός γεγὼς ύβριζόμην.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὁργᾶς πρέπει θεοὺς οὐχ ὁμοιοῦσθαι βροτοῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πάλαι τάδε Ζεὺς οὐμὸς ἐπένευσεν πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

αἰαῖ, δέδοκται, πρέσβυ, τιλήμονες φυγαί.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δήτα μέλλεθ' ἀπερ ἀναγκαῖως ἔχει;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὁ τέκνον, ὡς εἰς δεινὸν ἠλθομεν κακόν,
[πάντες], σύ θ' ἡ τάλαινα σύγγονοί τε σαί,
ἐγὼ θ' ὁ τιλήμον βαρβάρους ἀφίξομαι
γέρων μέτοικος· ἐτί δε μοι τὸ θέσφατον
εἰς 'Ελλάδι ἀγαγεῖν μιγάδα βάρβαρον στρατόν.
καὶ τὴν 'Αρεως παῖδ' 'Αρμονίαν δάμαρτ ἔμην,
δράκων δρακάινης φύσιν ἔχουσαν ἀγρίαν
ἀξω πί βωμοὺς καὶ τάφους 'Ελληνικούς,

1300

ἡγούμενοι λόγχαισιν· οὐδὲ παύσομαι
κακόν ὁ τιλήμον, οὐδὲ τὸν καταβάτην
'Αχέροντα πλεύσας ἦσυχος γενήσομαι.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὁ πάτερ, ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ στερεῖσα φεύξομαι.

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THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE
Dionysus, we beseech thee!—we have sinned.

DIONYSUS
Too late ye know me, who knew not in your hour.

AGAVE
We know it: but thy vengeance passeth bounds.

DIONYSUS
I am a God: ye did despite to me.

AGAVE
It fits not that in wrath Gods be as men.

DIONYSUS
Long since my father Zeus ordained this so.

AGAVE
Alas! our woeful exile's doom is sealed! 1350

DIONYSUS
Why then delay the fate that needs must be? [Exit.

CADMUS
Daughter, to what dread misery are we come,—
Yea, all, thou and thy sisters—woe is thee?
And I—ah me!—must visit alien men,
A grey-haired sojourner. I am doomed withal
On Greeks to lead a mingled alien host;
And Ares' child, Harmonia my wife,
In serpent form shall I, a serpent, lead
Against our Hellas' altars and her tombs,
Captaining spears. And I shall find no rest 1360
From woes, alas! nor that down-rushing stream
Of Acheron shall I cross and be at peace!

AGAVE
Robbed of thee, father, exiled shall I be!
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
τι μ’ ἀμφιβάλλεις χερσίν, δ’ τάλανα παί, ὁρνῦν ὅπως κηφήνα πολύχρως κύκνος;

ΑΓΑΤΗ
ποῖ γὰρ τράπωμαι πατρίδος ἐκβεβλημένη;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
οὐκ οἶδα, τέκνου· μικρὸς ἐπίκουρος πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
χαῖρ’, ό μέλαθρον, χαῖρ’, ό πατρία
πόλις· ἐκλείπω σ’ ἐπὶ δυστυχία
φυγάς ἐκ θαλάμων.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
στείχει νυν, ὧ παῖ, τὸν Ἀρισταίον

ΑΓΑΤΗ
στένομαι σε, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
κἀγὼ σέ, τέκνον,
καὶ σᾶς ἑδάκρυσα κασυγνήτας.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
δεινῶς γὰρ τάνδ’ αἰκίαν
Διόνυσος ἀναξ
τοὺς σους εἰς οἴκους ἐφερεν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
καὶ γὰρ ἐπασχεῖν δεινὰ πρὸς ύμῶν,
ἀγέραστον ἔχων ὄνομ’ ἐν Θήβαισ.

ΑΓΑΤΗ
χαῖρε, πάτερ μοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ
χαῖρ’, ό μελέα

θύγατερ. χαλεπῶς εἰς τὸδ’ ἀν ἥκουσ.
THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS
Why cast thine arms about me, hapless child? Like white swan cherishing its helpless sire?

AGAVE
Whither can I turn, outcast from my land?

CADMUS
I know not, child. Small help thy father is.

AGAVE
Farewell, mine home; farewell, ye city-towers Of fatherland! In anguish of despair I pass an exile from my bridal bowers.

CADMUS
Child, to the halls of Aristaeus fare: Abide thou there.

AGAVE
I mourn thee, father!

CADMUS
Child, I mourn for thee; And for thy sisters do I weep withal.

AGAVE
For Dionysus' tyrannous majesty Most fearfully hath caused upon thine hall This shame to fall.

CADMUS
Yea, outrage foul to him of you was done, In that his name in Thebes was held in scorn.

AGAVE
Farewell, my father.

CADMUS
Farewell, hapless one, Who ne'er shalt fare well, evermore forlorn!
ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΘΗ
άγετ' ὦ πομποὶ με, κασιγνήτας
ίνα συμφυγάδας ληψόμεθ' οἰκτρῶς.
ἐλθοίμε δ' ὁπόν
μήτε Κιθαιρῶν μιαρὸς μ' ἐσίδοι,
μήτε Κιθαιρῶν ὅσοισιν ἐγὼ,
μήθ' ὅθι θύροις μνήμ' ἀνάκειται.
Βάκχαις δ' ἀλλασίμι μέλοιεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,
πολλὰ δ' ἁέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί.
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκήτων πόρον ἦρε θεός.
τοιὸνδ' ἀπέβη τὸ ἄκαμα.

1390
THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE
O ye, to my sisters guide me,
My companions in banishment's misery.
O that afar I might hide me
Where accursèd Cithaeron shall look not on me,
Nor I with mine eyes shall Cithaeron see,
Where memorial is none of the thyrsus-spear!
Be these unto other Bacchanals dear.

CHORUS
O the works of the Gods—in manifold wise they
reveal them:
Manifold things unhoped-for the Gods to accom-
plishment bring.
And the things that we looked for, the Gods deign
not to fulfil them;
And the paths undiscerned or our eyes, the Gods un-
seal them.

So fell this marvellous thing.

[Exeunt omnes.]
APPENDIX TO THE "BACCHANALS."

A few fragments, given below, of the lost portion of the Bacchae have been collected, chiefly from the Christus Patiens, "a wretchedly stupid drama, falsely attributed to Gregory Nazianzenus, giving an account of the circumstances connected with the Passion of Christ, and consisting of a cento of verses taken chiefly from the Bacchae, Rhesus, and Troades" (Tyrrell, Introduction to his edition of the Bacchae).

The lines marked A. may be taken as from the speech of Agave; those marked D., as from that of Dionysus.

A. To find a doom of rending midst the rocks . . . .

What corpse is this that in mine arms I clasp?
How shall I press him—woe's me!—tenderly
Unto my breast?—in what wise wail o'er him?

For, had mine hands received not mine own curse . . . .

To rend to utter fragments every limb . . . .

Kissing the shreds of flesh which once I nursed . . . .

Come, ancient, this thrice-hapless sufferer's head
Compose we reverently, and all the frame
Lay we together, far as in us lies.
O best-beloved face, O youthful cheek . . . .
Lo, with this vesture do I veil thine head,
And these thy blood-bedabbled, furrow-scarred
Limbs . . . . . . . .

Whose is the mantle that shall shroud thy form
Ah, whose the hands that now shall tend thee, son?

1 From Lucian.  2 From the Scholiast to Aristophanes' Plutus.
APPENDIX

D. He dared the chain, he dared the scoffing word . . .

They which should have been last to slay him, slew . . .

All this hath yon man suffered righteously.

Yea, and the nation's doom I will not hide—
To leave yon town, a sign to alien men,
To pass to many cities wandering,
Dragging a yoke of thraldom woefully,
War-captives, draining misery's cup to the dregs

Yea, they must leave this city, expiate
The impious pollution of his murder,
And see no more their own land—God forbid
That murderers by their victims' graves should lie!

All woes thou too must suffer will I tell.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES
ARGUMENT

Hercules was hated from his birth by Hera, and by her devices was made subject to Eurystheus, king of Argos. At his command he performed the great Twelve Labours, whereof the last was that he should bring up Cerberus, the Hound of Hades, from the Underworld. Ere he departed, he committed Amphitryon his father, with Megara his wife, and his sons, to the keeping of Creon, king of Thebes, and so went down into the Land of Darkness. Now when he was long time absent, so that men doubted whether he would ever return, a man of Euboea, named Lycus, was brought into Thebes by evil-hearted and discontented men, and with these conspired against Creon, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. Then he sought further to slay all that remained of the house of Hercules, lest any should in days to come avenge Creon's murder. So these, in their sore strait, took refuge at the altar of Zeus. And herein is told how, even as they stood under the shadow of death, Hercules returned for their deliverance, and how in the midst of that joy and triumph a yet worse calamity was brought upon them by the malice of Hera.
ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΙΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΤΩΝ
ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ ΓΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ
ΛΤΚΟΣ
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ΙΡΙΣ
ΛΤΣΣΑ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Amphitheon, husband of Alcmene, and reputed father of Hercules.
Megara, wife of Hercules.
Lycus, a usurper, king of Thebes.
Hercules, son of Zeus and Alcmene.
Iris, a Goddess, messenger of the Gods.
Madness, a demon.
Servant of Hercules.
Theseus, king of Athens.
Chorus, consisting of Theban Elders.
Three young Sons of Hercules; Attendants of Lycus and of Theseus.

Scene: At Thebes, before the royal palace. The altar of Zeus stands in front.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ
Τῆς τῶν Διὸς σύλλεκτρων οὐκ οίδεν βροτῶν, 'Αργείων 'Αμφιτρύων, ὅν 'Αλκαίος ποτε ἔτιχθ' ὁ Περσέως, πατέρα τὸν Ἡρακλέους; ὅς τάσις Ἐθήβας ἔσχεν, ἐνθ' ὁ γηγενής σπαρτῶν στάχξας ἕβλαστεν, ὁς γένους 'Αρης ἔσωσ' ἅριθμὸν ὀλίγον, οἱ Κάδμου πόλιν τεκνοῦσι παιδῶν παισίν. ἐνθεν ἐξέφυ Κρέων Μενοικέως παῖς, ἀναξ τῆς ἕξονός. Κρέων δὲ Μεγάρας τῆς ἔγνυται πατήρ, ἢν πάντες ὑμεναίωσι Καμβέοι ποτε λωτῷ συνηλάλαξαν, ἡνὶκ' εἰς ἐμοὺς δόμους ὁ κλεινός Ἡρακλῆς νυν ἤγετο. Λεπτῶν δὲ Ἐθήβας, οὗ κατωκίσθην ἔγω, Μεγάραν τε τῆνδε πενθεροῦσ τε παῖς ἐμὸς 'Αργεία τείχη καὶ Κυκλωπίαν πόλιν ῥέξατ' οἰκεῖν, ἢ ἐγὼ φεύγω κτανῶν Ἡλεκτρύωνα· συμφοράς δὲ τὰς ἐμὰς ἐξευμαρίζων καὶ πάτραν οἰκεῖν θέλων, καθόδου δίδωσι μισθὸν Εὐρυσθεὶ μέγαν, ἐξημερώσας γαῖαν, εἰθ' Ἡρας ὑπὸ κέντρος δαμασθηῖς εὗτε τοῦ χρεῶν μέτα. καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἐξεμόχθησεν πόνους,
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON, MEGARA, and her three Sons by Hercules,
seated on the steps of the altar of Zeus the Deliverer.

AMPHITRYON

Who knows not Zeus’s couch-mate, who of men,
Argive Amphitryon, sprung from Perseus’ son
Alcaeus, father of great Hercules?
Here in Thebes dwelt he, whence the earth-born
crop
Of Sown Men rose, scant remnant of whose race
The War-god spared to people Cadmus’ town
With children of their children. Sprang from these
Creon, Menoeceus’ son, king of this land,
Creon, the father of this Megara,
Whose spousals all the sons of Cadmus once
Acclaimed with flutes, what time unto mine halls
Glorious Hercules brought home his bride.
But Thebes, wherein I dwelt, and Megara,
And all his marriage-kin, my son forsook,
Yearning for Argos’ giant-builfed burg
Mycenae, whence I am outlawed, since I slew
Electryon: he, to lighten mine affliction,
And fain to dwell in his own fatherland,
Proffered Eurystheus for our home-return—
Or spurred by Hera’s goads, or drawn by fate—
A great price, even to rid the earth of pests.
And, all the other labours now achieved,
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

tο λοίσθιον δὲ Ταϊνάρου διὰ στόμα
βέβηκ' ἐς "Ἀδων τὸν τρισώματον κύνα
eis φῶς ἀνάξων, ἐνθεὸν οὐχ ἦκει πάλιν.
γέρων δὲ δὴ τις ἔστι Καδμείων λόγος
ὡς ἦν πάρος Δήρκης τις εὐνήτωρ Δύκος
τὴν ἐπτάπυργον τὴντε δεσπόζων πόλιν,
tῶ λευκόπωλῳ πρὶν τυραννῆσαι χθονὸς
Ἀμφίον' ἢ Ἰηθόν, ἐκγόνω Διός.

οὐ ταῦτον ὅνομα παῖς πατρὸς κεκλημένος,
Καδμείος οὐκ ὁν, ἀλλ' ἀπ' Ἑυβοίας μολὼν,
κτείνει Κρέοντα καὶ κτανῶν ἀρχεῖ χθονὸς,
στάσει νοσοῦσαν τὶνδ' ἐπεισπεσῶν πόλιν.

ἡμῖν δὲ κύδος εἰς Κρέοντ' ἀνημέμον
κακὸν μέγιστον, ὡς ἐοικε, ἡγυνεῖται.

τοῦμοι γὰρ ὅντος παιδὸς ἐν μυχοῖς χθονῷς
ὁ καυνὸς οὐτὸς τῆς ὡς ἄρχων Δύκος
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παιδὰς ἐξελείν θέλει
κτανῶν δάμαρτα θ', ὡς φόνῳ σβέσῃ φόνων,
καὶ —εἰ τὸ δὴ χρή καὶ ἐν ἀνδράσιν λέγειν
γέροντ' ἀνχρείον—μὴ ποθ' οἶδ' ἤνδρωμένοι
μὴ τρωσίν ἐκτράξωσιν αἵματος δίκην.

ἐγὼ δὲ—λείπει γὰρ μὲ τοῦσ' ἐν δώμασι

τροφόν τέκνων οἰκουρόν, ἥνικα χθονὸς
μέλαιαν ὄρφην εἰσεβαίνε παῖς ἐμον—
σὺν μητρὶ, τέκνα μὴ θάνωσ' Ἡρακλέους,

βωμὸν καθίζω τόνδε σωτήρος Διός,

ὅν καλλινίκου δορὸς ἄγαλμ' ἱδρύσατο

Μενύας κρατήσας οὐμὸς εὐγενῆς τόκος.

πάντων δὲ χρείοι τάσδ' έδρας φυλάσσομεν,

σῶτων ποτῶν ἐσθήτος, ἀστρωτῶ πέδω

πλευράς τιθέντες· ἐκ γὰρ ἐσφραγισμένοι

δόμων καθήμεθ' ἀπορία σωτηρίας.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

For the last, down the gorge of Taenarus
He hath passed to Hades, to bring up to light
The hound three-headed, whence he hath not re-
turned.

Now an old legend lives mid Cadmus’ sons
That erstwhile was one Lycus Dirce’s spouse,
And of this seven-gated city king,
Ere Zethus and Amphion ruled the land,
Lords of the White Steeds, sprung from loins of Zeus. 30
And this man’s son, who bears his father’s name,—
No Theban, an Euboean outlander,—
Fell on the city by sedition rent,
Slew Creon, and having slain him rules the land.
And mine affinity with Creon knit
Is turned to mighty evil, well I wot.
For while my son is in the earth’s dark heart,
This upstart Lycus, ruler of the land,
Would fain destroy the sons of Hercules,
And slay, with blood to smother blood, his wife 40
And me,—if I be reckoned among men,
A useless greybeard,—lest these, grown to man,
Take vengeance for their mother’s father’s blood.

And I—for my son left me in his halls
To ward his sons and foster them, when he
Into the earth’s black nether darkness passed—
Here with their mother sit, that Hercules’ sons
May die not, at the altar of Saviour Zeus,
Which, in thanksgiving for the victory won
O’er Minyan foes, mine hero-scion reared. 50
And, lacking all things, raiment, meat, and drink,
Here keep we session, on the bare hard ground
Laying our limbs; for desperate of life
Here sit we, barred from homes whose doors are sealed.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

φίλων δὲ τοὺς μὲν οὐ σαφεῖς ὡρῶ φίλους, οἷς δ᾽ ὄντες ὀρθῶς ἀδύνατοι προσωφελεῖν. τοιούτων ἀνθρώπουσιν ἡ δυσπραξία, ἣς μῆποθ' ὀστὶς καὶ μέσως εὐνοὺς ἔμοι τύχοι, φίλων ἔλεγχον ἀψευδέστατον.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὡς πρέσβυ, Ταφίων νὸς ποτ' ἔξειδες πόλεως στρατηγικήσας κλειών Καδμείων δορός, ὡς οὐδὲν ἀνθρώπουσι τῶν θεῶν σαφές. ἐγὼ γὰρ οὖτ' εἰς πατέρ' ἀπηλάθην τύχης, διὸ εἰνεκ' ὁλίβου μέγας ἐκομπάςθη ποτέ, ἐχων τυραννίδ', ἢς μακραὶ λόγχαι πέρι πηδῶσ' ἔροτι σώματ' εἰς εὐδαιμονα, ἐχων δὲ τέκνα: κάμ' ἔσωκε παιδί σφ' ἐπίσημοι εὐνὴν Ἡρακλεῖ συνοικίσας: καὶ νῦν ἐκείνα μὲν θανόντ' ἀνέπτατο: ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ σὺ μέλλομεν θησκεῖν, γέρων, οἷς θ' Ἡράκλειου παιδέ, οὐς ὑπὸ πτεροῖς σφῶν νεοσοῦς ὅρμαι ὡς υφειμένους. οἷς δ' εἰς ἔλεγχον ἀλλος ἀλλοθεν πίττων, ὡς μήτερ, αὐθά', τοι πατήρ ἀπεστι γῆς; τι δρᾷ, πόθ' ἤξει; τῷ νεώ δ' ἐσφαλμένοι ξηποῦσι τὸν τεκόντ': ἐγὼ δὲ διαφέρω λόγους μυθεύουσα: θαυμάζω δ', ὅταν πύλαι ψοφῶσι, πᾶσ' τ' ἀνίστησιν πόδα, ὡς πρὸς πατρῷ προσπεσούμενοι γόνυ. νῦν οὖν τίν' ἐλπίδ' ἢ πόρον σωτηρίας ἐξευμαρίζει, πρέσβυ; πρὸς σ' γὰρ βλέπω. ὡς οὔτε γαῖας ὤρι ἄν ἐκβαίμεν λάθρα: φυλακαὶ γὰρ ἡμῶν κρείσσονες κατ' ἐξόδους: οὔτ' ἐν φίλοισιν ἐλπίδες σωτηρίας ἐτ' εἰσίν ἡμῖν. ἤμεν οὖν γνώμην ἔχεις.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

And of friends some, I note, are insincere,
Some, friends in truth, are helpless for our aid:
Such evil is misfortune unto men;
’Tis friendship’s sternest test: may it never come
To friend of mine, how faint soe’er his love!

MEGARA

Ancient, who once didst smite the Taphians’ burg,
Captaining gloriously the Theban spears,
How are God’s ways with men past finding out!
Not Fortune’s outcast was I through my sire:
So prospered he, all men acclaimed him great:
Kingship he had—that thing for lust whereof
Long lances leap against men fortune-throned:
Children had he; me to thy son he gave,
In glorious spousal joined with Hercules.
Now is all dead—on vanished pinions flown!
Now, ancient, thou and I are marked for death,
With Hercules’ children, whom, as ’neath her wings
A bird her fledglings gathereth, so I keep.
And this one, that one falls to questioning still—
“Mother, in what land stays our father?—tell.
What doth he? When comes?” In child-ignorance
They seek their sire: and still I put them by
With fables feigned; yet wondering start, whene’er
A door sounds; and all leap unto their feet,
Looking to cling about their father’s knees.

What hope or path of safety, ancient, now
Canst thou devise?—for unto thee I look.
We cannot quit the land’s bounds unperceived,
For at all outlets guards too strong are set:
Nor linger hopes of safety any more
In friends. What counsel then thou hast soe’er,
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

λέγει εἰς τὸ κοινῷ, μηθανεῖν ἐτοιμον ἢ, χρόνον δὲ μηκύνωμεν ὄντες ἀσθενείς.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ὁ θύγατερ, οὐτοὶ βάριον τὰ τοιάδε

φαύλως περαινεῖσι σπουδάσαντ' ἀνεν πόνου.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

λύπης τι προσδεῖσ ἡ φιλεῖς οὕτω φάος;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

καὶ τὰδε χαίρω καὶ φιλῶ τὰς ἐλπίδας.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

καγώ δοκεῖν δὲ τάδόκητ' οὐ χρῆ, γέρον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἐν ταῖς ἀναβολαῖς τῶν κακῶν ἐνεστ' ἀκη.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὁ δ' ἐν μέσῳ με λυπρὸς ὑπὶ δάκνει χρόνος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἐτ' ἄν γένοιτ', ὁ θύγατερ, οὕριος δρόμος

ἐκ τῶν παρόντων τῶν' ἐμοί καὶ σοὶ κακῶν,

ἐλθοι τ' ἐτ' ἄν παῖς οὕμος, εὐνήτωρ δὲ σός.

ἀλλ' ήσύχαζε καὶ δακρυρρόουσ τέκνων

πηγάς ἀφαίρει καὶ παρευκήλει λόγοις,
κλέπτουσα μύθοις ἀθλίους κλοπάς ὅμως.

κάμνουσι γὰρ τοι καὶ βροτῶν αἱ συμφοραί,
καὶ πνεῦματ' ἀνέμων οὐκ ἀεὶ βρώμην ἔχει,

οἱ τ' εὐτυχοῦντες διὰ τέλους οὐκ εὐτυχεῖσιν

ἐξίσταται γὰρ πάντ' ἀπ' ἀλλήλων δίχα.
οὕτως δ' ἄνηρ ἀριστος ὅστις ἔπισε

πέποιθεν ἀεὶ· τὸ δ' ἀπορεῖν ἀνδρὸς κακὸν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὑψόροφα μέλαθρα

καὶ γεραιὰ δέμνι, ἀμφὶ βάκτρωις

στρ.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Now speak it out, lest death be at the door,  
And we, who are helpless, do but peize the time.  

AMPHITRYON
Daughter, not easily, without deep thought,  
May one, though ne'er so earnest, counsel here.  

MEGARA
Dost seek more grief? Art so in love with life?  

AMPHITRYON
In this life I rejoice: I love its hopes.  

MEGARA
And I: yet for things hopeless none may look.  

AMPHITRYON
Even in delay is salve for evils found.  

MEGARA
But ah the gnawing anguish of suspense!  

AMPHITRYON
Daughter, a fair-wind course may yet befall  
From storms of present ills for thee and me.  
Yet may he come—my son, thy lord, may come.  
Nay, calm thee: stop the fountains welling tears  
Of these thy sons, and soothe them with thy words,  
Cheating them with a fable—piteous cheat!  
Sooth, men's afflictions weary of their work,  
And tempest-blasts not alway keep their force;  
Nor prosperous to the end the prosperous are;  
For all things fleet and yield each other place.  
He is the hero, who in steadfast hope  
Trusts on: despair is but the coward's part.  

Enter chorus, leaning on their staves, and climbing the ascent to the altar.  

CHORUS
Unto the stately palace-roofs, whereby  
The ancient coucheth on the ground,  

(Str.)
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἐρεύσαμα θέμενος, ἐστάλην ιαλέμων
γόων ἄοιδὸς ὡστε πολίδος ὄρνις,
ἔπεα μόνον καὶ δόκημα νυκτερωτὸν
ἐννύχων ὁνείρων,
tρομερὰ μὲν, ἀλλ’ ὄμως πρόθυμα.

ὁ τέκεα πατρὸς ἀπάτορ’, ὁ
γεραὶε σὺ τε τάλαινα μᾶ-
tερ, ὁ τὸν Ἥλιος δόμοις
πόσιν ἀναστενάζεις.

μὴ πόδα προκάμητε

βαρύ τε κῶλον, ὡστε πρὸς πετραῖον

†πλέπας χυγοφόρος ἀρματος βάρος φέρων
τροχηλάτοιο πᾶλος.1

λαβοῦ χερῶν καὶ πέπλων, ὁτὸν λέλοιπε
πόδος ἀμαυρὸν ἵχνος.

γέρων γέροντα παρακόμιμη,
φ’ ἕνυσπλα δόρατα νέα νέῳ
τὸ πάρος ἐν ἠλίκων πόνοις
ἔνυῃν ποτ’, εὐκλεσστάτας

πατρίδος ὁὐκ ὅνείδη.

ιδετε, πατρὸς ὁς

γόργωπες αἴδε προσφερεῖς

ὁμάτων αὐγαῖ,

τὸ δὲ δὴ κακοτυχές οὐ λέλοιπεν ἐκ τέκνων,

οὐδ’ ἀποκρεῖται χάρις.

1 A very corrupt passage: Nauck’s reading adopted.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Bowed o'er my propping staff—a chanter I
Whose song rings sorrow round—

Like some hoar swan I come—a voice, no more,
Like to a night-dream's phantom-show,
Palsied with eld, yet loyal as of yore
To friends of long ago.

Hail, children fatherless! Hail, ancient, thou!
Hail, mother bowed 'neath sorrow's load,
Who mournest for thy lord long absent now
In the Unseen King's abode!

Let feet not faint, nor let the tired limbs trail (Ant.)
Heavy, as when uphillward strain,
Trampling the stones, a young steed's feet that hale
The massy four-wheel wain.

Lay hold on helping hand, on vesture's fold,
Whoso hath failing feet that grope
Blindly: thy brother, ancient, thou uphold
Up this steep temple-slope,

Thy friend, who once mid toils of battle-peers
Shoulder to shoulder, did not shame—
When thou and he were young, when clashed the spears,—
His country's glorious name.

Mark ye how dragon-like glaring (Epode.)
As the eyes of the sire whom we knew
Are the eyes of the sons!—and unsparing
His hard lot followeth too
His sons! and the kingly mien
Of the sire in the children is seen.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

‘Ελλάς δ’ ξυμμάχους
οἶνος οἶνος ὀλέσασα
τούσδ’ ἀποστερήσει.

ἀλλ’ εἰσορῴ γὰρ τήσδε κοιράνον χθονὸς
Λύκον περώντα τῶνδε δωμάτων πάρος.

ΑΤΚΟΣ

140 τὸν Ἦρακλειον πατέρα καὶ ξυνώρον,
eἰ χρῆ μ’, ἔρωτός· χρῆ δ’, ἐπεί γε δεσπότης
ὑμῶν καθέστης, ἱστορεῖν ἂ βούλομαι.

τίν’ εἰς χρόνους ζητεῖτε μηκῶς βίον;
τίν’ ἐλπίδ’ ἀλκήν τ’ εἰσορᾶτε μὴ θανεῖν;
ἡ τοῦ παρ’ Ἀιδή πατέρα τῶνδε κείμενον
πιστεύειν ήξειν; ὡς ὑπὲρ τὴν ἄξιαν
τὸ πένθος αἴρεσθ’, εἰ θανεῖν ὑμᾶς χρέων,
σὺ μὲν καθ’ Ἐλλάδ’ ἐκβαλῶν κόμπους κενοὺς
ὡς σύγγαμος σοι Ζεὺς τέκνου τε κοινέων;

150 σὺ δ’ ὡς ἀρίστου φωτὸς ἐκλήθης δάμαρ.
τί δὴ τὸ σεμνὸν σὺ κατείργασται πόσει,
ὑδραν ἔλειον εἰ διώλεσε κτανῶν
ἡ τὸν Νέμειον θηρ’; ὃν ἐν βροχοῖς ἔλων
βραχίόνων φησ’, ἀγχόναισιν ἔξελειν.

τοῦσδ’ ἐξαγωνίζεσθε; τῶνδ’ ἀρ’ εἰνεκεν
tοὺς Ἦρακλείους παίδας οὐ θυμήσκειν χρεῶν;
δς ἐσχε δόξαν οὐδὲν ὁν εἰσυγχίας
θηρῶν ἐν αἰχμῇ, τάλλα δ’ οὐδὲν ἀλκίμος,
ὅς οὐποτ’ ἀσπίδ’ ἐσχε πρὸς λαίας χεῖρι
οὐδ’ ἠλθὲ λόγχης ἐγγύς, ἀλλὰ τὸς ἔχων,
κάκιστον ὀπλοῦ, τῇ φυγῇ πρόχειρος ἡν.
ἀνδρὸς δ’ ἐλεγχος οὐχὶ τὸς εἰσυγχίας,

2 Heath: for MSS. τέκοι νέων.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O Hellas, if thou uncaring
   Beholdest them slain, what a band
Of champions is lost to our land!

But lo, the ruler of this realm I see,
Lycus, unto these mansions drawing nigh.

Enter Lycus.

LYCUS

Thee, sire of Hercules, and thee, his wife,
I ask—if ask I may:—I may, I trow,
Who am your lord, make question as I will:—
How long seek ye to lengthen out your lives?
What hope expect ye or help from imminent death?

Trust ye that he, the sire of these, who lies
In Hades, yet shall come? How basely ye
Upraise a mourning that ye needs must die!—
Thou, who through Hellas scatteredst empty vaunts
That Zeus was co-begetter of sons with thee,
And thou, that thou wast named a hero's wife!

What mighty exploit by thy lord was wrought
In that he killed a hydra of the fen,
Or that Nemean lion?—which he snared,
Yet saith he slew with grip of strangling arms!
By these deeds would ye triumph?—for their sake
Must they die not, these sons of Hercules?
That thing of naught, who won him valour's name
Battling with beasts, a craven in all else,
Who never to his left arm clasped the shield,
Nor within spear-thrust came; but with his bow,
The dastard's tool, was ever at point to flee!
Bows be no test of manhood's valiancy:
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

アルバム δε μένων βλέπει τε κάντιδέρκεται
dορός ταχείαν ἀλοκα τάξιν ἐμβεβώς.
ἐχει δὲ τοῦμον οὐκ ἀναίδειαν, γέρον,
アルバム εὐλάβειαν ὦδα γὰρ κατακτάνων
Κρέοντα πατέρα τῆσδε καὶ θρόνους ἔχουν.
οὐκαυν τραφέντων τῶν δε μιμουρός ἐμοὶ
χρήζω λιπεσθαι τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

τὸ τοῦ Δίως μὲν Ζεὺς ἀμμυνέτω μέρει
παιδὸς· τὸ δ᾽ εἰς ἐμ᾽, Ἡράκλεις, ἐμοὶ μέλει
λόγοις τὴν τοῦδ᾽ ἀμαθίαν ὑπὲρ σέθεν
dειξαι· κακῶς γὰρ σ᾽ οὐκ ἐπεκεύεσθιν.
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν τὰρρῃτ᾽, ἐν ἀρρητοῖς γὰρ
τὴν σήν νομίζω δειλίαν, Ἡράκλεις,
σὺν μάρτυσιν θεοῖς δεῖ μ᾽ ἀπαλάξαι σέθεν.
Δίως κεραινών δ᾽ ἡρόμην τέθριππά τε,
ἐν οἷς βεβηκὼς τοῖς γῆς βλαστήμασι
Γάςι, πλευρῶς πτὴν ἐναρμόσας βῆλη,
tὸν καλλάνικον μετὰ θεῶν ἐκώμασε·
tετρασκελεῖς θ᾽ ὑβρίσμα Κενταύρων γένος,
Φολόνην ἔπελθον, δ᾽ κάκιστε βασιλέων,
ἔρου τίν᾽ ἄνδρ᾽ ἀριστον ἐγκρίνειαν ἄν,
ἡ οὐ παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν, ὅν αὐτοὶ εἶναι δοκεῖν.
Δίρφυν δ᾽ ἐρωτῶν ἡ σ᾽ ἑκρεψ᾽ Ἀβανίδα,
οὐκ ἂν σ᾽ ἐπαινέσειεν οὐ γὰρ ἐσθ᾽ ὅπου
ἐσθλῶν τι δράσας μάρτυρ᾽ ἅν λάβοις πάτραν.
τὸ πάνσοφον δ᾽ εὐρήμα, τοξήρη σάγην,
μέμφει· κλύων νῦν τὰπ᾽ ἐμοὶ σοφὸς γενοῦ.

Ἀνὴρ ὀπλήτης δοῦλος ἔστι τῶν ὅπλων,
κἀν τοίς συνταχθέσιν ὦν σι μὴ ἀγαθοῖς
αὐτὸς τέθυηκε δειλία τῇ τῶν πέλας,
θραύσας τε λόγχην οὐκ ἔχει τῷ σώματι

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Who bideth steadfast in the ranks, calm-eyed.
Facing the spear's swift furrow—a man is he!
Greybeard, no ruthlessness hath this my part,
But heedfulness: well know I that I slew
Creon, this woman's sire, and hold his throne.
Therefore I would not these should grow to man,
Left to avenge them on me for my deeds.

AMPHITRYON

For Zeus's part—his own son's birth let Zeus
Defend: but, Hercules, to me it falls
Pleading thy cause to show this fellow's folly:
I may not suffer thee to be defamed.
First; of that slander—for a slanderous lie,
Hercules, count I cowardice charged on thee,—
By the Gods' witness thee I clear of this:
To Zeus's thunder I appeal, to the car
That bare the Hero against the earth-born brood,
The Giants, planting winged shafts in their ribs,
When with the Gods he sang the victory-chant.
Or thou to Pholoë go, most base of kings,
The four-foot monsters ask, the Centaur tribe,
Ask them whom they would count the bravest man.
Whom but my son?—by thee named "hollow show"!
Ask Dirphys, Abas' land, which fostered thee;
It should not praise thee:—place is none wherein
Thy land could witness to brave deed of thine!

And at the bow, the crown of wise inventions,
Thou sneerest!—now learn wisdom from my mouth:
The man-at-arms is bondsman to his arms,
And through his fellows, if their hearts wax faint,
Even through his neighbours' cowardice, he dies.
And, if he break his spear, he hath naught to ward
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

θάνατον ἀμύναι, μίαν ἔχων ἀλκήν μόνον·
όσοι δὲ τόξοις χείρ· ἐχουσίν εὐστοχον,
ἐν μὲν τὸ λύχτων, μυρίους οἴστοις ἀφεῖς
ἄλλοις τὸ σῶμα ῶNobody met μὴ καθανεῖν,
ἐκάς δ’ ἀφεστῶς πολεμίους ἀμύνεται
τυφλοῖς ὀράντας οὐτάσας τοξεύματι,
τὸ σῶμα τ’ οὐ δίδωσι τοῖς ἑναντίοις,
ἐν εἰφυλάκτῳ δ’ ἐστὶ· τοῦτο δ’ ἐν μάχῃ
σοφὸν μάλιστα, δρῶντα πολεμίοις κακῶς
σώζειν τὸ σῶμα, μὴ ἐκ τύχης ὀρμυσμένους.
λόγοι μὲν οἴδε τοῖς σοῖς ἑναντίαν
γνώμην ἔχουσι τῶν καθεστῶτων πέρι.
παῖδας δὲ δὴ τί τούσδ’ ἀποκτεῖναι θέλεις;
τί σ’ οἴδ’ ἐδρασάν; ἐν τί σ’ ἡγούμαι σοφόν,
εἰ τῶν ἀρίστων τἀκγον’ αὐτὸς ἀν’ κακὸς
dédeikas. ἀλλὰ τοῦθ’ ὦμοι ἡμῖν βαρύ,
eἰ δειλίας σῆς καθανούμεθ’ εἴνεκα,
ὁ χρῆν σ’ ύφ’ ἡμῶν τῶν ἀμεινόνων παθεῖν,
eἰ Ζεὺς δικαίας εἶχεν εἰς ἡμᾶς φρένας.
eἰ δ’ οὖν ἔχειν γῆς σκῆπτρα τῆς ἄντος θέλεις,
ἐσαν ἡμᾶς φυγάδας ἐξέθειν χθονός·
βία δ’ ὑδάσης μηδέν, ἢ πείσει βίαν,
ὅταν θεός σοι πνεῦμα μεταβαλὼν τύχη.
φεῦ·
ο’ γαῖα Κάδμου, καὶ γὰρ εἰς σ’ ἀφίξομαι
λόγους ὀνειδιστήρας ἐνδαύτομενος,
toιαύτ’ ἀμύνεθ’ Ἡρακλεῖ τέκνοισι τε;
δὴ εἰς Μινύαισι πᾶσι διὰ μάχης μολὼν
Θῆβαις ἐθηκεν ὦμ’ ἐλεύθερον βλέπειν.
οὐδ’ Ἐλλάδ’ ὕνεσ’, οὐδ’ ἀνέξομαι ποτε
συγών, κακίστην λαμβάνων εἰς παίδ’ ἐμόν,
ἡν χρῆν νεοσσοῖς τούσδε πῦρ λόγχας ὀπλα
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Death from himself, who hath but one defence. But he whose hand is cunning with the bow,— This first, and best,—lets fly unnumbered shafts, Yet still hath store wherewith to avert the death. Afar he stands, yet beats the foeman back, And wounds with shafts unseen, watch as they will; Yet never bares his body to the foe, But is safe-warded; and in battle this Is wisest policy, still to harm all foes That beyond range shrink not, oneself unhurt. These words have sense opposed full-face to thine Touching the matter set at issue here.

But wherfore art thou fain to slay these boys? What have they done? Herein I count thee wise, That thou, thyself a dastard, fear'st the seed Of heroes: yet hard fate is this for us, If we shall for thy cowardice' sake be slain, As thou by us thy betters shouldst have been, If Zeus to us were righteously inclined. Yet, if thy will be still to keep Thebes' crown, Suffer us exiled to go forth the land; But do no violence, lest thou suffer it, When God shall haply cause the wind to change.

Out on it! O land of Cadmus,—for to thee I turn, Over thee hurling mine upbraiding words,— Hercules and his sons thus succourest thou, Him who alone faced all the Minyan host, And made the eyes of Thebes see freedom's dawn? Oh, shame on Hellas!—I will hold my peace Never, who prove her ingrate to my son,— Her, whom behoved with fire, with spear, with shield
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

φέρουσαν ἐλθεῖν, ποντίων καθαρμάτων
χέρσου τ' ἀμοιβάς, ὅν ἐμόχθησεν χάριν.
τα δ', ὦ τέκν', ὦμιν οὔτε Ὀηβαίων πόλις
οὔθ' Ἑλλάς ἀρκεί: πρὸς δ' ἐμ' ἀσθενὴ φίλον
dedórkat', οὔθεν οὔτα πλὴν γλώσσης ψόφου.
ῥώμη γὰρ ἐκλέλοιπεν ἢν πρὶν εἰχομεν'
γῆρα δὲ τρομερὰ γυία κάμαυρον σθένος.
eἰ δ' ἡ νεός τε κάτι σώματος κρατῶν,
λαβῶν ἂν ἔγχος τούδε τούς ξανθοὺς πλόκους
cαθήματῶ δ' αὖ, ὡστ' Ἀτλαντικῶν πέραν
φεύγειν ὅρων ἄν δειλία τούμον δόρυ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀρ' οὐκ ἀφορμάς τοῖς λόγοισιν ἀγαθοὶ
θυητῶν ἔχουσι, καὶ βραδὺς τις ἡ λέγειν;

ΛΥΚΟΣ

σὺ μὲν λέγῃ ἡμᾶς οῖς πεπύργωσαι λόγοις,
ἐγώ δὲ δράσος σ' ἀντὶ τῶν λόγων κακῶς.

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ἀγ', οἱ μὲν 'Ελλικών, οἱ δὲ Παρνασοῦ πτυχάς
tέμνειν ἀνωχθ' ἐλθόντες ὕλουργον δρυὸς
cορμοῦσ'. ἐπειδὰν δ' εἰσκομισθόσιν πόλει,
βωμὸν πέριξ νῆσαντες ἀμφήρη ξύλα
eμπτίπρατ' αὐτῶν καὶ πυροῦτε σώματα
πάντων, ἵν' εἰδὼς οὖνκ' οὐχ ὁ καθανόν
κρατεῖ χθονὸς τῆςδ', ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὰ νῦν τάδε.

υμεῖς δὲ πρέσβεις ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἐναντίοι
γνώμαισιν οὖντες, οὐ μόνον στενάξετε
tοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας, ἀλλὰ καὶ δόμον
τύχας, ὅταν πάσχῃ τι, μενήσεσθε δὲ
dοῦλοι γεγώτες τῆς ἐμῆς τυραννίδος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ γῆς λοχεύμαθ', οὖς 'Ἀρης σπείρει ποτὲ
ἀλβρον δράκοντος ἐξερημῶσας γέννων,

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To have helped these babes, thank-offering for his toils,
Repayment for his purging seas and lands.
Ah boys, such aid to you the Thebans' town
Nor Hellas brings! To me, a strengthless friend,
Ye look, who am nothing but a voice's sound:
For vanished is the might I had of old,
Palsied with eld my limbs are, gone my strength.
Were I but young yet, master of my thews,
I had grasped a lance, this fellow's yellow hair
I had dashed with blood, and so before my spear
Far beyond Atlas' bounds the craven had fled!

CHORUS
Lo, cannot brave men find occasion still
For speech, how slow soe'er one be of tongue?

LYCUS
Rail on at me with words up-piled as towers:
I will for words requite on thee ill deeds.
(To attendant) Ho! bid my woodmen go—to Helicon
these,
Those to Parnassus' folds, and hew them logs
Of oak; and, when these into Thebes are brought,
On either side the altar billets pile,
And kindle; so the bodies of all these
Roast ye, that they may know that not the dead
Ruleth the land, but now am I king here.
And ye old men which set yourselves against
My purpose, not for Hercules' sons alone
Shall ye make moan, but for your homes' affliction,
Fast as blows fall, and so shall not forget
That ye are bondslaves of my princely power.

CHORUS
O brood of Earth, whom Ares sowed of yore,
What time he stripped the dragon's ravening jaws,
ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

οὐ σκῆπτρα, χειρὸς δεξιὰς ἐρείσματα, ἀρείτε καὶ τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἀνόσιον κάρα καθαιματώσεθ', ὥστις οὖ Καδμείως ὠν ἀρχεῖ κάκιστος τῶν νέων ἐπῆλυς ὁν; ἄλλ' οὖκ ἐμοῦ γε δεσπόσεις χαίρων ποτὲ, οὔτ' ἀπόνησα πῦλ' ἐγὼ καμὼν χερὶ ἔξεις· ἀπέρρων δ' ἐνθεν ἡλθες ἐνθάδε, ύβρίζ'· ἐμοῦ γὰρ ξώντος οὐ κτενεῖς ποτὲ τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας· οὐ τοσούντε γῆς ἐνερθ' ἐκείνος κρύπτεται λυτῶν τέκνα.

ἐπεὶ σὺ μὲν γῆν τῆνδε διολέσας ἐξείς, ὃ δ' ὀφελήσας ἀξίων οὐ τυγχάνει· κάπετα πράσσαν πόλλ' ἐγώ, φίλους ἐμοὺς θανόντας εὐ δρῶν οὐ φίλων μᾶλστα δεί; δ' δεξιὰ χείρ, ὡς ποθεῖς λαβέιν δόρυ, ἐν δ' ἀσθενεία τὸν πόθον διώλεσας.

ἐπεὶ ο' ἐπανα' ἀν δούλων ἐννέποιντά με καὶ τάσδε Θῆβας εὐκλεῶς ὄκησαμεν, ἐν αἷς σὺ χαίρεις. οὐ γὰρ εὖ φρονεῖ πόλις στάσει νοσοῦσα καὶ κακοῖς βουλεύμασιν οὐ γὰρ ποτ' ἄν σὲ δεσπότην ἐκτήσατο.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

γέροντες, αἰνῶ· τῶν φίλων γὰρ εὐνέκα ὄργας δικαίως τοὺς φίλους ἐχειν χρεών· ἤμων δ' ἐκατι δεσπόταις θυμοῦμενοι πάθητε μηδέν. τῆς δ' ἐμῆς, Ἀμφιτρύων, γνώμης ἄκουσον, ἦν τί σοι δοκὼ λέγειν. ἐγὼ φιλῶ μὲν τέκνα· πῶς γὰρ οὐ φιλῶ ἀτικτῶν, ἀμόχθησα; καὶ τὸ καθάνειν δεινὸν νομίζω· τὸ δ' ἀναγκαῖος τρόπῳ
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Will ye not lift the props of your right hands,
Your staves, and dash with blood the impious head
Of yon man, who, though no Cadmeian he,
Base outland upstart, captains the Young Men?¹
Thou shalt not scatheless lord it over me!
Not that which I have gotten by toil of hand
Shalt thou have! Hence with curses whence thou cam'st!

There outrage! Whilst I live thou ne'er shalt slay
Hercules' sons! Not hidden in earth too deep
For help is he, though he hath left his babes.
Thou, ruin of this land, possessest her;
And he, her saviour, faileth of his due!
Am I a busy meddler then, who aid
Dead friends in plight where friends are needed most?
Ah right hand, how thou yearn'st to grip the spear,
But in thy weakness know'st thy yearning vain!
Else had I smitten thy taunt of bondslove dumb,
And we had ruled with honour this our Thebes
Wherein thou joyest! A city plagued with strife
And evil counsels thinketh not aright;
Else never had she gotten thee for lord.

MEGARA

Fathers, I thank you. Needs must friends be filled
With righteous indignation for friends' wrongs.
Yet for our sake through wrath against your lords
Suffer not scathe. Amphitryon, hearken thou
My counsel, if my words seem good to thee:
I love my sons,—how should I not love whom
I bare and toiled for?—and to die I count
Fearful: yet—yet—against the inevitable

¹ The revolutionary party, who styled themselves "Young Thebes."
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

δς ἀντιτείνει, σκαίδον ἡγούμαι βρωτόν. ἡμᾶς δ᾿ ἐπειδὴ δεί θανείν, θυσίσκειν χρεῶν μὴ πυρὶ καταξανθέντας, ἕχθροῖσι γέλων διδόντας, οὔμοι τοῦ θανείν μεῖζον κακόν. οὐφείλομεν γὰρ πολλὰ δώμασιν καλὰ. σὲ μὲν δόκησις ἔλαβεν εὐκλεῆς δορός, ὥστ᾿ οὐκ ἀνεκτῶν δειλίας θανείν σ᾿ ὑπὸ οὐμόσ δ᾿ ἀμαρτύρητος εὐκλεῆς πόσις, ὥς τοῦδε παίδας οὐκ ἂν ἐκσώσαι θέλων δόξαιν κακὴν λαβόντας: οὐ γὰρ εὐγενείς κάμνουσι τοὺς αἰσχροίς τῶν τέκνων ὑπὲρ, ἔμοι τε μύμηρ ἀνδρὸς οὐκ ἀπωστέον. σκέψαι δὲ τὴν σὴν ἐλπίδα, ἡ λογίζομαι ἢξειν νομίζειν παίδα σὸν γαίας ὑπὸ καὶ τὶς θανόντων ἠλθεν ἢξ Ἄιδον πάλιν; ἀλλ᾿ ως λόγοισι τόνδε μαλθάζαμεν ἂν; ἢκιστα: φεύγειν σκαίον ἀνδρὲ ἐχθρὸν χρεῶν, σοφοῦσι δ᾿ εἰκείν καὶ τεθραμμένοις καλῶς ῥάον γὰρ αἴδοις ὑποβαλὼν φίλ᾽ ἄν τύχοις. ἤδη δ᾿ ἐστίλθε μ᾽ ἐπὶ παραπτησάμεθα φυγάς τέκνων τῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸδ᾽ ἄθλιον, πενία σὺν οίκτρᾳ περιβαλεῖν σωτηρίαν ὡς τὰ ἔξων πρόσωπα φεύγουσιν φίλους ἐν ἡμαρ ὡδυ βλέμματ᾽ ἔχειν φασὶν μόνον. τόλμα μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν θάνατον, ὃς μένει σ᾿ ὀμος. προκαλούμεθ᾽ εὐγένειαν, ὃ γέρον, σὲθεν τὰς τῶν θεῶν γὰρ ὡστὶς ἐκμοχθεῖ τύχας, πρόθυμος ἐστιν, ἡ προθυμία δ᾽ ἄφρων ὁ χρῆ γὰρ οὐδεὶς μὴ χρεῶν ἥσσεὶ ποτὲ.

ΧΩΡΟΣ

εἰ μὲν σθενόντων τῶν ἔμων βραχιών τὴν τὶς σ᾽ ὑβρίζων, ῥαδίως ἐπαύσατ᾽ ἄν.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Who strives, I hold him but a foolish man.
Since we must needs die, better 'tis to die
Not with fire roasted, yielding laughter-scorn
To foes, an evil worse than death to me.
Great is our debt of honour to our house:—
Thou hast been crowned with glorious battle-fame;
Thou canst not, must not, die a coward's death:
Nor any witness needs my glorious spouse
That he would not consent to save these sons
Stained with ill-fame: for fathers gently born
Are crushed beneath the load of children's shame.
My lord's example I cannot thrust from me.
Thine own hope—mark how lightly I esteem it:
Dost think, from the underworld thy son shall come?
Ah, of the dead, who hath returned from Hades?
Dost dream we might with words appease this wretch?
Never!—of all foes, still beware the churl!
Yield, if thou must, to wise and high-bred foes;
So thy submission may find chivalrous grace.
Even now methought, "What if we asked for these
The boon of exile?"—nay, 'twere misery
To give them life with wretched penury linked.
For upon exile-friends the eyes of hosts
Look kindly, say they, one day and no more.
Face death with us: it waits thee in any wise.
Thy noble blood I challenge, ancient friend.
Whoso with eager struggling would writhe out
From fate's net, folly is his eagerness.
For doom's decree shall no man disannul.

CHORUS

Had any outraged thee while yet mine arms
Were strong, right quickly had he ceased therefrom;
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

νῦν δ’ οὐδὲν ἔσμεν. σὸν δὲ τοῦτοθέν σκοπεῖν ὅπως διώσει τὰς τύχας, Ἀμφιτρών.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

οὗτοι τὸ δειλὸν οὔδὲ τοῦ βίου πόθος θανεῖν ἔρύκει μ’, ἄλλα παιδὶ βοῦλομαι σώσαι τέκν’ ἀλλως δ’ ἀδυνάτων έσκ’ ἐρῶν.

320 ίδου πάρεστιν ἤδε φασγάνῳ δέρῃ κεντεῖν φονεύειν, ἰέναι πέτρας ἀπο.

μὲν δὲ νῦν δὸς χάριν, ἀναξ, ἰκνούμεθα· κτείνον μὲ καὶ τὴν ἀθλίαν παιδῶν πάρος, ὡς μὴ τέκν’ εἰσίδωμεν, αὐσίον θέαν, ψυχορραγοῦντα καὶ καλοῦντα μητέρα πατρός τε πατέρα. τάλλα δ’ ἢ πρόθυμος εἰ πράσσῃ· οὔ γὰρ ἀλκήν ἔχομεν ὡστε μὴ θανεῖν.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

καγῶ σ’ ἰκνοῦμαι χάριτι προσθείναι χάριν, ἡμῖν ἵν’ ἄμφοῖν εἰς ἰπουργήσῃς διπλά· κόσμον πάρες μοι παισὶ προσθείναι νεκρῶν, δόμους ἀνοίξας—νῦν γὰρ ἐκκεκλήμεθα— ὡς ἄλλα ταῦτα γ’ ἀπολάβωσ’ οίκων πατρός.

330 ΛΤΚΟΣ

ἐσται τάδ’. οὐγειν κλῆθρα προσπόλους λέγω. κοσμεῖσθ’ ἐσώ μολόντες· οὔ φθονῷ πέπλων. ὅταν δὲ κόσμον περιβάλησθε σώμασιν, ἥξω πρὸς ύμᾶς νερτέρα δῶσων χθονί.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὁ τέκν’, ὁμαρτεῖτ’ ἀθλίῳ μητρός ποδὶ πατρόφοιν εἰς μέλαθρου, οὔ τῆς οὐσίας ἄλλοι κρατοῦσι, τὸ δ’ οὖν’ ἅσθ’ ἡμῶν ἐτὶ.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

But now I am naught. 'Tis thine, Amphitryon, now To search how thou shalt pierce misfortune's snares.

AMPHITRYON

Nor cowardice nor life-craving holds me back From death: but for my son I fain would save His sons—I covet things past hope, meseems. Lo, here my throat is ready for thy sword, For stabbing, murdering, hurling from the rock. Yet grant us twain one grace, I pray thee, king: Slay me and this poor mother ere the lads, That—sight unhallowed—we see not the boys Gasping out life, and calling on their mother And grandsire: in all else thine eager will Work out; for we have no defence from death.

MEGARA

And, I beseech, to this grace add a grace, To be twice benefactor to us twain:— Open yon doors; let me array my sons In death's attire,—for now are we shut out,— Their one inheritance from their father's halls.

LYCUS

So be it: I bid my men throw wide the doors. Pass in; adorn you: I begrudge no robes. But, when ye have cast the arraying round your limbs, I come, to give you to the nether world. [Exit.

MEGARA

Children, attend your hapless mother's steps To your sire's halls, where others' mastery holds His substance, but his name yet lingereth ours. [Exit with children.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ο Ζεῦ, μάτην ἄρ' ὀμφαγαμὼν σ' ἐκτησάμην,
μάτην δὲ παιδὸς κοινεῶν' 1 σ' ἐκλήξομεν·
οὐ δ' ἦσθ' ἄρ' ἦσσον ἡ ὁδόκεις εἶναι φίλος.
ἀρετὴ σε νικῶ θυντὸς ὅν θεοῦ μέγαν·
pαῖδας γὰρ οὐ προύδωκα τοὺς Ἡρακλέους.
οὐ δ' εἰς μὲν εὐνάς κρύφιος ἡπίστω μολείν,
τάλλοτρα λέκτρα δόντος οὐδενὸς λαβῶν,
σφέζειν δὲ τοὺς σοὺς ὁυκ ἐπίστασαι φίλους.
ἀμαθὴς τις εἰ θεός, ἢ δίκαιος οὐκ ἐφύς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αὐλινον μὲν ἐπ' εύτυχεί στρ. α'
μολπᾶ Φοῖβος ἰαχεῖ,
τὰν καλλύθρογγον κιθάραν
ἐλαιύων πλήκτρῳ χρυσέφῳ.
ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν γὰρ ἐνέραν τ' ἐς ὀρφαν
μολόντα, παῖδ' εἶτε Δίος ὑπν εἴπω
εἴτ' Ἀμφιτρύνων ἰνν,
ὑμνήσαι στεφάνῳ μό-
χων δ' εὐλογίας θέλω.
γενναίων δ' ἀρεταὶ πόνων
toῖς θανοῦσιν ἀγαλμα.

πρῶτον μὲν Δίος ἄλσος

ἡρῆμωδε λέοντος,
πυρσῷ δ' ἀμφεκαλύφθῃ
ξανθὸν κράτ' ἐπισωτίσας
dεινῷ χάσματι θηρός·

1 Scaliger: for MSS. τοι νεὼν and τὸν νεὼν.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON
Zeus, for my couch-mate gained I thee in vain,
Named thee in vain co-father of my son.
Less than thou seemedst art thou friend to us!
Mortal, in worth thy godhead I outdo:
Hercules’ sons have I abandoned not.
Cunning wast thou to steal unto my couch,—
To filch another’s right none tendered thee,—
Yet know’st not how to save thy dear ones now!
Thine is unwisdom, or injustice thine. [Exit.

CHORUS

The Lay of the Labours of Hercules

Hard on the pæan triumphant-ring (Str. 1)
Oft Phoebus outpealeth a mourning-song,
O’er the strings of his harp of the voice
sweet-singing
Sweeping the plectrum of gold along.
I also of him who hath passed to the places
Of underworld gloom—whether Zeus’ Son’s story,
[praises—
Or Amphitryon’s scion be theme of my
Sing: I am fain to uplift him before ye
Wreathed with the Twelve Toils’ garland of glory:
For the dead have a heritage, yea, have a crown,
Even deathless memorial of deeds of renown.

I. The Nemean Lion

In Zeus’ glen first, in the Lion’s lair,
He fought, and the terror was no more there;

But the tawny beast’s grim jaws were veiling
His golden head, and behind swept, trailing
Over his shoulders, its fell of hair.

1 For ii, v, vii, viii, later writers substitute the Erymanthian Boar, the Augean Stables, the Stymphalian Birds, and the Cretan Bull.

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ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τῶν τ' ὀρεινόμον ἀγρίων
Κενταύρων ποτὲ γένναν
ἐστρωσεν τόξοις φονίοις,
ἐναίρων πτανοῖς βέλεσιν.
ξύνοιδε Πηνείδος ὁ καλλιδίνας
μακρά τ' ἄρουραι πεδίων ἀκαρποί
καὶ Πηλιάδες θεράπται
σύγχροτοί θ' ὀμόλας ἐναν-
λοι, πευκαίσιν ὅθεν χέρας
πληροῦντες χθόνα Θεσσαλῶν
ιππείαις ἐδάμαζον.

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tῶν τε χρυσοκάρανον
δόρκαν ποικιλόνωτον
συλήτειραν ἀγρωστὰν
κτείνας, θηροφόρον θεᾶν
Οἰνωάτιν ἀγάλλειν.

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tεθριππῶν τ' ἐπέβα
καὶ ψαλίως ἐδάμασσε πόλους
Διομήδεος, αἰ φονίαισι φιτναῖς
ἀχάλιν' ἑθοάζον
κάθαιμα σίτα γέννας, χαρμοναίσιν
ἀνδροβρῶσι δυστράπεζοι περῶν δ'.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

II. The Centaurs

Then on the mountain-haunters raining (Ant. 1)
Far-flying arrows, his hand laid low
The tameless tribes of the Centaurs, straining
Against them of old that deadly bow.
Peneius is witness, the lovely-gliding,
And the fields unsown over plains wide-spreading,
And the hamlets in glens of Pelion hiding,
And on Homole's borders many a steading,
Whence poured they with ruining hoofs down-treading
Thessaly's harvests, for battle-brands
Tossing the mountain pines in their hands.

III. The Golden-horned Hind

And the Hind of the golden-antlered head,
And the dappled hide, which wont to spread
O'er the lands of the husbandmen stark desolation,
He slew it, and brought, for propitiation,
Unto Oenoë's Goddess, the Huntress dread.

IV. The Horses of Diomed

(Str. 2)
And on Diomed's chariot he rode, for he reined them,
By his bits overmastered, the stallions four
That had ravined at mangers of murder, and stained them
With revel of banquets of horror, when gore
From men's limbs dripped that their fierce teeth tore.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἀργυρορρύταν Εβρον
ἐξέπρασσε μόχθον, ¹
Μυκηναίῳ πονῶν τυράννῳ

tάν τε Μηλιάδ’ ἁκτὰν
'Αναύρου παρὰ πηγάς:
Κύκνον δὲ ξενοδαίκταν
τόξοις ὠλεσεν, 'Αμφαναί-
ας οἰκήτορ' ἀμικτὸν

ἐμυῳδὸς τε κόρας
ηλθεν, 'Ἑσπερίαν ἐς αὐλὰν,
χρύσεων πετάλων ἀπὸ μηλοφόρων
χερὶ καρπὸν ἀμέρξων,
δράκοντα πυρσόνωτον, ὡς σφ’ ἀπλατον
ἀμφελικτὸς ἔλικ’ ἐφρούρει, κτανῶν

ποντίας θ’ ἄλος μυχοῦς
εἰσέβαινε, θνατοῖς
γαλανείας τιθεῖς ἑρετμοῖς:

οὐρανοῦ θ’ ὑπὸ μέσσαν
ἐλαύνει χέρας ἔδραν,
'Ατλαντος δόμον ἐλθὼν·
ἀστρωποὺς τε κατέσχειν οἴ-
κους εὐανορίᾳ θεῶν·

¹ Dindorf: for MSS. πέραν ... διεπέρασ’ ὤχθον.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

V. Cynus the Robber

Over eddies of Hebrus silvery-coiling
He passed to the great work yet to be done,
In the tasks of the lord of Mycenae toiling;
By the surf mid the Malia reefs ever boiling,
And by founts of Anaurus, he journeyed on,
Till the shaft from his string did the death-challenge sing
Unto Cynus the guest-slayer, Amphanae’s king,
Who gave welcome to none.

VI. The Golden Apples

(Rec. 2)

To the Song-maids he came, to the Garden enfolden
In glory of sunset, to pluck, where they grew
Mid the fruit-laden frondage the apples golden;
And the flame-hued dragon, the warden that drew
All round it his terrible spires, he slew.

VII. Extirpation of Pirates

Through the rovers’ gorges seaward-gazing
He sought; and thereafter in peace might roam
All mariners plying the oars swift-racing.

VIII. The Pillars of Heaven

To the mansion of Atlas he came, and placing
His arms outstretched ’neath the sky’s mid-dome,
By his might he upbore the firmament’s floor,
And the palace with splendour of stars fretted o’er,
The Immortals’ home.

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ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

tὸν ἰππευτάν τ᾽ Ἀμαξόνων στρατὸν στρ. γ᾽
Μαιῶτιν ἄμφὶ πολυπόταμον
ἐβα δι᾽ Ἐυξεινον οίδμα λίμνας,
tίν’ οὐκ ἄφ’ Ἐλλανίας ἄγορον ἀλίσας φίλων,
†κόρας Ἀρείας πλέων¹
χρυσέου στόλου φάρους;†
ξωστήρος ὀλεθρίους ἄγρας;
tὰ κλεινὰ δ’ Ἐλλὰς ἔλαβε βαρβάρου κόρας
λάφυρα, καὶ σφύζεται Μυκήναις.

tὰν τε μυριόκρανον
πολύφονον κύνα Δέρνας
ῦδραν ἔξεπτυρωσεν,

βέλεσὶ τ’ ἀμφέβαλ’ ῥόν,²
tὸν τρισώματον οἴσιν ἔ-
κτα βοτήρ’ Ἐρυθείας.

δρόμων τ’ ἄλλων ἀγάλματ’ εὐτυχῆ ἀντ. γ’
διῆλθε τὸν τε πολυδάκρυνον
ἐπλευσ’ ἐς” Αίδαν, πόνων τελευτάν,
ἲν’ ἐκπεραίνει τάλας

¹ Murray’s conjecture, for MSS. πέπλων χρυσεόστολον φάρος.
² Wecklein: for MSS. ἀμφέβαλε τὸν.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

IX. The Amazon's Girdle (Str. 3)

On the Amazon hosts upon war-steeds riding
By the shores of Maeotis, the river-meads green,
He fell; for the surges of Euxine he cleft.
What brother in arms was in Hellas left,
That came not to follow his banner's guiding,
When to win the Belt of the Warrior Queen,
The golden clasp of the mantle-vest,
He sailed far forth on a death-fraught quest?
And the wild maid's spoils for a glory abiding
Greece won: in Mycenae they yet shall be seen.

X. The Hydra

And the myriad heads he seared
Of the Hydra-fiend with flame,
Of the murderous hound Lernaean.

XI. The Three-bodied Giant Geryon

With its venom the arrows he smeared
That stung through the triple frame
Of the herdman-king Erythraean.

XII. Cerberus (Ant. 3)

Many courses beside hath he run, ever earning
Triumph; but now to the dolorous land,
Unto Hades, hath sailed for his last toil-strife;
And there hath he quenched his light of life
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

βίοτον οὐδ’ ἔβα πάλιν.
στέγαι δ’ ἔρημοι φίλων,
tὰν δ’ ἀνόστιμον τέκνων
Χάρωνος ἐπιμένει πλάτα
βίον κέλευθον ἄθεον ἄδικον· εἰς δὲ σὰς
χέρας βλέπει δώματ’ οὗ παρόντος.
eἰ δ’ ἐγὼ σθένος ἦβων
dόρυ τ’ ἐπαλλοῦ ἐν αἴχμα,
Καδμείων τε σύνηβοι,
tέκεσιν ἂν παρέσταν

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άλκα: νῦν δ’ ἀπολείπομαι
tὰς εὐδαίμονος ἤβας.

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άλλ’ ἐσωρῷ γὰρ τούσδε φθιμένων
ἐνδυτ’ ἔχοντας, τοὺς τοῦ μεγάλου
ὕποτε παῖδας τὸ πρὶν Ἡρακλέους,
ἀλοχον τε φίλην ὑποσειραίους
ποσὶν ἐλκουσαν τέκνα, καὶ γεραιῶν
πατέρ’ Ἡρακλέους. δύστηνος ἐγὼ,
δακρύων ὡς οὗ δύναμαι κατέχειν
γραίας ὄσσων ἔτι πηγάς.

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ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἐλευ τίς ἴερεύς, τίς σφαγεύς τῶν ὑστότιμων
ἡ τῆς ταλαίνης τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς φονεύς;
ἔτοιμ’ ἄγειν τὰ θύματ’ εἰς ’Αἴδου τάδε.
ὦ τέκν’, ἀγομεθά σεῦνος οὗ καλὸν νεκρῶν,
ὁμοῦ γέροντες καὶ νέοι καὶ μητέρες.
ὦ μοῖρα ὄσταλαίνῃ ἐμῆ τε καὶ τέκνων
τῶνδ’, οὓς πανύστατ’ ὀμμασίν προσδέρκομαι.
ἔτεκον μὲν ύμᾶς, πολεμίοις δ’ έθρεψάμην

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Utterly—woe for the unreturning!
And of friends forlorn doth thy dwelling stand;
And waits for thy children Charon's oar
By the river that none may repass any more,
Whither godless wrong would speed them: and
yearting
We strain our eyes for a vanished hand.
But if mine were the youth and the might
Of old—were mine old friends here,
Might my spear but in battle be shaken,
I had championed thy children in fight:
But mid desolate days and drear
I am left, of my youth forsaken!

Lo where they come!—the shrouds of burial cover
Each one,—the children of that Hercules
Named the most mighty in the days past over,
She whom he loved, whose hands draw onward these
Like to a chariot's trace-led steeds,—the father
Stricken in years of Hercules!—woe's me!
Fountains of tears within mine old eyes gather;
How should I stay them, such a sight who see? 450

Enter MEGARA, AMPHITRYON, and children.

MEGARA
Who is the priest, the butcher, of the ill-starred?
Or who the murderer of my woeful life?
Ready the victims are to lead to death.
O sons, a shameful chariot-team death-driven
Together, old men, mothers, babes, are we.
O hapless doom of me and these my sons
Whom for the last time now mine eyes behold!
I bare you, nursed you—all to be for foes

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ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

υβρισμα καπιχαμα και διαφθοραν.

φει:

η πολυ με δοξης εξεπαισαν ελπιδεσ,

ην πατρος υμων εκ λογων ποτ' ηλπισα.

σοι μεν γαρ Αργος ένεμ' ο καθανων πατηρ,

Ευρυσθεως δ' εμελλες οικησειν δομους

της καλλικάρπου κρατος έχων Πελασγιας,

στολην τε θηρος αμφεβαλλε σφ καρα

λευντος, ηπερ αυτως εξωπλιξετο:

συ δ' ησθα Θηβων των φιλαρματων αναξ,

εγκληρα πεδια ταμα γης κεκτημενος,

ως εξεπειθες των κατασπειρατα σε:

εις δεξιαν δε σην άλεξητηριων

ξυλων καθιε δαιδαλον, ψευδη δοσιν.

σοι δ' ην επερσε τοις εκηβόλοις ποτε

tοξουσι δώσεων Οιχαλλαν ιπέσχετο.

τρεις δ' δυτας υμας τριπτυχως τυραννισι

πατηρ επύργου, μεγα φρονων ευανδρια.

εγω δε νυμφας ηκροθιναξομην,

κηδη συναψουσ', εκ τ' Αθηναιων χθονος

Σπαρτης τε Θηβων θ', ως ανημιμενοι καλως

προμνησιοισι βλου έχοις ευδαιμονα.

και ταυτα φρουδα: μεταβαλούσα δ' η τυχη

νυμφας μεν υμων Κηρας άντιδωκ' εχειν,

εμοι δε δακρυνα λουτρα: δυστηνος φρενων.

πατηρ δε πατρος έστια γάμους οδη,

"Αιδην νομίξων πενθερόν, κηδος πυκρον.

ομοι, την υμων πρωτον η την ύστατον

προς στερνα θωμαι; τω προσαρμόσω στόμα ;
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

A scoff, a glee, a thing to be destroyed.
Woe and alas!
Ah for my shattered dreams, my broken hopes,
Hopes that I once built on your father's words!

Argos to thee¹ thy dead sire would allot:
Thou in Eurystheus' palace wast to dwell
In fair and rich Pelasgia's sceptred sway:
That beast's fell o'er thine head he wont to throw,
The lion's skin wherein himself went clad.
Thou² shouldst be king of chariot-loving Thebes,
And hold the campaigns of mine heritage;
Thy prayer won this of him that gave thee life;
And to thy right hand would he yield the club,
A feigned gift, his carven battle-stay.
To thee³ the land, by his far-smiting bow
Once wasted, promised he, Oechalia.
So with three princiomedoms would your sire exalt
His three sons, in the pride of his great heart.
And I chose out the choice of Hellas' brides,
Linking to ours by marriage Athens' land,
And Thebes, and Sparta, that ye might, as ships
Moored by sheet-anchors, ride the storms of life.

All that is past: the wind of fate hath veered,
And given to you the Maids of Doom for brides,
Tears for my bride-baths. Woe for those my dreams!
And now your grandsire makes the spousal-feast
With Hades for brides' sire, grim marriage-kin.
Ah me! whom first of you, or whom the last,
To mine heart shall I press?—whom to my lips?

¹ The eldest son, Therimachus.
² The second son, Creontidas.
³ The third son, Deīcoōn.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

tίνος λάβωμαι; πῶς ἂν ὡς ξουθόπτερος
μέλισσα συνενέγκαμι ἂν ἐκ πάντων γόους,
eἰς ἔν δὲ ἐνεγκούσθ’ ἄθροον ἀποδοίην δάκρυν.

ω φιλτατ’, εἰ τις φθόγγος εἰσακούειται
θυνητῶν παρ’ Ἀδη, σοι τάδ’, 'Ηράκλεις, λέγω:
θυήσκει πατήρ σος καὶ τέκνι, ὁλυμμαι δ’ ἐγώ;
ἡ πρὶν μακαρία διὰ σ’ ἐκληξύμην βροτοῖς.

ἀρηξον, ἐλθ’ καὶ σκιὰ φάνηθι μοι·
ἂνις γὰρ ἐλθὼν κἂν ὄναρ.¹ γένοιο σὺ
κακοὶ γάρ εἰσιν οἱ τέκνα κτείνουσι σά.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

σὺ μὲν τὰ νέρθεν εὔτρεπὴ ποιοῦ, γύναι
ἐγὼ δὲ σ’, ὦ Ζεῦ, χεῖρ’ ἐς οὐρανῶν δικῶν
αὐδῶ, τεκνοσιν εἰ τι τοισίδ’ ὕφελεῖν
μέλλεις, ἀμύνειν, ως τὰχ’ οὐδὲν ἁρκέσεις.
καῖτοι κέκλησαι πολλάκις· μάτην πονῶ·
θανεῖν γάρ, ὡς ἑοίκ’, ἀναγκαίως ἔχει.

ἀλλ’, ὦ γέροντες, μικρὰ μὲν τὰ τοῦ βίου·
τοῦτον δ’ ὅπως ἡδίστα διαπέρασετε,
ἐξ ἡμέρας εἰς νῦκτα μὴ λυπούμενοι.

ὡς ἐλπίδας μὲν ὁ χρόνος οὐκ ἐπίσταται
σφέξειν, τὸ δ’ αὐτοῦ σπουδᾶσας διέπτατο.

ὁρᾶτε μ’ ὅσπερ ἡ περίβλεπτος βροτοῖς
ἀνομαστὰ πράσσων, καὶ μ’ ἀφεῖλεθ’ ἡ τύχη

ωσπερ πτερον πρὸς αἰθέρ’ ἡμέρα μιᾶ.

ὁ δ’ ὄλβος ὁ μέγας ἢ τε δόξ’ οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅτῳ
βέβαιοι ϕέστι. χαίρετ’ ἄνδρα γάρ φίλον

μαύστατων νῦν, ἤλκεις, δεδόρκατε.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἔα·

ω πρέσβυν, λεύσσω τὰμὰ φιλτατ’; ἢ τί φῶ;

¹ Wilamowitz: for MSS. ἰκανῶν ἰν.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Whom shall I clasp? Oh but to gather store
Of moan, like brown-winged bee, from grief's wide
field,
And blend together in tribute of one tear!
Dear love,—if any in Hades of the dead
Can hear,—I cry this to thee, Hercules:
Thy sire, thy sons, are dying; doomed am I,
I, once through thee called blest in all men's eyes.
Help!—come!—though as a shadow, yet appear!
Thy coming as a dream-shape should suffice
To daunt the cravens who would slay thy sons!

AMPHITRYON

Lady, the death-rites duly order thou.
But I, O Zeus, with hand to heaven upcast,
Cry—if for these babes thou hast any help,
Save them; for soon thou nothing shalt avail.
Yet oft hast thou been prayed: in vain I toil;
For now, meseems, we cannot choose but die.
Ah friends, old friends, short is the span of life:
See ye pass through it blithely as ye may,
Wasting no time in grief 'twixt morn and eve.
For nothing careth Time to spare our hopes:
Swiftly he works his work, and fleets away.
See me, the observed of all observers once,
Doer of deeds of name—in one day all
Fortune hath snatched, as a feather skyward blown.
None know I whose great wealth or high repute
Is sure. Farewell: for him that was your friend
Now for the last time, age-mates, have ye seen.

HERCULES appears in the distance.

MEGARA

Ha!
Ancient, my dear lord—else what?—do I see?
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα, θύγατερ ἀφασία δὲ καῦ ἔχει.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὅδ' ἐστὶν ὃν γῆς νέρθεν εἰσηκουόμεν,

εἰ μὴ γ' ὀνειρον ἐν φάει τι λεύσομεν.

τί φημὶ; ποι' ὄνειρα κηραίνουσ' ὁρῶ;

οὐκ ἔσθ' ὃδ' ἄλλος ἀντὶ σοῦ παιδός, γέρον.

520 δεῦρ', ὃ τέκν', ἐκκρήμνασθε πατρῶν πέπλων,

𝑖τ' ἐγκονείτε, μη μεθὴτ', ἐπεὶ Δίος

σωτήρος ὑμῖν οὐδὲν ἔσθ' ὃδ' ὑστερος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὁ χαῖρε, μέλαθρον πρόπυλα θ' ἐστίας ἐμῆς,

ῶς ἄσμενός σ', ἐσείδου ἐς φάος μολῶν.

ἐα· τί χρῆμα; τέκν' ὀρῶ πρὸ δωμάτων

στολμοῖσι νεκρῶν κράτας ἐξεστεμένα,

ὁχλῳ τ' ἐν ἀνδρῶν τὴν ἐμὴν ξυναορον

πατέρα τε δακρύοντα συμφορὰς τίνας;

φέρ' ἐκτῦθωμαι τῶνδε πλησίον σταθεῖς,

530 τί καινὸν ἥλθε, γύναι, δώμασιν χρέος;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὁ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ὁ φάος μολῶν πατρὶ—

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἡκεῖς, ἐσώθης εἰς ἀκμὴν ἠλθῶν φίλοις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς; τίν' εἰς ταραγμον ἣκομεν, πάτερ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

διολλύμεσθα; σὺ δὲ, γέρον, σύγγνωθί μοι,

εἰ πρόσθεν ἢρπασ' ἀ σε λέγειν πρὸς τόνδ' ἐχρῆν

τὸ θῆλυ; γάρ πως μᾶλλον ὀἰκτρὸν ἀρσένων,

καὶ τά μ' ἐθνήσκε τέκν', ἀπωλλύμην δ' ἐγώ.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON
I know not, daughter,—speechless am I struck.

MEGARA
'Tis he who lay, we heard, beneath the earth,
Except in broad day we behold a dream!
What say I?—see they dreams, these yearning eyes?
This is none other, ancient, than thy son.
Boys, hither!—hang upon your father's cloak.
Speed ye, unhand him not; for this is he,
Your helper he, no worse than Saviour Zeus.

Enter HERCULES.

HERCULES
All hail, mine house, hail, portals of mine hearth!
How blithe, returned to life, I look on you!
Ha! what is this?—my sons before the halls
In death's attire and with heads chapleted!—
And, mid a throng of men, my very wife!—
My father weeping over some mischance!
Come, let me draw nigh these and question them.
Wife, what strange stroke hath fallen on mine house?

MEGARA
O best-beloved!—

AMPHITRYON
To thy sire light of life!—

MEGARA
Art come?—art saved for friends' most desperate
need?

HERCULES
How?—father, what confusion find I here?

MEGARA
We are at point to die!—thy pardon, ancient,
That I before thee snatch thy right of speech,
For woman is more swift than man to mourn,
And my sons were to die, and I was doomed.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

'Απολλον, οίοις φροιμίοις ἀρχεῖ λόγον.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
tεθνᾶσ' ἀδελφοῖ καὶ πατὴρ οὐμὸς γέρων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πῶς φῆς; τί δράσας ἡ δορὸς ποίου τυχῶν;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
Δύκος σφ' ὁ καινὸς γῆς ἀναξ διώλεσέν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὁπλοῖς ἀπαντῶν ἡ νοσησάσης χθονός;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
στάσει· τὸ Κάδμον δ' ἐπτάπυλον ἔχει κράτος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δήτα πρὸς σὲ καὶ γέροντ' ἦλθεν φάβος;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
κτείνειν ἐμελλε πατέρα καμὲ καὶ τέκνα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς; τί ταρβῶν ὀρφάνευμ' ἐμῶν τέκνων;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
μὴ ποτε Κρέοντος θάνατον ἐκτισσάιτο.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κόσμος δὲ παίδων τίς ὃδε νερτέροις πρέπων;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
θανάτου τάδ' ἦδη περιβόλαι' ἐνήμμεθα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ πρὸς βιαν ἐθυμήσκετ'; ὁ τλήμων ἔγω.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
φίλων ἔρημοι, σὲ δὲ θανόντ' ἦκουομεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πόθεν δ' ἐς ύμᾶς ἢδ' ἐς ἡλθ' ἀθυμία;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
Εὐρυσθέως κήρυκες ἄγγελλον τάδε.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES
Apollo!—what strange prelude to thy speech!

MEGARA
Dead are my brethren and my grey-haired sire.

HERCULES
How?—by what deed, or stricken by what spear?

MEGARA
’Twas Lykus slew them, this land’s upstart king.

HERCULES
Met in fair fight?—or plague-struck was the land?

MEGARA
By faction stricken. He rules seven-gated Thebes.

HERCULES
Why fell on thee and on the old man dread?

MEGARA
He sought to slay thy sire, thy sons, and me.

HERCULES
How?—of my fatherless children what feared he?

MEGARA
Lest Creon’s death one day they might avenge.

HERCULES
This vesture meet for dead folk, what means it?

MEGARA
In this attire we shrouded us for death.

HERCULES
And were to die by violence?—woe is me!

MEGARA
Forlorn of friends, we heard that thou hadst died.

HERCULES
Wherefore came on you this despair of me?

MEGARA
The heralds of Eurystheus published this.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
τι δ’ ἐξελείπτετ’ οίκοιν ἐστίαν τ’ ἐμήν;
ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
βία, πατήρ μὲν ἐκπεσῶν στρωτοῦ λέχους.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
κούκ ἐσχεν αἰδῶ τὸν γέροντ’ ἀτιμάσαι;
ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
αἰδῶ γ’, ἀποικεῖ τῆς τῆς θεοῦ πρόσω.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐτώ δ’ ἀπόντες ἐσπαυλύζομεν φίλων;
ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
φίλοι γάρ εἰσιν ἀνδρὶ δυστυχεῖ τίνες;
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
μάχας δὲ Μινυῶν ἄς ἔτη, ἀπέπτυσαν;
ΜΕΓΑΡΑ
ἀφίλον, ἵν’ αὖθις σοι λέγω, τὸ δυστυχές.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐ ρίψεθ’ "Αἰδοῦ τάσσε ἐπειβολὰς κόμης
καὶ φῶς ἀναβλέψεσθε τοῦ κάτω σκότου
φίλας ἀμοίβας ὑμμασίν δεδορκότες;
ἐγὼ δὲ, νῦν γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς ἔργου χερος,
πρῶτον μὲν εἰμὶ καὶ κατασκάψῳ δόμους
καὶ νῦν τυράννοις, κράτα δ’ ἀνόσιον τεμὸν
ράγω κυνῶν ἐλκήμα· Καδμείων δ’ ὅσους
κακοὺς ἐφηύρον εὐ παθόντας ἔξ ἔμοι,
τῷ καλλινίκῳ τῷ δ’ ὀπλὼ χειρόσομαι·
τοὺς δὲ πτερωτῶς διαφορὸν τοξύμασι
νεκρῶν ἀπαντ’ Ἰσμηνῶν ἐμπλήσῳ φόνον,
Δίρκης τε νᾶμα λευκὸν αἴμαχῆσεται.
τῷ γὰρ μ’ ἀμάνειν μᾶλλον ἡ δαμαρτί χρῆ
καὶ παισὶ καὶ γέροντι; χαίροντων πόνον
μάτης γὰρ αὐτοὺς τῶνδε μᾶλλον ἴνυσα.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

But why did ye forsake mine home and hearth?

MEGARA

By force: thy father from his bed was flung.

HERCULES

Had he no shame to outrage these grey hairs?

MEGARA

Shame?—from that Goddess far his dwelling is!

HERCULES

So poor of friends was I when far away!

MEGARA

Friends!—what friends hath a man unfortunate?

HERCULES

Scorned they the fights with Minyans I endured?

MEGARA

Friendless, I tell thee again, misfortune is.

HERCULES

Fling from your hair these cermements of the grave:
Look up to the light, beholding with your eyes
Exchange right welcome from the nether-gloom.
And I—for now work lieth to mine hand—
Will first go, and will raze to earth the house
Of this new king, his impious head smite off
And cast to dogs to rend. Of Thebans, all
Found traitors after my good deeds to them,
Some will I slay with this victorious mace,
And the rest scatter with my feathered shafts,
With slaughter of corpses all Ismenus fill,
And Dirce's pure stream red with blood shall run.
For whom should I defend above my wife
And sons and aged sire? Great toils, farewell!
Vainly I wrought them, leaving these unhelped!
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

καὶ δεῖ μ’ ὑπὲρ τῶνδ’, εἶπερ οἶδ’ ὑπὲρ πατρός, θυμήσκειν ἁμύνοντ’. ἢ τί φήσομεν καλὸν ὕδρα μὲν ἐλθεῖν εἰς μάχην λέοντι τε Ἐὐφροσθέως πομπαίσι, τῶν δ’ ἐμὸν τέκνων οὐκ ἐκπονήσω θάνατον; οὐκ ἄρ’ Ἡρακλῆς ὁ καλλίνικος ὡς πάροιθε λέξομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
δίκαια τοὺς τεκόντας ὦφελεῖν τέκνα πατέρα τε πρέσβιν τὴν τε κοινωνίαν γάμων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
πρὸς σοῦ μὲν, ὦ παῖ, τοῖς φίλοις εἶναι φίλον τά τ’ ἐχθρὰ μισεῖν. ἀλλὰ μὴ πείγου λιαν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
τί δ’ ἐστὶ τῶνδε θάσσον ή χρεῶν, πάτερ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
πολλοὺς πένθες, ὀλβίους δὲ τῷ λόγῳ δοκοῦντας εἶναι συμμάχους ἀναξ ἔχει, οὗ στάσιν ἔθηκαν καὶ διώλεσαν πόλιν ἐφ’ ἀρπαγαίσι τῶν πέλας, τὰ δ’ ἐν δόμοις διαπάναστι φρουδά διαφυγονθ’ ὑπ’ ἀργίας. ὥφθης ἐσελθὼν πόλιν ἐπεὶ δ’ ὥφθης, ὦρα ἐχθροῦς ἀθροίσας μὴ παρὰ γνώμην πέσῃς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
μέλει μὲν οὐδὲν εἰ μὲ πᾶσ’ εἴδεν πόλις. ὅρυν δ’ ἴδων τιν’ οὐκ ἐν αἰσίοις ἔθραις, ἔγων πόλιν τιν’ εἰς δόμους πεπτωκότα: ὡς τ’ ἐκ προνοίας κρύφος εἰσήλθον χθόνα.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
καλῶς προσελθὼν νῦν προσειπτε θ’ ἐστίναν καὶ δῶς πατρόφοις δῶμασιν σοῦ ὅμοι ἰδεῖν. ἦξει γὰρ αὐτὸς σήν δάμαρτα καὶ τέκνα ἐλξων φονεύσων καμ’ ἐπισφάξων ἀναξ.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

I ought defending these to die, if these
Die for their father:—else, what honour comes
Of hydra and of lion faced in fight
At King Eurystheus' hests, and from my sons
Death not averted? How shall I be called
Hercules the Victorious, as of old?

CHORUS
'Tis just the father should defend the sons,
The grey sire, and the yokemate of his life.

AMPHITRYON
Son, worthy of thee it is to love thy friends,
To hate thy foes: yet be not over-rash.

HERCULES
Father, what haste unmeet is found in this?

AMPHITRYON
The king hath many an ally, lackland knaves,
Fellows that have a name that they are rich,
Who sowed sedition, ruining the land,
To plunder neighbours, since their own estates,
Squandered by wasteful idleness, were gone.
Thou wast seen entering Thebes: since thou wast seen,
Let not foes gather, and thou fall unawares.

HERCULES
Though all the city saw me, naught reck I.
Yet, since I marked a bird in ominous place,
I knew that trouble on mine house had fallen,
And of set purpose entered secretly.

AMPHITRYON
Good: go thou now, and thine hearth-gods salute,
And show thy face to thine ancestral halls.
Himself, yon king, shall come to hale thy wife
And sons for murder, and to slaughter me.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

μένοντι δ' αυτοῦ πάντα σοι γενήσεται
τῇ τ' ἄσφαλείᾳ κερδανεῖς· πόλιν δὲ σήν
μὴ πρὶν ταράξης πρὶν τὸδ' εὐθέσθαι, τέκνον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
δράσω τάδ' εὐ γὰρ εἰπας· εἰμ' εἰσο δόμων.
χρόνω δ' ἀνελθὼν ἐξ ἀνηλίκων μυχῶν
"Αιδοῦ Κόρης τ' ἐνερθεν, οὖκ ἀτιμάσω
θεοὺς προσεπεῖν πρῶτα τοὺς κατὰ στέγας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

610 ἥλθες γὰρ ὄντως δῶματ' εἰς"Αιδοῦ, τέκνον ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
καὶ θηρά γ' εἰς φῶς τὸν τρίκρανον ἤγαγον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ
μάχη κρατήσας ἡ θεᾶς δωρήμασιν ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
μάχη τὰ μυστῶν δ' ὄργι ηὐτύχησ' ἰδών.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ
ἡ καὶ κατ' οίκους ἐστίν.Εὐρυσθέως ο θὴρ ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
Χθονίας νῦν ἄλσος Ἐρμιῶν τ' ἕχει πόλις.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ
οὐδ' οἶδεν Εὐρυσθεύς σε γῆς ἥκοντ' ἄνω ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐκ οἶδεν· ἥλθον ταῦθαδ' εἰδέναι πάρος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ
χρόνον δὲ πῶς τοσοῦτον ἤσθ' ὑπὸ χθονί;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
Θησέα κομίζων ἐχρόνιοι' ἐξ "Αιδοῦ, πάτερ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ
620 καὶ ποῦ ἁτιν; ἡ γῆς πατρίδος οἴχεται πέδου ;

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

If here thou bide, all shall go well with thee,  
And thou shalt gain in surety. Stir not up  
Thy city, ere thou hast ordered all things well.  

HERCULES  
I will: well said. I pass mine halls within. 
Returned at last from sunless nether crypts  
Of Hades and The Maid,¹ I will not slight  
The Gods, but hail them first beneath my roof.  

AMPHITRYON  
Son, didst thou verily go to Hades' halls?  

HERCULES  
Yea; the three-headed hound I brought to light.  

AMPHITRYON  
Vanquished in fight, or by the Goddess given?  

HERCULES  
In fight. I had seen the Mysteries—well for me.  

AMPHITRYON  
How? is the monster in Eurystheus' halls?  

HERCULES  
Nay, in Demeter's Grove, in Hermion's town.  

AMPHITRYON  
Nor knows Eurystheus thou art risen to day?  

HERCULES  
Nay; hither first, to know your state, I came.  

AMPHITRYON  
How wast thou so long time beneath the earth?  

HERCULES  
From Hades rescuing Theseus, tarried I.  

AMPHITRYON  
Where is he? Hath he passed to his fatherland?  

¹ Persephone, whose name it was perilous to utter.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
βέβηκ’ Ἄθηνας, νέρθεν ἀσμένως φυγών.
ἀλλ’ εἰ, ὅμαρτεῖτ’ ὁ τεκν’, εἰς δόμους πατρίν
καλλίωνες τάρ’ εἰσοδοι τών ἔξοδων
πάρεισιν ῥώμιν. ἀλλὰ θάρσος ἱσχετε
καὶ νάματ’ ὄσσων μηκέτ’ ἐξανιετε,
σὺ τ’, ὃ γύναι μοι, σύλλογον ψυχῆς λαβὲ
tρόμον τε παῦσαι, καὶ μέθεσθ’ ἐμὸν πέπλων
οὐ γὰρ πτερωτός οὐδὲ φευξείω φίλους.
ἀ’,
oὶδ’ οὐκ ἀφιάσ’, ἀλλ’ ἀνάπτυονται πέπλων
630
tοσφδε μᾶλλον’ ὁδ’ ἔβητ’ ἐπὶ ἕυροῦ;
ἀξὼ λαβὼν γε τοῦσδ’ ἐφολκίδας χεροῖν,
ναῦς δ’ ὅς ἔφέλξω καὶ γὰρ οὔκ ἁνάλυμαι
θεράπευμα τέκνων. πάντα τὰνθρώπων ἵσα.
φιλοῦσι ραῖδας ο’ τ’ ἀμείνονες βροτῶν
ο’ τ’ οὐδὲν ὄντες. χρήμασιν δὲ διάφοροι’
ἐχουσιν, ο’ ο’ οὐ’ πᾶν δὲ φιλότεκνον γένοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἀ νεότας μοι φίλον. ἄχθος δὲ τὸ γῆρας αἰεὶ στρ. α’
βαρύτερον Αἴτνας σκοπέλων
640 ἔπι κρατὶ κεῖται,
βλεφάρων σκοτεινῶν
φάρος ἐπικαλύψαν.
μη’ μοι μῆτ. Ἀσιήτιδος
tυρανίδος ὀλβος εἴη,
μη’ χρυσοῦ δώματα πλήρη
tὰς ἡβας ἀντιλαβεῖν.
ἀ καλλίστα μὲν ἐν ὀλβῷ,
καλλίστα δ’ ἐν πενίᾳ.
τὸ δὲ λυγρὸν φῶιόν τε γῆ-
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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES
To Athens, glad to have 'scaped the underworld.
Come, children, follow to the house your sire;
For fairer to you is your entering-in
Than your outgoing. Nay then, pluck up heart,
And shed the tear-floods from your eyes no more;
And rally thou, my wife, thy fainting spirit;
From trembling cease; and ye, let go my cloak:
I am no winged thing, nor would I fly my friends.
Ha!
These let not go, but hang upon my cloak
Only the more! Was doom so imminent then?
E'en must I lead them clinging to mine hands,
As ship that tows her boats. Not I reject
Care of my sons. Men's hearts be all like-framed:
They love their babes, as well the nobler sort,
As they that are but naught. In wealth they differ;
These have, those lack: their children all men love.

[Exeunt HERCULES, AMPHITRYON, MEGARA, and children.]

CHORUS

Ah, sweet is youth!—but always eld, (Str. 1)
On mine head weighing, downward drags,
A heavier load than lay the crags
Of Etna on the Titan quelled,

Muffling mine eyes in mantle-fold
Of gloom. Not mine be wealth that lies
In Asian tyrants' treasuries;
Not mine be halls of hoarded gold,

If forfeit youth for these must fleet—
Youth, fairest gem of high estate,
In lowliness most fair! I hate
Age, dark with death's on-coming feet:

N 2
650 ρας μυσώ κατὰ κυμάτων δ’
έρροι, μηδέ ποτ’ ὠφελεν
θνατῶν δύματα καὶ πόλεις
ἐλθείν, ἀλλὰ κατ’ αἰθέρ’ ἀ-
εἰ πτεροίσι φορείσθω.

εἰ δὲ θεοὶς ἡν ξύνισις καὶ σοφία κατ’ ἀνδρας, ἀντ. α
δίδυμον ἄν ἦβαιν ἐφερον
φανερὸν χαρακτήρ
ἀρετᾶς ὑσοσιν

660 μέτα, καθακάνοντες τ’
eἰς αὐγάς πάλιν ἄλιου
δισσοῦς ἄν ἦβαιν διαύλους,
ἄ δυσγένεια δ’ ἀπλᾶν ἄν
εἰχε ξώας βιοταῖν,
καὶ τῶ ἥν τοὺς τε κακοὺς ἄν
γνώναι καὶ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς,
ἳσον ἄτ’ ἐν νεφέλαισιν ἀ-
στρων ναύταις ἀριθμὸς πέλει.
νῦν δ’ οὐδεὶς ὑδρος ἐκ θεῶν

670 χρηστοῖς οὐδὲ κακοῖς σαφῆς,
ἄλλ’ εἰλισσόμενος τις αἰ-
ὸν πλοῦτον μόνον αὐξεί.

οὐ παύσομαι τὰς Χάριτας
Μούσαις συγκαταμνηνύσ,
ἀδίσταταν συζυγίαν.
μὴ ξώθην μετ’ ἀμοιβίας,
αἰεὶ δ’ ἐν στεφάνοισιν εἴην.
ἐτὶ τοι γέρων ἀοιδὸς
κελαδεῖ Μναμοσύναν’

180
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Deep be it drowned 'neath storm-waves' stress! 
Ah, would that ne'er such visitant 
Had come, men's homes and towns to haunt,
That yet its wings flew shelterless!

If wisdom, as of sons of earth, 
And understanding, dwelt in heaven,
Twice o'er the boon of youth were given,
Seal manifest of manhood's worth

On all true hearts: these from the grave 
To the sun's light again should climb, 
To run their course a second time: 
One life alone the vile should have.

Then, who are evil, who are good,
By such a sigh might all men learn,
As shipmen 'twixt the clouds discern
The star-host's marshalled multitude.

But now, no line clear-severing
'Twixt good and bad the Gods have drawn:
Wealth, as the rolling years sweep on,
Is all the blessing that they bring.

(Str. 2)
The Muses shall for me be twined for ever with the Graces:
For evermore my song shall pour that sweetest union's praises.
No life be mine of songless clown,
But, where for singers shines the crown,
Mine old lips still shall hymn renown of Memory's fair creation.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

680 ἐτι τὰν Ἡρακλέους
καλλίνικου ἄείδω
παρά τε Βρόμου ὀίνοδόταν
παρά τε χέλυος ἐπτατόνου
μολπᾶν καὶ Δίβυν αὐλῶν.
οὕτω καταπαύσομεν
Μούσας, αἱ μ’ ἑχόρευσαν.

παιάνα μὲν Δηλιάδες
ήμονος ἅμφι πύλας τὸν
Δατοὺς εὐπαιδα γόνου

690 εἰλίσσουσι καλλίχορον
παιάνας δὲ ἐπὶ σοὶς μελάθρους
κύκνος δὲ γέρων ἁοίδος
πολίαν ἐκ γενύων
κελαδήσω τὸ γὰρ εὖ
τοῖς ὠμοισιν ὑπάρχει,
Δίὸ δ’ παῖς τὸ δ’ εὐγενίας
κλέος ὑπερβάλλων [ἀρεταῖς]
μοχθήσας τὸν ἀκυμον
θῆκεν βίοτον βροτοῖς
πέρσας δείματα θηρῶν.

ΛΤΚΟΣ
ἐις καίρουν οἶκων, Ἄμφιτρυών, ἔξω περᾶς.
χρόνος γὰρ ἦδη δαρός ἐξ ὀτου πέπλοις
κοσμεῖσθε σῶμα καὶ νεκρῶν ἀγάλμασιν.
ἀλλ’ εἰα, παῖδας καὶ δάμαρθ’ Ἡρακλέους
ἔξω κέλευε τῶν δε φαίνεσθαι δόμων,
Ἔφ’ οἷς ὑπέστην αὐτεπάγγελτοι θανεῖν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΟΝ
ἀναξ, διώκεις μ’ ἁθλίως πεπραγότα
ὕβριν θ’ ὑβρίζεις ἐπὶ θανοῦσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Great Hercules the triumph-crowned my song extolleth ever, [wine-giver,
In feasts my theme, where beakers gleam of Bromius
And where the lyre of sevenfold string
Sounds, and where Libyan flutes outring:
Ceaseless I'll hear the Muses sing, queens of my inspiration.

(ANT. 2)

As maids of Delos chant the pæan's holy strain immortal,
[Leto's scion's portal,
Whose white feet glance as sweeps the dance round So will I raise the pæan-lay,
Swan-song of singer hoary-grey:
The portals of thine halls to-day shall hear the old lips chanting.

Proud theme hath minstrelsy, to sing mine hero's high achieving:
[mounts, far-leaving
He is Zeus' son, but deeds hath done whose glory
The praise of birth divine behind,
Whose toils gave peace to humankind,
Slaying dread shapes that filled man's mind with terrors ceaseless-haunting.

Enter LyCUS, attended. Re-enter Amphitryon.

LYCUS

So!—in good time, Amphitryon, com'st thou forth.
Ye have tarried all too long as ye arrayed
Your limbs in robes and trappings of the grave.
Haste, bid the sons and wife of Hercules
To show themselves forth-coming from these halls,
By your self-tendered covenant to die.

AMPHITRYON

King, thou dost trample on my misery:
Thou hearest insult on the heart bereaved.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

710 ἀ χρής σε μετρίως, κεῖ κρατεῖς, σπουδὴν ἔχειν. ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνάγκην προστίθης ἦμιν θανεῖν, στέργειν ἀνάγκη, δραστέον θ' ἀ σοὶ δοκεῖ.

ΑΤΚΟΣ ποῦ δὴ τὰ Μεγάρα; ποῦ τέκν' Ἀλκμήνης γόνου;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ δοκῶ μὲν αὐτὴν, ὡς θύραθεν εἰκάσαι,

ΑΤΚΟΣ τί χρῆμα δόξης; τοῦ δ' ἐξεις τεκμήριον;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ ἰκέτων πρὸς ἀγνοῖς Ἐστίας θάσσειν βάθροις,

ΑΤΚΟΣ ἀνόνητα γ' ἰκετεύουσαν ἐκσώσαι βλοῦ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ καὶ τὸν θανόντα γ' ἀνακαλεῖν μάτην πόσιν.

ΑΤΚΟΣ ὁ δ' οὖ πάρεστιν οὐδὲ μὴ μόλη ποτὲ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ οὐκ, εἰ γε μὴ τις θεῶν ἀναστήσειν νιν.

ΑΤΚΟΣ 720 χώρειν πρὸς αὐτὴν κάκκομιζ' ἐκ δωμάτων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ μέτοχος ἀν εἴην τοῦ φόνου δράσας τόδε.

ΑΤΚΟΣ ἡμεῖς, ἐπειδὴ σοὶ τὸν εἰστ' ἐνθύμουν, οἱ δειμάτων ἐξωθεὶς ἐκπορεύσομεν σὺν μητρὶ παιδας. δεῦρ' ἐπεσθε, πρόσπολοι, ὡς ἀν σχολήν λύσωμεν ἁσμενοι πόνων.

1 Murray: for MSS. δόξης τήσθ'.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

So strong and so impatient fits not thee.
But, since of force thou doonest me to die,
Of force must I content me and do thy will.

LYCUS
And Megara, and Alcmena's son's brood—where?

AMPHITRYON
I think that she—if one without may guess—

LYCUS
What of thy thinking? What dost know by proof?

AMPHITRYON
At the Hearth-goddess' altar suppliant sits,—

LYCUS
With bootless prayer to heaven to save her life!

AMPHITRYON
And vainly calleth on a husband dead.

LYCUS
Not here is he; nor shall he ever come.

AMPHITRYON
Never,—except by a God raised from the dead.

LYCUS
Go thou to her, and bring her forth the halls.

AMPHITRYON
So doing were I partaker in her blood!

LYCUS
I then,—since this lies heavy on thy soul,—
Who am past all fear, will bring forth with her sons
This mother. Henchmen, hither, follow me,
With joy to sweep this hindrance from our path.

[Exit.

185
ΗΡΑΗΚΛΑΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

σὺ δ’ οὖν ἵθ’, ἔρχει δ’ οἱ χρεῶν τὰ δ’ ἄλλ’ ἵσως ἄλλῳ μελήσῃ. προσδόκα δὲ δρᾶν κακῶς κακῶν τι πράξειν. ὃ γέροντες, εἴς καλὸν στείχει, βρόχοισι δ’ ἄρκυνων γενήσεται ξιφηφόροισι, τοὺς πέλας δοκῶν κτενείν ὁ παγκάκιστος. εἰμι δ’ ὡς ἱδώ νεκρὸν πίπτοντ’. ἔχει γὰρ ἡδονὰς θυμίσκων ἀνήρ ἑχθρὸς τίνων τε τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ΧΩΡΟΣ

α. μεταβολὰ κακῶν μέγας ὁ πρόσθ’ ἀναξ στρ. α πάλιν ὑποστρέφει βίοτον εἰς” Αίδαν.

β. ὦ δίκα καὶ θεῶν παλίρρους πότμος.

γ’. ἡλθες χρόνῳ μὲν οὖ δίκην δῶσεις θανῶν,

δ’. υβρεῖς υβρίζων εἰς ἀμείνονας σέθεν.

ε’. χαρμοναὶ δακρύων ἔδοσαν ἐκβολάς.

στ’. πάλιν ἐμολευ ἀ πάρος οὔποτε διὰ φρενὸς ἠλπίσεν παθεῖν γὰς ἀναξ.

ζ’. ἀλλ’, ὦ γεραιοί, καὶ τὰ δωμάτων ἔσω σκοπῶμεν, εἰ πράσσει τις ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON
Go thou where doom leads. For the rest, perchance,
Another shall take thought. Look thou for ill
To suffer ill! Old friends, in happy hour
He paceth on: in toils of snaring swords
Shall he be trapped who thought to slay his neighbours, 730
The utter-vile! I go to see him fall
Dead. Joy it is to see an enemy
Die, suffering vengeance for his ill-deeds done. [Exit.

The members of the Chorus chant successively.

CHORUS 1

Ho for requital of wrong! the king who was great
heretofore
Backward is turning the path of his life unto Hades’

CHORUS 2

Hail, justice and river of fate back-turning with re-
fluent roar!

CHORUS 3

Thou com’st at last to pay death’s penalty— 740

CHORUS 4

For outrage done to better men than thee.

CHORUS 5

Gladness constraineth the fountain of tears from mine
eyelids to start.

CHORUS 6

Come is the hour which the land’s king never ere
this in his heart
Foresaw,—retribution’s vengeance-smart!

CHORUS 7

Old friends, look we within the halls, to see
Our soul’s desire upon our enemy.

187
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΛΤΚΟΣ

ιώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

750 η'. τόδε κατάρχεται μέλος ἐμοὶ κλύειν ἀντ. α' φίλιον ἐν δόμοις. θάνατος οὐ πόρσω.

Θ'. βοᾷ φόνου φροίμου στενάξων ἀναξ.

ΛΤΚΟΣ

ὁ πᾶσα Κάδμου γα', ἀπόλλυμαι δόλῳ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ι'. καὶ γὰρ διώλλυς· ἀντίποινα δ' ἐκτίνων τόλμα, διδοὺς γε τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ια'. τίς ὁ θεοῦς ἀνομία χραίνων, θητὸς ὡν, ἀφρονα λόγον οὐρανίων μακάρων κατέβαλ', ὃς ἄρ' οὐ σθένουσιν θεοί;

760 ἵβ. γεροντες, οὐκέτ' ἐστι δυσσεβῆς ἀνήρ.

σιγᾷ μέλαθρα· πρὸς χοροὺς τραπώμεθα.

φίλοι γὰρ εὐνυχοῦσιν οὐς ἐγὼ θέλω.

χοροὶ χοροὶ καὶ θαλαί στρ. β'

μέλουσι Ἐθήβας ἱερὸν κατ' ἀστυ.

μεταλλαγαί γὰρ δακρύων,

μεταλλαγαί συντυχίας

[vέας] ἐτεκοὺν ἀοιδάς.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

LYCUS (within)

Ah me! Woe's me!

CHORUS 8

Hark to the outburst!—as music it is for mine ears [is exceeding near.
That strain ringing sweet through the halls: lo, death

CHORUS 9

This king shrieketh prelude of slaughter: he
shrieketh in anguish of fear.

LYCUS (within)

Oh Cadmus' land, by treachery am I slain!

CHORUS 10

As thou wouldst slay. Flinch not from vengeance-
pain:
Thine own deeds' retribution dost thou gain.

CHORUS 11

Who was it, in lawlessness flouting the Gods, that
mortal wight
Who in folly blasphemed the Blessèd that reign in
the heaven's height,
Saying that Gods be void of might?

CHORUS 12

Our foe is not:—such doom the impious earn.
Hushed are the halls. Now unto dances turn:
Blest are the dear ones over whom I yearn.

CHORUS

(Str. 2)

The dances, the dances are reeling, the shout of the
banqueters pealing
Through Thebes, through the city divine.
Now from affliction of tears cometh severance;
Now from the thraldom of woe is deliverance,
And song is their heir.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

βέβαι' ἀναξ ὁ καυσός,
ὁ δὲ παλαίτερος
κρατεῖ, λιμένα λιπῶν γε τὸν Ἀχερόντιον.
δοκημάτων ἐκτὸς ἦλθεν ἐλπίς.

770

θεοὶ θεοὶ τῶν ἀδίκων  ἀντ. β
μέλουσι καὶ τῶν ὅσιων ἐπάειν.
ὁ χρυσὸς ἄ τ' εὐτυχία
φρενῶν βροτοὺς ἔξαγεται,
δύνασιν ἄδικον ἐφέλκων.
χρόνου γὰρ οὕτως ἐτλα
τὸ πάλιν εἰσορᾶν.
νόμων παρέμενος, ἀνομία χάριν διδοῦς,
ἐθραυσεν ὦλβοι κελαινόν ἁρμα.

780

'Ἰσμήν ὁ στεφαναφόρει,
ξεσταὶ θ' ἐπταπύλου πόλεως
ἀναχορεύσατ' ἀγνίαι,
Δίρκα θ' ἂ καλλιρρέεθρος,
σὺν τ' Ἀσωπιάδες κόραι,
πατρὸς ὑδωρ βάτε λυποῦ-
σαι συναιδοί,
Νύμφαι, τὸν Ἡρακλέους
καλλίνικον ἄγων'. ὁ

790

Πυθίον δευδρώτι πέτρα
Μουσῶν θ' Ἐλικωνιάδων δώματα,
ήξετ' εὐγαθεῖ κελάδῳ
ἐμὰν πόλιν ἐμὰ τε τείχη,
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Gone is the tyrant, the upstart craven,
And enthroned is the ancient line
Re-arisen from Hades' drear ghost-haven:
Hope springs from despair.

(Ant. 2)
The Gods, O the Gods now are sealing unrighteousness' doom, and revealing
The right, their eternal design. [victorious
But Gold and Fair-fortune, with Power the
Harnessed beside them, in folly vainglorious
Hurry man to his doom:—
Law he outpaceth, and Lawlessness lasheth
To speed; nor his heart doth incline
To take heed to the end—lo, his car sudden-crasheth
Shattered in gloom!  

Deck thee with garlands, Ismenus, and ye (Str. 3)
Break forth into dancing,
Streets stately with Thebes' fair masonry,
And Dirce bright-glancing:

Come, Maids of Asopus, to us, from the spring
Come ye of your father;
Of Hercules' glorious triumph to sing,
Nymph-chorus, O gather

Pythian forest-peak, Helicon's steep
Of the Song-queens haunted,
To my town, to my walls, let the song-echoes leap
Of the strains loud-chanted—

1 The presumptuous wrong-doer is compared to a reckless charioteer in a race, in which he tries to outstrip the rival chariot of Law. His four horses are Gold and Prosperity as yoke-horses, with Power and Lawlessness for trace-horses.

191
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Σπαρτῶν ἵνα γένος ἔφανη,
χαλκασπίδων λόχος, δς γὰν
τέκνων τέκνωις μεταμείβει,
Θήβαις ἱερὸν φῶς.

ἄντ. γ'

ὁ λέκτρων δύο συγγενεῖς
εὐναί, θνατογενοῦς τε καὶ
Διὸς, ὃς ἤλθεν ἐς εὐνᾶς
Νύμφας τὰς Περσηϊδος· ὡς
πιστῶν μοι τὸ παλαιὸν ἥ-
δη λέχος, ὃ Ζεῦ, τὸ σὸν ὦκ
ἐπ' ἐλπίδι φάνθῃ,
λαμπρᾶν δ' ἔδειξ' ὁ χρόνος
τὰν Ἡρακλέος ἀλκάν·
δς γὰς ἔξεβα θαλάμων,
Πλούτωνος δῶμα λυπῶν νέρτερον.
κρείσσον μοι τύραννος ἐφυς
ἡ δυσγένει' ἀνάκτων·
ἀ νῦν ἐσοράν φαίνει
ξιφηφώρων ἐς ἀγώνων
ἀμιλλαν, εἰ τὸ δίκαιον
θεοῖς ἔτ' ἀρέσκει.

ἐα ἐα·
ἂρ' εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν πίτυλον ἦκομεν φόβου,
γέροντες, οἷον φάσμερ' ὑπὲρ δόμων ὀρῷ;
φυγῇ φυγῇ
νοθὲς πέδαιρε κώλου, ἐκποδῶν ἔλα.

ἀναξ Παιῶν,
ἀπότροπος γένοιο μοι πημάτων.

192
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To my town, whence the Dragon-seed rose to the day,

The warrior nation,
Whose sons guard the fathers' inheritance aye,
Thebes' light of salvation.

Hail to the couch where the spousals divine (Ant. 3)
With the mortal were blended,
Where for love of the Lady of Perseus' line
Zeus' glory descended!

For thy bridal of old is my faith, Zeus, won,
Though I held it a story
Past credence: by time is the might of thy son
Revealed in its glory:

He hath burst from earth's dungeons, hath rifted the chain
Of Pluto's deep prison!
Thou art worthier to rule than the churl-king slain,
O my King re-arisen!

For now the usurper hath proved, when in fight
The sword-wielders have striven,
Whether yet, as in old time, the cause of the right
Is well-pleasing to heaven.

The forms of Iris and madness appear above the palace.
Ha see! ha see!
On you, on me, doth this same panic fall?
Old friends, what phantom hovereth o'er the hall?
Ah flee! ah flee
With haste of laggard feet!—speed thou away!
Healer, to thee,
O King, to avert from me yon bane I pray!

vol. III.
ΔΗΜΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

...πόλεις ἵπποις ἔγγονοι

Λύσσαν, γέροντες, κἀκε τὴν θεὸν λάτρειν

'Ιριν' πόλει γὰρ οὔδὲν ἥκομεν βλάβος,

ἐνὸς δὲ ἐπ' ἄνδρος δώματα στρατεύομεν,

ὅν φαινεῖ εἶναι Ζηνὸς 'Αλκμήνης τ' ἀπο.

πρὶν μὲν γὰρ ἄθλους ἐκτελευτήσαι πικροὺς,

τὸ χρῆμα νῦν ἔξοσοφεν, οὖν εἶ ἡ πατὴρ

Ζεὺς νῦν κακῶς δράν οὐ τ' ἐμ' οὕθ' Ἡραν ποτέ.

ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθους διετέραν Ἐὐρυσθέως,

"Ἡρα προσάψαι κοινών αἴρ' αὐτῷ θέλειν

παῖδας κατακτείναι, συμβεβλὼδ' ὅ' ἔγώ.

ἀλλ' εἴ', ἀτεγκτον συλλαβοῦσα καρδιὰν,

Νυκτὸς κελαινῆς ἀνυμέναι παρθένεν,

μανίας τ' ἔπ' ἄνδρι τῶδε καὶ παιδοκτόνους

φρενῶν ταραγμοὺς καὶ ποιῶν σκηνήματα

ἐλαυνε, κίνει, φῶνον ἐξει κάλων;

ὡς ἄν πορεύσασι: δ' Ἀχερούσιον πόρον

τὸν κακλίπαιδα στεφάνου αὐθέντη φῶνω

γυν' μὲν τὸν."Ἡρας οἶδ' ἐστ' αὐτῷ χόλος,

μάθη δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν ἢ θεοὶ μὲν οὖδαμοι,

τὰ θυνταὶ δ' ἐσται μεγάλα, μὴ δόντος δίκην.

ΛΤΙΣΙΑ

ἐξ εὐγενοῦς μὲν πατρὸς ἐκ τε μητέρος

πέφυκα, Νυκτὸς Οὐρανοῦ τ' ἀφ' αἴματος

τιμᾶς δ' ἐχὼ τάσδ', οὐκ ἄγασθηναι φίλοις,

οὐδ' ἤδομαι φοιτῶσ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων φόνους.¹

παρανέσαι δὲ, πρὶν σφαλεῖσαν εἰσίδειν,

"Ἡρα θέλω σοί τ', ἂν πληθυσθ' ἐμοὶ λόγοις.

ἀνήρ ὁδ' οὐκ ἀσήμνος οὔτ' ἐπὶ χοῦν

¹ Dobree: for MSS. φίλοι. Adopted by Dindorf, Paley, and Gray and Hutchinson.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

IRIS:
Fear not: this is the child of Night ye see,
Madness, grey sires: I, handmaid of the Gods,
Iris. We come not for your city's hurt;
Only on one man's house do we make war—
His, whom Zeus' and Alcmene's son they call.
For, till he had ended all his bitter toils,
Fate shield'd him, and Father Zeus would not
That I, or Hera, wrought him ever harm.
But, now he hath toiled 'Eurystheus' labours through, 830
Hera will stain him with the blood of kin,
That he shall slay his sons: her will is mine.

On then, close up thine heart from touch of ruth,
O thou unwedded child of murky Night:
With madness thrill this man, with soul-turmoil:
Child-murdering, with wild boundings of the feet:
Goad him; the sheets of murder's sails let out,
That, when o'er Acheron's ferry his own hand
In blood hath sped 'his crown of goodly sons,
Then may he learn how dread is Hera's wrath,
And mine, against him: else the Gods must wane
And mortals wax, if he taste not her vengeance.

MADNESS

Of noble sire and mother was I born,
Even of the blood of Uranus and Night.
But not to do despite to friends I hold
My powers; nor love to haunt for murder's sake:
Fain would I plead with Hera and with thee,
Ere she have erred; if ye will heed my words.
This man, against whose house ye thrust me on,
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

850 οὔτ' ἐν θεοῖσιν, οὐ γέ μ' εἰσπέμπεις δόμους·
ἀβατον δὲ χώραν καὶ θάλασσαν ἀγρίαν
ἐξημερώσας, θεῶν ἀνέστησεν μόνον
τιμᾶς πιτυνύσας ἄνοσίων ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ
ὡστ' ὦ σοὶ παραινὲ μεγάλα βούλεσθαι κακά.

ΙΡΙΣ

μὴ σοῦ νουθέτει τά θ' Ἡρας κάμα μηχανήματα.

ΛΤΣΕΑ

εἰς τὸ λόγον ἐμβιβάζω σ' ἱχνος ἀντὶ τοῦ
κακοῦ.

ΙΡΙΣ

οὐχί σωφρονεῖν γ' ἔπεμψε δεῦρό σ' ὡς Δίος δάμαρ.

ΛΤΣΕΑ

"Ἡλον μαρτυρόμεσθα δρῶσ' ἀ δρᾶν οὐ βούλομαι.
εἰ δὲ δὴ μ' Ἡρας θ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τ' ἀναγκαίως
ἐχει

860 τάχος ἐπιρροήβην θ' ὁμαρτεῖν ὡς κυνηγέτη κύνας,
εἰμ ἡγ. οὔτε πόντος οὔτω κύμασι στένου λάβρος
οὔτε γῆσ σεισμὸς κεραυνοῦ τ' οἴστρος ὡδίνας
πυνέων,
ο' ἐγὼ στάδια δραμοῦμαι στέρνον εἰς Ἡρακλεόυς·
καὶ καταρρήξω μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐπεμβαλῶ,
τέκν' ἀποκτείνασα πρῶτον' ὁ δὲ κανὼν οὐκ
εἰσεται
παῖδας οὔς ἐτικτ' ἐναίρων, πρίν ἄν ἕμας λύσσας
ἀφή.

ἡν ἰδοὺ· καὶ δὴ τινάσσει κράτα βαλβίδων ἄπο,
καὶ διαστρέφους ἐλίσσει σύγα γοργοπούς κόρας.
ἀμπυονάς δ' οὐ σωφρονίζει, ταύρος ὅς ἐς ἐμβολήν·

1 Musgrave: for MSS. sol r'.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Nor on the earth is fameless, nor in heaven.
The pathless land, the wild sea, hath he tamed,
And the God's honours hath alone restored,
When these by impious men were overthrown.
Therefore I plead, devise no monstrous wrong.

IRIS

Dare not with thine admonitions trammel Hera's schemes and mine!

MADNESS

Nay, I do but point a pathway meeter far to tread than thine.

IRIS

Not to flaunt thy temperance hath she sent thee, Zeus's bride divine.

MADNESS

Witness, Sun, that I am doing that which I would fain refuse:
Yet, if I must work thy will and Hera's—if I may
But with skirr of rushing footfalls follow you like huntsman's pack,
On will I; nor sea nor moaning surges hurl such
No, nor earthquake, no, nor madding thunder's gasping agonies,
As the fury of mine onrush to the breast of Hercules.
I will rive his roofs, will swoop adown his halls:—his children first
I will slay; nor shall the murderer know he slakes
On the children of his body, till my madness' course is run.

See him—lo, his head he tosses in the fearful race
See his gorgon-glaring eyeballs all in silence wildly rolled!
Like a bull in act to charge, with fiery pantings un-
ΧΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

.870 δεινὰ μυκᾶται δὲ Κήδας ἀνακαλὼν τὰς Ταρτάρου.  [φόβῳ. 
tάχα σ’ ἐγὼ μᾶλλον χορεύσω καὶ κατανυκῆσω 
στείχ’ ἐς Οὐλυμπον πεδαῖρουσ’, Ἰρι, γενοῦν 
pόδα:  [κλέος. 
eἰς δόμους δ’ ἡμεῖς ἀφαντοὶ δυσόμεσθ’ Ἡρα-

ξορος

ότοτοι, στέναξον, ἀποκείρεται 
σὸν ἀνθὸς πόλεος, ὁ Διὸς ἐκχόνος. 
μέλεος Ἡλλὰς, ὃ τὸν εἰς φρενέταν 
ἀποβαλεῖς, ὀλεῖς μανιάσεις λύσσας 
χορεῦςεντ ἀναιλοῖς.

880 βέβακεν ἐν δύφροισιν ἀ πολύστοιος, 
ἀρμασὶ δ’ ἐνδίδωσι 
kεντρον ὡς ἐπὶ λάβα 
Νυκτὸς Γοργῶν ἐκατογικεφάλοις 
ὀφεων ἰαχήμασι, Λύσσα μαρμαρωτὸς.

ταχὺ τὸν αὐτυχῆ μετέβαλεν δαίμων, 
tαχὺ δὲ πρὸς πατρὸς τέκν’ ἐκπνεύσεται. 
iῷ μοι μέλεος, 
iῷ Ζεὺ, τὸ σὸν γένος ἄγονον αὐτίκα 
λυσσάδες ὁμοβρώτες ἀποινόδικοι δίκαι 
κακαίσιν ἐκπετάσωσιν. ἢδ’ στέγαι, 
κατάρχεται χόρευμα τυμπάνων ἄτερ, 
οὐ βρομῷ κεχαρισμένα θύρως,
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Awfully he bellows, howling to the fateful fiends of hell! [appalling knell! Wilder yet shall be thy dance, as peals my pipe's —Ay, unto Olympus soaring, Iris, tread thy path serene! [unseen. Mine the task into the halls of Hercules to plunge.

(IRIS ascends, and MADNESS enters the palace.

CHORUS

Alas and alas! cry out, O town, For thy goodliest flower, Zeus' son, mown down! Thy champion shall slip from thine hands, to thy bitter cost, Hellas; in frenzied dances of madness tossed Where the flute sounds not, he is lost to thee, lost!

She hath mounted her car, groans throng in her train; She is goading her horses on mission of bane; Night's daughter, a Gorgon with hundred-headed hiss Of her serpents, Madness the glittering-eyed is this.

Swiftly hath fortune o'erthrown him who sat on high: Swiftly the sons by the father's hand shall die. Ah misery! Zeus, mad vengeance ravenous-wild Straightway, athirst for requital, with evils on evils piled, [not thy child. Shall trample thy son unto dust, as though he were

Woe for the palace-dome! Her dance is beginning, but not with the cymbals clashing, Not with the pine-wand uptossed amid loud acclamation,—
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ιὼ δόμοι,
πρὸς αἵματ', οὐχὶ τὰς Διονυσιάδος
βοτρύων ἐπὶ χεύμασι λοιβᾶς.

φυγῇ, τέκν', ἐξορμᾶτε· δάιον τόδε
δάιον μέλος ἐπαυλεῖται.
κυναγετεὶ τέκνων διωγμόν·
οὐποτ' ἀκραντα δόμοισι Δύσσα βακχεύσει.

900 αἰαὶ κακῶν
αἰαὶ δῆta τὸν γεραιόν ὡς στένω
πατέρα, τὰν τε παιδοτρόφου, ἡ ματαν
τέκεα γεννᾶται.

ἰδοὺ ἰδοὺ,
θύελλα σεῖει δῶμα, συμπίπτει στέγη·
ἥ ἡ, τί δρᾶς, ὁ Δίος παῖ; μελάθρων
τάραγμα ταρτάρειον, ὡς
ἐπ' Ἑγκελάδῳ ποτὲ Παλλάς, εἰς δόμους πέμπεις.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἡ λευκὰ γῆρα σώματ',

ΧΟΡΟΣ

910 ἀνακαλεῖς τίνα με τίνα βοάν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Ἄλαστα τὰν δόμοισι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μάντιν οὐχ ἑτερον ἕξομαι.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Woe for a hero’s home!—
But for shedding of blood, not the blood of the grape
[oblation.
As the banqueters pour it forth for the Wine-god’s

Away, O ye children, in flight, for death,
Death shrieks through her pipe by the blast of her breath!

[Cries and sound of rushing within.]
Like a hound is he holding the children in chase!—
Never shall Madness keep revel for naught through his dwelling-place.

Woe, anguish and pain!
Woe and alas for the silver hair
Of his father!—woe for the mother who bare
His babes in vain!

[Sound of battering and rending within.]

Lo you, lo you!
A whirlwind is shaking the house—its roofs fall crashing—

Ah what, ah what, Zeus’ Son, wouldst thou do?
Down on thy palace the turmoil of hell art thou dashing,

[Enceladus flashing.
As the levin from Pallas’s hand to the heart of
Enter servant from within.

SERVANT

O reverend presences hoary-white—

CHORUS

What meaneth thy cry unto me—thy cry of fear?

SERVANT

Within yon halls is a fearful sight!

CHORUS

No need, to attest thy tale, that we seek to a seer.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τεθνάσι παιδες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αίαί.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

στενάξεθ', ώς στενακτά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δάιοι φόνοι,

dάιοι δὲ τοκέων χείρες.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν τὶς εἴποι μᾶλλον ἢ πεπόνθαμεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς παισὶ στενακτὰν ἄταν ἄταν

πατέρος ἀμφαίνεις;

λέγε τίνα τρόπον ἔσυντο θεόθεν ἐπὶ

μέλαθρα κακὰ τάδε

τλήμονας τε παιδῶν τύχας.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἰερὰ μὲν ἢν πάροιθεν ἐσχάρας Δίως

καθάρσι' οἴκων, γῆς ἀνακτ' ἐπεὶ κτανὼν

ἐξέβαλε τῶνδε δωμάτων Ἡρακλῆς'

χορὸς δὲ καλλιμορφὸς εἰστήκει τέκνων

πατήρ τε Μεγάρα τ' ἐν κύκλῳ δ' ἦδη κανοῦν

εἰλικτὸ βωμοῦ, φθέγμα δ' ὅσιον εἰχομεν.

μέλλων δὲ δαλῶν χειρὶ δεξιᾷ φέρειν,

ἐις χέρνιβ' ὡς βάψειν, Ἀλκμήνης τόκος

ἔστη σιωπῆ. καὶ χρονίζοντος πατρὸς

920

930

202
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

SERVANT
Dead are the children!

CHORUS
Woe is me!

SERVANT
Wail! well may ye wail!

CHORUS
Slain ruthlessly!
Oh that the hands of a father their murder should wreak!

SERVANT
Things have we suffered more awful than tongue may speak.

CHORUS
How? of the woeful doom by a father wrought
On his sons, canst thou tell?
Say, say in what fashion the malice of Gods hath brought [fraught
These ills on the house, and the fate with misery 920
On the children that fell.

SERVANT
Victims were set before the hearth of Zeus
To cleanse the house, since, having slain the king,
Forth of these halls had Hercules flung the corpse.
And there his children stood in fair array,
His sire, and Megara. Round the altar now [hush.
The maund had passed; and we kept hallowed
Then, even in act to bear the torch in hand
And plunge in lustral water, silent stood
Alemena's son: and, as their sire delayed, 930

1 A basket containing the sacrificial knife and barley was carried round the altar before the slaying of the victim.
2 A brand from the altar was quenched in water, with which the bystanders were then sprinkled.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

παίδες προσέσχον ὅμων: ὃς οὐκέθεναὐτὸς ἦν, ἀλλ' ἐν στροφαίσιν ὄμμάτων ἐφθαρμένος μίζας τῇ ἐν ὄσοις αἰματώπασ ἐκβαλών, ἀφρόν κατέστας εὐτρίχου γενειάδος.

ἐλέξε δ' ἀμα γέλωτε παραπεπληγμένῳ πάτερ, τί θύω πρὸν κτανεῖν Εὐρυσθέα καθάρσιον πῦρ, καὶ πόνους διπλοὺς ἔχω ἐξὸν μίας μ' ἐκ χειρὸς εὐθέσθαι τάδε; ὅταν δ' ἐνέγκω δεύρο κράτ' Εὐρυσθέως, ἐπὶ τοὺς νῦν θανοῦσιν ἀγνώ χέρας.

ἐκχείτε πηγάς, βίπτετ' ἐκ χειρῶν κανά. τίς μοι δίδωσι τόξα; τίς δ' ὄπλον χερός; πρὸς τὰς Μυκήνας εἶμι· λάξυσθαι χρεών μοχλοὺς δικέλλας θ', ως τὰ Κυκλόττων βάθρα φοίνικι κανόνι καὶ τύκοις ἡμοσμένα στρεπτῷ σιδήρῳ συντριμωσώσω τάλιν.

ἐκ τούτων βαίνων ἁρματ' οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν ἐφασκε, δίφρον δ' εἰσέβαινεν ἀντυγα καθευνε, κέντρον δῆθεν ὡς ἔχων χερί.

διπλοὺς δ' ὅπαθος ἦν γέλως φόβος θ' ὅμοι. καὶ τις τόδ' ἐπεν, ἀλλος εἰς ἄλλον δρακόντα παιζεῖ πρὸς ἡμᾶς δεσποτῆς ἢ μαίνεται; ὁ δ' εἴρη τ' ἀνώ τε καὶ κάτω κατὰ στέγας, μέσον δ' ἐς ἀνδρών εἰσπεσῶν Νίσου πόλεων ἔχειν ἐφασκε, δωμάτων εἰς ω βεβώς.

κλίθεις δ' ἐς οὐδας ὡς ἔχει σκευάζεται θοινήν. διελθῶν δ' ὡς βραχὺν χρόνον μονής, Ἰσθμοῦ ναπαίας ἐλεγε προσβαίνει πλάκας. κάνταυθα γυμνόν σῶμα θεῖς πορπαμάτων, πρὸς οὐδέν ἦμιλλάτο κάκηρυσσετο.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

His sons looked—lo, he seemed no more the same,
But wholly marred, with rolling eyes distraught,
With bloodshot eye-roots starting from his head,
While dripped the slaver down his bearded cheek.

Suddenly with a maniac laugh he spake:
"Why, ere I slay Eurystheus, sacrifice,
Father—have cleansing fire and toil twice o’er,
When all in one act I may compass well?
When hither I have brought Eurystheus’ head,
For him, with these now slain, I’ll purge my hands. 940
Spill ye the water, cast the maunds away!
Ho there—my bow!—the mace of my right hand!
I march against Mycenae:—I must take
Crowbars and mattocks, that you Cyclop town,
Yon walls with red line and with gavil squared,
May by my bended lever be upheaved."
Then set forth, speaking of his car the while,
Who car had none, sprang to the chariot-rail,
And thrust, as who held in his hand a goad.

His henchmen, half in mirth and half in fear,
Were glancing each at other, and one spake:
"Doth our lord make us sport, or is he mad?"
Still was he pacing up and down the house;
Then, to the men’s hall rushing, cried, "I have come
To Nisus’ town!"—who stood in his own halls.
He casts him on the bare floor, and prepares
To feast: yet, tarrying there but little space,
He cried, "I go to Isthmus’ woodland plains!"
Then from his body cast his mantle’s folds,
And wrestled with—no man!—proclaimed himself 960

1 Megara, half way on his imaginary journey, on the Isthmus of Corinth; this suggested the Isthmian games.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

αὐτὸς πρὸς αὐτοῦ καλλικοῦ, οὐδενὸς ἄκοψην ὑπειπών. δεινὰ δ’ Εὐρυσθεὶ βρέμων ἢν ἐν Μυκήναις τῷ λόγῳ. πατὴρ δὲ νῦν θυγάτων κραταῖας χειρὸς ἐννέπει τάδε· οὔ παῖ, τί πάσχεις; τίς ὁ τρόπος ξενώσεως τῆς; οὗ τί ποῦ φῶνες σ’ ἐβάκχευσεν νεκρῶν, οἷς ἁρτὶ καλῦσεις; ὁ δὲ νῦν Εὐρυσθέως δοκῶν πατέρα προταρβοῦνθ’ ἰκέσιον ψαύειν χειρὸς, ὦθεί, φαρέτραν δ’ εὐτρεπὴ σκευάζεται καὶ τὸς’ ἑαυτοῦ παισὶ, τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως δοκῶν φονεύειν. οἵ δὲ ταρβοῦντες φόβῳ ἀφονον ἄλλος ἄλλος’, εἰς πέπλους ὁ μὲν μητρὸς ταλαίνης, ὁ δ’ ὑπὸ κίονος σκιάν, ἄλλος δὲ βωμὸν ὄρνης δ᾿ ἐπτηξὶ υπὸ. βοᾷ δὲ μήτηρ’ ὦ τεκόν, τί δρᾶς; τέκνα κτείνεις; βοᾷ δὲ πρέσβυς οἰκετῶν τ’ ὄχλος. ὁ δ’ ἐξελύσσων παῖδα κίονος κύκλῳ τὸ ρεμμα δεινὸν ποδός, ἐναντίον σταθεῖς βάλλει πρὸς ἡπαρ’ ὑπτίος δὲ λαίνους ὀρθοστάτας ἐδευσέν ἐκπνέων βίον. ὁ δ’ ἡλάλαξε κάπεκόμπασεν τάδε· εἰς μὲν νεοσσός δὴθανον Εὐρυσθέως ἔχθραν πατρώμαν ἐκτίνων πέπτωκε μοι. ἄλλῳ δ’ ἐπείξε τὸς’, δς ἀμφὶ βωμίαι ἐπτηξὲ κρητὶδ’ ὡς λεηθέναι δοκῶν. φθάνει δ’ ὁ τλήμων γόνασι προσπεσὼν πατρὸς καὶ πρὸς γένειον χειρὰ καὶ δέρην βαλῶν· ὦ φιλτατ’, αὐδὰ, μὴ μ’ ἄποκτεινῃς, πάτερι· σὸς εἶμι, σὸς παῖς· οὔ τὸν Εὐρυσθέως ὀλείς. ὁ δ’ ἀγριωτὸν ὴμμα Γεργώνος στρέφων, ὡς ἐντὸς ἑστὶ παῖς λυγροῦ τοξεύματος, μυδροκτύπου μίμημ’, ὕπερ κάρα βαλῶν

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To himself the victor, cried, "Ye people, hear!"—
To none! In fancy at Mycenae then
He stormed against Eurystheus. But his sire
Clung to his brawny hand, and cried to him,
"What ails thee? What mad change of mood is this?
Surely thou art not driven distraught by blood
Of these late slain!" He deemed Eurystheus' sire,
A trembling supplicant, hung upon his hand,
And spurned him back; prepared his quiver and bow
Against his own sons then, thinking to slay
Eurystheus' sons. They, quaking with affright,
Rushed hither, thither: his hapless mother's skirts
This sought, that to a pillar's shadow fled;
A third cowered 'neath the altar like a bird

Then shrieked the mother, "Father, what dost thou?
Wouldst slay thy sons?" The thralls, the ancient,
cried.
He, winding round the pillar as wound his son
In fearful circlings, met him face to face
And shot him to the heart. Back as he fell,
His death-gasps dashed the column with red spray.
Then shouted Hercules, and vaunted thus:
"One of Eurystheus' fledglings here is slain,
Dead at my feet, hath paid for his sire's hate!"
Against the next then aimed his bow, who crouched
At the altar's base, in hope to be unseen.
But, ere he shot, the poor child clasped his knees,
And stretching to his beard and neck a hand,
"Ah, dearest father," cried he, "slay not me!
I am thy boy—thine!—'Tis not Eurystheus' son!"
He rolling savage gorgon-glaring eyes;
Since the boy stood too near for that fell bow,
Swung back overhead his club, like forging-sledge,
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ξύλον καθήκε παιδὸς εἰς ξανθὸν κάρα, ἔρρηξε δ' ὡστὰ. δεύτερον δὲ παίδ' ἐλὼν, χωρὶς τρίτον θύμ. ὥς ἐπισφάξων δυοῖν. ἀλλὰ φθάνει νῦν ἡ τάλαν' εἰσὶν δόμων μῆτηρ ὑπεκλαβοῦσα, καὶ κλῆει πῦλας. ὦ δ' ὡς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δῆ Κυκλωπίσωσαν ὁν σκάπτει μοχλεύει θύρετρα, κάββαλαν σταθμὰ δάμαρτα καὶ παῖδὶ ἑνὶ κατέστρωσεν βέλει. κανθὲνδε πρὸς γέροντος ἵππεις φόνον ἀλλ' ἤλθεν εἰκὼν, ὡς ὅραν ἐφαίνετο Παλλας κραδαίνουσ' ἐγχος ἐπιλόφως κάρα 1 κάρηπρε πέτρων στέρνον εἰς Ἡρακλέους, ὡς νυν φόνον μαργάντως ἐσκε, κεῖς ὑπνον καθήκε πιτνεὶ δ' εἰς πέδον, πρὸς κίονα νῶτον πατάξας, ὃς πεσήμασι στήγης διχορραγῆς ἐκεῖτο κρηπίδων ἐπι. ἡμεῖς δ' ἑλευθεροῦντες ἐκ δρασμῶν πόδα σὺν τῷ γέροντι δεσμὰ σειραίων βρόχων ἀνήπτομεν πρὸς κίον', ὡς λήξας ὑπνον μηδὲν προσεργάσαντο τοῖς δεδραμένοις. εὐδεὶ δ' ὁ τλῆμων ὑπνον οὐκ εὐδαίμονα, παῖδας φονέυσας καὶ δάμαρτ' ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ οἶδα θυντών ὅστις ἄθλωτερος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ φόνος ἦν δὲν Ἡργολλὶς ἕχει πέτρα τότε μὲν περισσαμώτατος καὶ ἁπίστος Ἐλλάδι τῶν Δαναοῦ παίδων. 1

τὰ δ' ὑπερέβαλε, παρέδραμε τὰ τότε κακά. . . . . τάλανι διογενεῖ κόρφ. 2

1 Wakefield: for MSS. ἐπὶ λόφῳ κέρα.
2 Tyrwhitt's punctuation: no stop in MS.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Down dashed it on his own son's golden head,
And shattered all the bones. This second slain,
He speeds to add to victims twain a third.
But first the wretched mother snatched the child,
And bare within, and barred the chamber-door.
But he, as though at siege of Cyclop walls,\(^1\)
Mines, heaves up doors, and hurls the door-posts down,
And with one arrow laid low wife and child:
Then charges down to spill his own sire's blood.
But a Shape came,—as seemed unto our eyes,
Pallas with plumed helm, brandishing a spear;—
And against Hercules' breast she hurled a rock
Which stayed him from his murder-frenzy, and cast
Into deep sleep. To earth he fell, and dashed
His back against a pillar, cleft in twain
By the roof's ruin, on the pavement thrown.
Then we, from flight of panic breathing free,
Wrought with the old man, binding him with cords
Unto the pillar, that, awaked from sleep,
He might not add ill deeds to ill deeds done.
There sleeps he, wretched man, a sleep unbllest,
Who hath slaughtered sons and wife. For me, I know
not
Of mortals any man more:fortune-crost.

CHORUS

That murder which Argos remembereth
Was aforetime through Hellas most famous, the
strange tale told
Of Danaus' daughters, the workers of death:—
But this hath surpassed, hath outrun, that horror of
old—
[the sacrifice done
This horror that blasts Zeus' Son! I might tell of

\(^1\) i.e. Eurystheus' city, Mycenae.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

μονοτέκνου Πρόκνης
φόνου ἅχω λέξαι θυόμενον Μούσαις:
σὺ δὲ τέκνα τρίγωνα τεκόμενοι, ὃ δαίε,
λυσότι ουσιασήσατο μοῖρα.
tίνα στεναγμὸν
ἡ γόνον ἢ φθιτῶν
φωδάν, ἡ τίν’ "Αίδα χορὸν ἀχήσω:
φεῦ φεῦ.
IDEOΣΘΕ, ΔΙΑΝΔΙΧΑ ΚΛΗΘΡΑ
κλίνεται ἴψιπύλων δόμων.

ΙΟῦ μοι:
IDEOΣΘΕ τάδε τέκνα πρὸ πατρὸς
ἀθλια κείμενα δυστάνοι,
εὐδοντος ὑπνὸν δεινὸν ἐκ παιδῶν φόνου.
περὶ δὲ δεσμὰ καὶ πολύβροχ’ ἀμμάτων
ἐρείσμαθ’ Ἦρακλειον
ἀμφί δέμας τάδε λαῆνοις
ἀνημμένα κίοσι ωἰκῶν.
ὁ δ’ ὡς τις ὄρνις ἀπτερου καταστένων
ὁδίνα τέκνων, πρέσβυς ὑστέρω πολύν
πικρὰν διώκων ἡλυσίαν πάρεσθ’ ὅδε.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
Καδμεῖοι γέροντες, οὐ σίγα σίγα
τὸν ὑπνὸ παρεμένον ἐάσετ’ ἐκ
λαθέσθαι κακῶν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
κατὰ σὲ δακρύοις στένω, πρέσβυ, καὶ
tékea καὶ τὸ καλλινικον κάρα.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To the Muses,\(^1\) of Procris who slaughtered the only child of her womb:—
But thou, who art father of children three, O unhappiest one, [madness's doom!
Together hast murdered them all, driven on by thy
With what cry shall I wail thee, what sighing,
What chant as for dead that are lying in Hades, what
dirge of the tomb?

Alas! O see
How the bolts slide back, and asunder fall
The stately doors of the palace-hall.
The palace is thrown open, and the scene within disclosed.

Ah me! ah me!
Lo there the children—ah misery!
At the feet of their wretched father they lie:
And from murder of sons he is resting in awful sleep;
And around him the bonds with manifold fastenings keep
The body of Hercules in ward,
And lashed to the palace's pillars of stone are the coils of the cord.
And that old sire, as bird that maketh moan
O'er fledgling brood, with footsteps eld-fordone
Treading a bitter pathway, cometh on.

AMPHITRYON
Ah peace, Cadmean fathers, peace!
Let his woes in oblivion a moment cease
By slumber's release.

CHORUS
With tears I bemoan thee, and these babes dead,
O ancient, and that victorious head.

\(^1\) The legend of Procris's murder of Itys has, in becoming a theme of song, been consecrated to the Muses.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

έκαστέρῳ πρόβατε, μή κτυπεῖτε, μή βοᾶτε, μή τὸν εὖ τ' ἰαύουθ'

1050 ύπνοδεά τ' εύνας ἐγείρετε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἶμοι.

φόνος ὁσος ὁδ' —

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἀ ἄ,

diὰ μ' ὀλεῖτε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κεχυμένος ἐπαντέλλει.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐκ ἀτρεμαία θήρυνον αἰῶνις', ὁ γέροντες;

η δὲσμ' ἀνεγειρομένος χαλάσας ἀπολεί πόλιν,

ἀπὸ δὲ πατέρα, μέλαθρά τε καταρρήξει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀδύνατ' ἀδύνατά μοι.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

σὺνα, πνοᾶς μάθων· φέρε πρὸς οὐς βάλω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὐδεὶ;

1060 ναι, εὐδεὶ

ὑπνον ὑπνον ὅλομενον,

δὲ ἡκαν' ἄλοχον, ἡκαν' δὲ τέκεα, τοξῆρει

ψαλμῷ τοξεύσας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στεναζέ νυν

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

στενάζω.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON
Withdraw you farther, beat not the breast,
Neither cry, neither break ye his slumbrous rest
Of calm-drawn breath.

CHORUS
Woe's me for the river of blood he hath spilt!—

AMPHITRYON
Ah, your words be my death!

CHORUS
It is rising against him, a witness of guilt!

AMPHITRYON
Let the wail of your dirge, ye ancients, softer fall,
Else will he wake, will rend his bonds, and in ruin lay
Thebes, will slay his father, and shatter his palace-hall.

CHORUS
I cannot—my crying I cannot forbear!

AMPHITRYON
Hush! let me hearken his breathing—bend low mine ear—

CHORUS
Sleepeth he?

AMPHITRYON
Yea—in a slumber of bane,
Who hath slain his wife, hath his children slain
With the string that sang them the bow's death-strain!

CHORUS
Wail therefore—

AMPHITRYON
I wail with thee.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tέκνων ὀλεθρον—

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἀμοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σέθεν τε παιδός.

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἀιαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ—

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

σύγα σύγαν

παλίντροπος ἔξεγειρόμενος στρέφεται· φέρ

ἀπόκρυφον δέμας ὑπὸ μέλαθρον κρύψω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει νυξ ἔχει βλέφαρα παιδί σῷ.

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ὁράθ' ὀράτε.

τὸ φάος ἐκλυπεῖν ἐπὶ κακώισιν οὐ

φευγω τάλας, ἀλλ' ἔξ ὑπὸ κανεὶ πατέρ' ὄντα,

πρὸς δὲ κακώις κακὰ μῆτεται

πρὸς Ἔρινύσι θ' αίμα σύγγονον ἔχει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tότε θανεῖν σ' ἐχρῆν, ὅτε δάμαρτι σᾶ

φόνον ὀμοσπόρων

ἐμολείς ἐκπράξειν

1080

Ταφίων περίκλυστον ἁστυ πέρασαν.

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

φυγὰ φυγὰ, γέροντες, ἀποπρὸ δωμάτων

dιώκετε· φεύγετε μάργουν

ἀνδρ' ἐπεγειρόμενον.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

CHORUS
His babes' death,—

AMPHITRYON
Woe is me!

CHORUS
And thy son's doom!

AMPHITRYON
Well-a-day!

CHORUS
Ah ancient—

AMPHITRYON
O hush ye! stay!
He is writhing—-is turning—-is waking! Away!
Under yon roof let me hide me out of his sight!

CHORUS
Fear not: on the eyes of thy son yet broodeth the night.

AMPHITRYON
Beware—O beware!
Not death do I shun, for a crown of the ills that I bear—
Wretch that I am!—but if me, if his father, he kill,
To his load of ill shall he add fresh ill,
And to heap up his debt to the Furies the blood of a
kinsman shall spill.

CHORUS
Then shouldst thou have died, when thou wentest
forth to requite [smite
The blood of the kin of thy wife on the Taphians, to
Their city enringed with the surf-crests white.

AMPHITRYON
Flee, ancients! Afar from the dwelling flee!
From his frenzy of fury O hasten ye,
For he waketh from sleep!
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τάχα φόνον ἐτερον ἐπὶ φόνῳ βαλὼν
αὔτ' αὖ βακχεύσει Καδμείων πόλεως.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀγαθεί, τί παῖδι ἡχηρας ὡς ὑπερκότως
τὸν σῶς, κακῶς δὲ πέλαγος εἰς τὸδ' ἦγαγες;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐα.

ἐμπνεον μὲν εἰμι καὶ δέδορχ' ἀπερ με δεῖ,
αἰθέρα τε καὶ γῆν τόξα θ' Ἡλίου τάδε.
ὡς δ' ἐν κλύδωνι καὶ φρεῦνον ταράγματι
πέπτωκα δεινῷ καὶ πνοῦς θερμᾶς πνεόν
μετάροσι', οὔ βέβαια, πνευμόνων ἀπὸ.

Ἰδοὺ, τί δεσμοῖς ναῦς ὑπὸς ἀρμοσμένος
νεανίαν θώρακα καὶ βραχίονα,
πρὸς ἡμιδραύστῳ λαῖνῳ τυχίσματι
ἡμαῖν νεκροίσθι γείτονας θάκους ἔχον;

πτερωτιτ' ἐγχεν τόξα τ' ἔσπαρται πέδφι,
ἀ πρὶν παρασπιζοῦντ' ἐμοῖς βραχίοσω
ἔσωξε πλευράς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τ' ἐσφετε.

οὐ που καθῆλθον αὕθες εἰς Ἁλδον πάλιν,
Εὐρυσθέως δίαυλον ἐξ Ἁλδον μολὼν;

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

γέροντες, ἐλθὼν τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν πέλας;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κάγωγε σὺν σοί, μή προδοὺς τὰς συμφοράς.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Full soon on the deaths he hath wrought fresh deaths shall he heap,
Through the city of Cadmus storming in awful revelry.

CHORUS
Ah Zeus, why this stern hate against thy son?
Why hast thou brought him to this sea of ills?

HERCULES (waking and stirring)

Ha!
Breathing I am—all I should see I see,
The sky, the earth, the shafts of yonder sun:
Yet as in surge and storm of turmoiled soul
Am welmed, and fiery-fervent breath I breathe
Hard-panted from my lungs, not tempered calm.
Ha!—wherefore like a ship by hawseres moored,
Ropes compassing my strong chest and mine arms,
Bound to half-shattered masonry of stone
Sit I?—lo, corpses neighbours to my seat!
Winged shafts and bow are strawn about the floor,
Which once, like armour-bearers to mine arms,
Warded my side, were kept of me in ward:

Sure, not to Hades have I again gone down,
Who have passed, repassed, Eurystheus’ Hades-course?
Nay, I see not the stone of Sisyphus,
Pluto, nor sceptre of Demeter’s Child.
I am distraught. Know I not where I am?
Ho there! who of my friends is near or far
To be physician to my ’wilderment?
For strange to me seem all familiar things.

AMPHITRYON
Old friends, shall I draw near unto my grief?

CHORUS
I too with thee, forsaking not thy woe.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
πάτερ, τί κλαίεις καὶ συναγίσχει κόρας, τοῦ φιλτάτου σοι τηλόθεν παιδὸς βεβώς;
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ὦ τέκνοι, εἰ γὰρ καὶ κακῶς πράσσων ἐμός.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
πράσσω δ' ἔγὼ τί λυπρόν, οὐ δακρυρροεῖς;
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ἀ κὰν θεῶν τίς, εἰ πάθοι, καταστένοι.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
μέγας γ' ὁ κόμπος, τὴν τύχην δ' οὔπω λέγεις.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ὁρᾶς γὰρ αὐτός, εἰ φρονῶν ἦδη κυρεῖς.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
εἰπε' εἰ τι καινὸν ὑπογράφει τὼμῷ βίῳ.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
εἰ μηκέθ' Ἡλιοῦ βάκχος εἰ, φράσασμεν ἄν.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
παπαί, τὸδ' ὡς ὑποπτὸν ἤνιξω πάλιν.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
καὶ σ' εἰ βεβαίως εὐ φρονεῖς ἦδη σκοπῶ.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐ γὰρ τὶ βακχεύσας γε μέμνημαι φρένας.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
λύσω, γέρουντες, δεσμὰ παιδὸς ἢ τὶ δρῶ;
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
καὶ τὸν γε δῆσαντ' εἰπε' ἀνανύμμεσθα γὰρ.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
τοσοῦτον ὅσθι τῶν κακῶν· τὰ δ' ἀλλ' ἔα.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἀρκεὶ σιωπὴ γὰρ μαθεῖν ὃ βούλομαι;
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES
Father, why dost thou weep and veil thine eyes,
Shrinking afar from thy beloved son?

AMPHITRYON
Oh my son!—mine, though ne'er so ill thy plight!

HERCULES
Am I in grievous plight, that thou shouldst weep?

AMPHITRYON
Plight whereat Gods might groan, were God so stricken!

HERCULES
Great words!—but what hath chanced thou say'st not yet.

AMPHITRYON
Thyself mayst see, if now thy wit be sound.

HERCULES
Speak, if thou shadowest forth strange ills for me.

AMPHITRYON
I will say—so thy frenzy of hell be past.

HERCULES
Again that word!—ha, what dark riddle this?

AMPHITRYON
Yea, if thy mind be sober yet I doubt—

HERCULES
Naught I remember of a frenzied mind.

AMPHITRYON
Fathers, shall I unbind my son, or no?

HERCULES
Who bound me? Him I account no friend of mine!

AMPHITRYON
Know thou so far thine ills:—the rest let be.

HERCULES
Is silence all? With that must I content me?
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
δ’ Ζεύ, παρ’ "Ηρας ἀρ’ ὅρας θρόνων τάδε;
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
άλλ’ ἢ τι κείθεν πολέμοιν πεπόνθαμεν;
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
τήν θεόν ἑάσας τὰ σὰ περιστέλλου κακά.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἀπωλόμεσθα· συμφορὰν λέξεις τίνα;
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ἰδοὺ θέασαι τάδε τέκνων πεσήματα.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οίμοι τίν’ ὄψιν τήνδε δέρκομαι τάλας;
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ἀπόλεμον, ὦ παῖ, πόλεμον ἐσπευσάς τέκνως.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
τί πόλεμον εἰπας; τούσδε τὶς διώλεσεν;
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
σὺ καὶ σὰ τόξα καὶ θεῶν δς αἰτίος.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
τί φής; τί δράσας; ὡ κάκ’ ἀγγέλλων πάτερ.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
μανεῖς· ἐρωτᾶς δ’ ἄθλι’ ἐρμηνεύματα.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἡ καὶ δάμαρτός εἰμ’ ἐγὼ φονεὺς ἐμῆς;
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
μᾶς ἀπαντα χειρὸς ἔργα σῆς τάδε.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
αἰαὶ· στεναγμῶν γάρ με περιβάλλει νέφοι.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
τούτων ἐκατὶ σὰς καταστένω τύχας.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON (unbinding him)
Zeus, seest thou this bolt from Hera's throne?

HERCULES
Ha! have I suffered mischief of her hate?

AMPHITRYON
Let be the Goddess: thine own miseries heed.

HERCULES
I am undone! What ruin wilt thou tell?

1130

AMPHITRYON
Lo, mark these fallen wrecks,—wrecks of thy sons!

HERCULES
Woe's me! ah wretch, what sight do I beheld?

AMPHITRYON
Unnatural war, son, waged against thy babes.

HERCULES
What war mean'st thou? Who hath done these to death?

AMPHITRYON
Thou, and thy bow—and whatsoever God was cause.

HERCULES
How?—what did I?—O ill-reporting sire!

AMPHITRYON
In madness. Heavy enlightening cravest thou!

HERCULES
Ha! am I murderer of my wife withal?

AMPHITRYON
Yea: all these deeds are work of one hand—thine.

HERCULES
Alas! a cloud of groaning shrouds me round!

1140

AMPHITRYON
For this cause heavily mourn I thy mischance.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἡ γὰρ συνήραξ' οἶκον, ἡ 'Βάκχευσ', ἐμὸν;

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἐν πάντα δυστυχὴ τὰ σά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ποῦ δ' οἶστρος ἡμᾶς ἔλαβε; ποῦ διώλεσεν;

ἈΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

δὴ ἀμφὶ βωμὸν χείρας ἤγυνξον πυρί.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἶμοι τὶ δὴ τὰ φεῖδομαι ψυχῆς ἐμῆς
tῶν φιλτάτων μοι γενόμενος παῖδων φονεύς,
κοῦκ εἶμι πέτρας λυσσάδος πρὸς ἄλματα
ἡ φάσαγον πρὸς ἂπαρ ἐξακούσιος
tέκνων δικαστής αἴματος γενήσομαι;

ἡ σάρκα 

τὴν ἐμὴν πρήσας πυρί,
δύσκλειαν ἡ μένει μ' ἀπώσομαι βίου;

ἀλλ' ἐμποδῶν μοι θανασίμων 

Βουλευμάτων 

Θησεύς ὅδ' ἔρπει συγγενῆς φίλος τ' ἐμὸς.

ὀθησόμεσθα, καὶ τεκνοκότουν μῦσος
eἰς ἄμμαθ' ἢξει φιλτάτῳ ξένων ἐμῶν.

οἶμοι, τὶ δράσω; 

ποὶ κακῶν ἐρημών 

εὖρω, πτέρωτός, ἢ κατὰ χθονὸς μολῶν;

"φέρ" [ὡ μέλαν] τι 1 κρατὶ 

περιβάλων σκότος.

αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ τοίς 

δεδραμένοις κακοῖς, 

καὶ τῶδε 

προσπόταιοιν 

αἶμα προσβαλὼν 

οὐδὲν 

κακῶσαι τοὺς ἀναιτίους 

θέλω.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἃκω σὺν ἀλλοῖς οἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ῥόδας 

μένουσιν, ἐνοπλοῖ γῆς Ἀθηναίων κόροι,

σὺ παιδί, πρέσβυ, σύμμαχον φέρων δόρυν.

κληδῶν γὰρ ἣλθεν εἰς Ἐρεχθειδῶν πόλιν

1 Translator's suggestion: for MSS. φέρ' ἄν τι. Cf. l. 1216.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES
I wrecked mine house, or loosed wild rioters there?

AMPHITRYON
One thing I know—thy state is ruin all.

HERCULES
Where did my frenzy seize me?—where destroy?

AMPHITRYON
As thine hand touched the altar's cleansing fire.

HERCULES
Woe's me! Ah wherefore spare I mine own life,
Who am found the murderer of my dear, dear sons,
And rush not to plunge headlong from a cliff,
Or dash a dagger down into mine heart,
And make me avenger of my children's blood,
Or with consuming fire burn this my flesh,
To avert the imminent life-long infamy?
But lo, to thwart my purposes of death,
Theseus draws nigh, my kinsman and my friend.
I shall be seen!—this curse of children's blood
Shall meet a friend's eyes, dearest of my friends!
Woe! What shall I do?—where find solitude
In ills?—take wings, or plunge beneath the ground?
Oh let me in black darkness pall mine head;
For I take shame for evils wrought of me,
Nor would I taint him with bloodguiltiness—
Nay, nowise would I harm the innocent.

Enter THESEUS, with attendants.

THESEUS
I come, with them that by Asopus' stream
In arms are tarrying, Athens' warrior sons,
Ancient, to bring thy son my battle-aid.
For rumour came to the Erechtheids' town

1 The mere sight of a murderer conveyed contamination.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ώς σκῆπτρα χώρας τής ἄναρπάσας Δύκος εἰς πόλεμον ὑμῖν καὶ μάχην καθίσταται. τίνος δ’ ἀμοιβάς ὑπῆρξεν Ἤρακλῆς σώσας με νέρθεν, ἤλθον, εἰ τε δεῖ, γέρον, ἡ χειρὸς ὑμᾶς τῆς ἐμῆς ἡ συμμάχων. ἔα: τί νεκρῶν τῶνδε πληθύνει πέδον; οὐ ποὺ λέειμαι καὶ νεωτέρων κακῶν ὑστερος ἀφύγμα; τίς τάδ’ ἔκτεινεν τέκνα; τίνος γεγόσαν τήνδ’ ὄρω συνάορον; οὐ γὰρ δορὸς γε παῖδες ἱστανται πέλας, ἀλλ’ ἀλλο τοῖ ποὺ καίνον εὐρίσκω κακῶν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ὦ τὸν ἐλαιοφόρον ὅχθον ἔχων ἀναξ—

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί χρῆμα μ’ οἰκτροῖς ἐκάλεσας προοιμίοις;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἐπάθομεν πάθεα μέλεα πρὸς θεῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οἱ παῖδες οἴδε τίνες, ἐφ’ ὦς δακρυρροέσθ.;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἔτεκε μέν νυν οὐμός ἰνῆς τάλας·

τεκόμενος δ’ ἔκτανε, φόνιον αἷμα τλάς.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

εὕφημα φώνει.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

βουλομένοισιν ἐπαγγέλλει.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ὦ δεινὰ λέξας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οἰχόμεθ’ οἰχομεθα πτανοὶ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί φῆς; τί δράσας;

224
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

That Lycus, this land's sceptered sway usurped,
For war had risen against you, and for fight.
And to requite the service done of him
Who out of Hades saved me, come I, ancient,
If aught ye need mine hand or mine allies.
—Ha! wherefore bears the earth this load of dead?
Have I been laggard?—have I come too late
To stay fell mischief? Who could slay these boys?
Whose wife is she, this woman that I see?
Not boys, good sooth, are ranged to face the spear!
Sure, some unheard—of outrage here I find!

AMPHITRYON

King, lord of the mount with the olives crowned—

THESEUS

Why in thy first words wails a voice of woe?

AMPHITRYON

Sore ills at the hands of the Gods have we found.

THESEUS

What lads be these, o'er whom thou weepest so?

AMPHITRYON

My son was their father—alas and alas for him—
Their father—and slew them!—who dared that murder grim!

THESEUS

Hush! Speak not horrors thou!

AMPHITRYON

Ah, would that I could but obey thy word!

THESEUS

Dread things thou sayest now!

AMPHITRYON

Fled is our bliss, as on wings of a bird.

THESEUS

What sayest thou?—how wrought he deed so dread?
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
μαινομένω πιτύλω πλαγχθείς
ἐκατογκεφάλον βαφαὶς ύδρας.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
"Ἡρας ὃδ' ἀγῶν' τίς ὃδ' ὅν ὑν κροὶς, γέρον;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ἐμὸς ἐμὸς ὅδε γόνος ὁ πολύπτωνος, δς ἐπὶ
δόρυ γναγυτοφόνον ἠθεν σὺν θεοῖς
Φλεγαράιοι εἰς πεδίον ἀσπιστάς.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
φεῦ φεῦ' τίς ἀνδρῶν ὃδε δυσδαίμων ἔφυ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
οὐκ ἄν εἰδεῖς ἔτερον
πολυμοχθότερον πολυπλαγκτότερον τε θνατῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
τί γὰρ πέπλοισιν ἄθλιον κρύπτει κάρα;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
αἰδώμενος τὸ σὸν ὅμμα
καὶ φιλίαιν ὄμοφυλον
ἀίμα τε παιδοφόνον.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἀλλ' ὡς συναλγὼν γ' ἠθονεν ἐκκάλυπτε μιν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ὡ τέκνου
πάρεις ἀπ' ὄμματοι
πέπλουν, ἀπόδικε, ἔθος ἄελιῷ δεῖξον
βάρος ἀντίπαλον δακρύοισιν ἀμιλλάται.
ἰκετεύομεν ἀμφὶ σὰν
γενειάδα καὶ γόνυ καὶ χέρα προσπίνων
πολιῶν τε δάκρυν ἐκβαλάνων.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON
Upon madness's surge was his soul tossed wide,
And his shafts in the blood of the hydra of hundred
heads were dyed.

THESEUS
Lo, Hera's work! Who crouceth midst yon dead?

AMPHITRYON
My son is it—mine—of the thousand toils, who stood
In the ranks of the Gods, stood slaying the giant-brood
On the Plain of Phlegra, a warrior good.

THESEUS
Woe! when was man by fate so ill-bested!

AMPHITRYON
None other of mortal men shalt thou see
Who hath burden of heavier griefs, was more dreadfully
misguided than he.

THESEUS
Why doth he overpall his hapless head?

AMPHITRYON
For shame that thine eyes such sight should win,
Shame for the pitying love of kin,
For his sons' blood shame—for the madness, the sin!

THESEUS
Unveil him—me hath sympathy hither led.

AMPHITRYON
Son, cast from thine eyes thy mantle's veil;
Fling it hence; thy face to the sun forth show.
Lo, a weight that outweigheth thy tears bears down
grief's scale!¹
I bow me in suppliance low [hear:
At thy beard, at thy knee, at thine hand, till thou
And mine old eyes drop the tear.

¹ The claims of friendship outweigh those of grief.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

1210 ἰὼ παῖ, κατά-
σχέθε λέουτος ἀγρίον θυμόν, ὡς-
дрόμον 1 ἐπὶ φόνιον ἀνόσιον ἐξάγει,
κακὰ θέλων κακοὶς συνάψαι, τέκνων.

ΟΗΣΕΥ
ἐλευ σὲ τὸν θάσσοντα δυστήνους ἑδρας
αὐδώ, φίλοισιν ὃμμα δεικνύναι τὸ σῶν.
οὐδεὶς σκότος γὰρ ὃδ᾽ ἔχει μέλαν νέφος,
ὅστις κακῶν σῶν συμφορὰν κρύψειεν ἄν.
τί μοι προσείων χείρα σημαινεῖς φόνον;
ὡς μὴ μύσος με σῶν βάλῃ προσφθεγμάτων;
οὐδὲν μέλει μοι σὺν γε σοι πράσσειν κακῶς;
καὶ γὰρ ποτ’ ἡτύχησο’ ἐκεῖδ’ ἀνοιστέουν,
ὅτ’ ἔξεσωσάς μ’ εἰς φάος νεκρῶν πάρα.
χάριν δὲ γηράσκουσαν ἐχθαίρω φίλων,
καὶ τῶν καλῶν μὲν ὡστὶς ἀπολαύειν θέλει,
συμπλεῖν δὲ τοίς φίλοισι δυστυχοῦσιν οὗ.
ἀνίστασ’, ἐκκάλυψον ἄθλιον κάρα.
βλέψον πρὸς ἡμᾶς. ὡστὶς εὐγενῆς βροτῶν,
φέρει τὰ θεῶν γε πτώματ’ οὐδ’ ἀναίνεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
Θησεῦ, δέδορκας τόνδ’ ἀγῶν’ ἐμῶν τέκνων;

ΟΗΣΕΥ

1220 ἤκουσα, καὶ βλέποντι σημαίνεις κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
τί δὴτά μου κράτ’ ἀνεκάλυψας ἥλιῳ;

ΟΗΣΕΥ

1230 τί δ’; οὐ μαίνεις θυητός ὅτι τὰ τῶν θεῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
φεῦγ’, ὦ ταλαίπωρ’, ἀνόσιον μάσμ’ ἐμῶν.

1 Reiske: for MSS. βρόμον.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O son, refrain thou the furious lion's mood!  
Thou wouldst speed on a race unhallowed, a path of blood,  
Who art bent on self-slaughter, on swelling with evil evil's flood.

THESEUS

Ho! thee in spirit-broken session crouched  
I hail—reveal unto thy friends thy face.  
There is no darkness hath a pall so black  
That it should hide the misery of thy woes.  
Why wave me back with hand that warns of blood?  
Lest some pollution of thy speech taint me?  
Naught reck I of misfortune, shared with thee.  
Fair lot hath found me—I date it from that hour  
When safe to day thou brought'st me from the dead.  
Friends' gratitude that waxeth old I hate,  
Hate him who would enjoy friends' sunshine-tide,  
But will not in misfortune sail with them.  
Stand up, unmuffle thou thine hapless head:  
Look on me: who of men is royal-souled  
Beareth the blows of heaven, and flincheth not.

[Unveils HERCULES.]

HERCULES

Theseus, hast seen mine onslaught on mine babes?

THESEUS

I have heard: the ills thou namest I behold.

HERCULES

Why then unveil mine head unto the sun?

THESEUS

Why?—mortal, thou canst not pollute the heavens.

HERCULES

Flee, hapless, my pollution god-accurst!
ΗΡΑΧΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
οὐδεὶς ἀλάστωρ τοῖς φίλοις ἐκ τῶν φίλων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἐπήνεσ’ εὖ δράσας δέ σ’ οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
ἐγὼ δὲ πάσχων εὖ τὸτ’ οἰκτείρω σε νῦν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οἰκτρὸς γάρ εἰμι τάμ’ ἀποκτείνας τέκνα.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
κλαίω χάριν σὴν ἔφ’ ἐτέραισι συμφοραῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ηὗρες δ’ ἐτ’ ἄλλους ἐν κακοίσι μείζοσιν;

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
ἀπεις κάτωθεν οὐρανοῦ δυσπραξία.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
τοιγὰρ παρεσκευάσμεθ’ ώστε καταθανεῖν.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
δοκεῖσ ἀπειλῶν σῶν μέλειν τι δαίμοσιν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
αὐθάδες ο θεός, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς ἑγὼ.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
‘ἴσχε στόμ’, ὡς μή μέγα λέγων μεῖζον πάθης.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
γέμω κακῶν δή, κοῦκέτ’ ἐσθ’ ὄπῃ τεθή.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
δράσεις δὲ δὴ τί; ποῖ φέρει θυμούμενος;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
θανῶν, ὅθεντερ ἠλθον, εἰμι γῆς ὑπο.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
εἴρηκας ἐπιτυχόντος ἀνθρώπου λόγους.

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

THESEUS
No haunting curse can pass from friend to friend.

HERCULES
Now nay!—yet thanks. I helped thee, nor repent.

THESEUS
I for that kindness now compassionate thee.

HERCULES
Compassion-worthy am I, who slew my sons!

THESEUS
I weep for thy sake, for thy fortune changed.

HERCULES
Hast thou known any whelmed in deeper woes?

THESEUS
From earth to heaven reach thy calamities.

HERCULES
Therefore have I prepared my soul to die.

THESEUS
Deem'st thou that Heaven recks aught of threats of thine?

HERCULES
For me God cares not, nor care I for God!

THESEUS
Refrain lips, lest high words bring deeper woes!

HERCULES
Full-fraught am I with woes—no space for more.

THESEUS
What wilt thou do?—whither art passion-hurled?

HERCULES
To death. I pass to Hades, whence I came.

THESEUS
No hero's words be these that thou hast said.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
σὺ δ’ ἐκτὸς ὃν γε συμφορᾶς με νουθετεῖς.

ΘΕΣΕΤΟ
ὁ πολλὰ δὴ τλάς Ἡρακλῆς λέγει τάδε;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐκον τοσαύτα γ’ εἰν μέτρῳ μοχθητέον.

ΘΕΣΕΤΟ
εὐρεγέτης βροτοῦσι καὶ μέγας φίλος;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οἶδ’ οὐδὲν ὤφελοῦσί μ’, ἀλλ’ Ἡρα κρατεῖ.

ΘΕΣΕΤΟ
οὐκ ἄν σ’ ἀνάσχοιθ’ Ἐλλᾶς ἀμαθία θανεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἀκουε δὴ νυν, ὡς ἀμελληθῶ λόγοις
πρὸς νουθετήσεις σάς· ἀναπτύξω δὲ σοι
ἀβιώτον ἡμῖν νῦν τε καὶ πάροδεν οὖν.
πρῶτον μὲν ἐκ τοῦθ’ ἐγενόμην ὅστις κτανῶν
μητρὸς γεραιὸν πατέρα προστρόπαιος ὅν
ἐγήμε τὴν τεκούσαν Ἀλκμήνην ἐμὲ.

1260 ὅταν δὲ κρητὶς μὴ καταβληθῇ γένους
ὁθὸς, ἀνάγκη δυστυχεῖν τοὺς ἐκγόνους.
Ζεὺς δ’—ὁστίς ὁ Ζεὺς—πολέμιον μ’ ἐγένατο
"Ἡρα· σὺ μέντοι μηδὲν ἀχθεσθῆς, γέρον
πατέρα γὰρ ἀντὶ Ζηνὸς ἡγοῦμαι σ’ ἐγώ.
ἐτ’ ἐν γαλακτὶ τ’ ὄντι γοργώπον ὅφεις
ἐπεισέφησε σπαργάνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς
ἡ τοῦ Δίος σύλλεκτος, ἡς ὑλοίμεθα.
ἐπεί δὲ σαρκὸς περιβόλαι ἐκτησάμην
ἡβῶντα, μόχθους οὐς ἤτλην τὶ δεῖ λέγειν;
ποίους ποτ’ ἢ λέουτας ἢ τρισωμάτους

1 Hermann: for MSS. γ’, εἰ μέτρῳ.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES
Thou dost rebuke me—clear of misery thou!

THESEUS
Speaks Hercules, who hath endured so much,—

HERCULES
Never so much!—its bounds endurance hath.

THESEUS
Men’s benefactor and their mighty friend?

HERCULES
_They_ cannot help, for Hera’s might prevails.

THESEUS
Hellas will brook not this fool’s death for thee.

HERCULES
Hearken, that I may wrestle in argument
With thine admonishings. I will unfold
Why now, as heretofore, boots not to live.
First, I am his son, who, with blood-guilt stained
From murder of my mother’s aged sire,
Wedded Alcmena who gave birth to me.
When the foundation of the race is laid
In sin, needs must the issue be ill-starred.

And Zeus—whoe’er Zeus be—begat me foe.
To Hera,—nay but, ancient, be not chafed,
For truer father thee I count than Zeus.
When I was yet a suckling, Zeus’s bride
Sent gorgon-glaring serpents secretly
Against my cradle, that I might be slain.
Soon as I gathered vesture of brawny flesh,
What boots to tell what labours I endured?
What lions, what three-bodied Geryon-fiends,
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Γηρυώνας¹ ἢ Γύγαντας ἢ τετρασκελῆ κενταυροπληθῆ πόλεμον οὐκ ἔξινυσα;
τὴν τ' ἀμφίκρανον καὶ παλμβλαστῇ κύνα ὑδραν φονεύσασα, μυρίων τ' ἄλλων πόνων
dιήλθον ἀγέλας κεῖσ νεκρῶς ἀφικόμην,
Αἰδοὺ πυλώρων κύνα τρίκρανον εἰς φάος ὄπως πορεύσαμι ἐντολαῖς Ἐυρυσθέως.
τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ τοῦτ' ἔτην τάλας φόων,
παιδοκτονήσας δῶμα θυρικώσαι κακοῖς.
ήκω δ' ἁνάγκης εἰς τόδ', οὐτ' ἐμαῖς φίλαις
Θήβαις ἐνοικεῖν ὅσιον ἦν δὲ καὶ μένω,
εἰς ποῖον ἰερὸν ἤ πανηγυριν φίλων
eἰμ'; οὐ γὰρ ἀτας εὐπροσηγόρους ἔχω.
ἀλλ' Ἀργος ἔλθω; πῶς ἐπεὶ φεύγω πάτραν;
φερ' ἀλλ' ἐς ἄλλην δὴ τιν' ὀρμήσω πόλιν'.
κάπετοθ' ὑποβλεπόμεθ' ὡς ἐγνωσμένοι,
γλώσσης πικροὶς κέντροις κληδοχούμενοι.
οὐχ οὕτως ὦ Διός, δε τέκν' ἐκτεινέω ποτε
dαμαρτά τ'; οὐ γῆς τής ἀποθαρασσεῖται;
κεκλημένῳ δὲ φωτί μακαρίῳ ποτὲ
αἱ μεταβολαὶ λυπηρῶν. ψ' δ' ἀεὶ κακῶς
ἐστ', οὐδὲν ἄλγει συγγενῶς δύστημος ὦν.
eἰς τούτῳ δ' ἦξείν συμφοράς οὐμαί ποτὲ
φωνήν γὰρ ἤσει χθῶν ἀπευνάθυσα μὲ
μὴ θυγγάνων γῆς καὶ θάλασσα μὴ περᾶν
πηγαὶ τε ποταμῶν, καὶ τὸν ἀρματήλατον
Ἰξιόν' ἐν δεσμοίσιν ἐκμιμήσῳ.
πρὸς ταύτ' ἀριστα μηδέν' Ἐλλήνων μ' ὀράν,
ἐν οἴσιν εὐτυχοῦστες ἦμεν ὀλβιοῖ.
τί δὴτα με ἔξη δεῖ; τί κέρδος ἔξομεν
βίοτον ἄχρειον ἀνόσιον κεκτημένοι;

¹ Elmsley: for MSS. Τυφώνας.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Or giants, slew I not?—or with what host
Of fourfoot Centaurs fought not out the war?
The hound o’erswarmed with heads that severed grew,
The Hydra, killed I: throngs of toils beside
Untold I wrought: I passed unto the dead
To bring forth at Eurystheus’ hest to light
The hound three-headed, warder of Hell-gate.
And this—woe’s me!—my latest desperate deed,
Murder of sons—mine home’s topstone of ills!

I am come to this strait—in my dear-loved Thebes
I cannot dwell uncursed. Though I should stay,
To what fane can I go?—what gathering
Of friends?—the Accurst, to whom no man may
speak!
Shall I to Argos?—I, an outlawed man!
Nay then, to another city let me go—
And there be eyed askance, a branded man,
My jailers there the scorpions of the tongue—
“Lo there Zeus’ son, who murdered babes and wife!
Shall he not hence?—perdition go with him!”

Now to the man called happy in time past
Reverse is torture: he whose days were dark
Always, grieves not, being cradled in distress.

To this curse shall I come at last, I ween,
That earth shall find a voice forbidding me
To touch her, and the sea, that I cross not,
And river-springs: so, like Ixion whirled
In chains upon his wheel shall I become.
Best so—that none set eyes on me in Greece,
The land where once I prospered and was blest.

Why need I live? What profit shall I have
Owning a useless life, a life accurst?
Χορευέτω δὴ Ζηνὸς ἡ κλεινὴ δάμαρ κρούουσ' Ὀλύμπου δὲν ἀρβύλη πέδουν ἐπραξε γὰρ βούλησων ἦν ἐβούλετο, ἀνδρὶ Ἑλλάδος τὸν πρῶτον αὐτοίσιν βάθροις ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα. τοιαύτῃ θεῷ τῆς ἂν προσεύχωθ' ἢ γυναῖκος εἶνεκα λέκτρων φθονοῦσα Ζηνὺ τοὺς εὐεργέτας Ἑλλάδος ἀπώλεσο' οὐδὲν ὄντας αἰτίους.

Ωθείς

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου δαμόνοις ἄγων ὅδε ἢ τῆς Δίως δάμαρτος. [οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν] ἱ παρανέσαιμ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἡ πάσχειν κακῶς. οὐδεὶς δὲ θυτῶν ταῖς τύχαις ἀκήρατος, οὐ θεών, οἰοδῶν εἰπέρ οὐ ψυχεῖς λόγοι. οὐ λέκτρα τ' ἀλλήλους, δὲν οὐδεὶς νόμος, συνήψαν; οὐ δεσμοῦσι διὰ τυραννίδας πατέρας ἐκηλίδωσαν; ἀλλ' οἴκοιο' ὄμως Ὀλυμποῦ ὄνεσχοντό θ' ἡμαρτηκότες.

καίτοι τι φήβεις, εἰ σὺ μὲν θυτῶς γεγὼς φέρεις ὑπέρφευ τάς τύχας, θεῷ δὲ μή; Ὅθεῖς μὲν οὖν ἐκλείπει τοῦ νόμου χάρων, ἔποιο δ' ἀμ' ἡμῖν πρὸς πόλισμα Παλλάδος. ἐκεὶ χέρας σὰς ἀγνίσας μᾶσματος, δόμοισ τε δόσω χρημάτων τ' ἐμῶν μέρος. ἄ δ' ἐκ πολιτῶν δῶρ' ἐχω σώσας κόρους διὸ ἐπτά, ταῦτον Κυνόσιον κατακτανών, σοὶ ταύτα δόσω. πανταχόν δὲ μοὶ χθονὸς τεμένῃ δέδαισι· ταῦτ' ἐπωνυμασμένα σέθεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκληστεῖ.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Now let her dance, that glorious bride of Zeus,  
Beating with sandalled foot Olympus' floor!  
She hath compassed her desire that she desired, 
Down with his pedestal hurling in utter wreck  
The foremost man of Greece! To such a Goddess  
Who shall pray now?—who, for a woman's sake  
Jealous of Zeus, from Hellas hath cut off  
Her benefactors, guiltless though they were!  

THESEUS

This is the assault of none of deities  
Save Zeus's Queen; yet thee I counsel not  
Rather to die than suffer and be strong.  
No mortal hath escaped misfortune's taint,  
Nor God—if minstrel-legends be not false.  
Have they not linked them in unlawful bonds  
Of wedlock, and with chains, to win them thrones,  
Outraged their fathers? In Olympus still  
They dwell, by their transgressions unabashed.  
What wilt thou plead, if, mortal as thou art,  
Thou chafe against thy fate, and Gods do not?

Nay then, leave Thebes, submissive to the law,  
And unto Pallas' fortress come with me.  
There will I cleanse thine hands from taint of blood,  
Give thee a home, and of my substance half.  
The gifts my people gave for children saved  
Twice seven, when I slew the Cnossian bull,  
These will I give thee. All throughout the land  
Have I demesnes assigned me: these shall bear  
Thy name henceforth with men while thou shalt live.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ξώντος θανόντα δ', ευτ' ἄν εἰς Ἀιδον μόλης,
θυσίαις θαίνοι τ' ἔχομενας τίμων ἀνάξει πάσῃ Ἀθηναίων πόλεις.
καλὸς γὰρ ἀστοῖς στέφανος Ἐλλήνων ὑπὸ ἄνδρ' ἔσθλὸν ὡφελοῦντας εὐκλείας τυχεῖν.
κάγω χάριν σοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας
tήμων ἀντιδώσω νῦν γὰρ εἰ χρείος φίλων.
θεοί δ' ὅταν τιμῶσιν, οὐδὲν δεῖ φίλων
ἀλλὰ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ὡφελῶν, ὅταν θέλη.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἷς οὖν πάρεργα τοι τάδ' ἐστ' ἔμων κακῶν.
ἐγὼ δέ τοὺς θεοὺς οὕτε λέκτρ' ἢ μὴ θέμις
στέργειν νομίζω, δεσμά τ' ἐξάπτειν χερῶν
οὕτ' ἤξισα πῶστορ' οὕτε πέσομαι,
οὐδ' ἄλλοιν ἄλλους δεσπότην πεφυκέναι.
δεῖται γὰρ ὁ θεὸς, εἴπερ ἐστ' ὀρθῶς θεός,
οὐδενός· οὐδέν οὐδε δύστηνοι λόγοι.
ἐσκεψάμην δὲ καίπερ ἐν κακοῖσιν ὅν,
μὴ δειλὰν ὁφλῶ τε ἐκλίπων φαός.

ταῖς συμφοραῖς γὰρ ὅστις οὐχ ὑφίσταται,
οὐδ' ἀνδρὸς ἄν δύναιθ' ὑποστήναι βέλος.
ἐγκαρτέρησον θάνατον· εἴμι δ' εἰς πόλιν
τὴν σην χάριν τε μυρίαν δόρων ἔχω.
ἀταρ πόνων δὴ μυρίων ἔγευσάμην
οὐτ' ἀπείπουν οὐδὲν οὕτ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων
ἐσταξα τηγάς, οὐδ' ἄν φόμην ποτὲ
eἰς τοῦθ' ἱέσθαι, δάκρυ ἀπ' ὀμμάτων βαλεῖν.

νῦν δ', ὡς ἔοικε, τῇ τύχῃ δουλευτέον,
εἰς' γεραιτε, τὰς ἐμὰς φυγάς ὀρᾶς,
ὄρας δὲ παῖδων ὑμα μ' αὐθέντην ἐμῶν.

δὸς τούσθε τύμβῳ καὶ περίστειλον νεκροὺς
δακρύσσω τιμῶν—ἐμὲ γὰρ οὐκ εἧ νόμος—

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

And, when in death thou goest to Hades' halls,
With sacrifice and monuments of stone
Shall all the Athenians' Town exalt thy name:
For a fair crown to win from Greeks is this
For us, the glory of a hero helped.
Yea, this requital will I render thee
For saving me; for now thou lackest friends.
When the Gods honour us, we need not friends:
God's help sufficeth, when he wills it so.

HERCULES

Ah, all this hath no pertinence to mine ills!
I deem not that the Gods for spousals crave
Unhallowed: tales of Gods' hands manacled
Ever I scorned, nor ever will believe,
Nor that one God is born another's lord.
For God hath need, if God indeed he be,
Of naught: these be the minstrels' sorry tales.

Yet thus I have mused—how deep soe'er in ills—
"Shall I quit life, and haply prove me craven?"
For he who flinchest from misfortune's blows,
He even from a mere man's spear would flinch.
I will be strong to await death. To thy town
I go. For thy gifts thanks a thousandfold.
Ah, I have tasted travail measureless,
Nor ever shrank from any, never shed
Tear from mine eyes, no, nor had ever thought
That I should come to this, to weep the tear!
But now, meseems, I must be thrall to fate.

Ay so!—thou seest, O ancient, mine exile;
Thou seest me a murderer of my sons.
Give these a tomb, and shroud the dead, with tears
For honour,—me the law withholds therefrom,—
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

πρὸς στέρν' ἐρείσας μὴ τρὶ δοὺς τ' ἐς ἀγκάλας, κοινωνίαν δύστηνον, ἥν ἐγὼ τάλας διώλεσ' ἄκων. γὰρ δ' ἔπην κρίτης νεκρούς, οἷκει πόλιν τὴνδ', ἄθλιος μέν, ἄλλτ' ὀμοσ ψυχὴν βιάζου τάμα συμφέρειν κακά.

ω τέκν', ὁ φύσας χὼ τεκὼν ὑμᾶς πατὴρ ἀρνάλεσ', οὐδ' ἄνασθε τὰν ἐμῶν καλῶν, ἀγὼ παρεσκεύαζον ἐκμοχθῶν βία
eὐκλειαν ὑμῖν, πατρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν καλῆν.

σὲ τ' ὀφτ' ἰμοῖσω, ὁ τάλαιν', ἀρνάλεσα ὄστερ σὺ τάμα λεκτρ' ἐσφξες ἀσφαλῶς, μακρὰς διαντλοῦσ' ἐν δόμοις οἰκουρίας.

οἶμοι δάμαρτος καὶ τέκνων, οἶμοι δ' ἐμοῦ ὅσ ἀθλίως πέπραγα κάποζεύγμαι τέκνων γυναικός τ'. ὁ λυγραὶ φιλημάτων τέρψεις, λυγραὶ δὲ τῶν ὁπλῶν κοινωνίαι.

ἀμηχανω γὰρ πότερ' ἔχω τάδ' ἡ μεθῶ, ἢ πλευρά τάμα προσπίπτουν' ἐρεῖ τάδε:

ἡμῖν τέκν' εἰλὲς καὶ δάμαρβ. ἡμᾶς ἔχεις παῖδοκτόνους σοὺς. εἰτ' ἐγὼ τάδ', ὅλεναις ὅιος; τί φάσκων; ἀλλᾶ γυμνωθεὶς ὁπλῶν, ἔνων οἶς τὰ κάλλιστ' ἐξεπτράξεν', ἐν Ἑλλάδι, ἔχθρος ἐμαυτὸν ὑποβαλὼν αἰσχρῶς θάνω; οὐ λειπτέον τάδ', ἄθλιως δὲ σωστέον.

ἐν μοί τί, Θησεῦ, σύγκαμ' ἀθλίῳ κυνὸς κόμιστρ' ἐς Ἀργος συγκατάστησον μολῶν, λύπη τί παίδων μὴ πάθω μονομενος.

ὁ γαϊά Κάδμου πᾶς τε Θησεῖος λέως, κείρασθε, συμπενθήσεστ', ἐλθετ' εἰς τάφον
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Laid on the mother's breast, clasped in her arms,
Sad fellowship, which I—O wretch!—destroyed
Unknowing. When thou hast hid them in the
tomb,
Live on in Thebes,—in misery, yet still
Constrain thy soul to share my load of woe.
Ah children, your begetter and your sire
Slew you!—ye had no profit of my glory,
Of all my travail and strenuous toil to win
Renown for you—a sire's best legacy.  
And thee, lost love, not in such wise I slew
As thou didst save, didst keep mine honour safe
Through all that weary warding of mine house!
Woe for my wife and children! woe for me!
How mournful is my plight, who am disyoked
From babes, from bride! Ah bitter joy of kisses!
Ah bitter fellowship of these mine arms!
Keep—cast them from me—I know not which to do.
Hanging athwart my side thus will they say:

"With us thou slavest babes and wife—yet keep'st
Thy children's slayers!" Shall mine hand bear
these?

What can I plead? Yet, naked of mine arms
Wherewith I wrought most glorious deeds in Greece,
'Neath foes' feet shall I cast me?—foully die?
Leave them I may not, to my grief must keep.
In one thing help me, Theseus: come to Argos
To back my claim of hire for Cerberus brought,
Lest grief for children slay me faring lone.
O Land of Cadmus, all ye Theban folk,
With shorn hair grieve with me: to my sons' tomb

1 He could not replace them by others as good; for they were gifts of Gods—the bow of Apollo, and the club of Hephaestus.

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ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

παίδων, ἀπαντας δ' ἐνι λόγῳ πευθήσατε
νεκροὺς τε κάμε: πάντες ἐξολώλαμεν
"Ηρας μιᾷ πληγέντες ἀθλοι τύχη.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἄνίστασ', ὃ δύστημεν δακρύων δ' ἄλις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐκ ἀν δυναίμην ἀρθρα γὰρ πέπηγε μου.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
καὶ τοὺς σθένοντας γὰρ καθαιροῦσιν τύχαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
φεῦ, 
ἀυτοῦ γενοίμην πέτρος ἀμνήμων κακῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
παύσαι δίδου δὲ χεῖρ' ὑπηρέτη φίλω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἀλλ' αἷμα μὴ σοῖς ἔξομόρξωμαι πέπλοις.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἐκμασσε, φείδου μηδέν' οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
παίδων στερηθεὶς παίδ' ὅπως ἐχω σ' ἐμόν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
δίδου δέρη σὴν χεῖρ', ὅθηγήσω δ' ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ζευγός γε φίλων ἀτέρος δὲ δυστυχής.
ὁ πρέσβυ, τοιῶνδ' ἀνδρα χρή κτάσθαι φίλων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΙΤΩΝ
ἡ γὰρ τεκοῦσα τόνδε πατρίς εὐτεκνός.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
Θῆσευ, πάλιν με στρέψου, ὡς ἰδω τέκνα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ὡς δὴ τί; φίλτρου τοῦτ' ἔχων ράων ἔσει;
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Pass, and in one wail make ye moan for all—
The dead and me: we have wholly perished all,
Smitten by one sore doom from Hera's hand.

THESEUS
Rise, sorrow-stricken: let these tears suffice.

HERCULES
I cannot: lo, my limbs are palsy-chained.

THESEUS
O yea, misfortune breaketh down the strong.

HERCULES
Woe worth the day!
Ah to be turned to stone, my woes forgot!

THESEUS
No more! To a friend, a helper, reach thine hand.

HERCULES
With this blood let me not besmirch thy robes!

THESEUS
On me wipe all off! Spare not: I refuse not!

HERCULES
Of sons bereaved, thee have I, like a son.

THESEUS
Cast o'er my neck thine arm; I lead thee on.

HERCULES
A yoke of love!—but one, a stricken man.
Father, well may one gain such friend as this.

AMPHITRYON
The land that bare him breedeth noble sons!

HERCULES
Theseus, let me turn back, to see my babes.

THESEUS
What spell to ease thy pain hath this for thee?
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ποθώ, πατρός τε στέρνα προσθέσθαι θέλω.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ιδοὺ τάδ’, ὃ παῖ· τὰμὰ γὰρ σπεύδεις φίλα.
ΟΗΣΕΤΣ
οὔτω πόνων σῶν οὐκέτι μνήμην ἔχεις;
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἀπαντ’ ἐλάσσω κεῖνα τῶν’ ἐτλῆν κακά.
ΟΗΣΕΤΣ
εἰ σ’ ὤψεται τις θῆλυν ὄντ’, οὐκ αἰνέσει.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ξῶ σοὶ ταπεινός; ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν οὐ δοκῶ.
ΟΗΣΕΤΣ
ἀγαν γ’· ὁ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς ποῦ κεῖνος ὁν;
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
σὺ ποίος ἤσθα νέρθεν ἐν κακοίσιν ὁν;
ΟΗΣΕΤΣ
ὡς εἰς τὸ λήμα παντὸς ἣν ἤσσων ἀνήρ.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
πῶς οὖν ἄν εἴποις ὅτι συνέσταλμαι κακοίς;
ΟΗΣΕΤΣ
πρόβαινε.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
χαῖρ’, ὃ πρέσβυ.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
καὶ σὺ μοι, τέκνου.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
θάφθ’ ὡσπερ εἴποιν παῖδας.
ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ἐμὲ δὲ τίς, τέκνου;

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THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES
I yearn—and on my father's breast would fall:

AMPHITRYON

Lo here, my son: mine heart as thine is fain.

THESEUS

Art thou so all-forgetful of thy toils? 1

HERCULES

All toils endured of old were light by these.

THESEUS

Who sees thee play the woman thus shall scorn.

HERCULES

Live I, thy scorn? Once was I not, I trow!

THESEUS

Alas, yes! Where is glorious Hercules?

HERCULES

What manner of man wast thou mid Hades' woes?

THESEUS

My strength of soul was utter weakness then.

HERCULES

Shouldst thou, then, name me a man by suffering cowed?

THESEUS

On then!

HERCULES

Farewell, old sire.

AMPHITRYON

Farewell thou, son.

HERCULES

Bury the lads.

AMPHITRYON

Who burieth me, my child?

1 The Twelve Labours, of which this weakness is unworthy.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐγώ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

πότ' ἔλθὼν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ήνικ' ἀν θάψῃς τέκνα.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

πῶς;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

eἰς Ἄθήνας πέμψομαι Θηβῶν ἀπὸ.

ἀλλ' εἰσκόμιζε τέκνα δυσκόμιστα γῆ.

ἡμεῖς δ' ἀναλώσαντες αἰσχύναις δόμον,

Θησεῖ πανώλεις ἐψόμεσθ' ἐφολκίδες.

όστις δὲ πλοῦτον ἡ σθένος μᾶλλον φίλων

ἀγάθων πεπάσθαι βούλεται, κακῶς φρουεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχομεν οἰκτροὶ καὶ πολύκλαυτοι,

τὰ μέγιστα φίλων ὀλέσαντες.
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I.

AMPHITRYON
When com'st thou?

HERCULES
When thou hast buried them.

AMPHITRYON

How?

HERCULES
I from Thebes to Athens will bring thee.
Bear in my babes—earth groans to bear such burden!
I, who have wasted by my shame mine house,
Like wreck in tow will trail in Theseus' wake.
Whoso would fain possess or wealth or strength
Rather than loyal friends, is sense-bereft.

CHORUS
With mourning and weeping sore do we pass away,
Who have lost the chiefest of all our friends this day.

[Exeunt omnes.]
THE

CHILDREN OF HERCULES
ARGUMENT

Eurystheus, king of Argos, hated Hercules all his life through, and sought to destroy him by thrusting on him many and desperate labours. And when Hercules had been caught up to Olympus from the pyre whereon he was consumed on Mount Oeta, Eurystheus persecuted the hero's children, and sought to slay them. Wherefore Iolaus, their father's friend and helper, fled with them. But in whatsoever city they sought refuge, thence were they driven; for Eurystheus ever made search for them, and demanded them with threats of war. So fleeing from land to land, they came at last to Marathon which belongeth to Athens, and there took sanctuary at the temple of Zeus. Thither came the folk of the land compassionating them, and Eurystheus' herald requiring their surrender, and the king of Athens, Theseus' son, to hear their cause. And herein is told the tale of the war that came of his refusal to yield them up, of the sacrifice of a noble maiden which the Gods required as the price of victory, of an old warrior by miracle made young, and of the vengeance of Alcmena.
ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
ΑΙΤΕΛΟΣ
ΕΤΡΙΣΘΕΤΣ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

IOLAEUS, an old man, formerly friend of Hercules.
COPEUS, herald of Eurystheus.
DEMOPHON, king of Athens, son of Theseus.
MACARIA, daughter of Hercules.
HENCHMAN of Hyllus, Hercules’ eldest son.
ALCMENA, mother of Hercules.
SERVANT of Alcmena.
Messerger, a captain from the army.
EURYSTHEUS, king of Argos.
CHORUS of old men of Marathon.
Young sons of Hercules, guards, and attendants.

SCENE: At Marathon, in the forecourt of the temple of Zeus. The great altar stands in the midst.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

Πάλαι ποτ' ἐστὶ τούτ' ἐμοὶ δεδομένων·
οὶ μὲν δίκαιος τοὺς πέλας πέφυκ' ἀνήρ,
ὁ δ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος λήμ' ἔχων ἀνεμένου
πόλεις τ' ἄχρηστος καὶ συναλλάσσειν βαρύς,
αὐτῷ δ' ἀριστος· οἶδα δ' οὐ λόγῳ μαθῶν.
ἐγὼ γὰρ αἴδοι καὶ τὸ συγγενές σέβων,
ἐξὸν κατ' Ἄργος ἰσύχως ναιεῖν, πόλων
πλείστων μετέχον ἐφ' ἀνήρ 'Ηρακλεία,
ὅτ' ἦν μεθ' ἡμῶν· νῦν δ', ἐπεὶ κατ' οὐρανῶν

10 ναἰεῖ, τὰ κεῖνον τέκν' ἔχων ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
σφόξω τάδ' αὐτὸς δεόμενος σωτηρίας.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ αὐτῶν γῆς ἀπηλλάχθη πατήρ,
πρῶτον μὲν ἡμᾶς ἦθελ' Ἐυρυσθεὺς κτανεῖν·
ἀλλ' ἐξεδραμεν· καὶ πόλεις μὲν οἰχεῖται,
ψυχῇ δ' ἐσώθη. φεύγομεν δ' ἄλωμενοι
ἀλλήν ἀπ' ἀλλής ἐξορίζοντες πόλην.
πρὸς τοὺς γὰρ ἄλλοις καὶ τοῦ Ἐυρυσθεὺς κακοῖς
ὐβρισμ' ἐς ἡμᾶς ἥξισσεν ὕβρισαι·

20 κήρυκας ἔξαιτει τε κάξειργει χθονός,
πόλυν προτείνων Ἄργος οὔ σμικρὰν φίλην
ἐχθράν τε θέσθαι, χαύτων εὐτυχοῦνθ' ἀμα.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS with HERCULES' CHILDREN, discovered sitting on the altar-steps.

IOLAUS

I hold it truth, and long have held:—the just Lives for his brother men; but he whose soul Uncurbed hunts gain alone, unto the state Useless, in dealings hard, is but to himself A friend—nor know this by report alone; Since I, who might in Argos peacefully Have dwelt, for honour's sake and kinship's bond Bore chief share in the toils of Hercules When he was with us: now, when in the heaven He dwells, his babes I shelter 'neath my wings 10 Defending, who myself sore need defence.

For, soon as from the earth their sire had passed, Us would Eurystheus at the first have slain, But we fled. Now our city, our home is lost, Life only saved. We are exiled wanderers From city unto city moving on. For on our other wrongs this coping-stone Of outrage hath Eurystheus dared to set,— Heralds to each land where we bide he sends, Demandeth us, and biddeth drive us forth, Warning them that no weakling friend or foe Is Argos, and himself a mighty king.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

οἱ δ’ ἄσθενῆ μὲν τὰ π’ ἐμοὶ δεδορκότες,
σμικροῦς δὲ τούσδε καὶ πατρὸς τητομένους,
τοὺς κρείσσονας σέβοντες ἐξείργουσί γῆς.
ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν φεύγουσι συμφεύγω τέκνοις
καὶ σὺν κακῶς πράσσουσι συμπράσσω κακῶς,
ὅκινων προδοῦναι, μὴ τις ὁδ’ ἐπὶ θρητῶν
Ἴδεςθ’, ἐπειδὴ παισῶν οὐκ ἔστιν πατήρ,

30 Ὅλοις οὖν ἦμυνε συγγενῆς γεγώς.
pάσης δὲ χώρας Ἑλλάδος τητόμενοι,
Μαραθῶνα καὶ σύγκλητον ἐλθόντες χθόνα
ικέται καθεξόμεθα βώμου θεῶν,
προσφέρεσαι: πεδία γὰρ τῆςδε χθονὸς
dισσοῦς κατοικεῖν Θησέως παῖδας λόγος
cλήρῳ λαχόντας, ἐκ γένους Παιδίωνος,
τοῦσδ’ ἐγγύς ὄντας· ὡν ἔκατε τέρμονας
cλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν τὴνδ’ ἀφικόμεσθ’ ὅδον.
δυοῖν γερόντων δὲ στρατηγεῖται φυγή·
ἐγὼ μὲν ἀμφί τοίσδε καλχαίνων τέκνοις,
ἡ δ’ αὐ τὸ θῆλυ παιδὸς Ἀλκμήνη γένος
ἐσωθε ναιού τούδ’ ὑπηγκαλισμενή
σωζεῖν νέας γὰρ παρθένους αἰδούμεθα
οὐχὶ πελάξειν κατὰ βωμοστατεῖν.

40 Ἡλλος δ’ ἀδελφοί θ’ οἴσι πρεσβεύει γένος
ζητοῦσ’ ὅπου γῆς πύργον οἰκούμεθα,
ἡν τῆςδ’ ἀπωθώμεσθα πρὸς βίαιν χθονὸς.
ὁ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦρο, λαμβάνεσθ’ ἐμῶν
πέπλων’ ὀρῶ κήρυκα τοῖδ’ Ἑυρυσθέως
στείχοντ’ ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς, οὗ διωκόμεσθ’ ὑπὸ
pάσης ἀλῆται γῆς ἀπεστερημένοι.
ὁ μῖσος, εἰθ’ ὅλοι χω πέμψας σ’ ἀνήρ·
δὲ πολλὰ δὴ καὶ τῶνδε γενναίῳ πατρὶ
ἐκ τοῦδε ταύτου στόματος ἤγγειλας κακά.

50
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And they, discerning that my cause is weak,
These but young children orphaned of their sire,
Bow to the strong, and drive us from their land.
I with his banished babes share banishment,
And with their ill plight am in evil plight.
Forsake them I dare not, lest men should say:
"See, now the children's father is no more,
Iolaus wards them not,—their kinsman he!"

And so, from all the soil of Hellas banned,
To Marathon and the federate land we come,
At the Gods' altars sitting suppliant,
That they may help; for Theseus' scions twain,
Saith rumour, in the plains of this land dwell,
By lot their heritage, Pandion's seed,
And kin to these; for which cause have we come
This journey unto glorious Athens' bounds,
Old captains we that lead this exile-march,—
I, for these lads heart-full of troubled thought;
And she, Alcmena, in yon temple folds
Her arms about the daughters of her son,
And guards: for we think shame to let young girls
Stand, a crowd's gazing-stock, on altar-steps.
Now Hyllus and his brethren elder-born
Seek some land for our refuge and our home,
If from this soil we be with violence thrust.
O children, children, hither!—seize my robes!
Yonder I see Eurystheus' herald come
Against us, him of whom we are pursued,
The homeless wanderers barred from every land.

Enter CREPUS.

Loathed wretch! Now ruin seize thee and him that sent,
Who oftentimes to the noble sire of these
From that same mouth hast published evil hests.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἡ ποιν καθήσατε τὴν ἐδραν καλὴν δοκεῖς πόλιν τ’ ἄφθισθαι σύμμαχον; κακῶς φρονῶν οὐ γὰρ τις ἔστιν δα πάροιθ’ αἰρήσεται τὴν σὴν ἀχρείου δύναμιν ἀντ’ Εὐρυσθέως κρώει’ τι μοχθεῖς ταῦτ’; ἀνίστασθαί σε χρῆ εἰς Ἄργος, οὐ σε λεύσιμος μένει δίκη.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ’, ἐπεὶ μοι βωμὸς ἀρκέσει θεοῦ ἑλενθέρα τε γαῖ ἐν ἦ βεβήκαμεν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

βούλει πόνον μοι τῇδε προσθεῖναι χερί;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὕτω βία γὲ μ’ οὐδὲ τούσδ’ ἀξεῖς λαβῶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

γνώσει σὺ’ μάντες δ’ ἦσθ’ ἄρ’ οὐ καλὸς τάδε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἀν γένοιτο τούτ’ ἐμοῦ ζῴντος ποτε...

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἀπαίρ’ ἐγὼ δὲ τούσδε, κἂν σὺ μὴ θέλῃς, ἀξὼ κομίζων, οὐπέρ εἰσ’, Εὐρυσθέως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὁ τὰς Ἀθηνᾶς δαρῶν οἰκοῦντες χρόνον, ἀμύνθ’ ἰκέται δ’ ὄντες ἀγοραίον Δίδ βιαζόμεσθα καὶ στέφῃ μαινεται, πόλει τ’ ὀνειδος καὶ θεῶν ἀτιμῆ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐὰν ἐὰν τὶς ἡ βοὴ βωμοῦ πέλας ἔστηκε; ποίαν συμφορὰν δεῖξε τάχα;
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS
Ha, deem'st thou this thy session bravely chosen,
This state thou hast reached thine ally? O thou fool!
There is no man shall choose that impotence
Of thy poor strength before Eurystheus' power.
Away! Why make this coil? Thou must depart
To Argos, where the doom of stoning waits thee. 60

IOLAUS
Never: for the God's altar shall avail,
And the free land whereunto we have come.

COPREUS
Ha! wouldst thou find some work for this mine hand?

IOLAUS
Nor me nor these by force shalt thou hale hence.

COPREUS
That shalt thou prove: ill seer thou art in this.

IOLAUS (resisting)
This shall not be! no, never while I live!

COPREUS
Hands off! these will I hale, though thou say nay,
Accounting them Eurystheus': his they are.

[Hurls Iolaus to the ground.]

IOLAUS
O ye, in Athens dwellers from of old,
Help! Suppliants we of Zeus of the Market-stead 70
Are evil-entreated, holy wreaths defiled,
To Athens' shame and to your God's dishonour!

Enter Chorus.

CHORUS
What ho! what outcry by the altar wakes?
Now what calamity shall this reveal?
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

'ϊδετε τὸν γέροντ', ἀμαλὸν ἐπὶ πέδως
χύμενον· ὦ τάλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς τοῦ ποτ' ἐν γῇ πτώμα δύστηνον πίτνεις;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οδ', ὦ ξένωι, μὲ σοὺς ἀτιμάζων θεοὺς
ἐλκει βιαίως Ζηνὸς ἐκ προβομίων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

80

σῦ δ' ἐκ τίνος γῆς, ὦ γέρον, τετράπτολων
ξύνοικον ἥλθες λαῶν; ἢ πέρα-
θεν ἀλίῳ πλάτα,
kατέχετ' ἐκλεπτόντες Εὔβοϊδ' ἀκτάν;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ νησιωτην, ὦ ξένωι, τρίβω βίον,
ἀλλ' ἐκ Μυκηνῶν σὴν ἀφίγμεθα χθόνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὀνόμα τί se, γέρον,
Μυκηναῖος ὤνομαζειν λεώς;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

tὸν Ἡράκλειον ἵστε ποτ' παραστάτην
Ἰόλαον· οὐ γὰρ ὄνομ' ἀκήρυκτον τόδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

90

οἴδ' εἰςακούσας καὶ πρὶν ἀλλὰ τοῦ
ποτ' ἐν χειρὶ σὰ κομίζεις κόρους
νεοτρέφεις· φράσον.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

'Ἡρακλέους οἴδ' εἰςὶ παῖδες, ὦ ξένωι,
ἰκέται σέθεν τε καὶ πόλεως ἀφιγμένοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὶ χρέας; ἢ λόγων πόλεως, ἐνεπέ μοι,
μελόμενοι τυχεῖν;
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAEUS
Behold ye!—the eld-stricken see
In his feebleness hurled to the ground, woe's me!

CHORUS
Of whom thus pitiably wast thou dashed down?

IOLAEUS
This man, O strangers, sets thy Gods at naught,
And drags me from the altar-floor of Zeus.

CHORUS
But from what land, O ancient, hast thou come
To the folk of the Four Burgs' federal home?
Were ye sped overseas by the brine-dipt oar
To our land from Euboea's craggy shore?

IOLAEUS
Strangers, no island-dweller's life is mine;
From proud Mycenae come we to thy land.

CHORUS
And by what name, ancient of days, did they call
Thee, they which be fenced with Mycenae's wall?

IOLAEUS
Hercules' helper haply do ye know,
Iolaus, for not fameless was my name.

CHORUS
I know; long since I heard: but whose are they,
The fostering lads that thine hand leadeth hitherward?—say.

IOLAEUS
Strangers, the sons they are of Hercules,
Which have to thee and Athens suppliant come.

CHORUS
Say, what is your need that here ye are?
Would ye plead your cause at the nation's bar?
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
μητ' ἐκδοθήναι μήτε πρὸς βλαν θεῶν
tῶν σῶν ἀποσπασθέντες εἶς ᾗ Άργος μολεῖν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
ἀλλ' οὕτως σοὶς δεσπόταις τάδ' ἀρκέσει,
oὐ σοῦ κρατούντες ἐνθάδ' εὐρίσκονσι σε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
εἰκὸς θεῶν ἱκτήρας αἴδεισθαι, ξένε,
καὶ μὴ βιαῖῳ χειρὶ δαιμόνων
ἀπολυπεῖν ἔδη
πότνια γὰρ Δίκα τάδ' οὐ πεῖσεται.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
ἐκπεμπέ νυν γῆς τούσδε τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως,
κοῦδὲν βιαῖῳ τήδε χρήσομαι χερί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἄθεουν ἰκεσίαν
μεθεῖναι πόλει ξένων προστροπαν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
καλὸν δὲ γ' ἔξω πραγμάτων ἔχειν πόδα,
εὐβουλίας τυχόντα τῆς ἀμείνονος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐκοῦν τυράννῳ τήσδε γῆς φράσαντά σε
χρήν ταύτα τολμᾶν, ἀλλὰ μὴ βιὰ ξένους
θεῶν ἀφέλκειν, γῆν σέβοντ' ἐλευθέραν;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
τίς δ' ἐστὶ χώρας τήσδε καὶ πόλεως ἀναξ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖς Δημοφῶν ὁ Θησέως.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
πρὸς τούτον ἄγων ἀρα τούδε τοῦ λόγου
μάλιστ' ἀν εἴητ' τάλλα δ' εἰρηται μάτην.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLANUS
Given up we would not be, nor torn away
Hence, in thy Gods' despite, and sent to Argos.

COPREUS
Ay, but this shall not satisfy thy masters
Whose lordship o'er thee holds, who find thee here.

CHORUS
God's suppliant, stranger, must we reverence,
And not with hands of violence tear them hence
From this place where the Holy Presence is:
The majesty of Justice shall not suffer this.

COPREUS
Then from your land send these, Eurystheus' thralls,
And this mine hand shall do no violence.

CHORUS
Now nay, 'twere an impious thing
To cast off suppliant hands to the knees of our city
That cling!

COPREUS
'Tis well to keep thy foot from trouble's snare,
And in good counsel find the better part.

CHORUS
Thou shouldst have shown respect to this free land,
And told her King, ere thy presumption tore
Therefrom the strangers in her Gods' despite.

COPREUS
And who is of this land and city king?

CHORUS
Demophon, Theseus' child, a brave sire's son.

COPREUS
With him then must all strife of this dispute
Be held alone: all else is idle talk.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
καὶ μὴν ὁδ' αὐτὸς ἔρχεται σπουδὴν ἔχων
'Ακάμας τ' ἀδελφός, τὸνδ' ἐπήκοοι λόγων.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

120 ἐπείπερ ἐφθης πρέσβεις ὦν νεωτέροις
βοηθομήσας τὴνδ' ἐπ' ἐσχάραν Διὸς,
λέξον, τὶς ὄχλοις τὸνδ' ἀθροίζεται τύχη ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ικέται κάθηνται παίδες οἶδ' Ἡρακλέους
βωμὸν καταστέψαντες ὡς ὄρᾶς, ἀναξ,
πατρός τε πιστὸς Ἰόλεως παραστάτης.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

130 τὸ δὴ τ' ἰνγυμῶν ἥδ' ἐδείτο συμφόρα ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
βίαν νῦν οὖτος τὴςδ' ἀπ' ἐσχάρας ἄγειν
ζητῶν βοήν ἐστήσε κάσφηλεν γόνυ
γέροντος, ὡστε μ' ἐκβαλεῖν οἰκτῷ δάκρυ.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

καὶ μὴν στολῆν γ' Ἐλληνα καὶ ῥυθμὸν πέπλων
ἔχει, τὰ δ' ἔργα βαρβάρου χερὸς τάδε.
σὺν δὴ τὸ φράζειν ἑστὶ, μὴ μέλλειν τ', ἐμοὶ
ποίας ἀφίξαι δεύρο γῆς ὅρους λυπῶν ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

'Αργείδος εἰμι, τοῦτο γὰρ θέλεις μαθεῖν.
ἔφ' οἶσι δ' ἥκω καὶ παρ' οὐ λέγειν θέλω.
πέμπτε Μυκηνῶν δεύρο μ' Ἐυρυσθεὺς ἀναξ
ἀξοντα τοῦσδε πολλὰ δ' ἦλθον, οἱ ξένε, δικαι' ὀμαρτῇ δράν τε καὶ λέγειν ἔχων.
'Αργείος δόν γὰρ αὐτὸς 'Αργείους ἄγω
ἐκ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ τοῦσδε δραπέτας ἐλών,
νόμοιοι τοῖς ἐκεῖθεν ἐψήφισσένοις
θανεῖν; δίκαιοι δ' ἐσμέν οὐκοῦντες πόλει

140

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THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS
Lo, hitherward himself in haste draws nigh,
And Acamas his brother, to hear thy claim.
Enter DEMOPHON, ACAMAS, and attendants.

DEMOPHON
Since thou, the old, preventedst younger men
In rescue-rush to Zeus's altar-hearth,
Tell thou what chance hath gathered all this throng.

CHORUS
Here supplicant sit the sons of Hercules,
Who have wreathed the altar, as thou seest, O. king,
And Iolaus, leal helper of their sire.

DEMOPHON
What need herein for lamentable cries?

CHORUS
Yon man essayed to drag them from the hearth
By force; raised outcry so, and earthward hurled
The ancient, that for ruth burst forth my tears.

DEMOPHON
Yet is the fashion of his vesture Greek;
But deeds of a barbarian hand are these.
Man, thine it is to tell me, tarrying not,
From what land's marches hither thou hast come.

COPREUS
An Argive I, since this thou wouldest know.
Wherefore I come, and from whom, will I tell:
Mycenae's king Eurystheus sends me hither
To lead these hence. Stranger, I bring with me
Just pleas in plenty, both for act and speech.
Myself an Argive would lead Argives hence,
Who find them runaways from mine own land,
By statutes of that land condemned to die;
For, dwellers in a state subject to none,
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

αυτοὶ καθ' αὐτῶν κυρίους κραίνειν δίκας.
πολλῶν δὲ κάλλων ἐστίας ἀφυγμένων,
ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖς τοισίδ' ἔσταμεν λόγοις,
κοῦδεὶς ἐτόλμησ' ἵδια προσθέσθαι κακά.
ἀλλ' ἢ τιν' εἰς σὲ μωρίαν ἐσκεμμένοι
δεῖρ' ἥλθον ἢ κίνδυνον ἐξ ἀμηχάνων
ρίπτοντες, εἰτ' οὐν ἐίτε μὴ γενήσεται:
οὐ γὰρ φρενήρη γ' οὔτα σ' ἐλπίζοισι ποὺν
μόνον τοσαύτης ἢν ἔπηλθον Ἐλλάδος
τὰς τῶνδ' ἀβουλοὺς συμφοράς κατοικτεῖν:
φέρ' ἀντίθες γάρ, τούσδε τ' εἰς γαίαν παρεῖς
ἡμᾶς τ' εὔσας ἐξάγειν, τί κερδανεῖς;
τὰ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν τοιᾶδ' ἔστι σοι λαβεῖν,
'Αργοὺς τοσόνδε χεῖρα τὴν τ' Ἐυρυσθέως
ἐσχύν ἀπασάν τῇδε προσθέσθαι πόλει.

ἡν δ' εἰς λόγους τε καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' οἰκτίσματα
βλέψας πεπανθής, εἰς πάλην καθίσταται
δορὸς τὸ πράγμα: μὴ γὰρ ὡς μεθήσομεν
donξης ἀγώνια τῶνδ' ἀτερ χαλυβδικὸν.
τὶ δήτα φήσεις, ποίᾳ πεδί' ἀφαιρεθεῖς,
Τιμυνθίους θεῖως πόλεμον 'Αργείοις ἔχειν;
ποίοις δ' ἀμύνων συμμάχως; τίνος δ' ὑπὲρ
θάψεις νεκροὺς πεσόντας; ἢ κακὰν λόγον
κτήσει πρὸς ἄστων, εἰ γέροντος εἶνεκα,
tύμβου, τὸ μηδὲν ὄντος, ὡς εἰπεῖν ἔτος,
παΐδων τε τῶνδ', εἰς ἄντλον ἐμβήσει πόλα.
ἐρεῖς τὸ λάστον ἐλπίδ' εὑρήσειν μόνον.
καὶ τοῦτο πολλῷ τοῦ παρόντος ἐνδεές:
κακῶς γὰρ 'Αργείοισιν οὐδ' ὁπλισμένοι
μάχοντ' ἄν ἡβησάντες; εἰ τι τοῦτο σε
ψυχὴν ἐπάφει, χοῦν μέσῳ πολὺς χρόνος,
ἐν φ' διεργασθεῖτ' ἀν. ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πιθοῦ·
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

The right is ours to ratify her decrees.
And, though they have come to hearths of many folk,
Still on the same plea did we take our stand,
And ruin on his own head none dared bring.
But these came hither, haply spying folly
In thee, or staking on one desperate throw
Their venture, or to win or lose it all:—
For sure they deem not thou, if sound of wit,
Alone in all this Hellas they have traversed,
Wilt have compassion on their hopeless plight.

Weigh this and that:—if thou grant these a home,
Or if thou let us hale them hence—what gain
Were thine? From us these boons thou mayest win:
Argos' strong hand and all Eurystheus' might
Thou mayest range upon this city's side.
If thou regard their pleadings, by their whinings
Be softened, to the grapple of the spear
The matter cometh. Never think that we
Will yield this strife but by the sword's award.
What canst thou plead? Of what lands art thou
robbed,
That with Tirynthian Argives thou wouldst war?
What allies art defending? In whose cause
Shall those thou buryest fall? Ill fame were thine
With thine Athenians, if for yon old man,
That sepulchre,—mere naught, as men might say,—
And these boys, in deep waters thou wilt sink.

Thy plea at best is hope for days to come.
Scant satisfaction for the present this!
For against Argos these, armed, grown to man,
Should make but feeble stand,—if haply this
Uplift thine heart:—and long years lie between,
Wherein ye may be ruined. Nay heed me:
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

δοὺς μηδὲν, ἀλλὰ τὰμ' ἐὼν ἄγειν ἐμὲ
κτῆσαι Μυκήνας, μηδ' ὅπερ φιλεῖτε δρᾶν
πάθης σὺ τοῦτο, τοὺς ἀμείνονας παρὸν
φίλους ἐλέσθαι, τοὺς κακίονας λάβης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἂν δίκην κρίνειν ἢ γνοῖν λόγον,
πρὶν ἂν παρ' ἀμφοῖν μύθων ἐκμάθῃ σαφῶς;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀναξ, ὑπάρχει μὲν τὸ δ' ἐν τῇ σῇ χθονί,
eἰπτεῖν ἀκούσαι τ' ἐν μέρει πάρεστί μοι,
κούδεῖς μ' ἀπώσει πρόσθεν, ὡσπερ ἄλλοθεν.

ημῖν δὲ καὶ τὸ δ' οὐδὲν ἐστίν ἐν μέσῳ. 1
ἐπεὶ γὰρ Ἄργους οὐ μέτεσθ' ἦμῖν ἐτ',
ψήφοι δοκήσαν, ἀλλὰ φεύγομεν πάτραν,
πῶς ἂν δικαίως ὁς Μυκηναῖος ἄγοι
δο' ὄντας ἡμᾶς, οὐς ἀπήλασαν χθονός;

ξένοι γὰρ ἐσμεν. ἢ τὸν Ἐλλήνων ὄρον
φεύγειν δικαιοθ' ὡστις ἂν τάργος φύγη; 190
οὐκοιν Ἁθήνας γ' οὐ γὰρ Ἄργειων φόβῳ
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παιδας ἐξελώσι γῆς.

οὐ γὰρ τ' Τραχίς ἐστίν οὐδ' Ἀχαικοῦν
πόλισμ', οθὲν σὺ τούσδε τῇ δίκη μὲν ὦ,
τὸ δ' Ἄργος ὅγκων, οἰατπερ καὶ νῦν λέγεις,
ἡλαυνεῖς ἵκετας βωμίους καθημένους.

εἰ γὰρ τὸ δ' ἔσται καὶ λόγους κρανοῦσι 2 σοῦν,
οὐ φῆμι' Ἁθήνας τάσο' ἐλευθέρας ἔτι.

ἀλλ' οἶδ' ἐγὼ τὸ τώνδε λήμα καὶ φύσιν
θυρήσκειν θελήσουσι'. ή γὰρ αἰσχύνη πάρος
τοῦ ξῆν παρ' ἐσθλωῖς ἁυδράσιν νομιζέται.

πόλιν μὲν ἄρκει' καὶ γὰρ οὖν ἐπίθηκον

1 Valckenaer: for MSS. ἐν μέρει.
2 Elmsley: for MSS. κρανοῦσι.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Give naught, but suffer me to take mine own;
So gain Mycenae's friendship. Do not err,
As oft ye do, taking the weaker side
When ye might choose for friend the stronger cause.

CHORUS

Who can give judgment, who grasp arguments,
Ere from both sides he clearly learn their pleas?

IOLAUS

King, this advantage have I in your land,
I am free to speak and in my turn to hear;
None, as from other lands, will first expel me.
We and this man have naught in common now;
We have naught to do with Argos any more
Since that decree: we are exiled from her soil.
What right hath he, to hale us, whom they banished,
As we were burghers of Mycenae yet?
Aliens we are:—or from all Hellas banned
Are men whom Argos exiles?—claim ye this?
Sooth, not from Athens: she shall drive not forth,
For fear of Argives, sons of Hercules.
She is no Trachis, no Achaean burg,
As that whence thou didst drive these—not of
right,
But, even as now, by vaunting Argos' power,—
These, suppliant at the altar as they sat!
If this shall be, if she but ratify
Thine hests, free Athens then no more I know.
Nay, her sons' nature know I, know their mood:
They will die sooner; for in brave men's eyes
The honour that fears shame is more than life.
Suffice for Athens this; for over-praise
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

λίαν ἐπαίνειν ἐστί, πολλάκις δὲ δὴ
cαύτὸς βαρυνθεὶς οἶδ᾽ ἀγαν αἰνούμενος.
σοὶ δ᾽ ὡς ἀνάγκη τούσδε βούλομαι φράσαι
σόζειν, ἔπειπερ τήσδε προστατεῖς χθονός.
Πιτθεὺς μὲν ἔστι Πέλοπος, ἐκ δὲ Πιτθέως
Αἴθρα, πατὴρ δ᾽ ἐκ τῆςδε γεννᾶται σέθεν
Θησεύς. πάλιν δὲ τῶνδ᾽ ἀνειμί σοι γένος.

210 Ἡρακλέης ἦν Ζηνός Ἀλκμήνης τε παις,
κείνη δὲ Πέλοπος θυγατρὸς· αὐτανεψίων
πατήρ ἄν εἴη σὸς τε χῶ τούτων γεγώς.
γένους μὲν ἧκεις ὡδε τοῖσιδε, Δημοφῶν·
ἀ δ᾽ ἐκεῖσ ἡδη τοῦ προσήκοντος σε δεὶ
tίσαι λέγω σοι παισί· φημὶ γάρ ποτε
σύμπλος γενέσθαι τῶνδ᾽ ὑπασπίζον πατρὶ
ζωστήρα Θησεί τὸν πολυκτόνον μέτα,
"Αἰδοὺ τ᾽ ἐρεμμοῦν ἐξανήγαγεν μυχῶν
πατέρα σὸν· Ἑλλὰς πᾶσα τούτο μαρτυρεῖ."
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Is odious: yea, myself have oftentimes,
Praised above measure, been but galled thereby.
But that thou canst not choose but save these boys
I would show thee, who rulest o’er this land.
Pittheus was Pelops’ son: of Pittheus sprang
Aethra; of her was thy sire Theseus born.
Again, the lineage of these lads I trace:
Zeus’ and Alcmena’s son was Hercules:
She, child of Pelops’ daughter: cousins’ sons
Shall be thy father and the sire of these.
So their near kinsman art thou, Demophon;
But what requital—ties of blood apart—
Thou owest to these lads, I tell thee:—once
Shield-bearer to their sire, I sailed with him
To win for Theseus that Belt slaughter-fraught; 1
And from black gulfs of Hades he brought up
Thy sire: all Hellas witnesseth to this.

This to requite, one boon they crave of thee,—
Not to be given up, nor torn by force
From thy Gods’ fanes, and banished from thy land:
This were thine own shame, Athens’ bane withal,
That homeless suppliants, kinsmen,—ah, their woes!
Look on them, look!—be dragged away by force.
I pray thee—these clasped hands are suppliant-boughs,—
By thy beard I implore, set not at naught
Hercules’ sons, who hast them in thine hands.
Prove thee to these true kinsman, prove thee friend,
Their father, brother, master—better that
Than into hands of Argive men to fall!

1 The belt of Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, the
winning of which cost many lives.

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ΧΟΡΟΣ

φώκτερ' ἀκούσας τούσδε συμφορᾶς, ἀναξί.

Ἀναξίωσις τῆς ἡμέρας

ζητεῖν τὴν ἑυγένειαν τῆς τύχης νικώμενην

νῦν ὅτι μάλιστ' εἰσείδον'. οἶδε γὰρ πατρὸς

ἐσθολοῦ γεγω̄τες δυστυχοῦσ' ἀναξίωσις.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

τρισσαί μ' ἀναγκάζουσι συμφορᾶς ὁδοί,

Ἰόλασ, τοὺς σοὺς μὴ παρώσασθαι λόγους·

τὸ μὲν μέγιστον Ζεὺς ἔφ' οὖ σὺ βῶμος

θακεῖς νεοσσῶν τὴνδ' ἔχων ὦμηγυριν,

τὸ συγγενές τε καὶ τὸ προὔφειλεν καλῶς

πρᾶσσειν παρ' ἡμῶν τούσδε πατρῴαν χάριν·

τὸ τ' αἰσχρῶν, οὔτε δὲί μάλιστα φροντίςαι·

εἰ γὰρ παρῆσω τὸν εὐπλάσθαι βιὰ

ξένοι πρὸς ἄνδρος βωμῶν, οὐκ ἐλευθέραν

οἰκεῖοι δοκίμων γαῖας, Ἀργείοις δ' ὅκινω

ἵκεται προδούναι· καὶ τάδ' ἀγχόνης τέλας.

ἀλλ' ὦφελες μὲν εὐτυχέστερος μολείν·

όμως δὲ καὶ νῦν μὴ τρέσης ὅπως σὲ τις

σὺν παῖσι βωμοῦ τούδ' ἀποστάσει βιὰ.

οὺδ' ἂν δίκαιον ἦτο καὶ νικᾶ λόγῳ;

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

καὶ πῶς δίκαιον τὸν ἰκέτην ἄγειν βίᾳ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐκοῦν ἐμοὶ τόδ' αἰσχρῶν, ἀλλ' οὖ σοι βλάβοις.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ἐμοὶ γ', ἓαν σοι τούσδ' ἐφέλκεσθαι μεθῶ.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS
I pity these in their affliction, king.
High birth by fortune crushed I now behold
As ne'er before: born of a noble sire
Are these, yet suffer woes unmerited.

DEMOPHON
Three influences, that meet in one, constrain me,
Iolaus, not to thrust hence these my guests:
The chiepest, Zeus, upon whose altar thou
Art sitting with these nestlings compassed round;
Then, kinship, and the debt of old, that these
Should for their sire's sake fare well at mine hands;
Third, dread of shame,—this most I must regard:
For if I let this altar be despoiled
By alien force, I shall be held to dwell
In no free land, but cowed by fear of Argos
To yield up suppliants:—hanging were not worse!
I would that thou hadst come in happier plight;
Yet, even so, fear not that any man
Shall from this altar tear thee with these boys.
Thou (to the herald), go to Argos; tell Eurystheus
this;
And, if he implead these strangers in our courts,
He shall have right. These shalt thou hale hence never.

COPREUS
Not if my cause be just, my plea prevail?

DEMOPHON
Just?—to hale hence by force the suppliant?

COPREUS
Then mine the shame: no harm befalleth thee.

DEMOPHON
My shame too, if I let thee drag these hence.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
σὺ δ' ἔξοριζε, κατ' ἐκείθεν ἄξομεν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
σκαιδὸς πέφυκας τοῦ θεοῦ πλείω φρονῶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
δεῦρ', ὡς ἔοικε, τοῖς κακοῖς φευκτέον.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
ἀπασὶ κοινὸν ῥύμα δαμόνων ἔδρα.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
ταῦτ' οὐ δοκήσει τοῖς Μυκηναίοις ἵσως.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
οὐκον ἐγώ τῶν ἐνθάδ' εἰμὶ κύριος;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
βλάπτων γ' ἐκείνους μηδέν, ἢν σὺ σωφρονήσ.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
βλάπτεσθ', ἐμοῦ γε μὴ μιαίνοντος θεοὺς.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
οὐ βούλομαι σε πόλεμον Ἀργείους ἔχειν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
κἂγω τοιοῦτος· τῶνδε δ' οὐ μεθήσομαι.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
ἀξῶ γε μέντοι τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐγώ λαβῶν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
οὐκ ἄρ' ἐσ 'Ἀργὸς ῥαδίως ἀπεὶ πάλιν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
πειρώμενος δὴ τοῦτό γ' αὐτίκ' ἐίσομαι.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
κλαίων ἄρ' ἀψεῖ τῶνδε κούκ ἐς ἀμβολίας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
μὴ πρὸς θεῶν κήρυκα τολμήσῃς θεεῖν.

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THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS
Banish them thou: then I will lead them thence.

DEMOPHON
O born a fool, who wouldst outwit the God!

COPREUS
So hither felons must for refuge flee!

DEMOPHON
The God's house gives to all men sanctuary.

COPREUS
Haply not so shall think Mycenae's folk.

DEMOPHON
Am I not master then in mine own land?

COPREUS
Not unto Argos' hurt,—so thou be wise.

DEMOPHON
The hurt be yours, so I flout not the Gods.

COPREUS
I would not thou with Argos shouldst have war.

DEMOPHON
I too: yet will I not abandon these.

COPREUS
Yet will I take mine own and hale them hence.

DEMOPHON
Not lightly shalt thou win to Argos back.

COPREUS
That will I now try, and be certified.

[Attempts to seize them.

DEMOPHON (raising his staff)
Touch these, and thou shalt rue, and that right soon.

CHORUS
Dare not to strike a herald, for heaven's sake!

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ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
εἰ μὴ γ’ ὁ κήρυξ σωφρονείν μαθήσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἀπελθε· καὶ σὺ τούτε μὴ θύγης, ἀναξ.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
στείχω· μᾶς γὰρ χειρὸς ἁσθενής μάχη.
 Hepo de pollhēn Ἀρειός Ἀργείου λαβὼν
páγχαλκον αἰχμῆν δεύρο. μυρίου de me
ménousin ἀσπιστῆρες Εὐρυσθέως τ’ ἀναξ
autōs stratēgōn· Ἀλκάθου δ’ ἐπ’ ἐσχάτοις
karadoków tāνθενδε τέρμασιν μένει.

λαμπρὸς δ’ ἀκούσας σὴν ὑβρίν φανῆσται
soi kai polítaiς γῆ te tēde kai phutois
mātōn γαρ ἡβην ὅδε γ’ ἄν κεκτόμεθα
pollhēn en Ἀργεί, μῆ se timarofūmenvoi.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
φθείρου· τὸ σὸν γὰρ Ἀργος οὐ δέδουκ’ ἑγὼ.
enθενδε δ’ ouk emellass aīsχūnas ēme
áxein bia toúd’· ou gar Ἀργεῖων πόλει
upēkouν tēn’ · alla’ ēleuthēravan ἔχω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
όμα προνοεῖν, πρὶν ὅροις πελάσαι
stratōn Ἀργείων

μᾶλα δ’ ὄξως Ἀρης ο Ἥμηναιαν,
ēpī tois δε δὴ μᾶλλον ἔτ’ ἢ πρὶν.
pāsī γαρ οὗτος κήρυξι νόμος,
dīs tōsa peregōn tōn ἡγουμένων.
pósα nīn λέξειν βασιλεύσι δοκεῖσ,
ws deiv’ ἐπάθεν καὶ παρὰ μικρὸν
ψυχὴν ἠλθεν διακυνίσαι;
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

DEMOPHON
That will I, if the herald learn not wisdom.

CHORUS
[To herald] Depart thou:—touch thou not this man,
O king.

COPREUS
I go; for feeble fight one hand may make.
But I will hither come with brazen mail
And spears of Argos' war: warriors untold
Await me; and Eurystheus' self, our king,
Their chief, expecting what shall come from hence,
Waits on the marches of Alcathous.¹
He shall flash forth, being told thine insolence,
On thee, thy folk, this land, and all her fruits.
For all this warrior youth were ours for naught
In Argos, if we avenge us not on thee.

DEMOPHON
Begone! I fear not that thine Argos, I!
'Twas not for thee to shame me and to drag
These hence by force. This city which I hold
Is not to Argives subject: she is free.

CHORUS
Exit COPREUS.

Chorus
It is time to prepare, ere the Argive array
Over our marches on-sweepeth;
For Mycenae's war-spirit is keen for the fray,
And more hot for these tidings upleapeth.
Yea, and after his kind will yon herald be swelling
His wrongs—such aye double a tale in the telling:—
In the ears of his lords, think ye, how will he cry
On the founness of outrage "that brought him this day
Unto death well nigh!"

¹ i.e. in Megara, of which Alcathous had shortly before been king.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ούκ ἐστὶ τοῦτε παισὶ κάλλιον γέρας ἢ πατρὸς ἐσθλοῦ κἀγαθοῦ πεφυκέναι [γαμεῖν τ’ ἀπ’, ἐσθλῶν· ὃς δὲ υικηθεῖς πόθῳ κακοῖς ἐκοινώησεν, οὐκ ἐπαινέσω, τέκνους δυνεῖς εἶνεχ’ ἡδονῆς λυπεῖν.] 1
tὸ δυστυχὲς γὰρ ἡγένει τιμήν τοὺς τοῦ θανάτου πεσόντες ηὐρόμενοι φίλοις καὶ ξυγγενεῖς τοῦτο, οὐ τοσῆδ’ οὐκομένης Ἑλληνίδος γῆς τῶν ἰδιότητας μόνοι. δότ’, ὦ τέκνα, αὐτοῖς χεῖρα δεξιάν, δότε ἤμεῖς τε παισί, καὶ πέλας προσέλθετε. ὃ παῖδες, εἰς μὲν πειραν ἠλθομεν φίλων ἢν δ’ οὐν ποθ’ ὑμῖν νόστος εἰς πάτραν φανὴ, καὶ δώματι οἰκήσητε καὶ τιμᾶς πατρός, σωτηρας αἰεὶ καὶ φίλους νομίζετε, καὶ μήποτ’ εἰς τὴν ἐχθρὸν αἱρέσθαι δόρυ, μεμυμένου τῶν, ἀλλὰ φιλτάτην πόλιν πασῶν νομίζετ’. ἄξιοι δ’ ὑμῖν σέβειν οἰ γῆν τοσήνδε καὶ Πελασγικὸν λέων ἡμῶν ἀπηλλάξαντο πολέμους ἐξειν, πτωχοὺς ἀλῆτας εἰσορῶντες. ἀλλ’ ὅμως οὐκ ἐξεδωκαν οὐδ’ ἀπῆλασαν χθονὸς. εὖ γέγονε καὶ ζῶν καὶ θανόν, ὅταν θάνω, πολλῷ σ’ ἐπαίνῳ Θησέως, ὦ τάν, πέλας ἴηλον ἀρῶ καὶ λέγων τάδ’ εὐφρανῶ, ὥς εὖ τ’ ἐδέξω καὶ τέκνοις ἡρκεσας τοῖς Ἡρακλείοις, εὐγενῆς δ’ ἀν Ἐλλάδα σφέξεις πατρών δόξαν, ἐξ ἐσθλῶν δὲ φύς οὐδέν κακίων τυγχάνεις γεγώς πατρός.

1 299–301 are of doubtful genuineness.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAEUS
No fairer honour-guerdon may sons win
Than this, to spring from noble sires and good,
[And so wed noble wives. Who, passion's thrall,
Links him with base folk, ne'er shall have my praise,
Who, for his lust's sake, stamps his seed with shame.] For noble birth stands in the evil day Better than base blood. We, to deepest depths Of evil fallen, yet have found us friends And kin in these: in all the peopled breadth Of Hellas these alone have championed us. Give, children, unto these the right hand give, And to the children ye; draw near to them.

Boys, we have put our friends unto the test:— If home-return shall ever dawn for you, And your sires' halls and honours ye inherit, Saviours and friends account them evermore, And never against their land lift hostile spear, Remembering this, but hold them of all states Most dear. They are worthy of your reverence, Who have ta'en our burden on them, enmity Of that great land, that folk Pelasgian. Beggars they saw us, homeless: for all this They gave not up nor chased us from their land. And I, in life,—in death, when death shall come, With high laud will extol thee, good my lord, At Theseus' side; and this shall make him glad, My tale how thou didst welcome, didst defend Hercules' sons, how nobly Hellas through Thou guard'st thy sire's renown: thy father's son Shames not the noble line wherefrom he sprang.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

παύρων μετ’ ἄλλων· ἦνα γάρ ἐν πολλοῖς ἵσως εὔροις ἄν δότις ἐστὶ μὴ χείρων πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰὲ ποθ’ ἤδε γαία τοῖς ἀμηχάνοις σὺν τῷ δικαίῳ βούλεται προσωφελεῖν. τοιγάρ πόνους δὴ μυρίους ὑπὲρ φίλων ἤνεγκε, καὶ νῦν τόνδ’ ἄγων’ ὀρῶ πέλας.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σοί τ’ εὖ λέεικται, καὶ τὰ τῶνδ’ αὐχώ, γέρων, τοιαύτ’ ἔσεθαί: μην μονεύσεται χάρις. κἀγὼ μὲν ἁστῶν σύλλογον ποιήσομαι, τάξω δ’, ὅπως ἀν τὸν Μυκηναίους στρατὸν πολλῆ δέχομαι χειρὶ· πρῶτα μὲν σκοπούς πέμψω πρὸς αὐτὸν, μὴ λάθη με προσπεσών· ταχὺς γάρ Ἀργεῖ πᾶς ἀνήρ βοηθόμοις· μάντεις δ’ ἀθροίσας θύσομαι· σὺ δ’ εἰς δόμους σὺν παίσι χώρει, Ζηνὸς ἐσχάραν λαπὼν. εἰσὶν γὰρ οἱ σοι, καὶ εἰς γὺν θυραῖος ὡς, μέριμναν ἐξουσ’. ἀλλά ἰθ’ εἰς δόμους, γέρων.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἄν λίποιμι βωμόν, ἐξώμεσθα δὲ ἰκέται μένοντες ἐνθάδ’ εὐ πράξαι πόλιν· ὅταν δ’ ἄγώνος τοῦδ’ ἀπαλλαχῆς καλῶς, ἢμεν πρὸς οἴκους. θεοίσι δ’ οὐ κακίσοι χρώμεσθα συμμάχοισιν Ἀργείων, ἀναξ· τῶν μὲν γὰρ Ἡρε προστατεῖ, Διὸς δάμαρ, ἢμῶν δ’ Ἀθάνα. φημὶ δ’ εἰς εὐπραξίαν καὶ τοῦθ’ ὑπάρχειν, θεῶν ἀμεινόνων τυχεῖν· νικωμένη γὰρ Παλλᾶς οὐκ ἀνέξεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

eἰ σὺ μέγ’ αὐχεῖς, ἔτεροι στρ.

σοῦ πλέον οὐ μέλονται,
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Few such there be: amid a thousand, one
Thou shouldst find undegenerate from his sire.

CHORUS
Ever of old she chooseth, this our land,
To help the helpless ones in justice' cause.
So hath she borne for friends unnumbered toils.
Now see I this new struggle looming nigh.

DEMOPHON
Well said of thee; and sure am I that these
Shall so prove; unforgot shall be our boon.
Now will I muster for the war my folk,
And marshal, that a goodly band may greet
Mycenae's host. Scouts first will I send forth
To meet it, lest unwares it fall on me;
For swift the Argives throng to the gathering-cry.
Seers will I bring, and sacrifice. Thou, leave
Zeus' hearth, and enter with the boys mine halls:
Therein be they which, though I be afar,
Shall care for thee. Pass, ancient, to mine halls.

IOLAUS
I will not leave the altar. Let us sit,
Abiding Athens' triumph, suppliant here.
And, when thou hast brought this strife to glorious end,
Then will we enter. Champion-gods have we
Not weaker than the Argive Gods, O king.
Though Hera, bride of Zeus, before them go,
Ours is Athena; and this tells, say I,
For triumph, to have gotten mightier Gods;
For Pallas never shall brook overthrow.

[Exit DEMOPHON.

CHORUS
Ay, vaunt as thou wilt, yet uncaring
Will we swerve none the more from the right,
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ο ἔριν’ Ἀργόθεν ἐλθὼν·
μεγαληγορίασι δ’ ἐμᾶς
φρένας οὐ φοβήσεις.
μήπω ταῖς μεγάλαισιν οὕτω
καὶ καλλιχόροις Ἀθάνασι
εἰσὶν. οὐ δ’ ἄφρον ὑ τ’ Ἀργεῖ
Σθενέλου τύραννος:

ὁ πόλιν ἐλθὼν ἐτέραν
οὐδὲν ἑλάσσον Ἀργοὺς,
θεόν ἱκτήρας ἀλάτας
καὶ ἐμᾶς χθονὸς ἀντομένους
ξένος ὤν βιαίως
ἐλκεῖς, οὐ βασιλεύσιν εἴξασι,
οὐκ ἄλλο δίκαιον εἰπὼν·
ποῦ ταῦτα καλῶς ἀν εἴη
παρὰ γ’ εὐ φρονοῦσιν;

εἰρήνα μὲν ἔμοι ἄρέσκει·
σοὶ δ’, ὡς κακόφρων ἂναξ,
λέγω· εἰ πόλιν ἥξεις,
οὐχ οὕτως ἄ δοκεῖς κυρήσεις.
οὐ σοὶ μόνῳ ἤγχος οὐδ’
ἰτέα κατάχαλκος ἐστίν.
ἀλλ’ οὖ, πολέμων ἑραστά,
μὴ μοι δορὶ συνταράξῃς
τὰν εὗ χαρίτων ἔχουσαν
πόλιν, ἀλλ’ ἀνάσχου.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὁ παῖ, τί μοι σύννοιαν ὀμμασίν φέρων
ἡκεῖς; νέον τι πολεμίων λέγεις πέρι;
μέλλουσιν ἢ πάρεισιν ἢ τί πυνθάνει;
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

O thou stranger from Argolis faring
To Athens, thou shalt not affright
Our souls by thy bluster high-swelling.
Not yet such dishonour be done
To the land great and fair beyond telling!
Fools—thou and thy despot-lord dwelling
In Argos, this Sthenelus’ son!

Thou who com’st to a city no lesser
Than Argos, essaying to seize—
And thou alien, O violent oppressor!—
The suppliants that cling to her knees,
The homeless that cry from her altars!
Thou hast not respect to our king,
And with justice thy false tongue palters:—
Who, except from truth’s pathway he falters,
But shall count it an infamous thing?

Peace love I well, but I warn thee,
O tyrant, O treacherous-souled,
Though thou march to the gates of our hold,
Not the crown of thy hopes shall adorn thee.
Not for thine hand the war-spear alone
Nor the brass on the buckler hath shone!
O thou that in battle delightest,
Trouble not, trouble not with thy spear
The burg that the Graces make brightest
Of cities:—dread thou and forbear.

Re-enter DEMOPHON.

IOLAUS
My son, why com’st thou with care-clouded eyes?
Tellest thou evil tidings of the foe?
Tarry they?—are they on us?—what hast heard?
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ού γάρ τι μὴ ψεύσῃ γε κήρυκος λόγος·
ό γάρ στρατηγὸς εὐτυχῆς τὰ πρόσθεν δὺν
εἰσιν, σάφ' οἶδα, καὶ μάλ' οὐ σμικρὸν φρονῶν
εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας. ἀλλὰ τῶν φρονημάτων
ὁ Ζεὺς κολαστῆς τῶν ἀγαν ὑπερφρόνων.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ἡκει στράτευμ' Ἀργείων Ἑὐρυσθέους τ' ἀναξ·
ἐγὼ νυν αὐτὸς εἰδον. ἀνδρα γὰρ χρεῶν,
ὅστις στρατηγεῖν φησ' ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς,
οὐκ ἀγγέλοιν τοὺς ἐναντίους ὀρᾶν.
πεδία μὲν οὖν γῆς εἰς τάδ' οὐκ ἐφήκε πω
στρατῶν, λεπαίαν δ' ὀφρύην καθήμενος
σκοπεῖ, δόκησιν δὴ τόδ' ἀν λέγοιμι σοι,
pολὰ προσάξει στρατόπεδόν τ' ἀνεν δορὸς
ἐν ἄσφαλει τε τῆσ' ἱδρύσεται χθονός.
καὶ τὰμά μέντοι πάντ' ἄραρ' ἢδη καλῶς·
pόλις τ' ἐν ὅπλωσιν, σφάγια θ' ἠτοιμασμένα
ἐστικένεν ὡς χρή ταῦτά τέμνεσθαι θεῶν,
θυηπολείται δ' ἀστυ μάντεων ὑπο,
tροπαία τ' ἐχθρῶν καὶ πόλει σωτηρία.
χρησμῶν δ' ἄοιδους πάντας εἰς ἐν ἀλίσας
ἡλεγξά καὶ βέβηλα καὶ κεκρυμμένα
λόγια παλαιά, τῇδε γῇ σωτηρία.
καὶ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων διάφορ' ἐστὶ θεσφάτων
πόλλ'· ἐν δὲ πάσι γνώμαι ταύτῶν ἐμπρέπει·
σφάξανε κελεύουσιν με παρθένον κόρη
Δήμητρος, ἢτε ἐστὶ πατρὸς εὐγενοῦς.

ἐγὼ δ' ἔχω μὲν, ὡς ὀρᾶς, προθυμίαν
τοσήνῳ ἐς μᾶς· παίδα δ' οὕτ' ἐμὴν κτενῶ
οὐτ' ἄλλον ἀστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ἀναγκάσω

1 Tyrwhitt: for MSS. πρὸς θεῶν.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

No empty promise was you herald's threat.
Their captain, aye triumphant heretofore,
Shall march, I know, with heart uplifted high,
Against our Athens. Notwithstanding Zeus
Chastiseth overweening arrogance.

DEMOPHON

They are come, the Argive host and king Eurystheus.
Myself beheld them; for behoves the man,
Whoso makes claim to know good generalship,
To see—nor that with eyes of scouts—his foes.
But to the plains not yet hath he marched down
His bands, but, couched upon the rocky brow,
Watcheth—I but make guess of that I tell thee—
Where without conflict to push on his host,
And in the land's heart camp him safety-girt.

Yet all my preparations well are laid:
Athens is all in arms, the victims ready
Stand for the Gods to whom they must be slain:
By seers the city is filled with sacrifice
For the foes' rout and saving of the state.
All prophecy-chanters have I caused to meet,
Into old public oracles have searched,
And secret, for salvation of this land.
And, mid their manifold diversities,
In one thing glares the sense of all the same:
They bid me to Demeter's Daughter slay
A maiden of a high-born father sprung.

Full am I, as thou seest, of good will
To you; yet neither will I slay my child,
Nor force thereto another of my folk;

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ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

άκονθ'. ἐκὼν δὲ τὸς κακῶς οὖτω φρονεῖ, ὡστὶς τὰ φίλτατ' ἐκ χερῶν δώσει τέκνα; καὶ νῦν πικρὰς ἀν συντάσεις ἀν εἰσίδοις, τῶν μὲν λεγόντων ὡς δίκαιον ἢν ξένως ἱκέταις ἀρῆγειν, τῶν δὲ μωρίαν ἐμοῦ κατηγοροῦντων εἰ δὲ δὴ δράσω τόδε, οἰκείος ἢ ἄλλη πόλεμος ἔξαρτύεται.

ταῦτ' οὖν ὅρα σὺ καὶ συνεξεύρισχ' ὅπως αὐτοῖ τε σωθήσεσθε καὶ πέδου τόδε, κἂνω πολίταις μὴ διαβληθήσομαι. οὐ γὰρ τυραννίδ' ὅστε βαρβάρων ἔχω. ἀλλ' ἢν δίκαια δρῶ, δίκαια πείσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἢ πρόθυμον οὖσαν οὐκ ἐὰν θεὸς ξένως ἀρῆγειν τήνδε χρήζουσαν πόλιν;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὡ τέκν', ἐοιγμεν ναυτίλοισιν, οὔτως χειμώνος ἐκφυγόντες ἀγριον μένος εἰς χεῖρα γῇ συνήψαν, εἶτα χερσόθεν πνοαίσιν ἠλάθησαν εἰς πότον πάλιν.

οὐτω δὲ χήμεις τῆς ἀπωθούμεσθα γῆς ἢ ἃ πρὸς ἀκταῖς δυντες ὡς σεσωσμένιοι. οἴμου· τί δὴ ἐτερψάς ὡ τύλαινα με ἐλπὶς τότ', οὐ μέλλουσα διατελέειν χάριν; συγγυνωστὰ γὰρ τοι καὶ τὰ τοῦδ', εἰ μὴ θέλει κτείνειν πολιτῶν παιδᾶς, αἰνέσαι δ' ἔχω καὶ τὰνθάδ'· εἰ θεοῖς δὴ δοκεῖ τάδε πρᾶσσειν ἐμ', οὕτως σοι γ' ἀπόλλυται χάρις. ὡ παιδές, ὑμῖν δ' οὐκ ἔχω τί χρήσομαι.

ποῖ τρεψόμεσθα; τίς γὰρ ἀστεπτὸς θεῶν; ποῖον δὲ γαίας ἔρκος οὐκ ἄφιγμεθα; ὅλουμεθ', ὡ τέκν', ἐκδοθησόμεσθα δή.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And of his own will who hath heart so hard
As from his hands to yield a most dear child?
Now gatherings mayst thou see of angry mood,
Where some say, right it is to render help
To suppliant strangers, some cry out upon
My folly:—yea, and if I do this thing,
Even this day is civil war afoot.
See thou to this then: help me find a way
Whereby yourselves and Athens shall be saved,
And I shall not be of my folk reproached.
For mine is no barbarian despot’s sway,
But by just dealing my just dues I win.

CHORUS

How? do the Gods forbid that Athens help
The stranger, though she yearn with eager will?

IOLAUS

O children, we are like to shipmen, who,
Escaped the madding fury of the storm,
And now in act to grasp the land, have yet
By blasts been driven from shore to sea again.
Even so are we from this land thrust away,
When, as men saved, even now we touched the strand.
Ah, me why didst thou cheer me, cruel hope,
Erst, when thy mind was not to crown thy boon?
The king I cannot blame, who will not slay
His people’s daughters: yea, I am content
With Athens’ dealings with us: if my plight
Please Heaven, my gratitude to thee dies not.
Ah boys, for you I know not what to do!
Whitherward flee?—what Gods rest unimplored?
What refuge upon earth have we not sought?
Die shall we, children, yielded up to foes.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

κάμοι μεν οὐδὲν εἰ με χρή θανεῖν μέλει,
πλὴν εἰ τι τέρψοι τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐχθροῦς θανών·
ὑμᾶς δὲ κλαίω καὶ κατοικτείρω, τέκνα,
καὶ τὴν γεραιαν μητέρο "Ἀλκμήνην πατρός.
ὁ δυστάλαινα τοῦ μακροῦ βίου σέθεν,
τλήμων δὲ καγώ πολλά μοχθήσας μάτην.
χρήν χρήν ἂρ ἐς ἡμᾶς ἄνδρος εἰς ἐχθροῦ χέρας
πεσόντας αἰσχρῶς καὶ κακῶς λυπεῖν βιῶν.
ἀλλ' οἴσθ' ὦ μοι σύμπραξον; οὖν ἀπασὰ γὰρ
πέφευγεν ἐλπὶς τῶνδε μοι σωτηρίας.
ἐμ' ἔκδοσ' Ἀργείασιν ἀντὶ τῶνδ', ἀναξ,
καὶ μήτε κυνόνυεν, σωθήτω τέ μοι
tέκν'. οὐ φαλείν δεῖ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν. ἵτω.
μάλιστα δ' Ἐυρυσθεὶς με βουλοῖτ' ἀν λαβῶν
tὸν Ἡράκλειον σύμμαχον καθυβρίσαι·
σκαίδος γὰρ ἄνηρ τοῖς σοφοῖς δ' εὐκτὸν σοφὸ
ἐχθραν συνάπτειν, μὴ ἀμαθεῖ φρονήματι.
πολλής γὰρ αἰδοὺς καὶ δίκης τις ἀν τύχοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ πρέσβυν, μὴ νυν τὴν ἐπαιτιῶ πόλιν
τάχ' ἀν γὰρ ἡμῖν ψευδὲς ἀλλ' ὀμῶς κακὸν
γένοτ' ὀνειδος ὡς ξένους προὐδώκαμεν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΟΝ

γενναία μὲν τάδ' εἴπας, ἀλλ' ἀμήχανα.
οὐ σοῦ χατίζων δεὺρ' ἀναξ στρατηλατεῖ.
τί γὰρ γέροντος ἄνδρός Εὐρυσθεὶ πλέον
θανόντος; ἀλλ' τούσδε βούλεται κτανεῖν.
δεινὸν γὰρ ἐχθροῖς βλαστάνοντες εὐγενεῖς,
νεανία τε καὶ πατρὸς μεμημένου

λύμης' ἀ' κείνον πάντα προσκοπεῖν χρεῶν.
ἀλλ' εἰ τιν' ἀλλην οἴσθα καιριωτέραν

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THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

I reck not of myself, if I must die,—
Except that o'er my death yon foes shall gloat;
But for you, babes, I weep in utter ruth,
And for your sire's grey mother, even Alcmena.
O lady, hapless in thy length of days!
And hapless I, who have greatly toiled in vain!
Doomed were we, doomed into a foeman's hands
To fall, and die in shame and agony!

King, help me!—wouldst know how?—not every hope
Of their deliverance hath fled my soul:—
Me to the Argives yield up in their stead.
So be unperilled thou, the lads be saved.
No right have I to love life: let it go!
Me would Eurystheus most rejoice to seize,—
Hercules' ally, me,—and evil-entreat;
For churl he is. Let wise men pray to strive
With wise men, not with graceless arrogance.
So, if one fall, he stoops to chivalrous foe.

CHORUS

O ancient, upon Athens cast not blame!
Haply 'twere false, yet foul reproach were this
That we abandoned stranger-suppliers.

DEMOPHON

Noble thine offer; yet it cannot be.
Not craving thee doth this king hither march;
For of what profit to Eurystheus were
An old man's death? Nay, these he lusts to slay.
For dangerous to foes are high-born youths
Growing to man, and brooding on sires' wrongs;
And all this he foresees, he needs must so.
If any rede thou knowest more than this

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ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

βουλήν, ἕτοιμας, ὡς ἐγωγ' ἀμήχανος χρησμῶν ἀκούσας εἰμί καὶ φόβου πλέωσ.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ξένοι, θράσος μοι μηδὲν ἔξοδος ἐμαίσ προσθήτε: πρῶτον γὰρ τὸ ἐξαιτήσομαι· γυναικὶ γὰρ συγή τε καὶ τὸ σωφρονεῖν κάλλιστον, εἴσω θ' ἤσυχοι μένειν δόμων. τῶν σών δ' ἀκούσασ', Ἰδλεως, στεναγμάτων εξήλθον, οὐ ταχθείσα προσβεύειν γένους.

αλλ' εἰμὶ γὰρ πως πρόσφορος, μέλει δὲ μοι μάλιστ' ἀδελφῶν τῶν, κάμαντής πέρι θέλω πυθέσθαι, μὴ ἐπὶ τοῖς πάλαι κακοῖς προσκείμενοι τι πῆμα σὴν δάκνει φρένα.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὁ παῖ, μάλιστα σ' οὗ νεωστὶ δὴ τέκνων τῶν 'Ηρακλείων ἔνδικως αἴνειν εἴχω. ἡμῖν δὲ δόξας εὖ προχωρήσαι δόμως πάλιν μεθέστηκ' αὐθίς εἰς τὰμήχανον' χρησμῶν γὰρ ὕδους φησι σημαίνειν ὅδε, οὐ ταῦρον οὐδὲ μόσχουν, ἀλλὰ παρθένον σφάξαι κόρη Δήμητρος ἡτίς εὐγενής, εἰ χρῆ μὲν ἡμᾶς, χρῆ δὲ τήνδε εἴναι πόλιν. ταῦτ' οὖν ἀμηχανοῦμεν οὔτε γὰρ τέκνα σφάξεων ὅδ' αὐτοῦ φησιν οὔτ' ἄλλου τινός, καμοὶ λέγει μὲν οὐ σαφῶς, λέγει δὲ πως, εἰ μὴ τι τούτων ἐξαμηχανήσομεν, ἡμᾶς μὲν ἄλλην γαϊαν εὐρίσκειν τινά, αὐτὸς δὲ σώσαι τήνδε βουλεῖται χθόνα.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ἐν τῷ δὲ καχόμεσθα σωθῆναι λόγῳ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἐν τῷ δὲ, τάλλα γ' εὐτυχῶς πεπραγότες.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

In season, set it forth: I am desperate,
Hearing these oracles, and full of fear.

Enter MACARIA from the temple.

MACARIA

Strangers, impute not for my coming forth
Boldness to me: this is my first request;
Since for a woman silence and discretion
Be fairest, and still tarrying in the home.
But, Iolaus, I heard thy moans, and came,—
Though I be not ordained mine house's head:
Yet in some sort it fits me, for I love
480
These brethren more than all: yea, mine own fate
Fain would I learn,—lest to the former ills
Some new pang added now torments thy soul.

IOLAEUS

Daughter, long since have I had righteous cause
To praise thee chiefliest of Hercules' seed.
Our house, that seemed but now to prosper well,
Once more hath fallen into desperate case.
For oracle-chanters, saith this king, proclaim
That he must bid to slay nor bull nor calf,
But a maid, daughter of a high-born sire,
490
If we, if Athens, must not cease to be.
This then is our despair: the king refuseth
To slay his own or any other's child,
And saith to me,—albeit not in words,—
Except we find for this some remedy,
We must needs forth and seek another land;
But his own land he cannot chose but save.

MACARIA

On these terms hangeth our deliverance?

IOLAEUS

On these,—if in all else our fortune speed.
ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

500 μὴ νυν τρέσης ἐτ’ ἐχθρὸν Ἄργειον δόρυν. ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτὴ πρὶν κελευσθῆναι, γέρον, θυγήσκειν ἐτοίμη καὶ παρίστασθαι σφαγῆ. τί φήσομεν γάρ, εἰ πόλεις μὲν ἄξιοι κίνδυνον ἡμῶν εἴνεκ’ αἴρεσθαι μέγαν; αὐτὸς δὲ προστιθέντες ἄλλοισιν πόνοις, παρόν σφε σῶσαι, φευξόμεσθα μὴ θανεῖν; οὐ δὴ, ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια, στένειν μὲν ἰκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους, πατρὸς δ’ ἐκείνου φύντας οὐ πεφύκαμεν, κακοὺς ὀράσθαι ποὺ τάδ’ ἐν χρηστοῖς πρέπει; κάλλιον, οἴμαι, τῆσδ’, ἀ μὴ τύχοι ποτέ, πόλεως ἀλώσης, χείρας εἰς ἐχθρῶν πεσεῖν, κάπετα δεινά, πατρὸς οὐδ’ εὐγενεῖς, παθοῦσαν Ἀιδήν μηδὲν ἢσσον εἰσίδειν.

510 ἄλλ’ ἐκπεσοῦσα τῆσδ’ ἀλητεύσω χθόνος, κοῦκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι δὴ, ἐὰν δὴ τις λέγῃ τί δεύρ’ ἀφίκεσθ’ ἰκεσίοισι σὺν κλάδοις αὐτὸς φιλοψυχοῦντες; ἔξειτε χθὸνος κακοὺς γὰρ ἡμεῖς οὐ προσωφελόσαμεν.

520 ἄλλ’ οὐδὲ μέντοι, τῶν δὲ μὲν τεθνηκότων, αὐτὴ δὲ σωθεῖσ’ ἐν πράξειν ἤχῳ πολλῶν γὰρ ἡδὴ τῆς προῦδος φίλον τίς γὰρ κόρην ἔρημον ἢ δάμαρτ’ ἤχειν ἢ παιδοποιεῖν ἐξ ἐμοὶ βουλήσεται; οὐκον θανεῖν ἀμείνων ἢ τούτων τυχεῖν ἀναβίαιν; ἄλλῃ δὲ καὶ πρέπει τινὶ μᾶλλον τάδ’, ἦτις μὴ ’πίστημος ὡς ἔγῳ. ἵγεισθ’ ὧτον δεὶ σῶμα καθανεῖν τὸδε, καὶ στεμματοῦτε καὶ κατάρχεσθ’, εἰ δοκεῖνι γιματε δ’ ἐχθροὺς ήδε γὰρ ψυχὴ πάρα
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

MACARIA

Then dread no more the Argive foeman's spear.
Myself—I wait no bidding, ancient—am
Ready to die, and yield me to be slain.
What can we say, if Athens count it meet
To brave a mighty peril for our sake,
And we to others pass the struggle on,
And flee death, when that way deliverance lies?
Never!—a scoffing to us this should be,
To sit and moan on, suppliant to their Gods,
And—born of that sire of whose loins we sprang—
To show us craven! Is this like the brave?
Better, forsooth, this town—which God forbid!—
Were ta'en, that into hands of foes I fell,
And suffered—I, from hero-father sprung—
Horrors, and looked on Hades none the less!
Or, banished, shall I wander from this land,
And not be utterly shamed, if one should say,
"Wherefore come hither with your suppliant boughs,
O ye that so love life?—hence from our land!
For we to cravens will not render help?"

Nay, and not even if all these were slain
And I saved, have I hope of happy days;—
Many, so tempted, have betrayed their friends;—
For who would stoop to take a friendless girl
To wife, or care to raise up seed of me?
Better to die than light on such a doom
Unworthy! Haply this might well be seem
Another maid who hath not my renown.

Lead on to where this body needs must die:
Wreathe me, begin the rite, if this seem good.
Vanquish your foes; for ready is this life,
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἐκούσα κοῦκ ἄκουσα· κάξαγγέλλομαι
θυήσκειν ἄδελφων τῶνδε κάμαςτης ὑπὲρ.
eὐρήμα γάρ τοι μὴ φιλοψυχοῦσ᾽ ἐγώ
κάλλιστον ηὕρηκ᾽, εὐκλεῶς λυπεῖν βίον.

ΧΩΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, τί λέξῳ παρθένῳ μέγαν λόγον
κλώνω, ἄδελφῶν ἢ πάρος θέλει θανεῖν;
tούτων τίς ἄν λέξεις γενναίοις λόγοις
μᾶλλον, τίς ἄν δράσεις ἀνθρώπων ἔτι;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὁ τέκνον, οὐκ ἔστ᾽ ἄλλοθεν τὸ σὸν κάρα,
540 ἀλλ᾽ ἔξ ἐκείνου σπέρμα τῆς θείας φρενὸς
πέφυκας Ἡράκλειος· οὐδ᾽ αἰσχύνομαι
τοῖς σοῖς λόγοις, τῇ τύχῃ δ᾽ ἀλγύρῳ.
ἀλλ᾽ ἢ γένοιτ᾽ ἄν ἐνδικωτέρως φράσω
πάσας ἄδελφας τῆς δεύρο χρή καλεῖν,
καθ᾽ ἢ λαχοῦσα θυησκέτω γένους ὑπερ-
σὲ δ᾽ οὐ δίκαιον καθθανεῖν ἀνεῦ πάλου.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

οὐκ ἄν θάνοιμι τῇ τύχῃ λαχοῦσ᾽ ἐγὼ
χάρις γὰρ οὐ πρόσεστι· μὴ λέξης, γέρων.
ἀλλ᾽ εἰ μὲν ἐνδίκησον καὶ βούλεσθε μοι
550 χρῆσαι προθύμων, τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἐγὼ
δίδωμ᾽ ἐκούσα τοῖσδ᾽, ἀναγκασθεῖσα δ᾽ οὐ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ.

ὅδ᾽ αὖ λόγος σοι τοῦ πρὶν εὐγενεστέρος·
kακέων ἢν ἀριστος, ἀλλ᾽ ὑπερφέρεις
tόλμη τε τὸλμας καὶ λόγῳ χρηστῷ λόγον.
οὐ μὴν κελεύω γ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἀπευνάσω, τέκνων,
thυήσκειν σ᾽ ἄδελφος δ᾽ ὦφελεῖς θανοῦσα σοῦς.

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Willing, ungrudging. Yea, I pledge me now
For these my brothers' sake, and mine, to die.
For treasure-trove most fair, by loving not
Life, have I found,—with glory to quit life.

CHORUS

What shall I say, who hear this maid's high words
Consenting for her brethren's sake to die?
What man could utter nobler words than these,
Or who do nobler deed henceforth for ever?

IOLAUS

O child, thine heart is of none other sire—
Thou art his own seed, of that godlike soul,
Hercules, sprung! Exceeding proud am I
For these thy words, but grieve for this hard fate.
Yet how 'twere done more justly will I tell:
Hither be all this maiden's sisters called;
Then for her house let whom the lot dooms die;
But that thou die without lot is not just.

MACARIA

I will not perish by the lot's doom, I;
For then is no free grace: thou, name it not.
But if ye will accept me, and consent
To take an eager victim, willingly
I give my life for these, nowise constrained.

IOLAUS

Ah, marvellous one!
Nobler thy latter speech is than thy first.
Perfect was that, but thou o'erpassest now
Courage with courage, word with noble word!
Yet, daughter, thee I bid not, nor forbid
To die:—thy brethren dost thou, dying, help.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

σοφῶς κελεύεις, μη τρέσης μιάσματος
tούμου μετασχείν, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρως θάνω.
ἐπού δὲ, πρέσβυν' σῇ γάρ εὐθανείν χερὶ
θέλω. πέπλοις δὲ σώμ' ἐμὸν κρύψον παρών
ἐπει σφαγῆς γε πρὸς τὸ δεινὸν εἰμ' ἐγώ,
eὔπερ πέφυκα πατρὸς οὐπερ εὐχομαι.

ΙΟΔΑΟΣ

οὖκ ἂν δυναίμην σῷ παρεστάναι μόρφ.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ τούδε χρῆζε, μὴ μ' ἐν ἄρσένων,
ἀλλ' ἐν γυναικῶν χερσίν ἔκπνεύσαι βίον.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ἐσται τάδ', ὁ τάλαινα παρθένων' ἔπει
κάμοι τόδ' αἰσχρόν, μὴ σε κοσμεῖσθαι καλῶς,
πολλῶν ἐκατ', τῆς τε σῆς εὐψυχίας
καὶ τοῦ δικαίου: τῆς ἰδιομοστάτην δὲ σὲ
πασῶν γυναικῶν εἶδον ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐγώ.
ἀλλ' εἰ τι βούλει τούσδε τὸν γέροντά τε,
χώρει προσείπου' ὑστάτοις προσφθέγμασιν.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ὁ χαίρε, πρέσβυν. χαίρε καὶ δίδασκε μοι
τοιοῦδε τούσδε παῖδας εἰς τὸ πάν σοφοὺς
ωσπερ σὺ, μηδὲν μᾶλλον' ἀρκέσουσι γὰρ.
πειρώ δὲ σώσαι μὴ θανεῖν, πρόθυμος ὄν
σοὶ παῖδες ἔσμεν' σαίν χερσίν τεθράμμεθα.
ὁρᾶς δὲ κάμε τήν ἐμὴν ὡραν γάμου
διδοῦσαν ἀντὶ τῶνδε καθανομένην.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

τοῖς ἄδελφοις' ἡ παροῦσ' ὀμιλία,
εὐθαμονοίτε, καὶ γένοιθ' ὑμῖν ὅσων
ἡμὴ πάροιδε καρδία σφαγήσεται.
καὶ τὸν γέροντα τὴν τ` ἔσω γραίαν δόμων

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MACARIA
Thou dost bid—wisely. Fear not thou to take
Guilt-stain of me; but let me die—die free.
Come with me, ancient: in thine arms to die
I ask. Be near me; veil my corse with robes,
Since to the horror of the knife I pass—
If I be of the sire that I boast mine.

IOLAUS
I cannot stand and look upon thy doom.

MACARIA
At least ask thou the king that I may breathe
My last breath not in men's but women's hands.

DEMOPHON
This shall be, hapless among maidens: shame
Were mine to grace thee not with honour meet,
For causes manifold; for thy great heart,
For justice' sake, and for that thou art brave
Above all women that mine eyes have seen.
Wouldst thou say aught to these, or this grey sire,
Speak thy last word, or ever thou depart.

[Exit.

MACARIA
Farewell, old sire, farewell, and teach, O teach
These boys to be like thee, in all things wise
As thou art—no whit more: that shall suffice.
And strive from death to save them, loyal soul:
Thy children are we, fostered by thine hands.
Thou seest how my bloom of spousal-tide
I yield up in the stead of these to die.
And ye, O band of brethren at my side,
Blessings on you! May all be yours, for which
The cleaving of mine heart shall pay the price.
This old man, and the grey queen therewithin,
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

tιμᾶτε πατρὸς μητέρ', Ἀλκμήνην ἐμοῦ ξένους τε τούσδε. κἂν ἀπαλλαγῇ πόνων καὶ νόστος ὑμῖν εὑρεθῇ ποτ' ἐκ θεῶν, μέμνησθε τὴν σώτειραν ὡς θάψαι χρεών· κάλλιστά τοι δίκαιον· οὐ γὰρ ἐνδεχό

590 ὑμῖν παρέστην, ἀλλὰ προὔθανον γένους. τάδ' ἀντὶ παίδων ἐστί μοι κειμήλια καὶ παρθενείας, εἰ τι δὴ κάτω χθονὸς· εἰη γε μέντοι μηδέν· εἰ γὰρ ἔξομεν κάκει μερίμνας οἱ θανοῦμενοι βροτῶν, οὐκ ὄδ' ὤποι τις τρέψηται· τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν κακῶν μέγιστον φάρμακον νομίζεται.

ΙΟΛΑΩΣ

ἀλλ', ὁ μέγιστον ἐκπρεποῦς εὐφυχία πασῶν γυναικῶν, ἵσθι, τιμωτάτη καὶ ξύσ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν καὶ θανοῦσ' ἐσεὶ πολὺ· καὶ χαίρε· δυσφημεῖν γὰρ ἄξομαι θεῖν, ἦ σὸν κατήρκται σῶμα, Δήμητρος κόρην. ὁ παῖδες, οἰχόμεσθα· λύται μέλη λύπη· λάβεσθε κεῖς ἐδραν μ' ἑρείσατε αὐτοῦ πέπλοισι τοῖς κρύψαντες, τέκνα. ὡς οὔτε τούτοις ἢδομαι πεπραγμένοις, χρησμοῦ τε μὴ κραυθέντος οὐ βιώσιμον· μείζων γὰρ ἄτη, συμφορὰ δὲ καὶ τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.
oὔτινα φημὶ θεῶν ἄτερ ὀλβίου, οὐ βαρύποτων, ἀνδρὰ γενέσθαι,

610 οὔδὲ τὸν αὐτὸν ἀεὶ βεβάναι δόμον εὐνυχία· παρὰ δ' ἀλλαν ἀλλα μοῖρα διώκειν·

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Alcmena, my sire's mother, honour ye,
And these our hosts. If there be found of heaven
For you release from toils, and home-return,
Remember then your saviour's burial due;—
Fair burial, as is just. I have failed you naught,
Have stood your champion, for mine house have died. 590
My treasure this shall be, for babes unborn,
Spousals forgone;—if in the grave aught be:
But ah that naught might be!—for if there too
We mortals who must die shall yet have cares,
I know not whither one shall turn; since death
For sorrows is accounted chiefest balm.

IOLAus

O thou who for high courage hast no peer,
Above all women, know, in life, in death,
Most chiefest honour shalt thou have of us.
Farewell; for awe I dare not curse the Goddess,
Demeter's child, to whom thy life is sealed.

[Exit Macaria. IOLAus sinks to the ground.

O boys, we are undone!—faint fail my limbs
For anguish! Take, upbear me to a seat
Hereby, and muffle with these robes, my sons.
For neither can I joy in these deeds done,
Nor might we live, the oracle unfulfilled.
This is calamity; that were deeper ruin.

CHORUS

(Str.)

Never man hath been blessed save by God's dispensation, nor bowed under sorrow:—

Lo, this do I cry:—[ways;]

Nor the same house treads evermore in prosperity's
But the fate of to-day is dogged by the feet of the
fate of to-morrow

Ever treading anigh;
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

tον μὲν ἀφ' ὑψηλῶν βραχῶν φίκισε,
tὸν δ' ἀτίταυ̣λ1 εὐδαίμονα τεῦχει.
μόρσιμα δ' οὕτι φυγείν θέμις,
οὐ σοφία τις ἀπώσεται.
ἀλλὰ μᾶταν ὁ πρόθυμος ἀεὶ πόνον ἕξει.

ἀντ.

ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ προπίτυνων τὰ θεῶν φέρε μηδ' ὑπερ-
ἀλγει

620 φροντίδα λύπα:
eὐδόκιμον γὰρ ἔχει θανάτου μέρος
ἀ μελέα πρὸ τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γὰς:
oῦδ' ἀκλεής νῦν
dόξα πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ύποδέξεται.
ἀ δ' ἀρετὰ βαίνει διὰ μόχθων.
ἀξία μὲν πατρός, ἀξία δ'
eὐγενίας τάδε γίγνεται.
eἰ δὲ σέβεσι θανάτους ἀγαθῶν, μετέχω σοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

630 ὠ τέκνα, χαίρετ'. Ἰόλεως δὲ ποὺ γέρων
μήτηρ τε πατρός τῆςδ' ἔδρας ἀποστατεῖ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
πώρεσμεν, ο᾽α δή γ' ἐμοῦ παρουσία.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
τί χρῆμα κείσαι καὶ κατηχεῖς ὃμ' ἐχεῖς;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
φροντίς τις ἦλθ' οἰκεῖος, ἥ συνειχόμην.

1 Lobeck: for MSS. ἄληταν.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And him that was highly exalted it comes to abase,
And him that was nothing accounted it setteth on high.
Ye may flee not your doom, nor repel, though the buckler of wisdom ye borrow,
And whoso essayeth hath vain toil endlessly.

(Ant.)

Ah, cast thee not down, but endure heaven’s stroke,
       nor thy spirit surrender
Unto anguished despair.

She hath won her a portion in death that the world shall praise, [Athens’ defender;
Who hath out of her agony risen, her brethren’s, our
       And a crown shall she wear
Of renown that the worship of men on her brows shall place;
        [ing fare.
For through tangle of trouble doth virtue unfalter-
Of her sire is it worthily done, of her line’s heroic splendour.
        [share.
In thine homage to noble death mine heart hath

Enter HENCHMAN OF HYLLUS.

HENCHMAN
Hail, children! Where stay ancient Iolaus
And your sire’s mother from their session here?

IOLAUS
Here am I—such as my poor presence is.

HENCHMAN
Why dost thou lie thus? Why these down-drooped eyes?

IOLAUS
A sorrow of this house is come to oppress me.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
έπαιρε νυν σεαυτόν, ὕρθωσον κύρα.
ΙΟΔΑΟΣ
γέροντές ἐσμεν κούδαμός ἐρρῶμεθα.
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ηκὼ γε μέντοι χάρμα σοι φέρων μέγα.
ΙΟΔΑΟΣ
tις δ’ εἰ σὺ; ποῦ σοι συντυχῶν ἀμνημονῶ;
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
"Τλλου πενέστης· οὔ με γηγηνωσκεῖς ὅρων;
ΙΟΔΑΟΣ
ὡ φίλταθ’, ἦκεις ἀρα νόν σωτῆρ βλάβης;
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
μάλιστα· καὶ πρὸς γ’ εὐτυχεῖς τὰ νῦν τάδε.
ΙΟΔΑΟΣ
ὡ μῆτερ ἐσθλοῦ παιδός, ’Ἀλκμήνην λέγω,
ἐξέλθ’, ἀκούσου τούσδε φιλτάτους λόγους.
πάλαι γὰρ ὁδόννυσα τῶν ἀφιγμένων
ψυχῆν ἔτηκου νόστος εἰ γενήσεται.

ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί χρήμ’ ἀυτῆς πὰν τὸδ’ ἐπλήσθῃ στέγος;
Ἰόλαε, μῶν τὸς σ’ αὐ νιᾶσεται παρῶν
κήρυξ ἀπ’ 'Ἀργοὺς; ἀσθενής μὲν ἢ γ’ ἐμῆ·
ῥόμη, τοσόνδε δ’ εἰδέναι σε χρή, ἕξε, 650
οὐκ ἔστ’ ἄγειν σε τούσδ’ ἐμοῦ ξώσης ποτέ.
ἡ τὰρ’ ἐκείνου μὴ νομιζόμην ἐγὼ
μήτηρ ἐτ’ εἰ δὲ τῶνδε προσθίξει χερί,
δυοῖν γεροντοῦν οὐ καλῶς ἀγωνιεῖ.
ΙΟΔΑΟΣ
θάρσει, γεραιά, μὴ τρέσης· οὔκ Ἀργόθεν
κήρυξ ἀφίκται πολεμίους λόγους ἔχων.

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THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN
Yet now upraise thyself: uplift thine head.

IOLAUΣ
Old am I, and my strength is utter naught.

HENCHMAN
But bringing tidings of great joy I come.

IOLAUΣ
Who art thou?—where have I met thee unremembered?

HENCHMAN
I am Hyllus' vassal. Look, dost know me not?

IOLAUΣ
Friend, com'st thou our deliverer from bane?

HENCHMAN
Yea: therewithal thou art fortunate this day.

IOLAUΣ
Alcmena, mother of a hero-son,
Come forth, give ear to these most welcome words;
For travelling long in spirit hast thou fainted
Lest those which now are come should ne'er return.

Enter ALCMENA from the temple.

ALCMENA
What means this outcry filling all the house?
How, hath a herald from their Argos come
Again to outrage thee? My strength is weakness;
Yet of this thing, O stranger, be assured,
Never, while I live, shalt thou hale these hence;
Else be I counted mother of Hercules
No more; for thou, if thou lay hand on these,
With two old foes shalt have inglorious strife.

IOLAUΣ
Fear not, grey queen, nor quake: no herald he
From Argos cometh bearing hests of foes.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ
τὶ γὰρ βοὴν ἐστησάς ἁγγελοῦ φόβου;
ἸΟΛΑΟΣ
σὺ πρόσθε ναοῦ τοῦ δὲ ὅπως βαῖης πέλας.
ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ
οὐκ ἢσμεν ἢμεῖς ταῦτα: τὶς γὰρ ἐσθ’ ὁδε;
ἸΟΛΑΟΣ
ἡκοντα παιδα παιδὸς ἁγγέλλει σέθεν.
ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ
ὡ χαίρε καὶ σὺ τοίσδε τοῖς ἁγγέλμασιν,
ἀτὰρ τί χώρα τῇδε προσβαλὼν πόδα
τοῦ νῦν ἀπεστὶ; τίς νῦν εἰργε συμφορὰ
σὺν σοὶ φανέντα δεῦρ’ ἐμὴν τέρψει φρένα;
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
στρατὸν καθίζει τάσσεται θ’ ὃν ἦλθ’ ἔχων.
ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ
τοῦ δ’ ὁμέθ’ ἡμῖν τοῦ λόγου μέτεστι δή.
ἸΟΛΑΟΣ
μέτεστιν’ ἡμῶν δ’ ἔργον ἱστορεῖν τάδε.
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
τί δῆτα βούλει τῶν πεπραγμένων μαθεῖν;
ἸΟΛΑΟΣ
πόσον τι πλήθος συμμάχων πάρεστ’ ἔχων;
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
πολλοὺς’ ἀριθμοῦν δ’ ἄλλων οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.
ἸΟΛΑΟΣ
670 ἵσασιν, οἶμαι, ταῦτ’ Ἀθηναίων πρόμοι.
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ἵσασι’ καὶ δὴ λαῖδ’ ἐστηκεν κέρας.
ἸΟΛΑΟΣ
ἥδη γὰρ ὡς εἰς ἔργον ἀπλισταῖ στρατὸς;
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA
Why then didst raise a cry in-ushering fear?

IOLASUS
That thou before this temple might'st draw nigh.

ALCMENA
This was not in my thought:—now who is this?

IOLASUS
He bringeth tidings. Thy son's son is here.

ALCMENA
Hail also thou for this thine heralding!
But wherefore absent, if he hath set foot
In this land?—where?—what hap hath hindered him
From coming with thee to make glad mine heart?

HENCHMAN
The host he hath brought he camps, and marshals it.

ALCMENA
Such matter appertaineth not to me.

IOLASUS
It doth—though my part be to inquire thereof.

HENCHMAN
What wouldst thou know concerning things achieved?

IOLASUS
How great a host of allies hath he brought?

HENCHMAN
Many: their tale I cannot tell save thus.

IOLASUS
All this, I trow, the chiefs Athenian know?

HENCHMAN
They know: yea, on their left he stands arrayed.

IOLASUS
Ha, is the host already armed for fight?
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
καὶ δὴ παρήκται σφάγια τάξεων ἔκας.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
πόσον τι δ’ ἔστ’ ἀπώθεν Ἄργεῖον δόρυ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ὡςτ’ ἐξορᾶσθαι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἐμφανῶς.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
τι δρῶντα; µῶν τάσσοντα πολεμίων στίχας;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ἡκάζομεν ταῦτ’ οὐ γὰρ ἐξηκουόμεν. ἀλλ’ εἰµ’ ἐρήµους δεσπότας τούµον µέρος
οὐκ ἂν θέλοιµι πολεµίωσεν συµβαλεῖν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
κάγωγε σὺν σοί ταῦτα γὰρ φροντίζομεν,
φίλοις παρόντες, ὡς ζευγµεν, ὠφελεῖν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ἡκιστά πρὸς σοῦ µῶρον ἢν εἰπεῖν ἔπος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
καὶ µὴ µετασχεῖν γ’ ἄλκιµον µάχης φίλοις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
οὐκ ἔστ’ ἐν ὑψεὶ τραύµα µὴ δρώσης χερός.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
τι δ’; οὐ θένοµι κὰν ἐγὼ δι’ ἀσπίδος;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
θένος ἂν, ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν αὐτὸς ἂν πέσοις.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
οὐδεὶς ἐµ’ ἐχθρῶν προσβλέπων ἀνέξεται.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦ τὰν, ἢ ποτ’ ἂν ῥώµη σέθεν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
ἀλλ’ οὖν µαχοῦµαι γ’ ἀριθµὸν οὐκ ἐλάσσοσι.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN
Yea, and the victims brought without the ranks.

IOLAEUS
And distant how far is the Argive spear?

HENCHMAN
So that thou plainly mayst discern their chief.

IOLAEUS
What doth he?—marshals he the foemen's lines?

HENCHMAN
So made we guess: not plainly could we hear. But I must go: I would not that without me, Through fault of mine, my lords should clash with foes.

IOLAEUS
And I with thee: my purpose is as thine,—
As meet is,—to be there and help my friends.

HENCHMAN
Nay, nowise worthy thee were idle talk!

IOLAEUS
Nor worthy of me to help not friends in fight!

HENCHMAN
The glance can deal no wound, if hand strike not.

IOLAEUS
How? Cannot I withal smite through a shield?

HENCHMAN
Smite?—yea, but thou thyself ere then mightst fall.

IOLAEUS
There is no foe shall dare to meet mine eyes.

HENCHMAN
Thou hast not, good my lord, thine olden strength.

IOLAEUS
Yet foes by tale not fewer will I fight.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
σμικρόν τὸ σὸν σήκωμα προστίθης φίλοις.

ΙΟΔΑΟΣ
μὴ τοῖς μ’ ἔρυκε δρᾶν παρεσκευασμένον.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
drᾶν μὲν σὺ γ’ οὖχ οἶδας τε, βούλεσθαι δ’ ἵσως.

ΙΟΔΑΟΣ
ός μὴ μενούντα τάλλα σοι λέγειν πάρα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
πῶς οὖν ὅπλίτης τευχέων ἄτερ φανεῖ;

ΙΟΔΑΟΣ
ἐστ’ ἐν δόμοισιν ἐνδον αἰχμάλωθ’ ὀπλα
toίσδ’, οἴσι χρησόμεσθα καπεδώσομεν
ξώντες: θανόντας δ’ οὐκ ἀπαιτήσει θεός.
ἀλλ’ εἰσιθ’ εἰσω κἀπο πασσάλων ἐλῶν
ἐνεγχ’ ὅπλίτην κόσμον ὡς τάχιστά μοι.

Αἰσχρόν γὰρ οἰκούρημα γίγνεται τόδε,
tοὺς μὲν μάχεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ δειλὰ μένειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
λῆμα μὲν οὖπω στόρνυσι χρόνος
tὸ σὸν, ἀλλ’ ἤθα: σῶμα δὲ φροῦδον.
tὶ πονεῖς ἀλλὰς θ’ σὲ μὲν βλάψει,
σμικρὰ δ’ ὄνησει πόλιν ἣμετέραν;
χρήν γνωσιμαχεῖν σὴν ἡλικίαν,
tὰ δ’ ἀμήχαν’ ἔαν’ οὐκ ἐστίν ὅπως
ἡθν τείησε πάλιν αὐθίς.

ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τὶ χρῆμα μέλλεις σῶν φρενῶν οὐκ ἐνδον ὄν
λυπεῖν μ’ ἔρημον σὺν τέκνοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς;

ΙΟΔΑΟΣ

ανδρῶν γὰρ ἀλκῆ’ σοι δὲ χρῆ τούτων μέλειν.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN
Scant weight into thy friends' scale wilt thou cast. 690

IOLAU.S
Hinder me not. I am wrought up for the deed.

HENCHMAN
For deeds no power thou hast;—hast will, perchance.

IOLAU.S
Talk as thou wilt, so I bide not behind.

HENCHMAN
With mailed men how shalt thou unarmed appear?

IOLAU.S
There hang within yon fane arms battle-won.
These will I use, and, if I live, restore;—
The God will not require them of the slain.
Pass thou within, and from the nails take down,
And bring with speed to me, that warrior-gear.

[Exit HENCHMAN.

Shameful it is—this loitering at home, 700
That some should fight, some, craven souls, hang back!

CHORUS
Not yet may the years quell thy spirit,
Young in heart, though thy strength be no more!
Why toil to thine hurt but in vain?
Small help of thee Athens should gain.
Let thine eld yet be wise, and refrain
From things hopeless: thou canst not inherit
Yet again the lost prowess of yore.

ALCMENA
Art thou beside thyself?—what, meanest thou
To leave me and my children thus forlorn? 710

IOLAU.S
Yea, men must fight. For these must thou take
thought.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
τί δ'; ἢν θάνης σὺ, πῶς ἐγὼ σωθήσομαι;
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
παιδὸς μελήσει παισί τοῖς λελειμένοις.
ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
ἣν δ' οὖν, δ' μὴ γένοιτο, χρήσωνται τύχῃ;
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
οἶδ' οὐ προδόσουσίν σε, μὴ τρέσης, ξένοι.
ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
tοσόνδε γὰρ τοι θάρσος, οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἔχω.
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
καὶ Ζηνὶ τῶν σῶν, οἴδ' ἐγὼ, μέλει πόνων.
ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
φεῦ.
Ζεὺς έξ ἐμοῦ μὲν οὐκ ἀκούσεται κακῶς:
εἰ δ' ἐστίν ὅσιος αὐτὸς οἶδεν εἰς ἐμὲ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

720 πλων μὲν ἦδη τήνδ' ὀρᾶς παντευχίαν.
φθάνουσι δ' ἄν οὐκ ἄν τοίσδε συγκρύπτων δέμας·
ὡς ἐγγὺς ἁγών, καὶ μᾶλλον Ἄρης στυγεῖ
μέλλοντας· εἰ δὲ τευχέων φοβεῖ βάρος,
νῦν μὲν πορεύον χμμόνας, εἰν δὲ τάξεων
κόσμῳ πυκάζου τφδ'. ἐγὼ δ' οἴσω τέως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
καλῶς ἐλέξας· ἄλλ' ἐμοὶ πρόχειρ' ἔχων
τεύχη κόμιζε, χειρὶ δ' ἐνθές ἡμνᾷ,
λαίαν τ' ἐπαίρε πήχυν, εὐθύνων πόδα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ἡ παιδαγωγεῖν γὰρ τὸν ὀπλίτην χρεῶν;
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

730 ὀρνιθὸς εἶνεκ' ἀσφαλῶς πορευτέον.

310
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA
But, if thou perish, how shall I be saved?

IOLAU.S
Thy son’s sons which are left shall care for thee.

ALCMENA
But if—which God forbid—aught hap to them?

IOLAU.S
Our hosts shall not forsake thee. Fear not thou.

ALCMENA
Mine heart’s last stay are these: none else have I.

IOLAU.S
Nay, Zeus, I know, remembereth thy griefs:

ALCMENA
Ah! (sighs heavily.)
Never of me shall ill be said of Zeus;
But is he just to me-ward? Himself knows!

[Retires within temple.

Re-enter HENCHMAN.

HENCHMAN
Lo, here thou seest a warrior’s gear complete:
Make all speed to encase in these thy frame.
The fight is nigh, and most the War-god loathes
Loiterers. If thou fear the armour’s weight,
Go mailless now, and lap thee mid the ranks
In this array: till then will I bear all.

IOLAU.S
Well hast thou said: yet ready to mine hand
Bring on the arms: set in mine hand a spear:
Bear up my left arm, ordering my steps.

HENCHMAN
How, lead as a little child the man-at-arms!

IOLAU.S
For the omen’s sake unstumbling must I go.
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
εἴθ’ ἥθα δυνατός δρᾶν ὅσον πρόθυμος εἰ.
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
ἐπειγε· λειψθεὶς δεινὰ πείσομαι μάχης.
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
σὺ τοι βραδύνεις, οὐκ ἐγὼ, δοκῶν τι δρᾶν.
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
οὕκουν ὁρᾶς μου κῶλου ὡς ἐπείγεται;
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ὁρῶ δοκοῦντα μᾶλλον ἥ σπεύδοντά σε.
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
οὐ ταῦτα λέξεις, ἡνίκ’ ἰν λεύσῃς μ’ ἐκεῖ.
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
τι δρῶντα; βουλοίμην δ’ ἰν εὐτυχοῦντά γε.
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
dι’ ἀσπίδος θείοντα πολεμίων τινά.
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
eι δὴ ποθ’ ἤξομέν γε· τούτο γὰρ φόβος.
ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
φεῦ.

740
eἴθ’, ὁ βραχίων, οἶον ἡβήσαντά σε
μεμνήμεθ’ ἡμεῖς, ἡνίκα ξῦν Ἡρακλεῖ
Σπάρτην ἐπόρθεις, σύμμαχος γένοιο μοι
τοιοῦτος· οἶος ἰν τροπὴν Εὐρυσθέως
θέμην· ἐπεί τοι καὶ κακὸς μένειν δόρυ.
ἐστιν δ’ ἐν ὀλβῳ καὶ τόδε οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἔχων,
eὐψυχίας δόκησις· οἰόμεσθα γὰρ
tὸν εὐτυχοῦντα πάντ’ ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
γὰ καὶ παννύχιος σελάνα
καὶ λαμπρόταται θεοῦ

750
φαεσίμβροτοι αὐγαί,
ἀγγελίαν μοι ἐνέγκαιτ’.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN
Would thou wert strong to do, as thou art fain!
IOLAU5
On!—woe, if I be laggard for the fray!
HENCHMAN
Not I, but thou art slow, who dream'st performance.
IOLAU5
Seest thou not how onward speed my limbs?
HENCHMAN
More thine imagining see I than thy speed.
IOLAU5
Thou shalt not say so when thou seest me there—
HENCHMAN
Achieving what?—I fain would see thy triumph!
IOLAU5
Smiting some foeman, yea, clear through the shield.
HENCHMAN
If we win ever thither,—this I doubt.
IOLAU5
Would, O mine arm, that, as I call to mind
Thy young strength, when thou didst with Hercules
Smite Sparta, such a helper unto me
Thou wouldst become! How mightily would I rout
Eurystheus—craven he to abide the spear!
With high estate is this delusion linked,
Repute for courage high: for still we deem
That he who prospereth knoweth all things well.

[Exeunt.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)
Earth!—Moon, which reign'st the livelong night!—
O glorious radiancy
Of Him who giveth mortals light,
Flash tidings unto me!

313
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ιαχήσατε δ' οὔρανῳ
καὶ παρὰ θρόνον ἀρχέταν,
γλαυκάς τ' ἐν Ἀθήναις.
μέλλω τὰς πατριώτιδος γὰς,
μέλλω καὶ ὑπὲρ δόμων,
ικέτας ὑποδεχθεῖς,
κίνδυνον πολιφῷ τεμεῖν σιδάρφι.

760
deinὸν μὲν πόλιν ὡς Μυκῆνας
eυδαίμονα καὶ δορὸς
πολυαίνετον ἀλκά
μὴν ἔμα ἄρθρᾳ κεύθειν
cακὸν δ', ὦ πόλις, εἰ ξένονς
ικητὴς παραδώσομεν
κελεύσμασιν Ἀργοὺς.
Zeús μοι σύμμαχος, οὗ φοβοῦμαι,
Zeús μοι χάριν ἐνδίκως
ἔχει· οὕτως θνατῶν
ἡσσόνες παρ' ἐμοὶ θεοί 1 φανοῦνται.

770
tαλλ', ὦ πότνια, σὸν γὰρ οὐδὰς
γὰς, σὸν καὶ πόλις, ἃς σὺ μάτηρ
dεσποινά τε καὶ φύλαξ,
pόρευσον ἀλλὰ τὸν οὗ δικαίως
tάδ' ἐπάγοντα δορυσοῦν
στρατῶν Ἀργόθεν· οὗ γὰρ ἔμα γ' ἀρετᾶ
dικαιός εἰμ' ἐκπεσεῖν μελάθρων.

780
ἐπεί σοι πολύθυμος αἰεὶ
tιμᾶ κραίνεται, οὐδὲ λάθει
μηνῶν φθινας ἁμέρα,
νέων τ' ἀοιδαὶ χορῶν τε μολπαῖ.

1 Dindorf: for MSS. ποτ' ἀν εἴτ' έμοῦ.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Shout triumph up through heaven's expansion,
   Up to the throne of all men's Lord,
Up to grey-eyed Athena's mansion!
I for my land am battle-dight,
Arrayed for hearth and home to fight,
   To shear through danger with the sword,
   For right of sanctuary.

Dread peril, that Mycenae-town—
   The mighty burg, whose hand
The wide world through hath spear-renown,—
   Nurse wrath against my land!
Yet shame, O shame, were thine, my city,
   If we must yield to Argos' hest
Suppliants,—if fear must cast out pity! . . .
Zeus champions me; I tread fear down:
Zeus' favour is my right, my crown:
   In mine esteem above the Blest
   Never shall mortals stand.

But, O Queen,—for our soil, for our city is thine,
   And to thee be we given—
O our Mother, our Mistress, O Warder Divine,
   Yon despiser of heaven,
Who from Argos brings storm-rush of spearmen
   upon me,
Chase afar!—no such guerdon hath righteousness
   As from home to be driven!

For the sacrifice-homage is rendered thee aye
   When the month waneth, bringing
The day when young voices to thee chant the lay,
   When the dancers are singing,
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἀνεμόεντι δ' ἐπ' ὄχθῳ
ὀλολύγματα πανυχίοις ὑπὸ παρθένων ἰαχεὶ ποδῶν κρότωσιν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
dεσποινα, μύθους σοί τε συντομωτάτους κλάειν ἐμοί τε τῷ δε καλλίστους φέρω. νικώμεν ἐχθροὺς καὶ τροπαίοι ἱδρύνει τινὲς παντευχίαν ἔχοντα πολέμιων σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
ὁ φίλταθ', ἤδε σ' ἡμέρα διήλασεν ἠλευθερώσθαι τούσδε τοῖς ἀγγέλμασιν. μῖᾶς δὲ μ' οὐπώ συμφορᾶς ἐλευθεροῖς φόβος γὰρ εἶ μοι ζῶσιν οὐ υἱῷ ἑγὼ θέλω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ζῶσιν μέγιστον γ' εὐκλεεῖσι κατὰ στρατόν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
ὁ μὲν γέρων οὖν ἔστων Ἰόλεως ἑτί;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
μάλιστα: πράξαι δ' ἐκ θεῶν κάλλιστα δή.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
τί δ' ἔστι; μῶν τι κεδυν ἡγωνίζετο;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
νέος μεθέστηκ' ἐκ γέροντος αὕτης αὖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
θαυμάστ' ἔλεξας: ἀλλὰ σ' εὐτυχῆ φίλων μάχης ἀγώνα πρῶτον ἀγγεῖλαι θέλω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
εἰς μοι λόγος σοι πάντα σημανεῖ τάδε. ἐπει γὰρ ἀλλήλοισιν ὀπλίτην στρατὸν κατὰ στόμι' ἐκτείνοντες ἀντετάξαμεν, ἐκβας τεθρίππων "Τλλος ἀρμάτων πόδα
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

When the wind-haunted hill with the beat of the
glancing
White feet of fair girls through the night-season
And with glad cries, is ringing.

ALCMENA comes again out of the temple. Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT
Mistress, I bring thee tidings passing brief.
To hear, and passing fair for me to tell.
Our foes are smitten: trophies now are reared
Hung with war-harness of thine enemies.

ALCMENA
Dear friend, this day hath wrought thy severance
From bondage, for the tidings thou hast brought.
Yet from one ill not yet thou freest me—
Fear touching those I love, if yet they live.

SERVANT
They live, in all the host most high-renowned.

ALCMENA
The old man Iolaus—lives he yet?

SERVANT
Yea, and by Heaven's help hath done gloriously.

ALCMENA
What is it?—hath he wrought some knightly deed?

SERVANT
He from an old man hath become a youth.

ALCMENA
Marvels thou speakest: yet I pray thee tell
First how the fight was victory for our friends.

SERVANT
One speech of mine shall set forth all to thee.
When host against host we had ranged the array
Of men-at-arms far-stretching face to face,
Then from his chariot Hyllus lighted down,
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἐστὶ μέσοισιν ἐν μεταίχμιοις δορῶν.
κάπετι ἐλεξεν. ὁ στρατηγὸς ὡς Ἀργόθεν ἥκεις, τί τῆνδε γαῖαν ὅν τε ἐιπασαμεν;
καὶ τὰς Μυκήνας οὔδὲν ἔργασε κακῶν ἀνδρὸς στερήσας· ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ μόνος μόνῳ
μάχην συνάψας, ἡ κτανῶν ἀγὼν λαβὼν
tους· Ἡρακλείους παῖδας, ἡ θανὼν ἐμοὶ
tιμᾶς πατρόων καὶ δόμους ἔχειν ἄφες.

810 στρατὸς δ’ ἐπήνεσε, εἰς τ’ ἀπαλλαγὰς πόνων
calῶς λελέχθαι μῦθον εἰς τ’ εὐπνεικᾶν.
ὁ δ’ οὐτε τοὺς κλώντας αἴδεσθείς λόγων
οὔτ’ αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ δειλῶν στρατηγὸς ὡν,
ἐλθεὶν ἐτόλμησ’ ἐγγὺς ἀλκίμον δορῶς,
ἀλλ’ ἤν κάκιστος’ εἶτα τοιοῦτος γεγονός
tους Ἡρακλείους ἴλθε δουλώσων γόνους.

820 Ἡλλὸς μὲν οὖν ἀπαύχετ’ εἰς ταξιν πάλιν
μάντεις δ’, ἐπειδὴ μονομάχου δι’ ἀσπίδος
dιαλλαγὰς ἐγνωσαν ὦ τελομένας,
ἐσφαξον, οὐκ ἐμελλον, ἀλλ’ ἄφιεσαν
λαιμῶν ἢ βροτεῖων ἐν θυὸς οὐριν φόνων
οί δ’ ἀρματ’ εἰσέβαινον, οἱ δ’ ὑπ’ ἀσπίδων
πλευρῶς ἐκρυπτὺν πλεῦρ’. Ἀθηναίων δ’ ἀναζ
στρατῷ παρῆγγελ’ οὐα χρῆ τὸν εὐγενῆ.
ὅ ἐμπολίται, τῇ τε βοσκοῦσῃ χθῶνι καὶ
τῇ τεκούσῃ νῦν τὶν ἀρκέσαι χρεῶν.
830 ὃ δ’ αὐ τῷ Ἦ Ἀργὸς μὴ καταίχυναι θέλειν
καὶ τὰς Μυκῆνας συμμάχους ἐλίσσετο.
ἐπεὶ δ’ ἐσήμην’ ὄρθιον Τυρσηνικὴ
σάλπιγγι καὶ συνῆψαν ἀλλήλων μάχην,
pόσον τω’ αὐχεῖς πάταγον ἀσπίδων βρέμειν,

1 An unlikely word here. Paley suggests βοτεῖον.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And midway stood between the spearmen-lines,
And cried, "O captain of the host, who hast come
From Argos, wherefore spare we not this land?
Lo, if thou rob Mycenae of one man,
Naught shalt thou hurt her:—come now, man to man
Fight thou with me: so, slaying, lead away
Hercules' sons; or, falling, leave to me
My father's honour and halls to have and hold."

"Yea!" the host shouted, counting this well said
For valour and for rest from battle-toil:
Yet he, unshamed for them that heard the challenge,
And his own cowardice, war-chief though he were,
Dared not draw nigh the essay of valour's spear,
But was sheer craven. And this dastard wretch
Came to enslave the sons of Hercules!
So to the ranks again went Hyllus back:
And the priests, knowing now that end of strife
Should not by clash of champion shields be attained,

Did sacrifice, nor tarried, but straightway
Spilled from the victims' throats the auspicious blood.

Then mounted these their cars: their shield-rims those
Before their bodies cast. But Athens' king
Cried to his host, as high-born chieftain should:
"Countrymen, now must each one play the man
For this land that hath borne and nurtured him!"
The while that other prayed his battle-aid
To brook not shame to Argos and Mycenae.
But when the Tuscan trumpet gave the sign
High-shrilling, and the war-hosts clashed in fight,
How mighty a crash of bucklers thundered then—
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

πόσον τινὰ στέναγμαν οἴμωγήν θ' ὁμοῦ; τὰ πρῶτα μὲν νυν πίτυλος Ἀργείου δορὸς ἔρρηξαθ’ ἡμᾶς· εἰτ’ ἔχωρησαν πάλιν. τὸ δεύτερον δὲ ποὺς ἐπαλλαχθεὶς ποδὶ, ἀνὴρ δ’ ἔπ’ ἀνδρὶ στὰς ἐκαρτέρει μάχῃ πολλοὶ δ’ ἔπιπτον, ἦν δὲ δύο κελεύσματα. 1 ὁ τὰς Ἀθήνας—ὁ τὸν 'Ἀργείων γυνὴν σπείροντες—οὐκ ἀρίζετε ἀἰσχύνῃν πόλει; μόλις δὲ πάντα δράστες οὐκ ἀτερ πόλων ἐτρεψάμεσθ’ Ἀργείων εἰς φυγὴν δόρυ. καύναθ’ ὁ πρέσβεως “Τλλον ἐξορμώμενον ἵδων, ὀρέξας ἰκέτευσε δεξιὰν Ἰόλαος ἐμβῆσαί νιν ὑπεικον δίφρον. λαβὼν δὲ χερσὶν ἦνιας Εὐρυσθέως πώλος ἐπεἶχε. τάτο τοῦτ’ ἤδη κλύων λέγοιμ’ ἄν ἄλλων, δεύρο δ’ αὐτὸς ἐἰς ἱδών. Παλληνίδος γὰρ σεμνὸν ἐκπερὼν πάγον δίας Ἀθάνας, ἀρμ’ ἱδῶν Εὐρυσθέως, ἠμάσαθ’ “Ἡβη Ζηνί θ’, ἠμέραν μίαν νέος γενέσθαι κάποτίσασσαί δίκην ἐξερούς· κλύειν δὴ θαύματος πάρεστι σοι. δυσσὶ γὰρ ἀστέρ’ ἑπικοῖς ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς σταθέντ’, ἔκρυψαν ἄρμα λυγαἰῶ νέφεις σὸν δὴ λέγονσι παῖδα γ’ οἱ σοφῶτεροι “Ἡβην θ’· ὁ δ’ ὀρφης ἐκ δυσαιθρίου νέων βραχιονών ἐδεξιέν ἥβητην τύπον. αἱρεῖ δ’ ὁ κλεῖνος Ἰόλαις Εὐρυσθέως τέτρωρον ἀρμα πρὸς πέτρας Σκειρωνίσι. δεσμοῖς τε δῆσας χεῖρας ἀκροθῖνιον κάλλιστον ἤκει τὸν στρατηλάτην ἄγων

1 Dindorf: for MSS. τοῦ κελεύσματος.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Think' st thou?—what multitudinous groan and shriek!
At first the onset of the Argive spear
Burst through our ranks: then gave they back again.
Anon foot stood in grapple locked with foot,
Man fronting man, hard-wrestling in the fray:
Fast, fast they fell. Cheers ever answered cheers—
"Dwellers in Athens!"—"Tillers of the land
Of Argos!"—"from dishonour save your town!"
With uttermostendeavour and strong strain
Scarce turned we unto flight the Argive spear.

Thereat old Iolaus, marking where
Hyllus charged on, with outstretched hand besought
That he would set him on a courser-car.
Then the reins grasped he, then the steeds he sped
After Eurystheus. All the rest I tell
From others' lips: the former things I saw.
For, as he passed beyond Pallene's Hill
Sacred to Pallas, spying Eurystheus' car
He prayed to Zeus and Hebe, for one day
To be made young, and wreak the vengeance due
On foes:—now shalt thou hear a miracle.
For two stars rested on the chariot-yoke,
And into gloom of shadow threw the car;
And these, diviners say, were thy great son
And Hebe. Then from out that murky gloom
He flashed—a youth, with mighty-moulded arms!

And glorious Iolaus overtook
By the Scironian Rocks Eurystheus' car.
He hath bound his hands with gyves, and hath returned
Bringing the crown of victory, that chief
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τὸν ὀλβιον πάροιθε· τῇ δὲ νῦν τῷ ς
βροτοῖς ἅπασι λαμπρὰ κηρύσσει μαθεῖν,
tὸν εὐτυχεῖν δοκοῦντα μὴ ζηλοῦν, πρὶν ἀν
θανοῦν τῇ τις· ὡς ἐφήμεροι τῦχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ τροπαίε, νῦν ἐμοὶ δεινοὶ φόβου
ἐλευθερον πάρεστιν ἦμαρ εἰςίδειν.

ΑΔΚΜΗΝΗ

ὦ Ζεῦ, χρόνῳ μὲν τἀμ’ ἕπεσκέψω κακά,
χάριν δὲ ὁμοὶ σοι τὸν πεπραγμένων ἔχω·
kαὶ παίδα τὸν ἐμὸν πρόσθεν οὐ δοκοῦσ’ ἐγὼ
θεοὶς ὁμιλεῖν νῦν ἐπίσταμαι σαφῶς.
ὦ τέκνα, νῦν δὴ νῦν ἐλευθεροὶ τόνων,
ἐλευθεροὶ δὲ τοῦ κακῶς ὀλομένου
Εὐρυσθέως ἐσέσθε καὶ πόλιν πατρὸς
ὄψέθε, κλήρους δὲ ἐμβατεύσετε χθονός,
kαὶ θεοὶς πατρόφοις θύσεθ’ ὁν ἀπειργημένοι
ζένοι πλανήτην εἴχετ’ ἄθλιον βίον.
ἀτὰρ τὶ κεύθων Ἰὸλεως σοφὸν ποτε
Εὐρυσθέως ἐφείσαθ’ ὡστε μὴ κτανεὶν ;
λέξουν παρ’ ἡμῖν μὲν γὰρ οὐ σοφὸν τόδε,
ἐχθροὺς λαβόντα μὴ ἀποτίσασθαι δίκην.

ΘΕΡΑΙΩΝ

τὸ σὸν πρωτιμῶν, ὡς νῦν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἴδοις
ἀλόντα 1 καὶ σὴ δεσποτούμενον χερί.
οὐ μὴν ἐκὼντα γ’ αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς βίαν
ἐξευξ’ ἀνάγκη καὶ γὰρ ὡς ἐβούλετο
ζών εἰς σὸν ἑλθεῖν ὁμμα καὶ δοῦναι δίκην.
ἀλλ’, ὦ γεραιά, χαίρε καὶ μέμνησό μοι
ὁ πρῶτον εἰπας, ἦνικ’ ἡρχόμην λόγου,

1 Heimsoeth: for MSS. κρατούντα. Reiske, κρατοῦσα.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

So prosperous once; but by his fate this day
Clear warning to all men he publisheth
To envy not the seemingfortunate, ere
He die, since fortune dureth but a day.

CHORUS

O Victory-wafter Zeus, now is it mine
To see a day from dark fear disenthralled!

ALCMENA

Zeus, late on mine affliction hast thou looked;
Yet thank I thee for all that thou hast wrought.
Now know I of a surety that my son
Dwelleth with Gods:ere this I thought not so.
O children, now, yea now from trouble free,
And from Eurystheus, doomed to a dastard's death,
Free shall ye be, shall see your father's city,
And tread the lot of your inheritance,
And sacrifice to your fathers' Gods, from whom
Banned ye have known a wretched homeless life.
But for what veiled wise purpose Iolaus
Hath spared Eurystheus, that he slew him not,
Tell; for in our sight nothing wise is this
To capture foes and not requite their wrong.

SERVANT

Of thought for thee, that him thine eyes might see
Held in thy power, and subject to thine hand.
He bowed him 'neath the yoke of strong constraint
Sore loth to come, for nowise he desired
Living to meet thine eye and taste thy vengeance.
Farewell, grey queen: forget not that which erst
Thou saidst to me when I began my tale.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

890 ἐλευθερώσειν μ’. ἐν δὲ τοῖς τοιούτοις χρή ἄφεντες εἶναι τοῖς γενναίοις στόμα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔμοι χορὸς μεν ἥδυς, εἰ λύγεια στρ. α’

λωτοῦ χάρις εὖν δαίτι,

εἰὴ δ’ εὐχαρις Ἀφροδίτα: θερμοῦν δὲ τι καὶ φίλων ἄρ’

εὐνυχίαν ἰδέσθαι τῶν πάρος οὐ δοκούντων.

πολλὰ γὰρ τίκτει Μοῖρα τελεσσιδώτειρ’

900 Αἴων τε Κρόνου παῖσ.

ἔχεις ὁδὸν τιν’, ὃ πόλις, δίκαιον’ ἀντ. α’

οὐ χρῆ ποτε τούδ’ ἀφέσθαι,

τιμᾶν θεοῦ’ ο ὑμ’ σε φάσκων ἐγγὺς μανιῶν ἐλαύνει,

δεικνυμένων ἐλέγχων τῶν’ ἐπίσημα γὰρ τοι θεοὺς παραγγέλλει,

τῶν ἄδικων παραιρῶν φρονήματος αἰ.

910 ἔστιν εὖν οὐρανῶ βεβακῶς στρ. β’

τεὸς γόνος, ὃ γεραιά:

φεύγω λόγον ὡς τὸν ’’Αἰδα ὁμον κατέβα, πυρὸς ἐνωὶ φλογὶ σῶμα δαισθείς: Ἡβας τ’ ἐρατόν χροίζει λέγων χρυσέαιν κατ’ αὐλάν.

ὡ ’’Τμέναιε, δισσοῦσ παῖδας Διὸς ἡξίωσας.

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THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Make me free man; for, touching suchlike boons,
The lips that lie not best be seem the noble.  [Exit.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

Sweet to me is the dance, when clear-pealing
Ring the flutes o'er the wine,
And when Love cometh sweetly in-stealing
Yea, and gladness is mine
To look on my dear ones well-faring
Which aforetime were whelmed in despairing.
Many blessings fate cometh on-bearing,
With whom Time paceth on, bringing healing,
Cronos' offspring divine.

In justice, my land, thy path lieth:  (Ant. 1)
This thy crown yield to none,
That thou fearest the Gods: who denieth,
Into madness hath run.
Lo, what sign is revealed for a token,
How the pride of wrong-doers is broken
Evermore; how to-day hath God spoken,
How the voice of Omnipotence crieth
In the deeds he hath done!

He hath died not!—to heaven hath risen (Str. 2) 910
Thy scion, grey queen.
Tell me never that Hades' dim prison
His long home hath been!
Nay, he soared through the flames leaping round him;
And with honour the Spousal-god crowned him,
And to Hebe with love-links he bound him,—
Zeus' son to Zeus' daughter,—where glisten
Heaven's halls with gold-sheen.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

συμφέρεται τὰ πολλὰ πολλοῖς· ἀντ. β'
καὶ γὰρ πατρὶ τῶν 'Αθάναν
λέγουσι· ἐπίκουρον εἶναι,
καὶ τούσδε θεᾶς πόλις
καὶ λαὸς ἔσωσε κείνας,
ἐσχεν δὲ ὑβρὶν ἀνδρός, ὥθυ-
μὸς ἦν πρὸ δίκαις βιαίως.
μήποτ' ἐμοὶ φρόνημα
ψυχά τ' ἀκόρεστος εἰς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

dέσποιν', ὅρᾶς μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰρήσεται,
Εὐρυσθέα σοι τόνδ' ἁγιοτες ἦκομεν,
ἀέλπτον ὄψιν, τῳδ' τ' οὐχ ἱσσον τύχην,
οὺ γὰρ ποτ' ἡχει χείρας ἵβεσθαι σέθεν,
οτ' ἐκ Μυκηνῶν πολυτόνῳ σὺν ἀσπίδι
ἐστείχε μεῖξον τῆς δίκης φρούων, πόλιν
πέρσων 'Αθάνας. ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐναντίαν
δαίμων ἔθηκε καὶ μετέστησεν τύχην.
"Τῆλος μὲν οὖν ὃ τ' ἐσθοδ' Ἰόλεως βρέτας
Δίος τροπαίον καλλίνικου ἱστασαν·
ἐμοὶ δὲ πρὸς σὲ τόνδ' ἐπιστῆλλουσ' ἁγεῖν,
tέρψαι θέλοντες σὴν φρέν'. ἐκ γὰρ εὐτυχοὺς
ὁδιστὸν ἐχθρὸν ἀνδρὰ δυστυχοῦνθ' ὅρᾶν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὁ μῖσος, ἤκεις; εἰλὲ σ' ἢ Δίκη χρόνῳ;
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοὶ δεῦρ'. ἐπίστρεψον κάρᾳ
καὶ τλῆθι τοὺς σοὺς προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον
ἐχθροὺς. κρατεῖ γὰρ νῦν γε-κοῦ κρατεῖς ἐτι.
ἐκείνοις εἰ σύ, βούλομαι γὰρ εἰδέναι,
ὅς πολλὰ μὲν τὸν ὅρθ' ὅπου 'στι νῦν ἐμὸν
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

How oft be life's strands interwisted! (Ant. 2)
    Of Athena, men say,
Was their sire in hard emprise assisted;
    And the city this day,
And the folk of that Goddess hath saved them,
And hath curbed him whose blood-lust had craved
    them,
Whose tyranny fain had enslaved them.
In my cause never pride be enlisted
    Insatiate for prey.

Enter messenger with guards leading eurystheus in
    chains.

Messerger
O queen, thou seëst,—yet shall it be told,—
Leading Eurystheus unto thee we come,
A sight unhoped, which ne'er he looked should hap,
    Who ne'er had thought to fall into thine hands,
When from Mycenae with vast shield-essay
He marched, his pride o'er justice soaring high,
To smite our Athens. But our destinies
Fortune reversed, and changed them, his for ours.
Hyllus I left and valiant Iolaus
Raising the victory-trophy unto Zeus;
But me they charge to bring this man to thee,
Being fain to glad thine heart; for 'tis most sweet
To see a foe triumphant once brought low.

Alcmena
Loathed wretch, art come? Justice at last hath
    trapped thee!
Nay then, first turn thou hitherward thine head,
    And dare to look thine enemies in the face.
No more art thou the master, but the thrall!
Art thou he—for I would be certified—
Who didst presume to load thine outrages,
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

παιδί ἡξίωσας, ὦ πανοῦργε, ἐφυβρίσαι; 
tί γὰρ σὺ κείνον οὐκ ἔτης καθυβρίσαι; 
δὲ καὶ παρ᾽ Ἅδην ξώντα νῦν κατήγαγες, 
ὕδρας λέοντάς τ᾽ ἐξαπολλύναι λέγων ἔπεμπες. ἄλλα δ᾽ οἶ ἐμηχανῶ κακὰ 
σιγώ. μακρὸς γὰρ μῦθος ἀν γένοιτο μοι. 
κοῦκ ἦρκεσέν σοι ταῦτα τολμῆσαι μόνον, 
ἄλλ᾽ εξ ἀπάσης κἀμὲ καὶ τέκν᾽ Ἑλλάδος 
ἡλαυνεὶ ἵκεται δαιμόνων καθημένους, 
τοὺς μὲν γέροντας, τοὺς δὲ νηπίουσ ἔτι. 
ἄλλ᾽ ἦρες ἀνδρας καὶ πόλισμ᾽ ἐλεύθερον, 
οί σοῦκ ἐδείσαν. δεὶ σε καθθανεῖν κακῶς, 
καὶ κερδάνεις ἀπαντά: χρῆν γὰρ οὐχ ἀπαξ 
θυήσκειν σὲ πολλὰ πήματ᾽ ἐξεργασμένου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐκ ἔστ᾽ ἀνυστὸν τόνδε σοι κατακτανεῖν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἄλλως ἄρ᾽ αὐτὸν αἰχμάλωτον εἴλομεν.

ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ
εἰργεὶ δὲ δὴ τίς τόνδε μὴ θανεῖν νόμος;
ΧΟΡΟΣ
τοῖς τῆσδε χώρας προστάταισιν οὐ δοκεῖ.

ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ
τί δὴ τόδ᾽; ἐχθροῦς τυισίδ᾽ οὐ καλὸν κτανεῖν;
ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐχ οὖντιν᾽ ἀν γε ξώνθ᾽ ἔλσωσιν ἐν μάχῃ.

ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ
καὶ ταῦτα δόξανθ᾽ Ἱλλος ἐξηνέσχετο;
ΧΟΡΟΣ
χρῆν δ᾽ αὐτῶν, οἶμαι, τῇδ᾽ ἀπιστῆσαι χθονί;

ἈΛΚΜΗΝΗ
χρῆν τόνδε μὴ ξῆν μηδ᾽ ἔτ᾽ εἰσορᾶν φάως.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Caitiff, on my son—whereso now he be?
For wherein didst thou fear to outrage him,
Who didst to Hades speed him living down,
Didst send him, bidding him destroy thee Hydras
And lions? All the ills thou didst devise
I name not, for the tale were all too long.
Nor yet sufficed thee this alone to dare;
But from all Hellas me and mine didst thou
Still hunt, though suppliant to the Gods we sat,
These stricken in years, those little children yet.
But men, and a free city, hast thou found,
Which feared thee not. Now die the dastard's death.
Yet is thy death all gain: thou ought'st to die
Not one death, who hast wrought ills manifold.

CHORUS
It may not be that thou shouldst slay this man!

MESSENGER
Captive in vain then have we taken him!

ALCMENA
Prithee what law withholdeth him from death?

CHORUS
It pleaseth not the rulers of this land.

ALCMENA
How?—do these count it shame to slay their foes?

CHORUS
Yea, such as they have ta'en in fight unslain.

ALCMENA
Ay so?—and this their doom hath Hyllus brooked?

CHORUS
Should he, forsooth, defy this nation's will?

ALCMENA
He should no more have lived, nor seen the light.
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
970 τότ' ἡδικήθη πρῶτον οὐ θανὼν οδε.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
οὔκοιν ἔτ' ἐστὶν ἐν καλῷ δοῦναι δίκην;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐκ ἔστι τοῦτον ὅστις ἄν κατακτάνοι.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
ἔγωγε· καίτοι φημὶ κάμ' εἶναι τίνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πολλήν ἄρ' ἔξεις μέμψιν, εἰ δράσεις τόδε.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
φιλῶ πόλιν τήνδ', οὐδὲν ἀντιλεκτέον.
τοῦτον δ', ἑπείπερ χείρας ἠλθεν εἰς ἐμάς,
οὐκ ἔστι θυμητῶν ὅστις ἔξαιρήσεται.

πρὸς ταῦτα τὴν θρασείαν ὅστις ἄν θέλη
καὶ τὴν φρονούσαν μεῖξον ἡ γυναίκα χρῆ
λέξει· τὸ δ' ἔργον τούτ' ἐμοὶ πεπράξεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
δεινῶν τι καὶ συγγυμνῶστόν, ὃ γύναι, σ' ἔχει
μῖσος πρὸς ἄνδρα τόνδε, γυμνωσκῷ καλῶς.

ΕΥΡΥΣΘΕΙΣ
γύναι, σάφ' ἵσθι μὴ με θωπεύσουτά σε,
μηδ' ἄλλο μηδὲν τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πέρι
λέξιν' οθεν χρῆ δειλίαις ὀφλεῖν τίνα.

ἔγω δὲ νείκος ὦν ἐκὼν τὸν ἡράμην
ἡδη γε σοι μὲν αὐτονεώςριος γεγώς,

τῷ σῷ δὲ παιδὶ συγγενῆς 'Ηρακλέιει.

ἀλλ' εἴτ' ἔχρηξον εἴτε μῆ, θεὸς γὰρ ἦν,

"Ηρα με κάμνειν τήνδ' ἔθηκε τὴν νόσον.

ἔτει δ' ἐκείνῳ δυσμένειαν ἡράμην
κἀγὼν ἀγώνα τόνδ' ἀγωνιούμενος,

πολλῶν σοφιστῆς πημάτων ἔγνωμήν

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THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS
Then was he wronged—to die not at the first. 970

ALCMENA
So then 'twere just he suffered vengeance yet.

CHORUS
None is there, none, would put him now to death.

ALCMENA
That will I—some one I account myself.

CHORUS
Thou shalt have bitter blame, if this thou do.

ALCMENA
I love this city; let no man gainsay:—
But, since this wretch hath come into mine hands,
There is of mortals none shall pluck him thence.
Wherefore who will shall rail on the overbold,
On her that nursed for woman thoughts too high;
Yet shall this deed by me be brought to pass. 980

CHORUS
A fearful hatred, yet a righteous, queen,
Thou hast against this man, I know full well.

EURYSTHEUS
Woman, be sure I will not cringe to thee,
Nor utter any word beside, to save
My life, whence cowardice might stain my name.
Yet of my will this feud I took not up.
I knew myself born cousin unto thee,
And kinsman unto Hercules thy son.
But, would I or no, 'twas Heaven that thrust me on:
Hera with this affliction burdened me. 990
But when I had made him once mine enemy,
And knew that I must wrestle out this strife,
Deviser I became of many pains,
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

καὶ πόλλ’ ἔτικτον, νυκτὶ συνθακῶν ἀεὶ, ὤτως διώσας καὶ κατακτεῖνας ἐμοὺς ἐχθροῦς τὸ λαυπὸν μὴ συνοικοίνῃ φόβῳ, εἰδὼς μὲν οὐκ ἀριθμὸν ἄλλ’ ἐπητύμως ἄνδρ’ ὅντα τὸν σὸν παῖδα· καὶ γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ὁιν ἀκούσεται τὰ γ’ ἐσθλὰ χρηστὸς ὃν ἀνήρ.

κεῖνον δ’ ἀπαλλαχθέντος οὐκ ἔχρην μ’ ἀρα μισούμενον πρὸς τὸν ἔλαυνειδότα ἐχθραν πατρῶν, πάντα κινήσαι πέτρον, κτείνοντα κάκβάλλοντα καὶ τεχνώμενον; τοιαύτα δρωτὶ τάμ’ ἐγώνετ’ ἀσφάλη.

οὐκοιν σὺ γ’ ἂν λαχοῦσα ¹ τὰς ἐμὰς τύχας ἐχθροῦ λέοντος δυσμενῆ βλαστήματα ἡλαυνεῖ ἂν κακοίσων, ἄλλα σωφρόνως εἰάσας οἰκεῖν “Ἀργος; οὐτίν’ ἂν πίθοις.

νῦν οὖν ἔπειδὴ μ’ οὐ διώλεσαν τὸτε πρόθυμον ὅντα, τοῖσιν Ἐκλῆνων νόμοις οὐχ ἀγνὸς εἴμι τῷ κτανόντι καθανόν τόλμης δ’ ἀφήκε σωφρονοῦσα, τὸν θεὸν μεῖζον τίουσα τῆς ἐμῆς ἐχθρᾶς πολύ.

α’ γ’ εἴπας ἀντήκουσας· ἐντεύθεν δὲ χρή τὸν προστρόπαιον τὸν τε γεναινοῦν καλεῖν.

οὕτω γε μέντοι τάμ’ ἔχει· θανεῖν μὲν οὐ χρήξω, λιπῶν δ’ ἂν οὐδὲν ἀχθοίμην βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παρασεῖσαι σοι σμικρῶν, ’Αλκμήνη, θέλω, τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἀφεῖναι τόνδ’, ἐπεὶ πόλει δοκεῖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ’, ἂν θάνη τε καὶ πόλει πιθώμεθα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ λόστ’ ἂν εἶπ’ πῶς τάδ’ οὖν γενήσεται;

¹ Weeklein: for MSS. ἀναλαβοῦσα.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Aye scheming—Night sat by, and counselled me—
How I might scatter and destroy my foes,
And have thenceforth for housemate fear no more,
Knowing thy son no cipher, but a man
In very deed; for, though he be my foe,
Praise shall he have, a very hero he.

But, rid of him, was I not even constrained—
Abhorred of these, ware of that heritage
Of hate—to move each scorpion-hiding stone,
By slaying, banishing, and plotting still?
While this I did, my safety was assured.
But thou, forsooth, had but my lot been thine,
Hadst spared to persecute the infuriate whelps
Left of thy foe the lion,—wisely rather
Hadst let them dwell in Argos? I trow not

Now therefore since, when I was fain to die,
They slew me not, by all the Hellene laws
My death pollution brings on whoso slays.
Wisely did Athens spare me, honouring more
God, far above all enmity of me.
Thou art answered. I must be hereafter named
The Haunting Vengeance, and the Heroic Dead.
Thus is it with me—I long not for death,
Yet to forsake life nowise shall I grieve.

CHORUS
Suffer one word of exhortation, queen.
Let this man go; for so the city wills.

ALCMENA
But—if he die, and I obey her still?

CHORUS
This should be best; yet how can this thing be?
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἐγὼ διδάξω ῥαδίως· κτανοῦσα γὰρ
tόνδ' εἶτα νεκρόν τοῖς μεταλθοῦσιν φίλων
dῶσω· τὸ γὰρ σῶμ' ὅυκ ἀπιστήσω χθονί,
oύτος δὲ δώσει τὴν δίκην θανῶν ἐμοί.

ΕΥΡΥΘΕΤΑ

κτεῖν', οὐ παρατούμαι σε· τήνδε δὲ πτόλιν,
ἐπεὶ μ' ἀφήκε καὶ κατηδέσθη κτανεῖν,
χρησμῷ παλαιῷ Δοξίου δωρήσομαι,
διὶ ωφελήσει μείζον' ὡ δοκεῖν χρόνων.

θανόντα γὰρ με θάψεθ' οὗ τὸ μόρσιμον,
διὰς πάροικε παρθένου Παλληνίδος·
καὶ σοι μὲν εὖνοι καὶ πόλει σωτήριος
μέτοικος αἰεὶ κείσομαι κατὰ χθονός,
τοῖς τῶν δ' ἐκγύνοις πολεμώτατος,
ὅταν μόλωσι δεύρο σὺν πολλῇ χερί
χάριν προδόντες τήνδε· τοιούτων ξένων
προὐστητε. πῶς οὖν ταῦτ' ἐγὼ πεπυσμένος
deυρ' ἦλθον, ἄλλ' οὖ χρησμὸν ἤδοιμην1 θεοῦ;
"Ηραν νομίζων θεσφάτων κρείσσω πολύ,
καὶ δὲν προδονύναι μ'. ἀλλὰ μήτε μοι χοὰς
μήθ' αἱμ' ἐάσης εἰς ἔμοι στάξαι τάφον.
κακον γὰρ αὐτοῖς νόστον αντί τῶν ἐγὼ
dῶσω· διπλοῦν δὲ κέρδος ἔξετ' ἐξ ἔμοι,
ὕμας τ' οὐνήσο τούσδε τε βλάψω θανῶν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δήτα μέλλετ', εἰ πόλει σωτηρίαν
κατεργάσασθαι τοισὶ τ' ἐξ ὑμῶν χρεῶν,
κτείνειν τὸν ἀνδρα τόνδ', ἀκούστες τάδε;
δείκνυσι γὰρ κέλευθον ἀσφαλεστάτην.
ἐχθρὸς μὲν ἀνήρ, ὥφελεὶ δὲ κατθανῶν.

1 Musgrave: for MSS. ἡρόμην.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA
This will I lightly teach thee:—I will slay,
Then yield him dead to friends that come for him.
Touching his corpse I will not cheat the state;
But die he shall, and do me right for wrong.

EURYSTEUS
Slay: I ask not thy grace. But I bestow
On Athens, who hath spared, who shamed to
slay me,
An ancient oracle of Loxias,
Which in far days shall bless her more than seems.
Me shall ye bury where 'tis fate-ordained,
Before the Virgin’s shrine Pallenian;
So I, thy friend and Athens’ saviour aye,
A sojourner shall lie beneath your soil,
But to these and their children sternest foe
What time they march with war-hosts hitherward,
Traitors to this your kindness:—such the guests
Ye championed! Wherefore then, if this I knew,
Came I, and feared not the God’s oracles?
Hera, methought, was mightier far than these,
And would not so forsake me. Shed not thou
Drink-offerings nor blood upon my tomb!
Ill home-return will I give thy sons’ sons
For this! Of me shall ye have double gain,—
My death shall be your blessing and their curse.

ALCMENA
Why linger then—if so ye must achieve
Your city’s safety and your children’s weal—
To slay this man, who hear this prophecy?
Himself the path of perfect safety points.
Your foe he is, yet is his death your gain.

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ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

κομίζετ' αυτόν, διμως, είτα χρή κυσί
doûnai κτανόντας· μὴ γὰρ ἐλπίσης ὅπως
αὕτης πατρώς ἔων ἐμ' ἐκβαλείς χθονός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταυτὰ δοκεῖ μοι. στείχετ', ὁπάδῳ·
tὰ γὰρ ἐξ ἡμῶν
καθαρῶς ἔσται βασιλεῦσιν.
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Hence with him, thralls. When ye have slain him, then
To dogs 'twere good to cast him. Hope not thou
To live, and drive me again from fatherland.

[Exeunt guards with EURYSTHEUS.

CHORUS
I also consent. On, henchman-train,
March on with the doomed. No blood-guilt stain,
Proceeding of us, on our kings shall remain.

[Exeunt omnes.]
THE

PHOENICIAN MAIDENS
ARGUMENT

When Oedipus, king of Thebes, was ware that he had fulfilled the oracle uttered ere he was born, in that he had slain his father, king Laius, and wedded his mother Jocasta, he plucked out his own eyes in his shame and misery. So he ceased to be king; but, inasmuch as his two sons rendered to him neither love nor worship, he cursed them with this curse, “that they should divide their inheritance with the sword.” But they essayed to escape this doom by covenanting to rule in turn, year by year. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polynices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year’s space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes.

And herein is told how the brothers met in useless parley; by what strange sacrifice Thebes was saved; of the Argives’ vain assault; and how the brothers slew each other in single combat.
TA TOY ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠA

IOKASTH
PAIDAGOGOS
ANTIGONH
XOROS
POLYNEIKHΣ
ETEOKLANΣ
KREON
TEIREZIΑΣ
MENOIKEΣ
AΓΕΛΟΣ
ETEROS AΓΕΛΟΣ
OIAIPΟΥΣ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Jocasta, wife of Oedipus.
Old Servant, attendant on Antigone.
Antigone, daughter of Oedipus.
Polyneices, exiled son of Oedipus.
Eteocles, son of Oedipus, and king of Thebes.
Creon, brother of Jocasta.
Teiresias, a blind prophet.
Menoecius, son of Creon.
Messenger, armour-bearer of Eteocles.
Oedipus, father of Eteocles and Polyneices.
Chorus, consisting of Phoenician Maidens, dedicated by the
    Tyrians to the service of Apollo at Delphi, who, resting at
    Thebes on their journey, have been detained there by the
    siege.
Daughter of Teiresias, guards of Eteocles, attendants of
    Jocasta and of Creon.

Scene: In front of the Royal Palace at Thebes.
ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

"Ω τὴν ἐν ἀστροίς οὐρανοῦ τέμνων ὅδὸν καὶ χρυσοκολλητοισιν ἐμβεβώς δίφροις Ἡλιε, θοαῖς ἐπιποισιν εἰλίσσον φλογα, ὡς δυστυχὴ Θῆβαισι τῇ τὸθ ἠμέρα ἀκτίν' ἐφήκας, Κάδμος ἢνίκ' ἤλθε γῆν τὴν', ἐκλειπόν Φοίνισσαν ἐναλίαν χθόνα· ὃς παῖδα γῆμας Κύπριδος Ἀρμονίαν ποτὲ Πολύδωρον ἐξέφυσε, τοῦ δὲ Δάβδακον φῦναι λέγουσιν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦδε Δάιον,

10 ἐγὼ δὲ παῖς μὲν κλήζομαι Μενοικέως, Κρέων τ' ἀδελφὸς μνημός ἐκ μιᾶς ἐφυ' καλοῦσι δ' Ἰοκάστην με, τοῦτο γὰρ πατὴρ ἐθετο, γαμεῖ δὲ Δάιος μ'. ἐπεὶ δ' ἀπαισ ἡν χρόνια λέκτης τάμ' ἔχων ἐν δώμασιν, ἐλθὼν ἐρωτᾷ Φοῖβον ἐξαιτεῖ τ' ἀμα παίδων ἐς οἴκους ἄρσένων κοινωνίαν.

20 ὁ δ' εἶπεν· ὃ Θῆβαισιν εὐιπποὺς ἀναξ, μὴ σπείρει τέκνων ἄλοκα δαιμόνων βία· εἰ γὰρ τεκνώσεις παῖδ', ἀποκτενεί σ' ὃ φύς, καὶ πᾶς σὸς οἶκος βηστεῖται δι' αἵματος.

ὁ δ' ἄδουν' δοὺς εἰς τε βακχεῖον πεσὼν ἐσπειρέν' ἢμῖν παῖδα, καὶ σπείρας βρέφος.\footnote{1 Probably corrupt: scholars propose φρενὸς, ἄφων, ἄφω.}
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Enter Jocasta.

Jocasta

O thou who cleav'st thy path mid heaven's stars,
Who ridest on thy chariot golden-clamped,
Sun, whirling on with flying steeds thy fire,
What beams accurst on that day sheddest thou
O'er Thebes, when Cadmus came to this our land,
Leaving Phoenicia's sea-fringed realm afar!
He took to wife Harmonia, Cypris' child,
And begat Polydore, of whom, men say,
Sprang Labdacus, and Laïus of him.

I, daughter of Menoeceus am I named;
My brother Creon the selfsame mother bare.
Jocasta men call me: this name my sire
Gave; Laïus wedded me. But when long years
Of wedlock brought no child our halls within,
He went and questioned Phoebus, craved withal
For me, for him, male heirs unto his house.
The God spake: "King of chariot-glorious Thebes,
Beget not seed of sons in Heaven's despite.
If so thou do, thee shall thine issue slay,
And all thine house shall wade through seas of blood."

Yet he, to passion yielding, flushed with wine,
Begat a son; and when our babe was born,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

γνοῦσ τάμπλάκημα τοῦ θεοῦ τε τὴν φάτιν, λειμῶν ἐς Ἡρας καὶ Κιθαιρώνος λέπας δίδωσι βουκόλοισιν ἐκθείναι βρέφος, σφυρῶν σιδήρα κέντρα διαπέρας μέσουν ὅθεν νῦν Ἑλλάς ἀνόμαζεν Οἰδίπουν. Πολύβου δὲ νῦν λαβόντας ἰπποβουκόλου φέρουσ’ ἐς οἰκους εἰς τε δεσποινήσ χέρας ἐθηκαν. ἦ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν ὠδίνων πόνων μαστοῖς υφεῖτο καὶ πόσιν πείθει τεκείν. ἦδη δὲ πυρσαῖς γένυσιν ἐξανδρούμενος παῖς οὐμός, ἡ γνοῦσ ἡ τυνος μαθῶν πύρα, ἔστειχε τοὺς φύσαντας ἐκμαθεῖν θέλων πρὸς δῶμα Φοίβου, Λαῖός θ’, οὐμός πόσις, τὸν ἐκτεθέντα παΐδα μαστεύων μαθεῖν, εἰ μηκέτ’ εἰς, καὶ ἐνυάπτετον πόδα εἰς ταῦτον ἄμφω Φωκίδος σχιστῆς ὁδοῦ. καὶ νῦν κελεύει Λαῖον τροχηλάτης: ἡ ἔνες, τυράννους ἐκποδῶν μεθιστάσοι. ὁ δ' ἐληρ' ἄναυδος, μέγα φρονῶν πῶλοι δὲ νῦν χηλαῖς τένοντας ἑξεφοίνισσον ποδῶν. ὅθεν—τί τάκτος τῶν κακῶν με δεί λέγειν;—παῖς πατέρα καλεῖ καὶ λαβῶν ὄχματα Πολύβο ροφεῖ δίδωσιν. ὡς δ' ἐπεξάρει Σφίγγη ἀρπαγαίσι πόλιν, ἐμὸς τ' οὐκ ἂν πόσις, Κρέων ἄδελφος τὰμα κηρύσσει λέγη, ὅτις σοφής αἰνιγμα παρθένον μάθαι, τοῦτο ἐνυάσσειν λέκτρα. τυγχάνει δὲ πως μούσας ἐμὸς παῖς Οἰδίπος Σφινγός μαθῶν, ὅθεν τύραννος τήσδε γῆς καθιστάται καὶ σκήπτρ’ ἐπαθλα τήςδε λαμβάνει χθονὸς γαμεῖ δὲ τὴν τεκούσαν οὐκ είδως τάλας οὐδ’ ἡ τεκοῦσα παιδὶ συγκοιμώμενη.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Ware of his sin, remembering the God's word,
He gave the babe to herdmen to cast forth.
In Hera's Mead upon Cithaeron's ridge,
His ankles pierced clear through with iron spikes,
Whence Hellas named him *Swell-foot*—Oedipus.

But Polybus' horse-tenders found him there,
And bare him home, and in their mistress' hands
Laid. To my travail's fruit she gave her breast,
Telling her lord herself had borne the babe.
Now, grown to man with golden-bearded cheeks,
My son, divining, or of some one told,
Journeyed, resolved to find his parents forth,
To Phoebus' fane. Now Laïus my lord,
Seeking assurance of the babe exposed,
If dead he were, fared thither. And they met,
These twain, where parts the highway Phocis-ward.
Then Laïus' charioteer commanded him—
"Stand clear, man, from the pathway of a prince!"
Proudly he strode on, answering not. The steeds
Spurned with their hoofs his ankles, drawing blood.

Then—why tell aught beyond the sad event?—
Son slayeth father, takes the car, and gives
To Polybus, his fosterer. While the Sphinx
Was ravaging Thebes, when now my lord was not,
Creon my brother published that the man,
Whoso should read the riddle of that witch-maid,
Even he should wed me. Strangely it befell—
Oedipus, my son, read the Sphinx's song,
Whence he became the ruler of this land:
Yea, for his guerdon wins the throne of Thebes,
And weds his mother,—wretch!—unwitting he,
Unwitting she that she was her son's bride.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

tίκτω δὲ παίδας παιδὶ δύο μὲν ἄρσενας, Ἐτεοκλέα κλεινῆν τε Πολυνείκους βίαν, κόρας δὲ δισσάς τὴν μὲν Ἰσμήνῃν πατὴρ ἀνόμασε, τὴν δὲ πρόσθεν Ἀντιγόνῃν ἐγὼ. μαθὼν δὲ τάμα λέκτρα μητρόφων γάμων ὁ πάντ᾽ ἀνατλᾶς Οἰδίπος παθήματα εἰς ὀμαθή αὐτοῦ δεινῶν ἐμβάλλει φόνον, χρυσήλατος πύρπαισιν αἰμάξας κόρας.

ἐπεῖ δὲ τέκνων γένους ἐμῶν σκιάζεται, κλῆθροις ἐκρυφάν πατέρ᾽, ἵνα ἀμνήμων τύχῃ γένουτο πολλῶν δεομένη σοφισμάτων. ξών δ᾽ ἔστ᾽ ἐν οἴκοις. πρὸς δὲ τῆς τύχης νοσῶν ἀρᾶς ἀράται παισὶν ἀνοσιωτάτας, θηκτῷ σιδήρῳ δῶμα διαλαχεῖν τόδε. τῷ δ᾽ εἰς φόβου πεσόντε, μὴ τελεσφόρους εὐχᾶσθε θεοὶ κραίνωσιν οἰκούντων ὄμοι, ξυμβάντ᾽ ἔταξαν τὸν νεώτερον πάρος φεύγειν ἐκόντα τῇ δὲ Πολυνείκῃ χθόνα, Ἐτεοκλέα δὲ σκήπτρον ἦχειν μένοντα γῆς ἐνιαυτὸν ἄλλασσοντ᾽. ἐπεῖ δ᾽ ἐπὶ ξυνοίς καθέξετ᾽ ἀρχῆς, οὐ μεθίσταται θρόνων, φυγάδα δ᾽ ἀπωθεῖ τῆς δὲ Πολυνείκῃ χθόνος.

ὁ δ᾽ Άργος ἔλθων, κῆδος Ἀδράστου λαβὼν, πολλὴν ἄθροίσας ἀστίδ᾽ Ἀργείων ἀγεῖ. ἐπ᾽ αὐτὰ δ᾽ ἔλθων ἐπτάπυλα τείχῃ τάδε, πατρῷ ἀπαιτεῖ σκήπτρα καὶ μέρη χθόνος. ἐγὼ δ᾽ ἔριν λύουσ᾽ ὑπόσπουνον μολεῖν ἐπείσα παιδὶ παίδα πρὶν ψαῦσαι δορός. ἦσειν δ᾽ ὁ πεμφθεὶς φήσιν αὐτὸν ἀγγέλος. ἀλλ᾽ ὁ φαεννᾶς οὐρωνοῦ ναίων πτυχᾶς Ζεὺ, σῶσον ἡμᾶς, δὸς δὲ σύμβασιν τέκνοις.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And children to my son I bare, two sons,
Eteocles and famed Polyneices' might,
And daughters twain: the one the father named
Ismene, the elder I, Antigone.
But, when he knew me mother both and wife,
Oedipus, crushed 'neath utterest sufferings,
On his own eyes wrought ruin horrible,
Yea, with gold brooch-pin drenched their orbs with blood.

Now, being to bearded manhood grown, my sons
Close-warded kept their sire, that his dark fate,
By manifold shifts scarce veiled, might be forgot.
Within he lives; but, by his fate distraught,
A curse most impious hurled he at his sons,
That they may share their heritage with the sword.
They, terror-stricken lest, if they should dwell
Together, Gods might bring the curse to pass,
Made covenant that Polyneices first,
The younger, self-exiled, should leave the land,
That Eteocles tarrying wear the crown
One year—then change. But, once in sovranity
Firm-seated, he would step not from the throne,
And thrust Polyneices banished forth the land.

To Argos fares he, weds Adrastus' child,
And bringeth huge war-muster of Argive shields.
To our very walls seven-gated hath he come,
Claiming his father's sceptre and his right.
And I, to allay their strife, persuaded son
In truce to meet son, ere they touch the spear:
And, saith the messenger I sent, he comes.
O dweller Zeus in heaven's veiling light,
Save us, grant reconciling to my sons!
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

χρή δ', εἰ σοφὸς πέφυκας, οὐκ ἔαιν βροτῶν τὸν αὐτὸν αἰεὶ δυστυχὴ καθεστάναι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

δ' κλεινὸν οἶκοις Ἀντιγόνη θάλος πατρί, ἐπεί σε μήτηρ παρθενώνας ἐκλιπεῖν
μεθήκε μελάθρων ἐς διῆρες ἐσχατὸν στράτευμι ἰδείν Ἀργείον ἱκεσίασι σαίς,
ἐπίσχες, ὡς ἀν προὔξερευνῆσο στίβουν,
μὴ τις πολιτῶν ἐν τρίβῳ φαντάζεται,
κάμοι μὲν ἐλθῇ φάυλος ὡς δούλῳ φόγος,
σοὶ δ' ὡς ἀνάσας πάντα δ' ἐξειδῶς φράσω
ἄ τ' εἰδον εἰσήκουσά τ' Ἀργείων πάρα,
σπουδάς ὃτ' ἦλθον σῷ καυσιγήτῳ φέρων ἐνθέν' ἐκείσε δευρό τ' αὐ κείνου πάρα.

ἈΛΛ' οὕτις ἄστῶν τοίσδε χρίμπτεται δόμους,
κέδρου παλαιὰν κλίμακ' ἐκπέρα ποδί.
σκόπει δὲ πεδία καὶ παρ' Ἰσμηνοῦ ῥοᾶς
Δήρκης τε νὰμα, πολεμίων στράτευμ' ὅσον.

ἈΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὁρεγέ νυν ὁρεγε γεραιὰν νέα
χείρ', ἀπὸ κλιμάκων ποδὸς
ἐχνος ἐπαντέλλων.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἰδοὺ ξύναψον, παρθέν'. εἰς καιρὸν δ' ἐβης·
κινούμενοι γὰρ τυγχάνει Πελασγικῶν
στράτευμα, χωρίζουσι δ' ἀλλήλων λόχους.

ἈΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰδ' πότνια παῖ Δατοῦς

Ἐκάτα, κατάχαλκον ἀπαν
πεδίον ἀστράπτει.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Thou oughtest not, so thou be wise, to leave
The same man evermore to be unblest. [Exit.

Enter, above, old servant and Antigone.

OLD SERVANT

Fair flower of thy sire's house, Antigone,
Albeit thy mother suffered thee to leave
Thy maiden-bower at thine entreaty, and mount
The palace-roof to view the Argive host,
Yet stay, that I may scan the highway first,
Lest on the path some citizen appear,
And scandal light—for me, the thrall, 'twere naught,—
On thee, the princess. This known, will I tell
All that I saw, and heard from Argive men,
When, to thy brother on truce-mission sent,
I passed hence thither, and then back from him...
Nay, not a citizen draws nigh the halls.
Climb with thy feet the ancient cedar-stair;
Gaze o'er the plain, along Ismenus' stream
And Dirce's flow, on thy great host of foes.

ANTIGONE

Stretch it forth, stretch it forth, the old man's hand,
unto me
The child, from the stair, and my feet upbear,
As upward I strain.

OLD SERVANT

Lo, maiden, grasp it: in good time thou com'st,
For yon Pelasgian host is moving now,
Battalion from battalion sundering.

ANTIGONE

O Queen, O Child of Latona, Hecate!
Lo, how the glare of the brass flashes there
Over all the plain!
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
οὐ γὰρ τι φαύλως ἥλθε Πολυνείκης χθόνα,
pολλοῖς μὲν ὰποιοῖς, μυρίοις δ’ ὀπλοῖς βρέμων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
ἀρα πῦλαι κλήθροις χαλκὼδετ’ ἄρ’ ἐμβολα
λαῖνεοὺς Ἦμφιόνος ὀργάνοις
τείχεος ἤμισσαται;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
θάρσει· τά γ’ ἐνδον ἀσφαλῶς ἔχει πόλις.
ἀλλ’ εἰσόρα τὸν πρῶτον, εἰ βούλει μαθεῖν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
τίς οὕτως ὁ λευκολόφας,
πρόπαρ δὲ ἄγειται στρατοῦ
πάγχαλκον ἀσπίδ’ ἄμφι βρα-
χίων κουφίζων;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
λοχαγός, ὃ δέσποινα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
τίς πόθεν γεγός;
αὐδασον, ὃ γεραιέ, τίς ὁνομάζεται;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
οὕτως Μυκηναῖος μὲν αὐδᾶται γένος,
Λερναία δ’ οἰκεῖ νάμαθ’, Ἰππομέδων ἀναξ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
ἐ ἐ ὃς γαύρος, ὃς φοβηρὸς εἰσίδειν,
γίγαντι γηγενέτα προσόμοιος
ἀστερωπὸς ἐν γραφαῖσιν, οὐχὶ πρόσφορος
ἀμερίφ γέννα.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
τὸν δ’ ἐξαιμέρτων ὀν όρᾶς Δήρης ὑδωρ;
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OLD SERVANT
Ay, for not feebly Polyneices comes
With thunder of many a steed, with countless shields.

ANTIGONE
Ah, be the gates secure, be the brass-clamped bolts made sure
In the walls that Amphion in days bygone Fashioned of stone?

OLD SERVANT
Fear not; the city wards all safe within. [him.
Mark yonder foremost chief, if thou wouldst know.

ANTIGONE
Who is he with the white helm-crest
Who marcheth in front of their war-array,
And a brazen buckler fencing his breast
Lightly his arm doth sway?

OLD SERVANT
A captain, princess.

ANTIGONE
What his land, his birth?
Make answer, ancient. What name beareth he?

OLD SERVANT
Yon chief proclaims him Mycenean-born:
By streams of Lerna King Hippomedon dwells.

ANTIGONE
Ah me, how haughty, how fearful he is to see,
Like to a Giant, a child of Earth!
Star-blazonry gleams on his shield: not like is he
Unto one of mortal birth.

OLD SERVANT
See'st thou not him who crosseth Dirce's flood?
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

άλλος άλλος οδε τευχέων τρόπος.

τίς δ' εστὶν οὗτος;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΡΟΣ

παῖς μὲν Οινέως ἔφυ

Τυδεύς, 'Αρη δ' Αἴτωλον ἐν στέρνοις ἔχει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὗτος ὁ τάς Πολυνείκεος, ὁ γέρον,

αὐτοκασιγνήτας νύμφας

ὅμογαμος κυρεῖ;

ός ἀλλόχρος ὀπλοῦσι μηξοβάρβαρος.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΡΟΣ

σακεσφόροι γὰρ πάντες Αἴτωλοι, τέκνον,

λόγχαις τ' ἀκοντιστήρες εὐστοχώτατοι.

140

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

σὺ δ', ὁ γέρον, πῶς αἰσθάνει σαφῶς τάδε;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΡΟΣ

σημεῖ' ἴδὼν τότ' ἁσπίδων ἐγνώρισα,

σπονδάς ὅτ' ἤλθον σφ' κασιγνήτῳ φέρων

ἀ προσδεδορκώς οἶδα τοὺς ὀπλισμένους.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς δ' οὗτος ἀμφὶ μνήμα τὸ Ζήθου περὶ

καταβόστρυχος, ὄμμασι γοργὸς ἐισ-

ιδεῖν νεανίας,

λοχαγὸς, ὥσ ὅχλος νῦν υπερφυ ποδὶ

πάνοπλος ἀμφέτει;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΡΟΣ

150 ὅδ' ἐστὶ Παρθενοπαῖος, 'Αταλάντης γόνος.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλά νῦν ἀ κατ' ὄρη μετὰ ματέρος

'Αρτεμίς ιεμένα τόξοις δαμάσασ' ὀλέσευεν,

δι' ἐπ' ἔμαν πόλιν ἔβα πέρσων.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE
Of other, of stranger fashion his armour shows!
Who is he?

OLD SERVANT
Tydeus he, of Oeneus' blood.
Aetolia's battle-fire in the breast of him glows.

ANTIGONE
Is this he, ancient, by spousal-ties
Unto mine own Polyneices allied,
Whose wife's fair sister he won for his bride?
How half-barbaric his harness, of no Greek guise?

OLD SERVANT
Nay, child, shield-bearers all Aetolians are,
And most unerring hurlers of the lance.

ANTIGONE
And thou, how know'st thou, ancient, all so well?

OLD SERVANT
Even then I noted their shield-blazonry,
When to thy brother with truce-pact I fared:
I marked them, and I know their bearers well.

ANTIGONE
Who is this by Zethus' sepulchre going, [flowing?
With the keen, stern eyes and the curls long-
A warrior young,
Yet a chief—for in armour brazen-glowing
See his followers throng!

OLD SERVANT
Parthenopaeus, Atalanta's son.

ANTIGONE
Now may Artemis, over the mountains hasting
With his mother, smite with her bow, and in death
lay yon man low,
Who is hitherward come for my city's wasting!
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
eίη τάδ’, ὁ παί: σὺν δίκη δ’ ἤκουσι γῆν,
δ’ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ σκοπῶσ’ ὀρθῶς θεοί.

АНΤΙΓΟΝΗ
ποῦ δ’ ὃς ἔμοι μᾶς ἐγένετ’ ἐκ ματρὸς
πολυπόνων μοῖρα;
ὁ φίλτατ’, εἰπέ, ποῦ ’στι Πολυνείκης, γέρον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
ἐκεῖνος ἐπτὰ παρθένων τάφων πέλας
Νιόβης ’Αδράστῳ πλησίον παραστατεῖ.
ὁρᾷς;

АНТΙΓΟΝΗ
ἐρώδ δήτ’ οὐ σαφῶς, ὀρῶ δὲ πως
μορφῆς τύπωμα στέρνα τ’ ἔχηκασμένα.
ἀνεμώκεος εἴθε δρόμων νεφέλας
ποσὶν ἐξανύσαμι δι’ αἰθέρος
πρὸς ἐμὸν ὁμογενέτορα, περὶ δ’ ὠλένας
dέρα φιλτάτα βάλοιμι χρόνῳ
φυγάδα μέλεον. ὡς
δρόσου ἐρυθρόσου ἐκπρεπῆς, γέρον,
εἰσε ὁμοία φλεγέθων βολαίς ἀλίου.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

170 ἦξει δόμους τούσδ’, ὡστε σ’ ἐμπλήσαι χαρᾶς,
ἑνσπονδὸς.

АНТΙΓΟΝΗ
ὁτος δ’, ὁ γεραῖο, τὶς κυρεῖ,
δ’ ἁρμα λευκὸν ἥνιστροφεῖ βεβώς ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
ὁ μάντης ’Αμφιάραος, ὁ δέσποιν’, ὁδε’
σφάγια δ’ ἄμ’ αὐτῷ, γῆς φιλαίματοι βοαί.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OLD SERVANT
So be it, child: yet for the right they come;
Wherefore I dreadlest God defend the right.

ANTIGONE
And where is he whom the selfsame mother bore
With me, to a doom of travail sore?
Dear ancient, where is Polyneices, tell.

OLD SERVANT
He standeth near Adrastus, near the tomb
Of Niobe’s unwedded daughters seven.
See’st thou?

ANTIGONE
I see—not clearly—yet, half-guessed,
Discern the outline of his frame and chest.
O that as wind-driven clouds swift-racing
I might speed with my feet through the air,
and light [embracing
By my brother, mine own, and with arms
Might hold but his dear neck close-enfolden—
So long an exile in dolorous plight!
Lo, how he flasheth in armour golden,
Like the morning shafts of the sun bright-blazing!

OLD SERVANT
Hither with joy to fill thee shall he come
By truce.

ANTIGONE
But yon chief, ancient, who is he,
Car-borne, who sways the reins of horses white?

OLD SERVANT
The prophet Amphiaraus, Lady, is this.
With him are victims, Earth’s blood-offerings.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὁ λιπαροζώνον θύγατερ Ἀελίου
Σελαναία, χρυσεόκυκλον φέγγος,
ὡς ἀτρεμαία κέντρα καὶ σώφρονα
πόλοις μεταφέρον ἱθύνει.

ποῦ δ’ ὅς τὰ δεινὰ τηδ’ ἐφύβριζει πόλει
Καπανεύς;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ

ἐκεῖνος προσβάσεις τεκμαίρεται
πύργων ἀνὸς τε καὶ κάτω τείχη μετρῶν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰῶ,
Νέμεσι καὶ Δίος βαρύβρομοι βρονταί,
κεραυνῶν τε φῶς αἰθαλόεν, σὺ τοι
μεγάλαγοριάν ὑπεράνορα κομάζεις·
ὅδ’ ἔστιν, αἰχμαλωτίδας
ὅς δ’ ὁρᾷ Θηβαίας Μυκηνήσιν
Λεονία τε δώσειν τριάντα,
Ποσείδανίοις Ἄμμωνιοι
ὑδασί, δουλείαν περιβαλῶν, [λέγει];
μήποτε μήποτε τάνδ’, ὁ πάτνια,
χρυσεβόστρυχον ὁ Δίως ἔρνος
Ἀρτέμι, δουλοσύναν πλαίνη.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ

ὁ τέκνων, εἰσβα δῶμα καὶ κατὰ στέγας
ἐν παρθενώσι μίμεο σοῖς, ἐπεὶ πόθου
εἰς τέρψιν ἥλθες ὅν ἔρχης εἰσιδεῖν.
ὁχλος γάρ, ὡς ταραχόμοι εἰσήλθεν πόλιν,
χωρεῖ γυναικῶν πρὸς δόμους τυραννικούς·
φιλόψογον δὲ χρήμα θηλεύν ἐφυ,
σμικράς τ’ ἀφορμᾶς ἢν λάβωσι τῶν λόγων,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE
O Child of the Sun-god, the Lord of the radiant zone,
O Moon, thou golden-rounded gleam,
How calmly, how soberly ever he driveth on,
One after other goading his team!
And where is Capaneus—he who hurls at Thebes
Insult of threats?

OLD SERVANT
There:—he counts up and down
The wall-stones, gauging our towers' scaling-height.

ANTIGONE
O Nemesis, O ye thunders rolling deep
Of Zeus, thou flaming light of his levin,
Overweening vaunts dost thou hush into endless sleep!
And is this the hero by whom shall be given
Into bondage to dames of Mycenae the spear-won daughters
Of Thebes,—to the Trident of Lerna, the fountain-Amymonian, at stroke of Poseidon that leapt,—
When his net of thraldom around them is swept?
Never, ah never, O Artemis Queen,
Zeus' child, with the tresses of golden sheen,
Bowed under bondage may I be seen!

OLD SERVANT
Daughter, pass in, and 'neath the roofs abide
Thy maiden bowers within; for thy desire
Hast thou attained, even all thou fain wouldst see.
Lo, to the royal halls a woman-throng
Comes, now confusion through the town hath passed.
And scandal-loving still is womankind;
For, so they find slight cause for idle talk,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

πλείους ἐπεισφέρουσιν ἠδονή δέ τις
gυναῖξι μηδὲν ὕγιες ἀλλήλας λέγειν.

χορός

Τῦριον οἴδαμα οἰνοῦσ' ἔβαν
ἀκροθινία Λοξία
Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου
Φοίβῳ δούλα μελάθρων,
ἵν' ὑπὸ δειράσι νυφοβόλοις
Παρνασσοῦ κατενάσθη,
Ἱόνιον κατὰ πόντον ἑλά-
τα πλεύσασα περιρρύτων
ὑπὲρ ἀκαρπίστων πεδίων
Σικελίας Ζεφύρου πυναῖς
ἵππεύσαντος ἐν οὐρανῷ
κάλλιστον κελάδημα.

πόλεως ἐκπροκρίθεισ' ἐμᾶς
καλλιστεύματα Λοξία
Καδμείων ἔμολον γὰν,
κλεινών 'Ἀγηνοριδὰν
ὁμογενεῖς ἐπὶ Δαῖον
περιπθείσ' ἐνθάδε πύργους.

ἰσα δ' ἀγάλμασι χρυσοτεύ-
κτοις Φοίβῳ γενόμαν λάτρις.
ἔτι δὲ Κασταλίας ὑδωρ
περιμένει με κύμας ἐμᾶς
δεόσαι παρθένων χλιδᾶν
Φοιβείασι λατρείασις.

ὦ λάμπουσα πέτρα πυρὸς
δικόρυφων σέλας ὑπὲρ ἄκρων
Βακχείων Διονύσου,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

More they invent. Strange pleasure women take To speak of sister-women nothing good. 200
[Exeunt old servant and Antigone.
Enter chorus

(Str. 1)

Afar from the tides against Tyre’s walls swelling,
For Loxias chosen an offering,
From the Isle of Phoenicia I came, to be thrall
Unto Phoebus, to serve in his palace-hall,
Where ’neath crags of Parnassus, with arrowy fall
Of the snow oversprent, he hath made him a dwelling.
O’er Ionian seas did it waft me, the wing
Of the oar, while the West-wind’s chariot sped
Over the furrows unharvested
That from Sicily roughened;—before him fled
Music, till all the heavens were telling
The glory of beauty his breathings bring.

The choice of my city’s virgin-flowers,  (Ant. 1)
A gift of beauty to Loxias made,
To the land of the children of Cadmus we came,
To the sons of Agenor of ancient fame,
Hither brought to a people by lineage the same
With my fathers, even to Laius’ towers.
But as gold-wrought statues to stand arrayed  220
For the service of Phoebus appointed we were;
And Castaly’s fount yet waiteth us there,
That my maiden glory of shining hair
May be oversprayed by its hallowing showers,
Ere for Phoebus’s service its tresses I braid.

Hail, rock that flasheth a splendour of light (Mesode)
From the cloven tongue of thy flame o’er the height
Of the Bacchic peak Dionysus haunteth!
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

οἶνα θ’, ἀ καθαμέριον
στάζεις τὸν πολύκαρπον
οἰνάνθας ἱεῖσα βότρυν,
ζάθεα τ’ ἄντρα δράκοντος οὕ-
ρειαί τε σκοπιαὶ θεών
νυφόβολον τ’ ὄρος ἱερόν, εἰ-
λίσσων ἀθανάτας θεοῦ
χορὸς γενοίμαν ἄφοβος
παρὰ μεσόμφαλα γύαλα Φοί-
βου Δίρκαν προκιποῦσα.

νῦν δὲ μοι πρὸ τειχέων
θούριος μολὼν "Ἀρης
αἶμα δαίον φλέγει
τάδ’, ὅ μὴ τύχοι, πόλει:
κοινὰ γὰρ φίλων ἄχη;
κοινὰ δ’, εἰ τι πείσεται
καλλίπυργος ἀδε γὰ
Φοινίσσα φόρα. φεῦ φεῦ.
κοινὸν αἷμα, κοινὰ τέκεα
tὰς κερασφόρου πέφυκεν Ἰοῦς.
ἄν μετέστι μοι πότων.

ἀμφὶ δὲ πτόλυν νέφος
ἀσπίδων πυκνὸν φλέγει
σήμα φοινίων μάχης,
ἀν "Ἀρης τάχ’ εἰσέται
παισίν Οἰδίπου φέρων
πημονὰν Ἐρινύων.
"Αργος ὁ Πελασγικὸν,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Hail, vine that with each morn offerest up
Thy giant cluster to brim the cup
That never the mystic ritual wanteth! 1
Hail, cavern revered where the Dragon abode!
Hail, watchtower scaur of the Archer-god!
Hail, snow-smitten ridges by mortal untrod!
O that the wreaths of the dance I were weaving,
With soul unafraid, to the Goddess undying,
These fear-stricken waters of Dirce leaving
For Apollo's dells by the world's heart lying!

But this day before the wall
Furious Ares comes; his hand
Lights for Thebes the slaughter-brand—
God forfend his will befall!
Friend with friend is one in pain;
And Phoenicia with all bane
Of the stately-towered land
Shall condole, a mourning nation,
One our lineage, one our blood;
All be hornèd Io's brood:
Mine is all your tribulation.

Round the town a shield-array •
Cloudlake flashes levin-light—
Grim presentment of red fight!
Yet shall Ares rue the day
If the Avengers' curse he bring
On the sons of that blind king:
Argos, thy Pelasgian might

1 In the temple of Dionysus on Parnassus was a vine yielding one ripe cluster daily, to furnish the libation for the God.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

dειμαίνω τὰν σὰν ἀλκὰν
καὶ τὸ θεόθεν· οὐ γὰρ ἄδικον
eἰς ἀγῶνα τόνδ᾽ ἐνοπλὸς ὀρμᾶ
παῖς μετέρχεται δόμους.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τὰ μὲν πυλώρων κλῆθρά μ᾽ εἰσεδέξατο
dι᾽ εὐπτείας τειχέων εἱσω μολεῖν.
ὁ καὶ δέδοικα μή με δικτύων ἔσω
λαβόντες οὐκ ἐκφρῶσ᾽ ἀναίμακτον χρόα.
ἀν εἶνεκ᾽ ὁμμα πανταχῇ διωστέον
κάκεισε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο, μὴ δόλος τις ἥ.
ἀκτισμένοις δὲ χείρα τῷδε φασγάφω
τὰ πίστ᾽ ἐμαυτῷ τοῦ θράσος παρέξομαι.
ἂν τίς οὐτός ὁ ἱερὸν φοβοῦμεθα;
ἀπαντᾶ γὰρ τολμᾶσι δεινὰ φαίνεται,
ὅταν δι᾽ ἔχθρας ποὺς ἀμείβηται χθόνος.
πέποιθα μέντοι μητρὶ, κοῦ πέποιθ᾽ ἁμα,
ἡτις μ᾽ ἐπεισε δεῦρ᾽ ὑπόσπουδον μολεῖν.
ἀλλ᾽ ἐγγὺς ἀλκή βόμμοι γὰρ ἐσχάραι
πέλας πάρεισι, κοῦκ ἐρημα δόματα.
φέρ᾽ ἐσ σκοτεινός περιβολὰς μεθὸν ξίφος
καὶ τάσι ἔρωμα, τίνες ἐφεστάσιν δόμως.
ξέναι γυναίκες, εἰπατ᾽, ἐκ ποῖας πάτρας
Ἐλληνικοίδει δόμασιν πελάζετε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Φοίνισσα μὲν γῆ πατρὶς ἡ θρέψασά με,
᾽Αγήνορος δὲ παίδες ἐκ παῖδων δορὸς
Φοίβῳ μ᾽ ἐπεμψαν ἐνθάδ᾽ ἀκροθίνιον.
μέλλων δὲ πέμπτευμ μ᾽ Ὀιδίπου κλείνος γόνος
μαντεία σεμνὰ Δοξίου τ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάρας,
ἐν τῷδ᾽ ἐπεστράτευσαν Ἀργείοι πόλιν,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Dread I, and the hand of Heaven!
For the strife of him who comes
Mail-clad to the ancient homes
Will with Justice’ help be striven.

Enter POLYNEICES.

POLYNEICES
Lightly, too lightly, have the warders’ bolts
Made way for me to pass within the walls.
Wherefore I fear lest, once within their net,
They shall not let me ’scape but with my blood.
Needs must I then turn every way mine eye
Hither and thither, lest some treachery lurk.
Mine hand with this blade armed shall give to me
The assurance of a desperate courage born.
Ha! who goes there?—or fear I but a sound?
All perilous seems to them that venture all,
Soon as their feet are set on hostile soil.
Yet do I trust my mother—and mistrust,—
Who drew me to come hither under truce.
But help is nigh; for lo, the altar-hearth
At hand; nor void the palace is of folk.
Into its dark sheath let me plunge my sword,
And ask these by the palace who they be.
Ye alien women, say, from what far land
Unto the homes of Hellas are ye come?

CHORUS
Phoenician was the land that fostered me.
Agenor’s sons’ sons sent me hitherward
To Phoebus, firstfruits of their battle-spoil.
When Oedipus’ famed son would speed me on
To Loxias’ awful oracle and hearths,
Even then the Argives marched against the town.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

σὺ δὲ ἀντάμειψαι μ’, ὡστὶς ὃν ἐλήλυθας ἐπτάστομον πύργῳμα Θηβαίας πόλεως.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πατὴρ μὲν ἡμῖν Ὀἰδίπον ὁ Δατοῦν,

ἔτηκτε δ’ Ἰοκάστη με, παῖς Μενοικέως.

καλεῖ δὲ Πολυνείκη με Θηβαῖος λεώς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ συγγένεια τῶν Ἀγήνορος τέκνων,

ἐμῶν τυράννων, ὃν ἀπεστάλην ὑπὸ—

γονυπετεῖς ἔδρας προσπίτνω σ’, ἀναξ,

τὸν οἰκοθεν νόμον σέβουσα—

ἔβας ὁ χρόνῳ γὰν πατρῴαν.

ἰὼ ἵω· πότνια, μόλε πρόδομος,

ἀμπέτασον πῦλας.

κλύεις, ὁ τεκοῦσα τὸνδε μάτερ;

τὶ μέλλεις ὑπόροφα μέλαθρα περὰν,

θυγεῖν τ’ ωλέναις τέκνου;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

Φοίνυσσαν βοῦν

κλύουσ’, ὁ νεάνιδες, γηραιὸν

πόδ’ ἐλκω, τρομερὰν βάσιν.

ἰὼ τέκνου,

χρόνῳ σὸν ὃμμα μυρίαις ἐν ἀμέραις

προσείδον· ἀμφίβαλλε μα-

στὸν ὀλέναισι ματέρος,

1 Murray: for MSS. γηραῖον ποδὶ τρομερὰν ἐλκω (παιδί) ποδὸς

βάσιν.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But thou, make answer, who art thou that com'st
Into this fortress of seven-gated Thebes?

POLYNEICES

Oedipus, son of Laïus, was my sire;
Menoeceus' child Jocasta gave me birth;
And me the Theban folk Polyneices name.

CHORUS

O kinsmen thou of old Agenor's race,
My rulers, who forth sent me to this place!—
Low on my knees in obeisance I fall,
After the wont of my people, O king!—
Thou art come at the last, to the land of thy fathers
comest thou!
What ho, Queen, ho! fare forth of the hall!
Wide let the palace-portals swing.
Mother that barest him, hear'st thou my call?
Why dost thou linger to pass from thine high-roofed
bowers now,
And around thy son with thine arms to cling? 300

Enter JOCASTA.

JOCASTA

Your Tyrian accents ringing clear
Smote, O ye maidens, on mine ear, [near.
And lo, my tottering feet, for eld slow-trailed, draw
Catches sight of POLYNEICES.

O my son, I behold
Thy face at the last,
After days untold,
O my son!—now cast
Thine arms round thy mother, and bosom to bosom
enfold me fast.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

παρηδων τ' ὄρεγμα βο-
στρύχων τε κυνόχρωτα χαί-
tas πλόκαμον, σκιάζων δέραν ἀμάν.

310 ἰὼ ἰὼ, μόλις φανεῖς
ἀελπτα καδόκητα ματρὸς ὀλέναις.
tί φῶ σε; πῶς ἄπαντα
καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λόγοισι
πολυέλικτον ἁδονὰν
ἐκεῖσε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο
περιχορεύουσα τέρψιν παλαιὰν λάβω
χαμονὰν; ἰὼ τέκος,
ἐρημὸν πατρῷον ἐλίπτες δόμου
φυγάς ἀποσταλεῖς ὀμαίμου λώβα,
320 ἦ ποθεινὸς φίλοις,
ἦ ποθεινὸς Θήβαις.

οὔθεν ἐμὰν τε λευκόχροα κείρομαι
dακρυόεσσ' ἀνείσα πένθει κόμαν,
ἀπεπλος φαρέων λευκῶν τέκνων,
δυσὸρφναιά δ' ἀμφὶ τρύχη τάδε
σκότη' ἀμείβομαι.

ὄ δ' ἐν δόμοις πρέσβυς ὀμματοστερῆς
ἀπήνας ὀμοπτέρου τὰς ἀπο-
ζυγείσαις δόμων
330 πόθον ἀμφιδάκρυτον ἂεὶ κατέχων
THE PHOENICIÁN MAIDENS

Stoop to me, stoop,
       Dear face, from above!
Let the dark head droop
       The tresses thereof,
Overshadowing my neck with its clustering curls,
       with the banner of love.
Hopes, dreams, they were past
       As a tale that is told;
Yet thou comest at last
       For mine arms to enfold!
What shall I say to thee?—how shall I grasp it, the
       rapture of old?
       By assurance of word,
       Or by hands that embrace,
       Or by feet that are stirred,
       Or by body that sways,
Hitherward, thitherward, tossed as the dance inter-
       twineth its maze?

Ah son, thy father’s desolate home forsaking,
       Wast thou by thine own brother’s tyrannous wrong
Exiled!—for thee thy lovers’ hearts were aching,
       Thebes’ heart for thee ached long.

Therefore my white hair have I shorn for mourning,
       With weeping let it fall for thee, my son:
Of white robes disarrayed, for all adorning
       These night-hued rags I don;

While in our halls the sightless ancient, ever
       Yearning and weeping o’er that noble twain
Whom from home’s yoke of love did hatred sever,
       Rushed, eager to be slain

VOL. III
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀνῆξε μὲν ξίφοις
ἐπ’ αὐτόχειρά τε σφαγάν,
ὑπὲρ τέραμνά τ’ ἄγχόνας,
στενάξων ἁρᾶς τέκνοις:
σὺν ἀλαλαῖσι δ’ αἰεῖν αἰαγμάτων
σκότια κρύπτεται.

σὲ δ’, ὁ τέκνοι, καὶ γάμοισι δὴ
κλύω ξυγέντα παιδοποιῶν ὠδονάν
ξένοισιν ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν
ἐξενον τε κῆδος ἀμφέτειν,
ἀλαστα ματρὶ τάδε Λα-
ἰω τε τῷ παλαιγενεί,
γάμων ἐπακτὸν ἄταν.
ἐγὼ δ’ οὔτε σοι πυρὸς ἀνήψα φῶς
νόμμομον ἐν γάμοις
[ὡς πρέπει] ματέρι μακαρίᾳ:
ἀνυμέναια δ’ Ἰσμηνὸς ἐκηδεύθη
λοστρόφόρου χλιδᾶς: ἀνὰ δὲ Ἡθβαίαν
πόλιν ἐσυγάθη σάς ἔσοδοι νύμφας.

.chompot τάδ’, εἶτε σίδαρος
eῖτ’ ἔρις εἶτε πατὴρ ὁ σὸς αἰτίως,
eῖτε τὸ δαιμόνιον κατεκόμασε
δώμασιν Οἶδιπόδα:
πρὸς ἐμὲ γὰρ κακῶν ἔμολε τῶνδ’ ἀχή.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
δεινὸν γυναιξίν αἱ δ’ ὠδίνων γοναί,
καὶ φιλότεκνον πως πᾶν γυναίκεῖον γένος.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

By his own hand, with sword, with noose down-trailing
From rafters dim,—now groaning o’er the doom
His malison brought on you, and ever wailing
With anguish, hides in gloom.

But thou, my son, men say, hast made affiance
With strangers: children gotten in thine halls
Gladden thee, yea, thou soughtest strange alliance!
Son, on thy mother falls
Thine alien bridal curse to haunt her ever.
Thee shall a voice from Laïus’ grave accuse.
The spousal torch for thee I kindled never,
As happy mothers use;

Nor for thy bridal did Ismenus bring thee
Joy of the bath; nor at the entering-in
Of this thy bride did Theban maidens sing thee.
A curse be on that sin,

Whether from spell of steel born, from thy father,
Or lust of strife, or whether revel rose
Of demons in yon halls!—on mine head gather
All tortures of these woes.

CHORUS
Mighty with women is their travail’s fruit;
Yea, dear the child is to all womankind.

1 "The spell of the steel itself draws men on to fight."—
Od. xix. 13.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μήτερ, φρονῶν εὐ κοῦ φρονῶν ἄφικόμην ἔχθρούς ἐς ἄνδρας· ἀλλ’ ἀναγκαίως ἔχει πατρίδος ἑρᾶν ἀπαντας· δὴ δ’ ἄλλος λέγει, λόγους χαίρει, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἐκεῖν’ ἔχει. οὕτω δὲ τάρβουσ εἰς φόβον τ’ ἄφικόμην, μὴ τις δόλος με πρὸς κασινυκτίτου κτάνσι, ὅστε εἰςπόρε χεῖρ’ ἔχων δὲ ἀστεως κυκλῶν πρόσωπον ἠθόποιν. ἐν δὲ μ’ ὠφελεῖ, σπονδαῖ τε καὶ σῆ πίστις, ἢ μ’ ἐστήγαγε τείχη πατρίδα· πολύπακρος δ’ ἄφικόμην, κρόνιος ἰδὼν μέλαθρα καὶ βωμοὺς θεῶν γυμνασία θ’ οἶσιν ἐνετάφων, Δίκης θ’ ὑδωρ· ὅν οὐ δικαίως ἀπελάθεσ’ ξένην πόλιν ναίω, δὲ ὅσοις δ’μ’ ἔχων δακρυφροῦν.

ἄλλ’ ἐκ γὰρ ἄλγους ἄλγος αὐ σὲ δέρκομαι [κάρας ξυρῆκες καὶ πέπλους μελαγχίμους] ἔχουσαν, οἱμοὶ τῶν ἐμῶν ἡγῶς κακῶν. ὡς δεινῶν ἔχθρα, μήτερ, οἰκείων φίλων καὶ δυσλύτους ἔχουσα τὰς διαιλαγάς. τὶ γὰρ πατήρ οἱ πρέσβυς ἐν δόμωσι δρᾶ, σκότον δεδορκός; τὶ δὲ κασινυκτῖα δύο; ἡ που στένουσι τλῆμονας φυγὰς ἐμᾶς;

ΙΟΚΑΣΘ

κακῶς θεῶν τις Οἰδίπου φθείρει γένος· οὕτω γὰρ ἤξετ’, ἀνομα μὲν τεκεῖν ἐμέ, κακῶς δὲ γῆμαι πατέρα σὸν φύναι τε σε. ἀτὰρ τὶ ταῦτα; δὲι φέρειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν. ὁπως δ’ ἔρωμαι, μὴ τι σῆν δάκω φρένα, δέδοιχ’, ἢ χρῆξω’ διὰ πόθου δ’ ἐληλυθα.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES
Wisely, and yet not wisely, have I come,
Mother, mid foes: yet all men are constrained
To love their fatherland; who saith not so,
Sporteth with words, his heart is otherwhere.
In such misgiving came I, in such dread
Lest treachery slay me, of my brother framed,
That through the city sword in hand I passed,
Aye keenly glancing round. One stay I had:—
The truce and thy fair faith drew me within
These walls ancestral. Full of tears I came,
So late to see home, altars of the Gods,
The athlete-stead that trained me, Dirce’s spring,
Whence banished wrongfully, in a strange town
dwell, mine eyes a fountain ever of tears.

Thee too, for sorrow’s crown of sorrow, I see
With shaven head, and in dark mourning robes
Clad—woe is me for my calamities!
Mother, how dire is strife betwixt near kin,
How hopeless reconciliation is!
What doth mine ancient father in his halls,
Whose light is darkness? And my sisters twain—
Do these bemoan mine exile’s misery?

JOCASTA
Foully doth some God ruin Oedipus’ line.
Thus it began—I bare forfended issue;
Wed under curse thy sire,—and thou wast born!
Yet wherefore this? The Gods’ will must we bear.
But how to ask the thing I would I fear,
Lest I should gall thy soul, yet long for this.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
άλλ' ἐξερώτα, μηδὲν ἐνδεές λίπης·
ἀ γὰρ σὺ βούλει, ταῦτ' ἐμοί, μήτερ, φίλα.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
καὶ δὴ σ' ἐρωτῶ πρῶτον ὃν χρήζω τυχεῖν,
τί τὸ στέρεσθαι πατρίδος; ἢ κακὸν μέγα;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
μέγιστον ἐργῷ δ' ἐστὶ μεῖζον ἢ λόγῳ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
τίς ὁ τρόπος αὐτοῦ; τί φυγάσων τὸ δυσχερές;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ἐν μὲν μέγιστον, οὐκ ἔχει παρρησίαν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
δούλου τὸδ' εἰπας, μὴ λέγειν α̣ τις φρονεῖ.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
τὰς τῶν κρατούντων ἀμαθίας φέρειν χρεῶν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
καὶ τοῦτο λυπρόν, συνασοφεὶν τοῖς μὴ σοφοῖς.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ἄλλ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος παρὰ φύσιν δουλευτέον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
αἱ δ' ἑλπίδες βοσκοῦσι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
καλοῖς βλέπουσαι γ' ὄμμασιν, μέλλουσι δὲ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
οὐδ' ὁ χρόνος αὐτὰς διεσάφησ' οὐσάς κενάς;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ἔχουσιν ἀφροδίτην τιν' ἣδειαν κακῶν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
πόθεν δ' ἐβόσκου πρὶν γάμοις εὑρεῖν βίον;

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES
Nay, ask; leave no desire unsatisfied;
For, mother, that thou wouldst is dear to me.

JOCASTA
First, then, I ask thee that I fain would learn.
What meaneth exile? Is it a sore ill?

POLYNEICES
The sorest. In deed sorer than in word.

JOCASTA
In what wise? Where for exiles lies its sting?

POLYNEICES
This most of all—a curb is on the tongue.

JOCASTA
That is the slave's lot, not to speak one's thought!

POLYNEICES
The unwisdom of his rulers must one bear.

JOCASTA
Hard this, that one partake in folly of fools!

POLYNEICES
Yokes nature loathes must be for profit borne.

JOCASTA
Yet hopes be exiles' meat, so runs the saw.

POLYNEICES
Hopes look with kind eyes, yet they long delay.

JOCASTA
But doth not time lay bare their emptiness?

POLYNEICES
Ah, but sweet witchery mid ills have they!

JOCASTA
Whence wast thou fed, ere marriage brought thee substance?
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ποτὲ μὲν ἐπ’ ἡμαρ εἶχον, εἰτ’ ὅικ εἶχον ἀν.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
φίλοι δὲ πατρὸς καὶ ξένοι σ’ ὅικ ὁφέλουν;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
εὖ πρᾶσσε· τὰ φίλων δ’ οὐδέν, ἦν τι δυστυχῆς.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
οὐδ’ ἡγένεια σ’ ἦρεν εἰς υψος μέγα;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
κακὸν τὸ μὴ ἔχειν· τὸ γένος ὅικ ἑσσοκέ με.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
ἡ πατρίς, ὡς έοικε, φίλτατον βροτοῖς.
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
οὐδ’ ὀνομάσαι δύναι’ ἀν ὡς ἔστιν φίλον.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
πῶς δ’ ἤλθες Ἀργος; τίν’ ἐπίνοιαν ἐσχεθεῖς;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
οὐκ οἶδ’ ὁ δαίμον μ’ ἐκάλεσεν πρὸς τὴν τύχην.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
σοφὸς γὰρ ὁ θεός· τίνι τρόπῳ δ’ ἐσχες λέχος;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ἐχρησ’ Ἀδράστῳ Δοξίᾳς χρησμὸν τινα.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
ποίον; τί τοῦτ’ ἔλεξας; ὅικ ἔχω μαθεῖν.
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
κάπρῳ λέοντι θ’ ἀρμόσαι παιδών γάμους.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘ
καὶ σοὶ τὰ θηρῶν ὀνόματος μετῆν, τέκνον;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
νῦξ ἦν, Ἀδράστου δ’ ἠλθον εἰς παραστάδας.

410

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES
Whiles had I daily bread, and whiles had not.

JOCASTA
Helped they not thee, thy father's friends and guests?

POLYNEICES
Prosper:—friends vanish if thou prosper not.

JOCASTA
Did high birth bring thee not to high estate?

POLYNEICES
A curse is penury. Birth fed me not.

JOCASTA
Most dear, meseems, to men is fatherland.

POLYNEICES
How dear, thou couldst not even utter it.

JOCASTA
To Argos how cam'st thou? With what intent?

POLYNEICES
I know not. Heaven to my fate summoned me.

JOCASTA
Wise is the God. How didst thou win thy bride?

POLYNEICES
To Adrastus Loxias spake an oracle.

JOCASTA
What was it? How mean'st thou? I cannot guess. 410

POLYNEICES
"Thy daughters wed to a lion and a boar."

JOCASTA
Son, with a brute's name what hadst thou to do?

POLYNEICES
'Twas night: to Adrastus' palace-porch I came.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ
κοίτας ματεύων ἢ φυγαῖς πλανώμενος;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ἢν ταῦτα· κατὰ γ’ ἠλθέν ἄλλος αὖ φυγάς.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ
τίς οὖτος; ὡς ἂρ’ ἄθλιος κακεῖνος ἡ.
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
Τυδεύσ, ὃν Οἰνέως φασίν ἔκφυναι πατρός.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ
τι θηρσίν ὑμᾶς δῆτ’ Ἄδραστος ἤκασεν;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
στρωμνής ἐς ἄλκην οὖνε’ ἠλθομεν πέρι.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ
ἐνταῦθα Ταλαοῦ παῖς συνήκε τέσσατα;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
κάδωκεν ἡμῖν δύο δύοῖν νεάνιδας.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ
ἀρ’ εὐτυχεῖσι οὖν τοῖς γάμοις ἢ δυστυχεῖσι;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
οὐ μεμπτὸς ἡμῖν ὁ γάμος εἰς τόδ’ ἡμέρας.
ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ
πῶς δ’ ἐξέπεισας δεύρο σοι σπέσθαι στρατῶν;
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
δισοφείς Ἄδραστος ἅμοσεν γαμβροῖς τόδε,
[Τυδεί τε κάμοι· σύγγαμοι γάρ ἐστ’ ἐμός,]
ἀμφός κατάξειν εἰς πάτραν, πρόσθεν δ’ ἐμέ.
πολλοὶ δὲ Δαναῶν καὶ Μυκηναίων ἄκροι
πάρεισι, λυπραὶ χάριν, ἀναγκαίαν δ’ ἐμοὶ
dιδόντες· ἐπὶ γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν στρατεύματι
πόλην. θεοὺς δ’ ἐπώμοσ’ ὡς ἀκουσίως
τοῖς φιλτάτωις τοκεύσων ἤραμην δόρυ.
ἀλλ’ εἰς σὲ τείνει τῶνδε διάλυσις κακῶν,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

JOCASTA
Seeking a couch, as homeless exiles roam?

POLYNEICES
Even that. Another exile thither came.

JOCASTA
Who? In what hapless plight was he withal!

POLYNEICES
Tydeus, who sprang, men say, of Oeneus' loins.

JOCASTA
Why to Adrastus seemed ye as wild beasts?

POLYNEICES
For that we fell to fighting for our couch.

JOCASTA
Then Talaus' son read right the oracle?

POLYNEICES
Yea—to us twain gave his young daughters twain.

JOCASTA
Blest or unblest, then, art thou in thy bride?

POLYNEICES
Unto this day I find no fault in her.

JOCASTA
How didst thou win yon host to follow thee?

POLYNEICES
To his two daughters' husbands swore Adrastus, Tydeus and me,—my marriage-kinsman he,—
To bring both home from exile, me the first.
Danaan and Mycenean chiefs be here
Many—a needful, yet a mournful grace
To me, for I against my country march.
And, by the Gods I swear, unwillingly
I lift the spear against my father's house.
But with thee rests the assuaging of these ills,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

μήτερ, διαλλάξασαν ὀμογενεῖς φίλους
παῦσαι πόνων με καὶ σε καὶ πάσαν πόλιν.
τάλαι μὲν ὡν ὑμνηθέν, ἀλλ' ὤμως ἐρώτα
τὰ χρήματ' ἀνθρώποις τιμώτατα
dύναμὶν τε πλειστὴν τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἔχει.
ἀγὼ μεθήκω δεύρο μυρίαν ἄγων
λόγχην πένης γάρ σύδεν εὐγενῆς ἀνήρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
καὶ μήν Ἑτεοκλῆς εἰς διαλλαγὰς ὀδὲ
χωρεῖ: σὸν ἔργουν, μήτερ Ἰοκάστη, λέγειν
tοιούσδε μῦθος ὦς διαλλάξεις τέκνα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μήτερ, πάρειμι: τήνυδε σοι χάριν διδοὺς
ήλθον. τί χρῆ δράν; ἀρχέτω δὲ τις λόγον.
ὡς ἀμφὶ τείχῃ καὶ ξυνωρίδας λόγων
tάσσων ἐπέσοχον πόλιν, ὅπως κλυοὶσὶ σοι
κοινὰς βραβείας, αἰς ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν
tόυδ᾿ εἰσεδέξῳ τειχέων πείσασά με.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐπίσχες: οὕτω τὸ ταχὺ τὴν δίκην ἔχει:
βραβεῖς δὲ μῦθοι πλεῖστον ἀνύουσιν σοφόν.
σχάσου δὲ δεινὸν ὃμμα καὶ θυμοῦ πνοαῖς;
οῦ γὰρ τὸ λαιμότμησκον εἰσορᾶς κάρα
Γοργονος, ἀδελφὸν δ᾿ εἰσορᾶς ἦκοντα σὸν.
σὺ τ᾿ αὖ πρὸσωπον πρὸς κασίγνητον στρέφει,
Πολυνείκες· εἰς γὰρ ταῦτον ὃμμασι βλέπων
λέξεις τ᾿ ἀμείνου τοῦδε τ᾿ ἐνδέξει λόγους.

παραίνεσαι δὲ σφῶν τὶ βούλομαι σοφόν·
ὅταν φίλος τις ἀνδρὶ θυμωθεὶς φίλῳ
eἰς ἐν συνελθῶν ὃμματ' ὅμμασιν δίδῳ,
ἐφ᾿ οἷς ἦκε, ταῦτα χρῆ μόνον σκοπείν,
κακῶν δὲ τῶν πρὶν μηδενὸς μνεῖαν ἔχειν.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Mother, to set at one those one in blood,
And end mine, thine, and all the city's toils.
Old is the saw,—yet will I utter it:—

*Wealth in men's eyes is honoured most of all,*
*And of all things on earth hath chiepest power.*

Captaining countless spears for this I come;
For the high-born in poverty is naught.

**CHORUS**

Lo, unto parley Eteocles comes.
Mother Jocasta, thine the task to speak
Words whereby thou shalt set thy sons at one.

*Enter ETEOCLES.*

**ETEOCLES**

Here am I, mother—all for grace to thee
I come. What needs to do? Be speech begun.
For I have stayed from marshalling round the walls
The close-linked cordon of defence, to hear
Thy mediation for the which thou hast wrought
On me to admit this man within our walls.

**JOCASTA**

Forbear: haste brings not justice in its train:
But slow speech winneth oftenest wisdom's end.
Refrain fierce look and passion's stormy breath:
The Gorgon's severed head thou seest not;
Thou seest thine own brother hither come.
And thou, unto thy brother turn thy face,
Polyneices; for, if thou but meet his eye,
Thou shalt the better speak, and hear his words.
Fain would I wisely counsel thee, and thee.
When he whose wrath is hot against his friend
Cometh to meet him, standeth eye to eye,
Let him look only at that for which he came,
And cherish no remembrance of old wrongs.

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ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

λόγος μὲν οὖν σὸς πρόσθε, Πολύνεικες τέκνοιν
σὺ γὰρ στράτευμα Δαναίδων ἦκεις ἄγων,
ἀδικά πεπονθῶς, ὡς σὺ φής, κριτής δὲ τις
θεῶν γένοιτο καὶ διαλλακτῆς κακῶν.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφυ,
κοῦ ποικίλων δεὶ τάνδιχ' ἐρμηνευμάτων.
ἔχει γὰρ αὐτὰ καὶρόν ὁ δ' ἄδικος λόγος
νοσῶν ἐν' αὐτῷ φαρμάκων δεῖται σοφῶν.
ἐγὼ δὲ πατρὸς δωμάτων προσκεκλήθη
τοῦμον τε καὶ τούδ', ἐκφυγεῖν χρήζων ἄρας
ἀς Οἰδίπους ἐφθέγξατ' εἰς ἡμᾶς τοτε,
ἐξῆλθον ἔξω τῆς ἐκὼν αὐτὸς χθονός,
δοὺς τῶν ἀνάσσευν πατρίδος ἐναυτοῦ κύκλου,
ωστ' αὐτὸς ἀρχεῖν αὐθίς ἀνὰ μέρος λαβῶν
καὶ μὴ δι' ἔχθρας τῶδε καὶ φόνου μολὼν
κακὸν τι δράσαι καὶ παθεῖν, ἃ γίγνεται.
ὁ δ' αἰνέσας τᾷθε' ὀρκίως τε δοὺς θεοὺς,
ἐδρασεν οὖδὲν ὅν ὑπέσχετ', ἀλλ' ἔχει
τυραννίδ' αὐτὸς καὶ δόμων ἐμὸν μέρος.
καὶ νῦν ἐτοιμὸς εἰμι τὰμαυτοῦ λαβῶν
στρατὸν μὲν ἔξω τῆς ἀποστείλατ' χθονός,
οἰκεῖν δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν οἰκον ἀνὰ μέρος λαβὼν
καὶ τῶδ' ἀφεῖναι τὸν ἵσον αὐθίς αὐχρόνου,
καὶ μήτε πορθὲν πατρίδα μήτε προσφέρειν
πύργοισι πικρέων κλημάκων προσαμβάσεις,
ἀ μὴ κυρήσας τῆς δίκης πειράσομαι
δράν. μάρτυρας δὲ τῶν ἀδίκων καλῶ,
ὡς πάντα πράσσων σὺν δίκη, δίκης ἄτερ
ἄποστεροῦμαι πατρίδος ἀνοσιώτατα.
ταύτ' αὐθ' ἐκαστα, μήτερ, οὐχὶ περιπλοκᾶς

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Son Polyneices, be the first word thine,
For thou hast brought on host of Danaus' sons,
Wronged, as thou pleadest. Now be some God judge
Hereof, and reconciler of these ills.

POLYNEICES

Plain and unvarnished is the tale of truth,
And justice needs no subtle sophistries:
Itself hath fitness; but the unrighteous plea,
Having no soundness, needeth cunning salves.

I had regard unto my father's house,
My weal, and this man's: fain to 'scape the curse
Uttered of Oedipus against us once,
Of mine own will I went from this realm forth,
Left him for one year's round to rule our land,
Myself in turn to take the sovereignty,
And not in hate and bloodshed clash with him,
And do and suffer ill—as now befalls.
And he consented, in the Gods' sight swore,
Yet no whit keepeth troth, but holdeth still
The kingship and mine half the heritage.

Now ready am I, so I receive mine own,
Forth from this land to send my war-array,
To take mine house, in turn therein to dwell,
And for like space to yield it him again,
And not to waste my fatherland, nor bring
Assault of scaling-ladders to her towers,
Which, save I win my right, will I essay
To do. I call the Gods to witness this—
That, wholly dealing justly, robbed am I
Of fatherland, unjustly, impiously.
These things have I said, mother, point by point,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

λόγων ἀθραίσας εἰπον, ἀλλὰ καὶ σοφοῖς
καὶ τούσι φαύλους ένδιξ', ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμοὶ μέν, εἰ καὶ μῆ καθ' Ἐλλήνων χθόνα
tεθράμμεθ', ἀλλ' οὐν ξυνετά μοι δοκεῖς λέγειν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

εἰ πάσι ταύτῳ καλὸν ἔφυ σοφὸν θ' ἁμα,
οὐκ ἦν ἄν ἀμφίλεγτος ἀνθρώποις ἔρις:
νῦν δ' οὐδ' ὁμοίων οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἰσον βροτοῖς,
πλὴν ὀνόμασιν, τὸ δ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε.
ἔγω γὰρ οὐδέν, μήτερ, ἀποκρύψας ἐρώ
ἀστρων ἄν ἠλθομ' ἥλιον πρὸς ἀντολὰς
καὶ γῆς ἐνερθε δυνατός ἄν δράσαι τάδε,
τὴν θεῶν μεγίστην ἤστ' ἐχειν Τυραννίδα.
τούτ' οὖν τὸ χρηστὸν, μήτερ, οὐχὶ βούλομαι
ἀλλ' παρεῖνα μᾶλλον ἡ σοφείς ἐμοί:
ἀνανδρία γάρ, τὸ πλέον ὅστις ἀπολέσας
τοῦλασας ἐλαβε. πρὸς δὲ τοῖσ' αἰσχύνομαι,
ἐξάντα σὺν ὅπλοις τόδε καὶ πορθούντα γην
τυχεῖν ἃ χρήζει· καὶ γὰρ ἄν Θηβαίς τόδε
γένοιτ' ὑπειδος, εἰ Μυκηναίων δορὸς
φόβω παρείνη σκῆπτρα τάμα τόδ' ἐχειν.
χρὴν δ' αὐτοῦν οὐχ ὅπλοις τὰς διαλλαγάς,
μήτερ, ποιεῖσθαι· πάν γὰρ ἔξαιρεί λόγος
δ' καὶ σίδηρος πολεμίων δράσειν ἂν.
ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἀλλως τόδε γην οἰκεῖν θέλει,
ἔξεστ'. ἐκείνω δ' οὐχ ἐκὼν μεθήσομαι,
ἄρχειν παρὸν μοι, τόδε δουλεύσαι ποτε.
πρὸς ταῦτ' ἵτω μὲν πῦρ, ἵτω δὲ φάσγανα,
ζεύγυνσθε δ' ἵππος, πεδία πίμπλαθ' ἀρμάτων,
ὡς οὐ παρήσω τόδ' ἐμήν τυραννίδα.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Not wrapped in webs of words, but, in the eyes
Of wise or simple, naked right, meseems.

CHORUS
To me—albeit Hellas nursed me not,
Yet to me soundly seemest thou to plead.

ETEOCLES
Were wisdom gauged alike of all,—and honour,
No strife of warring words were known to men. 500
But "fairness," "equal rights"—men know them not.
They name their names: no being they have as things.

Now, mother, nothing feigning will I speak:—
I would mount to the risings of the stars
Or sun, would plunge 'neath earth, if this I could,
So to win Power, diviner than all gods.
This precious thing, my mother, will I not
Yield to another, when myself might keep.
No man's part this, to let the better slip
And grasp the worse! Nay more—I think foul shame
That he should come with arms, lay waste the land,
And win his heart's desire. This were reproach
To Thebes, if I, by spears of Argos cowed,
Should yield my sceptre up for him to hold.
With arms should he not come in quest of peace,
Mother; for parley can accomplish all
That even steel of foes can bring to pass.
If he on other terms will dwell in Thebes,
That may he. This consent I not to yield.
I, who may rule, shall I be thrall to him?

Wherefore let fire and sword have free course now!
Yoke ye the steeds, with chariots fill the plains:—
I will not render him my sovereignty.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

εὔτερ γὰρ ἀδικεῖν χρὴ, τυραννίδος πέρι κάλλιστον ἀδικεῖν, τάλλα δὲ εὐσεβεῖν χρεών.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εὖ λέγειν χρὴ μὴ ἥπε ποὺς ἕργους καλοῖς, οὐ γὰρ καλὸν τοῦτ’, ἀλλὰ τῇ δίκῃ πικρόν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΙ

ὤ τέκνοι, οὐχ ἀπαντᾷ τῷ γήρᾳ κακά, Ἑτεόκλεες, πρόσεστιν ἀλλ’ ἡμπειρία ἐχει τι λέξαι τῶν νέων σοφότερον.

τί τῆς κακίστης δαιμόνων ἐφίεσαι Φιλοστιμίας, παῖ; μὴ σὺ γ’ ἄδικος ἢ θεός, πολλοὺς δ’ ἐσ ὀίκους καὶ πόλεις εὐδαιμονινας εἰσῆλθε καξίζηθ’ ἐπ’ ὀλέθρῳ τῶν χρωμένων ἔφ’ ἵ σὺ μαίνει. κεῖνο κάλλιον, τέκνοι, Ἰσότητα τιμᾶν, ἢ φίλους ἁεὶ φίλους πόλεις τε πόλεσι συμμάχους τε συμμάχους συνδεί: τὸ γὰρ ἰσον νόμιμον ἀνθρώποις ἔφη, τῷ πλέονι δ’ ἁεὶ πολέμοι καθίσταται τοῦλασσον ἐχθρᾶς θ’ ἡμέρας κατάρχεται. καὶ γὰρ μέτρ’ ἀνθρώποις καὶ μέρη σταθμῶν Ἰσότης ἔταξε κάρισμα διώρισε, νυκτὸς τ’ ἀφεγγγὲς βλέφαρον ἠλίου τε φῶς ἰσον βαδίζει τὸν ἐναυσίου κύκλων, κουδέτερον αὐτῶν φθόνον ἐχει νικώμενον. εἰθ’ ἦλιος μὲν νῦξ τε δουλειν βροτοῖς, σὺ δ’ οὐκ ἀνέξει δωμάτων ἔχων ἰσον καὶ τῷ ἀπονέμειν; κάτα ποὺ ’στιν ἡ δίκῃ; τὶ τῆς τυραννίδ’, ἀδικίαν εὐδαιμονα, τιμᾶς ὑπέρφευ, καὶ μέγ’ ἠγγει τόδε; περιβλέπεσθαι τίμων; κενὸν μὲν οὖν. ἡ πολλὰ μονοθείν πόλλῃ ἔχων εὐδαιμονα βούλει; τὶ δ’ ἐστι τὸ πλέον; διόμη’ ἐχει μόνων

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

If wrong may e’er be right, for a throne’s sake
Were wrong most right:—be God in all else feared!

CHORUS
Befits not fair speech glozing deeds unfair:
Not fair it is, but an offence to justice.

JOCASTA
My son Eteocles, evil unalloyed
Cleaves not to old age: nay, experience
Can plead more wisely than the lips of youth.
Why at Ambition, worst of deities,
Son, graspest thou? Do not: she is Queen of
Wrong.
Homes many and happy cities enters she,
Nor leaves till ruined are her votaries.
Thou art mad for her!—better to honour, son,
Equality, which knitteth friends to friends,
Cities to cities, allies unto allies.
Nature gave men the law of equal rights,
And the less, ever marshalled foe against
The greater, ushers in the dawn of hate.
Measures for men Equality ordained,
Meting of weights and number she assigned.
The sightless face of night, and the sun’s beam
Equally pace along their yearly round,
Nor either envieth that it must give place.
Sun, then, and night are servants unto men:
Shalt thou not brook to halve your heritage
And share with him? . . . Ah, where is justice then
Why overmuch dost thou prize Sovrancy—
Injustice throned!—and count it some great thing?
Wouldst have, with great wealth in thine halls, great
travail?
What is thy profit?—profit but in name;
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἐπεὶ τὰ γ’ ἀρκοῦνθ’ ἰκανὰ τοῖς γε σώφροσιν. 
οὔτοι τὰ χρήματ’ ἵδια κέκτηνται βροτοί,
τὰ τῶν θεῶν δ’ ἐχοντες ἐπιμελοῦμεθα:
ὅταν δ’ χρῆζωσ’, αὐτ’ ἀφαιροῦνται πάλιν.
[ὁ δ’ ἀλβος σὺ βέβαιος, ἀλλ’ ἐφήμερος.]
ἀγ’, ἣν σ’ ἔρωμαι δύο λόγῳ προθείσ’ ἁμα,
πότερα τυραννεῖν ἢ πόλιν σῶσαι θέλεις,
ἐρεῖς τυραννεῖν; ἢν δὲ νικήσῃ σ’ ὅδε
’Ἀργεία τ’ ἐγχθή δόρυ τὸ Καδμείων ἔλη,
ὁψεί δαμασθέν ἀστυ Θήβαιον τόδε,
ὁψεὶ δὲ πολλὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας κόρας
βία πρὸς ἀνδρῶν πολεμίων πορθομένας.
ὀδύνηρός ἄρ’ ὁ πλοῦτος, δύν ζητεῖς ἐχεῖν,
γενήσεται Θήβαισι, φιλότιμος δὲ σὺ.
σοὶ μὲν τάδ’ αὐδώ. σοὶ δὲ Πολυνείκες λέγω:
ἀμαθεῖς ’Ἀδραστος χάριτας εἰς σ’ ἀνήψατο,
ὑσύνετα δ’ ἥλθες καὶ σὺ πορθήσων πόλιν.
φέρ’, ἢν ἐλθη γῆν τῆν, δ’ μὴ τύχοι ποτὲ,
πρὸς θεῶν, τρόπαια πώσ’ ἀναστήσεις Διί;
πώς δ’ αὐ κατάρξει θυμάτων, ἐλὼν πάτραν,
καὶ σκύλα γράφεις πώς ἐπ’ Ίνάχον ροάις;
Θήβας πυρώσας τάσδε Πολυνείκης θεοῖς
ἀστίδας ἔθηκε; μῆτοτ’, ὦ τέκνοι, κλέος
τούνδε σοι γένοιτ’ υφ’ Ἑλλήνων λαβεῖν.
ἡν δ’ αὐ κρατήρῃ καὶ τὰ τοῦδ’ ὑπερδράμη,
πώς ’Ἀργος ἦξεις μυρίους λιπῶν νεκροὺς;
ἐρεὶ δὲ δὴ τίς: ὦ κακά μηστεύματα
’Ἀδραστε προσθεῖς, διὰ μιᾶς νύμφης γάμον
ἀπωλόμεσθα. δύο κακώ σπεύδεις, τέκνοιν,
κεῖνων στέρεσθαι, τῶνδε τ’ ἐν μέσφ πεσεῖν.
μέθετον τὸ λίαν, μέθετον ἀμαθίαι δυνῶν,
εἰς ταῦθ’ ὅταν μόλητον, ἔχθιστον κακῶν.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Seeing enough sufficeth for the wise.
Mortals hold their possessions not in fee:
We are but stewards of the gifts of God:
Whene'er he will, he claims his own again.
And wealth abides not, 'tis but for a day.

Come, if I set two things before thee, and ask,
"Wouldst thou be lord or saviour of thy Thebes?"
Wilt thou say, "Lord?" But if this man prevail,
And Argos' spears bear down Cadmean might,
Then conquered shalt thou see this city of Thebes,
And many captive maidens shalt thou see
dishonoured with foul outrage by the foe.
Yea, all this wealth thou covetest shall become
Thebes' curse, and thou shalt be ambition's fool.

This to thee; and to thee, Polyneices, this:—
A foolish grace Adrastus did to thee;
Madly thou too hast marched to ravage Thebes.
Come, if thou smite this land,—which God forbid,—
'Fore heaven, how wilt thou set Zeus' trophies up?
How sacrifice for fatherland o'ercome?
And how at Inachus' streams inscribe the spoils?—
"Polyneices hath burnt Thebes, and to the Gods
Offers these shields"—thus? Never, son, be it thine
To win from lips of Hellenes such renown!
But, he triumphant, vanquished thou, to Argos
How canst thou come, here leaving myriads dead?
And one shall say, "O cursed betrothal made
By thee, Adrastus! For one bridal's sake
We are ruined!" Evils twain thou draw'st on thee,—
There, to lose all, here, fail mid thine emprise.
Forbear, forbear your vehemence! When meet
Two headstrong fools, the issue is foulest ill.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ θεοί, γένοισθε τῶν ἀπότροποι κακῶν καὶ ξύμβασίν τιν' Οἰδίπον τέκνοις δότε.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μήτερ, οὐ λόγων ἐθ' ἄγων, ἀλλ' ἀνῆλθαί χρόνος οὐν μέσῳ μάτην, περαινει δ' οὐδὲν ἡ προβούμια: οὔ γὰρ ἂν ξυμβαίμεν ἄλλως ἢ 'πὶ τοὺς εἰρημένους, ἀδικεῖ σκῆτρων κρατοῦντα τῆς ἀνακτ' εἰναι χθονός. τῶν μακρῶν δ' ἀπαλλαγείσα νουθητημάτων μ' ἐκα ταῦτα ἐξώ κομίζουν τειχέων, ἢ καθυπατεῖ.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πρὸς τίνος; τίς δ' ἀτρωτος, ὡστὶς εἰς ἡμᾶς ξίφος φόνιον ἐμβαλὼν τὸν αὐτὸν οὐκ ἀποίσεται μόρον;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγγύς, οὐ πρόσω βέβηκεν εἰς χέρας λεύσσεις ἐμᾶς;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

eἰσορῶ δειλῶν δ' ὁ πλοῦτος καὶ φιλόψυχον κακῶν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κατὰ σὺν πολλοῖσιν ἴλθες πρὸς τὸν οὐδὲν ἐσε μάχην;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀσφαλῆς γὰρ ἐστ' ἀμείνων ἡ θρασύς στρατηλάτης.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

600 κομπὸς εἰ σπουδαῖς πεποιθώς, αἲ σε σφόξουσίν θανεῖν.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS
Ah Gods, be ye averters of these ills,
And set at one the sons of Oedipus!

ETEOCLES
Mother, 'tis too late for parley; nay, the time in
dallying spent [good intent.
Doth but run to waste, nor aught availeth this thy
Never shall we be at one, except as I have laid it 590
down,
wear the crown.
That in lordship over Thebes I sway the sceptre,
Have thou done with tedious admonitions then, and
let me be; [death shall light on thee.
And, for thee, thou get thee forth these walls, ere

POLYNEICES
Death?—of whom?—what man so woundless, as to
plunge his murderous sword [reward?
Into this my body, and not win himself the like

ETEOCLES
Nigh he is: not far he standeth: lo, these hands—
hast eyes to see?

POLYNEICES
Yea—and know how shrinks from death that craven
curse, prosperity!

ETEOCLES
Yet against a battle-blencher thou must lead yon
huge array!

POLYNEICES
Yea, for better than the reckless is the prudent
captain aye.

ETEOCLES
Safe behind the truce, from death that screens thee,
vaunting dost thou stand!
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
καὶ σὲ· δεύτερον δ’ ἀπαιτῶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη
χθονός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
οὐκ ἀπαίτούμεσθ᾽· ἐγὼ γὰρ· τὸν ἐμὸν οἰκήσω
δόμον.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
τοῦ μέρους ἔχων τὸ πλεῖον;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
φήμ᾽· ἀπαλλάσσου δὲ γῆς.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ὡ θεῶν βωμοὶ πατρῴων—

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
οὐς σὺ πορθήσων πάρει.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
κλύετε μου—

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
τίς δ’ ἂν κλύοι σου πατρίδ’ ἐπεστρατευμένου;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
καὶ θεῶν τῶν λευκοπόλων δῶμαθ᾽,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
οἱ στυγοῦσί σε.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ἐξελαυνόμεσθα πατρίδος,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
καὶ γὰρ ἥλθες ἐξελῶν.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ἀδικία γ’, ὦ θεοί.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
Μυκήναις, μὴ ἴθαδ’ ἀνακάλει θεοῦς.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES
Ay, and screens thee!—once again my crown, mine heritage I claim.

ETEOCLES
Naught to me are claims; for I will dwell in this mine house—mine own.

POLYNEICES
Grasping more than thine is?

ETEOCLES
Ay!—now get thee forth the land—begone!

POLYNEICES
Altars of our Gods ancestral,—

ETEOCLES
Whom to ravage thou art come!

POLYNEICES
Hear ye me!—

ETEOCLES
And who shall hear thee, bringer of war against thine home?

POLYNEICES
And ye temples of the Gods of Stainless Steeds!—

ETEOCLES
Who loathe thy name!

POLYNEICES
I am banished from my country!—

ETEOCLES
He that to destroy it came.

POLYNEICES
Wrongfully, ye Gods! •

ETEOCLES
To Gods not here, but at Mycenae, cry.

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ΦΟΙΝΙΞΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀνόσιος πέφυκας,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ’ οὐ πατρίδος, ὡς σὺ, πολέμως

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

δός μ’ ἄμοιρον ἐξελαύνεις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ κατακτεῖν γε πρός.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὁ πάτερ, κλύεις ἀ πάσχω;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ οία δρᾶς κλύει.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σὺ, μήτερ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀθέμιτον σοι μητρὸς ὀνομάζειν κάρα.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὁ πόλις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μολὼν ἐς Ἀργοὺς ἀνακάλει Λέρυης ὑδὼρ.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἰμι, μὴ πόνεις σὲ δ’ αἶνῳ, μήτερ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐξίθι χθόνος.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἐξίμεν’ πατέρα δὲ μοι δὸς εἰσίδειν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν τύχοις.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλὰ παρθένους ἀδελφάς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐδὲ τάσδ’ ὤψει ποτέ.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES
Impious art thou—

ETEOCLES
Yea ?—but not my country's foe, as thou, am I.

POLYNEICES
Who dost drive me forth defrauded!

ETEOCLES
Death withal I'll deal to thee. 610

POLYNEICES
Father, hear'st thou what I suffer?

ETEOCLES
Nay, thy doings heareth he.

POLYNEICES
And thou, mother?

ETEOCLES
That thou name our mother, sacrilege it were.

POLYNEICES
O my city!

ETEOCLES
Hence to Argos: call on Lerna's water there.

POLYNEICES
Fret thee not—I go. I thank thee, mother.

ETEOCLES
Forth the city! Go!

POLYNEICES
Forth I go: yet on my father let me look!

ETEOCLES
Thou see him! No!

POLYNEICES
Nay then, but my maiden sisters.

ETEOCLES
These thou never more shalt see.

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ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὁ κασίγνηται.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί ταύτας ἀνακαλεῖς ἐχθῆστος ὡν;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μήτερ, ἀλλὰ μοι σὺ χαῖρε.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

χαρτὰ γοῦν πάσχω, τέκνον.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐκέτ’ εἰμὶ παῖς σός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

εἰς πόλλ’ ἄθλια πέφυκ’ ἐγώ.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οδὲ γὰρ εἰς ἡμᾶς ὑβρίζει.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἀνθυβρίζομαι.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποὺ ποτε στῆσει πρὸ πύργων;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ὡς τί μ’ ἱστορεῖς τόδε;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀντιτάξομαι κτενῶν σε.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κάμε τοῦδ’ ἔρως ἔχει.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὁ τάλαν’ ἔγω. τί δράσετ’, ὃ τέκν’;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

αὐτὸ σημανεῖ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πατρὸς ὦ φεύξεος Ἐρυνῦσ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐρρέτω πρόπας δόμος.

396
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES
O my sisters!

ETEOCLES
Why dost call on these, their bitterest enemy?

POLYNEICES
Farewell, O my mother?

JOCASTA
Sooth, my son, I fare well, thus forlorn!

POLYNEICES
Son of thine no more!—

JOCASTA
To many a sorrow was thy mother born!

POLYNEICES
Since he doth me foul despite!

ETEOCLES
For foul despite received, I wis! 620

POLYNEICES
Where before the towers wilt plant thee?

ETEOCLES
Wherefore dost thou question this?

POLYNEICES
I will face thee there to slay thee.

ETEOCLES
Ha! I long to have it so!

JOCASTA
Woe is me! what will ye do, my sons?

POLYNEICES
The issue's self shall show.

JOCASTA
Flee, O flee your father's curses!

ETEOCLES
All our house let ruin seize!
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ως τάχι οὐκέθα αἴματηρον τούμον ἀργήσει-ξίφος.
τὴν δὲ θρέψασάν με γαῖαν καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρομαι
ὡς ἀτιμος οἰκτρὰ πάσχων εξελαύνομαι χθονὸς,
δοῦλος ὦς, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ταύτου πατρὸς Οἰδίπου
γεγώς;
κἂν τί σοι, πόλεις, γένηται, μὴ ἕμε, τόνδε δ' αἰτιῶ.

630
οὐχ ἐκὼν γὰρ ἠλθὸν, ἄκων δ' εξελαύνομαι χθονός.
καὶ σύ, Φοῖβ' ἀναξ 'Αγαμεῖ, καὶ μέλαθρα χαίρετε,
ἡλικές δ' οὖμοι, θεῶν τε δεξίμηλ' ἀγάλματα.
οὐ γὰρ οἷος εἴ μοι προσεπεῖν αὐθις ἐσθ' ὢμᾶς
ποτὲ:
ἐπὶδες δ' οὔπω καθεύδουσ', αἰς πέποιθα σὺν
θεῶς
tόνδ' ἀποκτεῖνας κρατήσεω τῆς Θηβαίας
χθονός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐξεῖθ' ἐκ χώρας: ἠληθῶς δ' ὅνομα Πολυνείκη
pατήρ
ἐθετό σοι θεία προνοία νεικέων ἐπώνυμον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Κάδμος ἐμολε τάνδε γὰν

Τύριος, φι γε τετρασκελῆς

640

μόσχος ἀδάματος πέσημα
dίκε τελεσφόροι διδοῦσα
χρησίμον, οὗ κατοικίσαι
πεδία, νῦν τὸ θέσιατον
πυροφόρ', 'Αόνων ἕχρῃ,
καλλιτόταμος ὑδατὸς ὑμα τε

νοτίς ἐπέρχεται ρυτᾶς

Δήρκας χλοηφόρους

1 Valckenaer: for MSS. δόμων.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES
Soon my sword, blood-reddened, shall abide no more in deedless case. [Gods in heaven, But I call to witness earth that nursed me, witness How with shame and piteous usage from the home- land I am driven, [Oedipus, came. Like a bondman, not a son that of one father, City, whatsoe'er befall thee, blame not me: yon tyrant blame. [willingly. Willingly I came not, from the land am cast un- 630 Farewell, Phoebus, Highway-king, O palace-bowers, farewell ye! [where sheep are slain! Friends of youth, farewell, and statues of the Gods For I know not if to me 'tis given to speak to you again. [with Gods to aid, But my hope not yet doth sleep, wherein I trust, Him to slay, and hold the land of Thebes beneath my sceptre swayed.

ETEOCLES
Get thee forth! Ha, truly Polyneices, "Man of many a feud," [thy feuds endued! Named thy father thee, with heavenly prescience of [Exit POLYNEICES.

CHORUS
To this land from Phoenicia Cadmus speeding (Str.) Came, till the heifer unbroken, leading The wanderer, cast her to earthward, telling 640 That so was accomplished the oracle spoken When the God for the place of his rest gave token, Bidding take the Aonian plains for his dwelling, Where the golden spears of the wheat-ranks quiver, Where the outgushing flood of the lovely river Forth flashes from fountains of Dirce welling
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΙΑΙ

καὶ βαθυσπόρους γύας,
Βρόμιον ἐνθα τέκετο μά-
τηρ Διὸς γάμωσι,
κισσός δὲν περιστεφῆς
ἐλικτὸς εὐθὺς ἔτι βρέφος
χλοερῷσιν ἐρευσιν
κατασκήσισιν ὀλβίας ἐνώτισεν,
Βάκχων χόρεμα παρθένοις Θηβαίαισι
καὶ γυναῖξιν εὐλοις.

ἐνθα φόνος ἢν δράκων
'Αρεος, ὁμόφρων φύλαξ
νάματ' ἐνυδρα καὶ ρέθρα
χλοερὰ δερμάτων κόραισι
πολυπλάνοις ἐπισκοπῶν
ὅν ἐπὶ χέρνιβας μολῶν
Κάδμος ὀλεσε μαρμάρῳ,
κρᾶτα φόνιον ὀλεσίθηρος
ἐλένας δικών βολαίς,
δίς ἀμάτορος δ' εἰς βαθυσπόρους γύας
gαπτεῖς δικών ὀδόν-
tας Παλλάδος φραδαίσιν.¹
ἐνθαν ἐξανήκε γὰ
tάνοπλον ὑπὲρ ἀκρων
ὅρων χθονώς· σιδαρόφρων
δὲ νυν φόνος πάλιν ἐξυνήθε γὰ φίλα.
αἵματος δ' ἐδευσε γαῖαν, ἀ νυν εὐηλίοισι
deίζειν αἰθέρος πνοαῖς.

καὶ σὲ τὸν προμάτορος ἐπῳδ.
Ἰους ποτ' ἐκγονον

¹ Murray’s arrangement, securing metrical correspondence.

400
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Over meadows and tilth-lands harvest-teeming,
Where sprang, from the spousals levin-gleaming
   Of Zeus, the God of the shout wild-ringing;
And the ivy arching its bowers around him,
With the fairy chains of its greenness bound him,
   To the babe with its sudden tendrils clinging,
Overmantling with shadow the Blessing-laden,
For a theme of the Bacchanal dance unto maiden
   Of Thebes, and to matron evoë-singing.

There on the hallowed fountain's border
   (Ant.)
Was the dragon of Ares, a ruthless warder;
   And the glare of his eyeballs fearful-flashing
Wandered in restless-roving keenness
O'er the brimming runnels, the mirrored greenness:
Then came to the spring for the lustral washing
Cadmus, and hurled at the monster, and slew it;
For he snatched a boulder, his strong arm threw it
   Down on the head of the slaughterer crashing.
Then, of Pallas, the motherless Goddess, bidden,
O'er the deep-furrowed earth, in her breast to be hidden,
   He scattered the teeth from the grim jaws parted.
And the travailing glebe flung up bright blossom
Of mail-clad warriors over the bosom
   Of the earth; but slaughter the iron-hearted
Again with the earth their mother blent them,
And drenched with their blood the breast which had sent them
   Forth, when to sun-quickened air they upstarted.

   Unto thee too, Epaphus, scion
   (Epode.)
   Of our first mother Io, I moan,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

'Επαφον, ὦ Διὸς γένεθλον,
ἐκύλεσ' ἐκύλεσα βαρβάρῳ βοῶ,
ιὼ, βαρβάροις λυταίς,
βάθι βάθι τάνδε γὰν,
σοὶ νῦν ἔκγονοι κτίσαν,
ἀν διώνυμοι θεαί,
Περσέφασσα καὶ φίλα
Δαμάτηρ θεά,
pάντων ἀνασσα, pάντων ὁ Ἔα τροφός,
ἐκτήσαντο· πέμπτε πυρφόρους
θεάς, ἄμυνε τάδε γὰ.
pάντα δ' εὐπτετή θεοῖς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

χώρει σὺ καὶ κόμιξ τῶν Μενοικέως
Κρέοντ', ἀδελφόν μητρὸς Ἰσάκτης ἐμῆς,
λέγων τάδ', ὡς οἰκεῖα καὶ κοινὰ χθονὸς
θέλω ἐπὸς αὐτῶν συμβαλεῖν βουλεύματα,
πρὶν εἰς μάχην τε καὶ δορὸς τάξιν μολεῖν.
καίτοι ποδῶν σὺν μόχθον ἐκλύει παρῶν·
ὁρῶ γὰρ αὐτὸν πρὸς δόμους στείχουτ' ἐμοῖς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἡ πόλις ἐπῆλθον εἰσιδεῖν χρῆσιν σ', ἀναξ
Ἐτεόκλης, πέριξ ἀπὸ Καδμείων τύλας
φυλακάς τ' ἐπῆλθον σὸν δέμας θηρόμενος.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σ' ἔχρηζον εἰσιδεῖν, Κρέον,
pολλῶν γὰρ ηὗρον ἐνδεεῖς διαλλαγὰς,
ὡς εἰς λόγους συνήψα Πολυνείκει μολὼν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἡκουσά μείζον αὐτῶν ἡ Θήβας φρονεῖν,
κηδει τ' Ἀδράστου καὶ στρατῷ πεποιθότα.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Unto thee, of our lord Zeus sprung,
With my alien chant upflung
And with prayers of an alien tongue!
Thy sons, who reared Thebes to thee, cry on
Their father—O come to thine own!
For Demeter, Persephone, wearing
Twin names, have our land in ward—
Even gracious Demeter All-queen,
Who is Earth, nurse of all that hath been,—
O send them, thy people to screen
From the evil, the Queens Torch-bearing!—
Is there aught for the Gods too hard?

ETEOCLICES (to attendant)

Go thou, and Creon bring, Menoeceus’ son,
Who is my mother’s, even Jocasta’s brother.
This tell him, that I would commune with him
Touching our own advantage and the land’s,
Ere we go battleward and range the spears.
But lo, he cometh, sparing thy foot’s toil.
Myself behold him drawing nigh mine halls.

Enter CREON.

CREON

Seeking to see thee, far I have wended, King
Eteocles; round to all Cadmean gates
And guards, still searching for thy face, I passed.

ETEOCLICES

Sooth, Creon, fain was I to look on thee:
For little worth I found his terms of peace,
When I for parley Polyneices met.

CREON

Beyond Thebes his ambition soars, I hear,
By Adrastus’ kinship, and his host, puffed up.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

άλλ' εἰς θεοὺς χρῆ ταῦτ' ἀναρτήσαντ' ἔχειν·
ἀ δ' ἐμποδῶν μάλιστα, ταῦθ' ἣκω φράσων.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τὰ ποία ταῦτα; τὸν λόγον γὰρ ἁγνωῦ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἡκεὶ τις αἰχμάλωτος Ἀργεῖων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λέγει δὲ δὴ τί τῶν ἐκεῖ νεώτερον;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μέλλειν [πέρις πύργωσι Καδμείων πόλιν
ὅπλοις] ἐλίξειν αὐτίκ' Ἀργεῖων στρατῶν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐξοιστέον τάρ' ὅπλα Καδμείων πόλει.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποί; μῶν νεάξων οὐχ ὀρᾶς ἑ χρῆν σ' ὀρᾶν;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐκτος τάφρων τῶνθ', ὡς μαχουμένους τάχα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σμικρὸν τὸ πλῆθος τῆσδε γῆς, οἱ δ' ἄφθονοι.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγένετα κείνος τοῖς λόγοις θυεῖν θρασεῖς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐχει τιν' ὄγκον Ἀργος Ἑλλήνων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει τάχ' αὐτῶν πεδίων ἐμπλήσω φόνου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

θέλομ' ἂν· ἀλλὰ τοῦθ' ὀρῶ πολλοῦ πόνου.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ὁς οὖ καθέξω τείχεων εἰσώ στρατῶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ μὴν τὸ νικᾶν ἔστι πᾶν εὐβουλία.

710

720

404
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But these things in the Gods' hands must we leave. Of our main stumblingblock I came to tell.

ETEOCLES
What shall this be? Thy drift is dark to me.

CREON
A captive from the Argive host is come.

ETEOCLES
What tidings bringeth he of dealings there?

CREON
That Argos' host will straightway wind the net Of arms round Cadmus' burg and all her towers.

ETEOCLES
Then Cadmus' burg must lead forth her array,—

CREON
Whither? Sees not thy rash youth what it should?

ETEOCLES
Across yon trenches, as to fight forthwith.

CREON
Small is the host of this land, countless theirs.

ETEOCLES
I know them for tongue-valiant warriors.

CREON
Argos hath high repute mid Hellas' sons.

ETEOCLES
Fear not: their slaughter soon shall load the plain.

CREON
That would I: yet herein I see grim toil.

ETEOCLES
Not I will pen mine host within the walls!

CREON
Yet wholly in good counsel victory lies.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
βούλει τράπωμαι δῆθ' ὅδονς ἄλλας τινάς;
ΚΡΕΩΝ
πάσας γε, πρὶς κίνδυνον εἰς ἀπαξ μολείν.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
eἰ νυκτὸς αὐτοῖς προσβάλοιμεν ἐκ λόχου;
ΚΡΕΩΝ
eἰπερ σφαλεῖς γε δεύρο σωθήσει πάλιν.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
ἵσον φέρει νύξ, τοῖς δὲ τολμῶσιν πλέον.
ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἐνδυστυχήσαι δειμὼν εὐφρόνης κνέφας.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ δεῖπνον οὕσι προσβάλω δόρυ;
ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἐκπληξίς ἂν γένοιτο, νικήσαι δὲ δεί.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
βαθὺς γέ τοι Διρκαίος ἀναχωρεῖν πόρος.
ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἀπαν κάκιον τοῦ φυλάσσεσθαι καλῶς.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
τί δ’, εἰ καθιππεύσαιμεν Ἀργείων στρατόν;
ΚΡΕΩΝ
κάκει πέφρακται λαὸς ἄρμασιν πέριξ.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
τί δήτα δράσω; πολεμίσωι δῶ πόλιν;
ΚΡΕΩΝ
μὴ δήτα· βουλεύου δ’, ἐπείπερ εἰ σοφός.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
τίς οὖν πρόνοια γέγνεται σοφωτέρα;
ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἐπι τ’ ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς φασιν, ὡς ἦκουσ’ ἐγώ,—
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ETEOCLES
Wouldst thou I turned me unto other paths?
CREON
Any path, ere on one cast all be staked.
ETEOCLES
How if by night we fall on them from ambush?
CREON
Yea,—if, miscarrying, safe thou mayst return.
ETEOCLES
Night equals all, yet helps the venturous most.
CREON
Yet, for ill-speed, night’s gloom is terrible.
ETEOCLES
Shall I make onset even as they sup?
CREON
A brief alarm:—’tis victory we need.
ETEOCLES
Dirce’s deep ford should hamper their retreat.
CREON
Naught were so good as ward us warily.
ETEOCLES
How, if our horse charge down on Argos’ host?
CREON
There too their lines be fenced with chariots round.
ETEOCLES
What shall I do then?—yield our town to foes?
CREON
Never. Take thought, if prudent chief thou art.
ETEOCLES
What counsel is more prudent, then, than mine?
CREON
Seven champions are there with them, have I heard,—
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
τί προστετάχθαι δράν; τὸ γὰρ σθένος βραχύ.
ΚΡΕΩΝ
λόχων ἀνάσσειν ἑπτὰ προσκεῖσθαι πύλαις.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
τί δὴ ἦτα δρὸμεν; ἀπορίαν γὰρ οὐ μενῶ.
ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἔπτ᾽ ἀνδρας αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ πρὸς πύλαις ἐλοῦ.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
λόχων ἀνάσσειν ἢ μονοστόλου δορός;
ΚΡΕΩΝ
λόχων, προκρίνας οὕτε πᾶσιν ἀλκιμώτατοι,
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
ξυνῆκ’ ἀμύνειν τειχέων προσαμβάσεις.
ΚΡΕΩΝ
καὶ ξυστρατήγους οὖς δ’ ἀνὴρ οὐ πάνθ’ ὀρᾶ.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
θάρσει προκρίνας ἡ φρενῶν εὐβουλία;
ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἀμφότερον ἀπολειφθέν γὰρ οὐδὲν θάτερον.
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
ἐσται τάδ’. ἐλθὼν δ’ ἐπτάπυργον ἔσ πολὺν
τάξω λοχαγοὺς πρὸς πύλαισιν, ὡς λέγεις,
ἴσους ἰσοίσι πολεμόσισι ἀντιθείσι.
δομαὶ δ’ ἐκάστου διατριβή πολλῆς ἔργας,
ἐχθρῶν ὡς τοῦτοι τείχεσιν καθημένου.
ἀλλ’ εἰμ’, ὅπως ἁν μὴ καταργῶμεν χέρα.
καὶ μοι γένοιτ’ ἀδελφὸν ἀντίρητα λαβεῖν
καὶ ξυσταθέντα διὰ μάχης ἐλείν δορί,
κτανεῖν θ’ ὃς ἢλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμῆν.
γάμους δ’ ἀδελφής Ἀντιγόνης παιδὸς τε σοῦ
Αἶμονος, ἐὰν τι τής τύχης ἐγὼ σφαλῶ,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ETEOCLES
Whereto appointed? Seven men's might were small!

CREON
To lead their bands to assail our seven gates.

ETEOCLES
What then? I wait not counsels of despair. 740

CREON
Seven choose thou too to front them at the gates.

ETEOCLES
To lead our bands, or fight with single spear?

CREON
To lead our bands: choose thou our mightiest;—

ETEOCLES
Ay so—to avert the scaling of the walls.

CREON
And under-captains: one man sees not all.

ETEOCLES
For valour chosen, or for prudent wit?

CREON
Nay, both: without its fellow, each is naught.

ETEOCLES
This shall be. Now to the seven towers will I,
And plant chiefs, as thou biddest, at the gates,
Champion for champion, ranged against the foe. 750
To tell each o'er, were costly waste of time,
When foes be camped beneath our very walls.
But I will go, that mine hands loiter not.
God grant I meet my brother face to face,
Clash in the grapple, and slay him with the spear—
Slay him, who came to lay my country waste!
But, for Antigone's marriage with thy son
Haemon,—if aught untoward hap to me,—
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

σοὶ χρῆ μέλεσθαι. τὴν δόσιν δὲ ἐχέγγυνον
760 τὴν πρόσθε ποιῶ νῦν ἔπ᾽ ἐξόδους ἐμαῖς.
μητέρος ἀδελφὸς εἰ; τί δεῖ μακρηγορεῖν;
τρέφ᾽ ἀξίως νῦν σοῦ τε τὴν τ᾽ ἐμὴν χάριν.
πατὴρ δ᾽ εἰς αὐτὸν ἀμαθίαν ὀφλισκάιει,
ὁπιν τυφλώσας ὃν ἄγαν σφ᾽ ἐπήνεσα·
ήμασ τ᾽ ἀραίων, ἢν τύχῃ, κατακτεῖε.
ἐν δ᾽ ἐστίν ἡμῖν ἄργον, εἰ τι θέσφατον
οἰωνόμαντις Τειρεσίας ἐχει φράσαι,
τοῦδ᾽ ἐκπυθέσθαι ταῦτ᾽ ἐγὼ δὲ παίδα σοῦν
Μενοικέα, σοῦ πατρὸς αὐτεπώνυμον,
770 ἄξοντα πέμψω δεύρῳ Τειρεσίαν, Κρέον·
σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἵδυς εἰς λόγους ἀφίξεται.
ἔγω δὲ τέχνην μαντικὴν ἐμεμψάμην
ἡδη πρὸς αὐτὸν, ὡστε μοι μομφᾶς ἔχειν.
πόλει δὲ καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ᾽ ἐπισκῆπτω, Κρέον·
ἡπερ κρατήσῃ τὰμά, Πολυνείκους νεκν
μήποτε ταφήναι τηδε Θηβαία χθονί·
θυσίειν δὲ τὸν θάψαυτα, κἂν φίλων τις ἦ.
σοὶ μὲν τάδ᾽ αὐδῶν προσπολόους δ᾽ ἔμοις λέγω.
ἐκφέρετε τευχὴν πάνοπλὰ τ᾽ ἀμφιβλήματα,
780 ός εἰς ἁγῶνα τὸν προκείμενον δορὸς
ὀρμώμεθ' ἤδη ξύν δίκη νικηφόρῳ.
τῇ δ᾽ Εὐλαβεία χρησιμωτάτη θεῶν
προσευχόμεσθα τήνυδε διασφίζειν πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅ πολύμοχθος Ἄρης, τί ποθ᾽ αἴματι στρ.
καὶ θανάτῳ κατέχει Βρομίου παράμονος ἐφοταῖς;
οὐκ ἐπὶ καλλιχόρους στεφάνοις νεάνιδος ὄρας
βόστρυχον ἀμπετάσας, λωτοῦ κατὰ πνεύματα
μέλπει

410.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

See thou to this. Their late betrothal-plight
Now, as I go forth, do I ratify.
Thou art my mother's brother: why waste words?
Give her fair nurture, for thy sake and mine.
My father hath wrought folly against himself,
Blinding his eyes;—scant praise of mine he hath;—
And us his curse shall slay, if so it hap.

One thing abides undone, to ask the seer
Teiresias touching this, if aught he hath
Of oracles to tell; and I will send
Thy son Menoeceus, of thy father named,
Creon, to bring Teiresias hitherward.
With a good will shall he commune with thee:
But the seer's art in time past have I mocked
Unto his face; so he may bear me grudge.

This, Creon, is mine hest to Thebes and thee:—
If my cause conquer, never bury ye
Polyneices' corpse upon this Theban soil.
Who buries him—though near and dear—must die.
This to thee:—to mine henchmen now I speak.
Bring forth my arms, mine harness-panoply,
That to the imminent conflict of the spear
I may set forth, with Right to crown mine arms.
To Heedfulness, of all Gods helpfulest,
That she will save this city, now we pray.  [Exit.

CHORUS

Ares the troublous, O whence is thy passion  (Str.)
For blood and for death, unattuned to the feasts of
the Revelry-king?  [ginal fashion
Not for the dances, the circlings of beauty, in vir-
Tossed are thy tresses abroad, nor to breathings of
flutes dost thou sing

418
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

μούσαν, ἐν ᾧ χάριτες χοροποιοί, ἀλλὰ σὺν ὀπλοφόροις στρατὸν Ἀργείων ἐπι-
πνεύσας

790 αἵματι Θήβαις
κώμον ἀναυλότατον προχορεύεισ.
οὐδ’ ἢπὸ θυρσομανεὶ νεβρίδων μέτα δίνα,
ἀρμασὶ καὶ ψαλίοις τετραβάμοσι μόνυχα πώλον,
ἵππεαις ἐπὶ χεῦμασι βαίνων
Ἰσμήνῳθοράζεις, Ἀργείοις ἐπιπνεύσας
Σπαρτῶν γένναν,
ἀσπιδοφέρμοι μιᾶσον ἐνοπλοῦν,
ἀντίπαλον κατὰ λάινα τείχεα
χαλκῷ κοσμῆσας.
ἡ δεινὰ τις Ἠρις θεὸς, ἄ τάδε
μῆσατο πῆματα γὰς βασιλεῖσιν,

800 Λαβδακίδαις πολυμόχθοις.

ὁ ξαθεών πετάλων πολυθηρότα-
τον νάπος, Ἀρτέμιδος χιονομόρφον ὄμμα Κιθαι-
ρόν, μῆποτε τὸν θανάτῳ πρωτεθέντα, λόχευμ Ἰοκά-
στας,
ὡφελεῖς Οἰδιπόδαν θρέψαι βρέφος ἐκβολοῦν οἴκων,
χρυσοδέτοις περόναις ἐπίσαμον
μηδὲ τὸ παρθένιον πτερόν, οὐρείον τέρας, ἐλθεῖν
πένθεα γαίας,
Σφιγγ’, ἀπομονοςτάταισι σὺν ὀῖδαῖς,
ἄ ποτε Καδμογενὴ τετραβάμοσι χαλαῖς

412
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

A strain to whose witchery dances are wreathing:
But with clangour of harness of fight through the
Argive array art thou breathing
War-lust for the blood of our Thebes athirst,
As thou leadest the dance of a revel accurst
Where no flutes ring.
Thou art found not where fawnskin and thyrsus in
mad reel mingle and sunder,
But with chariots and clashing of bits and with war-
horses’ footfall of thunder
By Ismenus’ brimming marge
With the rushing of steeds dost thou charge,
Into Argives breathing the battle-hate
Against the sons of the Dragon-state;
And with harness of brass and with targe,
Fronting our ramparts of stone, dost array
A host for the fray.
A fearful Goddess in sooth is Strife,
By whose devising the troublous life
Of the Labdacid kings of the land is anguish-rife.

Gorges mysterious of frondage, Cithaeron (Ant.)
Beast-haunted, O birth-bed of snows, O thou apple
of Artemis’ eye, [Jocasta, to rear on
Ah that thou ne’er hadst received him, the babe of
Thy lap such a fosterling, Oedipus, thrust from his
home as to die,
Life-marked with the brooch-pin golden-looping!
And O that the portent, the wings of the Sphinx
from the mountain swooping,
Down on the land for its woe had not come,
The maiden that sang us a chant of doom,
An untuneable cry,
When with talons of feet and of hands on the ram-
parts of Cadmus she darted,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

teίχεσι χρυμπτομένα φέρεν αιθέρος εἰς ἀβατον φῶς
810 ογένναν, ἀν ό κατὰ χθονὸς"Ἀιδας
Καδμεῖοις ἐπιπέμπει· δυσδαίμων δ’ ἔρις ἄλλα
θάλλει παίδων
Οἰδιπόδα κατὰ δόματα καὶ πώλων.
οὐ γὰρ ὁ μὴ καλὸν οὐποτ’ ἐφι καλὸν,
οὐδ’ οἱ μὴ νόμμοι παῖδες
ματρὶ λόχευμα, μίασμα πατρὸς δὲ συν-
αίμονος εἰς λέχος ἤλθεν.†

ἐτεκές, ὦ γὰ, ἐτεκές ποτε, ἐπωδ.
βύρβαρον ὡς ἀκολὴν ἐδάνην ἐδαὶν ποτ’ ἐν οἴκοις,
820 τὰν ἀπὸ θηροτρόφου φοινικολόφου δράκοντος
γένναν ὅδουνοφην, Ὀηβαὶς κάλλιστον ὄνειδος·
Ἄρμονίας δὲ ποτ’ εἰς ύμεναιος
ἡλυθον οὐρανίδαι, φόρμιγγὶ τε τείχεα Ὀηβαὶς
tὰς Ἀμφιονίας τε λύρας ὑπὸ πύργους ἀνέστα
dιδύμων ποταμῶν πόρου ἄμφι μέσον
Δήρκας, χλοεροτρόφον ὑ πεδίον
πρόπαρ Ἰσμηνοῦ καταδεῦει·
Ἰώ θ’ ἀ κερόεσσα προμάτωρ
Καδμείων βασιλῆς ἐγείνατο,
830 μυρίαδας δ’ ἀγαθὸν ἐτέροις ἐτέ-
ρας μεταμειβόμενα πόλις ὥσ’ ἐπ’ ἀ-
κροις ἐστακέν Ἀρή-
οις στεφάνοις.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And bearing his offspring to sun-litten cloudland untrodden departed,
She whom Hades from dens of the dead,
Against Cadmus' children sped!
But a new curse lights upon Thebes and her halls;
For 'twixt Oedipus' sons the hell-seed falls
Of strife, and it blossometh red.
O, never may aught that is utter shame
Bear honour's name;
Nay, nor the unblest spousal's fruit
Are sons true-born, but with stain they pollute
Their begetter, the stock that sprang from the selfsame root.

(Epode)

Thou didst bear, O land, thou didst bear of old—
For I heard, yea, I heard in mine home, in an alien tongue, the story—
From the dragon of crimson crest that battened on beasts of the wold [and her glory.
A race of the seed of his teeth, to be Thebes' reproach
To Harmonia's bridal descended of yore ¹
The Children of Heaven; and Thebes' walls rose to the
harp's voice singing, [her brows' enringing,
When the spell of Amphion's lyre fashioned towers for
In the space 'twixt the rivers twain that pour
Out of Dirce, whose dews drift greenness, shedding
Life o'er the plain by Ismenus spreading.
And our ancestress Io of hornèd brows
Was mother of kings unto Cadmus' house.
Lo, how hath this city, through line on line
Of blessings unnumbered, attained to the height
Where the War-god's crowns of victory-might
Shine!

¹ Cadmus wedded Harmonia, Ares' daughter.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ήγου πάροιθε, θύγατερ, ὡς τυφλῷ ποδὶ ὀφθαλμῶς εἰ σύ, ναυβάταισιν ἀστρον ὡς·
δεῦρ' εἰς τὸ λευρὸν πέδον ἵχνος τιθεῖα' ἐμὸν, προβαίνει, μὴ σφαλώμεν· ἀσθενῆς πατήρ·
κλήσοι τὲ μοι φύλασσε παρθένῳ χερί,
οὐς ἐλαβον οἰωνίσματ' ὅρνιθων μαθὼν
θάκοισιν ἐν ἱεροῖσιν, οὐ μαντεύομαι. 840

τέκνον Μενοκεῦ, παί Κρέοντος, εἰπέ μοι
πόση τις ἡ 'πίλοιτος ἀστεως ὄδος
πρὸς πατέρα τὸν σὸν· ὡς ἐμὸν κάμμει γόνυ,
πυκνὴν δὲ βαίνων ἠλυσίν μόλις περὶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

θάρσει. πέλασ γὰρ, Τειρεσία, φίλοις σοῖς
ἐξωρμίσαι σὸν πόδα· λαβοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ, τέκνον·
ὡς πᾶσ' ἀπήγ̄η ποὺς τε πρεσβύτου φιλεί
χειρὸς θυραίας ἀναμένειν κοψίματα. 850

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

εἶν, πάρεσμεν· τί με καλεῖς σπουδῆ, Κρέουν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὔπω λελησμέθ', ἀλλὰ σὔλλεξαι σθένος
καὶ πνεῦμ' ἄθροισον, αὐτοὺς ἐκβαλὼν ὄδοι.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

κόπῳ παρείμαι γοὺν Ἐρεχθειδῶν ἀπὸ
δεῦρ' ἐκκομμόθεις τῆς πάροιθεν ἡμέρας·
κάκει γὰρ ἦν τις πόλεμος Εὐμόλπου δορὸς,
οὐ καλλινίκους Κεκροπίδας ἔθηκ' ἐγώ·
καὶ τὸνδε χρυσῶν στέφανον, ὡς ὀρᾶς, ἐξο
λαβῶν ἀπαρχὰς πολεμίων σκυλευμάτων.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴωνον ἐθέμην καλλίνικα σὰ στέφῃ·
ἐν γὰρ κλύδωνι κείμεθ', ὦσπερ οἶσθα σὺ,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Enter TEIRESIAS led by his DAUGHTER, with MENOECEUS.

TEIRESIAS

Lead on, my daughter: to my sightless feet
As eyes art thou, as star to mariners.
Hither, on even ground, plant thou my steps.
Guide, lest I stumble: strengthless is thy sire.
Guard in thy maiden hand the augury-lots
Which, when I marked the bodings of the birds,
In the holy seat I took, where I divine.
Thou child Menoeceus, son of Creon, tell
How much remaineth of the townward way
To where thy father waits. Faint wax my knees:
Journeying so long, scarce have I strength to go.

CREON

Take heart, Teiresias, thou art nigh thy friends,
And thy foot's anchorage. Grasp his hand, my child.
Mule-car and aged foot alike are wont
To await the upbearing of another's hand.

TEIRESIAS

Here am I. Why this instant summons, Creon?

CREON

We have not forgotten. Gather strength, regain
Thy breath, cast off thy journey's toil and strain.

TEIRESIAS

Sooth am I spent with toil, brought hitherward
But yesterday from King Erechtheus' folk.
There too was war, against Eumolpus' spear,
Where I to Cecrops' sons gave victory.
This crown of gold, as thou mayst see, have I
As firstfruits of the foemen's spoils received.

CREON

I take thy triumph-crown for omen fair;
For we are, as thou knowest, in mid-surge
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

860 δορὸς Δαναίδῶν, καὶ μέγας Θήβαις ἀγών. βασιλεὺς μὲν ὁ ἔκακος κοσμηθεὶς ὅπλοις ἦδη πρὸς ἄλκην 'Ετεοκλῆς Μυκηνίδα· ἐμοὶ δὲ ἐπέσταλκεν ἐκμαθεῖν σέθεν πάρα, τί δρῶντες ἂν μάλιστα σώσαιμεν πόλιν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

'Ετεοκλέους μὲν εἶνεκ' ἀν κλῆσας στόμα χρησμοὺς ἐπέσχον· σοὶ δ', ἐπει χρησίς μαθεῖν, λέξω. νοσεὶ γὰρ ἦδε γῆ πάλαι, Κρέον,

870 εἶ ὁ τεκνώθη Δάμους βία θεῶν πόσιν τ᾽ ἐφυσε μπρού μέλεν Οἰδίπον· αἳ θ' ἀίματωποι δεργμάτων διαφθοραὶ θεῶν σῶφισμα κατάδειξις Ἑλλάδι.

ἀ δυναλύσαι παῖδες Οἰδίπον χρόνῳ χρήζουντες, ὡς δὴ θεοὺς ὑπεκδραμοῦμενοι, ἡμαρτον ἄμαθῶς· οὔτε γὰρ γέρα πατρὶ οὔτ', ἐξοδον διδόντες ἀνδρὰ δυστυχή ἐξηγούσαν· ἐκ δ' ἐπενευσ' αὐτοῖς ἀρᾶς δεινάς, νοσῶν τε καὶ πρὸς ἡτίμασμένοις.

880 ἀγῶ τι οὐ δρῶν, ποία δ' οὐ λέγων ἔπη, εἰς ἐχθρός ἠλθον παιοὶ τοῖς Οἰδίποι.

ἔγγυς δὲ θάνατος αὐτόχειρ αὐτοῖς, Κρέον πολλοὶ δὲ νεκροὶ περὶ νεκροῖς πεπτωκότες Ἄργεα καὶ Καδμεία μίζαντες βέλη πικρῶν γὰς δώσουσι Θῆβαι χθονί.

οὐ τ' δὲ τάλαινα συγκατασκάπτει πόλι, εἰ μὴ λόγους τις τοῖς ἐμοίσι πείσται. ἐκεῖνο μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον ἦν, τῶν Οἰδίποιοι μηδένα πολῖτην μὴ ἀνακτ' εἶναι χθονός,

890 ὡς δαμοῦντας κανατρέψοντας πόλιν. ἐπεὶ δὲ κρείσσον τὸ κακὸν ἦστι τάγαθος, μὴ ἐστιν ἄλλη μηχανή σωτηρίας.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Of Danaïd war, and Thebes must wrestle hard. 860
King Eteocles, clad in war-array,
Even now is gone to face Mycenae's might;
But to me gave in charge to inquire of thee
What deeds of ours shall best deliver Thebes.

TEIRESIAS

For Eteocles sealed my lips had been,
The oracles withheld:—since thou wouldst know,
I tell thee. Creon, long this land hath ailed
Since Laïus in heaven's despite begat
Oedipus, his own mother's wretched spouse.
Yea, and the gory ruin of his eyes
Was heaven's device, for warning unto Greece.

And Oedipus' sons, who fain had cloaked it o'er
With time, as though they could outrun the Gods,
In folly erred: vouchsafing to their sire
Nor honour nor free air, they stung to fury
His misery: dread malison he breathed
Against them, suffering and shamed withal.
What did I not? What warnings spake I not?—
And had for guerdon hate of Oedipus' sons.

But nigh them, Creon, mutual slaughter looms;
And corpses many upon corpses piled,
Transfixed with Argive and Cadmean shafts,
With bitter wails shall dower the Theban land.

Thou, hapless town, art made a ruin-heap—
Except unto my bodings one give heed!
This had been best, that none of Oedipus' line
Remained in Thebes, nor citizen nor king:
They are fiend-possessed and doomed to wreck the state.

But, seeing the evil hath o'erborne the good,
One other way of safety yet remains;
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀλλ'—οὐ γὰρ εἰπεῖν οὐτ' ἐμοὶ τὸδ' ἀσφαλὲς πικρόν τε τοῦτο τὴν τύχην κεκτημένους πόλει παρασχεῖν φάρμακον σωτηρίας—ἀπειμῆ, χαίρεθ' εἰς γὰρ ὅν πολλῶν μέτα τὸ μέλλον, εἰ χρῆ, πείσομαι τί γὰρ πάθω;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἐπίσχες αὐτοῦ, πρέσβυ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
μὴ πιλαμβάνου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
μεῖνον, τί φεύγεις;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἡ τύχη σ', ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
φράσον πολίταις καὶ πόλει σωτηρίαν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
βούλειν σὺ μέντοι κοὐχὶ βουλήσει τάχα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
καὶ πῶς πατρῴαν γαῖαν οὐ σῶσαι θέλω;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
θέλεις ἀκούσαι δήτα καὶ σπουδὴν ἔχεις;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
εἰς γὰρ τί μᾶλλον δεῖ προθυμίαν ἔχειν;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
κλῖνοις ἀν ἡδη τῶν ἐμὸν θεσπισμάτων. πρῶτον δ' ἐκεῖνο βούλομαι σαφῶς μαθεῖν, ποῦ 'στιν Μενοίκευς, ὃς με δεῦρ' ἐπήγαγεν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
ὅδ' οὐ μακρὰν ἀπεστί, πλησίον δὲ σου.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἀπελθέτω νυν θεσφάτων ἐμὼν ἔκας.

420
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But this to tell, for me were all unsafe,
And bitter unto those whom fate endows
With power to give their city safety's balm.
I go. Farewell! What must befall will I—
One midst a multitude—endure. What help?

[Turns to go.

CREON

Abide here, ancient!

TEIRESIAS

Lay not hold on me.

CREON

Tarry: why flee?

TEIRESIAS

Thy fortune flees, not I.

CREON

Tell citizens and city safety's path.

TEIRESIAS

Ay, fain art thou!—but loth thou soon shalt be.

CREON

How?—not desire to save my fatherland?

TEIRESIAS

Wouldst thou indeed hear? Art thou set thereon?

CREON

Yea: whereunto more earnest should I be?

TEIRESIAS

Then straightway shalt thou hear mine oracles.
But of this first would I be certified—
Where is Menoeceus, who hath led me hither?

CREON

He stands not far, but even at thy side.

TEIRESIAS

Let him withdraw then from my bodings far.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἐμὸς πεφυκὼς παῖς ἃ δεῖ συγήσεται.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
βούλει παρόντος δήτα σοι τούτον φράσω;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
κλύων γὰρ ἀν τέρποιτο τῆς σωτηρίας.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἀκούε δὴ υπὸ τεσσάρων ἐμὼν ὀδὸν
[ἀ δρόντες ἀν σώσαστε Καδμέων πόλιν.]
σφάξαι Μενοικὴ τόνδε δεῖ σ’ ὑπὲρ πάτρας
σον παῖδ’, ἐπειδὴ τὴν τύχην αὐτὸς καλεῖσ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
τί φῆς; τίν’ εἰπας τόνδε μῦθον, ὡ γέρον;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἀπερ πέφυκε, ταῦτα κανάγκη σε δρὰν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
ὡ πολλὰ λέξας ἐν βραχεὶ χρόνῳ κακά.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
σοί γ’, ἄλλα πατρίδι μεγάλα καὶ σωτηρία.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
οὐκ ἔκλυνον, οὐκ ἦκουσα· χαιρέτω πόλις.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἀνὴρ ὁδ’ οὐκέθ’ αὐτὸς, ἐκνεύει πάλιν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
χαίρων ἱθ’. οὐ γὰρ σῶν με δεὶ μαντευμάτων.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἀπόλωλεν ἀληθεὶ, ἐπεὶ σὺ δυστυχεῖς;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
ὡ πρὸς σε γονάτων καὶ γερασιμών τρίχος,

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
τί προσπίτνεις με; δυσφύλακτ’ αἴτει κακά.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON
He is my son, will keep what must be secret.

TEIRESIAS
Wilt thou indeed I speak before his face?

CREON
Yea; of this safety gladly shall he hear.

TEIRESIAS
Hear then the tenor of mine oracle,
What deed of yours shall save the Thebans' town.
Menoeceus must thou slay for fatherland,
Thy son—since thou thyself demandest fate.

CREON
How say'st thou? Ancient, what was this thy word?

TEIRESIAS
As hath been doomed, even this thou needs must do.

CREON
Oh countless ills in one short moment told!

TEIRESIAS
Thine ills—but great salvation for thy land.

CREON
I heard not!—hearkened not!—away, thou Thebes!

TEIRESIAS
Not the same man is this: he flincheth now.

CREON
Depart in peace: thy bodings need I not.

TEIRESIAS
Is truth dead, for that thou art fortune-crost?

CREON
Oh, by thy knees, and by thy reverend hair!—

TEIRESIAS
Why kneel? Thou prayest for ruin inevitable.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ
σίγα· πόλει δὲ τούσδε μὴ λέξης λόγους.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἀδικείν κελεύεις μ’ οὐ σιωπήσαιμεν ἂν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
tί δὴ μὲ δράσεις; παιδὰ μου κατακτενεῖς;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἄλλοις μελήσει ταῦτ’, ἐμοὶ δ’ εἰρήσεται.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἐκ τοῦ δ’ ἐμοὶ τὸδ’ ἥλθε καὶ τέκνη κακὸν;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

930 ὀρθῶς μ’ ἐρωτᾶς κεῖσ ἁγώ’ ἔρχει λόγων.
δεῖ τόνδε θαλάμαις, οὗ δράκων ὁ γηγενὴς
ἐγένετο Δίρκης ναμάτων ἐπίσκοπος,
σφαγέντα φόνιον αἴμα γῆ δοῦναί χοάς,
Κάδμου παλαιῶν Ἄρεως ἐκ μηνυμάτων,
δς γηγενεὶ δράκοντι τιμωρεῖ φόνον.
καὶ ταῦτα δρῶντες σύμμαχον κτῆσεσθ’ Ἄρη.
χθῶν δ’ ἀντὶ καρποῦ καρπὸν ἀντὶ θ’ αἰματος
ἀλ’ ἣν λάβῃ βρότειον, ἔξετ’ εὗμενή
γῆν, ἢ ποθ’ ἢμῖν χρυσοπήληκα στάχνων
σπαρτῶν ἀνήκεν’ ἐκ γένους δὲ δεὶ θανείν
τοῦδ’, ὃς δράκοντος γένους ἐκπέφυκε παῖς.
σῦ δ’ ἐνθάδ’ ἢμῖν λοιπὸς εἰ σπαρτῶν γένους
άκεραιος, ἐκ τε μητρὸς ἀρσένων τ’ ἄπο,
οὶ σοὶ τε παῖδες. Ἀλμονός μὲν οὖν γάμοι
σφαγᾶς ἀπείρων’ οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἥθεος,
κεὶ μὴ γὰρ εὐνής ἤφατ’, ἀλλ’ ἔχει λέχος
οὕτος δὲ πῶλος τῆδ’ ἀνειμένος πόλει
θανῶν πατρῶν γαῖαν ἐκσωστεῖν ἂν.
πικρὸν δ’ Ἄδραστῳ νόστον Ἀργείουσι τε
θῆσει, μέλαιναν κηρ’ ἐπ’ ὀμμασιν βαλών,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON
Keep silence: to the city tell not this.

TEIRESIAS
Thou bid'st me sin: I will not hold my peace.

CREON
What wilt thou do to me?—wilt slay my son?

TEIRESIAS
Others shall see to that. 'Tis mine to speak.

CREON
Whence came on me this curse, and on my son?

TEIRESIAS
Fair question and demand that I show cause. 930
In that den where the earth-born dragon lay
Watching the streams of Dirce, must he yield,
Slaughtered, a blood-ovation to the earth;
For Ares, nursing wrath 'gainst Cadmus long,
Now would avenge his earth-born dragon's death.
Do this, and Ares for your champion win.

If earth for seed gain seed, and human blood
For blood, then kindly shall ye prove the earth
Which once sent up a harvest golden-helmed
Of Sown-men. And it needeth that one die 940
Born of the lineage of the Dragon's Teeth;
And sole survivor art thou of the Sown
Of pure blood both on sire's and mother's side,
Thou and thy two sons. Haemon's spousals bar
His slaughter, for he is not virgin man.
Though sealed the rite be not, betrothed is he.

But this lad, to his city consecrate,
Dying, should yet redeem his fatherland,
And for Adrastus and the Argives make
Bitter return, their eyes with black death palled, 950
κλεινάς τε Θήβας. τοινδ’ ἐλοῦ δυόν πότμων τὸν ἔτερον’ ἥ γὰρ παῖδα σώσου ἢ πόλεω.
τὰ μὲν παρ’ ἡμῶν πάντ’ ἔχεις· ἤγοι, τέκνουν, πρὸς οἶκον. δοτὶς δ’ ἐμπύρῳ χρηται τέχνη,
μάταιος· ἢ μὲν ἐχθρὰ σημήνας τύχη,
πυκνὸν καθεστὶχ’ οἷς ἂν οἰωνοσκοπή.
ψυκὴ δ’ ὑπ’ οἴκτον τοῖς χρωμένοις λέγων
ἀδικεῖ τὰ τῶν θεῶν. Φοίβον ἀνθρώποις μόνον
χρῆν θεσπισθεῖν, ὅς δέδουκεν οὐδένα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

960 Κρέον, τι συγάς γῆρυν ἀφθονγον σχάσας;
κάμω γὰρ οὐδὲν ἥσσον ἐκπλήξε πάρα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τι δ’ ἂν τις εἵποι; δῆλον’ οἳ γ’ ἐμοὶ λόγοι.
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὕποτ’ εἰς τὸδ’ εἷμι συμφορὰς,
ὡστε σφαγέντα παῖδα προσθείναι πόλει.
πᾶσιν γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι φιλότεκνος βίος,
οὐδ’ ἂν τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδα τις δοῇ κτανεῖν.
μὴ μ’ εὐλογεῖτο τάμα τις κτεῖνον τέκνα.
αὐτός δ’, ἐν ὀφαῖρ γὰρ ἔσταμεν βίον.
θυησκεῖν ἐτοίμοις πατρίδος ἐκλυτήριον.

970 ἀλλ’ εἴα, τέκνον, πρὶν μαθεῖν πᾶσαν πόλιν,
ἀκόλαστ’ ἐάσας μάντεων θεσπισματο,
φεῦ’ ός τάχιστα τῆδ’ ἀπαλλαχθεῖς χρονός·
λέξει γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ στρατηλάταις τάδε,
πῦλας ἐφ’ ἐπὶ καὶ λοχαγέτας μολῶν·
καὶ μὲν φθάσωμεν, ἔστι σοι σωτηρία·
ἦν δ’ ὑστερήσεις, οἰχόμεσθα, καθανεὶ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

στοὶ δήτα φεῦγω; τίνα πόλιν; τίνα ξένων;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὁπον χρονὸς τῆδ’ ἐκποδῶν μάλιστ’ ἔσει.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And make Thebes glorious. One of these two fates Choose: either save the city, or thy son.
Now hast thou all my tale. Lead on, my child,
Homeward. Who useth the diviner's art
Is foolish. If he heraldeth ill things,
He is loathed of those to whom he prophesies.
If, pitying them that seek to him, he lie,
He wrongs the Gods. Sole prophet unto men
Ought Phoebus to have been, who feareth none.

[Exit.

CHORUS

Why silent, Creon, with lips held from speech?
On me, too, consternation weighs no less.

CREON

What should one say? . . . . But clear mine answer is:
Never such depth of misery will I seek,
As offer for my city a slaughtered son!
For love of children filleth all men's life,
And none to death would yield up his own child.
Let no man praise me while he slays my sons!
Myself—who have reached the ripeness of my
years—
For death stand ready, to redeem my land.
But up, my child, ere all the city hear:
Heed not the reckless words of soothsayers,
But fly—with all speed get thee from the land!
To the seven gates, the captains, will he go,
And tell the rulers and the chieftains this.
Yet, may we but forestall him, thou art saved;
But if thou lag, undone we are—thou diest.

MENOECEUS

But whither flee?—what city seek?—what friend?

CREON

Where thou from this land's reach shalt farthest be.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

οὐκον εἰς φράζειν εἰκός, ἐκπονεῖν δὲ ἐμὲ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Δελφοῦς περάσασ—

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

ποι με χρή, πάτερ, μολεῖν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Αἰτωλίδ' εἰς γῆν.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

ἐκ δὲ τῆς ἔρωτος ποι περῶ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Θεσπρωτῶν οὐδας.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

σεμνὰ Δωδώνης βάθρα;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐγνωσ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

τί δὴ τόδ' ἐρυμά μοι γενησεται;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πόμπιμος ο δαίμων.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

χρημάτων δὲ τίς πόρος;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐγώ πορεύσω χρυσόν.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

εὖ λέγεις, πάτερ.

χώρει νυν' ὡς σήν πρὸς κασυγνήτην μολὼν,

ἡς πρῶτα μαστὸν εἶλκυσ', Ἰοκάστην λέγω,

μητρὸς στερηθείς ὀρφανὸς τ' ἀποζυγείς,

προσηγορήσων εἰμι καὶ σώσων βιον.

全能' εἰς, χώρει. μὴ τὸ σὸν κολυνέτω,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

MENOECEUS
It best beseems that thou tell, I perform.

CREON

Pass Delphi—

MENOECEUS
Whither, father, must I go?

CREON

Unto Aetolia.

MENOECEUS
Whither journey thence?

CREON

Thesprotia's soil.

MENOECEUS
Dodona's hallowed floor?

CREON

Thou say'st.

MENOECEUS
What shall be my protection there?

CREON

The God shall speed thee.

MENOECEUS
How supply my need?

CREON

I will find gold.

MENOECEUS
Father, thou sayest well:
Haste then. Unto thy sister will I go,—
Jocasta, on whose bosom first I lay,
Reft of my mother, left an orphan lone,—
To bid her farewell, ere I flee for life.
On then: pass in, be hindrance not in thee.

[Exit CREON.]
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

gυναίκες, ώς εὑ πατρός ἐξείλον φόβου κλέψας λόγους, ὁσθ' ἢ βούλομαι τυχεῖν ὃς μ' ἐκκομέζει, πόλειν ἀποστερῶν τύχης, καὶ δειλία δίδωσι. καὶ συγγνωστὰ μὲν γέροντι τούμον δ' οὐχὶ συγγνώμην ἔχει, προδότην γενέσθαι πατρίδος ἢ μ' ἐγείνατο. ὡς οὖν ἂν εἰδῆτ', εἰμι καὶ σώσω πόλιν ψυχήν τε δόσῳ τής ὑπερθανείν χθονός. αἰσχρὸν γάρ, οἱ μὲν θεσφάτων ἐλευθεροί κοιν ἐἰς ἀνάγκην δαίμοναν ἀφυγμένου στάντες παρ' ἀσπίδ' οὐκ ὁκνήσουσιν θανεῖν, πῦργων πάροιδε μαχόμενοι πάτρας ὑπερ· ἐγὼ δὲ, πατέρα καὶ κασίγυνην προδοὺς πόλιν τ' ἐμαυτοῦ, δεῖλος δ' ἔξω χθονὸς ἀπειμ'. ὅπου δ' ἂν ξώ, κακὸς φανήσομαι. μᾶ τὸν μετ' ἀστρών Ζήν' Ἀρή τε φοίνουν, ὅς τοὺς ὑπερτείλαντας ἐκ γαίας πολεῖ. Σπάρτοις ἀνακτάς τής γῆς ἱδρύσατο. ἄλλ' εἰμι καὶ στὰς ἐξ ἐπάλξεων ἄκρων ἁφάξαι ἐμαυτόν σηκον ἐς μελαμβανή ἰράκοντος, ἐνθ' ὁ μάντης ἐξηγήσατο, ἐλευθερώσω γαίαν εἰρηται λόγος. στείχω δὲ, θανάτου δῶρον οὐκ αἰσχρὸν πόλει δώσων, νόσου δὲ τήνδ' ἀπαλλάξω χθόνα. εἰ γὰρ λαβὼν ἐκαστὸς ο τι δύνατό τις χρηστὸν διέλθαι τοῦτο κεῖς κοινὸν φέροι πατρίδι, κακῶν ἂν αἱ πόλεις ἐλασσόνων πειρώμεναι τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχοῖν ἂν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐβας ἐβας, στρ.

ὡ πτερούσσα, γὰς λόχευμα

430
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Maidens, how well I have stilled my father's fear
By guileful words, to attain the end I would!
Me would he steal hence, robbing Thebes of hope,
Branding me coward! This might one forgive
In age; but no forgiveness should be mine
If I betray the city of my birth.
Doubt not but I will go and save the town,
And give my soul to death for this land's sake.
'Twere shame that men no oracles constrain,
Who have not fall'n into the net of fate,
Shoulder to shoulder stand, blemch not from death,
Fighting before the towers for fatherland,
And I, betraying father, brother, yea,
My city, craven-like flee forth the land—
A dastard manifest, where'er I dwell!

By Zeus star-throned, by Ares, slaughter's lord,
Who set on high in kingship over Thebes
The Dragon-brood that cleft the womb of earth,
Go will I, on the ramparts' height will stand,
And o'er the Dragon's gloomy chasm-cave,
Whereof the seer spake, will I slay myself,
And make my country free. The word is said.

I go, to give my country no mean gift,
My life, from ruin so to save the land:
For, if each man would take his all of good,
Lavish it, lay it at his country's feet,
Then fewer evils should the nations prove,
And should through days to come be prosperous.

[Exit.

CHORUS

Thou camest, camest, O thou winged doom,
Fruit of Earth's travailing,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ewtērou τ' Ἐχίδνας,
Καδμείων ἀρπαγά,
πολύφθορος πολύστονος,
μιξόπάρθενος,
δάιον τέρας,
φοιτάσι πτεροῖς
χαλαισί τ' ὁμοσίτους.
Διρκαίων ἂ ποτ᾽ ἐκ
tόπων νέους πεδαίρουσ'
ἀλυρον ἀμφι μοῦσαν
ὁλομέναν τ' Ἐρμῦν.

ἐφερες ἐφερες ἄχεα πατρίδι
φόνων· φόνιος ἂ θεῶν
ὁς τάδ᾽ ἦν ὁ πράξας.
iάλεμοι δὲ ματέρων,
iάλεμοι δὲ παρθένων
ἔστεναξαν οἶκοις.
iήμιον βολὰν βοάν,
iήμιον μέλος μέλος
ἀλλος ἄλλ᾽ ἐπωτότυζε
diάδοχαῖς ἁνὰ πτόλιν.
βροντᾶ δὲ στεναγμὸς
ἀχα τ᾽ ἦν ὁμοίος,
ὁπότε πόλεος ἀφανίσειεν
ἄ πτερούσσα παρθένος τιν᾽ ἀνδρῶν.

χρόνῳ δ᾽ ἔβα
πυθίας ἀποστολαίσιν
Οἰδίπτοιο ὀ τλάμων
Θηβαίαν τάνδε γὰν
τότ᾽ ἄσμενοις πάλμων δ᾽ ἄχη
ματρὶ γὰρ γάμους

432
THE PHŒNICIAN MAIDENS

Begotten of the Worm of Nether-gloom,
   On Cadmus' sons to spring
Death-fraught, and fraught with moanings for the dead,
   Half maiden, half brute-beast,
Monster of roving pinions, talons red
   From that raw-ravening feast,
Snatching from Dirce's meads her young men, shrieking
   O'er them thy dissonant knell,
Anguish of slaughter on our country wreaking,
   Wreaking a curse-doom fell!
Ah, murderous God, these ills for us who fashioned!
   Moanings of mothers filled
The shuddering homes, and maidens' moanings passioned:
   And wail to wail aye thrilled,
And dirge to death-dirge, each to each replying
   The stricken city through—
A nation's pang—as thunder pealed their crying,
When the winged maid with each new victim flying
   From earth, was lost to view.

(Anl.)

At last was Oedipus, woe-fated, bound
   From Pytho, hither led,—
Our joy, but soon our grief,—who, triumph-crowned
   From that dark riddle read,
Wretch, in foul bridal made his mother wife,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

dυσαγάμους τάλας
cαλλίνικος δὲν
αινεματων συναπτει,
1050
μαινει δὲ τπόλυν' 
δι' αιματων δ' ἀμείβει
μυσαρόν εἰς ἀγώνα
καταβαλών ἀραῖοι
τέκεα μέλεος. ἀγάμεθ' ἀγάμεθ',
δι' ἔπει θάνατον οἴχεται
γὰς ὑπὲρ πατρόφας,
Κρεόντι μὲν λεπὼν γόον,
τὰ δ' ἐπτάπυργα κλήθρα γὰς
καλλίνικα θῆσον.

1060
γενοίμεθ' οδὲ ματέρες
γενοίμεθ' εὖτεκνοι, φίλα
Παλλάς, ἀ δράκοντος αἱμα
λιθόβολοι κατειργάσω,
Καδμεῖαν μέριμναν
ὁμήσασο ἐπ' ἔργον,
ὅθεν ἐπέσαυτο τάνδε γαῖαν
ἀρπαγαίσι δαμόνων τις ἄτα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ώη, τίς ἐν πῦλαισι δωμάτων κυρεί;
ἀνοιγετ', ἐκπορευέτ' ἱοκάστην δόμων,
ώη μάλι' ἀδίμι: διὰ μακροῦ μὲν, ἀλλ' ὁμώς
1070
ἐξελθ', ἀκουσον, Οἰδίπου κλεινὴ δάμαρ,
λήκασ' ὀδυρμῶν πενθίμων τε δακρύων.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ

ὁ φιλτατ', ἢ που ξύμφοραν ἥκεις φέρων
'Ετεοκλέους θανόντος, οὐ παρ' ὦστίδα
βέβηκας αἰε πολεμίων εἰργῶν βέλη;

434
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Polluted Thebes, and banned
His sons to stain in this accurséd strife
With brother-blood the hand.
Praise to him, praise, who unto death is faring,
Yea, for his land to die,
Leaving to Creon moans of love's despairing,
   But setting victory
For crown upon the city seven-gated!
   Ah, may such noble son
To bless mine happy motherhood be fated,
   O Pallas, gracious one!—
Pallas, of whom the sudden stone leapt, spilling
   The dragon-warder's blood:
Thou gav'st the thought the heart of Cadmus thrilling
To dare the deed whence rushed, with ravin filling
   The land, a God's curse-flood.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Ho there! Who standeth at the palace-gate?
Open ye, bring Jocasta forth her bowers.
Ho there, again! Though late, yet come thou forth:
Hearken, renowned wife of Oedipus;
Cease from thy wailings and thy tears of grief.

Enter JOCASTA.

JOCASTA

Friend—friend!—thou com'st not sure with ill news fraught
Of Eteocles' death, by whose shield aye
Thou marchedst, warding him from foemen's darts?
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

[τί μοι ποθ’ ἢκεις καινὸν ἀγγελῶν ἔπος;] τέθηκεν ἡ ζῆ ἡ παῖς ἐμός; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ζῆ, μὴ τρέψης τὸν’, ὡς σ’ ἀπαλλάξω φόβου.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ
τί δ’, ἐπτάπυργοι πῶς ἔχουσι περιβολαί;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἔστασ’ ἀθραυστοί, κούκ ἀνήρπασται πόλις.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ
ἡλθον δὲ πρὸς κίνδυνον ’Αργείου δορός;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἄκμην γ’ ἐπ’ αὐτήν’ ἀλλ’ ὁ Καδμείων Ἀρης κρέισσων κατέστη τοῦ Μυκηναίου δορός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ
ἐν εἰπε πρὸς θεῶν, εἰ τι Πολυνείκους πέρι οἶσθ’, ὡς μέλει μοι καὶ τόδ’, εἰ λεύσσει φάος.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ζῆ σοι ξυνωρίς εἰς τόδ’ ἡμέρας τέκνων.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ
ἐυδαίμονισθ. πῶς γὰρ ’Αργείων δόρυ πυλῶν ἀπεστῆσασθε πυργηροῦμενοι;

Λέξον, γέροντα τυφλὸν ὡς κατὰ στέγας ἐλθοῦσα τέρψε, τήσε ἡ γῆς σεσωσμένης.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἐπεὶ Κρέοντος παῖς ὁ γῆς ὑπερθανὼν πύργων ἐπ’ ἄκρων στὰς μελάνεντον ξίφος λαιμῶν διήκε τήδε γῆ σωτήριοι,

λόχους ένειμεν ἐπτά καὶ λοχαγέτας πύλας ἐφ’ ἐπτά, φύλακας ’Αργείου δορός,

σος παῖς, ἐφέδρους δ’ ἵπποτας μὲν ἰππόταις ἐταξ’, ὀπλίτας δ’ ἀσπιδηφόροις ἐπι,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

What word of tidings bringest thou to me? Dead is my son, or liveth he?—declare.

MESSENGER

He lives. Fear not! I rid thee so of dread.

JOCASTA

And the seven towers, how fares the fence thereof?

MESSENGER

They stand unshattered: Thebes not yet is spoiled.

JOCASTA

Were they sore perilled of the Argive spear?

MESSENGER

At ruin's brink: but stronger proved the might Of Cadmus' people than Mycenae's spear.

JOCASTA

One thing, by heaven!—of Polyneices aught Canst tell? I yearn for this? Doth he see light?

MESSENGER

Liveth thus far thy chariot-yoke of sons.

JOCASTA

Blessings on thee! How did ye thrust the spear Of Argos back from your beleaguered gates? Tell, that I may rejoice the blind old man The halls within, with news of this land saved.

MESSENGER

When Creon's son, who for his country died, Climbing a tower's height, had thrust the sword Black-hafted through his throat to save the land, Seven bands with captains to the seven gates, For watch and ward against the Argive spear, Thy son set, horsemen covering horsemen ranged, And men-at-arms behind the shield-bearers,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ώς τῷ νοσοῦντι τειχέων εἶ θερός
ἀλκή δι’ ὀλύγου. περγάμων δ’ ἀπ’ ὀρθίων
λεύκασσιν εἰσορώμεν ’Αργείων στρατοῦ
Τευμπόντο· καὶ τάφρου πέλας
δρόμῳ συνήθεον ἀκτήν Καθμίδας χθόνος.
παίδιν δὲ καὶ σάλπυγγες ἐκελάδον ὁμοῦ
ἐκείθεν ἐκ τε τειχέων ἦμων πάρα.
καὶ πρῶτα μὲν προσῆγε Νησταί πύλαις
λόχου πυκναίσσιν ἀσπίσσιν πεφρικότα
ο τῆς κυναγοῦ Παρθενοπαιός ἐγγυοῦς,
ἐπίσημα ἔχον οἰκείον ἐν μέσῳ σάκει,
ἐκημβόλοις τὸξοισίν Ἀταλάντης κάρπον
χειρουμένῃν Λιτωλών. εἰς δὲ Προιτίδας
πύλας ἔχοπει σφαγῆ ἔχον ἐφ’ ἄρματι
ὁ μάντις Ἀμφίαρας, οὐ σημεῖ’ ἔχων
ὑβρισμέν’, ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως ἁσθεὶ’ ὁπλα.
’Ομόγυια δ’ εἰς πυλώμαθ’ Ἰππομέδων ἀναξ
ἐστειχ’ ἔχων σημείον ἐν μέσῳ σάκει
στικτοῖς Πανόπτην ὀμμασίων δεδορκότα,
τα μὲν σὺν ἅστρων ἑπιτολαίσσιν ὄμματα
βλέποντα, τὰ δὲ κρύπτοντα δυνοῦν μέτα,
ὡς ύστερον θανόντος ἑισορᾶν παρῆν.
’Ομολογίαν δὲ τάξιν εἶχε πρὸς πύλαις
Τυδεῦς; λέοντος δέρος ἐχὼν ἐπ’ ἀσπίδα
χαίτη πεφρικός· δεξία δὲ λαμπάδα
Γίταν Προμηθεὺς ἔφερεν ὡς πρήσων πόλιν.
ὁ σὸς δὲ Κρητιαῖος Πολυνείκης πύλαις
’Αρη προσῆγε. Ποτηρίδες δ’ ἐπ’ ἀσπίδα
ἐπίσημα πόλοι δρομάδες ἐσκίρτων φόβῳ,
εὐ πως στροφιγξίν ἐνδοθεν κυκλούμεναι
πόρτας, ὑπ’ αὐτὸν, ὡστε μαίνεσθαι δοκεῖν.
ὁ δ’ οὐκ ἔλασσον ‘Ἀρεὸς εἰς μάχην φρονῶν
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

That, where the wall's defence failed, succour of spears
Might be hard by. Then from the soaring towers
We marked the white shields of the Argive host
Leaving Teumessus. Having neared the foss,
Suddenly charging closed they on Cadmus' burg.
Then paean swelled, and shattering trumpet shrilled,
All blended, from the foe and from the walls.

Parthenopaeus, that famed huntress' son,
First led against the Gate Neistian
A squadron horrent all with serried shields,
On his mid-targe the blazon of his house,
Atalanta slaying the Aetolian boar
With shafts far-smiting. Against Proetus' Gate,
Slain victims on his chariot, marched the seer
Amphiaraus, with no proud device,
But sober weapons void of blazonry.
The gates Ogygian King Hippomedon
Assailed, in mid-targe bearing for device
Argus, with gemmy eyes for aye at gaze,
Some with the rising of the stars aglare,
While, as the stars set, some were slumber-veiled,
As might be seen thereafter, he being slain.
Against the Gate of Homole Tydeus took
His stand, his shield draped with a lion's hide
All shaggy-haired: Titan Prometheus bore
A torch in hand there, as to burn the town.

Thy son Polyneices at the Fountain Gate
Led on the war. Upon his shield the steeds
Of Potniae racing in fear-frenzy sprang,
Wheeled round within by pivots cunningly
Hard by the hand-grip; that they seemed distraught.
High-stomached for the fight as Ares' self,
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

Καπανεύς προσήγε λόχον ἐπ' Ἡλέκτραις πύλαις.

1130 σιδηρονωτοῖς δ' ἀσπίδος τύποις ἐπὶ
γίγας ἐπ' ὀμοίς γηγενής ὅλην πόλιν
φέρων μοχλοίσιν ἐξαναστάσας βάθρων,
ὑπόνοιαν ἡμῖν οἷα πείσεται πόλις.

ταῖς δ' ἐβδομαίς "Ἄδραστος ἐν πύλαισιν ἦν,
ἐκατὸν ἐχιδναῖς ἀσπίδ' ἐκπληρόν γραφή
ὑδρας ἔχων λαιοίσιν ἐν βραχίοσιν
'Αργείων αὔξημ'. ἐκ δὲ τειχέων μέσων
δράκοντες ἐφερού τέκνα Καδμείων γνάθοις.

1140 παρήν δ' ἐκάστων τὸνδ' μοι θεάματα
ξύνθημα παραφέροντι ποιμέσιν λόχον.
καὶ πρῶτα μὲν τόξοισι καὶ μεσαγκύλοισι
ἐμαρνάμεθα σφενδόναις θ' ἐκηβόλοισι
πετρῶν τ' ἄραγμοίς· ὦς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχη,
ἐκλαμψε Τυδεὺς χῶ σος ἐξαίφνης γόνος·
ὁ τέκνα Δαναῶν, πρὶν κατεξάνθαι βολαῖς,
τί μέλλετ' ἀρδὴν πάντες ἐμπιπτεῖν πύλαις,
γυμνῆτες ἵππης ἀρμάτων τ' ἐπιστάται;
ἡλίας δ' ὅπως ἠκούσαν, οὕτως ἄργος ἦν·
πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιπτοῦν κρᾶτας αἰματούμενοι,

1150 ἡμῶν τ' ἐς οὐδ' εἰδεὶς ἀν πρὸ τειχέων
πυκνοῦς κυβιστητήρας ἐκπεπνεύκοτας,
ἐξῆλαν δ' ἐδευον γαίαν αἰματὸς ῥοΐς.
ὁ δ' Ἀρκας, οὐκ Ἀργείως, Ἀταλάντης γόνος
τυφῶς πύλαισιν ὡς τις ἐμπεσὼν βοῶ
πῦρ καὶ δικέλλας, ὡς κατασκάψων πόλιν·
ἀλλ' ἔσχε μαργώντ' αὐτὸν ἐναλίον θεοῦ
Περικλήμενος παῖς λᾶν ἐμβαλὼν κάρα
ἀμαξοπλήθη, γείσ' ἐπάλξεων ἀπο·
ξανθὸν δ' κρᾶτα διεπάλυνε καὶ ραφὰς

1160 ἔρρηξεν ὀστέων, ἀρτι δ' οἰνωπὸν γέννων

440
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Led Capaneus his troop to Electra’s Gate;
And, for his iron-faced buckler’s blazonry,
An earth-born giant on his shoulders bore
A whole town from its basement lever-wrenched,
As token for us of our city’s fate.
And at the seventh gate Adrastus was,
His graven shield with five-score vipers thronged
Swung on his left arm, even the Argive vaunt,
The Hydra; and its serpents from our walls
Were snatching Cadmus’ children in their jaws.
Each chief’s device I well might mark, who bare
The watchword to the leaders of our bands.

Then first with bows and thong-spied javelins
We battled, and with slings that smote from far,
And crashing stones. But when we ’gan prevail,
Suddenly shouted Tydeus and thy son:
“Sons of the Danaans, ere their bolts quell you,
Why do ye tarry, onward-hurling all,
To assault their gates—light-armed, horse, chariot-lords?”

Soon as they heard that cry, was none hung back.
Many, with heads blood-dashed, were falling fast;
And of us many earthward flung thou hadst seen
Before the walls, like divers plunging, dead,
Drenching the thirsty soil with streams of gore.

But Atalanta’s son—no Argive he—
Hurls like a whirlwind at the gates, and shouts
For fire and mattocks, as to raze the town.
But his mid-fury Periclymenus stayed,
The Sea-god’s son, who hurled a wain-load crag,
A battlement-coping, down upon his shield,
Spattered abroad the golden head, and rent
The knittings of its bones: the cheeks dark-flushed.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

καθημάτωσεν· οὐδ' ἀποίσεται βίον
tῇ καλλιτάξῳ μητρὶ Μαινάλου κόρη.
ἐπεὶ δὲ τάςδ' εἰσείδειν εὐτυχεῖσιν πύλας,
ἄλλας ἐπήκει παῖς σὸς, εἰπόμην δ' ἔγω.
ὅρω δὲ Τυδῆ καὶ παρασπιστὰς πυκνοῦς
Ἀιτωλίσιων λόγχαις εἰς ἀκρον στόμα
πῦργων ἀκοὐτίζοντας, ὡστ' ἐπάλξεων
λιπεῖν ἐρᾶν υναγάδας· ἄλλα μιν πάλιν,
kυναγὸς ὥσει, παῖς σὸς ἐξαθροῖτες,
πῦργος δ' ἐπέστησ' αὐθίσ. εἰς δ' ἄλλας πύλας
ἡπευγόμεθα, τούτῳ παύσαντες νοσοῦν.
Καπανεὺς δὲ πῶς εἴποιμ' ἄν ὡς ἐμαίνετο;
μακραύχενος γὰρ κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις
ἐχὼν ἐχώρει, καὶ τοσόνδ' ἐκόμπασε,
µηδ' ἄν τὸ σεμνὸν πῦρ νῦν εἰργαθεῖν Διὸς
τὸ µή οὗ κατ' ἄκρων περγάμον ἔλειν πόλιν.
καὶ ταῦθ' ἀµ' ἑγόρευε καὶ πετρούμενος
ἀνείρφ' ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἀσπίδ' εἰλίξας δέµας,
κλίµακος ἀµέθησον ξέστ' ἑνηλιάτων βάθρα.

Ἥδη δ' ὑπερβαίνοντα γεῖσα τειχέων
βάλλει κεραυνὸς Ζεῦς νῦν. ἐκτύπτησε δὲ
χθῶν, ὡστε δεῖσαι πάντας· ἐκ δὲ κλιμάκων
ἐσφυγοῦντο χωρίς ἀλλήλων μέλη,
κόμαι μὲν εἰς 'Ολύμπον, αἵμα δ' εἰς χθόνα,
χειρὲς δὲ καὶ κώλ' ὡς κύκλωµ' 'Ιξίονος
ἐκλύσσετ'. εἰς γῆν δ' ἐμπυρος πίπτει νεκρός.
ὡς δ' εἶδ' Ἀδραστος Ζήνα πολέμων στρατῷ,
ἐξώ τάφρον καθίσεις 'Αργείων στρατόν.
οἱ δ' αὖ παρ' ἡµῶν δεξιὰν Διὸς τέρας
ἰδόντες εξηλαυνον ἀρμάτων θυσίων
ἵππης· ὀπλίται τ' εἰς μέσ' 'Αργείων ὑπλα
συνήψαν ἔγχη, πάντα δ' ἢν ὀμοῦ κακά·
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Dashed he with blood. No life shall he bear back
To his archer-mother, Maid of Maenalus.
Then, marking how at this gate all went well,
Passed to the next thy son, I following still.
There saw I Tydeus with his serried shields,
With spears Aetolian javelining the height
Of the roofless towers, that from the rampart's crest
Ours fled in panic. But thy son again
Rallies them, as the hunter cheers his hounds;
So manned the walls anew. To other gates
On pressed we, having stayed the mischief there.

But how the madness tell of Capanews?
For, grasping the long ladder's scaling rounds,
On came he, and thus haughtily vaunted he,
That not Zeus' awful fire should hold him back
From razing from her topmost towers the town.
Thus crying, ever as hailed the stones on him,
He climbed, with body gathered 'neath his targe,
Aye stepping from smooth ladder-rung to rung.
But, even as o'er the ramparts rose his head,
Zeus smiteth him with lightning: rang again
The earth, that all quailed. From the ladder flew
His limbs abroad wide-whirling slingstone-like:
Heavenward his hair streamed, earthward rained his
blood:
Hands, feet—Ixion on his wheel seemed he—
Whirled round. To earth he fell, a corpse flame-
blasted.

Adrastus, seeing Zeus his army's foe,
Without the trench drew off the Argive host.
Then, marking Zeus's portent fair for us,
Forth of the gates our horse their chariots drive:
Our footmen crashed through Argos' mid-array
With levelled spears;—'twas turmoil'd ruin all—
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΧΑΙ

ἐθυνησκον ἡξέπιπτον ἀντύγων ἀπο, τροχοὶ τ’ ἐπήδων ἄξονες τ’ ἐπ’ ἄξοσι, νεκρὸι δὲ νεκροῖς ἑξεσωρεύονθ’ ὁμοῦ. πῦργων μὲν οὖν γῆς ἐσχομεν κατασκαφάς εἰς τὴν παρούσαν ἡμέραν· εἰ δ’ εὐτυχῆς ἔσται τὸ λοιπὸν ἢδε γῆ, θεοὶς μέλει· καὶ νῦν γὰρ αὐτὴν δαιμόνων ἔσωσε τις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καλὸν τὸ νικᾶν· εἰ δ’ ἀμείνων οἱ θεοὶ γνώμην ἔχουσιν—εὐτυχῆς εἰην ἐγὼ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καλὸς τὰ τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὰ τῆς τύχης ἔχει· παιδές τε γὰρ μοι ἔσωσι κάκπέφυγε γῆ. Κρέων δ’ έουσε τῶν ἐμῶν νυμφευμάτων τῶν τ’ Οἰδίπου δύσητος ἀπολαύσαι κακῶν, παιδὸς στερηθείς, τῇ πόλει μὲν εὐτυχῶς, ἰδίᾳ δὲ λυπρᾶς. ἀλλ’ ἀνελθέ μοι πάλιν, τί τάπι τούτοις παῖδ’ ἐμῶ δρασεῖτον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐα τὰ λοιπὰ· δεῦρ’ ἀεὶ γὰρ εὐτυχεῖσ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τοῦτ’ εἰς ὑποπτὸν εἶπας· οὐκ ἑατέον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μεῖζόν τι χρήζεις παῖδας ἢ σεσωσμένους;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τάπιλοπτά γ’ εἰ καλῶς πράσσω κλύειν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μέθες μ’ ἐρήμος παῖς ὑπασπιστοῦ σέθεν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κακὸν τι κεύθεις καὶ στέγεις ὑπὸ σκότῳ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν γε λέξαμ’ ἐπ’ ἀγαθοῖσι σοι κακά.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Men dying—falling o'er the chariot-rails—
Wheels leaping—axles upon axles dashed,
And corpses heaped on corpses all confused.

So then for this day have we barred the fall
Of our land's towers; but if good fortune waits
On Thebes henceforth, this resteth with the Gods:
Only a God's hand rescued her to-day.

CHORUS
Glorious is victory: if more favours yet
The Gods intend—ah, may I so be blest!

1200

JOCASTA
Fair are the dealings of the Gods and Fate:
For lo, my sons live, and the land hath 'scapeed.
But Creon hath, me seemeth, reaped evil fruit
Of mine and Oedipus' marriage—hapless sire,
Reft of his son, for blessing unto Thebes,
But grief to him! Take up the tale again,
And tell what now my sons are bent to do.

MESSENER
Forbear the rest. Thus far 'tis well with thee.

1210

JOCASTA
Thou stirr'st surmisings! I can not forbear!

MESSENER
How, wouldst thou more than know thy sons are safe?

JOCASTA
Yea, know if things to come be well for me.

MESSENER
Now let me go: thy son his henchman lacks.

JOCASTA
Some ill thou hid'st—in darkness veilest it!

MESSENER
I would not tell thee evil blent with good.

445
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἡν μὴ γε φεύγων ἐκφύγῃς πρὸς αἰθέρα.

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ

αἰαὶ· τί μ' οὖν εἰσάσας ἐξ ἐναγγέλου

φήμης ἀπελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ μηνύσαι κακά;

τὸ παῖδε τῷ σῷ μέλλετον, τολμήματα

ἀπάχιστα, χωρὶς μονομαχεῖν παντὸς στρατοῦ,

λέξαντες Ἀργείουσι Καδμείουσι τε
eῖς κοινῶν οἷον μὴ ποτ' ὄφελον λόγον.

Ἔτεοκλέης δ' ὑπῆρξ' ἀπ' ὀρθίου σταθεὶς

πῦργου, κελεύσας σύγα κηρύξαι στρατῷ·

[ἐλέξει δ'· ὁ γῆς Ἑλλάδος στρατηλάται]

Δαναῶν ἀριστῆς, οὐπερ ἠλθέτ' ἐνθάδε,

Κάδμου τε λαὸς, μῆτε Πολυνείκους χάριν

ψυχὰς ἀπεμπολοῦτε μὴθ' ἡμῶν ὑπερ.

ἔγὼ γὰρ αὐτὸς τόνδε καίδυνοι μεθὲ

μόνος συνάγω συγγόνω τῷ μόνῳ μάχην

καὶ μὲν κτάνω τόνδ', οίκον οἰκήσω μόνος,

ἡσσόμενος δὲ τῷδε παραδόσωσι μόνῳ.

ὑμεῖς δ' ἀγῶν' ἄφεντες, Ἀργείου, χθόνα

νίσσεσθε, βιστον μὴ λαπτότες ἐνθάδε,

Σπαρτῶν τε λαὸς ἀλις ὅσος κεῦται νεκρός.

τοσαύτ' ἔλεξε· σὸς δὲ Πολυνείκης γόνος

ἐκ τάξεων ὄροισε κατ' ἱματίαν πόλους.

πάντες δ' ἐπερρόθησαν Ἀργείου τάδε

Κάδμου τε λαὸς ὃς δίκαι· ἡγούμενοι.

ἐπὶ τοίοις δ' ἐσπείσαντο, καῖς μεταικῆιοι

ὀρκοὺς συνῆψαν ἐμμενεῖν στρατηλάται.

ἥδη δ' ἐκρυπτοῦν σῶμα παγχάλκοις ὀπλοῖς

δίσσοι γέροντος Οἰδίπου νεανίαν·

φίλοι δ' ἐκόσμουν, τήσδε μὲν πρόμον χθονὸς

Σπαρτῶν ἀριστῆς, τὸν δὲ Δαναίδῶν ἄκροι.

446
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

JOCASTA

That shalt thou—except to heaven thou wing thy flight.

MESSENGER

Alas! why couldst thou let me not go hence
After good tidings, but wouldst have the ill?
Thy two sons purpose single fight, apart
From all the host—a desperate deed of shame!
To Argives and Cadmeans one and all
They spake that which would God they had left unsaid!
Eteocles from a lofty tower began—
Having bid publish silence to the host—
And said: "O battle-chiefs of Hellas-land,
Lords of the Danaans who have hither come,
And Cadmus' folk—for Polyneices' sake
Sell not your lives, nor sell them in my cause.
For I myself will free you of this risk,
And with my brother grapple alone in fight.
If I slay him, mine halls I hold alone:
O'erthrown, I yield them up to him alone.
Argives, forbear the struggle, and return
Unto your land, not leaving here your lives;
And of the Sown suffice the already dead."
Thus spake he; Polyneices then, thy son,
Leapt from the ranks, and hailed the challenge-word;
And all the Argives shouted yea to this,
And Cadmus' folk, as righteous in their eyes.
On these terms made they truce, and in mid-space
The chiefs took oaths whereby they should abide.
Then ancient Oedipus' two sons straightway 'Gan case their bodies in all-brazen mail,
Holpen of friends; by Theban lords the king
Of this land, and by Danaan chiefs his brother.
ΦΩΝΙΣΣΕΙ

ἐσταν δὲ λαμπρώ, χρώμα τ' οὐκ ἡλλαξάτην
μαργώντ' ἐπ' ἀλληλοιοιν ἵεναι δόρυν.
παρεξίοντες δ' ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν φίλων
λόγοις θαρσύνοντες ἔξηνδων τάδε.

1250 Πολύνεικες, ἐν σοὶ Ζηνος ὅρθωσαι βρέτας
τρόπαιον Ἀργεὶ τ' εὔκλεα δοῦναι λόγον.
'Ετεοκλέα δ' αὐτ' νῦν πόλεως ὑπερμαχεῖς,
σὺ καλλινικος γενόμενος σκήπτρων κρατεῖς.

1260 τάδ' ἤγορευος παρακαλοῦντες εἰς μάχην.
μάντεις δὲ μῆλὶ ἐσφάζων, ἐμπύρους τ' ἀκμάς
ῥήξεις τ' ἐνώμοιν, ὕγροτητ' ἐναντίαν,
ἀκραν τ' λαμπάδ', ὡ δυνοῦ ὅρους ἔχει,

ΠΟΙΚΑΣΗ

1270 νίκης τ' σῆμα καὶ τὸ τῶν ἱσσωμένων.

ἀλλ' εἰ τίν' ἄλκην ἦ σοφοὺς ἔχεις λόγους

ἡ φίλτρ' ἐπωβῶν, στείχ', ἐρήτυσον τέκνα
dεινής ἀμίλλης, ὡς ὁ κίνδυνος μέγας


ΚΑΣΤΑΡΔΑ θενάδια ἑκνά ἀκρινά σοι γενήσεται

Δισσοὶ στερείσθ' τῇ' ἐν ἡμέρα τέκνων.


ΙΟΚΑΣΗ

1270 τίν', ὁ τεκνὸν, έξελθ', Ἀντιγόνη, δόμων πάρος
οὐκ ἐν χορείαις οὐδὲ παρθενεύμασι

νῦν σοι προχωρεῖ δαιμόνων κατάστασις,

ἈΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1270 ἀλλ' ἀνδρί ἅριστοι καὶ κασιγνήτω ςέθεν


ΙΟΚΑΣΗ

1270 εἰς θάνατον ἐκνεύσατε κωλύσατε σε δεῖ


ΔΙΣΣΟΙ θυγατερ'[, ἔρρει σῶν κασιγνήτων βίος.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

There stood they gleaming,—never paled their cheeks,—
Each panting at his foe to dart the spear.
On this side and on that their friends drew nigh,
With heartening words thus speaking unto them;
"Thine, Polyneices, is it to set up
Zeus' trophy-statue, and give Argos fame";
To Eteocles—"Thou for Thebes dost fight:
Now triumph, and thou hold'st her sceptre fast."
So did they hail them, cheering them to fight.
And the priests slew the sheep: flame-tongue they marked,
And flame-cleft, steamy reek that bodeth ill,
The pointed flame, which hath decisions twain,
Betokening victory or overthrow.
If any power thou hast or cunning words,
Or spell of charms, go, pluck thou back thy sons
From that dread strife; for grim the peril is;
And, for dread guerdon, tears shall be thy portion,
If thou of two sons be this day bereaved.  [Exit.

JOCASTA

Daughter Antigone, come forth the house!
No dances, neither toils of maiden hands,
Beseech thee in this hour of heaven's doom;
But heroes twain, yea, brethren unto thee,
Now deathward reeling, with thy mother thou
Must hold from dying, each by other slain.

Enter ANTIGONE.

ANTIGONE

Mother that bare me, what strange terror-cry
Before these halls to thy friends utterest thou?

JOCASTA

Daughter, thy brethren's life is come to naught.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

πῶς εἶπας;

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ

ἀιχμὴν ἐς μίαν καθέστατον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὗ γώ, τί λέξεις, μήτερ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ

οὔ φίλ', ἀλλ' ἔποι.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῖ, παρθενώνας ἐκλιποῦσ';

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ

ἀνὰ στρατόν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

αἰδούμεθ' ὀχλον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ

οὐκ ἐν αἰσχύνῃ τὰ σά.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δράσω δὲ δὴ τί;

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ

συγγόνων λύσεις ἔριν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί δρῶσα, μήτερ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ

προσπίτνουσ' ἐμοῦ μέτα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἡγοῦ σὺ πρὸς μεταίχμι', οὔ μελλητέον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΘΗ

1280 ἐπειγ' ἐπειγε, θύγατερ; ὡς ἦν μὲν φθάσω

παῖδας πρὸς λόγχης, οὔμος ἐν φάει βίοις

θανοῦσι δ' αὐτοῖς συνθανοῦσα κείσομαι.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

How say'st thou?

JOCASTA

Met they are for single fight.

ANTIGONE

Woe! what wilt say?

JOCASTA

Naught welcome. Follow me.

ANTIGONE

Whither, from maiden-bowers?

JOCASTA

Through the host.

ANTIGONE

I shrink from throngs!

JOCASTA

No time for modesty this!

ANTIGONE

I—what can I do?

JOCASTA

Part thy brethren's strife.

ANTIGONE

Mother, whereby?

JOCASTA

Fall at their feet with me.

ANTIGONE

Lead to the mid-space! We may tarry not.

JOCASTA

Haste, daughter, haste: for, may I but forestall 1280
My sons ere fighting, light of life is mine:
If they be dead, dead with them will I lie. [Exeunt. 451

α α 2
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαὶ αἰαὶ,
tρομερὰν φρίκα τρομερὰν φρέν᾽ ἔχω·
διὰ σάρκα δ᾽ ἐμὰν
ἔλεος ἔλεος ἔμολε ματέρος δειλαῖας.
δίδυμα τέκεα πότερος ἢρα πότερον αἰμάζει—
ἰώ μοι πόνων,

1290 ἵω Ζεῦ, ἵω γὰ—
ὁμογενὴς δέραν, ὁμογενὴς ψυχὰν
dι᾽ ἀσπίδων, δι᾽ αἰμάτων;
τάλαιν᾽ ἔγὼ τάλαινα,
πότερον ἢρα νέκυν ὀλόμενον ἄχήσω;

φεῦ δὰ φεῦ δὰ,
δίδυμοι θῆρες, φόνιαι ψυχαὶ
dορὶ παλλόμεναι
πέσεα πέσεα δαὶ αὐτῖχ’ αἰμάζετον.

1300 τάλανες, ὦ τι ποτὲ μονομάχον ἐπὶ φρέν᾽ ἕλθέτην,
βοὰ βαρβάρῳ
ἰαχὰν στενακτὰν
μελομέναν νεκροῖς δάκρυσι θρηνήσω.
σχεδὸν τύχα πέλας φόνου
κρινεῖ ξῖφος τὸ μέλλον.
ἀποτμὸς ἀποτμὸς ὁ φόνος ἐνεκ’ Ἑρινὺων.

ἀλλὰ γὰρ Κρέοντα λεύσω τὸνδε δεύρο συννεφῇ
πρὸς δόμους στείχοντα, παύσω τοὺς παρεστῶτας
γόους.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1310 οἴμοι, τί δράσω; πότερ’ ἐμαυτόν ἢ πόλιν
στένω δακρύσας, ἢν πέριξ ἔχει νέφος

1 Hermann : for φάος of MSS.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS

Alas and alas! (Str.)
Shuddering, shuddering horror of soul have I:
Through the very flesh of me pass
Compassion-thrills for a mother in misery. [lie—
Two sons—who, slain of the other, in blood shall
Woe, anguish, and dismay!
Zeus!—Earth!—to you I pray!—
With his throat pierced, his life by a brother sped,
His shield cleft, and his blood by a brother shed?
Woe's me and well-a-day!
For whom shall I uplift my voice to wail him dead?

O land, O land! (Ant.)
Two ravening beasts, two spirits of murderous mood,
With the battle-lust quivering they stand;
But brother shall soon lay brother low in his blood!
Wretches, that ever on duel bent they stood!
With wail of alien tongue
Shall my wild dirge be sung,
Tears for the dead, and lamentation's cry.
Fate presseth nearer, murder is hard by,
In the sword's balance hung:—
Curst slaughter, curst, the work of Vengeance-destiny!

Ha, 'tis Creon I behold, that hitherward with clouded
brow [but now.
Hasteth to the palace. I will hush the wail begun
Enter CREON, with ATTENDANTS bearing the body of
MENOECUS

CREON

What shall I do? Weeping shall I bemoan
Myself, or Thebes whom such a cloud o'erpalls
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

tοιούτον ὡστε δι᾽ Ἀχέροντος ἴεναι; ἕμος τε γὰρ παῖς γῆς ὀλωλ’ ὑπερθανόν, τοῦνομα λαβὼν γενναῖον, ἀνιαρον δ’ ἐμοί· ὰν ἀρτι κρήμονεν ἐκ δρακοντεῖων ἐλὼν αὐτοσφαγὴ δύστηνος ἐκόμιοι εὐ χεροῖν, βοᾷ δὲ δῶμα πᾶν ἕγω δ’ ἦκω μετὰ γέρων ἀδελφήν γραίαν Ἰοκάστην, ὅπως λούση προθήται τ’ ὀύκετ’ ὄντα παιὸν ἐμόν.

1320 τοῖς γὰρ θαυμώσι χρὴ τὸν ὅν τεθνηκότα τιμᾶς διδόντα χθόνιον εὔσεβεῖν θεόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βέβηκ’ ἀδελφή σή, Κρέων, ἔξω δόμων κόρη τε μητρὸς Ἀντιγόνη κοινῷ πούδ. 

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποῖ κατ’ ποίαν συμφορᾶν; σήμαινε μοι. 

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡκουσε τέκνα μονομάχῳ μέλλειν δορὶ εἰς ἀσπίδ’ ἤξειν βασιλικῶν δόμων ὑπερ. 

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶς φῆσ; νέκυι τοῦ παιδὸς ἀγαπάζων ἐμοῦ ὦκ εἰς τὸ τόδ’ ἥλθον ὡστε καὶ τάδ’ εἰδέναι. 

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ’ οὔχεται μὲν σή κασιγνήτη πάλαι· 

1330 δοκῶ δ’ ἀγώνα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς, Κρέον, ἦδη πεπρᾶχθαι πασί τοῖς Ὀἰδίπον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἶμοι, τὸ μὲν σημεῖον εἰσορῶ τόδε, 

σκυθρωπὸν ὄμμα καί πρόσωπον ἀγγέλου στείχοντος, ὃς πᾶν ἀγγελεῖ τὸ δρόμουν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὁ τάλας ἐγὼ, τὶν’ εἶπο τῦδον ἢ τίνας γόους;
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

As through the gloom of Acheron drifts her now?
Dead is my son! He died for fatherland,
Winning a glorious name, but woe for me.
Him from the Dragon's crags but now I caught
Self-slain, and woefully bare him in mine arms.
My whole house wails. I for my sister come,
Jocasta,—come, the old to seek the old,—
To bathe and lay out this no more my son.
For he who hath not died must reverence
The Nether-gods by honouring the dead.

CHORUS
Gone is thy sister, Creon, forth the house;
And with her went her child Antigone.

CREON
Whither?—for what mischance? Declare to me.

CHORUS
The purpose of her sons she heard, to fight
In single combat for the royal halls.

CREON
How sayest thou? Lo, tending my son's corse,
I came not to the knowledge of this deed.

CHORUS
Yea, hence thy sister parted long agone:
And that death-struggle, Creon, now, meseems,
Is ended 'twixt the sons of Oedipus.

CREON
Ah me! a token yonder do I see,
The joyless eye and face of one who comes
A messenger, to tell all horrors done.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER
Woe is me! what story can I tell, or utter forth what wail?
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ
οίχόμεσθ᾽ οὐκ εὑπροσώπως φροιμίως ἀρχεῖ λόγον.

ΑΙΤΕΛΟΣ
ω τάλας, δισσώς ἀντῶν, μεγάλα γὰρ φέρω κακά.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
πρὸς πεπραγμένοις ἄλλοις πῆμασιν, λέγεις δὲ τί;

ΑΙΤΕΛΟΣ
οὐκέτ᾽ εἰσὶ σῆς ἅδελφῆς παῖδες ἐν φάει, Κρέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
1340 αἰαῖ.
μεγάλα μοι θροεῖς πάθεα καὶ πόλει,
ὡ δῶματ᾽ εἰσηκούσατ᾽ Οἶδήποτε τάδε
παῖδων ὁμοίαις συμφοραῖς όλωλότων;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὡστὶ ἀν δακρύσαι γ', εἰ φρονοῦντ' ἐτύχανεν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
οἶμοι ξυμφοράς βαρυποτμωτάτας,
οἶμοι κακῶν δύστηνοις; ὡ τάλας ἐγώ.

ΑΙΤΕΛΟΣ
εἰ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοις γ' εἰδείης κακά.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
καὶ πώς γένοιτ' ἀν τῶνδε δυσποτμώτερα;

ΑΙΤΕΛΟΣ
τέθηκ' ἅδελφη σῇ δυνόν παῖδου μέτα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
1350 ἀνάγετ' ἀνάγετε κωκυτῶν,
ἐπὶ κάρα τε λευκοπῆχεις κτύπους χεροῖν.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON
Ah, undone! With no fair-seeming prelude thou begin'st thy tale.

MESSENGER
Woe! Again I cry it, for I bring a burden of dismay—

CREON
Heaped upon calamities already wrought? What wouldst thou say?

MESSENGER
Creon, those thy sister's sons behold no more the light of day.

CREON
Alas! Terrible ills for me and for Thebes dost thou tell—O halls of Oedipus, have ye heard this?—Dost tell of sons that by one doom have died!

CHORUS
Their very walls might weep, could they but know.

CREON
Woe's me, the disaster, when fate's stroke heavily fell! Woe for my sorrows! Ah unhappy I!

MESSENGER
Ah, didst thou know the evils more than these!

CREON
What can be more calamitous than these?

MESSENGER
Dead is thy sister—dead with her two sons.

CHORUS
Upraise, upraise the lamentation-strain, Down on the head let blows of white hands rain!
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὁ τλῆμον, οἶδον τέρμον', Ἰοκάστη, βίου
gάμων τε τῶν σῶν Σφυγγὸς αἰνίγμοις ἔτλης.
πῶς καὶ πέπρακται διστύχων παιδῶν φόνος
ἀρᾶς τ' ἀγάνισμ' Ὀιδίπον; σήμαινε μοι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τὰ μὲν πρὸ πῦργων εὐτυχήματα χθονὸς
οἶσθ'. οὐ μακρὰν γὰρ τειχέων περιπτυχαί.
[ὡςτ' οὖχ ἀπαντᾷ σ' εἰδέναι τὰ δρώμενα.]
ἐπεὶ δὲ χαλκεός σὺ μ' ἐκοσμησανθ' ὅπλοις
οἱ τοῦ γέροντος Οἰδίπον νεανίαι,
ἐστησάν ἐλθόντ' εἰς μέσον μεταίχμιον
[δισσῶ στρατηγῶ καὶ διπλῶ στρατηλάτα]
ὡς εἰς ἀγώνα μονομάχου τ' ἀλκην δορᾶς.
βλέψας δ' ἐσ 'Αργος ἤκει Πολυνέκης ἅρας.
ὁ πότιν ὧρα, σ' ὅς γάρ εἰμ', ἐπεὶ γάμοις
ἐξευξ' Ἀδράστου παῖδα καὶ ναίω χθόνα,
δὸς μοι κτανεῖν ἄδελφόν, ἀντήρη δ' ἐμὴν
καθαματώσαι δεξιῶν νικηφόροιν.'
[ἀνεγιστοὶ αὐτῶν στέφανος, ὀμογενής κτανεῖν.
pολλοῖς δ' ἐστήσει δάκρυα τῆς τύχης δοσ,
καβλεψάν ἀλλήλοις διαδόντες κόρας.]
'Ετεοκλέης δὲ Παλλάδος χρυσασπίδοις
βλέψας πρὸς οἶκον θυξιάτ' ὃς Διὸς κόρη,
δὸς ἐγχος ἡμῖν καλλωπίκου ἐκ χερὸς
εἰς στέραν ἄδελφον τῆσον ἀπ' ὀλένης βαλεῖν.
κτανεῖν θ' ἄν λύθη πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμῆν.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἀφείθη πυρσὸς ὡς Τυραγνικῆς
σάλπυγγος ἥχη, σήμα φοινίου μάχης,
ἐξαν δρόμημα δεινῶν ἀλλήλοις ἐπὶ.
κάπροι δ' ὅπως θήγοντες ἀγρίαν γέμων
ξυνήψαν, ἀφρῶ διάβροχοι γενειάδας.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON
Hapless Jocasta, what an end of life
And marriage hast thou proved the Sphinx's riddle!
How came to pass the death of her two sons,
The strife, of Oedipus' curse that came?—declare.

MESSENGER
The land's fair fortune in her towers' defence
Thou know'st: the girdling walls be not so far
But that thou mayest know whate'er is done.
Now when in brazen mail they had clad their limbs,
Those princes, sons of ancient Oedipus,
Into the mid-space went they forth and stood,
Those chieftains two, those battle-leaders twain,
As for the grapple and strife of single fight.

Then, gazing Argos-ward, Polyneices prayed:
"Queen Hera,—for thine am I since I wed
Adrastus' child, and dwell within thy land,—
Grant me to slay my brother, and to stain
My warring hand with blood of victory!"—
Asking a crown of shame, to slay a brother.
Tears sprang from many an eye at that dread fate,
And each on other did men look askance.
But unto golden-shielded Pallas' fane
Eteocles looked, and prayed: "Daughter of Zeus,
Grant that the conquering spear, of mine hand sped,
Yea; from this arm, may smite my brother's breast,
And slay him who hath come to waste my land!"

Then, when the Tuscan trump, like signal-torch,
Rang forth the token of the bloody fray,
Forth darted each at other in terrible rush;
And, like wild boars that whet the tameless tusk,
Clashed they, foam-flakes beslavering their beards.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἥσουν δὲ λόγχαις· ἀλλ' υφίζανον κύκλοις,
ὅπως σίδηρος ἔξολοισθάνοι μάτην.
εἰ δ' ὄμμ' ὑπεραχ' ἵτνος ἄτερος μάθοι,
λόγχην ἑνώμα, στόματι προφῆμαι θέλων.
ἀλλ' εὔ προσήγουν ἄσπίδων κεγχρώμασιν
ὅθαλμόν, ἀργὰν ὡστε γίγνεσθαι δόρυν.
πᾶσιν δὲ τοῖς ὀρῶσιν ἐστάλασσε· ἵδρως
tοῖς δράσι, διὰ φίλων ὀρρωδίαν.

Ἐστεκλήης δὲ ποδὶ μεταφαίρων πέτρων
ἰχνοὺς ὑπόδρομον, κῶλον ἐκτὸς ἄσπίδος
tίθησι. Πολυνείκης δ' ἀπήμυκσεν δορί,
πληγὴν σιδήρῳ παραδοθεῖσαν εἰσίδων,
κυνής τε διεπέρασεν 'Ἀγρεῖιον δόρυν
στρατός δ' ἀνηλάλαξε Δαναίδῶν ἄπας.
καὶ τῶδε μόχθῳ γυμνὸν ὃμιον εἰσίδων
ὁ πρόσθε τραδεῖσ στέρνα Πολυνείκους βία
διήκε λόγχην, καπέδωκεν ἰδονάς.

Κάδμου πολιταῖς, ἀπὸ δ' ἔθραυσε ἄκρον δόρυν.
εἰς δ' ἀπορον ἴκων δορὸς ἐπὶ σκέλως πάλιν
χωρεῖ, λαβόθων δ' ἀφήκη μάρμαρον πέτρων,
μέσον δ' ἀκούτα ἔθραυσεν. εξ ἴσου δ' "Ἀρης
ἵν, κάμακος ἄμφοιν χεῖρ' ἀπεστηρημένου.
ἐνθεν δὲ κόπας ἀρπάσαοτας φασίνασ
ἐς ταῦταν ἴκον, συμβαλῶτε δ' ἄσπίδας
πολυνταραγμόν ἀμφιβάντ' εἴχον μάχης.
καὶ πως νοήσει 'Ἐστεκλής τοῦ Θεσσαλῶν
εἰσήγηγεν σοφίσμα τ' ὀμίλια χθονὸς.
ἐξαλλαγεῖς γὰρ τοῦ παρεστῶτος πόνου,
λαῖν' μὲν εἰς τούτωσθεν ἀμφερεῖ πόδα,
πρόσω τὰ κοίλα γαστρὸς εὐλαβούμενος
προβάς δὲ κῶλον δεξίων δι' ὀμφαλοῦ
καθήκεν ἑγχος σφώνυλοις τ' ἐνήρμοισεν.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

With spears they lunged: yet crouched behind their shields,
That so the steel might bootless glance aside.
And, if one saw foe's eye peer o'er the targe,
Aye thrust he, fain to overreach his fence.
Yet cunningly through eyelets of their shields
They glanced, that naught awhile the spear achieved,
While more from all beholders trickled sweat,
Of fear for friends, than from the champions' selves.
But Eteocles, spurning aside a stone
That rolled beneath his tread, without his shield
Showed glimpse of fenceless limb. Polyneices lunged,
Marking the stroke so offered to the steel;
And through the shank clear passed the Argive lance.
Loud cheered the whole array of Danaus' sons.

But his foe's shoulder by that effort bared
The stricken marked, and Polyneices' breast
Pierced with a strong spear-thrust, and gave back joy
To Cadmus' folk; yet brake his spear-head short.
So, his lance lost, back fell he step by step,
Caught up a rugged rock, and sped its flight,
Snapping his foe's spear thwart. Now was the fray
Equal, since either's hand was spear-bereft.
Thereupon snatched they at their falchion-hilts,
Closed, clashing shields, and, traversing to and fro,
Made rage the stormy clangour of the fight.
But, having learnt it visiting Thessaly,
Eteocles used the northern warriors' feint:
For, from the instant grapple springing clear,
Back on his left foot, backward still, he sinks,
Watching the while his foe's waist: leaping then,
The right foot foremost, through the navel plunged
His sword, and 'twixt the spine-bones wedged the point.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

όμοιοι δὲ κάμψας πλευρὰ καὶ νηδῶν τάλας
σὺν αἴματηραῖς σταγοσι Πολυνείκης πίνυει.
ὁ δὲ, ὡς κρατῶν δὴ καὶ νεικηκὼς μάχη,
ξίφος δικῶν εἰς γαίαν ἐσκύλευε νυν,
τὸν νοῦν πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁυκ ἔχων, ἐκεῖσθε δὲ·
ὁ καὶ νιν ἐσφηλ' ἐτὶ γὰρ ἐμπνεύσων βραχῦ,
σωζὺν σίδηρον εἰς λυγρῷ πεσήματι,
μόλις μὲν, ἐξεῖτει εDi εἰς ἦπαρ ξίφος
Ἐτεοκλέους ὁ πρόσθε Πολυνείκης πεσών.
γαίαν δὲ ὀδῶξ ἐλόντες ἀλλήλων πέλας
πίπτουσιν ἁμφω κού διώρισαν κράτος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, κακῶν σῶν, Οἰδίπουν, σὺ ὅσων στένω
τὰς σὰς δ' ἀράς ἔοικεν ἐκπλήσσαι θεός.

ἌΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀκονε δὴ νων καὶ τὰ πρός τούτοις κακά.
ὡς γὰρ τέκνων πεσώνετ' ἐλευπτήνη βίον,
ἐν τῷ δὲ μήτηρ ἡ τάλαινα προσπίττει
σὺν παρθένῳ τε καὶ προθυμία ποδός.
τετρωμένους δ' ἰδοῦσα καλρίους σφαγὰς
ἀμωξένως δ' τέκνων, υστέρα βοηθόρμος
πάρειμι. προσπίττυσα δ' ἐν μέρει τέκνα
ἐκλαί', ἐθρῆνε τὸν πολὺν μάτην πόνου
στένουσα', ἁδελφὴ θ' ἡ παρασπίζουσ'. ὁμοῦ
ὁ γηροβοσκός μητρός, ὁ γάμους ἐμοῦς
προδότ' ἁδελφῶς φιλτάτοι. στέρνων δ' ἅπο
φύσημ' ἀνεῖς δύσθηντον Ἐτεοκλῆς ἀναξ
ἡκοῦσε μητρός, κατίθεις ὕγραν χέρα

1440

φωνὴν μὲν οὐκ ἀφῆκεν, ὁμματῶν δ' ἅπο
προσεῖτε δακρύοις, ὡστε σημῆναι φίλα.
ὁ δ' ἦν ἐτ' ἐμπνευς, πρὸς κασιγνήτην δ' ἱδὼν
γραίαν τε μητέρ' εἶπε Πολυνείκης τάδε.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Then, ribs and belly inarched in anguish-throe,
Down-raining blood-gouts, Polyneices falls.
Our king, as victor, winner of the fight,
Casting his sword down, fell to spoiling him,
Heeding but that, nor recking his own risk;
Which thing undid him. Faintly breathing yet,
Still grasping in his grievous fall his sword;
First-fallen Polyneices with hard strain
Plunged into Eteocles' heart the blade.
Gnashing in dust their teeth, there side by side
They lie, those twain, the victory doubtful still.

CHORUS

Alas! I wail thy sore griefs, Oedipus!
Thy malisons, I wot, hath God fulfilled.

MESSENGER

Ah, but hear now what woes remain to tell.
Even as her fallen sons were leaving life,
Their wretched mother rusheth on the scene,—
She and the maid, with haste of eager feet;
And, seeing them stricken with their mortal wounds,
She wailed, "Ah sons, too late for help I come!"

Then, falling on her sons, on each in turn,
She wept, she wailed, her long vain nursing-toil
Bemoaning: and their sister at her side—
"Props of your mother's age, dear brethren, who
Leave me a bride unwed!" One dying gasp
Hard-heaving from his breast, King Eteocles
His mother heard, touched her with clammy hand,
Uttered no word, but from his eyes he spake
With tears, as giving token of his love.
But Polyneices breathing yet, and gazing
On sister and on aged mother, spake:
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀπωλόμεσθα, μήτερ, οἴκτείρω δὲ σὲ καὶ τὴν' ἀδέλφην καὶ κασίγνητον νεκρῶν. φίλος γὰρ ἐξορῶς ἐγένετ', ἀλλ' ὀμοὶς φίλος. θάψουν δὲ μ', ὡ τεκοῦσα, καὶ σὺ, σύγγονε, ἐν γῇ πατρῶι, καὶ πόλιν θυμομένην παρηγορεῖτον, ὡς τοσόνδε γοῦν τύχω χθονὸς πατρὰς, κεῖ δόμους ἀπώλεσα. ξυνάρμοσον δὲ βλέφαρά μου τῇ σῇ χερί, μήτερ—τίθησι δ' αὐτὸς ὁμμάτων ἐπὶ—καὶ χαίρετ'. ἥδη γὰρ με περιβάλλει σκότος. ἀμφότεροι δ' αὐτοὶ ἐξέπνευσαν ἄθλιον βλόν. μήτερ δ', ὅπως ἐσεῖδε τὴνδε συμφοράν, ἀπερπαθήσασ' ἤρπασ' ἐκ νεκρῶν θάνατος κάτραξε δεινά' διὰ μέσου γὰρ αὐχένος ὡθεὶ σίδηρον, ἐν δὲ τοῖς φιλάτοις θυνοῦσα κεῖται περιβαλοῦσκ' ἀμφότεροι χέρας. αὖξε δ' θρόδος λαὸς εἰς ἑριν λόγου, ἠμεῖς μὲν ὡς νικῶντα δεσπότην ἐμὸν, οἴ δ' ὃς ἐκεῖνον. ἦν δ' ἐρις στρατηλάταις, οἴ μὲν πατάξαι πρὸσθε Πολυνείκην δορί, οἴ δ' ὃς θανόντων οὐδαμοὶ νῦις πέλοι. καὶ τὸδ' ὑπεξῆλθ' Ἀργεῖον στρατοῦ δίχα. οἴ δ' εἰς ὅπλ' ἤσσον εῦ δὲ πὼς προμηθία καθήστο Κάδμου λαὸς ἀσπίδων ἐπικαθήθησαν οὕτω τεύχεσιν πεφραγμένον Ἀργεῖον εἰσπεσόντες ἐξαίφνης στρατόν. κοῦδεῖσ υπέστη, πεδία δ' ἐξεπίμπλασαν φεύγοντες, ἔρρει δ' αἷμα μυρίων νεκρῶν λόγχαι πυτυόντων. ὃς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ, οἴ μὲν Διὸς τροπαίον ἵστασαν βρέτας, οἴ δ' ἀσπίδας συλῶντες Ἀργεῖον νεκρῶν σκυλεύματι εἰσό τειχέων ἐπέμπομεν.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

"Mother, our death is this. I pity thee,
And thee, my sister, and my brother dead.
Loved, he became my foe: but loved—yet loved!
Bury me, mother, and thou, sister mine,
In native soil, and our chafed city's wrath
Appease ye, that I win thus much at least
Of fatherland, though I have lost mine home.
And close thou up mine eyelids with thine hand,
Mother;"—himself on his eyes layeth it—
"And fare ye well: the darkness wraps me round."
So both together breathed their sad life forth.

And when the mother saw this woeful chance,
Grief-frenzied, from the dead she snatched a sword,
And wrought a horror: for through her mid-neck
She drives the steel, and with her best-beloved
Lies dead, embracing with her arms the twain.
Leapt to their feet the hosts with wrangling cries,—
We shouting that our lord was conqueror,
They, theirs. And strife there was between the chiefs,
These crying, "First smote Polyneices' spear!"
Those, "Both be dead: with none the victory rests!"
Antigone from the field had stol'n the while.

Then rushed the foe to arms: but Cadmus' folk
By happy forethought under shield had halted;
So we forestalled the Argive host, and fell
Suddenly on them yet unfenced for fight.
Was none withstood us: huddled o'er the plain
Fled they, and streamed the blood from slain untold
By spears laid low. So, victors in the fight,
Our triumph-trophy some 'gan rear to Zeus;
And, some from Argive corpses stripping shields,
Within our battlemments the spoils we sent.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

άλλοι δὲ τούς θανόντας Ἀντιγόνης μέτα νεκροὺς φέρουσιν ἐνθάδ’ οἰκτίσαι φίλοις. πόλει δ’ ἄγῳνες οἱ μὲν εὐτυχέστατοι τῇ δ’ ἐξέβησαν, οἱ δὲ δυστυχέστατοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εἰς ἀκολαθῆ λυτυχία
dόματος ἥκει: πάρα γὰρ λεύσειν
πτώματα νεκρών τρισσῶν ἢδη
tάδε πρὸς μελάθρος κοινῷ θανάτῳ
σκοτίαν αἰῶνα λαχοντοιν.

ἈΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ προκαλυπτομένα βοτρυχώδεος
ἄβρα παρηίδος οὖδ’ ὑπὸ
παρθενίας τὸν ὑπὸ βλεφαρίως
φοῖνικ’ ἔρυθημα προσώπουν,
αιδομένα φέροιμαι βάκχα νεκύων,
kράδεμνα δικοῦσα κόμας ἀπ’ ἐμᾶς,
στολίδως κροκόεσσαν ἀνείς τρυφάν,
ἀγαμόνευμα νεκροίσι πολύστοτον. αἰαί, ἱὼ μοι.
ὁ Πολύνεικες, ἔψυ ἄρ’ ἐπώνυμος, ὁμοι, Ὁβιαὶ
σὰ δ’ ἔρις οὐκ ἔρις, ἀλλὰ φόνῳ φόνος
Οἰδιπόδα δόμου ὠλεσε κρανθείς
ἄματι δείνῳ, ἄματι λυγρῷ.
tίνα προσφών
ἡ τίνα μουσοτόλον στονάχαν ἔπι
δάκρυσαι δάκρυσιν, ὦ δόμος ὦ δόμος,
ἄγκαλεσσαί,
τρισσὰ φέροισα τάδε σώματα σύγγονα,
ματέρα καὶ τέκνα, χάρματ’ Ἐρινύος ;
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And others with Antigone bear on
The dead twain hither for their friends to mourn.
So hath the strife had end for Thebes in part
Most happily, in part most haplessly.

CHORUS

Not a grief for the hearing alone
Is the bale of the house: ye may see
Here, now, yon corpses three
By the palace, in death as one
To the life that is darkness gone.

Enter procession bearing corpses, with CREON and
ANTIGONE.

ANTIGONE

Never a veil o'er the tresses I threw
O'er my soft cheek sweeping,
Nor for maidenhood's shrinking I hid from view
The hot blood leaping
'Neath mine eyes, when I rushed in the bacchanal
dance for the dead,
When I cast on the earth the tiring that bound mine
Loose flinging my bright robe saffron of hue—
I, by whom corpses with wailing are gravidward led.
Polyneices, "the man of much strife"—well named!
Woe's me!—

No strife was thy strife: it was murder by murder
brought
To accomplishment, ruin to Oedipus' house, and
With bloodshed of horror, with bloodshed of misery.
On what bard shall I call?
What harper of dirges shall I bid come
To wail the lament,—O home, mine home!—
While the tears, the tears fall,
As I bear three bodies of kindred slain,
Mother and sons, while the Fiend gloats over our woe

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ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

1510

α δόμον Οἰδιπόδα πρόπαν ἄλεσε,
tάς ἀγρίας ὡτε
δυσζύμετον ξυνετός μέλος ἔγνω
Σφιγγός ἀοίδῳ σῶμα φονεύσας.
iω μοι, πάτερ,
tίς Ἐλλᾶς ἢ βάρβαρος ἢ
τῶν προπάρουθ᾽ εὐγενετάν ἔτερος
ἐτλα κακῶν τοσῶνδ᾽
aίματος ἀμερίου
tούαδ᾽ ἄχεα φανερά;

1520

τάλαιν', ὡς ἐλελίζει.
tίς ἀρ' ὅρνις ἢ δρυός ἢ ἔλατας
ἀκροκόμος ἀμφὶ κλάδοις
ἐξομένα μονομάτορος ὀδυρμοῖς
ἐμοῖς ἄχεσι συνιᾷ;
aἰλινον αἰάγμασιν ἀ
tοῦςδε προκλαίω μονάδ' αἰώνα
dιάξουσα τὸν ἀεὶ χρόνον ἐν
λειβομένουσιν δακρύοισιν.

1530

τίν' ἰαχήσω;
τίν' ἐπὶ πρώτων ἀπὸ χαῖτας
σταραγμοῖς ἀπαρχὰς βάλω;
ματρὸς ἐμὰς διδύ-
μοισι γάλακτος παρὰ μαστοῖς,
ἡ πρὸς ἀδελφῶν
οὐλόμεν' αἰκίσματα νεκρῶν;

ότοτοτοι· λείπε σοὺς δόμους,
ἀλαδν ὃμμα φέρων,
pάτερ γεραιέ, δεῖξον,
Οἰδιπόδα, σοὺν αἰώνα μέλεον, ὃς ἐπὶ
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Who brought in ruin the house of Oedipus low,
In the day when the Songstress Sphinx's strain,
So hard to read, by his wisdom was read,
And the fierce shape down unto death was sped?
Woe for me, father mine!
Who hath borne griefs like unto thine?
What Hellene, or alien, or who that sprang
Of the ancient blood of a high-born line,
Whose race in a day is run, hath endured in the sight of the sun
Such bitter pang?

Woe's me for my dirge wild-ringing!
What song-bird that rocketh on high,
Mid the boughs of the oak-tree swinging,
Or the pine-tree, will echo my cry,
The moans of the motherless maiden,
Who wail for the life without friend
I must know, who shall weep sorrow-laden
Tears without end?

Over whom shall I make lamentation?
Unto whom with rendings of hair
Shall I first give sorrow's oblation?
Shall I cast them, mine offerings, thère
Where the twin breasts are of my mother,
Where a suckling babe I have lain,
Or on ghastliest wounds of a brother
Cruelly slain?

Come forth of thy chambers, blind father;
Ancient, thy sorrows lay bare,
Who didst cause mist-darkness to gather
On thine own eyes, thou who dost wear
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

dώμασιν ἀέριον σκότον ὁμασί
σοίσι βαλὼν ἐλκείς μακροτυποῦν ὄσων.
κλύεις, ὦ κατ’ αὐλὰν ἄλαίνων γεραιὸν
τόδα δεμνίοις
dύστανοι λαύων;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

τί μ’, ὦ παρθένε, βακτρεύμασί τυ-

1540 φλού ποδὸς ἔξαγαγες εἰς φῶς
λεχήρη σκοτίων ἐκ θαλάμων
οὐκτροτάσιων δακρύωσιν,
πολιῶν αἰθέρος ἀφανὲς εἰδωλον ἢ
νέκυν ἐνερθεύ ἢ
πτανὸν ὄνειρον;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

dυστυχεῖς ἀγγελίας ἔπος οἴσει
πάτερ, οὐκέτι σοι τέκνα λεύσσει
φάος οὐδ‘ ἄλοχος, παραβάκτρους
ἀ πόδα σοῦν τυφλόπονον θεραπεύμασιν αἰὲν ἐμόχθει,

1550 ὦ πάτερ, ὦμοι.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ὦμοι ἐμῶν παθέων· πάρα γὰρ στενάχειν τάδ’,
ἀντεῖν.

τρισσαί ψυχαί ποίᾳ μοίρα
πῶς ἔλιπον φάος; ὦ τέκνον, αὐδα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ ἔπ’ ὅνειδεσιν οὐδ‘ ἐπιχάρμασιν,
ἀλλ‘ ὄδυναι λέγω· σὺς ἀλάστωρ
ξίφεσιν βρίθων
καὶ πυρὶ καὶ σχετλίασι μάχαις ἐπὶ παῖδας ἥβα
σοῦς,

ἂν πάτερ, ὦμοι.

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THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Weariful days out. O hearken,
Whose old feet grope through the hall,
Who in gloom that no night-tide can darken
On thy pallet dost fall.

Enter OEDIPUS.

OEDIPUS

Why hast thou drawn me, my child, to the light,
Whose sightless hand to thine hand's prop clings,
Who was bowed on my bed amid chambers of night,—
Hast drawn by a wail through tears that rings,—
A white-haired shape, like a phantom that fades
On the sight, or a ghost from the underworld shades,
Or a dream that hath wings?

ANTIGONE

Woe is the word of my tidings to thee!
Father, thy sons behold no more.
The light, nor thy wife, who aye upbore
Thy blind limbs tirelessly, tenderly,
O father, ah me!

OEDIPUS

Ah me for my woes! Full well may I shriek, full
well may I moan!
By what doom have the spirits of these three
flown
From the light of life? O child, make known.

ANTIGONE

Not as reproaching, nor mocking, I tell,
But in anguish. Thy curse, with its vengeance of
hell,
With swords laden, and fire,
And ruthless contention, on thy sons fell:
Woe's me, my sire!
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

OIDIPOΣE

ai'ai.

ANTIGONH

1560 tı tάde kataستέneı's ;

OIDIPOΣE
tέkna.

ANTIGONH
diz o'dynas ñevas:
ei de tα tēθριππα γ' ès ἁρματα λευσσων
ἀελίου tάde σωματα νεκρων
όμματος αὐγαίς σαίς ἐπενώμας.

OIDIPOΣE
tων μεν ἐμῶν τεκέων φανερῶν κακόν
α de tάλαιν ἀλοχος τίνι μοι, τέκνον, ἄνετο
μοίρα ;

ANTIGONH
dákruna goerα φανερα πάσι tιθεμένα,
tέκεσι μαστόν
ἐφερεν ἐφερεν ἰκέτις ἰκέτιν ὄρομένα.

1570 ηὔρε de' en Ἡλέκτρασι πύλαις τέκνα
λωττρόφον κατά λείμακα
λόγχαις κοινῶν ἐνυάλιον
μάτηρ, ὕστε λέοντας ἐναύλους,
μαρναμένους ἐπὶ τραύμασιν, αἵματος
ἥδη ψυχράν λοιβάν φονίαν,
ἀν ἔλαχ "Αἰδας, ὦτασε δ' Ἀρης·
χαλκόκροτον de λαβοῦσα νεκρῶν πάρα φάσγανον
ei'so
sarkos ñeβαψεν, ἀχεὶ de tέκνων ἐπεσ' ἀμφὶ
tέκνωσιν.

pάντα de' en ἁματι τάde συνάγαγεν,

1580 ó páter, ἀμετέρουσι δόμωσιν ἀχή θεὸς
de tάde τελευτά.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS
Alas for me!

ANTIGONE
Wherefore thy deep-drawn sigh?

OEDIPUS
For my children!

ANTIGONE
Thine hath been agony:—
But oh, to the Sun-god's car couldst thou raise
Thine eyes, couldst thou on these bodies gaze,
Dead where they lie!

OEDIPUS
For the evil fate of my sons, it is all too plain!
But ah, mine unhappiest wife!—by what doom, O
my child, was she slain?

ANTIGONE
Weeping and wailing, that all of her coming were ware,
Hasted she. Unto her children she bare, O she bare
Sacredest breasts of a mother with supplicant prayer.
And she found her sons at Electra's portal,
In the mead with the clover fair,
Closing with spears in the combat mortal:
As lions that strive in their lair
They grappled, with falchions ruthless-gashing:
Yea, now the oblation of death fell plashing
Which Ares giveth when Hades the spoil will share.
And she snatched from the dead, and the bronze-hammered blade through her bosom she thrust;
And in grief for her children, enclasping her children, she fell in the dust.
Lo, all the griefs of our line, one marshalled array,
Have been gathered, O father, against our house this day
Of the God in whose hands their accomplish-
"ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ"

- ΧΟΡΟΣ
πολλῶν κακῶν κατήρξεν Οἰδίπου δόμοις
tόδ’ ἦμαρ· εἰς δ’ εὐνυχέστερος βίος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
οἰκτων μὲν ἤδη λήγεσθ', ὡς ὠρα τάφου
μνήμην τίθεσθαι· τόνδε δ’, Οἰδίπου, λόγων
ἀκουσον· ἄρχας τῆς δὲ γῆς ἑδωκέ μοι
'Ετεοκλέους παις σός', γάμων φερνάς διδός
Αἴμουν κόρης τε λέκτρων 'Αντιγόνης σέθεν.
οὐκ οὖν σ’ ἐάσῳ τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν ἐτί
σαφῶς γὰρ εἴπε Τειρεσίας οὐ μὴ ποτε
σοῦ τήνδε γῆν οἰκοῦντος εὐ πράξειν πόλυν.
ἀλλ’ ἐκκομίζου. καὶ τάδ’ οὐχ ὕβρις λέγω
οὐδ’ ἐχθρός ὄν σος, διὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀλάστορας
τοὺς σοὺς δεδοκικημεῖν μὴ τι γῆ πάθη κακὸν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
ὥ μοῦ’, ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς ὡς μ’ ἐφυσάς ἀθλίουν
καὶ τλήμουν’, εἰ τις ἄλλος ἀνθρώπων ἐφυ.
δι καὶ πρὶν εἰς φῶς μητρός ἐκ γονῆς μολεῖν,
ἀγωνὸν Ἀπόλλων Δαίφ μ’ ἐθέστησε
φονέα γενέσθαι πατρός· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.

ἐπεὶ δ’ ἐγενόμην, αὐτός ὁ στείρας πατήρ
κτείνει με νομίσας πολέμιον πεφυκέναι
χρήν γὰρ θάνειν ὑν ἐξ ἐμοῦ· πέμπει δὲ μὲ
μαστοῦ ποδόντα θηροῖν ἄθλιον βορᾶν
οῦ σφιδάμεθα. Ταρτάρου γὰρ ὠφελεν
ἐλθείν Κυθαιρῶν εἰς ἄβυσσα χάσματα,
ός μ’ οὐ διόλεσ’, ἀλλὰ δοῦλεύσαι γέ μοι
dαίμον ἑδωκε Πόλυβον ἀμφί δεσπότην.
κτανόν δ’ ἐμαυτὸν πατέρ’ ὁ δυσδαίμονον ἐγώ
εἰς μητρός ἤλθον τῆς ταλαιπώρου λέχος,
παιδάς τ’ ἀδελφοὺς ἔστεκον, οὐς ἀπώλεσα,
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS
Many an ill to Oedipus' house this day
Brings forth. May happier life be yet in store!

CREON
Refrain laments: time is it we gave heed
To burial. Unto these words, Oedipus,
Hearken: thy son Eteocles gave me rule
O'er this land, making it a marriage-dower
To Haemon with thy child Antigone.
Therefore thou mayest dwell therein no more;
For plainly spake Teiresias—never Thebes
Shall prosper while thou dwellest in the land.
Then get thee forth: this not despiteously
I speak, nor as thy foe, but fearing hurt
To Thebes by reason of thy vengeance-fiends.

OEDIPUS
Fate, from the first to grief thou barest me,
And pain, beyond all men that ever were.
Ere from my mother's womb I came to light,
Phoebus to Laius spake me, yet unborn,
My father's murderer—ah, woe is me!
When I was born, my father, my begetter,—
Doomed by mine hand to die,—accounting me
From birth his foe, would slay me, sent me forth,
A suckling yet, a wretched prey to beasts.

Yet was I saved. Oh had Cithaeron sunk
Down to the bottomless chasms of Tartarus,
For that it slew me not!—but Fate gave me
To be a bondman, Polybus my lord.
So mine own father did I slay, and came,—
Ah wretch!—unto mine hapless mother's couch.
Sons I begat, my brethren, and destroyed,

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ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀρὰς παραλαβῶν Λατόν καὶ παισὶ δοῦς.
oὐ γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἀσύνετος πέφυκ' ἐγὼ ὥστ' εἰς ἐμ' ἀδιματ' εἰς τ’ ἐμὸν παιδίων βίον ἀνευθεῖν τοῦ ταύτ’ ἐμηχανησάμην.
eἰχεν τι δράσω δῆθ' ὁ δυσδαίμων ἐγὼ;
τὸς ἕγεμὼν μοι ποδὸς ὁμάρτησε τυφλοῦ;
 ὦδ' ἡ θανοῦσα; ζώσα γ’ ἀν σάφ’ οἶδ’ ὅτι.
ἀλλ’ εὐτεκνὸς ἐξυνωρίς; ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἔστι μοι.
ἀλλ’ ἔτι νεάξων αὐτὸς εὐρομ’ ἀν βίον;
πόθεν; τί μ’ ἀρδὴν ὅδ’ ἀποκτείνεις, Κρέον;
ἀποκτείνεις γὰρ, εἰ με γῆς ἔξω βαλεῖς.
oὐ μὴν ἐξές γ’ ἀμφί σοι χείρας γόνυ
cακῶς φανοῦμαι τὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν ποτ’ εὐγενῆς
οὐκ ἀν προδοθῆν, οὐδὲ περ πράσσων κακῶς.

ΚΡΕΟΝ

σοὶ τ’ εὖ λέεικατ γόνατα μὴ χρφέειν ἐμά,
ἐγὼ τε ναιεῖν σ’ οὐκ ἐάσαιμ’ ἀν χθονα.
νεκρῶν δὲ τῶν τοῦ μὲν εἰς δόμους χερῶν
ήδη κομίζειν, τόνδε δ’, δ’ πέρσων πόλιν
πατρίδα σὺν ἄλλοις ἤλθε, Πολυνείκους νέκνυν
ἐκβάλετ’ αὕτην τὸ τησ’ ὀρὼν ἔξω χθονὸς.

κηρύξεται δὲ πάσι Καθμείοις τάδε,
δ’ ἀν νεκρὸν τόνδ’ ἡ καταστέφων ἀλὼ
ἡ γῆ καλύπτων, θάνατον ἀνταλλάξεται.
ἐὰν δ’ ἀκλαυστὸν, ἀταφον, οἰωνοῖς βοράν.
σὺ δ’ ἐκλποῦσα τριπτῦχων θρήνους νεκρῶν
κόμιζε σαυτὴν, ’Αντιγόνη, δόμων ἔσω,
καὶ παρθενεύον τὴν ἴουσαν ἡμέραν
μένουσ’ ἐν ἥ σε λέκτρου Λύμονος μένει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὁ πάτερ, ἐν οἴνοις κείμεθ’ ἀθλίοι κακοὶς.

ἀς σε στενάζω τῶν τεθυμκότων πλέον;
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Passing to them the curse of Laius.
For not so witless am I from the birth,
As to devise these things against mine eyes
And my sons' life, but by the finger of God.
Let be:—what shall I do, the fortune-crost?
Who shall companion me, my blind steps guide?
She who is dead? O yea, were she alive!
My sons, a goodly pair? Nay, I have none.
Am I yet young, to win me livelihood?
Whence? Wherefore, Creon, slay me utterly?
For thou wilt slay, if forth the land thou cast.
Yet never twining round thy knee mine hands
A coward will I show me, to betray
My noble birth, how ill soe'er I fare.

CREON

Well hast thou said thou wilt not clasp my knees:
I cannot let thee dwell within the land.
Of these dead twain, be this within the halls
Borne straightway: that—the corpse of him who came
With aliens to smite his father's city—
Forth of the land's bounds tombless shall be cast.
To all Cadmeans shall this be proclaimed:—
"Whoso on this corpse laying wreaths is found,
Or with earth hiding, death shall be his meed.
Unwept, unburied, leave him meat for birds."
But thou thy mourning for the corpses three,
Antigone, leave, and get thee within doors.
Thy maiden state until the morrow keep,
Whereon the couch of Haemon waiteth thee.

ANTIGONE

Father, in what ills is our misery whelmed!
For thee I make moan more than for the dead.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

οὺ γὰρ τὸ μὲν σοι βαρὺ κακῶν, τὸ δὲ οὐ βαρὺ, ἀλλ’ εἰς ἀπαντα δυστυχῆς ἔφυς, πάτερ.
ἀτὰρ σὺ ἔρωτῶ τὸν νεωστὶ κόιρανον
[τὶ τὸν θυρίεις πατέρ᾽ ἀποστελλὼν χθονὸς;]
tί θεσμοποιεῖς ἐπὶ ταλαιπώρῳ νεκρῷ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

'Ετεοκλέους βουλεύματ', σὺ ἠμῶν τάδε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀφρονά γε, καὶ σὺ μῶρος δς ἐπίθου τάδε.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶς ; τάντεταλμένι οὐ δίκαιον ἐκπονεῖν;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ, ἢν πονηρά γ᾽ ἡ κακῶς τ’ εἰρημένα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τὶ δ’; οὐ δικαίως ὅδε κυσίν δοθήσεται;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ ἑννοομον γὰρ τὴν δίκην πρᾶσσεσθὲ νῦν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἶπερ γε πόλεως ἐχθρός ἦν, οὐκ ἐχθρός ὁν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκοιν ἔδωκε τῇ τύχῃ τὸν δαίμονα;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ τῷ τάφῳ νῦν τὴν δίκην παρασχέτω.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τὶ πλημμελήσας, τὸ μέρος εἰ μετῆλθε γῆς;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἀταφος οδ’ ἀνήρ, ὡς μάθης, γενήσεται.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἔγὼ σφε θάψω, κἂν ἀπεννέπη πόλις.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σαυτήν ἄρ’ ἐγγύς τὸδε συνθάψεις νεκρῷ.

1650

478
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Thine ills are not part heavy and part light,
But in all things art thou in woeful case.
But thee I question, new-created king,
[Why outrage thus my sire with banishment?]
Wherefore make laws touching a hapless corse?

CREON
Eteocles' ordinance, not mine, is this.

ANTIGONE
'Tis senseless—witless thou who giv'st it force.

CREON
How, were't not just to carry out his hests?

ANTIGONE
If they be wrong, in malice spoken—no!

CREON
How, were't not just to cast yon man to dogs?

ANTIGONE
Nay: so ye wreak on him no lawful vengeance.

CREON
Yea, if to Thebes a foe, no foe by birth.

ANTIGONE
Hath he not unto fate paid forfeit life?

CREON
Forfeit of burial now too let him pay.

ANTIGONE
Wherein sinned he, who came to claim his own?

CREON
This man shall have no burial, be thou sure.

ANTIGONE
I, though the state forbid, will bury him.

CREON
Thyself then shalt thou bury with thy dead.

479
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ

άλλ' εὐκλεές τοι δύο φίλω κείσθαι πέλας.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λάξυσθε τήνδε κείς δόμους κομίζετε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ

οὐ δήτ', ἔπει τούθ' οὐ μεθήσομαι νεκροῦ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐκριν' ὃ δαίμων, παρθέν', οὐχ ἃ σοι δοκεῖ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ

κάκεινο κέκριται, μὴ ἐφυβρίζεσθαι νεκροὺς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὡς οὔτις ἀμφὶ τῷ ὑγρὰν θήσει κόνιν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ

ναὶ πρὸς σε τῆςδε μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης, Κρέων.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μάταια μοχθείς· οὐ γὰρ ἄν τύχοις τάδε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ νεκρῷ λουτρά περιβαλεῖν μ' ἔα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐν τούτῳ ἀν εἴη τῶν ἀπορρήτων πόλει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ

άλλ' ἀμφὶ τραύματ' ἀγρία τελαμῶνας βαλεῖν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως σὺ τόνδε τιμήσῃς νέκυν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ

ὅ φίλτατ', ἄλλα στόμα γε σὸν προσπτύξομαι.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐ μὴ ἐς γάμους σοὺς συμφορὰν κτήσῃ γόοις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ

ἡ γὰρ γαμοῦμαι ξῶσα παιδὶ σὺ ποτὲ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πολλὴ γ' ἀνάγκη· ποι γὰρ ἐκφεύξει λέχος;
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE
'Tis glorious that two friends lie side by side.

CREON
Seize ye this girl, and hale her within doors!

ANTIGONE
Never! for I will not unclasp this corpse.

CREON
God hath decreed, girl, not as seems thee good.

ANTIGONE
Yea—hath decreed this, Outrage not the dead!

CREON
Know, none shall spread the damp dust over him.

ANTIGONE
Nay!—for Jocasta's, for his mother's sake!

CREON
Vain is thy labour: this thou shalt not win.

ANTIGONE
Suffer at least that I may bathe the corpse.

CREON
This shall be of the things the state forbids.

ANTIGONE
Let me at least bind up his cruel wounds.

CREON
Thou shalt in no wise honour this dead man.

ANTIGONE
Belovèd! on thy lips this kiss at least—

CREON
Mar not thy bridal's fortune by laments.

ANTIGONE
How! living shall I e'er wed son of thine?

CREON
Needs must thou. Whither from the couch wilt flee?
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

νῦξ ἄρ' ἐκεῖνη Δανάϊδων μ' ἔξει μίαν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
eídes τὸ τόλμημ' οἶνον ἐξωνείδισεν;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἐστώ σίδηρος ὄρκιον τέ μοι ξίφος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
tί δ' ἐκπροθυμεῖ τῶν' ἀπηλλάχθαι γάμων;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

συμφεύξομαι τῶδ' ἀθλιωτάτῳ πατρί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

γενναιότης σοι, μωρία δ' ἔνεστί τις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ ξυνθανοῦμαι γ', ὡς μάθης περαιτέρω.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἴθ, οὐ φονεύσεις παιδ' ἐμόν, λίπε χθόνα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, αἰνῶ μὲν σε τής προθυμίας.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' εἰ γαμοῖμην, σὺ δὲ μόνος φεύγοις, πάτερ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

μὲν' εὐτυχοῦσα, τὰμ' ἐγὼ στέρξω κακά.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ τίς σε τυφλὸν ὄντα θεραπεύσει, πάτερ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

πεσὼν ὅπου μοι μοῖρα κείσομαι πέδω.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὁ δ' Οἰδίποις ποῦ καὶ τὰ κλεῖν' αἰνίγματα;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὀλωλ' ἐν ἡμάρ μ' ὅλβιο', ἐν δ' ἀπώλεσεν.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE
That night shall prove me one of Danaus' Daughters!  
CREON (to OEDIPUS)
Dost mark how rails she in her recklessness?  
ANTIGONE (raising POLYNEICES' sword )
Witness the steel—this sword whereby I swear.

CREON
Wherefore so eager to avoid this bridal?

ANTIGONE
I will share exile with mine hapless sire.

CREON
Noble thy spirit, yet lurks folly there.  
ANTIGONE
Yea, and with him will die. Know this withal.

CREON
Thou shalt not slay my son. Hence, leave the land!  
[Exit.

OEDIPUS
Daughter, for thy devotion thank I thee.

ANTIGONE
I marry, father,—thou in exile lone!

OEDIPUS
Ah stay: be happy. I will bear mine ills.

ANTIGONE
Who then will minister to thy blindness, father?

OEDIPUS
Where my weird is, there shall I fall, there lie.

ANTIGONE
Ah, where is Oedipus?—where that riddle famed?

OEDIPUS
Lost. One day blessed me, one hath ruined me

1 Who slew the husbands whom they wedded perforce.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

1690 οὐκοὺν μετασχεῖν κάμε δεὶ τῶν σῶν κακῶν;
OIDIPOΣ
αἰσχρὰ φυγὴ θυγατρὶ σὺν τυφλῷ πατρί.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
οὐ, σωφρονοῦσα γ’, ἄλλα γενναία, πάτερ.
OIDIPOΣ
προσάγαγε νῦν με, μητρός ὡς ψαύσω σέθεν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
ἰδοὺ, γεραιᾶς φιλτάτης ψαύσον χερί.
OIDIPOΣ
ὡ μήτερ, ὡ ξυνάορ ἀθλιωτάτη.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
σκέτρα πρόκειται, πάντε ἔχουσ’ ὁμοὺ κακά.
OIDIPOΣ
’Ετεοκλέους δὲ πτώμα Πολυνείκους τε ποῦ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
τάδ’ ἐκτάδην σοι κείσθοι ἄλληλοι σὲ πέλας.
OIDIPOΣ
πρόσθες τυφλὴν χεῖρ’ ἐπὶ πρόσωπα δυστυχῆ.

1700 ἰδοὺ, θανόντων σῶν τέκνων ἀπτοὺ χερί.
OIDIPOΣ
ὡ φίλα πεσῆμαι ἀθλί’ ἀθλίου πατρός.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
ὡ φιλτατον δῆτ’ ὄνομα Πολυνείκους ἐμοί.
OIDIPOΣ
νῦν χρησμός, ὡ παι, Δοξίου περαινεῖαι.

ΑΝΤΙΓΩΝΗ
ὁ ποίος; ἄλλη ἡ πρός κακοῖς ἔρεις κακά;
OIDIPOΣ
ἐν ταῖς Ἀθηναῖς καθάνειν μ’ ἀλώμενον.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE
Is it not then my due to share thine ills?

OEDIPUS
’Twere a maid’s shame,—exile with her blind sire!

ANTIGONE
Nay, but—so she be wise—her glory, father.

OEDIPUS
That I may touch thy mother, guide me now.

ANTIGONE
Lo, touch her with thine hand—so old, so dear!

OEDIPUS
Ah mother! Ah, most hapless helpmeet mine!

ANTIGONE
Piteous she lies, with all ills crowned at once.

OEDIPUS
Eteocles’ corse, and Polyneices’—where?

ANTIGONE
Here lie they, each by other’s side outstretched.

OEDIPUS
Lay my blind hand upon their ill-starred brows.

ANTIGONE
Lo there: touch with thine hand thy children slain.

OEDIPUS
Dear hapless dead sons of a hapless sire!

ANTIGONE
Ah Polyneices, name most dear to me!

OEDIPUS
Now, child, doth Loxias’ oracle come to pass,—

ANTIGONE
What? Wilt thou tell new ills beside the old?

OEDIPUS
That I, a wanderer, should in Athens die.
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
ποῦ; τίς σε πῦργος Ἀτθίδος προσδέξεται;
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
ιερὸς Κολωνός, δῷμαθ' ἱππίου θεοῦ.
アルバム εἰς, τυφλῷ τῷ ὑπηρέτει πατρί,
ἐπεὶ προθυμεῖ τήσδε κοινοῦσθαι φυγής.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1710
θῇ εἰς φυγὰν τάλανυν ὀρεγε χέρα φίλαν,
πάτερ γεραιέ, πομπίμαν
ἐχὼν ἐμ' ὡστε ναυσίπομπον αὐραν.
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

идον πορεύομαι, τέκνων;
σὺ μοι ποδαγὸς ἀθλία γενοῦ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

γενόμεθα γενόμεθ' ἀθλιαί
γε δῆτα Θηβαιῶν μάλιστα παρθένων.
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

πόθι γεραιόν ἱχνός τίθημι;
βάκτρα πρόσφερ', ὦ τέκνων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1720
τάδε τάδε βαθὶ μοι,
τάδε τάδε πόδα τίθει
ὡς τ' ἄνειρον ἵχύν.
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ιῶ ἵω, δυστυχεστάτας φυγὰς
ἐλαύνων τὸν γέροντά μ' ἐκ πάτρας.
ιῶ ἵω, δεινά δειν' ἐγὼ τλάς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί τλάς; τί τλάς; οὐχ ὡρὰ Δίκα κακοῦς,
οὐδ' ἀμείβεται βροτῶν ἁσυνεσίας.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE
Where? What Athenian burg shall harbour thee?

OEDIPUS
Hallowed Colonus, Chariot-father's home.
On then: to this thy blind sire minister,
Since thou art fixed to share my banishment.

ANTIGONE
To woeful exile pass away.
Stretch forth, O father hoary-grey,
Thy dear hand: grasp me. Thee I lead,
As breeze wafts on the galley’s speed.

OEDIPUS
Lo, daughter, I pass on:
Thou guide me, hapless one.

ANTIGONE
Hapless I am—thou sayest well—
Above all maids in Thebes that dwell.

OEDIPUS
Where shall I plant mine old feet now?
Reach me my staff, O daughter, thou.

ANTIGONE
Hitherward, hitherward, tread:
Let thy feet follow hither mine hand,
O strengthless as dream of the night!

OEDIPUS
Ah thou who on wretchedest exile hast sped
The old man forth of his fatherland!
Ah woes I have borne! Ah horror’s height!

ANTIGONE
Thou hast borne?—thou hast borne?—doth Justice
regard not then
The sinner? Requitest she not the follies of men?

1 Poseidon, the Sea-god, who created the first war-horse.
ΦΩΝΙΣΣΑΙ

OIDIPOΣ

ὅδ' εἴμι μούςαν δς ἐπὶ καλ-
λίνικον οὐράνιον ἔβαν

1730

παρθένου κόρας αἴ-
nυμ' ἀσύνυτον εὐρών.

ANTIGONH

Σφηγγὸς ἀναφέρεις ὀινείδος.

1740

ἀπαγε τὰ πάρος εὐνυχήματ' αὐδῶν.

 OIDIPOΣ

iros πατρός γε συμφορᾶς

1750

εὐκλεᾶ με θήσει:

 OIDIPOΣ

πρὸς ἡλικας φάνηθι σάς.

ANTIGONH

ἄλις ὀδυρμάτων ἐμῶν.

OIDIPOΣ

σὺ δ' ἀμφὶ βωμίους λιτάς—

ANTIGONH

κόρον ἔχουσ' ἐμῶν κακῶν.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS
Lo, I am he on breath
Of song upraised to heaven,
When that dark riddle of the Maid of Death 1730
To me to read was given.

ANTIGONE
Why raise the ghost of shame, the Sphinx's story?
Forbear to vaunt too late that faded glory.
For thee this anguish lay the while in wait,
Far from thy land to know the exile's fate,
And, father, in some place unknown to die.
To maids who love me leaving tears of yearning,
From fatherland an exile unreturning
I wander far in plight unmaidenly.

OEDIPUS
Woe for the heart where duty's fire is burning! 1740

ANTIGONE
Twined with my father's sad renown
This shall be mine unfading crown.
Woe for thy wrongs! Brother, alas for thine,
Who from thine home a tombless corse art thrust,
Hapless! Though death, my sire, for this be mine,
Yet will I veil him secretly with dust.

OEDIPUS
Show thee again to thy companions' eyes.

ANTIGONE
Why should they weep? Mine own laments suffice.

OEDIPUS
At the Gods' altars then with suppliant cry—

ANTIGONE
They weary of my tale of misery. 1750
ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ιθ' ἅλλα Βρόμιος ἤνα τε ση-
κός ἀβατος ὄρεσι μαίναδών.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

Καδμείαν ὥ
νεβρίδα στολιδωσαμένα ποτ᾽ ἐγὼ
Σεμέλας θίασον
ιερὸν ὄρεσιν ἀνεχόρευσα,
χάριν ἀχάριτον εἰς θεοὺς διδοῦσα ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ἄ πάτρας κλεινῇς πολίται, λεύσετ', Οἴδίποις
οδε,
ὅς τὰ κλεῖν' αἰνύγματ' ἔγνω καὶ μέγιστος ἦν
ἀνήρ,

1760 δό μόνος Σφυγγός κατέσχοι τῆς μαιφόνου κράτη,
νῦν ἀτιμὸς αὐτὸς οἰκτρὸς ἔξελαύνομαι χθονός.
ἀλλὰ γὰρ τί ταύτα θρηνῶ καὶ μάτην ὁδύρομαι;
τὰς γὰρ ἐκ θεῶν ἀνάγκας θυητῶν ὄντα δεὶ φέρειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄ μέγα σεμνῇ Νίκῃ, τὸν ἐμὸν
βίοντον κατέχοις,
καὶ μὴ λίγοις στεφανοῦσα.
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS
Seek at the least the haunt of the Clamour-god
Mid hills of the Maenads by foot profane untrod.

ANTIGONE
How!—render homage without heart
To Him, for whom erstwhile arrayed
In Theban fawnskins, I had part
In Semele's holy dance that swayed
By hill, by glade?

OEDIPUS
People of a glorious nation, mark me—Oedipus am I,
He who read the riddle world-renowned, the man
once set on high,
He whose single prowess quelled the Sphinx's blood-
polluted might.
Now dishonoured am I banished from the land in
piteous plight.
Yet what boots it thus to wail? What profits vainly
to lament?
Whoso is but mortal needs must bear the fate of
heaven sent. [Exeunt Oedipus and Antigone.

CHORUS
Hail, reveréd Victory!
Rest upon my life; and me
Crown, and crown eternally!

[Exeunt omnes,
SUPPLIANTS
ARGUMENT

In the days when Theseus ruled in Athens, there was war between Argos and Thebes. For the two sons of Oedipus, being mindful of their father's curse, that they should divide their inheritance with the sword, covenanted to rule in turn, year by year, over Thebes. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polyneices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year's space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes. But, forasmuch as in going he set at naught oracles and seers, his array was utterly broken in battle, and of those seven captains none returned, but Adrastus only. Thereafter, according to the sacred custom of Hellas, and the law of war, the Argives sent to require the Thebans to suffer them to bear away their slain that they might bury them. For, among the Greeks, if a man being dead obtained not burial, this was accounted a calamity worse than death, forasmuch as he was thereby made homeless and accursed in Hades. Yet did the Thebans impiously and spitefully reject that claim, being minded to wreak vengeance on their enemies after death. Then king Adrastus, with the mothers of the slain chiefs, came to Eleusis in Attica, and made supplication at the altar of Demeter to Aethra the mother of Theseus, and to the king's self. So Theseus consented to their prayer, and led the array of Athens against Thebes, and there fought and prevailed, and so brought back the bodies of those chiefs, and rendered to them the death-rites at Eleusis.
ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ.

ΑΙΘΡΑ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ΚΗΡΤΣ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΣΤΑΔΝΗ
ΙΦΙΣ
ΠΑΙΔΕΣ
ΆΘΗΝΑ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

AETHRA, mother of Theseus.
THESEUS, son of Aegeus, king of Athens.
ADRASTUS, king of Argos.
HERALD, from Creon king of Thebes.
MESSANGER from the army of Theseus before Thebes.
EVADNE, wife of Cepaneus one of the seven chiefs.
IPHIS, father of Evadne.
SONS of the slain chiefs.
ATHENA, Patron-goddess of Athens.
CHORUS, consisting of the mothers of the slain chiefs, with their Handmaids
Athenian heralda, guards, attendants, Athenian soldiers

SCENE: In the forecourt of the temple of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis. The great altar stands in the midst.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΙΘΡΑ

Δήμητρε, ἐστιν οὖς Ἐλευσίνους χθονὸς τῆςδ', οὔ τε ναοῦς ἔχετε πρὸς πολοῖς θεᾶς, εὐδαιμονεῖν με Θησέα τε παῖδ' ἐμὸν πόλων τ' Ἀθηνῶν τήν τε Πιτθέως χθόνα, ἐν ἢ με θρέψας ὅλοις ἐν δώμασιν ἀδραν πατὴρ δίδωσι τῷ Παυδίωνος Ἀγεί δάμαρτα, Δοξίου μαντεύμασιν. εἰς τάσδε γὰρ βλέψας ἐπινεξάμην τάδε γραυς, αἰ λυποῦσαι δῶματ' Ἀργείας χθονὸς ἰκτηρὶ βαλλὼ προσπίτυνοσ ἐμὸν γόνυ πάθος παθοῦσαι δεινόν· ἀμφὶ γὰρ πῦλας Κάδμον θανόντων ἐπτὰ γενναίων τέκνων ἀπαίδες εἰσιν, οὐς ποτ' Ἀργείων ἀναξ Ἀδραστος ἡγαίγ', ὁ Ἐδίπου παγκληρίας μέρος κατασχεῖν φυγάδι Πολυνείκει θέλων γαμβρῷ. νεκροὺς δὲ τοὺς ὀλωλότας δῷ θάψαι θέλουσι τῶνδε μητέρες χθονι. εἰργοῦσι δ' οἱ κρατοῦντες οὐδ' ἀναίρεσιν δοῦναι θέλουσι, νόμιμ' ἀτίξοντες θεῶν.
SUPPLIANTS

On the steps of the altar AETHRA is seated; and around her sit the members of the chorus. The olive-boughs of suppliance lie upon the altar, and from these are stretched woollen fillets, attaching them to AETHRA and the CHORUS. ADRASTUS lies prostrate on the earth, apart from these.

AETHRA

DEMETER, warder of Eleusis-land,
And ye which keep and serve the Goddess' fanes,
Grant me and my son Theseus prosperous days,
Grant them to Athens and to Pittheus' land,
Where in a happy home my sire nursed me,
Aethra, and gave me to Pandion's son
Aegeus, to wife, by Loxias' oracles.

Thus pray I as on these grey dames I look,
These which have left their homes in Argos-land,
And fall with suppliant bough before my knee,
10 Stricken with grievous stroke: for round the gates
Of Cadmus lying are their seven sons dead,
Sons of the childless, they whom Argos' king
Adrastus led, in Oedipus' heritage
To win his share for exiled Polyneices,
His daughter's lord. The mothers now of these,
The spear-slain, fain would lay them in the grave,
Wherefrom the victors let them, and refuse
The corpses, setting the Gods' laws at naught.

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        КК 2
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κοινών δὲ φόρτων ταῖσθ' ἔχων χρείας ἐμῆς Ἀδραστος ὀμμα δάκρυσι τέγγων ὄδε κεῖται, τὸ τ' ἐγχος τῆς τε δυστυχεστάτην στένων στρατείαν ἦν ἐπεμψην ἐκ δόμων· ὡς με ἐξοτρύνει παῖδ' ἐμόν πείσαι λιταῖς νεκρῶν κομιστήν ἢ λόγοισιν ἢ δορᾶς ῥώμη γενέσθαι καὶ τάφον μεταίτιον, μόνον τὸδ' ἔργον προστίθεις ἐμῷ τέκνῳ πόλει τ' Ἀθηνῶν. τινικάλοι δ' ὑπὲρ ἀθυνόδ ἀρότου προδόσου' ἐκ δόμων ἔλθοῦσ', ἐμῶν πρὸς τόνδε σηκών, ἐνθα πρῶτα φαίνεται φρίξας ὑπὲρ γῆς τῆς τής κάρπημος στάχυν· δεσμῶν δ' ἀδεσμον τὸνδ' ἐχοῦσα φυλλάδος μένω πρὸς ἀνγαῖας ἐσχάρας δυοῖν θεαῖν Κόρης τε καὶ Δήμητρος, οἰκτείρουσα μὲν πολιάς ἀπαίδας τάσδε μητέρας τέκνων, σέβουσα δ' ἑρά στέμματ'. οἰχείαι δὲ μοι κήρυξς πρὸς ἄστυ δεύρῳ Θησεα καλῶν, ὡς ἢ τδ τοῦτον λυπρὸν ἐξέλη χθονός, ἢ τάσδ' ἀνάγκας ἰκεισίους λύσῃ, θεοὺς ὁσίον τι δράσας· πάντα γὰρ δι' ἀρσένων γυναιξὶ πράσσειν εἰκός, αἰτίνες σοφαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ικετεύω σε, γεραιά, στρ. α' γεραιῶν ἐκ στομάτων, πρὸς γόνυ πίπτουσα τὸ σόν· ἀνα μοι τέκνα λύσαι φθιμένων

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SUPPLIANTS

Sharing the burden of their need of me,
Adrastus lieth here, his eyes with tears
Drowned, mourning for the battle-shivered spear
And that ill-starred array led forth of him.
Sore pleadeth he with me to bend by prayers
My son to be redeemer of the dead
By speech or spear, and helper to the grave,
Laying this charge alone upon my son
And Athens. Now it chanceth that I come
For the land's harvest's sake from forth mine halls
To this god's-acre, where first rose to light
Above the earth's face bristling ears of corn.

And, bound in this strong gossamer-chain of leaves,¹
At the two Goddesses' holy hearths I stay,
Demeter's and her Daughter's, both for ruth
Of these unchilded mothers silver-haired,
And awe of the holy bands. To Athens sped
Mine herald is, to summon Theseus hither,
That he may banish from the land these mourners,²
Or loose this strong constraint of supplication
By rendering heaven its due. Seemly it is
That women, which be wise, still act through men.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

Reverend Queen, with aged lips do I implore thee;
In my supplication at thy knee I fall before thee.
O redeem thou unto me from that assemblage of the dead

¹ The woollen fillets and boughs could not be removed without sacrilege.
² The presence of such, especially at the temple of Demeter, was ominous of evil, which the king only could avert, either by granting their request, or by refusing it and ordering them to depart.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

νεκύων, οί καταλείπουσι μέλη
θανάτῳ λυσιμελεῖ θηρίων ὅρείους βορᾶν.

ἔσιδονός' οίκτρα μὲν ὄσσων
δάκρυ' ἀμφί' βλεφάροις,

50 ῥυσὰ δὲ σαρκῶν πολιῶν
καταδρύμματα χειρῶν τί γάρ; ἃ

φθιμένους παιδας ἐμοῦς οὐτε δόμοις
προθέμαν, οὐτε τάφων χώματα γαίας ἐσορῶ.

ἐτεκες καὶ σὺ ποτ', ὥ πότνια, κοῦρον

στρ. β'

φίλα ποιησαμένα

λέκτρα πόσει σφ' μέτα νυν

δὸς ἐμοὶ σᾶς διανοίας,

μετάδος δ', ὅσον ἐπαλγῶ μελέα

τῶν φθιμένων οὖς ἔτεκον·

60 παράπεισον δὲ τὸ σῶν, λυσόμεθ', ἐλθεῖν
tέκνων Ἦσυμην ἐμὰν τ' εἰς χέρα θείην

νεκύων θάλερῶν σώματ' ἀλαίνοντ' ἄταφα.1

οἴσως οὐχ, ὑπ' ἀνάγκας δὲ προπίπτον-

σα προσαίτοι'] ἐμολον

dεξιπύρους θεῶν θυμέλας·

ἐχομεν δ' ἐνδίκα· καὶ σοὶ
tι πάρεστι σθένος ὡστ' εὔτεκνία

dυστυχίαν τὰν παρ' ἐμοὶ
kαθελεῖν' οἰκτρὰ δὲ πάσχουσ' ἰκετεύω

1 Murray: for λάιον τάφον.
SUPPLIANTS

My belovèd, from the harvest that the hand of death
hath spread [my womb!]
For the mountain-beasts to ravin on the children of

(Ant. 1)

Look upon me:—from mine eyes in my despairing
Tears are streaming, and my frenzied hands are tearing [should I do but mourn,
Crimson furrows on my wrinkled cheeks. What Who have laid not out my dead unto their burial to be borne, [for their tomb?
And who see not any heaping of the earth-mound

(Str. 2)

Thou hast borne a little one, thou hast given a princely son [joy in thee:
To thy lord, that marriage-treasure made his heart to
Let the full soul deal its bread to the sad ones famishèd:
Give according to the measure of my childless agony. Bend the spirit of thy son, that he may go, whose help we crave, [our dead—
To Ismenus, that our hands may lay the bodies of Who are outcasts now in Hades, being tombless— in the grave.

(Ant. 2)

Not according unto rite,¹ but as overmastering might Of Necessity constraineth, at the altars do I bend Whence to heaven leaps the flame; and the right is that I claim.
Thou art strong, thy son remaineth;—thou canst make my sorrows end. [wild Out of depths of sorest anguish rings my supplication

¹ There was no place in the temple-ritual for mourning.

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ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

τὸν ἐμὸν παῖδα τάλαν ς' ἐν χερί θείναι νέκυν, ἀμφιβαλεῖν λυγρὰ μέλη παιδὸς ἐμοῦ.

ἀγὼν ὁδ' ἄλλος ἔρχεται γόων γόους στρ. γ' διάδοχος' ἄχουσιν προπόλων χέρες.

ιτ' ὦ ξυνφδοί κακοίς,
ιτ' ὦ ξυναλγηδόνες,
χορὸν τὸν "Αἰδας σέβει,
διὰ παρήδος ὄνυχα λευκὸν αἴματοῦ τε χρῶτα τε φόνιον·
τὰ γὰρ φθίτων τοῖς ὀρῶσι κόσμος.

ἀπληστός ἀδὲ μ' ἐξάγει χάρις γόων ἀντ. γ'
πολύπονος, ὅς ἐξ ἀλιβάτου πέτρας
ὐγρὰ ρέουσα σταγών,
ἀπαυστός αἰὲ γόων·
τὸ γὰρ θανόντων τέκνων
ἐπίπονον τι κατὰ γυναῖκας
eἰς γόους πέφυκε πάθος. ἐ' ἐ'
θανοῦσα τῶν ἀλγέων λαθοῖμαν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τίνων γόων ἥκουσα καὶ στέρνων κτύπου νεκρῶν τε θρήνους, τῶνδ' ἀνακτόρων ἀπὸ ἥχους ιούσης; ὦς φόβος μ' ἀναπτεροῖ

μὴ μοί τι μήτηρ, ἣν μεταστείχω ποδὶ
χρονίαν ἀπούσαν ἐκ δόμων, ἔχῃ νέου.

ἐα'·
τί χρῆμα; κανὼς εἰσβολὰς ὀρῶ λόγων·
μητέρα γεραιάν βωμίαν ἐφημένην
ξένας θ' ὑμοῦ γυναῖκας, οὐχ ἕνα ῥυθμὸν.
SUPPLIANTS

That thou give me but a corpse, in mine embrace
to hold the same, [my child.
And to fling mine arms around the piteous body of 70
The attendant handmaids, beating their breasts and
marring their faces, wail in unison with the mothers.
O hearken yon wails to our wailing replying, (Str. 3)
To the hands of our handmaidens smiting hard
On their bosoms! Come, ye that re-echo our crying
With a burden of mourning, who sigh with our
sighing—
Come ye to the one dance Death doth regard;
Rend, rend ye the cheek, till the red stains streak
White fingers:—the dues that our dear dead seek
Shall be all our reward.

Unsatisfied mourning my soul is enthralling (Ant. 3)
Sorrow-burdened, as forth from a precipice flows 80
A spring with its rain ever flashing and falling.
Unrestingly wailing to wailing is calling;
For the heart's love of woman but one path knows,
Nor can choose but to moan for the dear dead son:—
And oh that the days of my life were done,
And forgotten my woes!

Enter THESEUS.

THESEUS

What wailings heard I, smittings upon breasts,
And dirges for the dead, as rang the sound [fear
From the holy place? How throbs mine heart with
Lest to my mother, who hath drawn me hither 90
By her long absence, some mischance betide.
Ha!
What see I here? What strange tale is to tell?
At the altar sitting my grey mother is,
And alien dames with her in diverse guise

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ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κακῶν ἐχούσας· ἐκ τε γὰρ γερασμῶν ὄσσων ἔλαινουσ' ῥυκτρόν εἰς γαῖαν δάκρυ, κοιμαὶ δὲ καὶ πεπλῶματ' οὐ θεωρικά.
τί τάντα, μήτερ; σῶν τὸ μηνύειν ἐμοί, ἡμῶν δ' ἀκούειν· προσδοκῶ τι γὰρ νέον.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ὁ παῖ, γυναῖκες αἰδὲ μητέρες τέκνων
tῶν καθανόντων ἀμφὶ Καδμείας πύλας
ἐπτὰ στρατηγῶν· ἱκεσίοις δὲ· σὺν κλάδοις
φρουροῦσι μ', ὡς δέδορκας, ἐν κύκλῳ, τέκνων.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τίς δ' οὐ στενάξων οἰκτρὸν ἐν πύλαις οδὲ;

ΑΙΘΡΑ

"Αδραστος, ὡς λέγονσιν, Ἄργειῶν ἀναξ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οἰ δ' ἀμφὶ τόνδε παῖδες ἢ τούτου τέκνα;

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οὐκ, ἄλλα νεκρῶν τῶν ὀλωλότων κόροι.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί γὰρ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἦλθον ἱκεσία χερί;

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οἴδ'· ἄλλα τόνδε μῦθος οὐντεῦθεν, τέκνων.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

σὲ τὸν κατήρη χλαυδίδωσιν ἄνωτορώ.
λέγε· ἐκκαλύφας κράτα και πάρες γόον·
πέρας γὰρ οὐδὲν μή διὰ γλώσσης ἵπν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὁ καλλινίκε γῆς Ἄθηναιῶν ἀναξ,
Θῆσεν, σὸς ἱκέτης καὶ πόλεως ἦκω σέθεν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί χρήμα θηρῶν καὶ τίνος χρείαν ἔχων;
SUPPLIANTS

Of sore affliction; for the piteous tear
Unto the ground from aged eyes they drop.
Shorn hair and garb unmeet for worshippers!
What means it, mother? 'Tis thy part to tell,
And mine to hear. I look for some strange thing.

AETHRA
My son, these dames the mothers are of those,
The chieftains seven, that in battle fell
By gates Cadmean. And with suppliant boughs
Compassed they hold me, captive, as thou seest.

THESEUS
Who yonder at the gates makes piteous moan?

AETHRA
Adrastus, as they tell, the Argive king.

THESEUS
And yon lads at his side, his boys are they?

AETHRA
Nay, but the sons of those dead which have died.

THESEUS
Wherefore to us came they with suppliant hand?

AETHRA
I know:—but these must tell the rest, my son.

THESEUS
Thee, in thy mantle muffled close, I ask—
Unshroud thine head, speak, let thy mourning be;
Naught shalt thou profit, if naught pass thy tongue.

ADRASTUS
O triumph-glorious king of Athens' land,
Theseus, I come thy suppliant and thy city's.

THESEUS
What seekest thou, and whereof hast thou need?
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
οἶσθ' ἦν στρατεύαν ἐστράτευσ' ὀλεθρίαν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
οὐ γὰρ τι συγῇ διεπέρασας Ἐλλάδα.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἐνταῦθ' ἀπώλεσ' ἀνδρας Ἀργείων ἄκρους.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
toιαῦθ' ὁ τλῆμων πόλεμος ἐξεργάζεται.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
tουτοὺς θανόντας ἦλθον ἔξαιτῶν πόλιν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
κήρυξιν Ἑρμοῦ πίσυνος, ὡς θάψης νεκροὺς;

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
cαὶ πεῖτα γ' ὦ κτανόντες οὐκ ἐδοὺς με.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
tί γὰρ λέγουσιν, ὅσια χρήζοντος σέθεν;

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
tί δὲ; εὐτυχοῦντες οὐκ ἐπίστανται φέρειν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ξύμβουλον οὖν μ' ἔπηκλης; ή τίνος χάριν;

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
κομίσαι σε, Θησεῦ, παῖδας Ἀργείων θέλων.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
tο δ' Ἀργος ύμῖν ποῦ στιν; ή κόμποι μάτην;

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
σφαλέντες οὐχόμεσθα. πρὸς σὲ δ' ἦκομεν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἰδία δοκήσαν σοι τὸδ' ή πάση πόλει;

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
πάντες σ' ἰκνοῦνται Δαναίδαι θάψαι νεκροὺς.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐλαύνεις ἐπτὰ πρὸς Θήβας λόχους;
SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS
Thou know'st what host I to destruction led.

THESEUS
Yea, not in silence passedst thou through Greece.

ADRASTUS
The chiefest men of Argos lost I there.

THESEUS
Such desolation worketh woeful war.

ADRASTUS
And these my dead I went to ask of Thebes.

THESEUS
Did heralds sanctify thy burial-claim?

ADRASTUS
Yea: even so the slayers grant them not.

THESEUS
What say they to thy plea of holy right?

ADRASTUS
Ay, what?—prosperity hath puffed them up.

THESEUS
For counsel com'st thou then, or what wouldst thou?

ADRASTUS
That thou shouldst rescue, Theseus, Argos' sons.

THESEUS
Where is your Argos? Is her vaunting vain?

ADRASTUS
We are fallen and undone. To thee we come.

THESEUS
Dost thou alone will this, or all thy state?

ADRASTUS
All Danaus' sons beseech thee entomb their dead.

THESEUS
Why didst thou march those seven hosts to Thebes?
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
dισσοίσι γαμβροῖς τήνδε πορσύνων χάριν.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
τῷ δ' ἐξέδωκας παῖδας Ἀργείων σέθεν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
οὐκ ἐγγενὴς συνήψα κηδεῖαν δόμοις.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
ἀλλὰ ξένοις ἐδωκας Ἀργείας κόρας;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
Τυδεὶ γε Πολυνείκει τε τῷ θηβαγενεί.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
τίν' εἰς ἔρωτα τήσδε κηδείας μολὼν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
Φοίβου μ' ὑπήλθε δυστόπαστ' αἰνίγματα.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
τί δ' εἰπ' Ἀπόλλων παρθένοις κραίνων γάμον;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
κάπρῳ με δούναι καὶ λέοντι παιδ' ἐμῷ.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
σὺ δ' ἐξελίσσεις πῶς θεοῦ θεσπίσματα;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἐλθόντε φυγάδε νυκτὸς εἰς ἐμὰς πύλας,

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
τίς καὶ τίς; εἰπέ· δύο γὰρ ἐξανδράς ἁμα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
Τυδεὺς μάχην ξυνήψε Πολυνείκης θ' ἁμα.

ΟΗΣΕΤΖ
ἡ τοῖσδ' ἐδωκας θηρσίν ὅς κόρας σέθεν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
μάχην γε δισσοίν κωδάλοιν ἀπεικάσσας.
SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS
To my two daughters' lords this grace I showed.

THESEUS
Thy daughters? To what Argives gav'st thou them?

ADRASTUS
With no man native-born I linked mine house.

THESEUS
Ha! gavest thou to aliens Argive maids?

ADRASTUS
To Tydeus, and to Thebes' son Polyneices.

THESEUS
Whence thy strong love for such affinity?

ADRASTUS
Phoebus' dark saying wrought upon my mind.

THESEUS
What spake Apollo to control their marriage?

ADRASTUS
"Thy daughters give to a lion and a boar."

THESEUS
And the God's precept how unfoldest thou?

ADRASTUS
There came by night two exiles to my gates.

THESEUS
Who this, who that?—for thou dost speak of twain

ADRASTUS
Tydeus and Polyneices: there they fought.

THESEUS
To these, as those wild beasts, gav'st thou thy daugh-
ters?

ADRASTUS
Yea: like those monsters twain, methought, they strove.

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İKETİDES

ΟΗΣΕΤΕ

ηλθον δε δη πως πατρίδος εκλιπόνθ' όρους;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδευς μεν αίμα συγγενές φεύγων χθονός.

ΟΗΣΕΤΕ

ο δ' Οιδίπου παις τινι τρόπῳ Θήβας λιπῶν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

άραις πατρφαις, μη κασίγιγητον κτάνοι.

ΟΗΣΕΤΕ

σοφήν γε έλεξας τήνδ' εκουσίου φυγήν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

άλλ' οι μένοντες τους άπόντας ήδίκουν.

ΟΗΣΕΤΕ

η πού σφ' άδελφος χρημάτων νοσφίζεται;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ταυτ' εκδικάξων ηλθον ειτ' απωλόμην.

ΟΗΣΕΤΕ

μάντεις δ' επτήλθες εμπύρων τ' είδες φλόγα;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οιμοι διώκεις μη μάλιστ' έγω 'σφάλην.

ΟΗΣΕΤΕ

ούκ ήλθες, ώς έοικεν, εύνοια θεών.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

tο δε πλέον, ήλθον 'Αμφιάρεώ γε προς βίαν.

ΟΗΣΕΤΕ

ούτω το θείου ραδίως ἀπεστράφης;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

νέων γαρ άνδρών θόρυβος ἐξέπλησσέ με.

ΟΗΣΕΤΕ

eυψωχίαιν ἐσπευσας ἀντ' εὐβουλίας.

512
SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS
How left they home-land’s bounds, and came to thee?

ADRASTUS
Tydeus, for shedding blood of kin exiled.

THESEUS
And Oedipus’ son, for what cause left he Thebes?

ADRASTUS
His father’s curse, lest he should slay his brother.

THESEUS
Wise was that self-sought exile, named of thee.

ADRASTUS
But they that tarried wrought the absent wrong.

THESEUS
Ha! did his brother take his heritage?

ADRASTUS
To claim his right I came—and found my ruin.

THESEUS
Didst seek to seers, and gaze on altar-flames?

ADRASTUS
Ah me! thou pressest me where most I erred!

THESEUS
Not with heaven’s blessing didst thou go, methinks.

ADRASTUS
Nay, worse; in Amphaiarus’ despite I went.

THESEUS
Didst thou thus lightly flout the will divine?

ADRASTUS
The clamour of the young men daunted me.

THESEUS
Valour instead of wisdom favourdest thou.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

dollas òpollos õlese stratetlátas.
álle ò kath' Ëlládò álklímátaton kára,
ánax 'Isthwòn, en mèn aìsgýnai ëxhò
pitìnov prós õudás ãwòn su ìmpíscheiw õerí,
polìos ánìp tîrânnos õiðáimwn pàrôs:
òìwos ðì ìnéngi ñumfòràis ìkêie ëmaìs.

sòsou nekroùs mòi tâmá t' oikteîras kàkà
kai tòv ògançoton tàsòde mihtéras tëkñwv,
aìs ãhòs ìkei polìon ëis ìpàidìan,
ëlwêiv ðì ìèltìsan deùro kai ëxéwn pòda.
thetaîai móliís õeraià kínuòsaî mièlì,
presbeîmat' òu Æìmatros ëis ìmusîmià,
álle òs nekroùs ìáìpòs, òs ìutòs ìèrònh
keìvòn tafeîsas õeròïn ùràìovn tûçèiv.
sòfòv ðè peînàv t' èiçòràv tòv òlbìov,
pènàtâ t' ëis tòv ðìlounçov ìppòùlêpetis
êlouìnoî', ìw' ìutòv õerìmátov ëròs ëxhì,
tà t' oikèò tàv ìì ìyììstuçèís ðëdòrkénav:
[tòn ðòì ìmòpetaîò ìutòs ìn tàkkì ìèìh
kàîrona tàkkèiî', ìn ðè ìì pàsçhì tàde,
oùtòi ðùnàît' ìn oíkòthèn ìì ìtòmëvòs
tàpèis ìn ìlloûs'. ìùè ìárì ðìkèì ìxeî.]

tàç' òwì èìpetis, òpolòión ðara ìùva
pòs tàiûs 'Isthwais tòndè ìprostàsèis òìnòv;
ègò ìkàiòs ëiû' ìfììgeîsò ðàde.
Spàrtàì mêì ìììh kài ðèpòìkìltò tàûòpòv,
tà ðì ìlla miçrà ðàstèvìë' ìòlòs ðè ìì
muìh ìùnàîì ìn tòndì ìppòùlùìì òìnòv.
tà t' oikèò ìárì ðèdòrke kài ìeàvìàv

1 By most editors regarded as an irrelevant interpolation.
SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Even that hath ruined many a battle-chief.
O thou in prowess first all Hellas through,
O king of Athens, sore ashamed am I
To fall to earth, and to embrace thy knee,
A grey-haired king in time past prosperous.
Yet to mine evil plight I needs must bow.

Save thou my dead, compassionate my woes,
And these the mothers of the slaughtered sons
Whom hoary age hath found in childlessness,
Who have endured to come, on alien soil
To set their feet, who scarce for elder may creep;
No mission to Demeter's mysteries,
But seeking burial for their dead, a boon
Themselves should have obtained of young strong hands.

Wisely doth wealth consider poverty:
Wisely to wealth the poor uplifts his eyes
Aspiring, that desire of good may spur him:
So ought the prosperous to look on woe.
[The poet's self in gladness should bring forth
His offspring, song; if he attain not this,
He cannot from a heart distraught with pain
Gladden his fellows: reason sayeth nay.]

Perchance thou askest, "Why pass by the land
Of Pælops, and on Athens lay this charge?"
Sooth, right it is that I should answer this:—
Sparta is heartless, never at one stay;
The rest be small and weak: but this thy burg
Alone can stand beneath the mighty strain.
'Twas ever pitiful, and hath in thee

515

L. L. 2
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ἐχεὶ σὲ ποιμέν’ ἐσθλόν· οὐ χρεία πόλεις
πολλαὶ διώλουτ’ ἐνδεεῖς στρατηλάτοιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
κάνω τὸν αὐτὸν τῶδε σοι λόγου λέγω,
Θησεῦ, δι’ οὐκτου τὰς ἐμᾶς λαβεῖν τύχας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ
ἀλλοισι δή˙ 'πόνησ' ἀμιλληθείς λόγῳ
toiw’. ἔλεξε γάρ τις ὡς τὰ χείρονα
πλείω βροτοὶσίν ἐστὶ τῶν ἀμεινώνων·
ἐγὼ δὲ τούτοις ἀντίαν γνώμην ἔχω
πλείω τὰ χρηστὰ τῶν κακῶν εἶναι βροτοῖς.

200
ei μὴ γάρ ἦν τὸδ’, οὐκ ἂν ἦμεν ἐν φάει.
aínw δ’ ὃς ἡμῖν βιστον ἐκ πεφυρμένου
καὶ θηρώδους θεῶν διεσταθμήσατο,
πρὼτον μὲν ἐνθεῖς σύνεσιν, εἶτα δ’ ἄγγελον
γλῶσσαν λόγων δοὺς, ὡς γεγωνισκέειν ὡπα,
τροφήν τε καρποῦ τῇ τροφῇ τ’ ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ
σταγώνας ὑδρηλάς, ὡς τὰ γ’ ἐκ γαίας τρέφη
ἀρδη τε νηδίνι. πρὸς δὲ τοῖς χειματος
προβλήματ’, αἰθρον ἐξαμύνασθαι θεοῦ,
pónton τε ναυστολήμαθ’, ὡς διαλλαγάς

210
ἔχοιμεν ἀλλήλοισιν ὅν πένωτο γη.
α δ’ ἔστ’ ἁσμα κού σαφῶς γιγνώσκομεν,
eῖς πῦρ βλέποντες καὶ κατὰ σπλάγχνων πτυχάς
μάντεις προσημαίνουσιν οἰσινων τ’ ἀπο.
ἀρ’ οὗ τρυφῶμεν θεοῦ κατασκευὴν βίω
δόντος τοιαύτην, οἰσιν οὐκ ἄρκει τάδε·
ἀλλ’ ἡ φρόνησις τοῦ θεοῦ μεῖξον σθένει
ζητεῖ, τὸ γαύρον ὃ’ ἐν φρεσίν κεκτημένοι
δοκοῦμεν εἶναι δαμόνων σοφότεροι.
ἂς καὶ σὺ φαίνει δεκάδος οὗ σοφός γεγώς,

220
ὅστις κόρας μὲν θεσφάτοις Φοίβου ζυγεῖς

516
SUPPLIANTS

- A young and valorous chief, for lack of whom
  To lead their hosts, have many cities fallen.

CHORUS

I too put up to thee the selfsame prayer,
Theseus, to have compassion on my lot.

THESEUS

With others oft in wrestle of argument
I have grappled touching this:—there be that say
That evil more abounds with men than good.
Opinion adverse unto these I hold,
That more than evil good abounds with men:
Were this not so, we were not of the light.

Praise to the God who shaped in order’s mould
Our lives redeemed from chaos and the brute,
First, by implanting reason, giving then
The tongue, word-herald, to interpret speech;
Earth’s fruit for food, for nurturing thereof
Raindrops from heaven, to feed earth’s fosterlings;
And water her green bosom; therewithal
Shelter from storm, and shadow from the heat,
Sea-tracking ships, that traffic might be ours
With fellow-men of that which each land lacks;
And, for invisible things or dimly seen,
Soothsayers watch the flame, the liver’s folds,
Or from the birds divine the things to be.

Are we not arrogant then, when all life’s needs
God giveth, therewith not to be content?
But our presumption stronger fain would be
Than God: we have gotten overweening hearts,
And dream that we be wiser than the Gods.
And thou art of this fellowship of folly,
Who didst by Phoebus’ hest thy daughters wed,
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ξένοισιν ὤδ' ἐδωκας ὡς ξώντων θεῶν, λαμπρὸν δὲ θολερὺ δῶμα συμμιξας τὸ σὸν ἡλκωσας οἶκους: χρῆν γὰρ οὐδὲ σῶματα ἄδικα δικαίους τὸν σοφὸν συμμυρνύαι, εὐδαιμονοῦντας δ' εἰς δόμους κτᾶσθαι φίλους. κοινὰς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰς τύχας ἡγούμενος τοῖς τοῦ νοσοῦντος πῆμασιν διώλεσε τὸν συνυσσούντα κουδέν ἡδικηκότα.

εἰς δὲ στρατεύαν πάντας Ἀργείους ἄγων, μάντεων λεγόντων θέσφατ' εἰτ' ἀτιμᾶσας βία παρελθὼν θεοῦς ἀπόλεσας πόλιν, νέοις παραχθεῖς, οὕτως τιμώμενοι χαίροντι πολέμους τ' αὐξάνουσ' ἀνευ δίκης, φθείρουτε ἄστοις, ὁ μὲν ὅπως στρατηλάτη, ὁ δ' ὡς υβρίζῃ δύναμιν εἰς χειρας λαβὼν, ἄλλος δὲ κέρδους εἰνεκ', οὐκ ἀποσκοπῶν τὸ πλῆθος εἰ τι βλάπτεται πάσχων τάδε. τρεῖς γὰρ πολιτῶν μερίδες: οἱ μὲν ὅλβιοι ἀνωφελεὶς τε πλειώνων τ' ἐρωθ' ἀεί.

οἱ δ' οὐκ ἔχοντες καὶ σπανίζοντες βίου, δεινοί, νέμοντες τῷ φθόνῳ πλέον μέρος, εἰς τοὺς ἔχοντας κέντρ' ἀφιάσιν κακά, γλώσσαις πονηρῶν προοτατῶν φηλούμενοι τριῶν δὲ μοιρῶν ἡ ν μέσῳ σφίζει πόλεις, κόσμον φυλάσσουν ὤντιν' ἂν τάξιν πόλισ. κάπετι' ἐγὼ σοι σύμμαχος γενήσομαι; τί πρὸς πολίτας τοὺς ἐμοὺς λέγων καλῶν; χαίρων ἱθ' εἰ γὰρ μὴ βεβούλευσαι καλῶς, αὐτὸς πιέζεις τὴν τύχην, ἦμᾶς δ' ἐὰν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡμαρτενεν' ἐν νέοισι δ' ἀνθρώπων τὸδε ἔνεστιν συγγνώμην δὲ τὸδ' ἔχειν χρεὼν.
SUPPLIANTS

To aliens—thus far recognising Gods;—
Yet mingling thy clear blood with turbid, so
Didst mar thine house: thou oughtest ne’er to have
blent,
So thou wert wise, just lives with lives unjust,
But for thine house to have gotten heaven-blest
friends:
For God, adjudging fates joined hand in hand,
Destroyeth by the sinner’s stroke whoe’er
Partaketh with him, though he have not sinned.
Thou ledest forth the Argives all to war, [naught
Though seers spake heaven’s warning, setting at 230
These, flouting Gods, didst ruin so thy state,
By young men led astray, which love the praise
Of men, and multiply wars wrongfully,
Corrupting others, one, to lead the host,
One, to win power, and use it for his lust,
And one for lucre’s sake, who recketh naught
Of mischief to a people thus misused.
For in a nation there be orders three:—
The highest, useless rich, aye craving more;
The lowest, poor, aye on starvation’s brink, 240
A dangerous folk, of envy overfull,
Which shoot out baleful stings at prosperous folk,
Beguiled by tongues of evil men, their “champions”:
But of the three the midmost saveth states,
Who keep the order which the state ordains.
Shall I then make me ally unto thee?
How to my nation should I make defence?
Depart in peace: if thou hast ill devised,
Face fortune’s blows thyself; drag us not down.

CHORUS

He erred; yet on the young men rests the blame:
But meet it is that he find grace with thee.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὗτοι δικαστήν τιν’ εἰλόμην ἐμῶν κακῶν, ἀλλ’ ὡς ἰατρὸν τῶνδ’, ἀναξ, ἀφίγμεθα, oὐδ’, εἰ τι πράξας μὴ καλῶς εὑρίσκομαι, τούτων κολαστῆν κάπιτιμητήν, ἀναξ, ἀλλ’ ὡς ὑπαίμην. εἰ δὲ μὴ βούλει τάδε, στέργειν ἀνάγκη τοῖς σοῖς· τι γὰρ πάθω; ἀγ’, ὃ γεραιᾷ, στείχετε, γλαυκῆς χλόης αὐτοῦ λιπούσας φυλλάδος καταστεφή, θεοῦς τε καὶ γῆν τὴν τε πυρφόρον θεῶν Δήμητρα θέμεναι μάρτυρ’ ἡλίου τε φῶς, ὡς οὐδέν ἡμῖν ἡρκεσαι λιταὶ θεῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

ἄς Πέλοπος ἦν παῖς, Πελοπίας ἐρμεῖς χθονὸς ταῦτον πατρῷον αίμα σοι κεκτήμεθα.

ΛΙΘΡΑ

τί δρᾶς; προδόσεις ταῦτα κᾶκβαλεῖς χθονὸς γραύς οὐ τυχούσας οὐδέν δὲν αὐτὰς ἐχρῆν; μὴ δῆτ’ ἔχει γὰρ καταφυγῆν θηρ μὲν πέτραν, δοῦλος δὲ βωμοὺς θεῶν, τόλμης δὲ πρὸς πόλιν ἐπτηξὺ χειμασθεῖσα· τῶν γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖς οὐκ ἑστὶν οὐδέν διὰ τέλους εὐδαίμονοιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βὰθι, τάλαιν’, ἵερων δαπέδων ἀπὸ Περσεφονείας, βἀθι καὶ ἀντίασον γονάτων ἔπι χεῖρα βαλοῦσα, τέκνων τεθυνωτῶν κομίσαι δέμας, ὃ μελέα γὼ, οὐς ὑπὸ τείχεσι Καδμείοισιν ἀπώλεσα κούρους.

1 Placed by Barnes here, instead of after 251, as in MSS.
2 So assigned by Paley, by other editors to Chorus,
SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS
Not for a judge I chose thee of mine ills,
But as to a healer of them, king, we come;
Nor, if I have calamitously sped,
Need I thy chastisement and chiding, king,
No, but thine aid. And if thou wilt not this,
I must content me with thy choice:—what help?
Come, aged dames, depart:—yet leave ye here
The grey-green boughs to roof the altar o'er,¹
Calling to witness heaven and earth, Demeter,
Fire-bearing Goddess, and the Sun-god's light,
That naught our prayers unto the Gods availed.

CHORUS
[On thine head be it, grandson thou of Pittheus]
Old Pelops' son! Lo, we of Pelops' land
The selfsame blood ancestral share with thee.

AETHRA
How?—wilt thou flout these prayers, cast forth the
land
Grey mothers, which have gained of their dues naught?
Nay, nay!—the beast finds refuge in the rock,
The slave at the Gods' altars; and a state
Storm-tossed must cower beneath another's lee;
For in man's lot naught prospereth to the end.

CHORUS

O thou afflicted, arise from Persephone's hallowed
floor; [thine hands, and implore
Rise thou, and bow at his knees, flinging round them
That he rescue the clay of my dead, my beloved—ah,
woe is me, woe!— [in dust lying low.
Of the sons I have lost, under ramparts of Cadmus

¹ If the petitioner's prayer was granted, he carried away
with him his suppliant-bough; if not, he left it on the altar.

521
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ιώ μου λάβετε φέρετε πέμπτετε ἀείρετε 1 μεσφεδ. ταλάντας χέρας γεραιάς.
πρὸς σε γενειάδος, οὐ φίλος, οὐ δοκιμώτατος Ἑλλάδι,
ἀντομαι ἀμφιπτίνουσα τὸ σὸν γόνυ καὶ χέρα
dειλαία.

280 οἴκτισαι ἀμφὶ τέκνων ἐκείταν τιν' ἀλάταν
οἰκτρὸν ἄλεμον οἰκτρὸν ἰείςαν,

ἀντ.

μηδ' ἀτάφους, τέκνων, ἐν χθονὶ Κάδμου χάρματα
θηρῶν
παῖδας ἐν ἀλικία τὰ σὰ κατίδης, ἰκετεύω.
βλέψων ἐμῶν βλεψάρων ἐπὶ δάκρυνον, ἃ περὶ
σοῖς
γούνασιν ὥδε πίτνω, τέκνοις τάφου ἔξανύσασθαι.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

μήτερ, τὶ κλαίεις λέπτ' ἐπ' ὀμμάτων φάρη
βαλοῦσα τῶν σῶν; ἀρα δυστήνουσ γόους
κλύουσα τῶνδε; κάμε γὰρ διήλθε τι.
ἐπαιρε λευκὸν κράτα, μὴ δακρυρρόει
290 σεμναίσθη Δηνὸς ἐσχάραις παρμένη.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

αἰαὶ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τὰ τοῦτων οὐχὶ σοὶ στενακτέουν.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ὦ τλήμονες γυναῖκες.

1 Hermann: for MSS. κρίνετε.
SUPPLIANTS

(Mesode)

Woe for me!—clasp me, uplift me, help onward,
upholding
The palsied hand of the woe-forspent!
By thy beard, O thou chiefest of champions of
Hellas, O friend, I beseech thee,
In the clasp of the wretched thy knees and thy
fingers enfolding!
Pity me; for my children in supplication bent
Like a beggar I bow: let my pitiful, pitiful out-
cryings reach thee!

(Ant.)

Ah, not unburied on Cadmus’s soil, for a ravin and glee
Unto beasts of the wold do thou leave them, the
young men like unto thee!
O look on the tears from mine eyes that are stream-
ing!—and all that I crave
Falling low at thy knees, is a grave—that thou win
for my sons but a grave!

THESEUS

Mother, why weepest thou, before thine eyes
Casting thy fine-spun veil? Dost weep to hear
Their mournful wails? Sooth, mine own heart was
thrilled.
Raise thy white head; be not a fount of tears,
There sitting at Demeter’s holy hearth.

AETHRA

Ah me!

THESEUS

'Tis not for thee to wail their woes.

AETHRA

Oh hapless dames!
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ού σὺ τῶνδ᾽ ἔφυς.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

εἴπω τι, τέκνον, σοί τε καὶ πόλει καλὸν;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ὡς πολλά γ᾿ ἐστὶ κἀπὸ θηλείων σοφά.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ἀλλ᾿ εἰς ὅκνον μοι μῦθος ὑν κεύθω φέρει.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

αἰσχρὸν γ᾿ ἔλεξας, χρήστ᾿ ἔπη κρύπτειν ϕίλους.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οὕτως σιωπῶσ᾿ εἴτα μέμψομαι ποτε
tὴν νῦν σιωπὴν ὡς ἐσυγήθη κακῶς,
οὐδ᾿ ὡς ἀχρείου τὰς γυναῖκας εὑ λέγειν.

300 δείσας᾿ ἀφήσω τῷ φόβῳ τοῦμον καλόν.

ἔγω δὲ σ’, ὡ παί, πρῶτα μὲν τὰ τῶν θεῶν
σκοπεῖν κελεύω μὴ σφαλῇς ἀτιμάσας·
tὰλλ᾿ εὐ φρονῶν γάρ, ἐν μόνῳ τόντῳ 'σφάλης.
πρὸς τοῖςδε ῥ΄, εἰ μὲν μὴ ἀδικουμένους ἔχρην
tολμηρῶν εἰναι, κάρτ᾿ ἄν εἴχον ἤσύχως·

νυνὶ δὲ σοὶ τε τοῦτο τὴν τιμὴν φέρει
κόμοι παρανεῖν οὐ φόβον φέρει, τέκνον,
ἀνδρὰς βιαίους καὶ κατείργοιτας νεκροὺς
τάφον τε μοῖρας καὶ κτερισμάτων λαχεῖν

310 εἰς τῆνδ᾿ ἀνάγκην σῷ καταστήναι χερὶ,

νόμιμα τε πάσης συνχέοντας 'Ἐλλάδος
παύσαι· τὸ γὰρ τοῖς συνέχον ἀνθρώπων πόλεις
tοῦτ᾿ ἔσθ’, ὅταν τις τοὺς νόμους σῴζῃ καλῶς.

ἔρει δὲ δὴ τις ὡς ἀνανδρία χερῶν,
πόλει παρόν σοι στέφανον εὐκλείας λαβεῖν,

deίσας ἀπέστης, καὶ σύνος μὲν ἀγρίου

524
SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS
Thou art not of their blood.

AETHRA
Son, may I speak for thine and Athens' honour?

THESEUS
Yea, even from women's lips much wisdom flows.

AETHRA
Yet—yet, it gives me pause, the word I hide.

THESEUS
Nay, this were shame, to hide good rede from friends.

AETHRA
I will not hold my peace, to blame hereafter
Myself for coward silence of this day;
Nor, cowed by that taunt, "Woman's best advice
Is worthless," will refrain my lips from good.

My son, I bid thee look to this first, lest
Thou err, despising their appeal to heaven.
In this alone thou err'st, in all else wise.

Nay more—I had endured, and murmured not,
Wert thou not bound to champion the oppressed.
Lo, this is the foundation of thy fame;
Therefore I fear not to exhort thee, son,
That thou wouldst lay thy strong constraining hand
On men of violence which refuse the dead
The dues of burial and of funeral-rites,
And quell the folk that would confound all wont
Of Hellas: for the bond of all men's states
Is this, when they with honour hold by law.

Ay, some will say faint heart made feeble hand;
That to win Athens glory's crown was thine,
Yet didst thou flinch for fear; that thou didst close
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

άγωνος ἣψῳ φαύλον ἀβλήσας πόνον,
oῦ δ' εἰς κράνος βλέψαντα καὶ λόγχης ἀκμὴν χρὴν ἐκπονήσαι, δειλὸς ὃν ἐφυρέθης.

μὴ δὴ τ' ἐμὸς γ' ὄνω, ὡ τέκνων, δράσης τάδε.

όρας, ἀβουλος ὡς κεκερτομένη
toῖς κερτομοῦσι γοργοῖν ὄμω ἀναβλέπει
σὴ πατρὶς ; ἐν γὰρ τοῖς πόνοισιν αὐξαται,

αἰ δ' ἵσυχοι σκοτεινὰ πράσσουσι πόλεις
σκοτεινὰ καὶ βλέπουσιν εὐλαβοῦμεναι.

οὐκ εἰ νεκροῖς καὶ γνωτεῖν ἀθλίας

προσωφελήσων, ὡ τέκνων, κεχρημέναις ;

ὡς οὔτε ταρβ ὑπὺ δίκη σ' ὄρμῳσιν,

Κάδμου θ' ὀρῶσα λαδύν εὐ πεπαγότα,

ἐτ' αὐτὸν ἄλλα βλήματ' ἐν κύβοις βαλεῖν

πέποιθ'· ὁ γὰρ θεὸς πάντ' ἀναστρέφει πάλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ φιλτάτη μοι, τῶδε τ' εἰρήκας καλῶς

κάμοι διπλούν δὲ χάρμα γίγνεται τόδε.

ΘΕΣΤΗ

ἐμοὶ λόγοι μὲν, μῆτερ, οἱ λελεγμένοι

ὁρδῶς ἔχουσ' εἰς τόνδε, καπεφηνάμην

gνώμην ύψ' οὗν ἐσφάλη βουλευμάτων·

ὁρῶ δὲ κἀγὼ ταῦθ' ἄπερ με νουθετεῖς,

ὡς τοῖς ἐμοῖσιν οὔχι πρόσφορον τρόπος

φεύγειν τά δεινά. πολλὰ γὰρ δράσας καλά,

ἐθος τὸτ' εἰς Ἐλλήνας ἐξεδεξάμην,

ἀεὶ κολαστής τῶν κακῶν καθεστάναι.

οὐκοῦν ἀπαυδὰν δυνατὸν ἐστὶ μοι πόνους.

τί γὰρ μ' ἐροῦσιν οἳ γε δυσμένεις βροτῶν,

ὁθ' ἡ τεκοῦσα χῦπερορρωδοῦσ' ἐμοῖ
SUPPLIANTS

In strife of little toil with that wild swine, ¹
But when behoved to face the helm, bear brunt
Of the spear's point, a craven wert thou found.
Ah, do not so, my son, as thou art mine!
Hast marked—bemocked for reckless policy,
How on the mockers glares with fierce bright eyes
Thy country?—in her energy is her life.

But states which work in darkness, cautious,
Grop in the darkness, for their caution's meed.
What, to the dead, and women misery-worn
Wilt thou not bring help, son, in this their strait?
I fear naught: justice is with thine essay;
And, though the folk of Cadmus prosper now,
Far otherwise yet for them the dice of doom
Shall fall, I trust:—God bringeth low the proud.

CHORUS

O best-beloved, well hast thou said, for him
And me alike; herein is twofold joy.

THESEUS

Mother, the words I spake were words of truth
Unto this man, wherein I showed my mind
Touching the counsels by the which he fell.
Yet these thy warnings—yea, I see their force,
That with my life's use it accordeth not
To flinch from peril. Many a glorious deed
Hath shown to sons of Hellas this my wont,
Ever to be a punisher of wrong.

Toil's challenge therefore cannot I refuse:
For what will they which hate me say of me,
When she that bare me—who, beyond all, fears

¹ Phæa, the wild sow of Krommion, slain by Theseus.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

πρώτη κελεύεις τόνδ’ ὑποστήναι πόνον; δράσω τάδ’, εἴμι καὶ νεκροὺς ἐκλύσωμαι λόγοιν πείθων εἰ δὲ μή, βία δορὸς ἡδὴ τόδ’ ἔσται κοὐχὶ σὺν φθόνῳ θεῶν. δόξαι δὲ χρῆξον καὶ πόλει πάση τὸδε.

δόξει δ’ ἐμοῦ θέλοντος: ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου προσδοῦς ἔχομι’ ἀν δῆμον εὐμενέστερον. καὶ γὰρ κατέστησ’ αὐτὸν εἰς μοναρχίαν ἐλευθερώσας τὴνδ’ ἰσόψηφον πόλιν.

λαβὼν δ’ Ἀδραστον δείγμα τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων, εἰς πλῆθος ἀστόν εἴμι καὶ πείσας τάδε, λεκτοὺς ἀθροίσας δεῦρ’ Ἀθηναίων κόροις ἥξων παρ’ ὅπλοις θ’ ἡμενὸς πέμψω λόγους Κρέοντι νεκρῶν σώματ’ ἐξαιτούμενος. ἀλλ’ ὁ γεραιαῖ, σέμ’ ἀφαιρεῖτε στέφη μνητρός, πρὸς οἴκους ὃς νῦν Αἰγέως ἁγω, φίλην προσάγας χείρα: τοῖς τεκοῦσι γὰρ δύστηνος δόστις μή ἀντιδουλεύει τέκνοις. κάλλιστον ἔρανου δοὺς γὰρ ἀντιλάξυναι παίδων παρ’ αὐτοῦ τοιάδ’ ἀν τοκεύσι δφ.

ΧΩΡΟΧ

στρ. α’

ἰππόβοτον Ἀργός, ὁ πάτριον ἐμὸν πέδων, ἐκλύσετε τάδ’ ἐκλύσετ’ ἀνακτος ὅσια περὶ θεοῦ καὶ μεγάλα Πελασγία καὶ κατ’ Ἀργός.

ἀντ. α

εἰ γὰρ ἐπὶ τέρμα καὶ τὸ πλέον ἐμὸν κακῶν ἱκόμενος ἐτὶ ματέρος ἀγαλμα φόνιον ἐξέλοι, γὰν δὲ φίλιον Ἰνάχου θεῖτ’ ὀνήσας.
SUPPLIANTS

For me,—first bids me undertake this toil? I will unto the deed, redeem their dead By fair words, if I may; if not, the might Of spears shall do it, nor the Gods shall grudge. Yet I require all Athens' sanction here. My wish should win their sanction; yet, if I Show cause withal, the loyaller shall they be. For I have made the land one single realm, A free state, with an equal vote for all. Adrastus for my witness will I take, And meet their concourse; their consenting won, With muster of chosen youths Athenian Will I return; and tarrying under arms, Will send to Creon, asking back the dead. But ye, grey women, from my mother take The holy wreaths, that I may clasp her hand, And lead to Aegeus' halls. A sorry son Is he that pays not service-debt to parents. Who giveth of love's best, by his own sons For all he hath given his parents is repaid.

[Exeunt Theseus and Aethra.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

O Argos, mead of the battle-steed, O land where my fathers abode of yore, [the hero-king, Ye have heard it, heard in Heaven was the word of His sacred plight in Pelasgia's sight, the pledge to be published all Argos o'er.

(Ant. 1)

O may he gain—yea, more than attain to the goal that seeth my miseries end! [mother to bring Forth let him go, let him wrest from the foe, to the 370 Her darling's clay blood-stained, and for aye have our own dear Inachus' land to friend.

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ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

καλὸν δ’ ἀγαλμα πόλεσιν εὐσεβής πόνος στρ. β’
χάριν τ’ ἔχει τὰν ἐς ἀεί.
tί μοι πόλις κρανεῖ ποτ’; ἀρα φίλιά μοι
tεμεῖ, καὶ τέκνοις ταφᾶς ληψόμεσθα;

ἀμνυς ματρί, πόλις, ἀμνυς, Παλλάδος, ἀντ. β’
nόμος βροτῶν μὴ μμάινειν.
σὺ τοι σέβεις δίκαιν, τὸ δ’ ἱσσον ἀδικία
νέμεις, δυστυχῇ τ’ ἀεὶ πάντα ῥύει.

ΘΕΣΣΕΣ

tέχνην μὲν ἀεὶ τήν’ ἔχων ὑπηρετεῖς
πόλει τε κάμοι, διαφέρων κηρύγματα:
ἐλθῶν δ’ ὑπέρ τ’ Ἀσωπὸν Ἰσμηνοῦ θ’ ὕδωρ
σεμνῷ τυράννῳ φράζε Καδμείων τάδε·
Θησεός σ’ ἀπαίτεῖ πρὸς χάριν θάψαι νεκροὺς,
συγγείτον οἰκῶν γαῖαν, ἄξιῶν τυχεῖν,
φίλον τε θέσθαι πάντ’ Ἐρεχθειδῶν λεών.
καὶ μὲν θέλωσιν αἰνέσαι, παλίσσυτος
στείχ’ ἦν δ’ ἀπιστῶσ’ ὡδε δεύτεροι λόγοι
κῶμον δέχεσθαι τὸν ὑμὸν ἀσπιδηφόρον.
στρατὸς δὲ θάσσει καξετάζεται παρὰν
Καλλίχορον ἀμφὶ σεμνὸν εὐτρεπῆς ὡδε.
καὶ μὴν ἐκοῦσά γ’ ἀσμένη τ’ ἐδέξατο
πόλις πόνον τόνδ’, ὡς θέλουτα μ’ ἱσθετο.
ἐα’ λόγων τίς ἐμποδῶν ὃδ’ ἔρχεται ;
Καδμείος, ὡς ἐοικεν οὐ σάφ’ εἰδότι.

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SUPPLIANTS

(Str. 2)
Memorial fair shall the cities share of the sacred labour of love: evermore [lingering.
The grace thereof shall abide, and the love aye
Ah, what shall come of their rede?—what doom?—shall Athens bestow the grace I implore?
Shall she league her might with me, and the right of the tomb to my slaughtered sons restore?

(Ant. 2)
O Pallas' Town, for my help step down; the holy cause of the mother defend;
So the laws of men shall be made not then a polluted
Thou reverencest great Justice' hest: injustice beneath thy yoke shall bend:
And through all the lands thy champion hands to the helpless oppressed deliverance send.

Enter THESEUS with ATHENIAN HERALD.

THESEUS
O thou that usest still thine art to serve
Athens and me, wide publishing mine hests,
Pass thou Asopus and Ismenus' stream,
And to the proud Cadmean despot say:
"Theseus of grace asks corpses for the tomb:
He dwells thy neighbour, and he claims but right:
So make thou the Erechtheid folk thy friend.'"
If they consent to grant it, turn thou back.
If they refuse, my second message speak,
"Look for my shielded revel-rout of war!"
Mine host is camped and marshalled hard at hand
By sacred Callichorus for fight prepared.
Yea, Athens of good will, and glad withal,
Took up this task, made ware of my desire.
Ha!—breaking in upon my speech who comes?
Theban, I deem, yet know not certainly:—
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κήρυξ. ἐπίσχεσ, ἢν σ’ ἀπαλλάξῃ πόνον
μολὼν ὑπαντα τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλεύμασιν.

ΚΗΡΤΩ

τίς γῆς τύραννος; πρὸς τίν’ ἀγγείλαι με χρή
λόγους Κρέοντος, ὃς κρατεῖ Κάδμου χθονός,
Ἐτεοκλέους θανόντος ἀμφ’ ἐπταστόμους
πύλας ἀδελφοῦ χειρὶ Πολυνείκους ὑπὸ;

ΘΗΣΕΤΗ

πρῶτον μὲν ἥξω τοῦ λόγου ψευδῶς, ξένε,
ζητῶν τύραννον ἐνθάδ’. οὐ γὰρ ἄρχεται
ἐνὸς πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἀλλ’ ἐλευθέρα πόλις.
δῆμος δ’ ἀνάσσει διαδοχαίσιν ἐν μέρει
ἐνιαυσίαισιν, οὐχὶ τῷ πλοῦτῳ διδοῦς
τὸ πλεῖστον, ἀλλὰ χῶραν ἐξου ἰσον.

ΚΗΡΤΩ

ἐν μὲν τὸς ἥμιν ὀσπερ ἐν πεσοῖς δίδωσ
κρέισσον. πόλις γὰρ ἂς ἐγὼ πάρειμ’ ἀπο
ἐνὸς πρὸς ἀνδρός, οὐκ ὃχι λθως κρατύνεται.
οὐδ’ ἐστιν αὐτὴν ὅστις ἐκχαυνὼν λόγοις
πρὸς κέρδος ἱδιον ἄλλοτ’ ἀλλοσε στρέφειν.
ὁ δ’ αὐτὸν ἰδὸς καὶ διδοῦς πολλῆς χάριν,
εἰσαύθις ἐβλαψ’, εἶτα διαβολαῖς νέας
κλέφας τὰ πρὸς θε σφάλματ’ ἐξέδυ δίκης.

Ἀλλαῖς τε πῶς ἄν μὴ διορθεύων λόγους
ὁρθῶς δύναιτ’ ἄν δῆμος εὐθύνειν πόλιν;
ὁ γὰρ χρόνος μάθησιν ἀντὶ τοῦ τάχους
κρείσσων δίδωσι. γαπόνοις δ’ ἀνὴρ πένης
εἰ καὶ γένοιτο μὴ ἀμαθῆς, ἐργῶν ύπο
οὐκ ἄν δύναιτο πρὸς τὰ κοῖν ἀποβλέπειν.
ἡ δὲ νοστοῖς τούτο τοῖς ἀμείνοις,
ὅταν θυμηρὸς ἄξιωμ’ ἄνηρ ἔχη
γιλώσῃ κατασχὼν δῆμον, οὐδὲν ἄν τὸ πρὶν.
SUPPLIANTS

A herald!—stay: thy toil perchance is spared.  
His coming meets my purpose in mid way.  

Enter Theban Herald.

HERALD

Your despot, who?—to whom must I proclaim 
The words of Creon, lord of Cadmus’ land 400 
Since Eteocles by the hand was slain 
Of Polyneices by the sevenfold gates?

Theseus

First, stranger, with false note thy speech began, 
Seeking a despot here. Our state is ruled 
Not of one only man: Athens is free. 
Her people in the order of their course 
Rule year by year, bestowing on the rich 
Advantage none; the poor hath equal right.

HERALD

One vantage hast thou given me, as to one 
That playeth draughts:—the city whence I come 410 
By one man, not by any mob, is swayed. 
There is none there who, slavering them with talk, 
This way and that way twists them for his gain, 
Is popular now, and humours all their bent; 
Now, laying on others blame for mischief done, 
He cloaks his faults, and slips through justice’ net.

How should the mob which reason all awry 
Have power to pilot straight a nation’s course? 
For time bestoweth better lessoning 
Than haste. But yon poor deliver of the ground, 420 
How shrewd soe’er, by reason of his toil 
Can nowise oversee the general weal. 
Realm-ruining in the wise man’s sight is this, 
When the vile tonguester getteth himself a name 
By wooing mobs, who heretofore was naught.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΕΣΣΕΣ

κομψός ὦ ὁ κῆρυξ καὶ παρεργάτης λόγων.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἀγώνα καὶ σὺ τῶν ἡγωνίσω,
ἀκοῦ· ἀμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προύθηκας λόγων.
οὐδὲν τυράννου δυσμενέστερον τὸλει,
ὅπως τὸ μὲν πρῶτιστον οὐκ εἰςιν νόμοι
κοινοί, κρατεῖ δ' εἰς τὸν νόμον κεκτημένος
αὐτὸς παρ' αὐτῷ, καὶ τὸδ' οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἵσον.
γεγραμμένων δὲ τῶν νόμων δ' ἀσθενὴς
ὁ πλοῦσιός τε τὴν δίκην ἵσην ἔχει,
ἔστιν δ' εὐισπεῖν τοίς ἄσθενεστέροις
tὸν εὐτυχοῦντα ταῦθ', ὅταν κλῆ κακῶς.
νικᾶ δ' ὁ μείων τὸν μέγαν δίκαι' ἐχών.
τούλευθερον δ' ἔκειν. Τὸς θέλει πόλει
χρηστῶν τι βούλευμ' εἰς μέσον φέρειν ἔχων;
καὶ ταῦθ' ὁ χρήζων λαμπρός ἔσθ', ὁ μὴ θέλων
συγά. τί τούτων ἔστ' ἵσαίτερον πόλει;
καὶ μὴν ὅπως γε δῆμος εὐθυντὴς χθονός,
ὑπούσιν ἁστοῖς ἦδεται νεανίαις.
ἀνὴρ δὲ βασίλευς ἔχθρον ἤγείται τόδε,
καὶ τοὺς ἁριστούς, οὐδ' ἄν ἡγήται φρονεῖν
κτείνει, δεδοκίμως τῆς τυραννίδος πέρι.
πῶς οὖν ἔτ' ἀν γένοιτ' ἄν ἱσχυρὰ πόλεις,
ὅταν τις ὁς λειμῶνος ἥρινοι στάχων
tόλμας ἀφαιρῇ κάπολωτίζῃ νέους;
κτάσθαι δὲ πλούτου καὶ βιον τί δεῖ τέκνοις,
ὡς τῷ τυράννῳ πλείου ἐκμοχθῇ βίον;
ἡ παρθενεύειν παῖδας ἐν δόμοις καλῶς
tερπνᾶς τυράννοις ἴδονάς, ὅταν θέλῃ,
δάκρυα δ' ἐτοιμάζουσι; μὴ ξόφην ἔτι,
SUPPLIANTS

THESSEUS

An eloquent herald this, a speech-crammed babbler! But, since thou hast plunged into this strife, hear me:—

[parley:—
'Twas thou flung'st down this challenge unto No worse foe than the despot hath a state, Under whom, first, can be no common laws,
But one rules, keeping in his private hands The law: so is equality no more.
But when the laws are written, then the weak And wealthy have alike but equal right. Yea, even the weaker may fling back the scoff Against the prosperous, if he be reviled; And, armed with right, the less o'ercomes the great. Thus Freedom speaks¹:—“What man desires to bring Good counsel for his country to the people?” Who chooseth this, is famous: who will not, Keeps silence. Can equality further go? More—when the people piloteth the land, She joyeth in young champions native-born: But in a king's eyes this is hatefullest; Yea, the land's best, whose wisdom he discerns, He slayeth, fearing lest they shake his throne. How can a state be stablished then in strength, When, even as sweeps the scythe o'er springtide mead, One lops the brave young hearts like flower-blooms? What boots it to win wealth and store for sons, When all one's toil but swells a despot's hoard? Or to rear maiden daughters virtuously To be a king's sweet morsels at his will, And tears to them that dressed this dish for him?

¹ He quotes the formula with which the herald opened the proceedings of the popular assembly at Athens.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ei tāmā tēkna prōs bían vumfevζetai.
kai tauta mév dh prōs ta sā eξηκόντυσα.

ηkeis dh dh ti tīsde gis kexhrmēnos;
klaîwov g' an hλxes, ei se mh 'peμψεν tōlis,
perisǎ phonwv. tōn gar anghelov xreōn
lēxanv' óso an tāξη tis w̄s táchos pāλin
xorein. to loipon d' eis emēn pōlīn Krēwv
hīσon lāλov sou peμptētov tīν anghelov.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

fev fev · kakaioisiv ὡς ὅταν daîmōn diidō
kalōs, ὑβρίζουσ' ὡς aei prāξontes ev.

ΚΗΡΤΕ

lēgoim' an ἤδη. tōn mév ἡγωνισμένων
soi méν dokeίtw taut', emoi dē tāntia.
ēγw ò apauvdō pās te Kadmeios lew̄
'Adrastov eis ghn tīνde mh parieina:
ei d' ēstiv ēn γῆ, πρīn theōv dūnai sēlas,
λūsanta semvā stēmmātov μυστήria
tīs'd' ēxeλαινειν, mh' anairēsθai nekrōus
bía, prōsēkont' oûdeîn 'Aργεῖων pōleî.
kaiv méν pīth' moiv, kumātov àter pōla
sēn naustolēseis: ei dē mh, pōla kluōn
hēmēn te kai soi sυμmāchos t' ēstai dorōs.
skeψαι dē, kai mh tois ēmōs thumōmēnos
lōgoisiv, ὡς dh pōlaν eλeneβrēn ēξhvν,
sfrugwnt' aμēψή fūθov en brakhōvν.
elπis gār ēst' āpistov, h pōllas pōleis
suv̄̄ψ', anouvsa thumōn eis ὑpερβολάς.

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οtān gār elθη pōlemos eis ψήfou lew̄,
oûdeis eθ' autoi thāνatov ekλōγιζetai,
tō dvstuv̄es dē toūt' ēs āllon ektrēpev:
ei d' ἤn par' όmma thāνatos ēn ψήfou fop̄̄.

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SUPPLIANTS

May I die ere I see my daughters ravished!
Such answering shaft to thine do I hurl back.
But thou, what wouldst thou have of this our land?
Except thy state had sent thee, thou shouldst rue
Thine insolent prating! 'Tis the herald's part
To speak his message, and to get him back
With speed. Henceforth let Creon to my town
Send a less wordy messenger than thee.

CHORUS
Out on it! When God prospereth evil men,
Wanton they wax, as who should prosper aye.

HERALD
Now will I speak my charge. For our dispute,
Be this thy mind, contrariwise be mine.
But I and all the folk Cadmean warn thee—
Receive Adrastus not into this land.
If in the land he is, ere set of sun
Free from yon wreaths your sacred Mysteries,
And drive him forth, nor go about by force
To take those dead: ye have naught to do with
Argos.
If thou obey me, thou by storm unscathed
Shalt helm thy city; if not, our great surge
Of war on thee and thine allies shall fall.

Look to it, nor, being chafed at these my words,—
Because forsooth a city free thou hast,—
Make arrogant answer from a weaker cause.
Hope is delusive: many a state hath this
Embroiled, by kindling it to mad emprise.
For, when for war a nation casteth votes,
Then of his own death no man taketh count,
But passeth on to his neighbour this mischance.
But, were death full in view when votes were cast,
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

οὐκ ἂν ποθ' Ἑλλᾶς δοριμανὴς ἀπώλλυτο. καίτοι δυοῖν γε πάντες ἀνθρωποὶ λόγοι τὸν κρείσσον' ἱσμεν καὶ τὰ χρηστὰ καὶ κακά, ὁσὶ τε πολέμου κρείσσον εἰρήνη βροτοῖς· ἢ πρότα μὲν Μοῦσαιοι προσφιλεστάτη, Ποιναίσι δ' ἐχθρά, τέρπεται δ' εὐπαίδεια, χαίρει δὲ πλούτῳ. ταῦτ' ἀφέντες οἱ κακοὶ πολέμους ἀναιρούμεσθα καὶ τὸν ἱερόν δουλούμεθ', ἀνδρεῖς ἀνδρα καὶ πόλις πόλιν. σὺ δ' ἀνδρας ἐχθροὺς καὶ θανόντας ὡφελεῖς, θάπτων κομίξων θ' ύβρις οὐς ἀπώλεσεν. οὐ τάρ' ἐτ' ὀρθῶς Καπανέως κεραύνοιν δέμας καπνοῦταί, κλιμάκων ὀρθοστάτας δς προςβαλὸν πύλαισιν ὄμοσεν πόλιν πέρειν θεοὺ θέλουτος ἢν τε μὴ θέλη, οὐδ' ἠρπασεν χάρυβδις οἰώνυσκότων, τέθριππον ἅρμα περιβαλοῦσα χάσματι, ἄλλοι τε κεῖνται πρὸς πύλαις λοχαγέται πέτρους καταξανθέντες ὀστέων ῥαφᾶς. ἢ νυν φρονεῖν ἀμείνον ἐξαύχει Δίος, ἢ θεοὺς δικαίως τοὺς κακοὺς ἀπολλύω. φιλεῖν μὲν οὖν χρή τοὺς σοφοὺς πρῶτον τέκνα, ἐπειτα τοκεῖας πατρίδα θ', ἢν αὐξεῖν χρεῶν καὶ μὴ κατάξαι. σφαλεῖν ἠγεμῶν θραύσεις νεώς τε ναύτης· ἦσυχος καιρῷ σοφός. καὶ τούτῳ τοι τάνδρείον, ἡ προμήθεια.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐξαρκέσας ἦν Ζεὺς ὁ πτυχωρούμενος, ὑμᾶς δ' ὕβριζειν οὖχ ἔχρην τοιάνδ' ὕβριν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὡς παγκάκιστο—
SUPPLIANTS

Never war-frenzied Greece would rush on ruin.
Yet, of elections twain, we know—all know—
Whether is best, the blessing or the curse,
And how much better is peace for men than war;
Peace, she which is the Muses’ chiepest friend,
But Retribution’s foe, joys in fair children,
In wealth delights. Fools let these blessings slip,
And rush on war: man bringeth weaker man
To bondage; city is made city’s thrall.
Thou helpest men our foes, and dead men they,
Wouldst win for graves them whom their insolence slew!

Good sooth, then, wrongfully did levin blast
Capaneus’ frame upon yon ladder’s height,
Which he had reared against our gates, and swore
To sack the town, whether God willed or no:
Wrongly earth’s chasm snatched from sight the seer,
Shrouding with yawning gulf his four-horse car,
While other captains lie before our gates,
The knittings of whose bones great stones have shattered!

Or boast thee to surpass in wisdom Zeus,
Or grant that rightly Gods destroy the wicked.
Behoves the wise to love his children first,
Parents and country next,—to make her great,
Not break her down. Rash leaders, pilots heady,
Mean ruin: the wise in season sitteth still.
This too is manful valour, even discretion.

CHORUS

The punishment of Zeus might well suffice!
Shall ye insult with wanton arrogance?

ADRASTUS

Villain of villains!—
Iketides

Ωησετε

σὺν, 'Αδραστ', ἔχε στόμα
cαι μὴ πτιπροσθεὶν τῶν ἐμῶν τοὺς σοὺς λόγους
θῆς· οὐ γὰρ ἤκει πρὸς σὲ κηρύσσων ὁδὲ,
ἀλλ’ ὅς εἰμ’ ἡμῶς κατακρίνασθαι χρεῶν.
cαι πρῶτα μὲν σε πρὸς τὰ πρῶτ’ ἀμείψομαι.
oὐκ οὖδ’ ἐγὼ Κρέοντα δεσπόζουν ἐμὸν
οὐδὲ σθένοντα μείζον, ὥστε ἀναγκάσαι
dρᾶν τὰς 'Ἀθήνας ταῦτ’· ἀνω γὰρ ἂν ῥέου
tὰ πράγμαθ’ οὕτως, εἰ πιταξόμεσθα δὴ.
pόλεμον δὲ τοῦτον οὐκ ἐγὼ καθίσταμαι,
δὲ οὐδὲ σὺν τοίοσ’ ἦλθον εἰς Κάδμου χθόνα.
νεκροὺς δὲ τοὺς θανόντας, οὐ βλάπτων πόλιν
οὐδ’ ἀνδροκημίας προσφέρων ἀγωνίας,
θάψας δικαίῳ, τὸν Πανελλήνην νόμον
σφήξαν. τί τούτων ἔστιν οὐ καλῶς ἔχον;
eἰ γὰρ τι καὶ πεπόνθατ’ Ἀργεῖων ὑπὸ,
tεθνάσω, ἡμύνασθε πολεμίσαι καλῶς,
αἰσχρῶς δ’ ἐκείνοις, χὴ δίκη διοίκεται.
ἐάσατ’ ἤδη γῆ καλυφθήναι νεκροὺς,
οθεν δ’ ἐκαστὸν εἰς τὸ φῶς ἀφίκετο,
ἐνταῦθ’ ἀπελθεῖν, πνεύμα μὲν πρὸς αἰθέρα,
τὸ σῶμα δ’ εἰς γῆν· οὕτι γὰρ κεκτήμεθα
ἡμέτερον αὐτὸ πλὴν ἔνοικησαι βίον,
καπείτα τὴν θρέψασαν αὐτὸ δεῖ λαβεῖν.
dοκεῖς κακούργησε Ἀργος οὐ βλάπτων νεκροὺς;
ἐκστασι’ πάσης Ἑλλάδος κοινὸν τόδε,
eἰ τοὺς θανόντας νοσφίσας ὦν χρῆν λαχεῖν
ἀτάφους τις ἐξει· δειλιὰν γὰρ εἰσφέρει
tοῖς ἀλκίμοισιν, οὕτως ἢ τεθὴ νόμος.
κάμοι μὲν ἥλθες δεῖν ἀπειλήσασιν ἐπὶ,
nεκροὺς δὲ ταρβεῖτ’, εἰ κρυβήσονται χθονί;
SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

Hold, Adrastus, peace,
And thrust not in before my words thine own;
For not to thee yon fellow doth his message,
But unto me: 'tis I must make reply.
Now, thy first utterance will I answer first:—
I know no Creon despot over me,
Nor more of might than I, that he should force
Athens to do this. Sourceward back should flow
The world's stream, if we brook such hest as his;
It is not I that launch upon this war,
Seeing with these I sought not Cadmus' land.

But lifeless bodies—harming not your state,
Nor thrusting man-destroying strife on her,—
I claim to bury: lo, all Hellas' law
Do I uphold. How is not this well done?
For if of Argives ye have suffered aught,
They are dead: with glory ye hurled back your foes,
With shame to them:—but there your right hath
end.

Let now the dead be hidden in the earth,
And each part, whence it came forth to the light,
Thither return, the breath unto the air,
To earth the body; for we hold it not
In fee, but only to pass life therein;
Then she which fostered it must take it back.

Dost think thou woundest Argos through her dead?
Not so: the common cause of Greece is this,
If one shall rob the dead of rightful dues,
And hold them from the tomb: this shall unman
Even heroes, if such law shall be ordained.
And to me comest thou to bluster threats,
While ye fear corpses, if they be entombed?
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

τί μὴ γένηται; μὴ κατασκάψωσι γῆν
tαφέντες ὑμῶν; ἥ τέκν' ἐν μυχοῖς χθονὸς
φύσωσιν, ἕξ ὡν εἰς τις τιμωρία;
σκαῖον γε τὰνάλωμα τῆς γλώσσης τόδε,
φόβους πονηροὺς καὶ κενοὺς δεδουκέναι.
ἀλλ' ὁ μάταιοι, γνῶτε ταῦθρωτών κακά;
pαλαίσμαθ' ἡμῶν ὁ βίος· εὐτυχούσι δὲ
οἱ μὲν τὰχ', οἱ δ' ἐσαύθιοι, οἱ δ' ἢδη βροτῶν.
τρυφᾷ δ' ὁ δαίμον πρὸς τε γὰρ τοῦ δυστυχοῦς,
ὡς εὐμενῆς ἦ, τίμιος γεραιτείαν,
ὁ τ' ὁλβιός νυν πνεῦμα δειμαίνων λυπεῖν
ὑψηλὸν αἴρει. γνώτας οὖν χρεῶν τάδε
ἀδικομένους τε μέτρια μὴ θυμάθέρειν
ἀδικεῖν τε τοιαῦθ' οἷα μὴ βλάψει πόλιν.
πῶς οὖν ἂν εἴη; τοὺς δὲλωλότας νεκρῶς
θάψαι δόθ' ἡμῖν τοῖς θέλονσιν εὐσεβεῖν.
ἡ δὴλα ταῦθενδ'. εἶμι καὶ θάψῳ βία.
οὐ γὰρ ποτ' εἰς Ἑλλήνας ἐξοισθήσεται
ὡς εἰς ἐμ' ἐλθὼν καὶ πόλιν Πανδίονος
νόμος παλαίδος δαιμόνων διεφθάρη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει· τὸ γὰρ τοῦ τῆς Δίκης σφόξων φάος,
pολλοὺς ὑπεκφύγοις ἀν ἀνθρώπων ψόγους.

ΚΗΡΤΕ

βούλει συνάψω μύθου ἐν βραχεῖ σέθεν;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

λέγ', εἰ τι βούλει· καὶ γὰρ οὐ συγηλὸς εἰ.

ΚΗΡΤΕ

οὐκ ἂν ποτ' ἐκ γῆς παιδας Ἀργείων λάβοις.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

κἀμοῦ νυν ἀντάκουσου, εἰ βούλει, πάλιν.
SUPPLIANTS

What fear ye? Lest they undermine your land,
There buried?—or in earth’s dark womb beget
Children, of whom shall vengeance fall on you?
’Twere idle waste of speech, good sooth, to unmask
Your caitiff terrors and your empty fears!
O fools, learn ye the real ills of men:—
Our life is conflict all: of mortals some
Succeed ere long, some late, and straightway some;
While Fortune sits a queen: worship and honour
The unblest gives her, so to see good days;
The prosperous extols her, lest her breeze
Fail him one day. Remembering this, should we
Meet wrong with calmness, not with fury of rage,
Neither on one whole nation visit wrong.

How shall it be then?—grant to us, who are fain
To render heaven its due, to entomb the dead.
Else, clear is the issue: this will I by force.
Never to Greeks shall it be said, that when
It fell to me and Athens to uphold
Heaven’s ancient law, that law was set at naught.

CHORUS
Fear not: while thou upholdest Justice’ light,
Thou shalt not fear what men can say of thee.

HERALD
Wouldst thou I summed up this thy claim in brief?

THESEUS
Speak, an thou list: no tongue-tied wight art thou.

HERALD
Thou ne’er shalt win from our land Argos’ sons.

THESEUS
Give ear to me in turn, then, if thou wilt.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

570  κλύομ' ἂν ὦ γὰρ ἀλλὰ δεῖ δὸναι μέρος.

571  ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
θάψω νεκροὺς γῆς ἐξελὼν Ἀσσωπίας.

572  ΚΗΡΤΕ
ἐν ἀσπίσιν σοι πρώτα κινδυνευτέον.

573  ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
πολλοὺς ἐτλην δὴ χατέρους ἀλλοὺς πόνους.

574  ΚΗΡΤΕ
ἡ πᾶσιν οὐν σ' ἐφυσεν ἐξαρκεῖν πατήρ;

575  ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ὀσοι γ' ύβρισταί· χρηστὰ δ' οὐ κολάζομεν.

576  ΚΗΡΤΕ
πράσσειν σ' πόλλ' εἰσθαν' ἢ τε σ' πόλις.

577  ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
τουγὰρ πονοῦση πολλὰ πόλλ' εὐδαίμονα.

578  ΚΗΡΤΕ
ἐλθ', ὡς σε λόγχη σπαρτός ἐν πόλει λάβη.

579  ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
τῖς δὲ ἐκ δράκουτος θοῦρος ἄν γένοιτ' Ἀρης;

580  ΚΗΡΤΕ
γνώσει σ' πάσχων' νῦν δ' ἐτ' εἰ νεανίας.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
οὕτωι μ' ἐπαρεῖς ὡστε θυμοῦσθαι φρένας
toῖς σοῖς κόμποις. ἀλλ' ἀποστέλλου χθονός,
λόγους ματαίους οὕσπερ ἡνέγκω λαβών.
περαῖνομεν γὰρ οὐδέν. ἀρμάσθαι χρεών
πάντ' ἀνδρ' ὁπλῖτην ἀρμάτων τ' ἑπεμβάτην,
μοναμπυκών τε φάλαρα κινεῖσθαι στόμα
ἀφρὰ καταστάξοντα, Καδμείαν χθόνα.
χωρῆσομαι γὰρ ἔπτα πρὸς Κάδμου πύλαις

544
SUPPLIANTS

HERALD
Yea—since I cannot choose but hear in turn. 570

THESEUS
From thy land will I take and bury them.

HERALD
First must thou face the hazard of the shield.

THESEUS
Full many a harder emprise have I dared.

HERALD
A champion born to match him with all men!

THESEUS
All arrogant tyrants: I scourge not the right.

HERALD
Ay, thou wilt still be meddling—thou and Athens.

THESEUS
Therefore, with much toil, much good speed is hers.

HERALD
Come!—let the Dragon-seed but find thee there!

THESEUS
What valorous host should spring from dragons' teeth?

HERALD
This shalt thou learn, and rue. Thou art yet but young. 580

THESEUS
Tush, man, thou canst not move mine heart to wrath
With all thy vauntings. Get thee forth the land:
The idle words thou broughtest, bear them back.
Naught comes of wrangling. [Exit HERALD.

Let each man-at-arms,
Each chariot-rider, and each battle-steed,
Whose swinging cheek-plate dashes round his jaws
The foam, charge onward into Cadmus' land.
For on to Cadmus' seven gates will I march,
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

590 αὐτὸς σίδηρον ἔξυν ἐν χεροῖν ἐχὼν
αὐτὸς τε κήρυξ. σοι δὲ προστάσσω μένειν,
'Αδραστε, κἀμοι μὴ ἀναμένοντες τύχας
tὰς σὰς ἐγὼ γὰρ δαίμονος τούμου μέτα
στρατηλατῆσῳ καίνος ἐν καιφὸ δορί.
ἐνὸς μόνου δὲι, τοὺς θεοὺς ἔχειν, ὅσοι
δίκην σέβονται· ταύτα γὰρ ξυνώθ' ὁμοῦ
νίκην δίδωσιν. ἀρετὴ δ' οὐδέν φέρει
βροτοίσιν, ᾧ μὴ τὸν θεὸν χρήζοντ' ἔχῃ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α’
οὶ μέλεια μελέων ματέρες λοχαγῶν,
στρ. α’
ὅς μοι ύφ’ ἧπατι δεῖμα χλοερὸν ταράσσει.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β’
600 τίν’ αὐδὰν τάνδε προσφέρεις νέαν;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α’
στράτευμα πάρ’ Παλλάδος κριθήσεται.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β’
διὰ δοὺς εἰπας ἡ λόγων ξυναλλαγαῖς;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α’
γένοιτ’ ἂν κέρδος· εἰ δ’ ἀρείφατοι
φόνοι, μάχαι, στερνοτυπεῖς τ’ ἀνὰ τόπον
πάλιν φανήσονται κτύποι,
τίν’ ἂν λόγων, τάλαινα,
τίν’ ἂν τῶν’ αὐτία λάθομι;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β’
ἀλλὰ τὸν εὔνυχία λαμπρὸν ἂν τις αἰροῖ
ἀντ. α’
μοίρα πάλιν· τόδε μοι τὸ θράσος ἀμφιβαίνει.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α’
610 δικαίως δαίμονας σύ γ’ ἐννέπεις.
SUPPLIANTS

Bearing myself the whetted steel in hand,
Myself mine herald. Thee I bid remain,
Adrastus: mingle not with mine thy fate.
For I 'neath mine own fortune's star will lead
Mine host, a tainted chief with taintless spear.
One only thing I need, all Gods to have
Which reverence right: for where these are, they give
Victory. Naked valour naught avails
To men, except it have the Gods' good will. [Exit.

HALF-CHORUS 1

(Str. 1)

Ye hapless mothers of hapless chieftains dead,
Ah, how is mine heart stormed-tossed with pale
dismay—

HALF-CHORUS 2

What ominous word and strange of thee is said? .

HALF-CHORUS 1

For the dread decision on Pallas' war-array!

HALF-CHORUS 2

Through battle, or peace-fraught parley, wouldst
thou say?

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ay, this last should be well; but if warrior-quelling
Slaughters and battles again shall be seen,
With the beating of breasts in each desolate dwelling
Of the land, what reproaches bitter-keen [been!
Should I win, through whom this sorrow hath

HALF-CHORUS 2

(Ant. 1)

Yet doom may the victor bring down low in dust;
This comforteth me, and bids be dauntless-souled.

HALF-CHORUS 1

Thou speakest of Gods that fail not, ever just.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'
tίνες γὰρ ἄλλοι νέμουσι συμφοράς;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'
dιάφορα πολλὰ θεῶν βροτοῖσιν εἰσορῶ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'
φόβῳ γὰρ τῷ πάροι διόλυσαι
dίκα δίκαιον δ' ἐκάλεσε καὶ φόνος
φῶνον, κακῶν δ' ἀναψυχάς
θεοὶ βροτοῖς νέμουσιν,
ἀπάντων τέρμα ἔχοντες αὐτοῖ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'
tὰ καλλίπυργα πεδία πῶς ἴκοίμεθ' ἀν,
Καλλίχορον θεαὶ ὑδόρ λιποῦσαι;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

620 ποτανὰν εἰ μὲ τις θεῶν κτίσαι,
διπόταμον ἴνα πόλιν μόλῳ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'
eἰδείης ἀν φίλων
εἰδείης ἀν τύχας.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'
tίς ποτ' αἰσα, τίς ἀρα πότμος
ἐπιμένει τὸν ἀλκιμον
τάσδε γὰς ἀνακτᾷ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'
κεκλημένους μὲν ἀνακαλούμεθ' αὖ θεοὺς· ἀντ. β'
ἀλλὰ φόβῳ πίστις ἄδε πρῶτα.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'
iὸ Ζεῦ, τᾶς παλαιομάτορος
παιδογόνε πόριος Ἰνάχου.

548
SUPPLIANTS

HALF-CHORUS 2
Of whom but of such be all our fates controlled?

HALF-CHORUS 1
Ah, many a change in God's ways I behold!

HALF-CHORUS 2
By the terrors o'erpast is the heart in thee stricken:
   Yet justice aloud unto justice doth call;
Blood calleth for blood, and the Gods shall requicken
   Our souls, for to mortals all blessings befall
From the hands that encompass the goal of all.

HALF-CHORUS 1

(Str. 2)

O might I speed from the Goddess's springs,
   Even Callichorus, to the fair-towered plain!

HALF-CHORUS 2
O would the Gods but vouchsafe to me wings,
   So to win to the city of rivers twain! 620

HALF-CHORUS 1
Ah then shouldst thou clearly discern—
   How thy champions speed shouldst thou learn.

HALF-CHORUS 2
Ah God, what fate, what doom doth await
The king of the mighty hand,
The hero of Cecrops' land?

HALF-CHORUS 1

(Ant. 2)

We have cried to the Gods, and we cry once more
   To the first best trust of the sore afraid.

HALF-CHORUS 2
Zeus, hear us, whose offspring was born of yore
Of Inachus' daughter, the heifer-maid!

1 Thebes: round the old citadel flowed, on one side, the
   Ismenus, on the other, the Dirce.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α’
πόλει μοι ἕξιμμαχος
γενοῦ τὰδ’ εὐμενής.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β’
tό σον ἄγαλμα, τό σον ἰδρύμα
πόλεος ἐκκομίζομαι
πρὸς πυρὰν ὑβρισθέν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
γυναῖκες, ἦκω πόλλ’ ἔχων λέγειν φίλα,
αὐτὸς τε σωθεῖς, ἤρεθην γὰρ ἐν μάχῃ,
ἡ δὲ θανόντων ἐπὶ τὰ δεσποτῶν λόχοι
ηγονίζαντο ἥμων Διρκαῖον πάρα,
νίκην τε Ὁσσέως ἀγγελών. λόγου δὲ σε
μακροῦ ἀποπαύσω. Καπανέως γὰρ ἡ λάτρις,
ὅν Ζεὺς κεραυνῷ πυρπόλῳ καταθελαίοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὦ φίλτατ’, εὖ μὲν νόστον ἀγγέλλεις σέθεν
tῆν τ’ ἀμφὶ Ὁσσέως βάξιν εἰ δὲ καὶ στρατὸς
σῶς ἔστ’ Ἀθηνῶν, πάντ’ ἄν ἀγγέλλοις φίλα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
σῶς, καὶ πέπραγεν ώς Ἀδραστος ὥφελε
πρᾶξιν ξὺν Ἀργείωσιν, οὖς ἀν’ Ἰακὸν
στείλας ἐπεστράτευσε Καμβείων πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πῶς γὰρ τροπαία Ζηνὸς Αἰγέως τόκος
ἐστησαν οἶ τε συμμετασχόντες δορός;
λέξον παρὼν γὰρ τοὺς παρόντας εὐφρανεῖς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

650
λαμπρὰ μὲν ἀκτίς ἡλίου, καὶ νῶν σαφῆς,
ἐβάλλε γαῖαν’ ἀμφὶ δ’ Ἡλεκτρα πύλας
ἐστὶν θεαίς πύργον εὐαγή λαβών.
ὅρῳ δὲ φύλα τρία τριῶν στρατευμάτων.

550
SUPPLIANTS

HALF-CHORUS 1
Oh be our champion thou,
To our city be gracious now!

HALF-CHORUS 2
Thy beloved are we, it was planted of thee,
This city whose sons we would gain
For the tomb from the outrage-stain.

Enter messenger.

MESSENER
Women, I come with tidings full of joy,—
Myself escaped, for I was ta'en in fight,
What time those seven bands of chieftains slain
Hard by the fount of Dirce strove their strife,—
Tidings of Theseus' triumph. I will spare thee
Question:—a vassal I of Capaneus
Whom Zeus did blast with blazing levin-bolt.

CHORUS
Dear friend, glad tidings this of thy return,
Glad news of Theseus: but if Athens' host
Is safe withal, thou heraldest all joy.

MESSENER
Safe: and hath fared—I would Adrastus so
Had fared with Argos' sons, whom forth he led
From Inachus to that Cadmean burg.

CHORUS
How then did Aegus' son uprear to Zeus
The trophy, he and those his spear-allies?
Tell; thou wast there: them that were not make glad.

MESSENER
Bright the sun's beam, true-levelled shaft of light,
Smote on the earth. Beside Electra's gate
On a far-looking tower I stood to watch.
And three tribes I beheld of war-bands three:
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

teuxhesphorou men laov ekteivont' anw
'Isomhion pros o'houn, ows men h' h' logos,
autou t' anakta, pai'da klei'don Aleu'wos,
kai tou's sun autw, dezi'don tezameneus
kera's, xalai'as Kekropias t' oikhtora's,
'isous arid'mon' armaton de' o'ch'mata
autou te Paidalau estolismenon dor'i.
kri'mn par' authn 'Areos' ippotn de' o'chlon
pros kraspe'doi'si stratopedou tezameneon.
Kad'mou de laos h'sto prothe teuxewn,
vekrous opiosebhen themenos, oan ekei' agw'n.
enerbe semwou mne'maton 'Ampirion.
1 ipeuvsi de' ippheis h'san anbopli'menoi
tetraoroi'si t' 'anti' armat' arma'san.
kerux de 'The'seos eitepe eis pantas tade'
si'gat' eis, laoi, s'g'ma, Kadmioi stixhes,
ako'sab' h'meis h'komeu vekrous meta
tha'fai the'lon'tes, ton Panellh'non nomon
soizontes, ou'den de'omenei teinai phonon.
ko'de'n K'reou tois' antekhiruxen logous,
al' h'st' ef' oplois s'g'ma. poimeneis de' o'chon
tetraorwv kat'hrechon entethen maxh'is
peran de diei'asantes allh'lon o'chon,
parai'bata's esth'san eis ta'xen doros.
choi men sidhirw die'maxhov, oi de 'estrefov
polous es alke'v aubis es parai'bata's.
ido'v de' Fodebas, ois monampikwv anav
h' tis'rexe'diasi'sin, armaton o'chlon,
oi t' au' to Kad'mou diefulasou ippi'kon,
sunphi'fan alke'vas kacratos h' sosv'to te.
leuv'sovn de ta'uta kou klwv, ekei gar h

1 Murray's re-arrangement adopted.
SUPPLIANTS

A mail-clad host far-stretching up the slopes
Unto the height Ismenian, as men said;
I saw the king's self, Aegeus' glorious son,
And his own war-band, marshalled on the right
With all the folk of Cecrops' ancient land,
Equal by tale. And all the battle-cars
And Seaboard Men, arrayed with spears, were ranged
By Ares' fountain; and the clouds of horse
Were drawn out on the fringes of the host.
Before their walls were marshalled Cadmus' folk—
Behind them lay those corpses, cause of strife—
On levels 'neath Amphion's hallowed tomb.
So against horsemen panoplied horsemen stood,
And four-yoked chariots were by chariots faced.
Then Theseus' herald cried in all men's ears:
"Silence, ye people! Hush ye, ranks of Cadmus!
Hearken—we come but for the corpses' sake,
To bury them, and keep all Hellas' law
Inviolate; nor would lengthen bloodshed out."
But Creon let his herald answer not,
But silent under shield abode. Thereat
The four-horsed chariot-lords began the fray.
On, down the battle-lanes of foes they swept,
Set down their warriors, spear opposing spear,
And, while these strove with bickering steel, those wheeled
Their steeds about, to aid their fighting-men.
Then Phorbas, captain of the Erechtheid horse,
And they withal which led the Theban riders,
Marking the tumult of the battle-cars,
Down charging clashed, now triumphing, rolled back now.
This saw I, and not heard; for I was there,
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ἐνθ’ ἀρματ’ ἤγωνίζεθ’ οἶ τ’ ἐπεμβάται.
τάκει παρόντα πολλά πήματ’, οὐκ ἔχω
τί πρῶτον ἐπω, πότερα τὴν ἐς ύπρανὸν
κόνιν προσαντέλλουσαν, ὡς πολλὴ παρὴν,
ἡ τοὺς ἁνω τε καὶ κατὸ φορομένους

690 ἰμᾶσιν, αἴματος τε φοινίου ροᾶς,
tῶν μὲν πιτυόντων, τῶν δὲ, θραυσθέντων δίφρων,
eἰς κράτα πρὸς γῆν ἐκκυβιστώντων βία
πρὸς ἀρμάτων τ’ ἀγαίσι λειπόντων βίων.
νικώντα δ’ ἵπποις ὡς ἱππείδετο στρατὸν
Κρέων τὸν ἔνθεν’, ἱτέαν λαβὼν χερὶ
χωρεῖ, πρὶν ἐλθεῖν ξυμμάχοις δυσθυμῶν.
καὶ συμπατάζοντες μέσον πάντα στρατὸν

700 ἐκτεινών ἐκτείνοντο, καὶ παρηγγύων
κελευσμὸν ἀλλήλους σὺν πολλῆ βοήθειν’, ἀντέρειδε τοῖς Ἐρεχθεάδαις δόρω.

691 καὶ μὴν τὰ Θησέως γ’ οὐκ ὅκυρ διεφθάρη,
698 ἀλλ’ ἵππες λάμπρ’ ἀναρπάσας ὁπλα.

703 λόχος δ’ ὀδύντων ὅφεος ἔξωνδρωμένος
dεινὸς παλαιστῆς ἂν’ ἔκλινε γὰρ κέρας
τὸ λαιὸν ἡμῶν’ δεξιοῦ δ’ ἥσσῳμενον
φεύγει τὸ κείνων’ ἂν δ’ ἄγων ἰσόρροπος.
καὶ τὸδε τὸν στρατηγὸν αἰνέσαι παρὴν’
oὐ γὰρ τὸ ἵππον τούτ’ ἐκέρδησαι μόνον,
ἀλλ’ ἄλοχε’ εἰς τὸ κάμνον ὁκείου στρατοῦ.

710 ἐρρῆξε δ’ αὐδῆν, ὡςθ’ ὑπηχῆσαι χθόνα:
ὁ παιδε, εἰ μὴ σχήσετε στερρὸν δόρυ
σπερτῶν τὸδ’ ἄνδρων, σχέτηαι τὰ Παλλάδος.
θάρσος δ’ ἐνώρησε παντι Κραναϊδῶν στρατῷ.
aὐτὸς θ’ ὁ πλισμα τοῦπιδαύριον λαβὼν
dεινής κορύνης διαφέρων ἐσφειδώνα,

1 Murray’s re-arrangement adopted.
SUPPLIANTS

There where the chariots and the warriors grappled. Of thousand horrors there, which first to tell I know not—or of dust that surged and soared Upward unto the heavens, clouds on clouds,— Of men, by tangling reins snatched from the cars, Slung earthward,—of the murder-streams of gore,— Men falling here, and there, as crashed the chariots, With violence hurled head downwards to the earth, And battered out of life by chariot-shards.

But Creon, marking how our horse prevailed On one wing, grasped his buckler in his hand, And vanward pressed, ere allies’ hearts should faint. All down the lines the fronts of battle clashed: Men slew—were slain—a thunder of wild war-cries Rang, roared, of men on-cheering each his fellow— "Smite!"—"Drive the spear against Erechtheus’ sons!"

Ha, but the heart of Theseus fainted not! On charged he, tossing high his flaming shield. But the host wrought to man of dragon-teeth Was a grim wrestler: back it bowed our wing Far on the left; but, by our right o’erborne, Fled theirs: so equal-balanced was the fight.

Then did our captain well and worshipfully; His triumph on the right sufficed him not, But he to his hard-pressed half-array sped fast, And sent a shattering shout,—earth rang again,— 710 "My sons, except ye stay the stubborn spear Of the Dragon-seed, your Pallas’ cause is lost!" So thrilled with courage all his Cranaid host. Himself that Epidaurian weapon seized, The fearful mace, and slingwise swung it round,
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

όμοι τραχήλους κάπικείμενον κάρα
κυνέας θερίζων κάποκαυλίζων ξύλω.
μόλις δ' πως ἔτρεψεν εἰς φυγὴν πόδα.
ἐγὼ δ' ἀνηλάλαξα κάνωρχησάμην
κάκρουςα χεῖρας. οἱ δ' ἔτεινον εἰς πῦλας.
βοή δε καὶ κωκυτός ἢν ἀνὰ πτόλυν
νέων, γερούτων, ίερά τ' ἐξεπίμπλασαν
φόβω. παρὸν δὲ τεῖχεν εἰς ὑμοὶ μολεῖν,
Θησεὺς ἐπέσχεν οὐ γὰρ ὡς πέρσων πόλιν
μολεῖν ἐφασκεν, ἀλλ' ἀπαιτήσων νεκρῶς.
τούντε τοι κατηγοῦν αἱρεῖσθαι χρεών,
ὅς ἐν τε τοῖς δευνοίσιν ἐστιν ἄλκιμος
μισεὶ θ' ὑβριστὴν λαόν, ὡς πράσσων καλῶς
εἰς ἀκρα βήναι κλιμάκων ἐνήλατα
ζητῶν ἀπώλεσ' ὄλβον ὃ χρήσθαι παρῆν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νῦν τήνδ' ἀελπτον ὑμέραν ἱδού' ἐγὼ
θεοὺς νομίζω, καὶ δοκῶ τῆς συμφορᾶς
ἐχεῖν ἔλασσον, τῶν τε τισάντων δίκην.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὁ Ζεῦ, τί δῆτα τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτοὺς
φρονεῖν λέγουσι; σοῦ γὰρ ἐξερθήμεθα
δρῶμεν τε τοιαύθ' ἀν σὺ τυχάνης θέλων.
ἡμῖν γὰρ ἂν τὸ τ' Ἀργος οὐχ ὑποστῶν,
αὐτοὶ τὰ πολλὰ καὶ νέοι βραχλοσιν.
Ἑτεοκλέους δὲ σύμβασιν ποιουμένου,

μέτρια θέλουτος, οὐκ ἐχρήξομεν λαβεῖν,
κάπειτ' ἀπωλόμεσθ'. ὁ δ' αὐ τὸτ' εὐτυχής,
λαβών τένης ὡς ἀρτίπλουτα χρήματα,
ὑβρίζ', ὑβρίζων τ' αὖθις ἀνταπώλετο
Κάδμον κακόφρων λαός. ὃ καὶροὺ πέρα

1 Murray's transposition of κεν. βρ. and κ. περ. adopted.
SUPPLIANTS

Down-mowing and clean-lobbing with his club
Alike their necks and heads in helmets cased:
And scarce even then those stubborn feet would fly.
And I, for joy I shouted, yea, I danced,
And clapped mine hands. On strained they to the gates.
Then rang a cry and wailing through the town
Of young and old: the panic-stricken thronged
The fanes. But, though the way within lay clear,
There Theseus stayed:—"Not to destroy the town
Came I," spake he, "but to reclaim the dead."
Well might men choose such battle-chief as this,
Who is in peril's midst a tower of strength,
But hates the scorners who, in fortune's hour
Seeking to mount the ladder's topmost round,
Let slip the bliss that lay within their hands.

CHORUS

Now I, beholding this unhoped-for day,
Know that Gods live, and feel my load of ill
Lighter, since these have paid the penalty.

ADRASTUS

Zeus, wherefore do they say that wretched man
Is wise? For lo, we hang upon thy skirts,
And that we do, it is but as thou wilt.
We deemed before our Argos none might stand,
Ourselves, a countless host of lusty arms;
And, when Eteocles proffered terms of peace,
Fair was his offer, yet we would not hear;
So were undone. Now, prospering in their turn,
Like beggar-wight with sudden-gotten wealth,
Wanton they waxed, and perished in their pride
Cadmus' mad-hearted sons. O foolish men

557
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

tὸ τόξον ἐντείνοντες, ὡς κενοὶ βροτῶν,
kai πρὸς δίκης γε πολλὰ πάθχοντες κακά,
φίλοις μὲν οὐ πείθεσθε, τοῖς δὲ πράγμασιν
πόλεις τ', ἔχουσαι διὰ λόγου κάμψαι κακά,
φόνῳ καθαιρεῖσθ' οὐ λόγῳ, τὰ πράγματα.
ἀτὰρ τὶ ταύτα; κεῖνο βουλομαι μαθεῖν,
pῶς ἔξεσώθησι οίτα τάλλ' ἐρήσομαι.

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἐπεὶ ταραγμὸς πόλιν ἐκίνησεν δορί,
pύλαις διῆλθον, ἤπερ εἰς ἥπει στρατός.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ὁν δ' εἰνεχ' ἀγών ἢν, νεκροὺς κομίζετε;

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ὁσοι γε κλεινοῖς ἐπτ' ἐφέστασαν λόχοις.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
πῶς φής; ὁ δ' ἀλλος ποῦ κεκμηκότων όχλος;

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ
τάφῳ δέδουται πρὸς Κιθαιρώνος πτυχαῖς.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
τούκειθεν ἡ τούνθενδε; τίς δ' ἔθαψε νῦν;

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Θησεύς, σκιώδης ἔνθ' Ἑλευθερίς πέτρα.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
οὖς δ' οὐκ ἔθαψε ποῦ νεκροὺς ἤκεις λιπῶν;

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἐγγύς: πέλας γὰρ πᾶν ὁ τι σπουδάζεται.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἡ ποὺ πικρῶς νῦν θέραπτες ἤγον ἐκ φόνου;
SUPPLIANTS

Who strain the bow beyond the mark, and suffer
Much harm at justice' hand, and yield at last
Not to friends' mediation, but stern facts!
O foolish states, which might by parley end
Feuds, yet decide them in the field of blood!
Yet wherefore this?—fain would I know of thee
How thou didst 'scape; then will I ask the rest.

MESSENGER

When tumult's battle-earthquake shook the town,
Through that gate slipt I where the host poured in.

ADRASTUS

And the dead bring ye, cause of all the strife?

MESSENGER

Even all which captained those seven bands renowned.

ADRASTUS

Ha!—and the rest which perished, where be they?

MESSENGER

Laid in the tomb, hard by Cithaeron's folds.

ADRASTUS.

On that side, or on this?—who buried them?

MESSENGER

Theseus, where hangs Eleutheræ's shadowing rock.

ADRASTUS

Where leftest thou those whom he buried not?

MESSENGER

At hand: for earnest haste brings all things near.

ADRASTUS

With loathing, surely, thralls took up the slain.

1 i.e. On the Theban or the Attic side of the range: the tombs would be in the possession of the people in whose land they were. Eleutheræ was in Attica.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
οὐδεὶς ἐπέστη τῷ δεῦ τοῦλος ἄν πόνη.
ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
φαίης ἃν, εἰ παρῆσθ' ὁτ' ἡγάπα νεκροὺς.
ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἐνιψεν αὐτὸς τῶν ταλαιπώρων σφαγάς;
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
κάστρωσέ γ' εὖνας κάκαλυψῃ σώματα.
ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
δεινὸν μὲν οὖν βάσταγμα κάσχυνην ἔχον.
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
τι δ' αἰσχρὸν ἀνθρώποισι τάλληλων κακά;
ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
οἴμοι· πόσῳ σφίν συνθανεῖν ἄν θελοιν.

770
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἀκραντ' ὀδύρει ταῖσεδε τ' ἐξάγεις δάκρυ.
ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
δοκῶ μὲν, αὐταί γ' εἰσίν αἱ διδάσκαλοι.

780
αὐλ' εἶνεν· αἵρω χεῖρ' ἀπαντήσας νεκροῖς
"Αἰδοὺ τε μολπᾶς ἐκχέω δακρυρρόους,
φίλους προσαυδᾶν, ὁδ' λειψαμένοις τάλας
ἐρήμα κλαῖο· τούτῳ γὰρ μόνοι βροτοῖς
οὐκ ἔστι τάναλωμ' ἀναλωθὲν λαβεῖν,
ψυχὴν βροτείαν· χρημάτων δ' εἰσίν πόροι.
ΧΩΡΟΣ

780
τὰ μὲν εὖ, τὰ δὲ δυστυχή· στρ. α'
πόλει μὲν εὐδοξία
καὶ στρατηλάταις δορὸς
dιπλάζεται τιμᾶ.
SUPPLIANTS

MESSENER

Never a slave set hand unto the toil.

ADRASTUS

[How?—did the king endure this, of his love?]

MESSENER

Hadst thou but seen his ministry of love!

ADRASTUS

He washed, himself, the poor youths' slaughter-stains!

MESSENER

And spread the biers, and veiled the bodies o'er.

ADRASTUS

An awful burden was it, fraught with shame!

MESSENER

Nay, but what shame to men are brethren's ills?

ADRASTUS

Ah me, far liever had I died with them!

MESSENER

Bootless thy mourning, stirring these to tears.

ADRASTUS

I trow themselves this mourning-lore have taught.
Enough: I raise mine hand to greet the dead,
And pour out songs of death with streaming eyes,
Hailing our loved, bereft of whom—ah me!—
Forlorn I weep: for the one loss is this
That never mortal maketh good again,—
The life of man, though wealth may be re-won.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

There is joy, there is sorrow this day; for our town
Hath a garland of glory;
And the chiefs of the spear-host, lo, twofold renown
Maketh splendid their story.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ.

ἐμοὶ δὲ παῖδων μὲν εἰσιδεῖν μέλη
πικρόν, καλὸν θέαμα δ’, εἰπερ ὅψομαι
tὰν ἀειπττὸν ἀμέραν,
ἰδούσα πάντων μέγιστον ἀλγος.

ἀγαμόν μ’ ἐτὶ δεῦρ’ ἀεὶ
χρόνος παλαιὸς·πατὴρ
ὡφελ’ ἀμερὰν κτίσαι.
τὶ γὰρ μ’ ἐδει παῖδων;
τὶ μὲν γὰρ ἦλπιζον ἄν πεπονθέναι
πάθος περισσόν, εἰ γάμων ἀπεξύγην;
νῦν δ’ ὡς σαφέστατον
κακὸν, τέκνων φιλτάτων στερεῖσθαι.

ἀλλὰ τάδ’ ἦδη σώματα λεύσσω
τῶν οἰχομένων παῖδων· μελέα
πῶς ἄν ὀλοίμην σὺν τοίσδε τέκνωις
κοινὸν ἐς ‘’Αἰδην καταβᾶσα;

ΑḌΡΑΣΤΟΣ

στεναγμόν, ὡ ματέρες,
tῶν κατὰ χθόνος νεκρῶν
ἀύσατ’ ἀπύσατ’ ἀντίφων ἐμῶν
στεναγμάτων κλύουσαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὡ παιδεῖς, ὡ πικρὸν φίλων
προσηγόρημα ματέρων,
προσαινόμε σε τόν θανόντα.

ΑḌΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὡ ἢ ἡ,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tῶν γ’ ἐμῶν κακῶν ἐγὼ.
SUPPLIANTS

But to see my sons' limbs!—sight bitter for me,
Yet proud, for the day that I hoped not to see
   Hath uprisen before me,
Who have seen earth's ghastliest misery.  (Ant. 1)

Ah that Time the father, the ancient of days,
   Had but caused me unmarried
To abide! Was I wholly in evil case
   While childless I tarried?
Yea, what dark bodings of anguish broke
My peace, when I thought to refuse love's yoke?
   But of dear sons harried
Now see I mine home, no visioned stroke.

Ah, yonder I see the forms draw nigh
   Of our perished children; alas!
O but with these my belovèd to die,
   Unto union in Hades to pass!

Enter Theseus, with Athenian soldiers marching in —
   procession with corpses on biers.

ADRASTUS

    Mothers, ring out the moan  (Str. 2)
    For dear dead 'neath the ground;
Echo my crying with accordant groan
   Of mournful-wailing sound.

CHORUS

    O dead son!—bitter word
    For mothers' lips to know!
I cry on thee, in ears that have not heard:
   Ah for my woe!
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

αἰαὶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

* * * * * *

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐπάθομεν ὁ —

ΧΟΡΟΣ

· τὰ κύντατ' ἄληγη κακῶν.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὁ πόλις Ἀργεία, τὸν ἐμὸν πότμον οὐκ ἐσοφάτε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁρῶσιν ἐμὲ τὴν
tάλαιναν, τέκνων ἀπαίδα.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

προσάγετε τῶν δυσπότμων
σώμαθ' αἰματοσταγή,
σφαγέντας οὐκ ἂξι' οὐδ' ὑπ' ἂξιων,
ἐν ὅις ἁγών ἐκράνθη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

dόθ', ὡς περιπτυχαίσι δὴ
χέρας προσαρμόσασ' ἐμοίς
ἐν ἁγκάσι τέκνα θῶμαι.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐχεῖς ἐχεῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πημάτων γ' ἀλις βάρος.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

αἰαὶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tοῖς τεκούσι δ' οὐ λέγεις;

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἀλετέ μου.
SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

We suffered—

CHORUS
Deepest anguish!

ADRASTUS
Ah, fair town
Of Argos, see my fate!

CHORUS
O yea, upon our sorrows she looks down,
The childless desolate!

ADRASTUS
Bring them, the blood-besprent (Ant. 2)
Forms of the evil-starred,
When to unrighteous foes the victory went,
Slain, an unmeet reward!

CHORUS
Give them, that I may cast
Mine arms round these, and lull,
In death's sleep clasped, my children.

ADRASTUS
This thou hast.

CHORUS
Grief's cup is full!

ADRASTUS
Woe!

CHORUS
For these mothers wail!

ADRASTUS
Hear me!
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
στένεις ἐπ' ἀμφότερ ἀχὴ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
εἶδε μὲ Καδμείων ἐναροῦ στίχες ἐν κονίασιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἐμὸν δὲ μήποτ' ἔτυγχη
dέμας γ' ἐς ἀνδρός εὐνόω.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἴδετε κακῶν πέλαγος, ὥ
ματέρες τάλαναι τέκνων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
κατὰ μὲν οὖν ἡλικίσμεθ', ἀμφί δὲ
σποδὸν κάρα κεχύμεθα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἰὼ ἰὼ μοι μοι.
κατὰ μὲ πέδου γὰς ἔλοι,
διὰ δὲ θύελλα σπάσαι,
πυρὸς τε φλογῶς ὁ Διὸς ἐν κάρα πέσοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πυροῦς ἑσειδες γάμους,
πυρᾶν δὲ Φοῖβου φάτιν ἔρημα σ' ὁ πολύστοιος Οἰδιπόδα
dῶματα λιποῦσ' ἤλθ' ἔρινὺς.

ΘΕΣΕΣ
μέλλων σ' ἑρωτάν, ἡνίκ' ἔξηντέλει στρατφ
γόους, ἀφίσω· τοὺς ἄκει μὲν ἐκλιπὼν
eiása μῦθος, νῦν δ' Ἀδραστοῦ ἱστορῶν
πόθεν ποθ' οἶδε διαπρεπεὶς εὐφυχία
θητῶν ἐφυσαν; εἰπέ γ', ὡς σοφότερος,
νέοισιν ἀστῶν τῶν· ἐπιστήμων γὰρ ei.
SUPPLIANTS

CHORUS

Thy moan
For us, for thee, is sped.

ADRASTUS

Oh had the foe slain me!

CHORUS

Oh to have known
Never a husband’s bed!

ADRASTUS

Ah mother!—ah, dead child!
Lo, what a trouble-sea!

CHORUS

Our cheeks are furrow-scarred, and our white heads are marred
With ashes all defiled.

ADRASTUS

Woe’s me, ah woe is me!
Yawn for my grave, earth’s floor!
Storm-blast, in pieces break!

O that on mine head dashed the flame of Zeus down flashed!

CHORUS

Ruin those bridals bore:
Thy ruin Phoebus spake.
The curse of Oedipus, with sighing fraught,
Childless hath left his house, and thee hath sought.

THESEUS (to leader of chorus)

Thee had I asked, but, for thy mourning poured
Forth to the host, refrain, and my request
To thee forgo, and ask Adrastus now:—

Of what race sprang these chiefs, above all men
Which shone in valour? To my young Athenians
Tell, of thy fuller wisdom; for thou know’st.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

eîdes 1 γὰρ αυτῶν κρείσσον ἢ λέξαι λόγῳ
tολμήμαθ', οἶς ἠλπίζον αἱρήσειν πόλιν.
ἐν δὲ οὐκ ἐρήσομαι σε, μὴ γέλωτ' ὁφλω,
ὅτως ἐπιόντες τῶν ἐκαστος ἐν μάχῃ
ἡ τραύμα λόγχης πολεμίων ἐδέξατο.
κοινὸν 2 γὰρ οὔτοι τῶν τ' ἀκούοντων λόγοι
καὶ τοῦ λέγοντος· πῶς τις ἐν μάχῃ βεβώς
λόγχης ιουσίης πρόσθεν ὄμματων πυκνῆς
σαφῶς ἀπήγγειλ' ὡς τίς ἐστὶν ἀγαθός;
οὐκ ἀν δυναίμην οὔτ' ἐρωτῆσαι τάδε
οὔτ' ἂν πιθέσθαι τοῖς τολμώσει λέγειν
μόις γὰρ ἂν τις αὐτὰ τάναγκαί ὀρᾶν
dύνατ' ἂν ἐστώς πολεμίως ἐναντίος.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἀκοῦε δὴ νυν· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀκοντί μοι
dίδως ἐπαίνον τῶνδ', ἔγω τε βούλομαι
φίλων ἀληθῆ καὶ δίκαι' εἰπεῖν πέρι.

ὁρᾶς τὸ Δίον οὖ βέλος διήπτατο;
Κατανεύει δ' ἐστίν· φ' βίος μὲν ἡν πολύς,
ηκίστα δ' ὅλβῳ γαύρος ἦν· φρόνημα δὲ
οὐδὲν τι μεῖζον εἰχείν ἢ πένης ἀνήρ,
φεύγων τραπέζαις ὡστις ἄγον̄κοιτ̄ ἄγαν̄
τάρκοιντ' ἀτίξων· οὐ γὰρ ἐν γαστρός βορᾶ
τὸ χρηστὸν εἶναι, μέτρια δ' ἔξαρκειν ἐφή.
φίλος τ' ἀληθῆς ἦν φίλος παροῦσι τε
καὶ μὴ παροῦσιν· ὅν ἀριθμὸς οὐ πολύς.
ἀψευδεὶς ἢθος, εὐπροσήγορον στόμα,
ἀκραντον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἐς οἰκέτας ἐχὼν
οὔτ' εἰς πολίτας. τὸν δὲ δεύτερον λέγω

1 Paley; for MSS. eldou.
2 So MSS. Grotius, κενολ: "For this, for those that tell
and those that hear, Were an idle tale."
SUPPLIANTS

Their gallant deeds, too great for words to speak,
Thou saw'st, whereby they hoped to win yon Thebes.

One question, meet for laughter, I ask not—
Whom each of these encountered in the strife,
Or from what foeman's spear received his wound.
For they that hear such tales as much could say
As he which tells. Who, that hath stood in fight,
When spear on spear is flying before men's eyes,
Can certainly report who bravely bears him?
I could not ask such vanity as this,
Nor them believe whose impudence would tell.
Scarce can a man see what needs must be seen,
What time he standeth foot to foot with foes.

ADRASTUS

Hear then. To no unwilling lips thou givest
The praise of these: full fain am I to speak
Both truth and justice touching men I loved.

Seest thou yon corpse wherethrough leapt Zeus's
bott?

Capaneus he, a mighty man of wealth,
Yet naught thereby exalted, but he bare
A spirit no whit loftier than the poor,
Shunning the man whose pomp of banquets scorned
That which sufficeth. "Not in gluttony,"
Said he, "is good: enough is as a feast."
True friend to friends was he, alike when near
And far: of such is there no multitude.
A guileless heart, a mouth of gracious speech,
Who left no dues unrendered, or to servants
Or citizens. Now of the next I speak,
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

'Ετέοκλουν, ἄλλην χρηστότητι ἥσκηκότα·

νεανίας ἦν τῷ βίῳ μὲν ἐνδεής,

πλείστας δὲ τιμᾶς ἔσχ' ἐν Ἀργεία χθονί.

φίλων δὲ χρυσοῦν πολλάκις δωρούμενων

οὐκ εἰσεδέξατ' οίκον ὡστε τοὺς τρόπους

διόλους παρασχεῖν χρημάτων ξενοθείς ὑπὸ Τοὺς δὲ ἐξαμαρτάνοντας, οὐχὶ τὴν πόλιν ἡχθαίρ· ἐπεὶ τοι κοιδέν αἰτία πόλεως κακῶς κλύουσα διὰ κυβερνήτην κακόν.

ὁ δὲ αὐτός τῶν Ἰππομέδων τοιάδ' ἐφυ·

παῖς δὲν ἐτόλμησ' εὖθὺς οὐ πρὸς ἢδονάς

Μουσῶν τραπέσθαι πρὸς τὸ μαλθακὸν βίον,

ἄγροις δὲ ναίων, σκληρὰ τῇ φύσει διδόνθ' ἕχαρε πρὸς τάνδρειον, εἰς τ' ἀγρας ὑπὸ

ἵππους τε χαῖρων τόξα τ' ἐντείνων χεροῦν,

πόλει παρασχεῖν σώμα χρήσιμον θέλων.

ὁ τῆς κυναγοῦ δ' ἄλλος Ἀταλάντης γόνος,

παῖς Παρθενοπαῖος, εἴδος ἔξοχωτατος,

Ἀρκας μὲν ἦν, ἔλθων δ' ἐπὶ Ἰνάχου ῥοὰς

παῖδευται κατ' Ἀργος. ἔκτραφεις δ' ἐκεῖ

πρῶτον μὲν, ὡς χρή τοὺς μετοικοῦντας ξένους,

λυπηρός οὐκ ἦν οὖν ἐπίφθονος πόλει

οὐδ' ἔξεριστής τῶν λόγων, ἰδεῖν διαρχὸς

μάλιστ' ἂν εἰη δημότης τε καὶ ξένος;

λόχοι δ' ἐφεστῶς ὡσπερ Ἀργείως γεγώς

ἡμίνε χώρα, χῶπτ' ἐν πράσσοι πόλει,

ἐχαίρε, λυπρῶς δ' ἐφερεν, εἰ τι δυστυχοῖ.

πόλλος δ' ἔραστάς κατ' θηλείων οίς

ἐχών, ἐφρουρεῖ μηδὲν ἐξαμαρτάνειν.

Τυδέως δ' ἐπαίνων ἐν βραχεῖ θῆσω μέγαν·

οὐκ ἐν λόγοις ἦν λαμπρός, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀσπίδι

δεινὸς σοφιστῆς πολλὰ τ' ἐξευρεῖν σοφός.
SUPPLIANTS

Eteoclus, graced, he too, with excellence.
A young man he, not rich in this world’s goods,
But in the Argive land dowered rich with honour;
Who oft, when friends would lavish on him gold,
Received it not his doors within, to make
His life a slave bowed ’neath the yoke of wealth.
He loathed wrong-doers, not his erring country;
Seeing the guilt is nowise in the State
That through an evil pilot wins ill fame.

Such too Hippomedon was, the third with these.
From childhood up he deigned not turn aside
Unto the Muses’ joys, for ease of life;
But in the field abode, enduring hardness
Gladly for valour’s sake, and, hunting still,
Joyed in the steed and hands that strain the bow,
Eager to yield his land his body’s best.

The fourth was huntress Atalanta’s son,
Parthenopaeus, unmatch’d in goodlihead:
Arcadian he, but came to Inachus,
And lived his youth at Argos. Fostered there,
First, as beseems the sojourner in the land,
He vexed not, nor was jealous of the state,
Nor was a wrangler, whereby citizens
Or aliens most shall jar with fellow-men;
But in the ranks stood like an Argive born,
Fought for the land, and, whenso prospered Argos,
Rejoiced, and grieved when it went ill with her;—
Of many a man, of many a woman loved,
Yet from transgression did he keep him pure.

Tydeus’ high praise next will I sum in brief.
In speech he shone not; a dread reasoner he
In logic of the shield, and war’s inventions:
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

γνώμη δ' ἀδελφοῖ Μελεάγρου λελειμμένος,
Ἰσον παρέσχεν ὅνομα, διὰ τεχνης δορὸς
εὐρῶν ἀκριβῆ μουσικῆν ἐν ἀσπίδι
φιλότιμον ἰθὸς, πλουσίων φρόνημα δὲ
ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις, οὐχὶ τοῖς λόγοις ἵσον.
Εκ τῶν δὲ μὴ θαύμαζε τῶν εἰρημένων,
Θησεῦ, πρὸ τύργων τούπσε τολμήσαι θανεῖν.
τὸ γὰρ τραφήναι μὴ κακῶς αἰῶν φέρει
αἰσχυνεῖται δὲ τάγάθ' ἀσκήσας ἄνηρ
κακός κεκλήσαι τᾶς τυς. ἢ δ' εὐαισθένα
διδακτός, εἰπερ καὶ βρέφος διδάσκεται
λέγειν ἀκούειν θ' ὅν μάθησιν οὐκ ἔχει.
ἀ δ' ἰνε μάθη τις, ταῦτα σφώζεσθαι φίλε
πρὸς γῆρας. οὐτω παῖδας εὐ παιδεύετε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἅτω τέκνυν, δυστυχὴ σ',
ἔτρεφον, ἐφερον ὑπ' ἤπατος
πόνους ἐνεγκοῦσ' ἐν ὀδίσει: καὶ νῦν
"Αἰδας τὸν ἐμὸν ἔχει
μόχθον ἀθλίας, ἐγὼ δὲ
γνησίως οὐκ ἔχω
τεκνοῦ' ὁ τάλαινα παῖδα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

καὶ μὴ τὸν Ὀικλέους γε γενναίον τόκον
θεοὶ ζωτ' ἀναρτᾶσαντες εἰς μυχοὺς χθόνος
αὐτοῖς τεθρίπποις εὐλογοῦσιν ἐμφανῶς;
τὸν Οἰδίποο δὲ παῖδα, Πολυνείκην λέγω,
ἡμεῖς ἐπαινέσαντες οὐ ψευδοίμεθ' ἄν.

ξένος γὰρ ἢν μοι πρὶν λιπὼν Κάδμου πόλειν

572
SUPPLIANTS

In counsel not as his brother Meleager,
Yet of like fame, through science of the spear
Getting him ripest scholarship of war.
A soaring soul was his, a spirit rich
Where deeds might serve; in speech of less avail.

Hearing my words, O Theseus, marvel not
That these before yon towers feared not to die.
The fruit that noble nurture bears is honour;
And whoso’er hath practised knightly deeds
Would blush to be called craven. Ye may teach
This chivalry; for even the babe is taught
To speak and hear things not yet understood;
And what one learneth, that he is wont to keep
To hoary hairs. Then train ye well the child.

CHORUS

O son, for thy sorrow I gave thee
Life of my life 'neath my zone,
And I bore for thee travail-pain:
And now is my loss death’s gain;
Of my labours no fruit doth remain,
Nor to foster mine eld may I have thee.
Woe’s me that I bare a son!

THESEUS

To Oeleus’ noble son the very Gods,
Who whelmed him with his car down earth’s abyss
Living, gave manifest token of their praise.¹
But Oedipus’ son—I tell of Polyneices—
Myself shall praise, nor falsely speak herein.
My guest was he, ere, leaving Cadmus’ town

¹ As being rescued from pursuers, and entombed by the Gods.

573
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

φυγῇ πρὸς Ἀργος διαβαλεῖν αὐθαίρετος. ἀλλ᾽ οίσθ᾽ ὁ δρασάι βούλομαι τούτων πέρι;

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
οὐκ οἴδα πλὴν ἐν, σοῦσι πείθεσθαι λόγοις.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
τὸν μὲν Δίῳς πληγέντα Καπανέα πυρὶ—

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἡ χωρίς ἱερὸν ὡς νεκρὸν θάψαι θέλεις;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ναὶ τοὺς δὲ γ' ἄλλους πάντας ἐν μὰ πυρὰ.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ποὺ δήτα θήσεις μνῆμα τῷ δε χωρίσας;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
αὐτοῦ παρ’ οἴκος τούσδε συμπήξας τάφον.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
οὗτος μὲν ἡδὴ δμωσίν ἀν μέλοι πόνοσ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἡμῖν δὲ γ’ οἴδε. στειχέτω δ’ ἀχθη νεκρῶν.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ίτ', ὦ τάλαιναι μητέρες, τέκνων πέλας.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἡκιστ', Ἄδραστε, τοῦτο πρόσφορον λέγεις.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
πῶς; τὰς τεκουσας οὐ χρεων ψαύσαι τέκνων;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ὁλοιντ᾽ ἴδουσαι τοῦτ'd ἀν ἡλλοιωμένους.

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
πικρᾶ γὰρ ὄψις αἵμα κωτειλαὶ νεκρῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
τι δήτα λύπην ταίσδε προσθείναι θέλεις;
SUPPLIANTS

Self-banished, unto Argos he crossed o’er.
But knowest thou my wish as touching these?

ADRASTUS

Naught know I, save one thing—to heed thy words.

THESEUS

Capaneus, stricken by the fire of Zeus—

ADRASTUS

Wouldst bury him apart, a hallowed corpse?

THESEUS

Yea, but the rest all on one funeral-pyre.

ADRASTUS

Where wilt thou set for him that several tomb?

THESEUS

Here, by these halls I have built his sepulchre.

ADRASTUS

Our servants’ tendance shall he straightway have.

THESEUS

These, mine. Now let the biers of death move on. 940

ADRASTUS

Come, hapless mothers, to your sons draws nigh.

THESEUS

Adrastus, this thou say’st were all unmeet.

ADRASTUS

How should the mothers choose but touch their sons?

THESEUS

’Twere death to look on them so sorely marred.

ADRASTUS

Bitter to see are slain men’s blood and wounds.

THESEUS

Why then wouldst add fresh anguish to their grief?

575
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

νικᾶς· μένειν χρή τλημόνως· λέγει γὰρ εὗ Θησεύς· ὅταν δὲ τούσδε προσθῶμεν πυρί,
όστα προσάξεσθ'. ὃ ταλαιπωροὶ βροτῶν,
τί κτᾶσθε λόγχας καὶ κατ' ἀλλήλων φόνους
τίθεσθε; παύσασθ', ἀλλὰ λήξαντες πόνων
ἀστὴ φυλάσσεσθ' ἥσυχοι μεθ' ἥσύχων.
σμικρὸν τὸ χρῆμα τοῦ βίου· τοῦτον δὲ χρῆ
ὡς ῥάστα καὶ μή σὺν πόνοις διεκπερὰν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκέτ' εὗτεκνος, οὐκέτ' εὔπαις,
στρ.
οὐδ' εὐτυχίας μετεστίν μοι
κουροτόκοις ἐν 'Αργείαις·
οὐδ' Ἀρτεμίς λοχία
προσφθέγχαι' ἀν τὰς ἀτέκνους.

δυσαίων δ' ὁ βίος,
πλαγκτὰ δ' ὡσεὶ τὶς νεφέλα,
πνευμάτων ὑπὸ δυσχίμων ἀίσσω.

ἐπτὰ ματέρες ἐπτὰ κοῦροις
ἀντ.
ἐγεινάμεθ' αἱ ταλαιπωροὶ
κλεινοτάτους ἐν 'Αργείοις·
καὶ νῦν ἁπαῖς ἀτεκνος
γηρᾶσκω δυστηνοτάτως,
οὔτ' ἐν φθίμενοις
οὔτ' ἐν ἔδισ τινων κρινομένα,

χωρίς δὴ τινα τῶν ἐξούσα μοῖραν.

ὑπολειμμένα μοι δάκρυα·
ἐπώδ.
μέλεα παιδος ἐν οἰκοῖς
κεῖται μνήματα, πενθιμοι
κουραί καὶ στέφανοι κόμας,
SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Well said. Ye, tarry patiently, for well
Speaks Theseus. When to fire we have given these,
Yourselves the bones shall gather. Hapless mortals!
Why do ye get you spears and deal out death
To fellow-men? Stay, from such toils forbear,
And peaceful mid the peaceful ward your towns.
Short is life's span: behoves to pass through this
Softly as may be, not with travail worn.

The funeral procession passes on to the pyres, which are
kindled in sight of the stage.

CHORUS

Crowned with fair sons above others (Str.)
No more am I seen,
Neither blessèd mid Argive mothers;
Nor the Travail-queen
To the childless shall give fair greeting!
Forlorn is my life, as a fleeting
Lone cloud that flees from the beating
Of storm-scourges keen.

Seven mothers—and heroes seven (Ant.)
To our sorrow we bare:
None princelier to Argos were given.
Now in childless despair
Drear old age creepeth upon me;
Yet the ranks of the dead have not known me,
Nor the count of the living may own me;
But an outcast I fare. 970

For me are but tears remaining: (Epode)
Saddest memorials rest
In mine halls of my son—shorn hair
And garlands of mourning are there;

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ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

λοιβαί τε νεκύων φθιμένων,
ἀοιδὰί θ’ ἃς χρυσοκόμας
Ἄπολλων οὐκ ἐνδέχεται·
γόοισιν δ’ ὀρθρευμένα
δάκρυσι νοτερὸν ἤει πέπλων
πρὸς στέρνῳ πτύχα τέγξω.

καὶ μὴν θαλάμας τάσσ’ ἐσορῶ δὴ
Καπανέως ἦδη τύμβον θ’ ἱερὸν
μελάθρων τ’ ἐκτὸς
Θησέως ἀναθήματα νεκροῖς,
κλεινὴν τ’ ἀλοχον τοῦ καταφθιμένου
tοῦδε κεραυνῷ πέλας Εὐάδυνην,
ἥν Ἰφίς ἀναξ παίδα φυτεύει.
τί ποτ’ αἰθερίαν ἔστηκε πέτραν,
ἡ τῶν δόμων ὑπερακρίζει,
τήν’ ἐμβαίνουσα κέλευθον;

ΕΤΑΔΗΗ

τι φέγγος, τίν’ αἰγλαν
ἐδίφρευε τὸθ’ ἄλιος
σελάνα τε κατ’ αἰθέρα,
λαμπάσιν ὁκυθόαις λυγρᾶς
ιππεύουσα δι’ ἄρφνας,

* * * ἀνίκα γάμων
τῶν ἐμῶν πόλις Ἀργοὺς
ἀοιδὰς εὐδαιμονίας
ἐπύργωσε καὶ γαμέτα
χαλκεστευχοῦσ τε Καπανέως;
δρομᾶς εξ ἐμῶν πρὸς σ’ ἱεβα
οίκων ἐκβακχευσαμένα,

1 Text corrupt. Paley’s reading and interpretation.
SUPPLIANTS

Libations—for dead lips' draining;
   Songs—which the golden-tressed
    Apollo shall turn from in scorn;
    And with wails shall I greet each morn,
Ever drenching with tears fast raining
   The vesture-folds on my breast.

Lo, yonder the fiery bower,
   Even Capaneus' sacred pyre:
    I see it without the fane,
    With Theseus' gifts to the slain
Ha! the wife draweth nigh in this hour
    To the slain of the levin-fire,
    Evadne the princess renowned!
    On yon cliff why is she found
Whose crags above this fane tower?
    And she climbs, and she climbs ever higher!

EVADNE appears on the cliff above the pyre of Capaneus,
   dressed in festal attire.

EVADNE
What light ill-omened shone
When flashed thy wheels, O Sun,
And when the moon raced on,
    And star-lamps glancing
Raced through a lowering sky,
When Argos tossed on high
The gladsome bridal-cry,
    And throbbed with dancing,
And thrilled with song, to see
Mine hero wed with me?
O love, I rush to thee
    From mine home, raving,
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

πυρός φῶς τάφον τε
ματεύουσα τόν αυτόν,
ἐσ" Ἀιδαν καταλύουσον ἐμμοχθοῦν
βίοτον αἰώνος τε πόνους·
ἡδιστὸς γὰρ τοι θάνατος
συνθημέσκειν θυσίαν φίλοις,
eἰ δαίμον τάδε κραίνοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὅρας τὴν ᾦς ἐφεστηκας πέλας
πυραῖν, Δίὸς θησαυρῶν, ἐνθὲ ἐνεστὶ σὸς
πόσις δαμασθεὶς λαμπάσιν κεραυνίοις.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ὁρῶ δὴ τελευτάν,
ὶν ἔστακα· τόχα δὲ μοι
ἐυνάπτει πόδος· ἀλλὰ τῆς
eὐκλείας χάριν ἔθεν ὅρη-
μάσω τὰσδ᾽ ἀπὸ πέτρας
πηδήσασα πυρὸς έσω,
σώμα τ᾽ αἴθοπι φλογῷ
πόσει συμμίξασα φίλοιν,
χρωτὰ χρωτὶ πέλας θεμένα
Περσεφονεῖας ἡξῶ θαλάμους,
σὲ τὸν θανόντ᾽ ὁποτέ ἔμα
προδοῦσα ψυχὰ κατὰ γᾶς.
ῖτω φῶς γάμοι τὲ.
†εἰθ᾽ ἁμένοιν εὐναὶ
dικαῖον ὑμεναίον ἐν Ἀργεῖ
φανεῖν τέκνοισιν ἐμὸν,
eἰ ὑ ὑ ναῖος γαμέτας†

1 Text uncertain. Paley's reading and interpretation.
SUPPLIANTS

Seeking thy tomb, thy pyre,  
Longing with strong desire  
To end in that same fire   
    Mine anguish, braving  
Hades—to end life’s woe;  
For death is sweetest so  
With dear dead to lie low:—  
    God grant my craving!

CHORUS

Lo, the pyre nigh,—above it dost thou stand,—  
Zeus’ own possession, on the which is laid  
Thy lord, o’erthrown by flash of levin-bolt.

EVADNE  

The end!—I see it now, (Ant.)  
Here standing. . .Friend art thou,  
Fortune! From this cliff’s brow,  
    For wifehood’s glory,  
With spurning feet I dart  
Down into yon fire’s heart  
To meet him, ne’er to part,—  
    Flames reddening o’er me,—  
To nestle to his side,  
In Cora’s  
    bowers a bride!  
O love, though thou hast died,  
    I’ll not forsake thee.  
Farewell life, bridal bed!  
By happier omens led,  
Ah, be our children wed!  
    May leal love make ye,  
Bridegrooms to be, life through  
Unto my daughters true:

1 Persephone, queen of Hades.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

συντηρθεῖς αὐραῖς ἀδόλοις
γενναίας ψυχάς ἀλόχρῳ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
καὶ μὴν ὃδ᾽ αὐτὸς σὸς πατήρ βαίνει πέλας,
γεραιῶς Ἰφις εἰς νεστέρους λόγους,
οὗς οὐ κατείδως πρόσθεν ἀληθείς κλῦων.

ἸΦΙΣ

ὁ δυστάλαιναι, δυστάλαις δ᾽ ἐγὼ γέρων,
ηκὼ διπλοῦν πένθημι ὁμαιμονῶν ἔχων,
τὸν μὲν θανόντα παίδα Καδμείων δορὶ
Ἐτέοκλον εἰς ὃν πατρίδα ναυσθλώσων νεκρόν,
ξητὸν δ᾽ ἐμὴν παίδι, ἢ δόμων ἕξωπιος
βέβηκε τηδῆσασα Καπανέως δάμαρ,
θανεῖν ἐρῶσα σὺν πόσει. χρόνον μὲν οὖν
τὸν πρόσθ᾽ εφρουρεῖτ ἐν δόμοις· ἐπεὶ δ᾽ ἐγὼ
φυλακὰς ἀνήκα τοῖς παρεστῶσιν κακοῖς,
βέβηκεν, ἄλλα τῆδε νῦν δοξάζομεν
μᾶλιστ᾽ ἂν εἶναι φράζετ᾽ εἰ κατείδετε.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

τί τάσδ᾽ ἔρωτᾶς; ἦδ᾽ ἐγὼ πέτρας ἐπὶ
ἀρνίς τῆς ὀσεί Καπανέως ὕπερ πυρᾶς
δύστην ἀἰώρημα κοψφίξω, πάτερ.

ἸΦΙΣ

τέκνου, τῆς αὕρα; τῆς στόλος; τίνος χάριν
δόμων ὑπερθρᾶσ᾽ ἡλθες εἰς τὴν ἀχόνα;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ὁργὴν λάβοις ἀν τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων
κλῦων· ἀκούσαι δ᾽ οὐ σε βούλομαι, πάτερ.

ἸΦΙΣ

τί δ᾽; οὐ δίκαιον πατέρα τὸν σὸν εἰδέναι;

582
SUPPLIANTS

One love-breath breathe in you.
    Now, Death, come—take me!

CHORUS

Lo, here himself, thy sire, is drawing nigh,
Old Iphis, within sound of thy strange speech,
Which, heard not yet, shall wring his heart to hear.

Enter Iphis.

IPHIS

O hapless ye!—O hapless ancient I!
Burdened with twofold grief for kin I came,
To bear unto his fatherland oversea
My son Eteocles, slain by Theban spear,
And seeking for my daughter, who hath fled
Forth of mine halls, the wife of Capaneus,
Longing with him to die. Through days o’erpast
Guarded she was at home: but soon as I
 Slackened the watch, for ills that pressed on me,
Forth did she pass. Howbeit here, methinks,
Is she most like to be. Say, have ye seen her?

EVAADNE

Wherefore ask these? Here am I on the rock.
Even as a bird, my father, hang I poised
In misery o’er the pyre of Capaneus.

IPHIS

My child, what wind hath blown, what journeying
    led thee?
Why flee thine home and come unto this land?

EVAADNE

Thou wouldst be wroth to hear my purposes.
O father, I would not that thou shouldst hear.

IPHIS

How?—were’t not just thy very father knew?
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΕΤΑΔΗΝ
κριτής δὲν εἰς οὐ σοφὸς γνώμης ἔμης.

ΙΦΙΣ
σκευή δὲ τῆς τοῦ χάριν κοσμεῖς δέμας;

ΕΤΑΔΗΝ
θέλει τι κλεινὸν οὗτος ὁ στολμός, πάτερ.

ΙΦΙΣ
ὡς οὖκ ἐπ᾽ ἀνδρὶ πένθιμος πρέπεις ὃρᾶν.

ΕΤΑΔΗΝ
eἰς γὰρ τι παράγμα νεοχμὸν ἐσκευάσμεθα.

ΙΦΙΣ
καὶ πεῖται τύμβῳ καὶ πυρᾷ φαίνει πέλας;

ΕΤΑΔΗΝ
ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ καλλικίκος ἔρχομαι.

ΙΦΙΣ
νικῶσα νίκην τίνα; μαθεῖν χρῆξω σέθεν.

ΕΤΑΔΗΝ
πᾶσας γυναῖκας ὡς δέδορκεν ἥλιος.

ΙΦΙΣ
ἐργοῖς Ἀθάνας ἢ φρενῶν εὐβουλία;

ΕΤΑΔΗΝ
ἀρετῇ· πόσει γὰρ συνθανοῦσα κείσομαι.

ΙΦΙΣ
τὴ φῆς; τὶ τοῦτο αἴνυμα σημαίνεις σαθρὸν;

ΕΤΑΔΗΝ
ἔσω θανόντος Καπανέως τήνδε εἰς πύραν.

ΙΦΙΣ
ὡς θύγατερ, οὐ μὴ μύθον εἰς πολλοὺς ἐρεῖς;

ΕΤΑΔΗΝ
τοῦτο αὐτὸ χρῆξο, πάντας Ἀργείους μαθεῖν.

ΙΦΙΣ
ἀλλὰ οὐδὲ τοῖς σοι πείσομαι δρώση τάδε.
SUPPLIANTS

EVADNE
Thou wouldest be no wise judge of my resolve.

IPHIS
And why in this attire array thy form?

EVADNE
Father, this vesture glorious meaning hath.

IPHIS
Thou seemest not as one that mourns her lord.

EVADNE
For deed unheard-of have I decked me thus.

IPHIS
By tomb and pyre appear'st thou in such guise?

EVADNE
Yea, I for victory's triumph hither come.

IPHIS
What victory this? Fain would I learn of thee.

EVADNE
Over all wives on whom the sun looks down.

IPHIS
In works by Pallas taught, or prudent wit?

EVADNE
In courage. With my lord will I lie dead.

IPHIS
How sayest thou?—what sorry riddle this?

EVADNE
I plunge to yon pyre of dead Capaneus.

IPHIS
O daughter, speak not so before a throng!

EVADNE
Even this would I, that all the Argives hear.

IPHIS
Nay, surely will I let thee from this deed.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΣΤΑΔΗΝ

1070 ὁμοιον ὦ γὰρ μὴ κίχης μ' ἐλὼν χερί.
καὶ δὴ παρεῖται σῶμα, σοὶ μὲν ὦ φίλον,
ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τῷ συμπτυρομένῳ πόσει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1075 ἰὸ, γύναι, δεινὸν ἔργον ἐξειργάσω.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, Ἄργεων κόραι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1080 ἐ ἐ, σχέτλια τάδε παθὼν,
τὸ πάντολμον ἔργον ὅψει τάλας.

ΙΦΙΣ

οὐκ ἀν τιν' εὐροιτ' ἀλλον ἀθλιώτερον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1085 ἰδὶ τάλας,
μετέλαξες τύχας Οἰδιπόδα, γέρον,
μέρος καὶ σὺ καὶ πόλις ἐμὰ τλάμων.

ΙΦΙΣ

1090 οἴμωι. τί δὴ βροτοῖσιν οὐκ ἔστιν τὸδε,
νέος δὲ εἶναι καὶ γέροντας αὐ πάλιν;
ἀλλ' ἐν δόμοις μὲν ἦν τι μὴ καλῶς ἐχή,
γνώμαισιν ὑστέραισιν ἐξορθούμεθα,
αἰῶνα δ' οὐκ ἔξεστιν. εἰ δ' ἦμεν νέοι
δὲς καὶ γέροντες, εἰ τις ἔξημάρτανε,
δυπλοῦ βίον τυχόντες ἐξωρθούμηθ' ἀν.
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἄλλος εἰσορῶν τεκνομένον
παίδων τ' ἐραστής ἢ πόθω τ' ἀπωβλήμην.
εἰ δ' εἰς τὸδ' ἦλθον κἀξεπειράθην παθὼν
οἴον στέρεσθαι πατέρα γίγνεται τέκνων,
οὐκ ἀν ποτ' εἰς τὸδ' ἦλθον εἰς δ ὕνων κακῶν.

1 Paley; for MSS. τέκνων.
SUPPLIANTS

EVADNE
Let or let not—thou canst not reach nor seize me.
Lo, hurled my body falls, for grief to thee,
For joy to me and him with me consumed.

Throw’s herself from the cliff on to the pyre.

CHORUS
O lady, what awful deed hath been compassed of thee!

IPHIS
O Argos’ daughters, wretched I!—undone!

CHORUS
Woe for thee, woe, who hast borne this misery!
Yet its fulness of horror remaineth for thee to see.

IPHIS
None other shall ye find more sorrow-crushed.

CHORUS
O ancient, O sore-stricken heart,
In the fortune partaker thou art [part.

Of Oedipus: thou and mine hapless city therein have

IPHIS
Ah me, why is not this to men vouchsafed,
Twice to see youth, and twice withal old age?
Now in our homes, if aught shall fall out ill,
By wisdom’s second thoughts this we amend;
Life lived we may not. Might we but be young
And old twice o’er, if any man should err,
We would amend us in that second life.
For I, beholding others rich in sons,
For children yearned, and by my longing perished.
Had I to that come first,—by suffering proved
What to a father child-bereavement means,
I had never come to this, to this day’s woe,
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

όστις φυτεύσας καὶ νεανίαν τεκὼν
ἀριστον, εἶτα τοῦδε νῦν στερίσκομαι.
εἶν· τί δὴ χρῆ τὸν ταλαίπωρόν με δρᾶν;
στείχειν πρὸς οἶκους; κἂν ἔρημιαν ἰδὼ
πολλὴν μελάθρων ἀπορίαν τ' ἐμῷ βίῳ;
ὁ πρὸς μέλαθρα τοῦδε Καπανέως μόλω;
ἡδιστα πρὶν γε δῆθ', ὃτ' ἦν παῖς ἤδε μοι.
ἀλλ' οὐκέτι' ἔστιν· ἢ γ' ἐμὴν γενειάδα
προσήγητ' ἀεὶ στόματι καὶ κάρα τόδε
κατεῖχε χερσίν· οὔδὲν ἢδιον πατρὶ
γέροντι θυγατρός· ἀρσένων δὲ μείζονες
ψυχαί, γλυκεῖαι δ' ἡσσον εἰς θωπεύματα.
οὐχ ὡς τάχιστα δὴτα μ' ἀξετ' εἰς δόμους
σκότῳ τε δώσετ'· ἐνθ' ἀσιτίας ἐμὸν
dέμαις γεραίων συντακεῖς ἀποφθερῶν.
τί μ' ὀφελήσει παιδὸς ὀστέων θυγείν;
ὦ δυσπάλαιστον γῆρας, ὡς μισῶ σ' ἕχων,
μισῶ δ' ὅσοι χρῆζουσιν ἔκτεινειν βίον,
βρωτοῖς καὶ ποτοῖς καὶ μαγεύμασι
παρεκτρέποντες ὠχέτον ὡστε μὴ θανεῖν·
οὐ χρῆν, ἐπειδὰν μηδὲν ὀφελῶσι γῆν,
θανόντας ἔρρειν κάκτοδῶν εἶναι νέοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰῶ, τάδε δὴ παῖδων φιμένων
ὀστᾶ φέρεται. λάβετ', ἀμφίπολοι
γραίας ἀμενοὺς· οὐ γὰρ ἐνεστὶν
ῥώμη παῖδων ὑπὸ πένθους,

1 Burney: for MSS. χειρ.· πατρὶ δ' οὐδὲν ἢδιον.
SUPPLIANTS

I, who begat a young son of my loins
Most goodly, and am now of him bereft!
No more!—what must I do, the sorrow-fraught?
Wend home?—and filled with desolation see
Home—for my life the hunger of despair?
Or seek the mansion of yon Capaneus?—
Once sweet, O sweet, when this my daughter lived!
Ah, but she is no more, who wont to draw
Down to her lips my face, fold in her arms
Mine head:—naught sweeter than a daughter is
To grey-haired sire; sons’ hearts be greater-framed,
But not, not theirs the dear caressing wiles!
Lead me, with speed O lead me to mine home,
And hide in darkness, there to make an end
Of this old frame, by fasting pined away.
What profit if I touch my daughter’s bones?
Strong wrestler Eld, O how I loathe thy grasp—
Loathe them which seek to lengthen out life’s span,
By meats and drinks and magic philtre-spells
To turn life’s channel, that they may not die,
Who, when they are but cumberers of the ground,
Should hence, and die, and make way for the young.

The stage gradually fills with a procession, in which the sons of the dead chiefs bear the urns containing their ashes.
The members of the chorus advance to meet them.

CHORUS

Woe is me, woe!
Onward, onward the bones of sons, sons dead,
Are borne: O lend me your hands; my strength is sped,
Handmaids: stricken with eld, in childless pain
I faint for my dear sons slain.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

πολλοῦ τε χρόνου ζωῆς μέτα δῆ,
kataleibomênes τ’ ἄλγεσι πολλοῖς.

1120
tὶ γὰρ ἐν μείζον τοῦδ’ ἐτὶ θυντοῖς
πάθος ἔξευροις
ἡ τέκνα θανόντ’ ἐσιδέσθαι;

ΠΑΙΔΕΣ

φέρω φέρω, στρ. α’
tάλανα μάτερ, ἐκ πυρᾶς πατρὸς μέλη,
bάρος μὲν οὐκ ἄβριθες ἄλγεων ὑπερ,
ἐν δ’ ὀλγῳ τὰμα πάντα συνθείς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ιδ’ ἵω’
pαδ’ δάκρυα φέρεις φίλα
ματρὶ τῶν ὀωλότων,

1130 σποδοῦ τε πλῆθος ὀλγου ἀντὶ σωμάτων
eὐδοκίμων δήποτ’ ἐν Μυκήναις;

ΠΑΙΣ α’
pαπαὶ παπαῖ’ ἀντ. α’
ἐγὼ δ’ ἐρημὸς ἄθλιον πατρὸς τάλας
ἐρημοῦ οἶκον ὅρφανεύσομαι λαβών,
οὐ πατρὸς ἐν χερὶ τοῦ τεκόντως.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α’

ιδ’ ἵω’
pοῦ δὲ πόνος ἐμῶν τέκνων,
pοῦ λοχευμάτων χάρις
τροφᾷ τε ματρὸς ἀντινὰ τ’ ὦμμάτων τέλη
καὶ φίλαι προσβολαὶ προσώπων;

1 Paley’s arrangement of this Commos adopted.
SUPPLIANTS

Bowed down under the load of years on years,
Wasted ever with sorrows, aye with tears.
Couldst thou tell of a harder, sorer stroke
That lighteth on mortal folk,
Than when mothers behold their dead sons' biers?

CHORUS OF CHILDREN

I bear, O I bear, (Str. 1)
Sad mother, the limbs of my sire from the
burning,— [there,—
A burden not light, for the weight of my sorrow is
All that I love in this little vial inurning.

CHORUS OF MOTHERS

Woe is me, woe!
Is it all that thou bringest, the salt tears' flow,
To the dead man's mother?—naught else canst
thou show? [the men of renown
To a handful of dust brought down are the forms of
So glorious erewhile in Mycenae-town?

FIRST CHILD

Alas for my doom! (Ant. 1)
Sad son by an ill-starred father forsaken,
Henceforth I inherit the orphan's desolate home,
Unsheltered by arms of the sire from whose loins
I was taken.

FIRST MOTHER

Woe for my plight!
Whitherward hath my toil for my babes taken
flight?
What now doth the pain of my travail requite?
What reward hath the mother's breast, and the eyes
that would take no rest, [pressed?
And the face to the dear little babe-face

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ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΠΑΙΣ Β'
βεβᾶσιν, οὐκὲτ' εἰσίν· οἴμοι πάτερ·

πυρὸς τετακότας σποδῷ·
ποτανόλ δ' ἦνσαν τὸν Ἄιδαν.

ΠΑΙΣ γ'
πάτερ, μῶν σῶν κλύεις τέκνων γόους;
ἀρ' ἀσπιδοῦχος ἔτι ποτ' ἀντιτίσομαι σὸν φόνον;

ΠΑΙΣ δ'
eἰ γὰρ γένοιτο, τέκνον.

ΠΑΙΣ ζ'
ἐτ' ἀν θεοὺθ θελοντος ἑλθοι δίκα
'πατρῶς· οὕτω κακὸν τὸδ' εὗδει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζ'

ᾰλις γόων, ἀλις τύχας,
ἀλις δ' ἀλγέων ἐμοὶ πάρεστιν.

ΠΑΙΣ ε'

1150 ἐτ' Ἀσωποῦ με δέξεται γάνος
χαλκέοις ἐν ὁπλοῖς Δαναίδων στρατηλάταν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ε'

τοῦ φθιμένου πατρός ἐκδικαστάν.

ΠΑΙΣ ζ'

ἐτ' εἰσορᾶν σε, πάτερ, ἐπ' ὁμμάτων δοκῶ—

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζ'
φίλον φίλημα παρὰ γένυν τιθέντα σόν.

592
SUPPLIANTS

SECOND CHILD

(St. 2)

They are gone! No sons hast thou any more—they are lost!—

[ghost.

Alas for my father!—through void air drifts each 1140

SECOND MOTHER

They crumbled to ashes mid flame as they lay,
And to Hades now have they winged their way.

THIRD CHILD

O my father, the wail of thy sons ringeth down unto thee.
Ah shall I ever bear shield, an avenger to be
Of thy blood?

THIRD MOTHER

God grant it, my child, to thy destiny!

FOURTH CHILD

(Ant. 2)

My father’s avenging!—one day unto me shall it come,

If God will:—the wrong sleepeth not by his side in

FOURTH MOTHER

Ah, to-day’s disaster and sorrow suffice:
Sufficeth the grief on mine heart that lies! 1150

FIFTH CHILD

Ha, yet shall they greet me, Asopus’ ripples of light,
Leading the Danaans onward in brass-mail dight!

FIFTH MOTHER

A champion thou of thy perished father’s right.

SIXTH CHILD

O father mine, methinks I see thee now—

(S. 3)

SIXTH MOTHER

Laying the kiss of love upon thy brow.

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ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΠΑΙΣ Ἔ

λόγων δὲ παρακέλευσμα σῶν ἀέρι φερόμενον οὐχεταί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ Ἐ

δυοῖν δ’ ἁχή, ματέρι τ’ ἔλυπε— σὲ τ’ οὐποτ’ ἀλγη πατρφα λείψει.

ΠΑΙΣ Τ

ἐχὼ τοσόνδε βάρος ὅσον μ’ ἀπώλεσεν. ἀντ. γ’

ΧΟΡΟΣ Τ

1160 φέρ’, ἀμφὶ μαστῶν ὕποβάλω σποδόν.

ΠΑΙΣ Τ

ἐκλαυσα τόδε κλύων ἐπος στυγνότατον ἐθυγέ μου φρενῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ Τ

ω τέκνου, ἔβας οὐκέτι φίλον φίλας ἀγαλμ’ ὅψομαι σε ματρός.

ΘΗΣΣΕΣ

"Ἀδραστε καὶ γυναῖκες Ἀργεῖαι γένος, ὅρατε παῖδας τούσδ’ ἐχοντας ἐν χεροῖν πατέρων ἄριστων σώμαθ’ ὃν ἀνειλόμην τοῦτοι ἐγώ σφε καὶ τόλις δωρούμεθα. ύμᾶς δὲ τῶνδε χρῆ χάριν μεμνημένους σώζειν, ὃρωντας ὅν ἐκύρσατ’ ἐξ ἐμοί. παισίν δ’ ὑπείποιν τούς τοις αὐτοῖς λόγους, τιμᾶν πόλιν τήνδ’, ἐκ τέκνων αἰε τέκνως μνήμην παραγγέλλοντας ὅν ἐκύρσατε. Ζεῦς δὲ ξυνίστωρ οὗ τ’ ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοὶ οἶνον ὕφ’ ἡμῶν στείχετ’ ἥξωμένοι.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Θησεῦ, ξύνωσεμν πάνθ’ ὅσ’ Ἀργεῖαν χθόνα δέδρακας ἐσθλὰ δεομένην εὐργετῶν,
SUPPLIANTS

SIXTH CHILD
But thy words of exhorting are come to naught;
They are wafted afar on the wind's wing caught.

SIXTH MOTHER
Unto twain is anguish bequeathed, unto me,
And grief for thy father shall ne'er leave thee.

SEVENTH CHILD
By this my burden am I all undone! (Ant. 3) 1160

SEVENTH MOTHER
Let me embrace the ashes of my son!

SEVENTH CHILD
I weep to hearken thy piteous word,
Most piteous—the depths of mine heart hath it stirred.

SEVENTH MOTHER
O son, thou art gone: never more shall I gaze
On the light of thy mother, thy glorious face!

 THESEUS
Adrastus, and ye dames of Argive race,
Ye see these children bearing in their hands
The dust of gallant sires whom I redeemed:
That dust do I and Athens give to these.
But ye must guard the memory of this grace,
Keeping my boon for aye before your eyes;
And on these boys I lay the selfsame charge,
To honour Athens, and from son to son
To pass on like a watchword this our boon.
Lo, Zeus is witness, and the Gods in heaven,
How honoured and how favoured hence ye pass.

ADRASTUS
Theseus, our hearts know all thy noble deeds
To Argos, and thy kindness in her need.
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

χάριν τ' ἀγήρων ἐξομεν· γενναία γὰρ παθόντες ὑμᾶς ἀντιδράν ὅφειλομεν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τι δῆτ' ἑθ' ὕμιν ἀλλ' ὑπουργήσαι με χρή;

ἈΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

χαῖρ· ἄξιος γὰρ καὶ σὺ καὶ πόλις σέθεν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἔσται τάδ'· ἀλλὰ καὶ σὺ τῶν αὐτῶν τύχως.

ἈΘΗΝΑ

ἀκοῦε, Θησεῦ, τούσδε· Ἀθηναίας λόγους, ἃ χρή σε δράσαι, δρώντα δ' ὁφελεῖν τάδε. μὴ δὸς τάδ' ὅστὰ τοῖσδ' ἐς Ἀργείαν χθόνα παίσιν κομίζειν ῥαδίως οὕτω μεθείς, ἀλλ' ἀντί τῶν σῶν καὶ πόλεως μοχθημάτων πρῶτον λάβε ὅρκον, τόνδε δ' ὀμνύων χρεῖων Ἀδραστον' οὖτος κύριος, τύραννος ᾧν, πάσης ὑπὲρ γῆς Δαναίδῶν ὅρκωμοτείν. ὁ δ' ὅρκος ἔσται, μήποτ' Ἀργείους χθόνα εἰς τήν' ἐποίσειν πολέμιον παντευκάν, ἀλλὰν τ' ἱόντων ἐμποδῶν θήσειν δόμον. ἦν δ' ὅρκον ἐκλιπτόντες ἐλθοσιν πόλιν, κακῶς ὀλέθαι τρόπτρεπ' Ἀργείων χθόνα. ἐν δ' ἐὰν τέμνειν σφάγια χρή σ', ἀκοῦε μον. ἔστων τρίποντος σοι χαλκόποντος εἰσό δόμων, ἓν Ἐλίσων ποτ' ἐξαναστήσασα βάθρα σπουδὴν ἐπ' ἀλλην Ἡρακλῆς ὀρμώμενος στῆσαι σ' ἐφείτω Πυθικὴν πρὸς ἑσχάραν. ἐν τῶδε λαίμοις τρεῖς τρωῆν μῆλων τεμῶν ἐγγραψον ὅρκους τρίποδος ἐν κοῖλῳ κύτει, κάπεϊτα σφέξειν θεᾶς δὸς ὡς Δελφῶν μέλει, μνημεία σ' ὅρκων μαρτύρημα σ' Ἐλλάδι. ᾧ δ' ἄν διοίξεις σφάγια καὶ τρώσῃς φόνον.
SUPPLIANTS

Our love shall ne'er wax old: ye have dealt with us
Nobly: your debtors owe you like for like.

THESEUS

What service yet remains that I may render? 1180

ADRASTUS

Fare well: for thou art worthy—thou and Athens.

THESEUS

So be it. The same fortune light on thee.

ATHENA appears in her chariot above the temple-roof.

ATHENA

Give ear, O Theseus, to Athena's hest
What thou must do—for Athens' service do:—
Yield thou not up thus lightly yonder bones
For these their sons to bear to Argive land.
Nay, first, for thine and Athens' travail's sake,
An oath take of them. Let Adrastus swear—
He answereth for them, despot of their folk,
For all troth of the land of Danaus' sons:—
Be this the oath,—that never Argive men
Shall bear against this land array of war;
If others come, their spear shall bar the way.
If they break oath, and come against our town,
Call down on Argos miserable ruin.

And where to slay the victims hear me tell:
Thou hast a brazen tripod in thine halls,
Which Hercules, from Ilium's overthrow
Hasting upon another mighty task,
Bade thee to set up at the Pythian hearth.

O'er this three throats of three sheep sever thou,
And in the tripod's hollow grave the oath.
Then give it to the Delphian God to guard,
Token of oaths and witness unto Hellas.  [gashed
And that keen knife, wherewith thou shalt have
ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

δέσποτον μάχαιραν ἐς γαίας μυχοῦς
κρύψων παρ' αὐτὰς ἐπτὰ πυρκαίας νεκρῶν
φόβου γὰρ αὐτοῖς, ἣν ποτ' ἐλθὼσιν πόλιν,
δειχθείσα θῆσει καὶ κακὸν νόστον πάλιν.

1210

δράσας δὲ ταῦτα πέμπε γῆς ἐξω νεκρῶς.
τεμένη δ', ἵν' αὐτῶν σώμαθ' ἡγνίσθη πυρί,
μέθες παρ' αὐτὴν τρίδοιον 'Ἰσθμίαν θεβ.

σοὶ μὲν τάδ' εἰπον: παιαὶ δ' 'Αργείων λέγων
πορθήσεθ' ἡβήσαντες 'Ἰσμηνοῦ πόλιν,
πατέρων θανόντων ἐκδικάζοντες φόνον,
σὺ τ' ἀντὶ πατρός, Αἰγιαλέως, στρατηλάτης

1220

νέος καταστάς, παίς τ' ἀπ' Ἀἰτωλῶν μολῶν
Τυδέως, δυ ωνόμαξε Διομήδην πατήρ.

ἀλλ' οὖ φθάνειν χρὴ συσκιάζοντας γέννω
καὶ χαλκοπληθὴ Δαναίδων ὀρμᾶν στρατὸν
ἐπτάστομον πῦργωμα Καδμείων ἐπι.


πικροὶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦξετ', ἐκτεθραμμένοι


σκύμνοι λεύτων, πόλεος ἐκπορθήτορες.

κοῦκ ἔστιν ἄλλως: 'Επίγονοι δ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδα
κληθέντες ὥδας ύστεροι θήσετε:


τοῖον στράτευμα σὺν θεῷ πορεύσετε.

ΘΗΣΕΤΖ

δέσποτον 'Ἀθάνα, πείσομαι λόγους σοῖς:

1230

σὺ γὰρ μ' ἀνορθοῖς, ὡστε μὴ ἤσαμαρτάνειν
καὶ τὸν' ἐν ὅρκοις ξεύξομαι: μόνον σὺ με
ἐις ὅρθον ἵστη: σοῦ γὰρ εὐμνοῦς πόλει


οὔ̇σης τὸ λοιπὸν ἀσφαλῶς οἰκήσομεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχωμεν, 'Αδρασθ', ὅρκια δῶμεν


τῶδ' ἀνδρὶ πόλει τ' ἄξια δ' ἧμῖν


προμεμοχθήκασι σέβεσθαι.
SUPPLIANTS

The victims with the death-wound, bury thou
In the earth's depths hard by the seven pyres.
For, if they march on Athens ever, this, [shame.
Shown them, shall daunt, and turn them back with
This done, then send the dead dust forth the land. 1210
The precinct where fire purified their limbs
Be the God's Close, by those three Isthmian ways.
This to thee: now to the Argives' sons I speak.
Ye shall, to man grown, waste Ismenus' town;
In vengeance for the slaughter of dead sires.
Thou in thy sire's stead, Aegialeus,1 shalt be
Their young chief: from Aetolia Tydeus' son,
Named Diomedes of his sire, shall come.
When beards your cheeks are shadowing, tarry not
To hurl a brazen-harnessed Danaid host 1220
On the Cadmean seven-gated hold.
Bitter to them, the lions' whelps full-grown
To strength, to sack their city shall ye come.
This is sure doom. "The After-born" through Hellas
Named, shall ye kindle song in days to be;
Such war-array with God's help shall ye lead.

THESEUS

Athena, Queen, thy words will I obey:
Thou guid'st me ever that I may not err.
Him will I bind with oaths: only do thou
Still lead me aright; for, gracious while thou art 1230
To Athens, shall we ever safely dwell.

CHORUS

On pass we, Adrastus, and take oath-plight
Unto Theseus and Athens. That worship requite
Their travail for us, is meet and right.

[Exeunt omnes.

1 Son of Adrastus.

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