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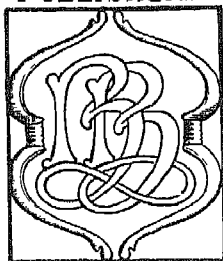
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THE 'ELECTRA' OF SOPHOCLES
AND
THE 'PEACE' OF ARISTOPHANES

PUBLISHERS.



CAMBRIDGE.

THE 'ELECTRA' OF SOPHOCLES

TOGETHER WITH THE FIRST PART OF

THE 'PEACE' OF ARISTOPHANES

THE GREEK TEXTS, AS PERFORMED AT

CAMBRIDGE BY MEMBERS OF THE

UNIVERSITY, 22ND-26TH FEB.

1927, TOGETHER WITH

ENGLISH VERSE

TRANSLATIONS

BY

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INTRODUCTION

THE *Electra* is the study of a noble spirit, first tortured and then ruined by the cruelty of circumstances and a vicious creed. On the stage, I think, it tells a plain tale, but, since many learned readers have misunderstood its purport, some few words of introduction may be useful.

The heroic legend of Orestes, as a more effectual Hamlet, a brave youth who pitted his own strength and cunning against overwhelming odds and killed his father's murderers, had long ago been moralised by Delphi for the glory of Apollo. Clytaemnestra killed her husband and was killed in turn by her own son. But, according to the Delphic version, Orestes fought not merely for his own hand, to redeem his kingdom, but for justice, as Apollo's chosen minister. No less a sanction than the god's commission could explain or palliate a matricide, however just. Moreover, since so terrible a blood-pollution could not be regarded lightly by the gods, the youth must suffer. The Furies claimed him, and he hardly could repel their onset, even with Apollo's magic bow in hand. In the end, after much pain, with penance duly done, Apollo by his purifying rites absolved and saved him.

To Aeschylus, as to us, the Delphic story seemed by no means wholly edifying. He reshaped it to the glory not of Delphi and Apollo, but of Athens and her goddess. In his view, no oracle could justify the crime, no ritual could save the criminal. This much at least he implied, that for the

court of Areopagus, a jury not of priests but good Athenian citizens, Apollo's claim to speak as sole interpreter of Zeus, the highest god, had no validity. Half the judges voted for the Furies, only half for Orestes. The final reconciling word, which made it possible for mercy to prevail, was spoken not by Phoebus but by Pallas, the embodiment of reason, offspring and representative of Zeus the Saviour. So Aeschylus hailed Pallas and her citizens, not Phoebus and his ministers, as the true benefactors of mankind, inaugurators of a reign of civil justice, stern yet not unmerciful, which should replace the arbitrary and interminable cruelties of the old blood-feud or vendetta.

When Aeschylus produced his masterpiece in 458 B.C., Euripides was twenty-two years old, and Sophocles already in the prime of life. After the death of Pericles, thirty years later, when Athens, in the double stress of war and civil strife, was swept by many gusts of primitive, unreasoning hatred and fanaticism, there was much need for the reassertion of the old ideals of moderation and of ordered justice. Both Euripides and Sophocles, each in his own way, in those later days reshaped the ancient stories into modern plays. Each gave the legends a new meaning: each drew inspiration from the master's work.

Euripides, inheriting the speculative courage which had dared to criticise the gods, retold the story of Orestes frankly as a warning against superstition. For him, 'Gods whose deeds were shameful, were not gods at all.' 'It was a fiend, perhaps, who took the likeness of a god and gave this oracle,' cried his Orestes¹.

¹ Euripides, *Electra*, 979. See Mr Gilbert Murray's admirable version.

Sophocles, less concerned with propaganda against superstition, was content to base his work on a more orthodox opinion. The gods, he held, will not abide our question. Only fools and criminals suppose that, if an oracle appears to sanction crime, the crime is justified.

I know the ways of God None but the fool
Thinks him a plain blunt teacher. To the wise
His oracles are riddles¹

His purpose was, so far as possible, to rule out the religious controversy and to concentrate attention on the human issues, and particularly on the moral agony of his Electra. Therefore he told the story as a tragedy of human error, the more pitiful and comprehensible to all spectators, whether orthodox or not, because the actors thought themselves the ministers of God. He drew an Orestes less scrupulous and sensitive than the Aeschylean hero, educated in the bad old Pelopid tradition by a loyal but vindictive servant, never questioning the righteousness of what had been presented to his mind from childhood as a perilous but obviously laudable undertaking. This youth consults the oracle not on the moral question, but about the means of execution, and the riddling answer, 'Do the righteous deed of blood by stealth,' does not suggest to him the all-important problem, 'Can it possibly be "righteous" for a son to kill his mother? Ought I not, perhaps, to spare her and to kill Aegisthus only?' So, self-blinded, fearing, as he says, 'no hurt from any word that

¹ Sophocles, *Fr.* 771, Pearson. I have tried to avoid controversy. A defence of the interpretation here adopted will be found in the *Classical Review*, Feb. 1927.

pays,' he presses on to ruin, dragging his sister with him. When he cries, with his mother's blood on his hands,

All's well, if Apollo's oracle was well,

we are not deceived. Men cannot shift responsibility upon the gods and shirk the consequences of their actions thus. Though the Chorus, once the advocates of moderation, hail his triumph as the end of troubles, though he prates of justice, pointing a grim moral which in fact condemns himself, Orestes, like his sister, is a tragic victim, driven to destruction by a fatal loyalty to a false creed.

But Electra is the central figure, far more tragic than her brother. Like Orestes, she believes that vengeance is a high religious duty, but there is this difference. He is by nature somewhat hard and unimaginative, and, since early childhood, he has never met his mother till he kills her. Sophocles has so contrived his plot that son and mother never meet until the crisis. Electra is sensitive. By nature, like Antigone, she was born to join in loving, not in hating. When we first meet her, she has lived with Clytaemnestra and been persecuted by her many years. Yet she still feels that her hatred of her mother, though she thinks it right and necessary, is an outrage. She is distracted by the clash between her own instinctive modesty and her conviction that to hate her mother and to pray for vengeance is a bounden duty. She lives to keep a protest in the name of righteousness alive. Orestes does not come, and she begins to faint under her burden, yet she still protests. 'I am ashamed,' she says, 'and yet I will not cease my lamentation! If the dead man is to lie, a negligible heap, and they not pay the penalty by death, there will be no more

modesty not righteousness in the world.' 'That is the paradox, the secret of her tragedy. For the vindication of righteousness and modesty, she must be irreligious, shameless

Sophocles here, as often, is developing a hint from Aeschylus. In the *Choephores* (140), the Aeschylean Electra prayed to be 'more modest-hearted and more righteous in her actions' than her mother. Sophocles knew that for a woman situated as Electra is, and feeding on the hope of vengeance, such an aspiration could not possibly be realised. He has therefore drawn his heroine as naturally sweet and lovable, tortured by circumstances and by her mistaken creed, fixing her only hope of love and happiness upon Orestes, fighting his cause alone among his enemies; then, on the very day on which, by Clytaemnestra's dream, the gods have seemed to promise the fulfilment of her hope, plunged into fresh despair and deeper darkness by the false news of his death. When he comes to her alive, for one brief moment she is happy, free from the thought of wrong and hatred, radiant and young again in her pride and joy. The moment passes. First her brother, then the grim old Paidagogue, reminds her there is work to do. The moment seems propitious. Clytaemnestra is alone. Electra's love and loyalty make her the eager, humble servant of the executioners. She bids her brother, 'Strike again, if you have strength,' although it is their mother who is asking for their pity.

The sequel speaks for itself. Before the end Electra loses every trace of modesty and pious scruple. While the two men, criminals both, both doomed (see line 1498), wrangle over Clytaemnestra's body, she is silent for a time,

then breaks into a speech appalling in its blasphemy and pitiful in its despair

AEGISTHUS. Oh, I am lost. Give me a little time
To speak a little.

ELECTRA Do not let him talk!
In God's name, brother, do not let him talk!
A little time? With lives fast bound to wrong,
What use in time for souls that have to die?
Kill him at once When you have done it, fling
The carrion to the buriers it deserves,
Out of our sight Nothing but that can serve
To set me free and blot out the old wrong.

Aegisthus prophesies that this is not the end of troubles for the house of Pelops. Orestes sees no Furies yet, and stays to point his moral, as he drives the second victim to the charnel-house. But while the Chorus sing the triumph of the good cause and the dawn of freedom, Electra still stands silent. What are her thoughts, as she turns to enter the Palace, passing the body of her mother?

J. T. S.

KING'S COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE
December 1926

THE 'ELECTRA' OF SOPHOCLES

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ORESTES, *son of Agamemnon, brother of Electra.*

PYLADES, *his friend.*

An old man, the SERVANT of Orestes.

ELECTRA.

CHRYSOTHEMIS, *her sister*

CLYTAEMNESTRA, *her mother*

AEGISTHUS, *Clytaemnestra's paramour*

Chorus of Argive ladies.

SCENE

A public place before the Royal Palace at Mycene In the foreground an altar of Apollo.

Enter, as from the open country, ORESTES and PYLADES, conducted by an old man, the SERVANT of Orestes

SER. Son of the Captain of the Greeks at Troy,
Agamemnon's child, at last your eyes may see
All that your heart so long desired. We stand
On Argive soil. These fields were haunted once
By that distracted daughter of a King,
The holy maiden Io. This, Orestes,
Is the Wolf-Slayer's precinct. Yonder dwells
The Queen of Marriage, Hera. But look up
Where stands the golden palace of Mycene,
The rich and ruinous house of Pelops' line.
They kill'd your father here, and here your sister
Rescued you from the butchers. From her arms
I took you, saved you, and have rear'd you now
To manhood, to avenge your father's murder.

Therefore, Orestes, and good Pylades,
Prepare your plan for action It is time
The bright beams of the sun already wake
The morning voices of sweet birds to song
The black night wanes, and there are no more stars.
Consult at once Someone at any moment
May come from the house. The place and time admit
No scrupulous delay, but action, action!

OR. Good servant,—rather say, good friend—you show
By certain proof your loyal excellence.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΑΙΓΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ ΤΟΤ' στρατηγήσαντος ἐν Ἰτροίᾳ ποτὲ
Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖ, νῦν ἐκεῖν' ἔξοστὶ σοι
παρόντι λεύσσειν ὦν πρόθυμος ἦσθ' αἰεί.
τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν Ἄργος οὐπόθεις τόδε,
τῆς οἰστροπλήγος ἄλσος Ἰνάχου κόρης· 5
αὕτη δ', Ὀρέστα, τοῦ λυκοκτόνου θεοῦ
ἀγορὰ Δύκειος· οὐξ ἀριστερᾶς δ' ὄδε
Ἦρας ὁ κλεινὸς ναός· οἱ δ' ἰκάνομεν,
φάσκειν Μυκήνας τὰς πολυχρύσους ὀρᾶν,
πολύφθορόν τε δῶμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε, 10
ὅθεν σε πατὴρ ἐκ φόνων ἐγὼ ποτε
πρὸς σῆς ὀμαίμου καὶ κασιγνήτης λαβὼν
ἦνεγκα κῆξέσωσα κῆξεθρεψάμην
τοσόνδ' ἐς ἥβης, πατρὶ τιμωρὸν φόνου
νῦν οὖν, Ὀρέστα, καὶ σὺ φίλτατε ξένων 15
Πυλάδῃ, τί χρὴ δρᾶν ἐν τάχει βουλευτέον·
ὥς ἡμῖν ἤδη λαμπρὸν ἡλίου σέλας
ἔφα κινεῖ φθέγματ' ὀρνίθων σαφῇ,
μέλαινά τ' ἄστρον ἐκλέλοιπεν εὐφρόνη.
πρὶν οὖν τιν' ἀνδρῶν ἐξοδοιπορεῖν στέγης, 20
ξυνάπτετον λόγοισιν· ὥς ἐνταῦθ' ἵνα
οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτ' ὀκνεῖν καιρός, ἀλλ' ἔργων ἀκμή.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν προσπόλων, ὥς μοι σαφῇ
σημεῖα φαίνεις ἐσθλὸς εἰς ἡμᾶς γεγώς.

As a fine charger, overspent with years,
Prick-ear'd at snuff of danger, still approving
The courage of the breed, you challenge us
To action, and yourself are first afield
Listen with care I shall expose to you
My whole determination. Any faults
Or flaw therein it is for you to mend.

I went to Delphi, to the oracle
Of Phoebus, with my question, by what means
I could do justice on the murderers.

Now listen Thus, or nearly thus, the god
Spoke. 'With no force of arméd men, alone,
By cunning do the righteous deed of blood.'

Such was the oracle we heard—and you,
Wait till you find fit opportunity,
Then get you in Observe, and so report
With knowledge, all that passes in the house.
They'll not suspect you Age and the long years
Have chang'd your favour much. They will not know you.
But you must have some story. You shall say
You come from Phocis—yes, from Phanoteus,
Their sworn friend, link'd with them in close alliance,
And tell them—swear it with an oath—Orestes
Is dead—by accident—in course of nature—
At Delphi, in the games, the chariot-race,
Thrown from his car. Good That shall be the story.

Meanwhile, as he enjoin'd, we two will go
And, with libation, at my father's grave
Offer a lock of hair; then come again,
Bringing the brazen vessel, which you know
I hid among the bushes. Oh, my tale

ὥσπερ γὰρ ἵππος εὐγενής, καὶ ἡ γέρων, 25
 ἐν τοῖσι δεινοῖς θυμὸν οὐκ ἀπώλεσεν,
 ἀλλ' ὀρθὸν οὖς ἵστησιν, ὡσαύτως δὲ σὺ
 ἡμᾶς τ' ὀτρύνεις καὶ τὸς ἐν πρώτοις ἔπει.
 τοιγὰρ τὰ μὲν δόξαντα δηλώσω, σὺ δὲ
 ὀξείαν ἀκοὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις διδούς, 30
 εἰ μὴ τι καιροῦ τυγχάνω, μεθάρμοσον
 ἐγὼ γὰρ ἡνίχ' ἰκόμην τὸ Πυθικὸν
 μαυτεῖον, ὡς μάθοιμ' ὅτῃ τρόπῳ πατρὶ
 δίκας ἀροίμην τῶν φονευσάντων πάρα,
 χρῆ' μοι τοιαῦθ' ὁ Φοῖβος ὦν πεύσει τάχα· 35
 ἄσκειον αὐτὸν ἀσπιδῶν τε καὶ στρατοῦ
 δόλοισι κλέψαι χειρὸς ἐνδίκους σφαγὰς.
 ὅτ' οὖν τοιόνδε χρῆσμον εἰσηκούσαμεν,
 σὺ μὲν μολών, ὅταν σε καιρὸς εἰσάγῃ,
 δόμων ἔσω τῶνδ', ἔσθι πᾶν τὸ δρώμενον, 40
 ὅπως ἂν εἰδῶς ἡμῖν ἀγγείλῃς σαφῆ.
 οὐ γάρ σε μὴ γῆρα τε καὶ χρόνῳ μακρῷ
 γνῶσ', οὐδ' ὑποπτεύουσιν ὧδ' ἡνθισμένον
 λόγῳ δὲ χρῶ τοιῷδ', ὅτι ξένος μὲν εἰ
 Φωκεύς, παρ' ἀνδρὸς Φανοτέως ἦκων· ὁ γὰρ 45
 μέγιστος αὐτοῖς τυγχάνει δορυξένων.
 ἀγγελλε δ' ὄρεα, προστιθείς, ὁθούνεκα
 τέθυγκ' Ὀρέστης ἐξ ἀναγκαίας τύχης,
 ἄθλοισι Πυθικοῖσιν ἐκ τροχηλάτων
 δίφρων κυλισθείς· ὧδ' ὁ μῦθος ἐστάτω. 50
 ἡμεῖς δὲ πατρὸς τύμβον, ὡς ἐφίετο,
 λουβαῖσι πρῶτον καὶ κατατόμοις χλιδαῖς
 στέψαντες, εἴτ' ἄψορον ἤξομεν πάλιν,
 τύπωμα χαλκόπλευρον ἡρμένον χεροῖν,
 ἃ καὶ σὺν θύμῳις οἷσθ' ἴπῳ κεκοιμημένον 55

Shall pleasantly beguile them That same urn,
 I'll say, contains the relics of my body,
 All that the fire has left, ashes and dust [He shudders
 How can it hurt me to profess myself
 A dead man, for the sake of life and honour?
 I fear no harm from any tale that pays,
 And I have seen this often, men of wit
 Falsely reported dead: mark how they grow
 In reputation when they live again:
 So on my enemies I swear to rise
 From false eclipse, a living, terrible star.

Land of my fathers, and ye, gods of Argos,
 Welcome and bless me on this road I tread.
 All hail, my father's home! I come to you
 Justly with cleansing as God's minister.
 Dismiss me not dishonour'd Let these hands
 Restore my house and save my heritage.

Well, I have said my say. The time is ripe
 For action. Get you to your task within.
 Watch well. Occasion calls, and good success
 Waits ever on occasion. Let us go.

[He turns to PYLADES, and the Old Man moves towards
 the Palace

EL. [within]. Ah me! O wretchedness! O sorrow!

SER. My son, I seem to hear a stifled cry
 Of grief within. Some serving-maid in trouble?

OR. Or is it sad Electra? May we stay,
 And wait upon her sorrow?

SER. No! We must try to do the god's command
 First, before everything. First you must pour
 Libation to your father. Thus, I say,

ὅπως λόγῳ κλέπτουτες ἡδεῖαν φάτιν
 φέρωμεν αὐτοῖς, τοῦμὸν ὡς ἔρρει δέμας
 φλογιστὸν ἤδη καὶ κατηνθρακωμένον
 τί γάρ με λυπεῖ τοῦθ', ὅταν λόγῳ θανῶν
 ἔργοισι σωθῶ καλξενέγκωμαι κλέος, 60
 δοκῶ μέν, οὐδὲν ῥήμα σὺν κέρδει κακόν.
 ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον πολλάκις καὶ τοὺς σοφούς
 λόγῳ μάτην θνήσκοντας· εἶθ' ὅταν δόμους
 ἔλθωσιν αὐθις, ἐκτετίμηνται πλέον·
 ὡς καὶ ἐπαυχῶ τῆσδε τῆς φήμης ἄπο 65
 δεδαρκότ' ἐχθροῖς ἄστρον ὡς λάμψειν ἔτι.
 ἀλλ', ὦ πατρώα γῆ θεοί τ' ἐγγχώριοι,
 δέξασθέ μ' εὐτυχοῦντα ταῖσδε ταῖς ὁδοῖς,
 σύ τ', ὦ πατρῶον δῶμα σοῦ γὰρ ἔρχομαι
 δίκη καθαρτῆς πρὸς θεῶν ὠρμημένος· 70
 καὶ μή μ' ἄτιμον τῆσδ' ἀποστείλῃτε γῆς,
 ἀλλ' ἀρχέπλουτον καὶ καταστάτην δόμων
 εἶρηκα μέν νυν ταῦτα· σοὶ δ' ἤδη, γέρον,
 τὸ σὺν μελέσθω βάντι φρουρήσαι χρέος
 νῶ δ' ἔξιμεν· καιρὸς γάρ, ὅσπερ ἀνδράσιν 75
 μέγιστος ἔργου παντός ἐστ' ἐπιστάτης.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰὼ μοί μοι δύστηνος.

- ΠΑ. καὶ μὴν θυρῶν ἔδοξα προσπόλων τινὸς
 ὑποστενούσης ἔνδον αἰσθέσθαι, τέκνον.
 ΟΡ. ἀρ' ἐστὶν ἡ δύστηνος Ἥλεκτρα; θέλεις 80
 μείνωμεν αὐτοῦ κἀνακούσωμεν γόων;
 ΠΑ. ἦκιστα· μηδὲν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ Λοξίου
 πειρώμεθ' ἔρδειν κἀπὸ τῶνδ' ἀρχηγετέιν, ,
 πατρὸς χέοντες λουτρά· ταῦτα γὰρ φέρειν

Is victory 'This shall prosper all we do

[*The three men withdraw*]

ELECTRA *enters from the Palace*

EL. O holy Light of Heaven,
And Air, Earth's equal partner,
How many dirges of my singing have ye heard.
How often have ye seen me
In the morning, when the dark night vanishes,
Beating my breast until the blood flows
And the nights that I have pass'd,
The bed that I loathe in this home of sorrow knows them
And the dirges that I make for my unhappy father.

The cruel War-God did not take him in that far-off
country.

My mother, my own mother, with her bedfellow Aegisthus,

Like woodcutters cutting an oak,
With an axe cleft his head;
There is no sign of pity anywhere,
Except from me, O father,
For thy pitiful, dishonourable death.

But I will never cease my dirges,
My cries of misery and loathing,
While I behold this daylight and the shimmering of stars.
As the nightingale lamenteth for her children,
So will I lament thee.
Here, at the door of my father's house, I will cry aloud,
And every man shall hear.

O House of Hades and Persephone,
O Hermes, Lord of the Dead, O Spirit of the Curse,

νίκην τέ φημι καὶ κράτος τῶν δρωμένων

85

ΗΛ ὦ φίλος ἄγνων

καὶ γῆς ἰσόμοιρ' ἀήρ, ὥς μοι

πολλὰς μὲν θρήνων ῥῖδας,

πολλὰς δ' ἀντήρεις ἥσθου

στέρνων πληγὰς αἰμασσομένων,

90

ὅπότεν δνοφερὰ νύξ ὑπολειφθῇ·

τὰ δὲ παννυχίδων ἤδη στυγερὰι

ξυνίσασ' εὐναὶ μογερῶν οἴκων,

ὅσα τὸν δύστηνον ἐμὸν θρηνῶ

πατέρ', ὃν κατὰ μὲν βίρβαρον αἶαν

95

φοίνιος Ἀρης οὐκ ἔξενισεν,

μήτηρ δ' ἡμῇ χῶ κοινολεχῆς

Ἀγισθος, ὅπως δρῶν ὑλοτόμοι,

σχίζουσι κάρα φονίῳ πελέκει·

κοῦδεις τούτων οἶκτος ἀπ' ἄλλης

100

ἢ μοῦ φέρεται, σοῦ, πάτερ, οὔτως

αἰκῶς οἰκτρῶς τε θανόντος.

ἀλλ' οὐ μὲν δὴ

λήξω θρήνων στυγερῶν τε γόων,

ἔστ' ἂν παμφεγγεῖς ἄστρων

105

ρίπας, λεύσσω δὲ τόδ' ἡμαρ,

μὴ οὐ τεκνολέτειρ' ὥς τις ἀηδῶν

ἐπὶ κωκυτῷ τῶνδε πατρῶων

πρὸ θυρῶν ἡχῶ πᾶσι προφωνεῖν

ὦ δῶμ' Ἀίδου καὶ Περσεφόνης,

110

ὦ χθόνι' Ἑρμῇ καὶ πότνι' Ἀρά,

And you, ye dreadful Daughters of the Gods, ye Furies,
 Who look on men who die unjustly,
 Who look on men whose marriages are stolen from them,
 Come to me! come to my aid! Avenge our father's
 murder,
 And send my brother back to me,
 Because I can no longer bear my burden:
 It is too great a load for me to bear alone.

*The CHORUS of Argive ladies has entered
 during the last lines of the song*

STI. 1

CHO. My child, Electra,
 Why art thou so insatiate in grieving
 For him, so long ago
 Caught by thy crafty mother,
 In a godless trap beguil'd,
 Agamemnon, by the hand of guilt betray'd?
 May he who did the deed perish,
 If it be right for me to breathe so terrible a prayer.

EL. Children whose birth was noble,
 Have ye come to comfort me in my affliction?
 I know these things: I understand: I am not ignorant:
 And yet I do not wish to leave my grieving,
 Nor will I cease to cry aloud for my unhappy father.
 Ah, friends, who are indeed my friends in all the sweet
 exchange of friendship,
 I pray you, I beseech you,
 Give me leave. Let me be mad.

ant 1

CHO. And yet you cannot
 By any prayer, nor voice of lamentation,

σεμναί τε θεῶν παῖδες Ἑρινύες,
αἱ τοὺς ἀδίκως θνήσκοντας ὀράθ',
αἱ τοὺς εὐνὰς ὑποκλεπτομένους,
ἔλθετ', ἀρήξατε, τείσασθε πατρὸς
φόνου ἡμετέρου,
καί μοι τὸν ἐμὸν πέμψατ' ἀδελφόν·
μούνη γὰρ ἄγειν οὐκέτι σωκῶ
λύπης ἀντίρροπον ἄχθος.

115

120

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΧΟ. ὦ παῖ, παῖ δυστανοτάτας
Ἥλεκτρα ματρός, τίν' αἰὲ τᾶκεῖς ὧδ' ἀκόρεστον
οἰμωγὰν
τὸν πάλαι ἐκ δολερᾶς ἀθεώτατα
ματρός ἀλόντ' ἀπάταις Ἀγαμέμνονα
κακᾶ τε χειρὶ πρόδοτον; ὥς ὁ τάδε πορῶν
ᾔλοιτ', εἰ μοι θέμις τὰδ' αὐδᾶν.
ΗΛ. ὦ γενέθλα γενναίων,
ἤκετ' ἐμῶν καμάτων παραμύθιον;
οἶδά τε καὶ ξυνίημι τὰδ', οὐ τί με
φυγγάνει· οὐδ' ἐθέλω προλιπεῖν τόδε,
μὴ οὐ τὸν ἐμὸν στενάχων πατέρ' ἄθλιον.
ἀλλ' ὦ παντοίας φιλότῃτος ἀμειβόμεναι χάριν,
ἔᾗτέ μ' ὧδ' αἰλύειν,
αἰαῖ, ἱκνούμαι.

125

130

135

ἀντ. α'.

ΧΟ. ἀλλ' οὐτοι τόν γ' ἐξ Ἀΐδα
παγκοίνου λίμνας πατέρ' ἀνστάσεις οὔτε γόοις οὔτε
λιταῖσιν·

Bring him again from death,
From the great lake of Hades.
Your own life wanes and wastes
In hopeless immeasurable grief,
Immoderate, to no purpose,
Because grief cannot cure Why strive for that which may
not be?

EL. Only the fool forgetteth
His father, pitifully taken from him
I am not so. I love the wakeful, sorrowful nightingale.
Is not her ceaseless cry for 'Itys, Itys'
Importunate? And yet she is the bird of Zeus the Father.
Ah, Niobe, who art all tears, I count thee more than
mortals happy,
Because, although thou weapest,
Thou art changed; thou art a stone.

sti 2

CHO. Not to you alone has grief been given,
Child. Why should you pass all bounds of grief,
More than friends and kindred, wantonly?
How does Iphianassa live, and how Chrysothemis?
Or he whose boyhood has been saved from sorrow,
The happy child whom great Mycene yet shall welcome,
His noble father's son, return'd in glory by the grace of
Zeus, Orestes?

EL. Have I fail'd him? I have waited long.
Husbandless, childless, wretched, I have waited,
Overspent with weeping and interminable waste of an-
guish unavailing.
But he forgets his wrongs,
Slights the messages I send him,

- ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων ἐπ' ἀμήχανον 140
 ἄλγος αἰεὶ στενάζουσα διόλλυσται,
 ἐν οἷς ἀνάλυσίς ἐστιν οὐδεμία κακῶν.
 τί μοι τῶν δυσφόρων ἐφίει,
- ΗΛ. νήπιος ὃς τῶν οἰκτρῶς 115
 οἰχομένων γονέων ἐπιλάθεται.
 ἀλλ' ἐμέ γ' ἂ στονόεσσ' ἄραρεν φρένας,
 ἂ Ἴτυν, αἰὲν Ἴτυν ὀλοφύρεται,
 ὄρνις ἀτυζομένα, Διὸς ἄγγελος.
 ἰὼ παντλάμων Νιόβα, σέ δ' ἔγωγε νέμω θεόν, 150
 ἅτ' ἐν τάφῳ πετραίῳ
 αἰεὶ δακρύεις.
- στρ. β'.
 ΧΟ. οὔτοι σοὶ μούνα, τέκνον, ἄχος ἐφάνη βροτῶν,
 πρὸς ὃ τι σὺ τῶν ἔνδον εἶ περισσά, 155
 οἷς ὁμόθεν εἶ καὶ γονᾷ ξύναιμος,
 οἷα Χρυσόθεμις ζῶει καὶ Ἰφιόλασσα,
 κρυπτᾷ τ' ἀχέων ἐν ἡβᾷ,
 ὄλβιος, δὴν ἂ κλεινὰ 160
 γὰ ποτε Μυκηναίων
 δέξεται εὐπατρίδαν, Διὸς εὐφρονη
 βήματι μολόντα τάνδε γᾶν Ὀρέσταν.
- ΗΛ. ὃν γ' ἐγὼ ἀκάματα προσμένουσ', ἄτεκνος,
 τάλαιν' ἀνύμφευτος αἰὲν οἰχνῶ, 165
 δάκρυσι μυδαλέα, τὸν ἀνήνυτον
 οἷτον ἔχουσα κακῶν· ὃ δὲ λάθεται
 ὦν τ' ἔπαθ' ὦν τ' ἐδάη τί γὰρ οὐκ ἐμοὶ
 ἔρχεται ἀγγελίας ἀπατώμενον; 170

Sends me back no truthful answer.

He longs to come,

But still in spite of all his longing will not deign to come.

ant. 2

CHO. Have good courage! Zeus is in His Heaven,

Child, beholding, overruling all.

Lay on Him the burden of the wrath:

Be not vexéd with the enemy overmuch, nor yet forgetful.

Time is a god who disentangles evil

You are remember'd in the pasture-lands of Crisa

By Agamemnon's child, and by the god who reigns beside
the streams of Wailing.

EL. Year by year my life has gone from me,

Utterly hopeless, till my strength has left me.

Faint I am, and very weary, for I have no father and no
husband

To love me and defend;

Like a stranger and a beggar,

Dwelling in my father's house, thus,

In rags and shame,

I steal the scraps from empty tables when the feast is done.

str 3

CHO. Pitiful the voice that welcom'd him,

Pitiful the cry from the King's marriage-chamber,

When the edge of the bronze struck home.

Craft the plotter, Lust the slayer,

And of these a fearful shape begotten—

Was it human? Did a Spirit strike the blow?

EL. O day, to me beyond all other days most loathsome!

ἀεὶ μὲν γὰρ ποθεῖ,
ποθῶν δ' οὐκ ἀξιοῖ φανῆναι

ἀντ. β'

ΧΟ θαρσει μοι, θάρσει, τέκνον· ἔτι μέγας οὐρανῷ
Ζεὺς, ὃς ἐφορᾷ πάντα καὶ κρατύνει· 175
ᾧ τὸν ὑπεραλγῇ χόλον νέμουσα
μήτ' οἷς ἐχθαίρεις ὑπερέχθεο μήτ' ἐπιλθαίου.
χρόνος γὰρ εὐμαρῆς θεός
οὔτε γὰρ ὁ τὰν Κρίσαν 180
βούνομον ἔχων ἀκτὰν

παῖς Ἀγαμεμνονίδας ἀπερίτροπος,
οὔθ' ὁ παρὰ τὸν Ἀχέροντα θεὸς ἀνάσσω.
ΗΛ. ἀλλ' ἐμὲ μὲν ὁ πολὺς ἀπολέλοιπεν ἤδη 185
βίोटος ἀνέλπιτος, οὐδ' ἔτ' ἀρκῶ·
ἄτις ἄνευ τεκέων κατατόκομαι,
ἃς φίλος οὔτις ἀνὴρ ὑπερίσταται,
ἀλλ' ἀπερεὶ τις ἔποικος ἀναξία·
οἰκονομῷ θαλίμους πατρός, ὧδε μὲν 190
ἀεικεῖ σὺν στολᾷ,
κεναῖς δ' ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις.

στρ. γ'.

ΧΟ. οἰκτρὰ μὲν νόστοις αὐδά,
οἰκτρὰ δ' ἐν κοίταις πατρῷαις
ὅτε οἱ παγχάλκων ἀνταῖα 195
γενύων ὠρμάθη πλαγὰ.
δόλος ἦν ὁ φράσας, ἔρος ὁ κτείνας,
δεινὰν δεινῶς προφυτεύσαντες
μορφάν, εἴτ' οὖν θεὸς εἴτε βροτῶν
ἦν ὁ ταῦτα πρᾶσσω. 200

ΗΛ. ὦ πασᾶν κείνα πλεον ἰμέρα

O night, O feast of treachery,
Horror unmentionable of my father's shameful death!
He look'd upon them 'They were twain who slew,
And these are they who have destroy'd me,
Sold me to ruin
God in the Height, hear me!
Let them suffer, let them pay for all
Never a gleam of good light on them
For the work that they have done.

ant 3

CHO Patience Speak no word immoderate
Think. Do you not know you court your own destruction?
Heap on yourself fresh shame,
Evil grown to greater evil,
In the brooding haunted soul begetting
War? But they are strong and war availeth not.

EL. I know I am not ignorant of my own spirit
I am not free. Necessity,
Fearful Necessity of evil holds me While I live
I shall not make an end, though evil grow.
For should I make an end, belovéd,
Who would approve me?
None that is right-minded.
Let me be! There is no remedy

ἔλθοῦσ' ἐχθίστα δὴ μοι·
 ὦ νύξ, ὦ δείπνων ἀρρήτων
 ἔκπαγλ' ἄχθη,
 τοὺς ἐμὸς ἴδε πατὴρ
 θανάτους αἰκεῖς διδύμειν χειροῖν,
 αἰ τὸν ἐμὸν εἶλον βίον
 πρόδοτον, αἶ μ' ἀπώλεσαν·
 οἷς θεὸς ὁ μέγας Ὀλύμπιος
 ποίνιμα πάθεα παθεῖν πόροι,
 μηδέ ποτ' ἀγλαίας ἀπονυίατο
 τοιάδ' ἀνύσαντες ἔργα.

205

210

ἀντ. γ'

ΧΟ φράζου μὴ πόρσω φωνεῖν.
 οὐ γνῶμαν ἴσχεις ἐξ οἶων
 τὰ παρόντ'; οἰκείας εἰς ἄτας
 ἐμπίπτεις οὕτως αἰκῶς.
 πολὺ γάρ τι κακῶν ὑπερεκτήσω,
 σῶ δυσθύμῳ τίκτουσ' ἀεὶ
 ψυχᾷ πολέμους· τὰ δὲ τοῖς δυνατοῖς
 οὐκ ἐριστὰ πλάθειν.

215

220

ΗΛ. δεινοῖς ἠναγκάσθην, δεινοῖς·
 ἔξοιδ', οὐ λάθει μ' ὀργή.
 ἀλλ' ἐν γὰρ δεινοῖς οὐ σχήσω
 ταύτας ἄτας,
 ὄφρα με βίος ἔχῃ.
 τίνι γάρ ποτ' ἄν, ὦ φίλῃ γενέθλα,
 πρόσφορον ἀκούσαιμ' ἔπος,
 τίνι φρονοῦντι καίρια;
 ἀνετέ μ', ἀνετε, παράγοροι·
 τάδε γὰρ ἅλυστα κεκλήσεται,

225

230

Ever again, nor rest: only strife
And innumerable tears.

epode

CHO. Yet I speak in kindness,
As a careful mother, pleading with you.
Breed not sin for sin, and wrong for wrong.

EL. Tell me, is there any measure in my evil?
Tell me, is it good to slight the dead?
Seek in all the world, you will not find that custom.
Better shame than such dishonour.
If there be any good thing left me, may I not enjoy it,
If it mean that I must fold the wings of my lamenting,
And put dishonour on my father.
For if the dead must lie
A heap of negligible dust, and they,
The slayers, pay not death for death,
There will be left no Modesty
Nor Righteousness on earth.

CHO. Daughter, for my own sake as well as yours
I came. But if my counsel be not good,
You shall prevail. We are your loyal friends.

EL. Ladies, I am ashamed to cry my grief
So rudely that I seem extravagant.
Violence, harsh necessity, compel me
Forgive. Is there a woman, nobly born
As I, could see her father so abus'd
Day after day, night after night, and watch
This thriving unabated infamy
With patience? First, my mother—she who bore me,
My worst of enemies now. As for my home,
I share it with my father's murderers;

οὐδέ ποτ' ἐκ καμάτων ἀποπαύσομαι
ἀνάρριθμος ὧδε θρήνων.

ἐπ.

ΧΟ. ἀλλ' οὖν εὐνοίᾳ γ' αὐδῶ,
μάτηρ ὥσεί τις πιστά,
μὴ τίκτειν σ' ἄταν ἄταις. 235

ΗΛ. καὶ τί μέτρον κακότατος ἔφν; φέρε,
πῶς ἐπὶ τοῖς φθιμένοις ἀμελεῖν καλόν;
ἐν τίνι τοῦτ' ἔβλαστ' ἀνθρώπων;
μήτ' εἴην ἔντιμος τούτοις,
μήτ' εἴ τῳ πρόσκειμαι χρηστῷ, 240
ξυνναίοιμ' εὐκηλος, γονέων
ἐκτίμους ἴσχουσα πτέρυγας
ὀξυτόνων γόων.

εἰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν θανὼν γὰρ τε καὶ οὐδὲν ὦν
κείσεται τάλας, οἱ δὲ μὴ πάλιν 245
δώσουσ' ἀντιφόνους δίκας,
ἔρροι τ' ἂν αἰδὼς ἀπάντων τ' εὐσέβεια θνατῶν. 250

ΧΟ. ἐγὼ μὲν, ὦ παῖ, καὶ τὸ σὸν σπεύδουσ' ἅμα
καὶ τοῦμὸν αὐτῆς ἦλθον· εἰ δὲ μὴ καλῶς
λέγω, σὺ νίκα· σοὶ γὰρ ἐψόμεσθ' ἅμα.

ΗΛ. αἰσχύνομαι μέν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ δοκῶ
πολλοῖσι θρήνοις δυσφορεῖν ὑμῖν ἄγαν· 255
ἀλλ' ἡ βία γὰρ ταῦτ' ἀναγκάζει με δρᾶν,
σύγγνωτε. πῶς γάρ, ἥτις εὐγενὴς γυνή,
πατρὶ ὀρώσα πῆματ' οὐ δρόφῃ τὰδ' ἄν,
ἀγῶ κατ' ἡμάρ καὶ κατ' εὐφρόνην αἰεὶ
θάλλοντα μᾶλλον ἢ καταφθίνονθ' ὀρώ; 260
ἥ πρῶτα μὲν τὰ μητρὸς ἥ μ' ἐγείνατο
ἔχθιστα συμβέβηκεν· εἴτα δώμασιν
ἐν τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τοῖς φονεύσι τοῦ πατρὸς

I live with them, their subject, their dependent,
The bond-slave of their bounty or denial.
What of my daily life? Imagine it.
To see Aegisthus vested in the robes
My father honour'd, seated on the throne,
My father's throne; to see him at the altar
Making libation, where he kill'd my father;
And then, the last, worst infamy—to see
That murderer couch'd in my father's bed
With my unhappy mother—if the name
Of mother suits the assassin's concubine.
She is not scrupulous: she fears no gods
Nor Furies, in the bed of the polluter
Rather, to make a triumph of her sin,
She cons the calendar, and marks the day
On which her cunning plot destroy'd my father,
And keeps that day with monthly sacrifice
And dancing for the gods of her salvation.

I live with that. I see this mockery,
This festival call'd by my father's name,
And weep for it, and break my heart for it,
Bitterly, secretly—I am not free
To weep as my sick soul would have me weep,
For she, this plausible, seeming-noble Queen,
Rails on me and reviles me. 'Godless wretch,
Are you forsooth the world's one fatherless child?
Have you the world's monopoly of grief?
I loathe and curse you! May the infernal gods
You worship, keep your life a life of tears.'
So she insults my sorrow, save when rumour
Speaks of Orestes coming: then, possess'd,

ξύνειμι, καὶ τῶνδ' ἄρχομαι, καὶ τῶνδέ μοι
 λαβεῖν θ' ὁμοίως καὶ τὸ τητᾶσθαι πέλει. 265
 ἔπειτα ποίας ἡμέρας δοκεῖς μ' ἄγειν,
 ὅταν θρόνοις Ἀλγισθον ἐνθακοῦντ' ἴδω
 τοῖσιν πατράσιν, εἰσίδω δ' ἐσθήματα
 φοροῦντ' ἐκείνῳ ταῦτά, καὶ παρεστίους 270
 σπένδοντα λοιβὰς ἐνθ' ἐκείνον ὤλεσεν,
 ἴδω δὲ τούτων τὴν τελευταίαν ὕβριν,
 τὸν αὐτοφόντην ἡμῖν ἐν κοίτῃ πατρὸς
 ξὺν τῇ ταλαίνῃ μητρί, μητέρ' εἰ χρεὼν
 ταύτην προσαυδᾶν τῷδε συγκοιμωμένην·
 ἢ δ' ὥδε πλήμων ὥστε τῷ μιάστορι 275
 ξύνεστ', Ἐρινὺν οὕτιν' ἐκφοβουμένη·
 ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐγγελῶσα τοῖς ποιουμένοις,
 εὐρούσ' ἐκείνην ἡμέραν ἐν ᾗ τότε
 πατέρα τὸν ἅμδν ἐκ δόλου κατέκταρεν,
 ταύτῃ χοροὺς ἵστησι καὶ μῆλοσφαγῇ 280
 θεοῖσιν ἔμμην' ἱερὰ τοῖς σωτηρίοις.
 ἐγὼ δ' ὁρῶσ' ἢ δύσμορος κατὰ στέγας
 κλαίω, τέτηκα, κἀπικωκύνω πατρὸς
 τὴν δυστάλαιναν δαῖτ' ἐπωνομασμένην
 αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτήν· οὐδὲ γὰρ κλαῦσαι πάρα 285
 τοσόνδ' ὅσον μοι θυμὸς ἡδονὴν φέρει.
 αὕτη γὰρ ἢ λόγοισι γενναία γυνὴ
 φωνούσα τοιάδ' ἐξονειδίζει κακὰ·
 ὦ δύσθεον μίσσημα, σοὶ μόνῃ πατὴρ
 τέθνηκεν; ἄλλος δ' οὕτις ἐν πένθει βροτῶν; 290
 κακῶς ὄλοιο, μηδέ σ' ἐκ γόων ποτὲ
 τῶν νῦν ἀπαλλάξειαν οἱ κάτω θεοί.
 τὰδ' ἐξυβρίζει· πλὴν ὅταν κλύῃ τινὸς
 ἤξοντ' Ὀρέστην· τῆνικαῦτα δ' ἐμμανὴς

She clamours at my ear, 'You are the cause.
You serv'd me thus. You stole Orestes, you,
And put him out of reach; but you shall pay,
Yes, you shall surely pay full measure for it.'
So, muttering threats, she ends, and the good lord,
Her bridegroom, like an echo, hounds her on
To frenzy—puny, devilish, pestilent coward,
Fighting his battles with a woman still
His weapon. What of me? I wait, and wait,
Lost, utterly lost Orestes will not come.
'Always the promise, never the fulfilment
Of hopes and dreams that vanish in despair.

Friends, is there any room for modesty
Or good religion here? Set in the midst
Of evil, we must practise evil still.

CHO. Where is Aegisthus? Is he near at hand
Or absent? You have spoken very bravely.

EL. Not here but in the country. If Aegisthus
Were here, I should not dare to leave the house.

CHO. Then, since Aegisthus is not here, may I
Venture to speak to you more openly?

EL. You may. What have you in your heart to tell me?

CHO. It is a question. Have you news? Your brother—
Is he coming? Must you still be waiting? Tell us.

EL. He tells me he will come. He never comes.

CHO. Men pause before a perilous enterprise.

EL. I did not think of perils when I sav'd him.

CHO. Take heart! He is not base. He will not fail you.

EL. I trust him. I could not have liv'd without it.

βοῶ παραστᾶσ', οὐ σύ μοι τῶνδ' αἰτία, 215
 οὐ σὸν τόδ' ἐστὶ τοῦργον, ἥτις ἐκ χερῶν
 κλέψας' Ὀρέστην τῶν ἐμῶν ὑπεξέθου;
 ἀλλ' ἴσθι τοι τείσουσά γ' ἄξιαν δίκην.
 τοιαῦθ' ὑλακτεῖ, σὺν δ' ἐποτρύνει πέλας
 ὁ κλεινὸς αὐτῇ ταῦτ' ἀνυμφίος παρών, 300
 ὁ πάντ' ἀναλκις οὗτος, ἡ πᾶσα βλάβη,
 ὁ σὺν γυναιξὶ τὰς μάχας ποιούμενος.
 ἐγὼ δ' Ὀρέστην τῶνδε προσμένουσ' αἰεὶ
 παυστῆρ' ἐφήξειν ἢ τάλαιν' ἀπόλλυμαι.
 μέλλων γάρ αἰεὶ δρᾶν τι τὰς οὔσας τέ μου 305
 καὶ τὰς ἀπούσας ἐλπίδας διέφθορεν.

ἐν οὖν τοιούτοις οὔτε σωφρονεῖν, φίλαι,
 οὔτ' εὐσεβεῖν πάρεστιν, ἀλλ' ἐν τοι κακοῖς
 πολλῇ 'στ' ἀνάγκη καπιτηδεύειν κακά.

ΧΟ. φέρ' εἰπέ, πότερον ὄντος λῆγίσθου πέλας 310
 λέγεις τὰδ' ἡμῖν, ἢ βεβῶτος ἐκ δόμων;

ΗΛ. ἦ κάρτα· μὴ δόκει μ' ἄν, εἴπερ ἦν πέλας,
 θυραῖον οἰχνεῖν· νῦν δ' ἀγροῖσι τυγχάνει.

ΧΟ. ἦ καὶ ἐγὼ θαρσοῦσα μάλλον ἐς λόγους 315
 τοὺς σοὺς ἰκοίμην, εἴπερ ὦδε ταῦτ' ἔχει;

ΗΛ. ὥς νῦν ἀπόντος ἰστόρει· τί σοι φίλον;

ΧΟ. καὶ δὴ σ' ἐρωτῶ, τοῦ κασιγνήτου τί φῆς,
 ἥξοντος, ἢ μέλλοντος; εἰδέναι θέλω

ΗΛ. φησὶν γε· φάσκων δ' οὐδὲν ὦν λέγει ποιεῖ.

ΧΟ. φιλεῖ γὰρ ὀκνεῖν πρῶγμ' ἀνὴρ πράσσων μέγα. 320

ΗΛ. καὶ μὴν ἔγωγ' ἔσωσ' ἐκεῖνον οὐκ ὄκνη.

ΧΟ. θάρσει· πέφυκεν ἐσθλός, ὥστ' ἀρκεῖν φίλοις.

ΗΛ. πέποιθ', ἐπεὶ τᾶν οὐ μακρὰν ἔζων ἐγώ.

Enter from the Palace CHRYSOTHEMIS,
with offerings for the grave

CHO. Hush, no more words! Someone is coming out!

Chrysothemis, your sister, by the same
Father, and the same mother In her hands
She bears what look like offerings for the dead

CHR. Sister, what purpose can it serve to stand
For ever talking in the public street?

Will you not learn by long experience
The folly of this passionate indulgence?
I know myself enough for this—I know

I grieve at all that happens: they should know
My feelings plainly too, if I were strong

But, as it is, to bow before the storm
Seems better than to make a show of action

Which does them not a jot of harm. I wish
That you could do as I I know the right

Is as you judge, nor as I say. And yet
Obedience is my means of life and freedom.

EL. Strange, you should be his child, that father's child,
Yet think of him so little, and so much

Of her. I know these lessons that you read me
Are all her teaching, nothing of your own

Choose. Either be impolitic with me,
Or use your policy and forget your dearest.

Just now you said, 'If I could find the strength,
How plainly I would show them how I hate them.'

Yet, when you see me fighting for my father,
You give no help, you try to hinder me,

You add to all our wrongs your cowardice.

ΧΟ. μὴ νῦν ἔτ' εἵπῃς μηδέν· ὥς δόμων ὀρώ
τὴν σὴν ὄμαιμον, ἐκ πατρὸς ταύτου φύσιν, 325
Χρυσόθεμιν, ἕκ τε μητρός, ἐντάφια χερσὶν
φέρουσαν, οἷα τοῖς κάτω νομίζεται

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

τίν' αὖ σὺ τήνδε πρὸς θυρῶνος ἐξόδοις
ἐλθοῦσα φωνεῖς, ὦ κασιγνήτη, φάτιν,
κοῦδ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ διδαχθῆναι θέλεις 330
θυμῷ ματαίῳ μὴ χαρίζεσθαι κενά,
καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ' οἶδα κίμαντήν, ὅτι
ἀλγῶ πῖ τοῖς παροῦσιν· ὥστ' ἄν, εἰ σθένος
λάβοιμι, δηλώσαιμ' ἂν οἷ' αὐτοῖς φρονῶ.
νῦν δ' ἐν κακοῖς μοι πλεῖν ὑφειμένη δοκεῖ, 335
καὶ μὴ δοκεῖν μὲν δρᾶν τι, πῇ μᾶλιν δὲ μή.
τοιαῦτα δ' ἄλλα καὶ σὲ βούλομαι ποεῖν.
καίτοι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον οὐχ ἤ γὰρ λέγω,
ἀλλ' ἢ σὺ κρίνεις· εἰ δ' ἐλευθέραν με δεῖ
ζῆν, τῶν κρατούντων ἐστὶ πάντ' ἀκουστέα. 340
ΗΛ. δεινὸν γέ σ' οὔσαν πατρὸς οὗ σὺ παῖς ἔφυς·
κείνου λελησθαι, τῆς δὲ τικτοῦσης μέλειν.
ἅπαντα γάρ σοι τὰ μὰ νουθετήματα
κείνης διδασκία, κοῦδὲν ἐκ στυγῆς λέγεις.
ἔπειθ' ἐλόν γε θάτερ', ἢ φρονεῖν κακῶς, 345
ἢ τῶν φίλων φρονοῦσα μὴ μνήμην ἔχειν·
ἥτις λέγεις μὲν ἀρτίως ὥς, εἰ λάβοις
σθένος, τὸ τούτων μῖσος ἐκδείξειας ἄν·
ἐμοῦ δὲ πατρὶ πάντα τιμωρουμένης
οὔτε ξυνέρδεις τήν τε δρώσαν ἐκτρέψεις. 350
οὐ ταῦτα πρὸς κακοῖσι δεῖλιν ἔχει;

Tell me, or rather listen, I'll tell you,
Just how much I should gain by keeping silence.
I have my life—I know, a wretched life—
But it will serve. I hurt them, and the dead
Is honour'd—if such honours please the dead.
You hate them? Oh, a phrase! This is the fact—
'They kill'd your father, and you live with them
I would not—no, not if they lavish'd on me
All those delightful gifts that make you fine,
I would not yield one jot. Keep to yourself
Your rich repasts, your boundless luxury:
I want no food but this—I do myself
No harm. I could not relish your—success
You could not, were you modest You, who might
Have own'd the noblest father in the world,
Be call'd your mother's child. The world will know you—
One who betray'd her dearest, her dead father.

CHO. Oh, for God's pity, let us have no anger!
There is much truth in both your arguments,
And you might learn from her, and she from you.

CHR. Ladies, her harsh reproaches grow by use
Something familiar I should not have spoken,
Had I not heard of a calamity
Which, if it fall, must silence her for ever.

EL. What is this terrible thing? If it is worse
Than what I suffer now, you shall persuade me.

CHR. I'll tell you plainly everything I know.
They mean, if you persist in lamentation,
To send you to a place where the dear sun
Will never visit you: far away, alive,
In a dark dungeon you must nurse your grief.

- ἔπει δίδαξον, ἥ μάθ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ, τί μοι
κέρδος γένοιτ' ἂν τῶνδε ληξιάσῃ γόων;
οὐ ζῶ; κακῶς μέν, οἶδ', ἐπαρκοῦντως δ' ἐμοί.
λυπῶ δὲ τούτους, ὥστε τῷ τεθνηκότι 355
τιμὰς προσάπτειν, εἴ τις ἔστ' ἐκεῖ χάρις.
σὺ δ' ἤμιν ἢ μισοῦσα μισεῖς μὲν λόγῳ,
ἔργῳ δὲ τοῖς φονεύσι τοῦ πατρὸς ξύνει.
ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἄν ποτ', οὐδ' εἴ μοι τὰ σὰ
μέλλοι τις οὔσειν δῶρ', ἐφ' οἷσι νῦν χλιδᾶς, 360
τούτοις ὑπεικάθοιμι· σοὶ δὲ πλουσία
τράπεζα κείσθω καὶ περιρρείτω βίος.
ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἔστω τοῦμὲ μὴ λυπεῖν μόνον
βόσκημα· τῆς σῆς δ' οὐκ ἐρῶ τιμῆς τυχεῖν.
οὐδ' ἂν σύ, σῶφρων γ' οὔσα, νῦν δ' ἐξὸν πατρὸς 365
πάντων ἀρίστου παῖδα κεκλήσθαι, καλοῦ
τῆς μητρός· οὕτω γὰρ φανείη πλείστοις κακῇ,
θανόντα πατέρα καὶ φίλους προδοῦσα σοῦς.
ΧΟ. μηδὲν πρὸς ὀργὴν πρὸς θεῶν· ὥς τοῖς λόγοις 370
ἔνεστιν ἀμφοῖν κέρδος, εἰ σὺ μὲν μάθοις
τοῖς τῆσδε χρῆσθαι, τοῖς δὲ σοῖς αὕτη πάλιν.
ΧΡ. ἐγὼ μὲν, ὦ γυναῖκες, ἡθὰς εἰμί πως
τῶν τῆσδε μύθων· οὐδ' ἂν ἐμνήσθην ποτέ,
εἰ μὴ κακὸν μέγιστον εἰς αὐτὴν ἰδὼν
ἤκουσ', ὃ ταύτην τῶν μακρῶν σχήσει γόων. 375
ΗΛ. φέρ' εἰπὲ δὴ τὸ δεινόν· εἰ γὰρ τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ
μεῖζόν τι λέξεις, οὐκ ἂν ἀντείποιμ' ἔτι.
ΧΡ. ἀλλ' ἐξερῶ σοι πᾶν ὅσον κάτοιδ' ἐγώ.
μέλλουσι γάρ σ', εἰ τῶνδε μὴ λήξεις γοων,
ἐνταῦθα πέμψειν ἔνθα μὴ ποθ' ἡλίου 380
φέγγος προσόψει, ζῶσα δ' ἐν κατηρεφεῖ
στέγγῃ χθονὸς τῆσδ' ἐκτὸς ὑμνήσεις κακά.

Think, then, and do not blame me afterwards,
When it has come. Now is the time for prudence

EL. They have determin'd? Did you say determin'd?

CHR. Yes, it is settled: when Aegisthus comes.

EL. Why, then, I hope and pray he may come soon

CHR. Alas, alas! You pray for your own death!

EL. Is that his purpose? Then he cannot come
Too quickly.

CHR. Are you mad? What do you mean?

EL. I mean, I shall be free from all of you.

CHR. It is your life, remember.

EL. Such a life
As mine! Is that so beautiful a thing?

CHR. If you were only wise, it might be so

EL. Enough! You shall not teach me treachery

CHR. There's no such matter. You would yield to
force.

EL. Cringe, if you must I have not learnt the habit.

CHR. No wise man seeks a fall.

EL. What, if I fall?
Anyhow, I shall fight my father's cause.

CHR. Father forgives and understands, I know.

EL. The coward's plea!

CHR. It is my plea to you.
Will you not listen?

EL. No. I pray my soul
May never be so destitute of wisdom.

CHR. Then I will go my ways and do my errand.

EL. What errand? Where? What are these offerings?

CHR. Gifts from my mother for my father's tomb.

EL. What? She, who hated him, O sister, she—

πρὸς ταῦτα φράζου, καὶ με μὴ ποθ' ὕστερον
παθοῦσα μέμψῃ· νῦν γὰρ ἐν καλῷ φρουεῖν.

ΗΛ. ἦ ταῦτα δὴ με καὶ βεβούλευνται ποεῖν; 385

ΧΡ. μάλισθ'· ὅταν περ οἵκαδ' Αἰγισθος μόλῃ.

ΗΛ. ἀλλ' ἐξίκοιτο τοῦδέ γ' οὔνεκ' ἐν τάχει.

ΧΡ. τίν', ὦ τάλαινα, τόνδ' ἐπηράσω λόγον;

ΗΛ. ἐλθεῖν ἐκεῖνον, εἴ τι τῶνδε δρᾶν νοεῖ.

ΧΡ. ὅπως πάθῃς τί χρήμα; ποῦ ποτ' εἰ φρενῶν; 390

ΗΛ. ὅπως ἀφ' ὑμῶν ὡς προσώψαιτ' ἐκφύγω.

ΧΡ. βίου δὲ τοῦ παρόντος οὐ μνείαν ἔχεις,

ΗΛ. καλὸς γὰρ οὐμὸς βίοςτος ὥστε θαυμάσαι.

ΧΡ. ἀλλ' ἦν ἄν, εἰ σύ γ' εὖ φρουεῖν ἠπίστασο.

ΗΛ. μὴ μ' ἐκδίδασκε τοῖς φίλοις εἶναι κακῇν. 395

ΧΡ. ἀλλ' οὐ διδάσκω· τοῖς κρατοῦσι δ' εἰκαθεῖν.

ΗΛ. σὺ ταῦτα θώπευ'· οὐκ ἐμὸν τρόπους λέγεις.

ΧΡ. καλὸν γε μέντοι μὴ 'ξ ἀβουλίας πεσεῖν.

ΗΛ. πεσοῦμεθ', εἰ χρή, πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι.

ΧΡ. πατὴρ δὲ τούτων, οἶδα, συγγνώμην ἔχει. 400

ΗΛ. ταῦτ' ἐστὶ τᾶπῃ πρὸς κακῶν ἐπαινέσαι.

ΧΡ. σὺ δ' οὐχὶ πείσεις καὶ συναινέσεις ἐμοί;

ΗΛ. οὐ δῆτα· μὴ πω νοῦ τοσόνδ' εἴην κενή.

ΧΡ. χωρήσομαί τᾶρ' οἷπερ ἐστάλην ὁδοῦ.

ΗΛ. ποῖ δ' ἐμπορεύει; τῷ φέρεις τὰδ' ἔμπυρα; 405

ΧΡ. μῆτηρ με πέμπει πατρὶ τυμβεύσαι χοάς.

ΗΛ. πῶς εἶπας; ἦ τῷ δυσμενεστάτῳ βροτῶν;

CHR. Who kill'd him, you would say Yes. She has sent them.

EL. What friend still cares? Who can have ung'd her to it?

CHR. Something, I think, that frighten'd her, at night.

EL. At last! Gods of our father's house, be with us!

CHR. You think her fear spells hope?

EL. I'll answer that,

If you can tell me what it was, she saw.

CHR. I am not clear—I only know a little.

EL. However little, tell me. One brief word
Has ruin'd lives ere now, or brought salvation.

CHR. They say she saw the spirit of our father
Return'd to earth again. They say he took
That sceptre, which Aegisthus now usurps,
In his own royal hand, and planted it
In the earth upright There, they say, it grew
Into a lusty sapling, which at length
O'ershadow'd the whole Mycenean land.
Someone who listen'd when she told her dream
To the Sungod in the morning, told me this,
And it is all I know—except that fear,
This fear, has made her send me on my errand.
Therefore, by all our gods, I beg you, yield
Do nothing rash. Though you repel me now,
Perhaps in trouble you may turn to me.

EL. What you have there, dear one, must never touch
Our father's grave, never. Drink-offerings
And washings, if you bring them as from her,
His wife and enemy, are a profanation.
Scatter them to the winds, or, bury them

- ΧΡ. ὃν ἔκταν' αὐτῇ· τοῦτο γὰρ λέξαι θέλεις.
- ΗΛ. ἐκ τοῦ φίλων πεισθεῖσα· τῷ τοῦτ' ἤρσεν;
- ΧΡ. ἐκ δειματός του νυκτέρου, δοκεῖν ἐμοί. 410
- ΗΛ. ὦ θεοὶ πατρῷοι, συγγένεσθέ γ' ἄλλα νῦν.
- ΧΡ. ἔχεις τι θάρσος τοῦδε τοῦ τάρβους πέρι;
- ΗΛ. εἴ μοι λέγοις τὴν ὄψιν, εἴποιμ' ἂν τότε.
- ΧΡ. ἀλλ' οὐ κάτοιδα πλὴν ἐπὶ σμικρὸν φράσαι
- ΗΛ. λέγ' ἄλλα τοῦτο· πολλὰ τοι σμικροὶ λόγοι 415
ἔσφηλαν ἤδη καὶ κατώρθωσαν βροτούς.
- ΧΡ. λόγος τις αὐτὴν ἐστιν εἰσιδεῖν πατρὸς
τοῦ σοῦ τε κῆμοῦ δευτέραν ὁμιλίαν
ἐλθόντος εἰς φῶς· εἴτα τόνδ' ἐφέστιον
πῆξαι λαβόντα σκῆπτρον, οὐφόρει ποτὲ 420
αὐτός, τανῦν δ' Αἴγισθος· ἔκ τε τοῦδ' ἄνω
βλαστέιν βρύοντα θαλλόν, ᾧ κατάσκιον
πᾶσαν γενέσθαι τὴν Μυκηναίων χθόνα.
τοιαῦτά του παρόντος, ἡνίχ' Ἑλίω
δείκνυσσι τοῦναρ, ἔκλυον ἐξηγουμένου. 425
- πλείω δὲ τούτων οὐ κάτοιδα, πλὴν ὅτι
πέμπει με κείνη τοῦδε τοῦ φόβου χάριν.
πρὸς νῦν θεῶν σε λίσσομαι τῶν ἐγγενῶν
ἐμοὶ πιθέσθαι μηδ' ἄβουλίᾳ πεσεῖν·
εἰ γάρ μ' ἀπώσσει, σὺν κακῷ μέτει πάλιν. 430
- ΗΛ. ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη, τούτων μὲν ὧν ἔχεις χεροῖν
τύμβῳ προσίψης μηδέν· οὐ γάρ σοι θέμις
οὐδ' ὅσιον ἐχθρᾶς ἀπὸ γυναικὸς ἰστάναι
κτερίσματ' οὐδὲ λοντρά προσφέρειν πατρί·
ἀλλ' ἢ πυοαῖσιν ἢ βαθυσκαφεῖ κύνει 435

Deep in the earth, where not a drop shall reach
His resting-place, but all be kept in store
For that luxurious wanton when she dies.
Is she not wanton? Is there in the world
A woman so hard-hearted as to make
Loveless libations to the man she murder'd?
Can we believe, does she herself believe,
The dead will take these washings as a gift
Of love? Of love? She kill'd, insulted, mock'd him,
And mutilated Washings? When she kill'd him,
How did she wash the body? On his head
She wip'd her bloody hands. Think you these offerings
Can make her peace for that? Nay, let them be.
Your hair is beautiful Take one tress of it,
And this, of mine—alas, it is unkempt—
Take it—a trifling gift, but what I have—
Stay: here's my girdle too—how drab it is—
Offer it on your knees, beseeching him
To rise and succour us against the foe
And grant his son Orestes victory
And life, to trample on our enemies,
That in the future we may honour him
With richer gifts than we can offer now.
I think, I think, some stirring of his spirit
Mov'd him to send these evil-seeming dreams.
Dear sister, do this office for my sake
And yours, and his, belov'd in spite of death
More than the world, my father and your own.

CHO. Your sister's right, dear child. If you would be
Modest and pious, you will do her bidding.

CHR. I will. It is not wisdom to dispute

κρύψον νιν, ἔνθα μή ποτ' εἰς εὐνὴν πατρὸς
 τούτων πρόσσεισι μηδέν· ἀλλ' ὅταν θάνῃ,
 κειμήλι' αὐτῇ ταῦτα σφξέσθω κάτω
 ἀρχὴν δ' ἄν, εἰ μὴ τλημονεστάτῃ γυνὴ
 πασῶν ἔβλαστε, τάσδε δυσμενεῖς χοὰς
 οὐκ ἂν ποθ', ὅν γ' ἔκτεινε, τῷ δ' ἐπέστεφε.
 σκέψαι γὰρ εἴ σοι προσφιλῶς αὐτῇ δοκεῖ
 γέρα τάδ' οὖν τίφοισι δέξεσθαι νέκυσ,
 ὕψ' ἥς θινὸν ἄτιμος ὥστε δυσμενὴς
 ἔμασχαλίσθη, καὶ πῖ λουτροῖσιν κάρᾳ
 κηλίδας ἐξέμαξεν. ἄρα μὴ δοκεῖς
 λυτήρι' αὐτῇ ταῦτα τοῦ φόνου φέρειν,
 οὐκ ἔστιν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν μέθες· σὺ δὲ
 τεμοῦσα κρατὸς βυστρήχων ἄκρας φόβας
 καμῶν ταλαίηνης, σμικρὰ μὲν τάδ', ἀλλ' ὅμως
 ἄχω, δὸς αὐτῷ, τήνδ' ἀλιπαρὴν τρίχα
 καὶ ζῶμα τοῦμόν οὐ χλιδαῖς ἥσκημένον.
 αἰτοῦ δὲ προσπίτνουσα γῆθεν εὐμενῇ
 ἡμῖν ἀρωγὸν αὐτὸν εἰς ἐχθροὺς μολεῖν,
 καὶ παῖδ' Ὀρέστην ἐξ ὑπερτέρας χερὸς
 ἐχθροῖσιν αὐτοῦ ζῶντ' ἐπεμβῆναι ποδί,
 ὅπως τὸ λοιπὸν αὐτὸν ἀφνεωτέραις
 χερσὶ στέφωμεν ἢ τανῦν δωροῦμεθα.
 οἶμαι μὲν οὔν, οἶμαί τι καὶ κείνῳ μέλον
 πέμψαι τάδ' αὐτῇ δυσπρόσοπτ' ὀνειράτα·
 ὅμως δ', ἀδελφή, σοί θ' ὑπούργησον τάδε
 ἐμοί τ' ἀρωγά, τῷ τε φιλτάτῳ βροτῶν
 πάντων, ἐν Ἀἰδον κειμένῳ κοινῷ πατρί.

- ΧΟ. πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἢ κόρη λέγει· σὺ δέ,
 εἰ σωφρονήσεις, ἴδ' φίλῃ, δράσεις τάδε.
 ΧΡ. δράσω· τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οὐκ ἔχει λόγον

About our duties, but to join in action.
So I will do my best—but, oh, my friends,
Keep what I do a secret, I implore you;
For if my mother learns of this, alas,
I think I shall pay dearly for this boldness

str

[Exit CHRYSOTHEMIS]

CHLO. If I am not a fool in prophecy
And destitute of wisdom utterly,
Justice by this dream reveals her purpose.
Justice comes, with victory
For the good cause, hunting the evil down,
Very soon, my child;
Yea, I am well assur'd;
Breathing a spirit of joy from the tale of the dream.
The lord of Greece, thy father,
Hath not forgotten.
Nor hath that brazen two-edg'd axe forgotten
Through all the waste of years,
Which slew him shamefully.

ant

Yea, with the clash of many swords, the noise
Of many trampling feet, forth from the lair
Vengeance, brazen-footed Fury, ambush'd
Now in darkness, cometh soon
To the light—Sin tainted the bridal bed
Of the twain that slew.
'Therelore, my soul knows well,
Sure is the presage of evil, the sign of the doom;
It cannot, may not fail us.
'They needs must suffer,
Or else there is no truth in mortal dreaming,

δυοῖν ἐρίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐπισπεύδειν τὸ δρᾶν.
 πειρωμένη δὲ τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἐμοὶ
 σιγῇ παρ' ὑμῶν πρὸς θεῶν ἔστω, φίλαι·
 ὡς εἰ τὰδ' ἡ τεκοῦσα πεύσεται, πικρὰν 170
 δοκῶ με πείραν τήνδε τολμήσειν ἔτι.

στρ.

ΧΟ. εἰ μὴ ἔγωγ' ἀπαράφρων μάντις ἔφυν
 καὶ γνώμας λειπομένα σοφᾶς, εἴσιν ἂ πρόμαντις 175
 Δίκα, δίκαια φερομένα χεροῖν κρίτη·
 μέτεσιν, ὧ τέκνον, οὐ μακροῦ χρόνου.
 ὕπεστί μοι θάρσος, ἄδυπνόνων κλύουσιν 180
 ἀρτίως ὄνειράτων·
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἀμναστέϊ γ' ὁ φύσας σ' Ἑλλάνων ἀναξ,
 οὐδ' ἂ παλαιὰ χαλκόπλακτος ἀμφάκης γένυς, 185
 ἧ νιν κατέπεφνεν αἰσχίσταις ἐν αἰκίαις.

ἥξει καὶ πολύπους καὶ πολύχειρ
 ἂ δεινοῖς κρυπτομένα λόχοις χαλκόπους Ἐρινύς.

ἄλεκτρ' ἀνυμφα γὰρ ἐπέβα μαιφόνων 191
 γάμων ἀμιλλήμαθ' οἷσιν οὐ θέμις.
 πρὸ τῶνδε τοί μ' ἔχει μή ποτε μή ποθ' ἡμῖν 195
 ἀψευγὲς πελᾶν τέρας
 τοῖς δρῶσι καὶ συνδρῶσιν. ἧ τοι μαντεῖλαι βροτῶν

And vain is prophecy,
Unless this dream prove true.

epode

Alas, that ancient fount of sorrow,
Since Pelops drove his fatal car,
Hath well'd incessantly,
And the land groaneth still.

When from that golden chariot Myrtilos
Flung headlong, violently, shamefully abus'd,
Sank to the waves, and was engulf'd, and slept,
There came upon this house sorrow and shame and
anguish,
Haunting it still.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA

CLY. So, it appears, you rove again at large?
Aegisthus is not with us to prevent
This public shaming of your friends and kindred.
Aegisthus is not here! What do you care
For me? Oh, you have told your story times
Enough to many cars, that I am harsh
And impudent, using my authority
To wrong you and your cause. It is not true.
I am not impudent. And if I speak
Harshly of you, what have you said of me?
Always your father is your theme, your father,
And how I caused his death. I know. I did it.
I have no such thought in me as to deny it
And yet not I alone, but Justice slew him,
And you would fight for Justice if your mind
Were sane and righteous. Why, this man, your father,

οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐν δεινοῖς ὀνείροις οὐδ' ἐν θεσφάτοις, 500
εἰ μὴ τῷδε φάσμα νυκτὸς εἴη κατασχῆσει.

ἐπ.

ὦ Πέλοπος ἅ πρόσθεν πολύπονος ἵππεϊα, 505
ὡς ἔμολες αἰανῆς τῷδε γᾶ.
εὔτε γὰρ ὁ ποιντισθεὶς Μυρτίλος ἐκοιμάθη,
παγχρυσέων δίφρων δυστάνοις αἰκείαις 510
πρόρριζος ἐκριφθείς, οὔ τί πω
ἔλιπεν ἐκ τοῦδ' οἴκου πολύπονος αἰκεία. 515

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἀνειμένη μὲν, ὡς ἔοικας, αὖ στρέφει·
οὐ γὰρ πάρεστ' Λῆγισθος, ὅς σ' ἐπεῖχ' αἰεὶ
μή τοι θυραίαν γ' οὔσαν αἰσχύνειν φίλους·
νῦν δ' ὡς ἄπεστ' ἐκεῖνος, οὐδὲν ἐντρέπει 520
ἐμοῦ γε· καί τοι πολλὰ πρὸς πολλοὺς με δὴ
ἐξεῖπας ὡς θρασεῖα καὶ πέρα δίκης
ἄρχω, καθυβρίζουσα καὶ σὲ καὶ τὰ σά.
ἐγὼ δ' ὕβριν μὲν οὐκ ἔχω, κακῶς δέ σε
λέγω, κακῶς κλύουσα πρὸς σέθεν θαμύ.
πατὴρ γάρ, οὐδὲν ἄλλο, σοὶ πρόσχημ' αἰεὶ 525
ὡς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τέθνηκεν. ἐξ ἐμοῦ· καλῶς
ἔξοιδα· τῶνδ' ἄρνησις οὐκ ἔνιστί μοι·
ἢ γὰρ Δίκη νιν εἴλεν, οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνη,
ἢ χρῆν σ' ἀρήγειν, εἰ φρουοῦς' ἐτύγχανες.
ἐπεὶ πατὴρ οὗτος σός, ὃν θρημεῖς αἰεὶ, 530

For whom you make such weeping, had the heart—
He, of all men and Greeks!—to sacrifice

• Your sister. He, who sow'd the seed, he slew her.
| He had not felt the pangs that gave her life.—
Ah—

Tell me, come tell me this, What was the cause?
Why did he sacrifice her? For the Greeks?
She was my child. What right had they to kill her?
For Menelaus? What? For a brother's sake
To kill my child—must he not pay for that?
Menelaus had two children.—By what law
Should she be kill'd, not they? They were his sons,
And Helen's—Did not Helen make the war?
Or had the King of Death grown passionate
To taste my children's flesh—not hers, but mine?
Or had your curséd father so much love
For Menelaus' children, none was left
For his and mine? Then was he not a fool,
Unnatural and insensate? You deny it,
And yet I think he was, and she who died,
If she could speak to you, would tell you so.

I think of what I did with no regrets,
No heaviness of heart. I seem to you
Wicked and wrong? Be just before you blame me.

EL. You cannot say that any bitterness
Of mine provokes you now to answer me.
Have I your leave, in my dead father's name,
And for my sister's sake, to speak the truth?

CLY. Freely, and had you always spoken so,
I could have heard you without bitterness.

EL. 'This is the truth. You say you kill'd my father.

τὴν σὴν ὄμαιμον μοῦνος Ἑλλήνων ἔτλη
 θύσαι θεοῖσιν, οὐκ ἴσον καμὼν ἐμοὶ
 λύπης, ὅτ' ἔσπειρ', ὥσπερ ἡ τίκτουσ' ἐγὼ
 εἶεν, δίδαξον δὴ με, τοῦ χάριν, τίνων
 ἔθυσεν αὐτὴν; πότερον Ἀργείων ἱρεῖς; 535
 ἀλλ' οὐ μετὴν αὐτοῖσι τὴν γ' ἐμήν κτανεῖν
 ἀλλ' ἀντ' ἀδελφοῦ δῆτα Μενέλεω κτανὼν
 τᾶμ' οὐκ ἔμελλε τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ δώσειν δίκην;
 πότερον ἐκείνῳ παῖδες οὐκ ἦσαν διπλοῖ,
 οὓς τῆσδε μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἦν θνήσκειν, πατρός 540
 καὶ μητρός θντας, ἧς ὁ πλοῦς ὅδ' ἦν χάριν,
 ἢ τῶν ἐμῶν Ἀιδίης τι' ἴμερον τέκνων
 ἢ τῶν ἐκείνης ἔσχε δαίσασθαι πλέον,
 ἢ τῷ πανώλει πατρὶ τῶν μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ
 παίδων πόθος παρεῖτο, Μενέλεω δ' ἐνήν, 545
 οὐ ταῦτ' ἀβούλου καὶ κακοῦ γνώμην πατρός;
 δοκῶ μὲν, εἰ καὶ σῆς δίχα γνώμης λέγω.
 φαίη δ' ἂν ἡ θανούσά γ', εἰ φωνὴν λάβοι.
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ εἰμὶ τοῖς πεπραγμένοις
 δύσθυμος· εἰ δὲ σοὶ δοκῶ φρονεῖν κακῶς, 550
 γνώμην δικαίαν σχοῦσα τοὺς πέλας ψέγει.

ΗΛ. ἐρεῖς μὲν οὐχὶ νῦν γέ μ' ὥς ἄρξασά τι
 λυπηρόν, εἴτα σοῦ τᾶδ' ἐξήκουσ' ὕπο·
 ἀλλ' ἦν ἐφῆς μοι, τοῦ τεθνηκότος θ' ὕπερ
 λέξαιμ' ἂν ὀρθῶς τῆς κασιγνήτης θ' ὁμοῦ. 555

ΚΛ. καὶ μὴν ἐφίημ'· εἰ δέ μ' ὦδ' ἀπὸ λόγους
 ἐξήρχες, οὐκ ἂν ἦσθα λυπηρὰ κλύειν.

ΗΛ. καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι, πατέρα φῆς κτεῖναι. τίς ἂν

Justly or not, could there be anything
More shameful to confess? But I shall say
You did not kill for justice, but for love
Of a base man. You are living with him now

Go, ask the Virginal Huntress, why the winds
At Aulis stopp'd the fleets—No! I will tell you.
We must not question her. This was the cause.
They say my father, hunting in a grove,
Startled a dappled hind from cover, aim'd,
And hit and kill'd, and boasted foolishly.
For that the child of Leto in her wrath
Stopped the Greek ships and made my father pay
Her price for a dead favourite—his child.

So came that sacrifice; no other way
To bring his men safe home, or cross to Troy;
Therefore, and not for Menelaus' sake,
Reluctant, but compell'd, he offer'd her.
Was it for Menelaus? I will meet you
On your own ground. Was it? What then? Have
you,

Therefore, the right to kill him? By what law?
Take care. If you lay down this principle,
This ruthless law of vengeance, you pronounce
The sentence on yourself. If life for life
Were always to be taken, you yourself
Must be the first to die, if you have Justice.

No, Justice was the pretext, not the cause.
Think well. Instruct me, if you will, what cause
Compels you now to your worst shame? You live
With that polluted man, you sleep with him,
And with him, long ago, you kill'd my father

τούτου λόγος γένοιτ' ἂν αἰσχύων ἔτι,
εἴτ' οὖν δικαίως εἴτε μή; λέξω δέ σοι, 560
ὥς οὐ δίκη γ' ἔκτεινας, ἀλλὰ σ' ἔσπασεν
πειθὼ κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρός, ᾧ τανῦν ξύνει.

ἔρου δὲ τὴν κυναγὸν Ἀρτεμιν, τίνος
ποιναὺς τὰ πολλὰ πνεύματ' ἔσχ' ἐν Αὐλίδι·
ἢ ᾧ γὼ φράσω· κείνης γάρ οὐ θέμις μαθεῖν. 565
πατὴρ ποθ' οὐμός, ὥς ἐγὼ κλύω, θεᾶς
παίζων κατ' ἄλσος ἐξεκίνησεν ποδοῖν
στικτὸν κεράστην ἔλαφον, οὗ κατὰ σφαγὰς
ἐκκομπήσας ἔπος τι τυγχάνει βαλὼν.

καὶ τοῦδε μηνίσαισα Λητώα κόρη 570
κατεῖχ' Ἀχαιοὺς, ὥς πατὴρ ἀντίσταθμον
τοῦ θηρὸς ἐκθύσειε τὴν αὐτοῦ κόρην.
ᾧδ' ἦν τὰ κείνης θύματ'· οὐ γὰρ ἦν λύσις
ἄλλη στρατῷ πρὸς οἶκον οὐδ' εἰς Ἴλιον.
ἀνθ' ὧν βιασθεῖς πολλὰ κἀντιβὰς μόλις 575
ἔθυσεν αὐτήν, οὐχὶ Μενέλεω χάριν.

εἰ δ' οὖν, ἐρῶ γὰρ καὶ τὸ σόν, κείνουν θέλων
ἐπωφελῆσαι ταῦτ' ἔδρα, τούτου θανεῖν
χρῆν αὐτὸν οὐνεκ' ἐκ σέθεν; ποίῳ νόμῳ;
ὅρα τιθεῖσα τόνδε τὸν νόμον βροτοῖς 580
μὴ πῆμα σαυτῇ καὶ μετ' ἄγνοϊαν τιθῆς.
εἰ γὰρ κτενοῦμεν ἄλλον ἀντ' ἄλλου, σύ τοι
πρώτῃ θάνοις ἄν, εἰ δίκης γε τυγχάνοις.

ἀλλ' εἰσόρα μὴ σκῆψιν, οὐκ οὔσαν τίθης.
εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, δίδαξον ἀνθ' οὗτου τανῦν 585
αἰσχιστα πάντων ἔργα δρῶσα τυγχάνεις,
ἥτις ξυνεύδεις τῷ παλαμναίῳ, μεθ' οὗ
πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν πρόσθεν ἐξαπώλεσας,

You bear him children—while the innocents,
Your lawful husband's children, you have banish'd
Is that to be approved? Or will you tell me
You do it for your daughter? To your shame
You do it—Why should honour wed and bed
With enemies, because you loved your daughter?

Your daughter may not even speak to you
Plainly, or else you clamour and protest
That she reviles her mother—Mother? No,
Tyrant you are, and mistress, but not mother!
What is my life? What have I had from you—
You, and your mate—but only persecution?
What of your other child, who just escaped you,
But only just escaped—what of Orestes?
In exile. And how often have you said
I cherish'd him to punish you and kill you?—
Yes! If I could, I would! . . . So, I have said it.
Publish me to the world unnatural,
Abusive, vile and utterly lost to shame.
If I am all these things, be proud to know
You have a child so worthy of her mother!

CHO I see you grow too passionate Is regard
Still left for right and justice in such passion?

CLY. Pray, what am I to think, or what regard
To have for her, a woman grown, who heaps
Such outrage on her mother? Not a crime,
You see, too black for her—she has no shame

EL. No shame? You may be sure I am ashamed
Although you think not so. I understand.
I know that what I do passes all bounds
And is unworthy of me, but your hate

καὶ παιδοποιεῖς· τοὺς δὲ πρόσθεν εὐσεβεῖς
 καὶ εὐσεβῶν βλαστόντας ἐκβαλοῦσ' ἔχεις 590
 πῶς ταῦτ' ἐπαινέσαιμ' ἄν; ἢ καὶ ταῦτ' ἑρεῖς
 ὥς τῆς θυγατρὸς ἀντίποινα λαμβάνεις;
 αἰσχρῶς δ', ἐάν περ καὶ λέγῃς· οὐ γὰρ καλὸν
 ἐχθροῖς γαμείσθαι τῆς θυγατρὸς οὐνεκα.
 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ νουθετεῖν ἔξεστί σε, 595
 ἢ πᾶσαν ἱγὺς γλῶσσαν ὥς τὴν μητέρα
 κακοστομοῦμεν καὶ σ' ἔγωγε δεσπύτιν
 ἢ μητέρ' οὐκ ἔλασσον εἰς ἡμᾶς νέμω,
 ἢ ζῶ βίον μοχθηρόν, ἕκ τε σοῦ κακοῖς
 πολλοῖς αἰεὶ ξυνοῦσα τοῦ τε συννόμου. 600
 ὁ δ' ἄλλος ἔξω, χεῖρα σὴν μόλις φυγών,
 τλήμων Ὀρέστης δυστυχή τρίβει βίον·
 ὃν πολλὰ δὴ με σοὶ τρέφειν μιάστορα
 ἐπητιάσω· καὶ τόδ', εἴπερ ἔσθενον,
 ἔδρων ἄν, εὖ τοῦτ' ἴσθι. τοῦδέ γ' οὐνεκα 605
 κήρυσσέ μ' εἰς ἅπαντας, εἴτε χρῆς κακὴν
 εἴτε στόμαργον εἴτ' ἀναιδείας πλέαν.
 εἰ γὰρ πέφυκα τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἴδρις,
 σχεδόν τι τὴν σὴν οὐ καταισχύνω φύσιν.
 ΧΟ. ὁρῶ μένος πνέουσιν· εἰ δὲ σὺν δίκῃ 610
 ξύνεστι, τοῦδε φροντίδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσορῶ
 ΚΛ. ποίας δ' ἐμοὶ δεῖ πρὸς γε τήνδε φροντίδος,
 ἥ τις τοιαῦτα τὴν τεκούσαν ὕβρισεν,
 καὶ ταῦτα τηλικούτος; ἀρά σοι δοκεῖ
 χωρεῖν ἄν εἰς πᾶν ἔργον αἰσχύνῃς ἄτερ , 615
 ΗΛ. εὖ νυν ἐπίστω τῶνδ' ἐμ' αἰσχύνῃν ἔχειν,
 κεῖ μὴ δοκῶ σοι· μανθάνω δ' ὀθούνεκα
 ἔξωρα πράσσω· οὐκ ἐμοὶ προσεϊκότα.
 ἀλλ' ἢ γὰρ ἐκ σοῦ δυσμένεια καὶ τὰ σέ

Forces me, and your evil deeds compel me
To forget shame because my life is shameful.

CLY. I and my talk and actions, it appears,
Move you to wild and wanton words.

EL. The words
Are yours, not mine, because the sin was yours:
And words are only echoes of the fact

CLY So bold? By Artemis, the Queen, I swear,
You shall pay dearly, when Aegisthus comes.

EL. You bid me speak, and then grow passionate.
You see, you cannot bear to hear the truth.

CLY You have had licence—will you not allow
Even a decent silence for my prayer?

EL. Yes, pray I bid you pray. You shall not blame
My clamour any longer I have done.

CLY [*to an attendant*]. Lift high the offering. As we
consecrate

These fruits of earth to heaven, so may the god
Release us from the fears which now possess us.

Phoebus, Defender, lend thine ear, to catch
My secret whisper—those who listen here
Are not my friends. It suits not to reveal
All that is in my heart, while she is near,
Lest the outrageous malice of her tongue
Spread slander through the city. Thus I speak;
Listen, and understand. This night I saw
Strange shapes and doubtful dreams. Lycean King,
If they be good, I pray thee grant fulfilment:
If they be evil, let my enemies
Be haunted by them. There are some who plot
And plan to thrust me from my wealth—prevent them.

- ἔργ' ἔξαναγκάζει με ταῦτα δρᾶν βία·
αἰσχροῖς γὰρ αἰσχροὶ πράγματ' ἐκδιδάσκειται. 620
- ΚΛ. ὦ θρέμμ' ἀναιδές, ἣ σ' ἐγὼ καὶ τᾶμ' ἔπη
καὶ τᾶργα τὰμὰ πόλλ' ἄγαν λέγειν ποεῖ
- ΗΛ. σὺ τοι λέγεις νυν, οὐκ ἐγὼ· σὺ γάρ ποεῖς
ταῦργον· τὰ δ' ἔργα τοὺς λόγους εὐρίσκεται. 625
- ΚΛ. ἀλλ' οὐ μὰ τὴν δέσποιναν Ἀρτεμιν θράσους
τοῦδ' οὐκ ἀλύξεις, εἴτ' ἂν Ἀῖγισθος μόλη.
- ΗΛ. ὀρᾷς; πρὸς ὀργὴν ἐκφέρει, μεθεῖσά μοι
λέγειν ἂν χρῆξιμ', οὐδ' ἐπίστασαι κλύειν.
- ΚΛ. οὐκουν ἐάσεις οὐδ' ὑπ' εὐφήμου βοῆς
θῦσαί μ', ἐπειδὴ σοί γ' ἐφῆκα πᾶν λέγειν; 630
- ΗΛ. ἐῷ, κελεύω, θῦε· μῆδ' ἐπαιτιῶ
τοῦμὸν στόμ', ὥς οὐκ ἂν πέρα λείξαιμ' ἔτι.
- ΚΛ. ἔπαιρε δὴ σὺ θύμαθ' ἣ παροῦσά μοι
πάγκαρπ', ἀνακτι τῷδ' ὅπως λυτηρίους
εὐχὰς ἀνάσχω δειμάτων ἂν νῦν ἔχω. 635
- κλύοις ἂν ἦδη, Φοῖβε προστατήριε,
κεκρυμμένην μου βίῃ· οὐ γὰρ ἐν φίλοις
ὁ μῦθος, οὐδὲ πᾶν ἀναπτύξαι πρέπει
πρὸς φῶς παρούσης τῆσδε πλησίας ἐμοί, 640
- μὴ σὺν φθόνῳ τε καὶ πολυγλώσσῳ βοῇ
σπεύρῃ ματαίαν βᾶξιν εἰς πᾶσαν πόλιν.
ἀλλ' ὦδ' ἄκουε· τῇδε γὰρ καγὼ φράσω.
ἂν γὰρ προσεῖδον νυκτὶ τῇδε φάσματα
δισσῶν ὀνείρων, ταῦτά μοι, Δύκει' ἀναξ,
εἰ μὲν πέφηνεν ἐσθλά, δὸς τελεσφόρα, 645
- εἰ δ' ἐχθροί, τοῖς ἐχθροῖσιν ἔμπαλιν μέθες·
καὶ μὴ με πλούτου τοῦ παρόντος εἴ τινας
δόλοισι βουλευούουσιν ἐκβαλεῖν, ἐφῆς,

Let me continue safe as now, and sway
The house and sceptre of the sons of Atreus,
Happy among the friends with whom to-day
I live, and with my children—such of them
As neither hate nor hurt me cruelly.
Hear me, Apollo, Lord, be gracious to me,
And as we pray, so may we all be answer'd.
The rest I will not speak. Thou art a god,
I bid thee read my silence All the world
Should hold no secret for a son of Zeus.

*While CLYTAEMNESTRA still stands in an attitude
of supplication at the altar of Apollo, the SERVANT
of Orestes enters*

SER. Ladies, is this the palace of the lord
Aegisthus? I would know with certainty.

CHO. You may be certain. You have guessed aright.

SER. And if I guess, that is Aegisthus' wife—
Her looks are royal—shall I still be right?

CHO. Nothing more certain, sir. Yes, that is she.

SER. Joy to the Queen. Madam, I bring you news,
Sweet news, from a friend, for you and for Aegisthus.

CLY. Good words. We greet the omen, and we thank you.
But tell me first, who sent you?

SER. Phanoteus
The Phocian—and there's matter in my tale.

CLY. What is it? Tell me. I am very sure,
Your news, from such a friend, will prove right welcome.

SER. In brief this is the news: Orestes dead.

EL. Ah woe is me! Oh, I am lost, quite lost.

CLY. Do not listen to her, stranger. Did you say—?

ἀλλ' ὦδέ μ' αἰεὶ ζῶσαν ἀβλαβεῖ βίῳ 650
 δόμους Ἀτρειδῶν σκηπτρά τ' ἀμφέπειν τάδε,
 φίλοισί τε ξυνοῦσαν οἷς ξύνειμι νῦν
 εὐήμεροῦσαν καὶ τέκνων ὄσων ἐμοὶ
 δύσνοια μὴ πρόσσεστιν ἢ λύπη πικρά.
 ταῦτ', ὦ Δύκει' Ἀπολλων, ἴλεως κλύων 655
 δὸς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν ὥσπερ ἐξαιτούμεθα.
 τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα καὶ σιωπῶσης ἐμοῦ
 ἐπαξιῶ σε δαίμον' ὄντ' ἐξειδέναί.
 τοὺς ἐκ Διὸς γὰρ εἰκὸς ἐστι πῖνθ' ὄραν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ξέναι γυναῖκες, πῶς ἂν εἰδείην σαφῶς 660
 εἰ τοῦ τυράννου δώματ' Αἰγίσθου τάδε;
 ΧΟ. τὰδ' ἐστίν, ὦ ξέν'. αὐτὸς ἦκασας καλῶς.
 ΠΑ. ἦ καὶ δάμαρτα τήνδ' ἐπεικάζων κυρῶ
 κείνου; πρέπει γὰρ ὡς τύραννος εἰσορᾶν.
 ΧΟ. μάλιστα πάντων· ἦδε σοι κείνη πάρα. 665
 ΠΑ. ὦ χαῖρ', ἄνασσα· σοὶ φέρων ἦκω λόγους
 ἡδεῖς φίλου παρ' ἀνδρὸς Αἰγίσθω θ' ὁμοῦ
 ΚΛ. ἐδεξάμην τὸ ρηθέν· εἰδέναι δέ σου
 πρώτιστα χρήζω, τίς σ' ἀπέστειλεν βροτῶν.
 ΠΑ. Φανοτεὺς ὁ Φωκεὺς, πρᾶγμα πορσύνων μέγα. 670
 ΚΛ. τὸ ποῖον, ὦ ξέν', εἰπέ· παρὰ φίλου γὰρ ὦν
 ἀνδρὸς, σάφ' οἶδα, προσφιλεῖς λέξεις λόγους.
 ΠΑ. τέθνηκ' Ὀρέστης· ἐν βραχεῖ ξυνηθεὶς λέγω.
 ΗΛ. οἶ' γὰρ τάλαιν', ὅλωλα τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.
 ΚΛ. τί φῆς, τί φῆς, ὦ ξεῖνε; μὴ ταύτης κλύε 675

SER. Orestes dead, I said, and say so still

EL. Forlorn and utterly wretched! Lost, quite lost!

CLY. Look to your own concerns You, stranger, tell me,
And tell me truly, in what way he died.

SER. I was sent for that, and I will tell you all.

To Delphi, to Apollo's festal games,
The pride and glory of assembled Greece,
He came He heard the herald's thrilling cry
Summon the runners for the race came first
He rose in beauty, radiant. all the throng
Was hush'd in wonder so he ran the course
From first to last victorious, crowned at length
With perfect honour. Oh, the tale were long
If I should tell you all I have not known
A man so valiant, so victorious,
Fast as the judges order'd each event,
Winning, and winning yet again. At last
He was acclaim'd by all, an Argive born,
His name Orestes, son of that great prince
Who gather'd Greece for war, King Agamemnon.

So fell these things. But when a god intends
Destruction, even the strong may not escape.
Next day at sunrise, when the lists were set
For the racing of swift-footed steeds and cars,
In a throng of charioteers he also enter'd
One was Achæan one from Sparta: two
From Africa, well-skilled in horsemanship:
And he was fifth, driving a team of mares
From Thessaly: then an Aetolian
With chestnut steeds: next a Magnesian,
And after him an Aenian, with white horses,

- ΠΑ. θανόντ' Ὀρέστην νῦν τε καὶ πάλοι λέγω
 ΗΛ. ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, οὐδέν' εἰμ' ἔτι
 ΚΛ. σὺ μὲν τὰ σαυτῆς πράσσ', ἐμοὶ δὲ σύ, ξένε,
 τάληθές εἰπέ, τῷ τρόπῳ διόλλυται,
 ΠΑ. κάπεμπόμην πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ τὸ πᾶν φράσω. 680
 κείνος γὰρ ἔλθων εἰς τὸ κλεινὸν Ἑλλάδος
 πρόσχημ' ἀγῶνος Δελφικῶν ἄθλων χάριν,
 ὅτ' ἦσθετ' ἀνδρὸς ὀρθίων κηρυγμάτων
 δρόμον προκηρύξαντος, οὗ πρώτη κρίσις,
 εἰσήλθε λαμπρός, πᾶσι τοῖς ἐκκ' σέβας· 685
 δρόμου δ' ἰσώσας τὰφέσει τὰ τέρμματα
 νίκης ἔχων ἐξήλθε πάντιμον γέρας
 χῶπας μὲν ἐν πολλοῖσι παῦρά σοι λέγω,
 οὐκ οἶδα τοιοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἔργα καὶ κρίτη
 ἐν δ' ἴσθ'· ὅσων γὰρ εἰσεκήρυξαν βραβῆς 690
 τούτων ἐνεγκῶν πάντα τὰπινίκια
 ὠλβίζετ', Ἀργεῖος μὲν ἀνακαλούμενος,
 ὄνομα δ' Ὀρέστης, τοῦ τὸ κλεινὸν Ἑλλάδος
 Ἀγαμέμνονος στρώτευμ' ἀγείραντός ποτε 695
 καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τοιαῦθ'· ὅταν δέ τις θεῶν
 βλάπτῃ, δύναται' ἂν οὐδ' ἂν ἰσχύων φυγεῖν
 κείνος γὰρ ἄλλης ἡμέρας, ὅθ' ἵππικῶν
 ἦν ἡλίον τέλλοντος ὠκύπους ἀγῶν,
 εἰσήλθε πολλῶν ἱρματηλατῶν μέτα. 700
 εἰς ἣν Ἀχαιός, εἰς ἀπὸ Σπάρτης, δύο
 Λίβυες ζυγωτῶν ἱρμάτων ἐπιστάται·
 κύκείνος ἐν τούτοισι Θεσσαλὰς ἔχων
 ἵππους, ὁ πέμπτος· ἕκτος ἐξ Αἰτωλίας
 ξανθαῖσι πώλοις· ἔβδομος Μάγνης ἀνὴρ· 705
 ὁ δ' ὀγδοὺς λεύκιππος, Αἰνιὰν γένος·

'The eighth: from god-built Athens came the ninth,
And from Bocotia the tenth and last.
They took their places where the judges, set
To do that office, by the lot assign'd them.
'The trumpet sounds! They start, with a shake of the reins
And a shout to the horses. All the course is fill'd
With noise of rattling cars and rising clouds
Of dust and racers struggling in close pack—
No stinting of the goad—on, on, to pass
The hurrying ival wheels, the flying foam
Of panting steeds, whose labour'd breath bedews
The track of the car, the back of the charioteer.
Boldly he drove close by the stone that marks
The turning, to the trace-horse on his right
Giving free rein, but pulling on the left;
And all the cars drove safely on and on
For six completed courses. Suddenly,
At the seventh course, just as they made the turn,
The Aenian's colts refused the curb, and bolted,
Colliding with a car from Africa,
And from that first mishap car after car
Crash'd and was overturn'd, and filled the plain
Of Crisa with confusion and with wreckage.
The man of Athens understood. He wrench'd
His horses from their course, and cunningly
Drove clear of all that surging sea of trouble.
Last came Orestes, holding back his team,
And trusting for the victory to the end
Now, now he saw no rivals left but one!
He rous'd his horses with a sharp shrill cry,
Hotly pursuing. Neck and neck they drove,

ἔνατος Ἀθηνῶν τῶν θεοδμήτων ἄπο·
 Βοιωτὸς ἄλλος, δέκατον ἐκπληρῶν ὄχον,
 στάντες δ' ὅθ' αὐτοὺς οἱ τεταγμένοι βραβῆς
 κλήρους ἔπηλαν καὶ κατέστησαν δίφρους, 710
 χαλκῆς ὑπαὶ σάλπιγγος ἦξαν· οἱ δ' ἦμα
 ἵπποις ὁμοκλήσαντες ἡνίας χεροῖν
 ἔσεισαν· ἐν δὲ πᾶς ἐμεστώθη δρόμος
 κτύπου κροτητῶν ἁρμάτων· κόνις δ' ἄνω
 φορεῖθ'· ὁμοῦ δὲ πᾶντες ἀναμεμυγμένοι 715
 φείδοντο κέντρων οὐδέν, ὡς ὑπερβῆλοι
 χνόας τις αὐτῶν καὶ φρυγίμαθ' ἵππικαί
 ὁμοῦ γὰρ ἀμφὶ νῶτα καὶ τροχῶν βάσεις
 ἤφριζον, εἰσέβαλλον ἵππικαὶ πνοαί.
 κείνος δ' ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἐσχίτην στήλην ἔχων 720
 ἔχριμπτ' αἰὲ σύριγγα, δεξιὸν δ' ἰνεῖς
 σειραῖον ἵππον εἴργε τὸν προσκείμενον.
 καὶ πρὶν μὲν ὀρθοὶ πάντες ἕστασαν δίφροι·
 ἔπειτα δ' Αἰνιᾶνος ἀνδρὸς ἄστομοι
 πῶλοι βίᾳ φέρουσιν, ἐκ δ' ὑποστροφῆς, 725
 τελοῦντες ἕκτον ἔβδομόν τ' ἤδη δρόμον,
 μέτωπα συμπαίουσι Βαρκαίοις ὄχοις·
 κἀντεῦθεν ἄλλος ἄλλον ἐξ ἐνὸς κακοῦ
 ἔθραυε κἀνέπιπτε, πᾶν δ' ἐπίμπλατο
 ναυαγίων Κρισαῖον ἵππικῶν πέδον. 730
 γνούς δ' οὐξ Ἀθηνῶν δεινὸς ἡνιοστρόφος
 ἔξω παρασπᾶ κἀνοκωχεύει παρεῖς
 κλύδων' ἔφιππον ἐν μέσῳ κυκώμενον.
 ἤλαυνε δ' ἔσχατος μὲν ὑστέρας ἔχων
 πῶλους Ὀρέστης, τῷ τέλει πίστιν φέρων· 735
 ὅπως δ' ὄρᾳ μόνον νιν ἐλλελειμμένον,
 ὅξυν δι' ὥτων κέλαδον ἐνσείσας θοαῖς
 πῶλοις διώκει, κἀξισώσαντε ζυγὰ

First one and then the other, as the cars
Sped on together, leading by a head,
Course after course: and all this while the youth
Unfortunate drove safely and drove well.
At last the moment came when thoughtlessly
He slack'd his left rein as he took the corner,
And struck the pillar, and his axle snapp'd;
He fell back from the car, a prisoner,
Caught in the leathern reins, and, as he fell,
His horses left the track and bolted madly:
Upon which sight, the assembled multitude
With one great shout of wonder and of grief
Acclaim'd a youth, so nobly valiant,
So greatly suffering. High in the air
His madden'd horses flung him, then to earth
Dash'd him again and yet again. At last
His comrades brought the horses to a stand
And loosed the blood-stain'd body, now so changed
That those who loved him best would not have known him.
They gave him to the fire. Their messengers
Are on their way to bring you what is left
Of all that greatness, ashes and an urn,
For the last honours in his father's realm.

That is my tale, and it is pitiful,
Even to tell. For us who witness'd all,
It was a sight sadder than I have seen.

CHO. Alas, alas!

The offspring of our ancient master's house
Hath fallen, and is utterly destroy'd.

CLY. O Zeus, what shall I say? Is this thing good,
Or terrible, though it save me? Must my life

ἡλαυνέτην, τότε ἄλλος, ἄλλοθ' ἄτερος
 κᾶρα προβάλλων ἵππικῶν ὀχημάτων 740
 καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους πάντας ἀσφαλεῖς δρόμους
 ὠρθοῦθ' ὁ τλήμων ὀρθὸς ἐξ ὀρθῶν δίφρων·
 ἔπειτα λύων ἥνιαν ἱριστεράν
 κάμπτοντος ἵππου λανθάνει στήλην ἄκραν
 παίσας· ἔθραυσε δ' ἄξονος μέσας χνόας, 745
 καὶ ἀντύγων ἀλίσθε· σὺν δ' ἐλίσσεται
 τμητοῖς ἱμάσι· τοῦ δὲ πίπτοντος πέδῳ
 πῶλοι διεσπάρησαν εἰς μέσον δρόμον.
 στρατὸς δ' ὅπως ὀρᾷ νιν ἐκπεπτωκότα 750
 δίφρων, ἀνωλόλυξε τὴν νεανίαν,
 οἷ' ἔργα δράσας οἶα λαγχάνει κακί,
 φορούμενος πρὸς οὔδας, ἄλλοτ' οὐρανῷ
 σκέλη προφαίνων, ἔστε νιν διφρηλάται
 μόλις κατασχεθόντες ἵππικὸν δρόμον,
 ἔλυσαν αἵματηρόν, ὥστε μηδένα 755
 γινῶναι φίλων ἰδόντ' ἂν ἄθλιον δέμας
 καὶ νῦν πυρᾷ κέαυτες εὐθὺς ἐν βραχεῖ
 χαλκῷ μέγιστον σῶμα δειλαίας σποδοῦ
 φέρουσιν ἄνδρες Φωκέων τεταγμένοι,
 ὅπως πατρῴας τύμβον ἐκλάχῃ χθονός 760
 τοιαῦτά σοι ταῦτ' ἐστίν, ὥς μὲν ἐν λόγῳ
 ἀλγεινά, τοῖς δ' ἰδοῦσιν, οἷπερ εἶδομεν,
 μέγιστα πάντων ὧν ὅπωπ' ἐγὼ κακῶν.
 ΧΟ. φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ πᾶν δὴ δεσπόταισι τοῖς πάλοι
 πρόρριζον, ὥς ἔοικεν, ἐφθαρται γένος. 765
 ΚΛ. ὦ Ζεῦ, τί ταῦτα, πότερον εὐτυχῇ λέγω,
 ἢ δεινὰ μὲν, κέρδη δέ, λυπηρῶς δ' ἔχει,

Be saved by such a grief? Alas, it hurts.

SER. Madam, what grief is there for you in this?

CLY. It is strange to be a mother Though they hurt,
These children that we bear, we cannot hate them.

SER. It seems, then, that I brought my news in vain?

CLY. No, not in vain. Why should you say in vain?

If you have come with proof, if he be dead,
That child of my own life, who left my breast,
And would not have my care, but lived abroad,
And grew a stranger—he had never seen me
Since he left Argos, but with fearful threats
Tormented me—he said I killed his father—
Until sweet sleep never by night or day
Visited me with rest, and tyrant time
Kept me alive as one condemn'd to die.
This day has made an end of all my fears
Of him—and her—she plagued me worse than he;
She lived with me, and she has drunk her fill
Of my sheer heart's blood—Now I am exempt
From all her threats, and I can live at peace.

EL. Ah, woe is me! Now I can cry alas,
Orestes, for your fortune—laid so low,
Insulted by your mother. Is this well?

CLY. Not well for you! But, as for him—all's well.

EL. Avenging spirit of the lately dead,
Hear her!

CLY. The Spirit of vengeance heard the voice
Which had the right to justice, and avenged—

EL. Be bold! Be blasphemous! while your good Luck
holds—

CLY. And what should break my Luck? Can you? Can he?

- εἰ τοῖς ἐμαντῆς τὸν βίον σφύζω κακοῖς.
 ΠΑ τί δ' ὦδ' ἀθυμεῖς, ᾧ γύναι, τῷ νῦν λόγῳ,
 ΚΛ δεινὸν τὸ τίκτειν ἐστίν· οὐδὲ γὰρ κακῶς 770
 πάσχοντι μῖσος ὧν τέκη προσγίγνεται.
 ΠΑ μάτην ἄρ' ἡμεῖς, ὥς ἔοικεν, ἤκομεν.
 ΚΛ οὔτοι μάτην γε· πῶς γὰρ ἂν μάτην λέγοις;
 εἴ μοι θανόντος πίστ' ἔχων τεκμήρια
 προσήλθες, ὅστις τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς γεγώς, 775
 μαστῶν ὑποστὰς καὶ τροφῆς ἐμῆς, φυγὰς
 ἀπεξενοῦτο· καί μ', ἐπεὶ τῇσδε χθονὸς
 ἐξῆλθεν, οὐκέτ' εἶδεν· ἐγκαλῶν δέ μοι
 φόνους πατρώους δαίν' ἐπηπειλεῖ τελεῖν·
 ὥστ' οὔτε νυκτὸς ὕπνον οὔτ' ἐξ ἡμέρας 780
 ἐμὲ στεγάζειν ἠδύν, ἄλλ' ὁ προστατῶν
 χρόνος διηγέ μ' αἰὲν ὥς θανουμένην.
 νῦν δ', ἡμέρα γὰρ τῇδ' ἀπήλλαγμαί φόβου
 πρὸς τῇσδ' ἐκείνου θ'· ἦδε γὰρ μείζων βλάβη
 ξύνοικος ἦν μοι, τοῦμόν ἐκπίνουσ' αἰεὶ 785
 ψυχῆς ἄκρατον αἷμα—νῦν δ' ἔκκληά που
 τῶν τῇσδ' ἀπειλῶν οὔνεχ' ἡμερεύσομεν.
 ΗΛ οἴμοι τάλαινα· νῦν γὰρ οἰμῶξαι πάρα,
 Ὅρεστα, τὴν σὴν ξυμφοράν, ὅθ' ὦδ' ἔχων
 πρὸς τῇσδ' ὑβρίζει μητρός. ἄρ' ἔχει καλῶς; 790
 ΚΛ οὔτοι σύ· κείνος δ' ὥς ἔχει καλῶς ἔχει
 ΗΛ ἄκουε, Νέμεσι τοῦ θανόντος ἀρτίως
 ΚΛ ἤκουσεν ὧν δεῖ κάπεκύρωσεν καλῶς
 ΗΛ ὕβριζε· νῦν γὰρ εὐτυχοῦσα τυγχάνεις.
 ΚΛ οὐκ οὐν Ὅρεστος καὶ σὺ παύσετον τάδε; 795

EL. No, we are broken, lost We can do nothing.

CLY [*to the SERVANT*] If you have stopped that clamorous tongue, we owe you

For that good office, friend, a rich reward.

SER. By your leave, I will go, if all indeed be well.

CLY. Nay, we remember what we owe ourselves
And our good friend who sent you. You must stay,
And welcome. Pay no heed to her. Come in.
Leave her to cry her wrongs and mourn her dead.

[*Exeunt CLYTAEMNESTRA, the SERVANT, and attendants*]

EL. Friends, do you think she grieves? Where are the tears?

The mother's cry of bitterness? She went
With laughter on her lips Oh, woe is me,
Orestes! You are dead, and I am lost,
Lost, empty-hearted! You have stripp'd away
And carried to your grave that one last hope,
That you might live and come again some day
To vindicate our father and to save me.
What can I do now? I am quite alone,
My father lost—and you—and I once more
A drudge among these deadly enemies,
My father's butchers Is it well with me?
No, I will not go in. However long
I live, I'll not go in, but lay me down
Here at the gate and pine away the time,
Friendless and helpless. If it breaks their peace,
Why, let them kill me. I shall thank them for it.
To live is pain. I do not wish for life.

str. 1

CHOR. Where are the bolts of Zeus
And the fire of the Sun-God?

ΗΛ. ^ἡπεπαύμεθ' ἡμεῖς, οὐχ ὅπως σε παύσομεν.

ΚΛ πολλῶν ἂν ἦκοις, ὦ ξέν', ἄξιος τυχεῖν,
εἰ τήνδ' ἔπαυσας τῆς πολυγλώσσου βοῆς

ΠΛ. οὐκοῦν ἀποστείχοιμ' ἄν, εἰ τάδ' εὖ κυρεῖ.

ΚΛ. ἦκιστ'· ἐπεὶ περ οὕτ' ἐμοῦ καταξίως
πράξειας οὔτε τοῦ πορεύσαντος ξένου.

ἀλλ' εἴσιθ' εἴσω· τήνδε δ' ἔκτοθεν βοᾶν
ἔα τά θ' αὐτῆς καὶ τὰ τῶν φίλων κακά.

ΗΛ. ἄρ' ὑμῖν ὥς ἀλγοῦσα κώδυνωμένη
δεινῶς δακρύσαι κήπικωκῦσαι δοκεῖ

τὸν υἱὸν ἢ δύστηνος ᾧδ' ὀλωλότα ;
ἀλλ' ἐγγελῶσα φροῦδος, ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ·

Ὅρέστα φίλταθ', ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας θανῶν
ἀποσπάσας γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς οἴχει φρενὸς

αἶ μοι μόναι παρήσαν ἐλπίδων ἔτι,
σέ πατρὸς ἥξειν ζῶντα τιμωρόν ποτε

κἀμοῦ ταλαίνης νῦν δέ ποῖ με χρῆ μολεῖν,
μόνη γάρ εἰμι, σοῦ τ' ἀπεστερημένη

καὶ πατρός· ἤδη δεῖ με δουλεύειν πάλλιν
ἐν τοῖσιν ἐχθίστοισιν ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ

φονεῦσι πατρός· ἰδρά μοι καλῶς ἔχει ;
ἀλλ' οὗ τι μὴν ἔγωγε τοῦ λοιποῦ χρόνου

ξύνοικος εἴσειμ', ἀλλὰ τῇδε προς πύλῃ
παρεῖσ' ἐμαυτὴν ἀφίλος ἀνὰ νῶ βίον.

πρὸς ταῦτα καίνέτω τις, εἰ βαρύνεται,
τῶν ἔνδον ὄντων· ὥς χάρις μέν, ἦν κτάνη,

λύπη δ', ἐὰν ζῷ· τοῦ βίου δ' οὐδείς πάθος.

στρ α'

ΧΟ. ποῦ ποτε κεραυνοὶ Διός, ἢ ποῦ φαέθων

825

Can the gods see these things, and leave the dead in darkness
And not be moved?

EL. Ah!

CHO. Weep not, child

EL. Alas!

CHO. Make no presumptuous outcry.

EL. Nay, thou wilt destroy me.

CHO. How so?

EL. If thou dost even hint at any hope
For those who manifestly are departed into Hades,
Thou wilt but trample on my misery, and mock my tears.

ant. 1

CHO. I hope, because I know the princely Amphiaraus,
Though swallow'd in the earth by reason of a woman's
golden snares,

Now, in the realms below—

EL. Ah me, ah me!

CHO. Ruleth in plenitude of princely power.

EL. Alas!

CHO. Alas!

Because that murderous woman—

EL. Was slain

CHO. Yea, she was slain.

EL. I know, I know A champion arose to help the
mourner.

But I—I have no helper now. For he that was, is gone,
is taken from me.

str. 2

CHO. Thou art unhappy, and thy fortune is unkind.

EL. I know, I know these things too well.

Has not my life of sorrow and confusion,

“Αλιος, εἰ ταῦτ’ ἐφορῶντες κρύπτουσιν ἔκκληοι,

ΗΛ. ἔἔ, αἰαῖ.

ΧΟ. ὦ παῖ, τί διακρίεις,

ΗΛ. φεῦ. ΧΟ μῆδ’ ἐν μέγ’ ἀνύσῃς ΗΛ ἀπολεῖς. ΧΟ.
πῶς, 831

ΗΛ εἰ τῶν φανερώς οἰχομένων
εἰς Ἀΐδαν ἐλπίδ’ ὑποίσσεις, κατ’ ἐμοῦ τακομένας
μᾶλλον ἐπεμβάσει. 835

ἀντ. α’

ΧΟ. οἶδα γὰρ ἄνακτ’ Ἀμφιάρεων χρυσοδέτοις
ἔρκεσι κρυφθέντα γυναικῶν· καὶ νῦν ὑπὸ γαίης

ΗΛ. ἔἔ· ἰώ. 840

ΧΟ πάμψυχος ἀνάσσει.

ΗΛ. φεῦ. ΧΟ φεῦ δῆτ’· ὅλοα γὰρ ΗΛ. ἐδάμη. ΧΟ. ναί

ΗΛ. οἶδ’ οἶδ’· ἐφάνη γὰρ μελέτωρ 846
ἀμφὶ τὸν ἐν πένθει· ἐμοὶ δ’ οὔτις ἔτ’ ἔσθ’· ὃς γὰρ
ἔτ’ ἦν,
φροῦδος ἀναρπασθεῖς

στρ. β’.

ΧΟ. δειλαία δειλαίων κυρεῖς.

ΗΛ. καγὼ τοῦδ’ ἴστωρ, ὑπερίστωρ, 850
πανσύρτῳ παμμήνῳ πολλῶν

Ruinously sweeping through the months of 'anguish,
taught me?

CHO. We have seen the cause of thy lamenting.

EL. Then do not seek to wean me any longer from my
sorrow, for to-day, to-day—

CHO. What wouldst thou say?

EL. There is no longer any hope
Of succour from my noble brother.

ant 2

CHO. All must die

EL. Nay, not as he died, trampled by the racing steeds,
Caught in the reins and dragg'd to death

CHO Ah me,

A mystery inscrutable.

EL. Is it not so?

Like one I knew not, far from my arms—

CHO Alas!

EL. He lies in death, and I have not lamented
Nor brought him to his grave.

Enter CHRYSOTHEMIS, joyfully and in haste

CHR. Joy, sister, joy has banished every thought
Of maiden modesty, and bids me haste
To bring you news of happiness and peace
From sorrow and from tears.

EL. Where will you find
Comfort for me? How can you cure a grief
Past the physician's skill?

CHR. Sister, sweet sister,
Orestes has come home. Listen. As surely
As I stand here with you, he has come home.

EL. Alas, child, are you mad, that you can jest

δεινῶν στυγνῶν τ' αἰῶνι.

ΧΟ. εἶδομεν ἀθρήνεις

ΗΛ. μή μέ νυν μηκέτι

παραγάγῃς, ἵν' οὐ ΧΟ τί φής; 856

ΗΛ. πάρεσιν ἐλπιδῶν ἔτι κοινοτόκων
εὐπατριδᾶν ἄρωγαί.

ἀντ. β'.

ΧΟ. πᾶσι θνατοῖς ἔφυ μόρος. 860

ΗΛ. ἦ καὶ χαλαργοῖς ἐν ἀμίλλαις
οὕτως ὥς κείνῃ δυστάνῳ
τμητοῖς ὀλκοῖς ἐγκῦρσαι :

ΧΟ. ἄσκοπος ἡ λῶβα.

ΗΛ. πῶς γὰρ οὔκ· εἰ ξένος 865
ἄτερ ἐμῶν χερῶν ΧΟ. παπαῖ.

ΗΛ. κέκευθεν, οὔτε του τάφου ἀντιάσας
οὔτε γόων παρ' ἡμῶν. 870

ΧΡΗΣΘΕΜΙΣ

ὕψ' ἡδονῆς τοι, φιλτάτη, διώκομαι
τὸ κόσμιον μεθεῖσα σὺν τάχει μολεῖν.
φέρω γὰρ ἡδονάς τε κἀνάπαυλαν ὦν
πάροιθεν εἶχες καὶ κατέστενες κακῶν.

ΗΛ. πόθεν δ' ἂν εὔροις τῶν ἐμῶν σὺ πημάτων 875
ἄρηξιν, οἷς ἴασιν οὔκ ἔνεστ' ἰδεῖν ;

ΧΡ. πάρεστ' Ὀρέστῃς ἡμῖν, ἴσθι τοῦτ' ἐμοῦ
κλύουσ', ἐναργῶς, ὥσπερ εἰσορᾷς ἐμέ.

ΗΛ. ἀλλ' ἦ μέμνησας, ὦ τάλαινα, κἀπὶ τοῖς

At your own grief and mine?

CHR. No, in the name
Of our great father's house, I do not jest
Orestes has come home.

PL. Alas, poor child,
Who has abused your faith? Who told you this?

CHR. I learnt it for myself. I have the sure
And certain evidence of my own eyes.

EL. What have you seen, poor child? What has inspired
This feverish, hopeless, brainsick fantasy?

CHR. Listen, in God's name, first, and then pronounce
Your verdict on my wisdom or my folly.

EL. Well, if it makes you happy, tell your story.

CHR. Yes, I will tell you everything. I came
To our great father's grave, and there I found
Fresh streams of milk from the high barrow's top
Trickling, and all the monument was gay
And garlanded with flowers. When I saw it,
At first I stood amazed. I looked about,
Afraid—Was someone lurking there? The place
Was still and silent. Over all was peace.
I moved towards the tomb; a lock of hair
Lay on the edge of the pyre.—Oh! my poor heart
Thrilled at the sight of it. I seemed to see
The bright familiar vision of our dreams,
I knew it was a sign from dear Orestes.
I took it in my hand. I said no word
Untimely; though my eyes were full of tears,
It was for joy I wept. I knew, I know,
It must have been Orestes. None but he
Or you or I would bring such offerings,

- σ' αὐτῆς κακοῖσι κἀπὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς γελᾶς ; 880
 ΧΡ. μὰ τὴν πατρώαν ἐστίαν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὕβρει
 λέγω τάδ', ἀλλ' ἐκείνου ὡς παρόντα νῦν.
 ΗΛ. οἴμοι τάλαινα· καὶ τίνας βροτῶν λόγον
 τόνδ' εἰσακούσας ᾧδε πιστεύεις ἄγαν ;
 ΧΡ. ἐγὼ μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ τε κοῦκ ἄλλης σαφῇ 885
 σημεῖ' ἰδοῦσα τῷδε πιστεύω λόγῳ
 ΗΛ. τίν', ὦ τάλαινα, ἰδοῦσα πίστιν ; εἰς τί μοι
 βλίψασα θάλλπει τῷδ' ἀνηκίστῳ πυρί,
 ΧΡ. πρὸς νυν θεῶν ἄκουσον, ὡς μαθοῦσά μου 890
 τὸ λοιπὸν ἢ φρονοῦσαν ἢ μώραν λέγῃς
 ΗΛ. σὺ δ' οὖν λέγ', εἴ σοι τῷ λόγῳ τις ἡδονή.
 ΧΡ. καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι πᾶν ὅσον κατειδόμην.
 ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἦλθον πατρὸς ἀρχαῖον τάφον,
 ὁρῶ κολώνης ἐξ ἄκρας νεορρύτους 895
 πηγᾶς γάλακτος, καὶ περιστεφῇ κύκλῳ
 πάντων ὅσ' ἔστιν ἀνθέων θήκην πατρός
 ἰδοῦσα δ' ἔσχον θαῦμα, καὶ περισκοπῶ
 μή πού τις ἡμῖν ἐγγὺς ἐγχερίμπτη βροτῶν.
 ὡς δ' ἐν γαλήνῃ πάντ' ἐδερκόμην τόπον,
 τύμβου προσεῖρπον ἄσπον· ἐσχάτης δ' ὁρῶ 900
 πυρᾶς νεώρη βόστρυχον τετμημένον·
 κεῦθὺς τάλαινα ὡς εἶδον, ἐμπαίει τί μοι
 ψυχῇ σύνηθες ὄμμα, φιλτάτου βροτῶν
 πάντων Ὀρέστου τοῦθ' ὁρᾶν τεκμήριον·
 καὶ χερσὶ βαστάσασα δυσφημῶ μὲν οὐ,
 905 χαρᾷ δὲ πῖμπλημ' εὐθὺς ὄμμα δακρύων.
 καὶ νῦν θ' ὁμοίως καὶ τότε! ἐξεπίσταμαι
 μή του τόδ' ἀγλαίσμα πλὴν κείνου μολεῖν.
 τῷ γὰρ προσήκει πλὴν γ' ἐμοῦ καὶ σοῦ τόδε ;

Or care to bring them, and, it was not I,
Nor you; I know how watchful cruelty
Forbids you even to approach the gods,
Nor was it she, our mother. In her spirit
Is no such thought. Besides, we must have known it.
These honours of the grave belong to none
Except Orestes. Dear, be confident.

The face of fortune changes You and I
Have known her frowns: perhaps to-day may bring
Blessing for bane, and joy for suffering.

EL. Ah, fond simplicity! I pity you.

CHR. Are you not glad?

EL. You do not know how far
You travel from the truth, in what a coil
You are bemused.

CHR. I know what I have seen.

EL. Your brother's dead, poor child, with all our hopes
Of happiness. You must look no more to him

CHR. Alas, who told you this?

EL. The man who stood
Beside him when he died

CHR. Where is this man?
Oh, I am in a maze

EL. He is within
Our mother makes him welcome.

CHR. Oh, alas!
Who was it, then, that brought those offerings
To grace our father's tomb?

EL. They were a gift,
I think, from one who honours dead Orestes.

CHR. I came to you so full of happiness,

καὶ γὰρ μὲν οὐκ ἔδρασα, τοῦτ' ἐπίσταμαι,
οὐδ' αὖ σύ· πῶς γάρ; ἥ γε μηδὲ πρὸς θεοὺς
ἔξεστ' ἀκλαύστῳ τῆσδ' ἀποστῆναι στέγης
ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ μητρὸς οὐθ' ὁ νοῦς φιλεῖ
τοιαῦτα πρᾶσσειν οὔτε δρῶσ' ἐλάνθανεν·
ἀλλ' ἔστ' Ὀρέστου ταῦτα τὰ πιτύμβια 915
ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη, θάρσυνε. τοῖς αὐτοῖσί τοι
οὐχ αὐτὸς ἄε δαιμόνων παραστατεῖ
νῶν ἦν τὰ πρόσθεν στυγνός· ἡ δὲ νῦν ἴσως
πολλῶν ὑπάρξει κύρος ἡμέρα καλῶν.

ΗΛ. φεῦ τῆς ἀνοίας, ὥς σ' ἐποικτίρω πάλαι. 920

ΧΡ. τί δ' ἔστιν; οὐ πρὸς ἡδονὴν λέγω τάδε;

ΗΛ. οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅποι γῆς οὐδ' ὅποι γνώμης φέρει

ΧΡ. πῶς δ' οὐκ ἐγὼ κάτοιδ' ἃ γ' εἶδον ἐμφανῶς;

ΗΛ. τέβνηκεν, ὦ τάλαινα· τὰ κείνου δέ σοι
σωτήρι' ἔρρει· μηδὲν εἰς κεῖνόν γ' ὄρα. 925

ΧΡ. οἴμοι τάλαινα· τοῦ τὰδ' ἤκουσας βροτῶν;

ΗΛ. τοῦ πλησίον παρόντος ἡνίκ' ὥλλυτο.

ΧΡ. καὶ ποῦ 'στιν οὗτος; θαυμά τοί μ' ὑπέρχεται

ΗΛ. κατ' οἶκον, ἡδὺς οὐδὲ μητρὶ δυσχερής.

ΧΡ. οἴμοι τάλαινα· τοῦ γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ποτ' ἦν 930
τὰ πολλὰ πατρὸς πρὸς τάφον κτερίσματα;

ΗΛ. οἶμαι μάλιστ' ἔγωγε τοῦ τεθνηκότος
μνημεῖ' Ὀρέστου ταῦτα προσθεῖναι τινα

ΧΡ. ὦ δυστυχής· ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν χαρᾷ λόγους

So eager with my news I did not know
How far we were from joy. And here I find
All the old griefs, and worse than all we knew.

EL. Yes, it is true And yet there is one way,
One hope, if you will do my bidding, still,
To lift the burden from us.

CHR. Can I call
The dead to life again?

EL. I am not mad.
I do not ask for that

CHR. What can I do
That you would have me do?

EL. You must be strong,
To do what I shall ask.

CHR. I'll not refuse
If anything can help.

EL. There is no way
To prosper without pain Think well.

CHR. I know.
Yes, I will help you with what strength I have.

EL. Then listen to my purpose. You and I—
You know it—have no friend to help us now,
Not one. Death came to rob us, and he took
Our friend, and you and I are left alone.
For my part, while I heard my brother lived,
I kept my hope. I told myself, some day
He will come home to quit my father's murder,
Some day. But he is dead. I must not hide
Anything from you now. I look to you
For courage. Will you shrink, or will you help
Your sister to avenge your father's murder?

ν

τοιούσδ' ἔχουσ' ἔσπευδον, οὐκ εἰδυί' ἄρα 935
 ἴν' ἤμεν ἄτης· ἀλλὰ νῦν, ὅθ' ἰκόμην,
 τά τ' ὄντα πρόσθεν ἄλλα θ' εὐρίσκω κακά.

ΗΛ. οὕτως ἔχει σοι ταῦτ'· ἐὰν δέ μοι πίθῃ,
 τῆς νῦν παρούσης πημονῆς λύσεις βάρος.

ΧΡ. ἦ τοὺς θανόντας ἐξαναστήσω ποτέ; 940

ΗΛ. οὐκ ἔσθ' ὃ γ' εἶπον· οὐ γὰρ ὧδ' ἄφρων ἔφυν.

ΧΡ. τί γὰρ κελεύεις ὦν ἐγὼ φερέγγυος,

ΗΛ. τλήναι σε δρώσαν ἂν ἐγὼ παραινέσω

ΧΡ. ἀλλ' εἴ τις ὠφέλειά γ', οὐκ ἀπόσομαι.

ΠΛ. ὄρα, πόνου τοι χωρὶς οὐδὲν εὐτυχεῖ. 945

ΧΡ. ὁρῶ. ξυνοίσω πᾶν ὅσον περ ἂν σθένω.

ΗΛ. ἄκουε δὴ νυν ἥ βεβούλευμαι τελεῖν.

παρουσίαν μὲν οἶσθα καὶ σὺ που φίλων

ὥς οὐτις ἡμῖν ἐστίν, ἀλλ' Ἄιδης λαβὼν

ἀπεστέρηκε καὶ μόνα λελείμμεθον. 950

ἐγὼ δ' ἔως μὲν τὸν κασίγνητον βίω

θάλλοντ' ἔτ' εἰσήκουον, εἶχον ἐλπίδας

φόνου ποτ' αὐτὸν πράκτορ' ἵζεσθαι πατρός·

νῦν δ' ἡνίκ' οὐκέτ' ἐστίν, εἰς σέ δὴ βλέπω,

ὅπως τὸν αὐτόχειρα πατρώου φόνου 955

ξὺν τῇδ' ἀδελφῇ μὴ κατοκνήσεις κτανεῖν

Ἀλγισθον· οὐδὲν γάρ σε δεῖ κρύπτειν μ' ἔτι.

ποῖ γὰρ μενεῖς ῥάθυμος, ἐς τίν' ἐλπίδων

Help me to kill Aegisthus? 'There's no way,
No hope, except in action What is left
'That you can look for? Your inheritance
Is gone already. You may weep for it,
And mourn the long lost years, the desolate waste
Of your virginity—You can never hope
To marry now—Aegisthus is no fool.
He'll have no children got on you or me
As ministers of revenge—no hope of that.
But if you take my way, what then? Why, first,
You will do right; you will entreat our dead,
Father and brother, both, religiously;
And then, as you were born noble and free,
You shall be free and noble, and shall wed
Worthily. Honour wins the world's regard.
If you are ruled by me, think, you will get
For both of us such honour and such praise,
No citizen or stranger, when he sees us,
But will acclaim us thus —' Behold, good friends,
Two sisters who, to save their father's house
From ruin, made no question of their lives,
But braved a prosperous enemy, and dealt
Death to the strong. All glory and all love
Should grace them, and their excellent bravery
Be crown'd in all our public feasts with honour.'
This, while we live, and when we die, what then?
Fame that shall never die! Let it be so,
Dear sister. Be persuaded. Help to bear
Your father's burden. Suffer with your brother,
And save yourself and me Life without honour
Is shame, not life, for us who were born noble.

βλέψας ἔτ' ὀρθήν; ἢ πάρεστι μὲν στέρειν
 πλούτου πατρῷου κτήσιν ἐστερημένην, 960
 πάρεστι δ' ἄλγειν ἐς τοσούδε τοῦ χρόνου
 ἄλεκτρα γηράσκουσιν ἀνυμέναιά τε.
 καὶ τῶνδε μέντοι μηκέτ' ἐλπίσῃς ὅπως
 τεύξει ποτ'· οὐ γὰρ ᾧδ' ἄβουλός ἐστ' ἀνὴρ
 Αἰγισθος ὥστε σὸν ποτ' ἢ καμὸν γένος 965
 βλαστεῖν εἶσαι, πημονὴν αὐτῷ σαφῆ.
 ἀλλ' ἣν ἐπίσπῃ τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλευμασιν,
 πρῶτον μὲν εὐσέβειαν ἐκ πατρὸς κάτω
 θανόντος οἴσει τοῦ κασιγνήτου θ' ἅμα·
 ἔπειτα δ', ὥσπερ ἐξέφυς, ἐλευθέρα 970
 καλεῖ τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ γάμων ἐπαξίων
 τεύξει· φιλεῖ γὰρ πρὸς τὰ χρηστὰ πᾶς ὄραν.
 λόγων γε μὴν εὐκλειαν οὐχ ὀρᾷς ὅσῃν
 σαντῇ τε κύμοι προσβαλεῖς πεισθίεις ἐμοί;
 τίς γὰρ ποτ' ἀστῶν ἢ ξένων ἡμᾶς ἰδὼν 975
 τοιοῖσδ' ἐπαίνοις οὐχὶ δεξιῶσεται,
 ἴδεσθε τῷδε τῷ κασιγνήτῳ, φίλοι,
 ὦ τὸν πατρῷον οἶκον ἐξεσωσάτην,
 ὦ τοῖσιν ἐχθροῖς εὖ βεβηκόσιν ποτὲ
 ψυχῆς ἀφειδήσαντε προὔστητην φόνου· 980
 τούτῳ φιλεῖν χρή, τῷδε χρή πάντας σέβειν·
 τῷδ' ἔν θ' ἐορταῖς ἔν τε πανδήμῳ πόλει
 τιμᾶν ἅπαντας οὐνεκ' ἀνδρείας χρεῶν.
 τοιαυτὰ τοι νῦν πᾶς τις ἐξερεῖ βροτῶν,
 ζῶσαιν θανοῦσαιν θ' ὥστε μὴ κλιπεῖν κλέος. 985
 ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη, πείσθητι, συμπόνει πατρί,
 σύγκαμν' ἀδελφῷ, παῦσον ἐκ κακῶν ἐμέ,
 παῦσον δὲ σαυτὴν, τοῦτο γιγνώσκουσ', ὅτι
 ζῆν αἰσχροὺν αἰσχροῶς τοῖς καλῶς πεφυκόσιν.

CHO. You have much need, both you who speak and you
Who hear this plea, of judgment and discretion.

CHR Discretion? She is brainsick, every thought
Of prudence quite forgotten, or the need
Of caution would have check'd her. It is you [*to ELECTRA*]
Should think. What can you look for? what success
Could wait upon so rash an enterprise
As this to which you call me? You forget
You are a woman, and your enemy
Is strong and flourishing, day after day
Uplifted on a flooding tide of fortune,
While ours still ebbs and tails. This is a man
Whose ruin none can compass, and himself
Escape disaster. What we suffer now,
Alas, we know. But if such talk as this
Be once reported to him, worse will come.
What can it help or profit us to win
The empty name of honour if we die
Shamefully? Death is not the worst, but when
The tortured crave release, and cannot die.
I do beseech you, then, before you bring
Destruction on us both, and quite uproot
The remnant of our house, be well advised.
Control your passion. All that you have said
Shall be as if unspoken. I will keep
Your secret. Only be advis'd. Your strength
Is weakness. Learn to bow before the strong.

CHO. Be ruled by her. Life has no better gift
Than wise discretion and a prudent mind.

EL. I knew you would reject me. You have said
Nothing unlook'd for. I must do my task

- ΧΘ. ἐν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις ἐστὶν ἡ προμηθία
καὶ τῷ λέγουσι καὶ κλύοντι σύμμαχος. 990
- ΧΡ. καὶ πρὶν γε φωνεῖν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ φρενῶν
ἐτύγχαν' αὕτη μὴ κακῶν, ἐσφίζετ' ἂν
τὴν εὐλάβειαν, ὥσπερ οὐχὶ σφίζεται
ποῖ γὰρ ποτ' ἐμβλέψασα τοιοῦτον θρίσος 995
αὐτῇ θ' ὀπλίζει καὶ ὑπηρετεῖν καλεῖς,
οὐκ εἰσορᾷς; γυνὴ μὲν οὐδ' ἀνὴρ ἔφυς,
σθένεις δ' ἔλασσον τῶν ἐναντίων χερὶ
δαίμων δὲ τοῖς μὲν εὐτυχὴς καθ' ἡμέραν,
ἡμῶν δ' ἀπορρεῖ κατὰ μὴδὲν ἔρχεται 1000
τίς οὖν τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα βουλεύων ἐλεῖν
ἄλυπος ἄτης ἔξαπαλλαχθήσεται;
ὅρα κακῶς πρίσσουντε μὴ μείζω κακὰ
κτησώμεθ', εἴ τις τούσδ' ἀκούσεται λόγους.
λύει γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἐπωφελεῖ 1005
βίξιν καλὴν λαβόντε δυσκλεῶς θανεῖν·
οὐ γὰρ θανεῖν ἔχθιστον, ἀλλ' ὅταν θανεῖν
χρήζων τις εἴτα μὴδὲ τοῦτ' ἔχη λαβεῖν.
ἀλλ' ἀντιάζω, πρὶν πανωλέθρους τὸ πᾶν
ἡμᾶς τ' ὀλέσθαι καὶ ξερωμῶσαι γένος, 1010
κατάσχεσ ὀργήν. καὶ τὰ μὲν λελεγμένα
ἄρρητ' ἐγὼ σοι κατέλη φυλάξομαι,
αὐτὴ δὲ νοῦν σχές ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ ποτέ,
σθένουσα μὴδὲν τοῖς κρατοῦσιν εἰκαθεῖν.
- ΧΘ. πείθου· προνοίας οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ 1015
κέρδος λαβεῖν ἄμεινον οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ.
- ΗΛ. ἀπροσδόκητον οὐδὲν εἴρηκας· καλῶς δ'
ἦδη σ' ἀπορρίψουσιν ἀπηγγελλόμεν.
ἀλλ' αὐτόχειρί μοι μόνῃ τε δραστέον

Alone We cannot leave this work undone

CHR. Ah!

Would you had shown such mettle on the day
Our father died! You might have ended all!

LL. In spirit I was the same; in thought a child.

CHR. Cherish the same thought now Be a child still.

EL. This counsel means you will not help?

CHR.

I think

Things ill begun can hardly end in good.

EL. I envy your discretion, and I loathe
Your cowardly heart.

CHR. I shall be patient still
When your time comes to praise me.

LL. Never, never!

CHR. Wait. The long lapse of time will judge between us.

EL. Leave me. You do not help.

CHR.

And yet I think

I could, if you could only understand.

EL. Get you gone! Tell your mother everything!

CHR. No! I am not so much your enemy.

EL. Yet think what infamy you would offer me!

CHR. No infamy. It is my care for you.

EL. Are you to judge what's right? Are you my guide?

CHR. When you are your sane self, you shall be mine.

EL. Strange, how you find good words, yet miss the truth.

CHR. That's the true cause of your own malady.

EL. What? Can you doubt the justice of my cause?

CHR. Justice may sometimes end in grief and wrong.

EL. That is no rule of life for me to follow.

CHR. Yet you will find its truth, if you do this thing.

EL. I shall do this thing You cannot frighten me.

- 1
 τοῦργον τόδ'· οὐ γὰρ δὴ κενόν γ' ἀφήσομεν. 1020
 ΧΡ. φεῦ·
 εἴθ' ὥφελες τοιάδε τὴν γνώμην πατρὸς
 θυήσκοντος εἶναι· πᾶν γὰρ ἂν κατειργάσω.
 ΗΛ. ἀλλ' ἡ φύσιν γε, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἥσσων τότε
 ΧΡ. ἄσκει τοιαύτη νοῦν δι' αἰῶνος μένειν.
 ΗΛ. ὥς οὐχὶ συνδράσουςα νουθετεῖς τάδε. 1025
 ΧΡ. εἰκὸς γὰρ ἐγχειροῦντα καὶ πράσσειν κακῶς.
 ΗΛ. ζηλῶ σε τοῦ νοῦ, τῆς δὲ δειλίας στυγῶ.
 ΧΡ. ἀνέξομαι κλύουσα χῶταν εὖ λέγης.
 ΗΛ. ἀλλ' οὐ ποτ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ γε μὴ πιάθης τόδε.
 ΧΡ. μακρὸς τὸ κρίναι ταῦτα χῶ λοιπὸς χρόνος 1030
 ΗΛ. ἄπελθε· σοὶ γὰρ ὠφέλησις οὐκ ἔνι.
 ΧΡ. ἔνεστιν· ἰλλὰ σοὶ μάθησις οὐ πάρα.
 ΗΛ. ἐλθοῦσα μητρὶ ταῦτα πᾶντ' ἔξιπε σῇ.
 ΧΡ. οὐδ' αὖ τοσοῦτον ἔχθος ἐχθαίρω σ' ἐγώ.
 ΗΛ. ἀλλ' οὖν ἐπίστω γ' οἷ μ' ἀτιμίας ἄγεις. 1035
 ΧΡ. ἀτιμίας μὲν οὐ, προμηθείας δὲ σοῦ
 ΗΛ. τῷ σῷ δικαίῳ δῆτ' ἐπισπέσθαι με δεῖ;
 ΧΡ. ὅταν γὰρ εὖ φρονῇς, τόθ' ἡγήσει σὺ νῶν.
 ΗΛ. ἡ δεινὸν εὖ λέγουσαν ἐξαμαρτάνειν.
 ΧΡ. εἰρηκας ὀρθῶς ἢ σὺ πρόσκεισαι κακῷ. 1040
 ΗΛ. τί δ'; οὐ δοκῶ σοι ταῦτα σὺν δίκῃ λέγειν;
 ΧΡ. ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἔνθα χῆ δίκη βλάβην φέρει.
 ΗΛ. τούτοις ἐγὼ ζῆν τοῖς νόμοις οὐ βούλομαι.
 ΧΡ. ἀλλ' εἰ ποιήσεις ταῦτ', ἐπαινέσεις ἐμέ.
 ΗΛ. καὶ μὴν ποιήσω γ', οὐδὲν ἐκπλαγεῖσά σε. 1045

CHR. Must it be so? Can you not change your purpose?

EL. For no base counsel, which I loathe

CHR.

I think

You do not understand me.

EL.

I have long

Determin'd this. It is no sudden impulse.

CHR. Then I will go. Does not your mind approve
My words? My heart cannot applaud your ways.

EL. Go then. I shall not follow If your heart
Indeed be in this matter, still I cannot,
Since to be set on vanity is great folly.

CHR. Pursue your purpose, if indeed you think
There's wisdom in it Presently, in the midst
Of evil, you will say I spoke the truth.

str. 1

[Exit CHRYSOTHEMIS

CHO Wise are the birds of air, and well repay
Their debt of love for life and loving care.

Why are not we as they?

How can we watch them and forget

The self-same debt?

Zeus of the lightning-sword,

With Righteousness enthron'd above,

Bitter and swift is man's reward

For scorn of love.

O Voice, O mirthless messenger of song,

Cry it aloud, the tale of shame and wrong:

Cry, that the King may hear and understand

Even in the dead men's land.

ant. 1

Tell him, 'The shame and wrong will not remove.'

Tell him that love is weak and strife is strong.

- ΧΡ καὶ τοῦτ' ἀληθές, οὐδὲ βουλευέσει πάλιν;
 ΗΛ. βουλῆς γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστιν ἔχθριον κακῆς
 ΧΡ. φρονεῖν ἔοικας οὐδὲν ὧν ἐγὼ λέγω.
 ΗΛ. πάλαι δέδοκται ταῦτα κοῦ νεωστί μοι.
 ΧΡ. ἄπειμι τοῖνυν· οὔτε γὰρ σὺ τᾶμ' ἔπη 1050
 πολμῶς ἐπαινεῖν οὔτ' ἐγὼ τοὺς σοὺς τρόπους.
 ΗΛ. ἀλλ' εἴσιθ' οὗ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαί ποτε,
 οὐδ' ἦν σφόδρ' ἰμείρουσα τυγχάνης· ἐπεὶ
 πολλῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τὸ θηρᾶσθαι κενά.
 ΧΡ. ἀλλ' εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι 1055
 φρονεῖν, φρόνει τοιαῦθ'· ὅταν γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς
 ἤδη βεβήκης, τᾶμ' ἐπαινέσεις ἔπη.
 στρ. α'.
 ΧΟ. τί τοὺς ἄνωθεν φρονιμωτάτους οἶων-
 οὺς ἐσορώμενοι τρυφᾶς
 ' κηδομένους ἀφ' ὧν τε βλάστ- 1060
 ωσιν ἀφ' ὧν τ' ὄνασιν εὖρ-
 ωσι, τὰδ' οὐκ ἐπ' ἴσας τελούμεν;
 ἀλλ' οὐ τὰν Διὸς ἀστραπὰν
 καὶ τὰν οὐρανίαν Θέμιν,
 δαρὸν οὐκ ἀπόνητοι. 1065
 ὦ χθονία βροτοῖσι φά-
 μα, κατὰ μοι βόασσον οἰκ-
 τρὰν ὅπα τοῖς ἔνερθ' Ἀτρεί-
 δαις, ἀχόρευτα φέρουσ' ὀνείδῃ·
 ἀντ. α'.
 ὅτι σφιν ἤδη τὰ μὲν ἐκ δόμων νοσεῖ 1070
 δῆ, τὰ δὲ πρὸς τέκνων διπλῇ

His children turn from love
 And in the storm of strife fordone,
 Betray'd, alone,
 Electra still must mourn—
 O constancy uncomfited,
 O sorrowful nightingale, forlorn—
 A father dead.

O royal child, O daughter of a King!
 She careth not for death, if death shall bring
 The twofold Fury down, for so to die
 Were true nobility

stl 2

Who would lose a noble name?
 Purchase life for shame?
 Child, thou hast the better part,
 Service, though it break the heart
 Evil is the weapon, but the prize
 Is great As thou art faithful, thou art wise.

ant 2

Live, and triumphant—every foe
 Vanquish'd and brought low!
 Prosper, since in thee I find,
 Though thy fate hath prov'd unkind,
 A loyal servant of life's highest laws,
 Faithful to Zeus and righteous in His cause.

Enter ORESTES and PYLADES with the urn

OR. Inform us, ladies. Have we heard aright?
 Will this road bring us to the goal we seek?

CHO. What purpose brings you here? What do you seek?

OR. Where does Aegisthus dwell? That was my question.

CHO. Yes, you are right, and your informant blameless.

φύλοπις οὐκέτ' ἐξισοῦ-
 ται φιλοτασίῳ διαί-
 τα πρόδοτος δὲ μόνα σαλεύει
 Ἥλεκτρα, τὸν αἰεὶ πατρὸς
 1075 δειλαία στενάχουσ', ὅπως
 ἅ πᾶνδυρτος ἀηδών,
 οὔτε τι τοῦ θανεῖν προμη-
 θῆς, τό τε μὴ βλέπειν ἐτοί-
 μα, διδύμαν ἐλοῦσ' Ἑρι-
 1080 νύν. τις ἂν εὐπατρὶς ὦδε βλάστοι;

οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀγαθῶν γὰρ
 ζῶν κακῶς εὐκλειαν αἰσχύναι θέλει
 νῶνυμος, ὦ παῖ παῖ·
 ὥς καὶ σὺ πάγκλαυτον αἰῶνα κοινὸν εἴλου,
 1085 τὸ μὴ καλὸν καθοπλίσασα δύο φέρειν ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ,
 σοφά τ' ἄριστα τε παῖς κεκλησθαι.

ζῳῆς μοι καθύπερθε
 1090 χειρὶ καὶ πλούτῳ τεῶν ἐχθρῶν ὅσον
 νῦν ὑπόχειρ ναίεις·
 ἐπεὶ σ' ἐφεύρηκα μοῖρα μὲν οὐκ ἐν ἐσθλῇ
 βεβῶσαν· ἃ δὲ μέγιστ' ἔβλυστε νόμιμα, τῶνδε
 φερομέναν
 1095 ἄριστα τῇ Ζηνὸς εὐσεβείᾳ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄρ', ὦ γυναῖκες, ὀρθά τ' εἰσηκούσαμεν,
 ὀρθῶς θ' ὁδοιποροῦμεν ἔνθα χρῆζομεν;
 ΧΟ τί δ' ἐξερευνᾶς καὶ τί βουλευθεὶς πάρει;
 1100 ΟΡ. Αἰγισθον ἔνθ' ᾗ κηκεν ἱστορῶ πάλαι.
 ΧΟ. ἀλλ' εὖ θ' ἰκάνεις χά φρύσας ἀζήμιος.

OR. Which of you will be messenger, and tell '
The household, friends are here who will prove welcome?

CHO. This maiden If it be for the house, there's none
It touches nearer

OR [*to ELECTRA*] Go within, and say
There are men from Phocis here, who seek Aegisthus.

EL. Oh, do not tell me you have come with proof
And confirmation of the news we heard

OR. I do not know your rumours. Strophios
Charg'd me to come with news about Orestes.

EL. What is this news, stranger? I am afraid.

OR. He is dead In the narrow compass of this urn
We are bringing home the remnants of his body.

EL. Alas! My news was true, and I must feel
The very touch of sorrow

OR. Have you tears
To shed for sad Orestes? You must know
The truth All that is left of him is here

EL. Give me the vessel Is he thus bestow'd?
Good friend, I do beseech you, give it me
That, weeping for these ashes, I may weep
As well for all his kindred and myself.

OR. Take it and give it her, for this request
Comes from no enemy. Whoe'er she be,
She loves him, or was born of the same blood.

EL. [*approaching PYLADES and holding out her hands for the urn*] O sad memorial of the life I priz'd
Beyond all other lives, my lov'd Orestes,
How much this welcome home belies the hope
With which I sent you forth, so young, so bright—
O child! and now this nothing, which I hold

- ΟΡ. τίς οὖν ἂν ὑμῶν τοῖς ἔσω φράσειεν ἂν
 ἡμῶν ποθεινὴν κοινόπουν παρουσίαν ;
- ΧΟ. ἦδ', εἰ τὸν ἀγχιστόν γε κηρύσσειν χρεῶν 1105
- ΟΡ. ἴθ', ὦ γύναι, δῖλῳσον εἰσελθοῦς' ὅτι
 Φωκῆς ματεύουσ' ἄνδρες Αἰγισθόν τινες
- ΗΛ. οἴμοι τάλαιν', οὐ δὴ ποθ' ἥς ἠκούσαμεν
 φήμης φέροντες ἐμφανῇ τεκμήρια ;
- ΟΡ. οὐκ οἶδα τὴν σὴν κληδόν'· ἀλλὰ μοι γέρων 1110
 ἐφέλτ' Ὀρέστου Στρώφιος ἀγγεῖλαι πέρι
- ΗΛ. τί δ' ἔστιν, ὦ ξέν', ὥς μ' ὑπερχεται φόβος.
- ΟΡ. φέροντες αὐτοῦ σμικρὰ λείψαν' ἐν βραχεῖ
 τεύχει θανόντος, ὥς ὀρῆς, κομίζομεν
- ΗΛ. οἱ γὰρ τάλαινα, τοῦτ' ἐκεῖν' ἤδη σαφές 1115
 πρόχειρον ἄχθος, ὥς ἔοικε, δέρκομαι
- ΟΡ. εἴπερ τι κλαίεις τῶν Ὀρεστείων κακῶν,
 τόδ' ἄγχιος ἴσθι σῶμα τοῦκείνου στέγον.
- ΗΛ. ὦ ξεῖνε, δός νυν πρὸς θεῶν, εἴπερ τόδε 1120
 κέκευθεν αὐτὸν τεύχος, εἰς χεῖρας λαβεῖν,
 ὅπως ἐμαυτὴν καὶ γένος τὸ πᾶν ὁμοῦ
 ξὺν τῇδε κλαύσω καὶ ποδύρωμαι σποδῶ
- ΟΡ. δόθ', ἥτις ἐστί, προσφέροντες· οὐ γὰρ ὡς
 ἐν δυσμενεῖα γ' οὐς' ἐπαιτεῖται τάδε,
 ἀλλ' ἢ φίλων τις ἢ πρὸς αἵματος φύσιν. 1125
- ΗΛ. ὦ φιλτάτου μνημεῖον ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ
 ψυχῆς Ὀρέστου λοιπόν, ὥς σ' ἀπ' ἐλπίδων
 οὐχ ὥνπερ ἐξέπεμπον εἰσεδεξάμεν.
 νῦν μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ὄντα βαστάζω χεροῖν·
 δόμων δέ σ', ὦ παῖ, λαμπρὸν ἐξέπεμψ' ἐγώ. 1130

So lightly in my hand. Would I had died
Before I sent you out, stolen from death,
Retriev'd from murder, sav'd, to dwell far off
With strangers Better had you died that day
And shared your father's grave than perish'd so,
Miserably in helpless homeless banishment,
Far from my care. Alas! These hands of mine
Which should have dress'd and bathed you lovingly,
Then from the hungry flames have gather'd in
Grief's precious load for burial—not so!
Some stranger did my office—all I have
Is this—a little dust, a paltry urn. *[She takes it*

Alas for all my care, my loving care,
Prov'd useless now! The labour was so sweet,
Because it was for you, but all in vain.
Your mother never loved you as I loved you.
I was your nurse; none of the household nursed you;
And you would call me, 'Sister,' always, 'Sister.'
One day you died, and in that one day all
Has vanish'd, all. You gather'd up my life
And, like a whirlwind, left me. Everything
Vanish'd. Our father's dead, and it is death
To me that you are gone. Our enemies
Laugh, and our mother, most unmotherly,
Runs mad for joy. How often you would send
Your secret messages. You would come, you said,
And punish her yourself. The luckless chance
That haunts us both has stolen hope away,
And sent me for the bright form that I lov'd
These ashes and a shade that cannot help.

Ah me, alas!

ὦ ἄφελον πάροιθεν ἐκλιπεῖν βίον,
 πρὶν ἐς ξένην σε γαῖαν ἐκπέμψαι χερσὶν
 κλέψασα τοῖνδε κἀνισώσασθαι φόνου,
 ὅπως θανὼν ἔκτισο τῇ τύτῃ ἡμέρᾳ,
 τύμβου πατρῷου κοινὸν εἰληχὼς μέρος. 1135
 νῦν δ' ἐκτὸς οἴκων κἀπὶ γῆς ἄλλης φυγὰς
 κακῶς ἀπώλου, σῆς κασιγνήτης δίχα·
 κοῦτ' ἐν φίλαισι χερσὶν ἢ τάλαινα' ἐγὼ
 λουτροῖς σ' ἐκόσμησ' οὔτε παμφλέκτου πυρὸς
 ἀνελόμην, ὡς εἰκός, ἄθλιον βάρος 1140
 ἵλλ' ἐν ξέναισι χερσὶ κηδευθεὶς τίλας
 σμικρὸς προσήκεις ὄγκος ἐν σμικρῷ κύτει
 οἷμοι τάλαινα τῆς ἐμῆς πύλαι τροφῆς
 ἀνωφελήτου, τὴν ἐγὼ θάμ' ἀμφὶ σοὶ
 πόνῳ γλυκεῖ παρέσχον. οὔτε γάρ ποτε 1145
 μητρὸς σὺ γ' ἦσθα μᾶλλον ἢ καίμου φίλος,
 οὔτ' οἱ κατ' οἶκον ἦσαν, ἵλλ' ἐγὼ τροφός,
 ἐγὼ δ' ἀδελφῇ σοὶ προσηυδώμην αἰεὶ
 νῦν δ' ἐκλέλοιπε ταῦτ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ
 θανόντι σὺν σοί. πάντα γὰρ συναρπάσας 1150
 θύελλ' ὅπως βέβηκας. οἴχεται πατήρ·
 τέθνηκ' ἐγὼ σοί· φροῦδος αὐτὸς εἰ θανόν·
 γελῶσι δ' ἐχθροί· μαίνεται δ' ὑφ' ἡδονῆς
 μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ, ἥς ἐμοὶ σὺ πολλὰ κίς
 φήμας λίθρα προὔπεμψες ὡς φανούμενος 1155
 τιμωρὸς αὐτός. ἀλλὰ ταῦτ' ὁ δυστυχῆς
 δαίμων ὁ σὸς τε κύμὸς ἐξαφείλετο,
 ὅς σ' ὥδέ μοι προὔπεμψεν ἀντὶ φιλότητος
 μορφῆς σποδὸν τε καὶ σικιὰν ἀνωφελῇ.
 οἷμοι μοι· 1160

O pitiful and strange!

Ah me, alas, alas!

O dearest, by what strange and terrible ways
You travell'd, to destroy me utterly,
Yes, brother, to destroy! Come, welcome me
To this same narrow room which houses you,
My nothing to your nothing. Let me dwell
With you below for ever. Here in life
We shared and shared alike. Now I would share
Your grave, and never part from you again.
I see, only the dead can feel no pain

CHO. Electra, think Your father was a man.

So was Orestes. Every mortal soul
Must pay this debt. Let grief be moderate.

OR. What shall I say? Alas, I have no words
'To speak, and no more strength to hold my tongue.

EL. Are you in trouble too? Your words are strange.

OR. The royal maid, Electra—can it be?

EL. Such as you see—so wretched—I am she.

OR. Oh, this is hard to bear.

EL. Stranger, you weep.

Surely your tears are not for me?

OR. So changed!

Ruined and shamed by wanton cruelty!

EL. In bitter truth, stranger, you speak of me.

OR. Disconsolate, neglected, husbandless!

EL. Stranger, why do you look at me and weep?

OR. I find I did not know my own misfortunes.

EL. What is there in our talk to bring you knowledge?

OR. The sight of you in all this wretchedness.

EL. Yet what you see is but a little part.

- ὦ δέμας οἰκτρόν, φεῦ φεῦ
 ὦ δεινοτάτας, οἴμοι μοι,
 πεμφθεῖς κελεύθους, φίλταθ', ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας·
 ἀπώλεσας δῆτ', ὦ κασίγνητον κῆρα.
 τοιγὰρ σὺ δέξαι μ' ἐς τὸ σὸν τόδε στῆγος, 1165
 τῇν μηδέν εἰς τὸ μηδέν, ὥς σὺν σοὶ κάτω
 ναίω τὸ λαιπρόν. καὶ γὰρ ἡνίκ' ἦσθ' ἄνω,
 ξὺν σοὶ μετεῖχον τῶν ἴσων· καὶ νῦν ποθῶ
 τοῦ σοῦ θανούσα μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι τάφου.
 τοὺς γὰρ θανόντας οὐχ ὄρω λυπουμενούς. 1170
- ΧΟ. θνητοῦ πέφυκας πατρός, Ἥλέκτρα, φρόνει·
 θνητοὺς δ' Ὀρέστης· ὥστε μὴ λῖαν στένε.
 πᾶσιν γὰρ ἡμῖν τοῦτ' ὀφείλεται παθεῖν.
- ΟΡ. φεῦ φεῦ, τί λέξω; ποῖ λόγων ἡμυχανῶν
 ἔλθω; κρατεῖν γὰρ οὐκέτι γλώσσης σθίνω. 1175
- ΗΛ. τί δ' ἔσχεις ἄλγος; πρὸς τί τοῦτ' εἰπὼν κυρεῖς;
- ΟΡ. ἦ σὸν τὸ κλεινὸν εἶδος Ἥλέκτρας τόδε,
 ΗΛ. τόδ' ἔστ' ἐκεῖνο, καὶ μάλ' ἀθλίως ἔχον.
- ΟΡ. οἴμοι ταλαίνης ἄρα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς
- ΗΛ. οὐ δὴ ποτ', ὦ ξέν', ἀμφ' ἐμοὶ στένεις τύδε; 1180
- ΟΡ. ὦ σῶμ' ἀτίμως κᾶθώς ἐφθαρμένον. γ'
- ΗΛ. οὐτοὶ ποτ' ἄλλην ἢ 'μὲ δυσφημεῖς, ξένε.
- ΟΡ. φεῦ τῆς ἀνύμφου δυσμόρου τε σῆς τροφῆς
- ΗΛ. τί δὴ ποτ', ὦ ξέν', ὦδ' ἐπισκοπῶν στένεις; '
- ΟΡ. ὥς οὐκ ἄρ' ᾗδῃ τῶν ἐμῶν οὐδὲν κακῶν. 1185
- ΗΛ. ἐν τῷ διέγνωσ τοῦτο τῶν εἰρημένων;
- ΟΡ. ὁρῶν σὲ πολλοῖς ἐμπρέπουσαν ἄλγεσιν.
- ΗΛ. καὶ μὴν ὁρᾷς γε παύρα τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν

OR. A little part? What could be worse than this?

EL. My only home is with the murderers

OR. What murderers are these? Whom did they kill?

EL. My father. And they use me as their slave.

OR. Who makes you do them service? Who compels you?

EL. One much unlike her name. She is call'd my mother.

OR. By brute constraint? By shame and hardship? How?

EL. Brute force, shame, hardship—every kind of wrong.

OR. And is there none to help? None to prevent?

EL. None! You have brought me the one helper, dead.

OR. Alas! Unhappy one, I pity you.

EL. You are the first who ever pitied me.

OR. The wrong they do to you is done to me,
And so I suffer

EL. Is it possible

You are some kinsman?

OR. I could tell you all,

If these are friends

EL. They are, most loyal friends.

OR. You shall hear everything. Give me back the urn.

EL. No, no! In God's name, do not take it from me!

OR. Be ruled by me. You shall have no regret.

EL. In mercy leave me what is left to love.

OR. I say you shall not keep it.

EL. My Orestes!

They will not even let me bury you!

OR. Speak words of better omen, for your grief
Is much mistaken.

EL. Is my brother dead,

And am I not to grieve?

- ΟΡ. καὶ πῶς γένοιτ' ἂν τῶνδ' ἔτ' ἐχθίῳ βλίσπειν,
 ΗΛ. ὀθούνεκ' εἰμὶ τοῖς φονεύσι σύντροφος 1190
 ΟΡ. τοῖς τοῦ; πόθεν τοῦτ' ἐξεσήμηνας κακόν;
 ΗΛ. τοῖς πατρός· εἴτα τοῖσδε δουλεύω βία.
 ΟΡ. τίς γάρ σ' ἀνάγκη τῇδε προτρέπει βροτῶν;
 ΗΛ. μήτηρ καλεῖται, μητρὶ δ' οὐδὲν ἐξισοῖ.
 ΟΡ. τί δρῶσα; πότερα χερσίν, ἢ λύμῃ βίου, 1195
 ΗΛ. καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λύμῃσι καὶ πῦσιν κακοῖς.
 ΟΡ. οὐδ' οὐπαρήξων οὐδ' ὁ κωλύσων πάρα;
 ΗΛ. οὐ δῆθ'· ὅς ἦν γάρ μοι σὺ προῦθηκας σπαδόν.
 ΟΡ. ὦ δύσποτμ', ὥς ὀρῶν σ' ἐποικτίρω πάλαι
 ΗΛ. μόνος βροτῶν νυν ἴσθ' ἐποικτίρας ποτέ. 1200
 ΟΡ. ῥ' ὁμος γὰρ ἦκω τοῖσι σοῖς ἀλγῶν κακοῖς.
 ΗΛ. οὐ δὴ ποθ' ἡμῖν ξυγγενὴς ἦκεις ποθέν;
 ΟΡ. ἐγὼ φράσαιμ' ἄν, εἰ τὸ τῶνδ' εὐνουν πάρα.
 ΗΛ. ἀλλ' ἐστὶν εὐνουν, ὥστε πρὸς πιστὰς ἐρεῖς.
 ΟΡ. μέθες τόδ' ἄγγος νυν, ὅπως τὸ πᾶν μάθης. 1205
 ΗΛ. μὴ δῆτα πρὸς θεῶν τοῦτο μ' ἐργάσῃ, ξένη.
 ΟΡ. πιθοῦ λέγοντι κοῦχ ἁμαρτήσῃ ποτέ.
 ΗΛ. μή, πρὸς γεγενέου, μὴ 'ξέλη τὰ φίλτατα
 ΟΡ. οὐ φήμ' εἰάσειν. ΗΛ. ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ σέθεν,
 'Ορέστα, τῆς σῆς εἰ στερήσομαι ταφῆς. 1210
 ΟΡ. εὐφημα φώνει· πρὸς δίκης γὰρ οὐ στένεις.
 ΗΛ. πῶς τὸν θανόντ' ἀδελφὸν οὐ δίκη στένω;

OR. It is not you
Should speak of mourning him.

EL. Am I so shamed,
Deem'd so unworthy?

OR. There's no shame at all,
And yet there is no cause for you to mourn him.

EL. What? With Orestes' ashes in my hands?

OR He is not there—A tale—an empty phrase

EL. O poor unfortunate! Where is he buried?

or. Nowhere. The living want no burial.

FL. My son, what have you said?

OR. Only the truth.

EL. Orestes is alive?

OR. If I am living,

EL. And you are he?

OR. See if my words are true.

'The seal I carry—take it—was our father's

EL. O happy light!

OR. A light of joy indeed!

EL. Voice, you have come!

OR. My voice shall be your answer.

EL. Here in my arms?

OR. Here, where I still would be!

EL. Daughters of Argos, look! It is Orestes!

His death he did so cunningly contrive

That now, by cunning, he is here alive!

CHO. Dear child, we see, and at the glad event

Our eyes are dim with tears of our content

str.

EL. Son of the race,
Flesh of the flesh that I love.

- ΟΡ. οὐ σοι προσήκει τήνδε προσφωνεῖν φάτιν.
 ΗΛ. οὕτως ἄτιμός εἰμι τοῦ τεθνηκότος,
 ΟΡ. ἄτιμος οὐδενὸς σύ· τοῦτο δ' οὐχὶ σόν 1215
 ΗΛ. εἴπερ γ' Ὀρέστου σῶμα βαστάζω τόδε.
 ΟΡ. ἀλλ' οὐκ Ὀρέστου, πλὴν λόγῳ γ' ἡσκημένον.
 ΗΛ. ποῦ δ' ἔστ' ἐκείνου τοῦ ταλαιπώρου τάφος;
 ΟΡ. οὐκ ἔστι· τοῦ γὰρ ζώντος οὐκ ἔστιν τίφος.
 ΗΛ. πῶς εἶπας, ὦ παῖ; ΟΡ. ψευδὸς οὐδὲν ὦν λέγω. 1220
 ΗΛ. ἦ ζῇ γὰρ ἀνὴρ; ΟΡ. εἴπερ ἔμφυχός γ' ἐγώ.
 ΗΛ. ἦ γὰρ σὺ κείνος; ΟΡ. τήνδε προσβλέψασά μου
 σφραγίδα πατρὸς ἔκμαθ' εἰ σαφῇ λέγω.
 ΗΛ. ὦ φίλτατον φῶς. ΟΡ. φίλτατον, συμμαρτυρῶ.
 ΗΛ. ὦ φθέγμ', ἀφίκου; ΟΡ. μηκέτ' ἄλλοθεν πύθῃ. 1225
 ΗΛ. ἔχω σε χερσίν; ΟΡ. ὡς τὰ λοιπ' ἔχοις ἀεί.
 ΗΛ. ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ὦ πολίτιδες,
 ὁρᾶτ' Ὀρέστην τόνδε, μηχαναῖσι μὲν
 θανόντα, νῦν δὲ μηχαναῖς σεσωσμένον.
 ΧΟ. ὁρῶμεν, ὦ παῖ, κάπῃ συμφοραῖσί μοι 1230
 γεγενηθὸς ἔρπει δάκρυον ὀμμάτων ἄπο
 στρ.
 ΗΛ. ἰὼ γοναί,
 γοναὶ σωμάτων ἐμοὶ φιλάτων,

At last you are here, you have found me,
You see me, whom your heart has long'd to see.

OR. I am here. But wait a little while in silence.

EL. What is it?

OR. Better be silent. Someone within may hear.

EL. No, by the virginal untam'd Artemis,
I am too proud to fear a parcel of women
That cumber the house indoors.

OR. Ah, but consider Women too can fight.
You know it. In your own life you have prov'd it.

EL. Horrible, horrible!

Why do you wake the thought of the old evil?
Nothing can hide it, nothing can cure,
Nothing can make me forget.

OR. I know, I know. But the time for memories
Will come, when we are free to speak the truth.

ant.

EL. Now is the time—

No, it is always the time

To speak of the truth and of justice—

Freedom has tarried long Am I not free?

OR. You are free now. Look to it. Make your freedom
sure

EL. How can I?

OR. By silence, when it is no time for speech.

EL. How is it possible? Must we not speak of it?
Who could be silent? Brother, so long was the waiting!
You tarried till hope seem'd dead.

ἐμόλετ' ἀρτίως,
ἐφηύρετ', ἤλθετ', εἶδεθ' οὓς ἐχρήζετε. 1235

ΟΡ. πάρεσμεν· ἀλλὰ σῖγ' ἔχουσα πρόσμενε.

ΗΛ. τί δ' ἔστιν,

ΟΡ. σιγᾶν ἄμεινον, μή τις ἔνδοθεν κλύη.

ΗΛ. ἀλλ' οὐ τὰν Ἄρτεμιν τὰν αἰὲ ἀδμήταν
τόδε μὲν οὐ ποτ' ἀξιώσω τρέσαι 1240
περισσὸν ἄχθος ἔνδον
γυναικῶν ὃν αἰεί

ΟΡ. ὄρα γε μὲν δὴ καὶ γυναιξιν ὥς Ἄρης
ἔνεστιν· εὖ δ' ἔξοισθα πειραθείσά που.

ΗΛ. ὅτοτοτοτοῖ τοτοῖ, 1245
ἀνέφελον ἐνέβαλες
οὐ ποτε καταλύσιμον,
οὐδέ ποτε λησόμενον
ἰμέτερον οἶον ἔφνυ κακόν. 1250

ΟΡ. ἔξοιδα καὶ ταῦτ'· ἀλλ' ὅταν παρρησίᾳ
φραίξῃ, τότε ἔργων τῶνδε μεμνήσθαι χρεῶν.

ἀντ.

ΗΛ. ὁ πᾶς ἐμοί,
ὁ πᾶς ἂν πρέποι παρὼν ἐννέπειν
ταῖδε δίκαια χρόνος· 1255
μόλις γὰρ ἔσχον νῦν ἐλεύθερον στόμα.

ΟΡ. ξύμφημι κἀγώ· τοιγαροῦν σῶζου τόδε.

ΗΛ. τί δρώσα;

ΟΡ. οὐ μὴ ᾽στι καιρὸς μὴ μακρὰν βούλου λέγειν.

ΗΛ. τίς οὖν ἀντάξει ἂν σοῦ γε πεφηνότος 1260
μεταβάλοιτ' ἂν ὧδε σιγᾶν λόγων;
ἐπεὶ σε νῦν ἀφράστως
αἰέλπτως τ' ἐσείδον.

OR. When the gods moved me to the task, I came

EL. Happiness, happiness!

Sweeter than ever the joy of the glad meeting,
Is it a god who bringeth you home?
I count it a sign from God.

OR. I would not check your gladness, yet I fear
Your spirit sway'd by such excess of joy.

epode

EL. O happy journey's end!

After so many days,

Since you have deign'd to come to me thus at last,
Do not, I beg you—you see, I have suffer'd much—
Nay, I beseech you, do not—

OR.

What is it you ask?

EL. Do not take from me the light of your countenance
Nor rob me of the joy I have in you.

OR. Let any man attempt it at his peril—

EL. You promise this?

OR.

Why, yes, I promise it

[*A pause; then ELECTRA continues very quietly*]

EL. Dearest, what I have heard I never thought to hear
I have learnt my lesson of silence well. Ah me!
To listen and make no sound, to have you here, and to see
The face that I love, and to know,
Nothing can make me forget.

OR. No word, save to the purpose, now. No need
To prove my mother's wickedness. No need
To tell me that the prodigal Aegisthus
Battens on my inheritance, scattering
And wasting. Time's too urgent. None of that,
But only show me this—Occasion calls
For nothing more—where shall I hide myself,

ΟΡ. πῶτ' εἶδες, εὖτε θεοί μ' ἐπώτρυναν μολεῖν

ΗΛ. ἔφρασας ὑπερτέραν 1265

τᾶς πάρος ἔτι χάριτος,

εἴ σε θεὸς ἐπόρισεν

ἡμέτερα πρὸς μέλαθρα·

δαιμόνιον αὐτὸ τίθημ' ἐγώ. 1270

ΟΡ. τὰ μὲν σ' ὀκνῶ χαίρουσαν εἰργαθεῖν, τὰ δὲ
δέδοικα λίαν ἡδονῇ νικωμένην.

ἐπ.

ΠΛ. ἰὼ χρόνῳ μακρῷ φιλτάταν

ὁδὸν ἐπαξιώσας ὅδε μοι φανῆναι,

μή τί με, πολύπονον ὧδ' ἰδὼν 1275

ΟΡ. τί μὴ ποιήσω, ΗΛ μή μ' ἀποστερήσης

τῶν σὼν προσώπων ἡδονὰν μεθέσθαι.

ΟΡ. ἦ κάρτα καὶ ἄλλοισι θυμοίμην ἰδῶν.

ΗΛ. ξυναινεῖς;

ΟΡ. τί μὴν οὔ;

1280

ΗΛ. ὦ φίλ', ἔκλυον ἂν ἐγὼ

οὐδ' ἂν ἥλπισ' αὐδάν·

ἔσχον ὄργαν ἀναυδον

οὐδὲ σὺν βοᾷ κλύουσ' ἡ τάλαινα.

νῦν δ' ἔχω σε· προῦφάνης δὲ 1285

φιλτάταν ἔχων πρόσοψιν,

ἂς ἐγὼ οὐδ' ἂν ἐν κακοῖς λαθοίμαν.

ΟΡ. τὰ μὲν περισσεύοντα τῶν λόγων ἄφες,

καὶ μήτε μήτηρ ὡς κακὴ δίδασκέ με,

μήθ' ὡς πατρώων κτήσιν Αἴγισθος δόμων 1290

ἀντλεῖ, τὰ δ' ἐκχεῖ, τὰ δὲ διασπείρει μάτην·

χρόνου γὰρ ἂν σοι καιρὸν ἐξείργῃ λόγος.

ἂ δ' ἀρμόσει μοι τῷ παρόντι νῦν χρόνῳ

Or, suddenly appearing, make an end
Of this day's work by stopping all their laughter.
Stay. When we both go in, you must not show
Your gladness to your mother. You must weep,
As if the tale were true and all were lost.
Our turn has yet to come, if luck be in,
For free and happy laughter, when we win

EL. Brother, whatever way your heart inclines,
I shall make mine, since every joy I know
Is nothing of my own, but all from you.
Nor could I choose a blessing for myself
That gave you the least hurt. I would not serve
So ill the spirit of good that gave this day.
You know how matters stand? I think you know—
You have been told—Aegisthus is abroad,
Our mother is within. Oh, never fear.
She shall see no light in my eyes. The bitterness
Of the old hate is part of me. Besides,
Since I have found you, I shall still be weeping
My tears of joy. Have I no cause to weep?
Have I not seen you in this one day's journey
Dead and alive? What have you done to me?
I am in a maze now. If my father stood
Alive before me, I should think it true,
And not a prodigy. Brother, such strange ways
Have brought you home, direct me as you will,
For, had I been without you, even I
Had saved myself, or known the way to die.

OR. Better be silent. Someone is coming out.
I heard a sound at the entry

EL. [*loudly*].

Go your ways,

- σῆμαιν', ὕπου φανέντες ἢ κεκρυμμένοι
 γελῶντας ἐχθροὺς παύσομεν τῇ νῦν ὁδῷ. 1295
 οὕτω δ' ὅπως μήτηρ σε μὴ 'πιγνώσεται
 φαιδρῷ προσώπῳ νῶν ἐπελθόντοιν δόμους·
 ἀλλ' ὥς ἐπ' αἴτῃ τῇ μάτην λελεγμένη
 στέναζ'· ὅταν γὰρ εὐτυχήσωμεν, τότε
 χαίρειν παρέσται καὶ γελᾶν ἐλευθέρως. 1300
 ΗΛ. ἀλλ', ὦ κασίγνηθ', ὧδ' ὅπως καὶ σοὶ φίλον
 καὶ τοῦμὸν ἔσται τῇδ'· ἐπεὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς
 πρὸς σοῦ λαβοῦσα κοῦκ ἐμὴς ἐκτησίμην.
 'κοῦδ' αἶν σε λυπήσασα δεξαίμην βραχὺ
 αὐτὴ μέγ' εὐρεῖν κέρδος· οὐ γὰρ αἶν καλῶς 1305
 ὑπηρετοίην τῷ παρόντι δαίμονι.
 ἀλλ' οἶσθα μὲν τὰνθένδε, πῶς γὰρ οὔ, κλύων
 ὀθούνεκ' Αἴγισθος, μὲν οὐ κατὰ στέγας,
 μήτηρ δ' ἐν οἴκοις· ἦν σὺ μὴ δείσης ποθ' ὥς
 γέλωτι τοῦμὸν φαιδρὸν ὄψεται κάρα· 1310
 μῖσός τε γὰρ παλαιὸν ἐντέτηκέ μοι,
 κάπεί σ' ἐσεῖδον, οὐ ποτ' ἐκλήξω χαρᾶ
 δακρυρροοῦσα. πῶς γὰρ αἶν λήξαιμ' ἐγώ,
 ἥτις μᾶ σε τῇδ' ὁδῷ θαυύντα τε
 καὶ ζῶντ' ἐσεῖδον; εἰργασαι δέ μ' ἄσκοπα· 1315
 ὥστ' εἰ πατήρ μοι ζῶν ἴκοιτο, μηκέτ' αἶν
 τέρας νομίζειν αὐτό, πιστεύειν δ' ὀρᾶν
 ὅτ' οὖν τοιαύτην ἡμῖν ἐξήκεις ὁδόν,
 ἄρχ' αὐτὸς ὥς σοι θυμός· ὥς ἐγὼ μόνῃ
 οὔκ αἶν δυοῖν ἡμαρτον· ἢ γὰρ αἶν καλῶς 1320
 ἔσωσ' ἐμαυτήν, ἢ καλῶς ἀπωλόμην
 ΟΡ. σιγᾶν ἐπήνεσ'· ὥς ἐπ' ἐξόδῳ κλύω
 τῶν ἐνδοθῆεν χωροῦντος ΗΛ. εἴσιτ', ὦ ξένοι,

Strangers, go in. You bring with you a gift
None will refuse, yet none have joy from it.

Enter from the Palace the OLD SERVANT

SER. Fools! Fools and blind! Have you no mother-wit,
Or do you think life such a paltry thing
As not to be worth saving? On the brink,
Nay, in the grip of peril, when the worst
Threatens, and all's at stake, you linger on
In blissful ignorance. Had I not been here,
Watching the doors, your purpose had outrun
Your persons, and betray'd the truth within.
My care prevented that. Come, make an end!
Enough of joyful clamour! Leave your talk
And come. In such a business all delays
Are fatal. Seize the hour, and make an end!

OR. How stands the matter now? If I go in...?

SER. All's well—this much at least—no one will know
you.

OR. Ah, so you gave your message? I am dead?

SER. Yes. You can count yourself a dead man here.

OR. And they have joy of it? Say you?

SER.

I will give

My answer when you act. As things are now,
All's well with them—all—even what is not well.

EL. Who is this man? Brother, I beg you, tell me.

OR. Do you not understand?

EL.

I cannot guess.

OR. You know to whose hands you deliver'd me?

EL. What do you mean? Who is it?

OR.

That same friend

- ἄλλως τε καὶ φέρουντες οἷ' ἂν οὔτε τις
δόμων ἀπώσαιοι' οὔτ' ἂν ἡσθήη λαβίων. 1325
- ΠΑ. ὦ πλείεστα μῶροι καὶ φρενῶν τητώμενοι,
πότ' ἐρα παρ' οὐδὲν τοῦ βίου κήδεσθ' ἔτι,
ἢ νοῦς ἔνεστιν οὔτις ὑμῖν ἐγγενής,
ὅτ' οὐ παρ' αὐτοῖς ἄλλ' ἐν αὐτοῖσιν κακοῖς
τοῖσιν μεγίστοις ὄντες οὐ γιγνώσκετε, 1330
ἀλλ' εἰ σταθμοῖσι τοῖσδε μὴ 'κύρουν ἐγὼ
πάλαι φυλάσσω, ἦν ἂν ὑμῖν ἐν δόμοις
τὰ δρώμεν' ὑμῶν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ σώματα·
νῦν δ' εὐλάβειαν τῶνδε προὔθεμην ἐγώ.
καὶ νῦν ἀπαλλαχθέντε τῶν μακρῶν λόγων 1335
καὶ τῆς ἀπλήστου τῆσδε σὺν χαρῇ βοῆς
εἴσω παρέλθεθ', ὥς τὸ μὲν μέλλειν κακὸν
ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἔστ', ἀπηλλάχθαι δ' ἀκμή.
- ΟΡ. πῶς οὖν ἔχει τὰν τεύθεν εἰσιόντι μοι;
- ΠΑ. καλῶς· ὑπάρχει γὰρ σε μὴ γινῶναί τινα 1340
- ΟΡ. ἡγγεῖλας, ὥς ἔοικεν, ὥς τεθνηκότα.
- ΠΑ. εἰς τῶν ἐν "Αἰδου μάνθαν' ἐνθάδ' ὦν ἀνὴρ.
- ΟΡ. χαίρουσιν οὖν τοῦτοισιν; ἢ τίνες λόγοι;
- ΠΑ. τελουμένων εἴποισ' ἂν· ὥς δὲ νῦν ἔχει,
καλῶς τὰ κείνων πάντα, καὶ τὰ μὴ καλῶς. 1345
- ΗΛ. τίς οὗτός ἐστ', ἀδελφέ; πρὸς θεῶν φράσου.
- ΟΡ. οὐχὶ ξυνίης; ΗΛ. οὐδέ γ' εἰς θυμὸν φέρω.
- ΟΡ. οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅτ' ἄν μ' ἔδωκας εἰς χέρας ποτέ;
- ΗΛ. ποίῳ; τί φωνεῖς; ΟΡ. οὐ τὸ Φωκέων πέδον



By whom you sent me secretly to Phocis.

EL. Is this indeed that man, the one true friend
Found loyal on the day they kill'd my father?

OR. Spend no more time in questions. 'This is he.

EL. O light of joy! Sole saviour of the house
Of Agamemnon, have you come to us,
His saviour and my own? Friend, are you he?
Dear hands and feet, so faithful in your task
Of kindness! Were you here, so close to me,
So long, and gave no sign, but hid the truth,
Most blessed, in a tale that broke my heart?
Welcome, dear father! Yes, I see in you
My father! I have never known a man
I loved and hated so in one short day.

SER. Enough, I think, Electra. Many days
And many nights hereafter shall renew
The past in talk, and make the story plain
My word is for the men. Are both of you
Ready? The time is now! The Queen's alone
With not a man in the house. To hold your hand,
Remember, ranges on her side fresh odds
Of numbers and much keener wits withal.

OR. It seems this business, Pylades, affords
No matter for much talk. Let us go in.
Come. As we pass the threshold, we'll invoke
The keepers of the house, my father's gods.

[He prays in silence]

EL. Hear them, Apollo! Lord, be gracious to them,
And hear me too. Have I not come to thee
Often with such poor presents as I had?
So now, as best I can, I do beseech thee

- ὑπεξεπέμφθην σῇ προμηθείᾳ χεροῖν
 1350
 ΗΛ. ἣ κείνος αὐτός ὃν ποτ' ἐκ πολλῶν ἐγὼ
 μόνον προσηῦρον πιστὸν ἐν πατρὸς φόνῳ,
 ΟΡ. ὅδ' ἐστί· μὴ μ' ἔλεγε πλείοσιν λόγους.
 ΗΛ. ᾧ φίλτατον φῶς, ᾧ μόνος σωτὴρ δόμων
 Ἀγαμέμνονος, πῶς ἦλθες; ἢ σὺ κείνος εἶ,
 1355
 ὃς τόνδε κἄμ' ἔσωσας ἐκ πολλῶν πόνων;
 ᾧ φίλταται μὲν χεῖρες, ἥδιστον δ' ἔχων
 ποδῶν ὑπηρέτημα, πῶς οὕτω πάλαι
 ξυνών μ' ἔληθες οὐδ' ἔφαινες, ἀλλὰ με
 λόγους ἀπώλλυς, ἔργ' ἔχων ἥδιστ' ἐμοί;
 1360
 χαῖρ', ᾧ πῆτερ· πατέρα γὰρ εἰσορᾷν δοκῶ·
 χαῖρ'· ἴσθι δ' ὡς μάλιστά σ' ἀνθρώπων ἐγὼ
 ἦχθηρα καφίλησ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ.
 ΠΑ. ἀρκεῖν δοκεῖ μοι· τοὺς γὰρ ἐν μέσῳ λόγους,
 1365
 πολλὰ κυκλοῦνται νύκτες ἡμέραι τ' ἴσαι,
 αἱ ταῦτά σοι δείξουσιν, Ἥλέκτρα, σαφῆ·
 σφῶν δ' ἐννέπω γε τοῖν παρεστώτοιιν ὅτι
 νῦν καιρὸς ἔρδειν· νῦν Κλυταιμνήστρα μόνῃ
 νῦν οὐτις ἀνδρῶν ἐνδον· εἰ δ' ἐφέξετον,
 1370
 φροντίζεθ' ὡς τούτοις τε καὶ σοφώτεροις
 ἄλλοισι τούτων πλείοσιν μαχούμενοι.
 ΟΡ. οὐκ ἂν μακρῶν ἔθ' ἡμῖν οὐδὲν ἂν λόγων,
 1375
 Πυλάδῃ, τόδ' εἴη τοῦργον, ἀλλ' ὅσον τάχος
 χωρεῖν ἔσω, πατρῷα προσκύσανθ' ἔδη
 θεῶν, ὅσοι περ πρόπυλα ναίουσιν τάδε.
 ΗΛ. ἀναξ' Ἀπολλων, ἵλεως αὐτοῖν κλῦε,
 ἐμοῦ τε πρὸς τούτοισιν, ἣ σε πολλὰ δὴ
 ἀφ' ὧν ἔχοιμι λιπαρεῖ προὔστην χερί.
 νῦν δ', ᾧ Λύκει' Ἀπολλων, ἐξ οἷων ἔχω

Help and promote and bless this enterprise,
Showing the world what wages by the gods
Are granted to reward impiety

[ORESTES and PYLADES enter the Palace, followed by
ELECTRA. The doors are shut

str

CHO See where the God of Battle moveth on,
A Spirit of Hate
In the breath of his nostrils is blood.
'They have gone within,
The implacable hounds, the pursuers of sin.
The dream that ever haunts my soul
Will not have long to wait for its fulfilment.

ant.

The crafty-footed avenger moveth on,
He fights for the dead:
There is blood on his hands, with a sword
He has gone within
The luxurious house of his fathers, to kill.
The God of Guile hath cloak'd the plot
In darkness, and it works. The end comes soon.

Re-enter ELECTRA

EL. The end is now, dear women. Even now
The men are at the doing. Wait in silence.

CHO What are they doing?

EL. She is decking the urn
For burial, and the men stand close to her.

CHO And you came out—for what?

EL.

To watch, for fear

αἰτῶ, προσιπύπτω, λίσσομαι, γενοῦ πρόφρων 1380
 ἡμῖν ἀρωγὸς τῶνδε τῶν βουλευμάτων,
 καὶ δεῖξον ἀνθρώποισι τὰπιτίμια
 τῆς δυσσεβείας οἷα δωροῦνται θεοί

στρ.

ΧΟ. ἴδεθ' ὅπου προνέμεται
 τὸ δυσέριστον αἶμα φυσῶν Ἄρης. 1385
 βεβᾶσιν ἄρτι δωμάτων ὑπόστεγοι
 μετάδρομοι κακῶν πανουργημάτων
 ἄφυκτοι κύνες,
 ὥστ' οὐ μακρὰν ἔτ' ἀμμενεῖ
 τοῦμόν φρενῶν ὄνσιρον αἰωρούμενον 1390

ἀντ.

παράγεται γὰρ ἐνέρων
 δολιόπους ἀρωγὸς εἴσω στέγας,
 ἀρχαιοπλοῦτα πατρός εἰς ἐδώλια,
 νεακόνητον αἶμα χειροῖν ἔχων·
 ὁ Μαίης δὲ παῖς 1395
 Ἑρμῆς σφ' ἄγει δόλον σκότῳ
 κρύψας πρὸς αὐτὸ τέρμα, κούκέτ' ἀμμένει.

ΗΛ. ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ἄνδρες αὐτίκα
 τελοῦσι τοῦργον· ἀλλὰ σῖγα πρόσμενε.

ΧΟ. πῶς δὴ; τί νῦν πράσσουσιν; ΗΛ. ἡ μὲν ἐς τάφον
 λέβητα κοσμεῖ, τὼ δ' ἐφέστατον πέλας. 1401

ΧΟ. σὺ δ' ἐκτὸς ἦξας πρὸς τί; ΗΛ. φρουρήσουσ' ὅπως

Aegisthus catch them unawares.

CLY. [*within*] Alas!

Home, destitute of friends, full of destroyers!

EL. Someone cried out within. Did you not hear it?

CHO. I heard what should not have been heard. Alas!
I shudder—

CLY. Ah! Aegisthus, where art thou?

EL. The voice again. Listen.

CLY. My child, my child,
Pity your mother.

EL. Did you pity him?
Or had you any pity on his father?

CHO. O city, O miserable race,
Now is your fortune fading, fading.

CLY. He strikes! Ah!—

EL. Strike again, if you have strength.

CLY. Again! Ah!

EL. Would it were Aegisthus too.

CHO The curses are at work. The dead are living,
They are draining back the blood from those who slew.

PYLADES *and* ORESTES *appear*

See, they are here! Look! There is blood on his hands
From the sacrament of Hate—nor can I blame him.

EL. How is it with you, Orestes?

OR. In the house

All's well, if Apollo's oracle was well.

EL. Is she dead, unhappy one?

OR. You need not fear
Your mother will insult you any more.

Ἀὔγισθος ἡμᾶς μὴ λάθῃ μολῶν ἔσω.

ΚΛ. αἰαῖ· ἰὼ στέγαι

φίλων ἔρημοι, τῶν δ' ἀπολλύντων πλέαι. 1405

ΗΛ. βοᾷ τις ἔνδον· οὐκ ἀκούετ', ὦ φίλαι;

ΧΟ. ἤκουσ' ἀνήκουστα δύστανος, ὥστε φρίξαι.

ΚΛ. οἴμοι τάλαιν'· Ἀὔγισθε, ποῦ ποτ' ὦν κυρεῖς;

ΗΛ. ἰδὸν μάλ' αὖ θροεῖ τις. ΚΛ. ὦ τέκνον τέκνον, 1410

οἴκτιρε τὴν τεκοῦσαν. ΗΛ. ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκ σέθεν

ᾤκτίρεθ' οὗτος οὐδ' ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ.

ΧΟ. ὦ πόλις, ὦ γενεὰ τάλαινα, νῦν σοι

μοῖρα καθαμερίῃ φθίνει φθίνει. 1414

ΚΛ. ὦμοι πέπληγμαι. ΗΛ. παῖσον, εἰ σθένεις, διπλῆν.

ΚΛ. ὦμοι μάλ' αὖθις. ΗΛ. εἰ γὰρ Αἰγίσθω γ' ὁμοῦ

ΧΟ. τελοῦσ' ἀραί· ζῶσιν οἱ γὰρ ὑπαὶ κείμενοι

παλίσρυντον γὰρ αἰμ' ὑπεξαιροῦσι τῶν κτανόντων

οἱ πάλαι θανόντες. 1421

καὶ μὴν πάρεισιν οἶδε· φοινία δὲ χεῖρ

ι σταῖζει θυηλῆς Ἄρεος, οὐδ' ἔχω ψέγειν.

ΗΛ. Ὅρέστα, πῶς κυρεῖτε; ΟΡ. τὰν δόμοισι μὲν

καλῶς, Ἀπόλλων εἰ καλῶς ἐθέσπισεν. 1425

1 ΗΛ. τέθνηκεν ἡ τάλαινα; ΟΡ. μηκέτ' ἐκφαβοῦ

μητρῶον ὥς σε λῆμ' ἀτιμάσει ποτέ.

CHO. Stop, for I see Aegisthus.

EL. Back, my children.

OR. Do you see the man?

EL. Yes, yes, we have him! Yonder,
Beyond the city gates, triumphant!

CHO. Quick! Into the vestibule at once!

Finish the work so well begun.

OR. Have no fear. We are ready.

EL. Quick! You know your plan.

OR. Yes, I will go.

EL. I stay. My charge is here.

CHO. A few words whisper'd in his ear may serve,
And lure him to the judgment, unsuspecting.

Enter AEGISTHUS

AEG. Where are these Phocian strangers who are said
To bring some story of Orestes' death,
Wreck'd with his chariot? Which of you knows?
My question is for you—you, who were once
So bold. Yes, you must know. It touches you,
I think, most nearly. Tell me.

EL. Yes, I know.
Indeed I know, or I should have no part
In what concerns my dearest friend on earth

AEG. Where are the strangers, then? Impart your knowledge.

EL. Within. They found a hostess to their mind.

AEG. And they report him dead? Is that the truth?

EL. Nay, they have stronger proofs to show than words.

AEG. He is here then? We can see him?

EL. He is here,

- ΧΟ. πάνσασθε· λένσσω γὰρ Λίγισθον ἐκ προδῆλου
 ΗΛ. ὦ παῖδες, οὐκ ἄφορρον; ΟΡ. εἰσοράτε ποῦ 1130
 τὸν ἄνδρ', ΗΛ. ἐφ' ἡμῖν οὗτος. ἐκ προαστίου
 χωρεῖ γεγηθώς
 ΧΟ. βᾶτε κατ' ἀντιθύρων ὅσον τάχιστα,
 νῦν, τὰ πρὶν εὖ θέμινοι, τὰδ' ὥς πάλιν.
 ΟΡ. θάρσει· τελοῦμεν. ΗΛ. ἦ νοεῖς ἔπειγέ νυν. 1135
 ΟΡ. καὶ δὴ βέβηκα ΗΛ. τὰνθίδ' ἂν μέλοιτ' ἐμοί.
 ΧΟ. δι' ὥτὸς ἂν παῦρά γ' ὥς ἡπίως ἐννέπειν
 ἡρὸς ἄνδρα τόνδε συμφέροι, λαθραῖον ὥς ὀρούση
 πρὸς δίκας ἡγῶνα. 1141

ΛΙΡΙΣΘΟΣ

- τίς οἶδεν ὑμῶν ποῦ ποθ' οἱ Φωκῆς ξένοι,
 οὓς φασ' Ὀρέστην ἡμῖν ἡγγεῖλαι βίον
 λελοιπόθ' ἱππικοῖσιν ἐν ναυαγίοις;
 σέ τοι, σέ κρίνω, ναὶ σέ, τὴν ἐν τῷ παρος 1415
 χρόνῳ θρασεῖαν· ὥς μάλιστα σοὶ μέλειν
 οἶμαι, μάλιστα δ' ἂν κατειδυῖαν φράσαι
 ΗΛ. ἔξοιδα· πῶς γὰρ οὐχί, συμφορᾶς γὰρ ἂν
 ἔξωθεν εἶην τῶν ἐμῶν τῆς φιλτάτης.
 ΑΙ. ποῦ δῆτ' ἂν εἶεν οἱ ξένοι; δίδασκέ με. 1450
 ΗΛ. ἔνδον· φίλης γὰρ προξένου κατήνυσαν.
 ΑΙ. ἦ καὶ θανόντ' ἡγγεῖλαν ὥς ἐτητύμως;
 ΗΛ. οὐκ, ἀλλὰ κατέδειξαν, οὐ λόγῳ μόνον.
 ΑΙ. πάρεστ' ἄρ' ἡμῖν ὥστε κάμφανῃ μαθεῖν;
 ΗΛ. πάρεστι δῆτα, καὶ μάλ' ἄζηλος θέα. 1455

And no glad sight to see

AEG. You give me joy

It has not been your habit.

EL If you find

Reason for joy in this, I give you joy

AEG. Be silent all Open the gates, and show

To Argos and Mycene such a sight

That any who have nurs'd the idle hope

Of this man's home-coming, may see him dead,

And learn, before the master's heavy hand

Is raised for chastisement, to bear my yoke

EL For me the lesson's finish'd. Time has brought

Discretion, and my master's will is mine.

[*As she speaks, the doors open and reveal, veiled, on a bier,*

the body of CLYTAEMNESTRA *ORESTES stands beside it*

AEG. Thy Wrath, O God, contrived this spectacle!

Nay, we'll not speak of that, lest we offend.

He was our kinsman. Lift away the veil.

We'll see him face to face and mourn his fate.

OR. It is your part, not mine, to lift the veil

And see what's hidden here, and greet your dead.

AEG. Good counsel. I will take it. And do you [*to* ELECTRA

Call Clytaemnestra here Is she within?

OR. [*as AEGISTHUS removes the veil*]. No need to look else-

where. She is near you now

AEG. Ah! What is this?

OR. Do you not recognise?

Of whom are you afraid?

AEG. What are these men?

Into whose trap have I fallen?

OR. You are slow

- ΑΙ ἧ πολλὰ χαίρειν μ' εἶπας οὐκ εἰωθότως
 ΗΛ. χαίροις ἄν, εἴ σοι χαρτὰ τυγχάνει τάδε.
 ΑΙ. σιγᾶν ἄνωγα κἀναδεικνύναι πύλας
 πᾶσιν Μυκηναίοισιν Ἀργείοις θ' ὄραν,
 ὥς εἴ τις αὐτῶν ἐλπίσιν κεναῖς πάρος 1460
 ἐξήρετ' ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε, νῦν ὀρίδν νεκρὸν
 στόμια δέχεται τάμα, μηδὲ πρὸς βίαν
 ἔμοῦ κολαστοῦ προστυχῶν φύσῃ φρένας.
 ΗΛ. καὶ δὴ τελεῖται τὰπ' ἐμοῦ· τῷ γὰρ χρόνῳ
 νοῦν ἔσχον, ὥστε συμφέρειν τοῖς κρείσσοσιν. 1465
 ΑΙ. ὦ Ζεῦ, δέδορκε φάσμ' ἄνευ φθόρου μὲν οὐ
 πεπτωκός· εἰ δ' ἔπεστι νέμεσις, οὐ λέγω
 χαλᾶτε πᾶν κάλυμμ' ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν, ὅπως
 τὸ συγγενές τοι καὶπ' ἐμοῦ θρήνων τύχη.
 ΟΡ. αὐτὸς σὺ βᾶσταξ'· οὐκ ἐμὸν τύδ', ἀλλὰ σόν, 1470
 τὸ ταῦθ' ὄραν τε καὶ προσηγορεῖν φίλως
 ΑΙ. ἀλλ' εὖ παραινεῖς, κάπιπέισομαι· σὺ δέ,
 εἴ που κατ' οἶκόν μοι Κλυταιμνήστρα, κἄλει.
 ΟΡ. αὕτη πέλας σοῦ· μηκέτ' ἄλλοσε σκόπει.
 ΑΙ. οἷμοι, τί λεύσσω; ΟΡ. τίνα φοβεῖ; τίν' ἀγνοεῖς;
 ΑΙ. τίνων ποτ' ἀνδρῶν ἐν μέσοις ἀρκυστάτοις 1476
 πέπτωχ' ὁ τλήμων; ΟΡ. οὐ γὰρ αἰσθάνει πάλαι



To read the truth. You call the living dead.

AEG. Alas! I understand. It is Orestes!

OR. You can read oracles well? Yet you are caught.

AEG. Oh, I am lost Give me a little time

To speak a little—

EL. Do not let him talk!

In God's name, brother, do not let him talk!

A little time? With lives fast bound to wrong,

What use in time for souls that have to die?

Kill him at once. When you have done it, fling

The carrion to the buriers it deserves,

Out of our sight. Nothing but that can serve

To set me free and blot out all the wrong.

[During the remainder of the scene ELECTRA stands rigid and silent. But she shudders when AEGISTHUS prophesies the future

OR. Go in at once. You are not fighting now

For words, but for your life.

[ORESTES points with his sword to the Palace-door.

AEGISTHUS does not move

AEG. Why drive me in? If what you do is good,

What need of darkness? Kill me here and now.

OR. No more instructions. Go. You are to die

There, where you kill'd my father.

AEG. Is it so?

Must all the evils of the race of Pelops

Be witness'd by this House—my own to-day

And what's to come?

OR. At any rate, your own.

I read that oracle well!

AEG. Your father's son

Inherits no great skill in reading omens.

- ζῶντας θανούσιν οὔνεκ' ἀνταυδάς ἴσα ,
- ΑΙ. οἶμοι, ξυνήκα τοῦπος· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως
ὅδ' οὔκ' Ὀρέστης ἔσθ' ὁ προσφωνῶν ἐμέ. 1180
- ΟΡ. καὶ μάντις ὦν ἄριστος ἐσφάλλου πάλαι ;
- ΑΙ. ὄλωλα δὴ δειλαιοσ. ἀλλὰ μοι πάρες
κὰν σμικρὸν εἰπεῖν. ΗΛ. μὴ πέρα λέγειν ἔα
πρὸς θεῶν, ἀδελφέ, μηδὲ μηκύνειν λόγους.
τί γὰρ βροτῶν ἂν σὺν κακοῖς μεμιγμένων 1185
ῥηθήσκειν ὁ μέλλων τοῦ χρόνου κέρδος φέροι ,
ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστα κτεῖνε, καὶ κταυὼν πρόθεσ
ταφεύσιν ὦν τόνδ' εἰκός ἐστι τυγχάνειν,
ἄποπτον ἡμῶν· ὡς ἐμοὶ τόδ' ἂν κακῶν
μόνον γένοιτο τῶν πάλαι λυτήριον. 1190
- ΟΡ. χωροῖς ἂν εἴσω σὺν τάχει· λόγων γὰρ οὐ
νῦν ἐστιν ἀγών, ἀλλὰ σῆς ψυχῆς πέρι.
- ΑΙ. τί δ' ἐς δόμους ἄγεις με ; πῶς, τόδ' εἰ καλὸν
τοῦργον, σκότου δεῖ, κοῦ πρόχειρος εἰ κταυεῖν ;
- ΟΡ. μὴ τύσσε· χώρει δ' ἔνθαπερ κατέκτανες 1195
πατέρα τὸν ἀμόν, ὡς ἂν ἐν ταύτῳ θάνης
- ΑΙ. ἦ πᾶσ' ἀνάγκη τήνδε τὴν στέγην ἰδεῖν
τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα Πελοπιδῶν κακά ;
- ΟΡ. τὰ γοῦν σ'· ἐγὼ σοι μάντις εἰμὶ τῶνδ' ἄκρος.
- ΑΙ. ἀλλ' οὐ πατρώαν τὴν τέχνην ἐκόμπασας. 1500

- ΟΡ. πολλ' ἀντιφωνεῖς, ἢ δ' ὁδὸς βραδύνεται.
ἀλλ' ἔρφ' Αἰ ὑφηγοῦ. ΟΡ σοὶ βαδιστέον πάρος
- Αἰ. ἢ μὴ φύγω σε; ΟΡ μὴ μὲν οὖν καθ' ἡδονὴν
θάνης· φυλάξαι δεῖ με τοῦτό σοι πικρόν.
χρῆν δ' εὐθὺς εἶναι τήνδε τοῖς πᾶσιν δίκην, 1505
ὅστις πέρα πρίσσειν γε τῶν νόμων θέλει,
κτείνειν τὸ γὰρ πανοῦργον οὐκ ἂν ᾔην πολύ.
- ΧΟ. ὦ σπέρμ' Ἀτρέως, ὡς πολλὰ παθὼν
δι' ἐλευθερίας μόλις ἐξήλθες
τῇ νῦν ὀρμῇ τελεωθέν 1510

THE 'PEACE' OF ARISTOPHANES

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE *Electra* is essentially a Tragedy of War, a study of the ruinous effects on human nature of hatred and of the creed, which flourishes most in times of war and civil strife, that justice claims an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and a wrong for every wrong.

Since it was the custom in antiquity for the Tragedies to be followed by a gay Satyric Drama, it has been thought not inappropriate that in the Cambridge festival, after the serious business of the Tragedy, an extract from the lively, irresponsible, but wise and humane Comedy of Aristophanes should follow, and the play which has been chosen for performance is the 'Peace,' a gay extravaganza, inspired by the hope of renewed prosperity and amity in Greece, afforded by the death of the two chiefs of the war-parties in Athens and in Sparta, Cleon and Brasidas, and the good progress of negotiations for the Peace of Nicias in 421 B.C.

The text used represents about half the play, as composed by Aristophanes, but except for cuts no liberties have been taken with the poet's work.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Two SERVANTS of Trygaeus.

TRYGAEUS, *an honest master-vinedresser of Athens.*

His two DAUGHTERS.

HERMES, *the Lackey of the Gods.*

WAR, *the Bane of Men.*

PANIC, *War's servant.*

SPARTAN LEEK.

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PEACE, PLENTY *and* FESTIVITY.

CHORUS of GREEKS.

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SCENE

The scene is laid in the stable-yard of TRYGAEUS' house at Athens.

Two SERVANTS are discovered kneading dung-cakes.

1 SER. Cake for the beetle! Hurry up!

2 SER. Right ho!

There you are!

1 SER. Give it him, filthy beast. Now go
And fetch another—donkey's dung will do

2 SER. Right. Here's another

1 SER. Wait a bit. You know
You gave him one—has he eaten it, or what?

2 SER. Roll'd it between his legs and gulp'd the lot!

1 SER. Make masses more—make heaps of juicy cakes.

2 SER. [*to the audience*]. Gentlemen scavengers—order of
the jakes—

Quick! to the rescue! I shall choke and smother!

1 SER. Another—ugh—another and another!
Make a considerable number more!

2 SER. Oh, stow it!

Can't stand it any longer Not if I know it.
I'll pick the beastly muck-pan up, and throw it—

1 SER. Throw yourself after it, by all means, do!
And I'll explain the story to this crew

Of little boys and little gentlemen
And the gentlemen in the circle—yes, and then
To the exquisites in the boxes, supermen!

Our master's mad—not in the least like you,
No, not a bit in the fashion—something new
And quaint in madness. There he'll sit all day

ΕΙΡΗΝΗ

ΟΙΚΕΤΗΣ Α

Αἶρ' αἶρε μᾶζαν ὡς τάχιστα καθάρω

ΟΙΚΕΤΗΣ Β

ἰδού.

ΟΙ. Α. δὸς αὐτῷ, τῷ κάκιστ' ἀπολουμένῳ.
δὸς μᾶζαν ἑτέραν, ἐξ ὀνίδων πεπλασμένην.

ΟΙ. Β. ἰδού μάλ' αὖθις.

ΟΙ. Α. ποῦ γὰρ ἦν νῦν δὴ 'φερεις ; 5
οὐ κατέφαγεν.

ΟΙ. Β. μὰ τὸν Δί', ἀλλ' ἐξαρπάσας
ῥῆγην ἐνέκαψε περικυλίσας τοῖν ποδοῖν.

ΟΙ. Α. ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστα τρῖβε πολλὰς καὶ πυκνάς.

ΟΙ. Β. ἄνδρες κοπρολόγοι, προσλάβεσθε πρὸς θεῶν,
εἰ μή με βούλεσθ' ἀποπνιγέντα περιδεῖν 10

ΟΙ. Α. αἰβοῦ, φέρ' ἄλλην, χᾶτέραν μοι χᾶτέραν, 15
καὶ τρῖβ' ἔθ' ἑτέρας

ΟΙ. Β. μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω 'γὼ μὲν οὔ·
οὐ γὰρ ἔθ' οἶός τ' εἴμ' ὑπερέχειν τῆς ἀντλίας.
αὐτὴν ἄρ' οἶσω συλλαβὼν τὴν ἀντλίαν.

ΟΙ. Α. νῆ τὸν Δί' ἐς κόρακάς γε, καὶ σαυτὸν γε πρὸς, 50
ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν λόγον γε τοῖσι παιδίοις
καὶ τοῖσιν ἀνδρίοις καὶ τοῖς ἀνδράσι
καὶ τοῖς ὑπερτάτοις ἀνδράσιν φράσω
καὶ τοῖς ὑπερηνορέουσιν ἔτι τούτοις μάλα.
ὁ δεσπότης μου μαίνεται καινὸν τρόπον,
οὐχ ὄνπερ ὑμεῖς, ἀλλ' ἕτερον καινὸν πάννυ 55
δι' ἡμέρας γὰρ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν βλέπων

And gape at the sky and swear at Zeus, and say,

'O Lord,

Put down that broom! Don't sweep us all away!'

TRY. [*within*]. Oh dear, oh dear!

I SER.

That's him I hear!

Hush! hush!

TRY. [*within*]. O Zeus, take care! I greatly fear
You don't know what you're doing! Get it clear
Before you ruin Greece! Oh dear! Oh dear!

I SER. That's it! Just what I told you! Brain quite gone
That's a fair sample of his goings-on.

Listen, I'll tell you how the thing began.

He talked to himself. 'Oh, if I had a plan

To get right up to Zeus!' That's what he said,

Then had a lot of little ladders made,

And tried to scramble to the sky—instead

Of which he tumbled down and broke his head.

Then yesterday he slipp'd away to some

Accurséd place, fetch'd a great beetle home,

And made me groom it, if you please. Poor lunny,

He stroked it down as if it was a pony!

'My feathery steed,' he said, 'you soon shall fly,

Dear Pegasus, with me to Zeus on high.'

I'll just look in to see what little game

He's up to now. Good lord! He's on that same

Gigantic beetle's beastly back, of course,

Riding him through the air, just like a horse!

Enter TRYGAEUS, ambling gently on the Beetle

TRY. Gingerly, gingerly, dear little beetle,

Slow at the start, learning the art,

ὥδ' κεχηνὼς λοιδορεῖται τῷ Δίῳ,
καί φησιν, "ὦ Ζεῦ, τί ποτε βουλεύει ποιεῖν;
κατάθου τὸ κόρημα· μὴ ἔκκορει τὴν Ἑλλάδα"

ΤΡΥΤΡΑΙΟΣ

ἔα ἔα.

60

- ΟΙ Α. σιγήσαθ', ὡς φωνῆς ἀκούειν μοι δοκῶ.
 ΤΡ ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δρᾷσεις ποθ' ἡμῶν τὸν λῶν;
 λήσεις σεαυτὸν τὰς πόλεις ἐκκοκκίσας
 ΟΙ Α. τοῦτ' ἔστι τοῦτ' ἐν τῷ κακῷ αὐτῷ οὐ γὰρ "λεγον.
 τὸ γὰρ παράδειγμα τῶν μανιῶν ἀκούετε· 65
 ἃ δ' εἶπε πρῶτον ἡνίκ' ἤρχεθ' ἡ χολή,
 πεύσεσθ'. ἔφασκε γὰρ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐνθαδί·
 "πῶς ἂν ποτ' ἀφικοίμην ἂν εὐθὺ τοῦ Διός;"
 ἔπειτα λεπτὰ κλιμάκια ποιούμενος,
 πρὸς ταῦτ' ἀνηρριχᾷτ' ἂν ἐς τὸν οὐρανόν, 70
 ἕως ξυνετρίβῃ τῆς κεφαλῆς καταρρυείς.
 ἐχθὲς δὲ μετὰ ταῦτ' ἐκφθαρεῖς οὐκ οἶδ' ὅποι
 εἰσήγαγ' Αἰτναῖον μέγιστον κίνθαρον,
 καῖπειτα τοῦτον ἵπποκομεῖν μ' ἠνάγκασεν,
 καὐτὸς καταψῶν αὐτὸν ὥσπερ πωλίον, 75
 "ὦ Πηγάσιόν μοι," φησί, "γενναῖον πετρόν,
 ὅπως πετήσει μ' εὐθὺ τοῦ Διός λαβών."
 ἀλλ' ὅ τι ποιεῖ τηδὶ διακύψας ὄψομαι.
 οἴμοι τάλας, ἵτε δεῦρο δεῦρ', ὦ γείτονες·
 ὁ δεσπότης γὰρ μου μετέωρος αἵρεται 80
 ἱππηδὸν εἰς τὸν ἀέρ' ἐπὶ τοῦ καυθάρου

ΤΡ. ἥσυχος ἥσυχος, ἡρέμα, κἀνθων·
 μή μοι σοβαρῶς χῶρει λίαν

Sweating a little to loosen the sinews (now we are on the wing),

Practising long, until you are strong, soon you shall have your fling!

But one thing remember, and bear it in mind—

Now we are making the pace,

I shall leave you at home in the stable behind

If you puff in my face.

[The Beetle puffs, and TRYGAEUS falls off. He remounts several times during the following dialogue]

1 SER. You are mad! It's absurd, sir!

TRY. Hush, hush! Not a word, sir!

2 SER. A ridiculous sight. Your mind isn't right.

Pray, where is this journey to end?

TRY. I am taking my flight over Greece. It's a bright, Yes, a splendid invention, my friend!

1 SER. But why should you fly? You are certainly mad.

TRY. Not a sound! Not a cry! And of language that's bad Not a breath nor a word,

But only the glad Hallelujahs be heard

As I mount to the sky.

And bid ev'ry mortal be silent and cover

His drains and conveniences over and over

Again with fresh brickwork wherever I hover.

SERVANTS. Unless you tell us where you mean to fly, We won't be quiet.

TRY. Visiting the sky,
To call on Zeus, I tell you.

SERVANTS. Oh! And why?

TRY. I want to ask about his policy,
Just what he means to do with Greece, you see?

εἰθὺς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ῥώμῃ πίσυνος,
 πρὶν ἂν ιδίσης καὶ διαλύσης 85
 ἄρθρων ἱνας πτερύγων ῥύμῃ.
 καὶ μὴ πνεῖ μοι κακόν, ἀντιβολῶ σ'·
 εἰ δὲ ποιήσεις τοῦτο, κατ' οἴκους
 αὐτοῦ μέινον τοὺς ἡμετέρους.

ΟΙ Α. ὦ δέσποτ' ἀνάξ, ὥς παραπαίεις. 90

ΤΡ σίγα σίγα.

ΟΙ Β. ποῖ δῆτ' ἄλλως μετεωροκοπεῖς,

ΤΡ. ὑπὲρ Ἑλλήνων πάντων πέτομαι,
 τόλμημα νέον παλαμησάμενος.

ΟΙ Α. τί πέτει; τί μίτην οὐχ ὑγιαίνεις; 95

ΤΡ. εὐφημεῖν χρή καὶ μὴ φλαῦρον
 μηδὲν γρύζειν, ἀλλ' ὀλολύζειν·
 τοῖς τ' ἀνθρώποισι φρίσσον σιγᾶν,
 τοὺς τε κοπρῶνας καὶ τὰς λαύρας
 καιναῖς πλίνθισιν ἀνοικοδομεῖν, 100
 καὶ τοὺς πρωκτοὺς ἐπικλείειν

ΟΙ. οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως σιγήσομ', ἦν μή μοι φράσης
 ὅποι πέτεσθαι διανοεῖ.

ΤΡ. τί δ' ἄλλο γ' ἢ
 ὥς τὸν Δί' εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν,

ΟΙ. τίνα νοῦν ἔχων;

ΤΡ. ἐρησόμενος ἐκείνον Ἑλλήνων πέρι 105
 ἀπαξαπάντων ὅ τι ποιεῖν βουλεύεται.

1 SER. Not while I live!

TRY. There is no other way!

2 SER [*weeping*]. Children, come here! Quick, little ones,
I say!

Your Father's going off, he says, and what are you
to do,

If father slips away to heaven? Oh, beg him not to go!

Enter two LITTLE GIRLS, Trygaeus' daughters

LITTLE GIRLS O father dear, is this I hear

The truth, or is it quite absurd?

For you, they said, were off your head

And wanted to become a bird!

And leave us here. O father dear,

Is this the truth or quite absurd?

TRY Yes, children, as you see, it is the truth.

I could not bear to hear your little voices

Crying 'papa' and begging me for bread,

With not a penny in the house to buy it.

So, if my trip succeeds, I'll bring you home

Fat puddings—and I'll smack you too for sauce.

GIRLS. How will you get to heaven? You won't find

A ship to take you there.

TRY. No, not a ship,

But this wing'd steed will bear me safely thither.

[*He mounts steadily, singing as he goes*]

Speedily, speedily, Pegasus, onward,

Merrily, merrily, making the course;

With a shake of the ear as a sign of good cheer

And a clatter emit from the glittering bit—

O my dear little horse,

ΟΙ Α. μὰ τὸν Διόνυσον οὐδέποτε ζῶντός γ' ἐμοῦ.

ΤΡ οὐκ ἔστι παρὰ ταῦτ' ἄλλ'.

ΟΙ Β. ἰοὺ ἰοὺ ἰοὺ·

110

ὦ παιδί', ὁ πατήρ ἀπολιπὼν ἀπέρχεται

ὑμᾶς ἐρήμονες εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν λάθρα.

ἀλλ' ἀντιβολεῖτε τὸν πατέρ', ὃ κακοδαίμονα.

ΚΟΡΑΙ

ὦ πάτερ, ὦ πάτερ, ἄρ' ἔτυμός γε

δώμασιν ἡμετέροις φάτις ἤκει

115

ὡς σὺ μετ' ὀρνίθων προλιπὼν ἐμέ

ἐς κόρακας βαδικὲ μεταμώνιος;

ἔστι τι τῶνδ' ἐτύμως; εἴπ', ὦ πάτερ, εἴ τι φιλεῖς με.

ΤΡ. δοξάσαι ἔστι, κόραι· τὸ δ' ἐτήτυμον, ἄχθομαι ὑμῖν,

ἡνίκ' ἂν αἰτίζητ' ἄρτον, πύππαν με καλοῦσαι, 120

ἔνδον δ' ἀργυρίου μηδὲ ψακὰς ἢ πάνυ πάμπαν.

ἦν δ' ἐγὼ εὖ πράξας ἔλθω πάλιν, ἔξετ' ἐν ὥρᾳ

κολλύραν μεγάλην καὶ κόνδυλον ὄψον ἐπ' αὐτῇ

ΚΟ. καὶ τίς πόρος σοι τῆς ὁδοῦ γενήσεται;

ναῦς μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἄξει σε ταύτην τὴν ὁδόν.

125

ΤΡ. πτηνὸς πορεύσει πῶλος· οὐ ναυσθλώσομαι.

ἀλλ' ἄγε, Πήγασε, χῶρει χαίρων,

χρυσοχάλινον πάταγον ψαλίων

155

διακινήσας φαιδροῖς ὥσιν.

What on earth are you doing, diverting your nose,
To the scent of the places—well, well—But, here goes!

With a fling of the wing,
My brave little beetle shall bear me on high,
Safe home to the palace of Zeus in the sky!
[TRYGAEUS *becomes dizzy*] Mr Property Man, do please
be careful, do!

Oh, I am so frighten'd! I'm not joking now, Oh no!

[*At this point TRYGAEUS is gently lowered to the
platform in front of the Palace of Zeus*]

That's better now. We're somewhere near the gods, I
fancy. Whoa!

Yes, here we are! The house of Zeus, of course it is.
What ho!

What ho! Who answers at the door? Hullo, hullo, hullo!

*Enter from the Palace HERMES, a very elegant lackey,
who first smells, then sees and addresses the Beetle.
TRYGAEUS is hiding under the Beetle's wings at first*

HER. What's this? A human smell? [Beetle *puffs at
him*] Good lord! Much worse!

What is this filthy brute?

TRY. [*popping up*]. A beetle-horse.

HER. [*still to the Beetle*]. You Dirty Dick, who would'nt
stick

At any nasty kind of trick,
You sink of stink, you stinking sink, come, tell me what's
your name, sir,

Yes, how you came, and what's your name?

TRY. Me? Dirty Dick's my name, sir.

τί ποιεῖς, τί ποιεῖς ; ποῖ παρακλίνεις
 τοὺς μυκτῆρας πρὸς τὰς λαύρας ;
 ἕει στυτὸν θαρρῶν ἀπὸ γῆς,
 κᾶτα δρομαίαν πτέρυγ' ἐκτείνων 160
 ὀρθῶς χῶρει Διὸς εἰς αὐλᾶς.
 οἴμ' ὥς δέδοικα κούκέτι σκώπτων λέγω.
 ὦ μηχανοποιέ, πρόσσεχε τὸν νοῦν ὥς ἐμέ·
 ἀτὰρ ἐγγὺς εἶναι τῶν θεῶν ἐμοὶ δοκῶ,
 καὶ δὴ καθορῶ τὴν οἰκίαν τὴν τοῦ Διός.
 τίς ἐν Διὸς θύραισιν ; οὐκ ἀνοίξετε ;

ΕΡΜΗΣ

πόθεν βροτοῦ με προσέβαλ' ; ὦναξ Ἡράκλεις, 180
 τουτὶ τί ἐστὶ τὸ κακόν ;

ΤΡ. ἵπποκάνθαρος

ΕΡ. ὦ μιαρὲ καὶ τολμηρὲ καναῖσχυντε σὺ
 καὶ μιαρὲ καὶ παμμίiare καὶ μιαρῶτατε,
 πῶς δεῦρ' ἀνῆλθες, ὦ μιαρῶν μιαρῶτατε ;
 τί σοί ποτ' ἔστ' ὄνομ' ; οὐκ ἐρεῖς ;

ΤΡ. μιαρῶτατος. 185

HER No, no, I mean your family name?

TRY. All Dirty Dicks, the same, sir.

HER. Your father's name Is that the same?

TRY. Yes, Dirty Dick's to blame, sir.

HER. I take my solemn oath to you, unless at once you tell me true

Exactly who you are, and what, I'll strike you dead upon the spot.

TRY. Trygaeus is the name I bear, a simple peasant, nothing shoddy,

I tend my vines with honest care, no sycophant nor-busy-body!

HER Then make it clear what brought you here.

TRY. A joint of meat for you to eat. [*Points at the Beetle*]

HER. [*delighted and friendly*] O seedy one! How was it done?

TRY. It's done the trick. Your chops you lick.

We've heard the last of Dirty Dick.

O greedy one! Be off, my son!

Go, find your master Zeus, and say

There's someone here who wants a chat!

HER. Oh dear, oh dear, I greatly fear

Your destination, if it's that,

Is far away: for yesterday

The gods went off and left the flat!

TRY. Why, where on earth...?

HER. Oh dear me, no,

They're not on earth.

TRY. Where *did* they go?

HER. Aloof on high to the roof of the sky,

Just under the dome.

ΕΡ. ποδαπὸς τὸ γένος δ' εἶ, φράζε μοι.

ΤΡ. μιαρώτατος

ΕΡ. πατὴρ δέ σοι τίς ἐστίν;

ΤΡ. ἐμοί; μιαρώτατος.

ΕΡ. οὐ τοι μὰ τὴν Γῆν ἔσθ' ὅπως οὐκ ἀποθανεῖ,
εἰ μὴ κατερεῖς μοι τοῦνομ' ὃ τι ποτ' ἔστι σοι.

ΤΡ. Τρυγαῖος Ἀθμονεύς, ἀμπελουργὸς δεξιός, 190
• οὐ συκοφάντης, οὐδ' ἐραστὴς πραγμάτων.

ΕΡ. ἥκεις δὲ κατὰ τί;

ΤΡ. τὰ κρέα ταυτί σοι φέρων.

ΕΡ. ὦ δειλακρίων, πῶς ἦλθες;

ΤΡ. ὦ γλίσχρων, ὄρῃς
ὥς οὐκέτ' εἶναί σοι δοκῶ μιαρώτατος;
ἴθι νυν, κίλεσόν μοι τὸν Δί'.

ΕΡ. ἰὴ ἰὴ ἰή, 195
ὅτ' οὐδὲ μέλλεις ἐγγὺς εἶναι τῶν θεῶν·
φροῦδοι γὰρ ἐχθρές εἰσιν ἐξοκισμένοι.

ΤΡ. ποῖ γῆς;

ΕΡ. ἰδὸν γῆς.

ΤΡ. ἀλλὰ ποῖ;

ΕΡ. πόρρω πᾶνυ,
ὕπ' αὐτὸν ἀτεχνῶς τοῦρανοῦ τὸν κύτταρον.

TRY. 'Can you tell me why
They left you at home?'

HER. I'm to keep an eye
On the pots and the pans and crockery.

TRY. Why did they go away? What made them do it?

HER. They were so angry with the Greeks. You'll rue it.
They've put in War, they've handed him the lease,
With leave to do just what he likes with Greece,
And sought a refuge in the wastes of air,
Far, far away, because they could'nt bear
Your quarrels or be bother'd with your prayer.

TRY. Why did they treat us so? Explain it, please?

HER. You always wanted War, they wanted Peace.
If Sparta won a skirmish, all the duffers
In Sparta cried, 'We'll see that Athens suffers.'
And every time your Athens had a win
And Sparta sued, you sang the self-same strain—
'Athena! Zeus! We'll not be taken in!'
Just stick to Pylos, then they'll come again!'

TRY. Those were our very phrases, I agree.

HER. And so I don't suppose you'll ever see
The face of Peace again.

TRY. Why? Where is She?
She's lost, I know.

HER. War's buried her below
In a deep hole.

TRY. Where?

HER. [*pointing*]. There! And then, you know,
He piled that heap of rocks above her head,
So that you shouldn't rescue her.

TRY. You said

ΤΡ. πῶς οὖν σὺ δῆτ' ἐνταῦθα κατελείφθης μόνος; 200

ΕΡ. τὰ λοιπὰ τηρῶ σκευάρια τὰ τῶν θεῶν,
χυτρίδια καὶ σανίδια κίμφορείδια.

ΤΡ. ἐξῆκίσαντο δ' οἱ θεοὶ τίνος οὔνεκα;

ΕΡ. Ἕλλησιν ὀργισθέντες. εἴτ' ἐνταῦθα μέν,
ἵν' ἦσαν αὐτοί, τὸν Πόλεμον κατῴκισαν, 205
ὑμᾶς παραδόντες δρᾶν ἀτεχνῶς ὅ τι βούλεται·
αὐτοὶ δ' ἀνφείσανθ' ὅπως ἀνωτάτω,
ἵνα μὴ βλέποιν μαχομένους ὑμᾶς ἔτι
μηδ' ἀντιβολουμένων μηδὲν αἰσθανοίαιτο.

ΤΡ. τοῦ δ' εἵνεχ' ἡμᾶς ταῦτ' ἔδρασαν; εἰπέ μοι. 210

ΕΡ. ὅτιν πολεμεῖν ἤρείσθ', ἐκείνων πολλάκις
σπονδὰς ποιούντων· κεῖ μὲν οἱ Λακωνικοὶ
ὑπερβύλουντο μικρόν, ἔλεγον ἂν ταδί·
“ναὶ τὼ σιῶ, νῦν Ἀττικίων δώσει δίκην.”
εἰ δ' αὖ τι πράξαιτ' ἀγαθὸν Ἀττικωνικοὶ 215
κᾶλλοιεν οἱ Λάκωνες εἰρήνης πέρι,
ἐλέγετ' ἂν ὑμεῖς εὐθύς· “ἐξαπατώμεθα,
νῆ τὴν Ἀθηνῶν, νῆ Δί', οὐχὶ πειστέον·
ἤξουσιν καὐθις, ἣν ἔχωμεν τὴν Πύλον.”

ΤΡ. ὁ γοῦν χαρακτήρ ἡμεδαπὸς τῶν ῥημάτων. 220

ΕΡ. ὦν οὔνεκ' οὐκ οἶδ' εἴ ποτ' Εἰρήνην ἔτι
τὸ λοιπὸν ὄψεσθ'.

ΤΡ. ἀλλὰ ποῖ γὰρ οἴχεται;

ΕΡ. ὁ Πόλεμος αὐτὴν ἐνέβαλ' εἰς ἄντρον βαθύ.

ΤΡ. εἰς ποῖον;

ΕΡ. εἰς τουτὶ τὸ κάτω. κᾶπειθ' ὄρῃς
ὅσους ἄνωθεν ἐπεφόρησε τῶν λίθων, 225
ἵνα μὴ λάβητε μηδέποτ' αὐτήν.

ΤΡ. εἰπέ μοι,

War had a free hand now. What will he do?

HER. I can't exactly say. I only know,
Last night he fetched a mortar to his quarters—
The most gigantic size in salad-mortars

TRY. What does he mean to do with that?

HER.

He means

To smash your cities into smithereens
And make a salad-dressing. I must go.
I think he's coming out. There's such a row!

[*Exit* HERMES

TRY. What's to become of me now? Oh dear, oh dear!
I'd better run and hide! It is, I fear,
The thunder of War's mortar drawing near.

The doors of the Palace open and disclose WAR, a small but very irascible personage, and his servant, PANIC, a large and lachrymose creature. WAR is making his salad, as predicted.

WAR [*to the ingredients—men dressed as leeks for Sparta, garlic for Megara, cheese for Sicily and honey for Attica*]. Ah, mortals, mortals, mortals, doom'd to woe!
Your jaws shall ache before I let you go!

TRY. [*from his hiding-place*]. Oh what a dreadful mortar—
such a size!—

And War's an ugly look about the eyes.
So that's the dreadful bogeyman who gives you such
fright,
The bugaboo who barks at you and bites your legs at night.
WAR. Thrice-wretched Cockaleekie! Three times wretched,
did I say?

Five or ten or more times wretched. For I promise you
to-day

ἡμᾶς δὲ δι' ἡ τὴν δρᾶν παρασκευάζεται ,

ΕΡ. οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν, ὅτι θυνείαν ἐσπέρως
ὑπερφυᾶ τὸ μέγεθος εἰσηνέγκατο.

ΤΡ. τί δῆτα ταύτῃ τῇ θυνεία χρήσεται, 230

ΕΡ. τρίζειν ἐν αὐτῇ τὰς πόλεις βουλεύεται.
ἀλλ' εἴμι· καὶ γὰρ ἐξιέναι, γνώμην ἐμήν,
μέλλει· θορυβεῖ γοῦν ἔνδον

ΤΡ. οἶμοι δελταῖος.
φέρ' αὐτὸν ἀποδρῶ· καὶ γὰρ ὅσπερ ἡσθόμην
καὐτὸς θυνείας φθέγμα πολεμιστηρίας. 235

ΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἰὼ βροτοὶ βροτοὶ βροτοὶ πολυτλήμονες,
ὥς αὐτίκα μίλα τὰς γνάθους ἀλγήσετε.

ΤΡ. ὦναξ' Ἀπολλων, τῆς θυνείας τοῦ πλάτους.
ὅσον κακὸν καὶ τοῦ Πολέμου τοῦ βλέμματος.
ἄρ' οὐτός ἐστ' ἐκείνος ὃν καὶ φεύγομεν, 240
ὁ δεινός, ὁ ταλαύρινος, ὁ κατὰ τοῖν σκελοῖν ;

ΠΟ (πράσα ἐμβάλλων) ἰὼ Πρασῖαι τρισάθλιαι καὶ πεντάκις

I will dash you into pieces!

TRY.

What care I?

He's on the Spartan side, so let him die!

WAR. Now, Megara, my garlic! Now for you!

I'll hash and mash and smash you for my stew!

TRY. Oh poor old Megara! Really he's a touch
Too cruel. Garlic makes one cry so much.

WAR. Now Sicily, we mustn't leave you out,
My cheese.

TRY. He'll grate the cheese up fine, no doubt.

WAR. And Attic honey, to complete this gear!

TRY. No, no, my lad! I warn you to steer clear.
Don't waste the Attic honey. It's too dear.

[TRYGÆUS has rushed forward in his excitement,
but WAR takes no notice of him]

WAR. Slave! Panic!

PAN.

Sir?

WAR

You'll find it doesn't pay

To loaf, my lad. Take that, and that!

PAN

I say!

That stung a bit! It gave me quite a twist.

You must have got some garlic on your fist.

WAR. Now run and fetch a pestle.

PAN.

Can't be done.

We've only just moved in. There isn't one.

WAR. Fetch one from Athens. Run.

PAN [to the audience].

I have to do it,

Or else, you see, the master makes me rue it.

[Exit PANIC, among the audience]

TRY. Poor little men! Whatever shall we do?
Look out! A frightful danger threatens you.

καὶ πολλοδικαίικες, ὡς ἀπολιῦσθε τήμερον

ΤΡ. τουτὶ μέν, ἄνδρες, οὐδὲν ἡμῖν πράγμα πω·
τὸ γὰρ κακὸν τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τῆς Λακωνικῆς. 215

ΠΟ. (σκόροδα ἐμβάλλων) ὦ Μέγαρα Μέγαρ', ὡς ἐπιτετρί-
ψεσθ' αὐτίκα

ἀπαξάπαντα καταμεμυττωτευμένα.

ΤΡ. βαβαὶ βαβαιάξ, ὡς μεγάλα καὶ δριμέα
τοῖσιν Μεγαρεῦσιν ἐνέβαλεν τὰ κλαύματα.

ΠΟ. (τυρὸν ἐμβάλλων) ἰὼ Σικελίαι, καὶ σὺ δ' ὡς ἀπόλλυσαι

ΤΡ. -οἶ' ἡ πόλις τάλαινα διακναισθήσεται. 231

ΠΟ. φέρ' ἐπιχέω καὶ τὸ μέλι τουτὶ τίητικόν.

ΤΡ. οὗτος, παραινῶ σοι μέλιτι χρῆσθ' ἀτέρω
τετρώβολον τοῦτ' ἐστί· φείδου τᾶττικοῦ.

ΠΟ. παῖ παῖ Κυδοιμέ

ΚΤΑΘΙΜΟΣ

τί με καλκῖς;

ΠΟ. κλαύσει μακρά. 255

ἔστηκας ἀργός, οὐτοσί σοι κύνδυλος.

ΚΤ. ὡς δριμύς· οἴμοι μοι τάλας. ὦ δέσποτα,
μῶν τῶν σκορόδων ἐνέβαλες εἰς τὸν κύνδυλον;

ΠΟ. οἷσεις ἀλετρίβανον τρέχων.

ΚΤ. ἀλλ', ὦ μέλε,

οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῖν· ἐχθρὸς εἰσφκίσμεθα. 260

ΙΟ. οὐκουν παρ' Ἀθηναίων μεταθρέξει ταχύ;

ΣΤ. ἔγωγε νῆ Δι'· εἰ δὲ μή γε, κλαύσομαι.

ΓΡ. ἄγε δῆ, τί δρῶμεν, ὦ πόνηρ' ἀνθρώπια;
όρᾶτε τὸν κίνδυνον ἡμῖν ὡς μέγας

If that young person brings a pestle back,
He'll make our towns a ruin and a wrack.

PAN. [*returning*]. I say—

WAR.

Haven't you got one?

PAN

Sorry, sir,

Athens has lost her greatest warmonger,
Her pestilent tanner Cleon.

TRY

Cleon lost?—

How patriotic,—when the city most
Needed a loss like that! Our Lady too
Be praised for saving us from that grim stew!

WAR. Then run along to Sparta. Never worry.

You'll find one there.

PAN.

Oh yes, sir

[*Exit as before*]

WAR.

Hurry! Hurry!

TRY. Now comes the crisis. What's to be our fate?

Is anybody here initiate

In the Samothracian mysteries? Then pray

That young man's feet get twisted the wrong way.

PAN [*returning*]. Boohoo, boohoo! Boohoo, boohoo,
boohoo!

WAR. What? Haven't you got it?

PAN.

Sparta's pestle too

Is lost.

WAR. What's that, you scoundrel?

PAN.

Sir, they sent him

To Thrace, where somebody to whom they lent him

Lost him.

TRY. Good luck to them! Each heavenly Twin
Be praised! Cheer up, my mortals. Your luck's in!

WAR. Come, clear away Take everything indoors. I'll
have to wrestle

εἴπερ γὰρ ἦξει τὸν ἀλετρίβανον φέρων, 265
τούτῳ ταράξει τὰς πόλεις καθήμενος.

ΚΥ. οὗτος.

ΠΟ. τί ἔστιν; οὐ φέρεις;

ΚΥ. τὸ δεῖνα γάρ,
ἀπόλωλ' Ἀθηναίοισιν ἀλετρίβανος,
ὁ βυρσοπώλης, ὃς ἐκύκα τὴν Ἑλλάδα . 270

ΤΡ. εὖ γ', ὦ πότνια δέσποιν' Ἀθηναία, ποιῶν
ἀπόλωλ' ἐκείνος κὰν δέσονται τῇ πόλει,
ἢ πρὶν γε τὸν μυττωτὸν ἡμῖν ἐγχείαι

ΠΟ. οὐκοῦν ἕτερον δῆτ' ἐκ Λακεδαιμόνους μέτει
ἀνύσας τι;

ΚΥ. ταῦτ', ὦ δέσποθ'

ΠΟ. ἡκέ νυν ταχύ. 275

ΤΡ. ὦνδρες, τί πεισόμεσθα; νῦν ἄγων μέγας.
ἀλλ' εἴ τις ὑμῶν ἐν Σαμοθράκη τυγχάνει
μεμνημένος, νῦν ἔστιν εὖξασθαι καλὸν
ἀποστραφῆναι τοῦ μετιόντος τὸ πόδε.

ΚΥ. οἴμοι τάλας, οἴμοι γε, κἄτ' οἴμοι μάλα 280

ΠΟ. τί ἔστι, μὴν οὐκ αὖ φέρεις;

ΚΥ. ἀπόλωλε γὰρ
καὶ τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοισιν ἀλετρίβανος.

ΠΟ. πῶς, ὦ πανούργ';

ΚΥ. ἐς τὰπὶ Θράκης χωρία
χρήσαντες ἐτέροις αὐτὸν εἴτ' ἀπώλεσαν.

ΤΡ. εὖ γ', εὖ γε ποιήσαντες, ὦ Διοσκόρῳ. 285

ἴσως ἂν εὖ γένοιτο· θαρρεῖτ', ὦ βροτοί.

ΠΟ. ἀπόφερε τὰ σκεύη λαβὼν ταυτὶ πύλιν·

Myself with this emergency and make myself a pestle.

[*Exeunt WAR, PANIC, etc.*]

TRY. Now, gentlemen of Greece, it is time to find release
From the troubles and the quarrels and the pain.

It is time to rescue Peace and to make the fighting cease,
Before another pestle's here to hinder us again.

Come, islanders and foreigners and all the population,
Come, tradesmen, farmers, carpenters, no matter what
your station,

We want you all to hear the call and help us save the nation.
Here's fortune's cup, come drink it up. Oh, hurry, every-
one!

Rope, spade and lever soon shall heave her out, and Peace
be won!

*Enter the CHORUS of town and country
people from all parts of Greece.*

CHO. Come hither all, obey the call, and help to save the
nation!

Come, work for Peace, ye men of Greece, O day of
jubilation!

Not marching on parade with the officers ahead,—

What a pretty mess they made with their uniforms of red!
So much the worse for Lamachus,
Who cares a curse for Lamachus?

We'll follow you instead.

Come on, my man, unfold the plan! Your counsel shall
be mine,

We shall not shirk at any work upon a day so fine!

But heave the lever, strain the crane,

And bring her to the light again,

The best of all the goddesses, the Lover of the Vine.

ἐγὼ δὲ δοίδυκ' εἰσιὼν ποιήσομαι.

ΤΡ. νῦν ἐστὶν ἡμῖν, ὦνδρες Ἑλληνες, καλὸν
ἀπαλλαγεῖσι πραγμάτων τε καὶ μαχῶν
ἐξελεύσαι τὴν πᾶσιν Εὐρήνῃν φίλην,
πρὶν ἕτερον αὖ δοίδυκα κωλύσαι τινα 295
ἀλλ', ὦ γεωργοὶ κἄμποροι καὶ τέκτονες
καὶ δημιουργοὶ καὶ μέτοικοι καὶ ξένοι
καὶ νησιῶται, δεῦρ' ἔτ', ὦ πάντες λεῶ,
ὥς τάχιστ' ἄμας λαβόντες καὶ μοχλοὺς καὶ σχοινία·
νῦν γὰρ ἡμῖν ἰρπίασαι πάρεστιν ἀγαθοῦ δαίμονος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεῦρο πᾶς χώρει προθύμως εὐθὺ τῆς σωτηρίας. 301
ὦ Πανέλληνες, βοηθήσωμεν, εἴπερ πάποτε,
τάξεων ἀπαλλαγέντες καὶ κακῶν φοινικικῶν·
ἡμέρα γὰρ ἐξέλαμψεν ἥδε μισολάμαχος.
πρὸς τὰδ' ἡμῖν, εἴ τι χρὴ δρᾶν, φράζς κἀρχιτεκτόνει,
οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως ἀπειπεῖν ἂν δοκῶ μοι τήμερον,
πρὶν μοχλοῖς καὶ μηχαναῖσιν εἰς τὸ φῶς ἀνελεύσαι
τὴν θεῶν πασῶν μεγίστην καὶ φιλαμπελωτάτην.

TRY. Be silent, boys! Don't make a noise! Postpone the joyful din!

Be quiet or you'll waken War, who's lurking there within.

CHO. [*repeating the song*]. So much the worse for Lamachus,

Who cares a curse for Lamachus?—

Hurrah! My little man!

TRY. Whatever is the matter there?

A very serious affair!

Your dancing and your prancing will upset my little plan!

CHO. I didn't mean to dance, but oh! I feel so happy, don't you know?

These merry legs will not be still, but make me dance against my will.

TRY. Enough, my son.

CHO. All right! I've done!

TRY. You know that isn't true.

CHO. Oh dear, I simply *have* to swing one leg about.

TRY. Well, have your fling

This once. Then, that will do!

CHO. [*repeating the song, very softly, and dancing on one leg*] We shall not shirk, etc.

[*TRYGAEUS manages to get them fairly quiet at last*]

TRY. Now, how are we to drag these stones away?

Enter HERMES

HER. You dirty rogue, what are you doing, pray?

TRY. Nothing that's wrong, as Killikon would say.

HER. Death, you must know, is Zeus's penalty

For anyone who digs her up

TRY. I see.

ΤΡ. οὐ σιωπήσεσθ', ὅπως μὴ περιχαρεῖς τῷ πράγματι
τὸν Πόλεμον ἐκζωπυρίσῃ· ἔνδοθεν κεκραγότες, 310
τί τὸ κακόν, τί πάσχετ', ὦνδρες; μηδαμῶς, πρὸς
τῶν θεῶν,

πρᾶγμα κάλλιστον διαφθείρητε διὰ τὰ σχήματα.

ΧΟ. ἀλλ' ἔγωγ' οὐ σχηματίζειν βούλομ', ἀλλ' ὑφ' ἡδονῆς
οὐκ ἐμόνῳ κινουῦντος αὐτῶ τῶ σκέλη χορεύετον 323

ΤΡ. μή τι καὶ νυνί γ' ἔτ', ἀλλὰ παῦε παῦ' ὀρχούμενος.

ΧΟ. ἦν ἰδοῦ, καὶ δὴ πέπαυμαι.

ΤΡ. φῆς γε, παύει δ' οὐδέγω

ΧΟ ἐν μὲν οὔν τουτί μ' ἔασον ἐλκύσαι, καὶ μηκέτι.

ΤΡ. τοῦτό νυν, καὶ μηκέτ' ἄλλο μηδὲν ὀρχήσεσθ' ἔτι.

φέρει δὴ κατίδω, ποῖ τοὺς λίθους ἀφέλξομεν.

ΕΡ. ὦ μιαρὲ καὶ τολμηρέ, τί ποιεῖν διανοεῖ,

ΤΡ. οὐδὲν πονηρόν, ἀλλ' ὅπερ καὶ Κελλικῶν.

ΕΡ. αἶρ' οἴσθαι θάνατον ὅτι προεῖψ' ὁ Ζεὺς ὅς ἂν 371

ταύτην ἀνορύττων εὐρεθῇ;

ΤΡ. νῦν ἄρά με

So I shall have to die?

HER. Oh, certainly.

TRY. Then lend me half a crown. That's the solution.
I'll buy a pig before my execution,
And get myself initiated

HER. Lord
Of Thunder, Zeus, this fellow—

TRY. Not a word,
I beg you!

HER. I insist on being heard!

TRY. I brought some meat for you to eat!
Oh please, dear Hermes, do not shout!

HER. All very well! Unless I tell,
And shout it out, without a doubt
My master Zeus will give me Hell!

TRY. Please, please, dear Hermes, do not shout
Just now. [*To the CHORUS*] What are you all about?
You're standing there in dumb despair
Come, shriek and shout and raise a rout
Or else he'll blurt the whole thing out!

CHO. O Hermes, never, never, never, never, never do!
But if ever I have sacrificed a sucking-pig to you,
If you tasted it with pleasure, if you bolted it with glee,
Pray, remember at your leisure 'twas a pleasure due to me!

TRY. Of course it was. Dear Hermes, lend a hand,
Help us to dig her out. You understand,
We shall sacrifice to nobody but you,
We shall keep the great Panathenaea too
As a festival to Hermes, if you do.
We'll give you lots of other things! Look! Here's

[Produces a gold cup]

ἴπασ' ἀνάγκη 'στ' ἀποθανεῖν;

ΕΡ. εἰ ἴσθ' ὅτι

ΤΡ. ἐς χοιρίδιόν μοι νυν δίνειςον τρεῖς δραχμάς·
δεῖ γὰρ μνηθῆναί με πρὶν τεθνηκέναι. 375

ΕΡ. ὦ Ζεῦ κεραυνοβρόντα.

ΤΡ. μὴ πρὸς τῶν θεῶν
ἡμῶν κατείπης, ἀντιβολῶ σε, δέσποτα.

ΕΡ. οὐκ ἂν σιωπήσαιμι.

ΤΡ. ναί, πρὸς τῶν κρεῶν

ἄγῳ προθύμως σοι φέρων ἀφικόμην.

ΕΡ. ἀλλ', ὦ μέλ', ὑπὸ τοῦ Διὸς ἀμαλδυνθήσομαι, 380
εἰ μὴ τετορήσω ταῦτα καὶ λακήσομαι.

ΤΡ. μὴ νυν λακήσης, λίσσομαί σ', ὄρμιδιον.
εἰπέ μοι, τί πείσχειτ', ὦνδρες, ἔστατ' ἐκπεπληγμένοι
ὦ πόνηροι, μὴ σιωπᾶτ'· εἰ δὲ μή, λακήσεται.

ΧΟ μηδαμῶς, ὦ δέσποθ' Ἑρμῇ, μηδαμῶς, μηδαμῶς, 385
εἴ τι κεχαρισμένον

χοιρίδιον οἶσθα παρ' ἐ-
μοῦ γε κατεδηδοκῶς,

τοῦτο μὴ φαῦλον νόμιζ' ἐν τῷδε τῷ νῦν πράγματι.

ΤΡ 417
ναὶ μὰ Δία. πρὸς ταῦτ', ὦ φίλ' Ἑρμῇ, ξύλλαβε
ἡμῖν προθύμως, τήνδε καὶ ξυνέλκυσον
καὶ σοὶ τὰ μεγάλ' ἡμεῖς Παναθῆναι' ἄξομεν,
πάσας τε τὰς ἄλλας τελετὰς τὰς τῶν θεῶν,
χᾶτερ' ἔτι πόλλ' ἔξεις ἀγαθὴ πρῶτον δέ σοι
(φίολην χρυσὴν δίδωσιν αὐτῷ)

'The first instalment—'tis the cup that cheers!
HER. [*much moved*]. I am too merciful, I know

'The sight of gold affects me so

But be it as you say

'The task is yours to save the maid

Let every person take a spade

To dig the stones away.

CHO. We will, we will! Great god of skill,

Direct us in the work

Your master-hand should take command,

Though none of us will shirk.

TRY. The cup, the cup, come hold it up! And, as we
take our station,

Before we dig we'll have a big inaugural libation.

HER. [*as Herald*]. Silence for the libation Silence all.

Silentium! Silentium!

TRY. As thus we pour libation, let us pray

May Greece be crowned with blessing from this day.

May any man who pulls with might and main

Never see service in the ranks again.

CHO. Nay, rather sit and poke the fire in peace

Domestic, with his lady on his knees.

TRY. But any manufacturer

Of armaments, who would prefer

War to continue—'Good for trade'—

May he be captured in a raid

Of pirates who will keep him quiet,

With barley-groats his only diet.

CHO. May all who make it their ambition

To win a cushy staff-commission,

All slaves, who seek a chance to steal

- δῶρον δίδωμι τήνδ', ἵνα σπένδειν ἔχῃς
- ΕΡ οἴμ' ὡς ἐλεήμων εἴμ' αἰεὶ τῶν χρυσίδων 125
 ὑμέτερον ἐντεῦθεν ἔργον, ὦνδρες ἰλλὰ ταῖς ἄμαις
 εἰσιόντες ὡς τάχιστα τοὺς λίθους ἀφέλκετε
- ΧΘ ταῦτα δρῖσομεν. σὺ δ' ἡμῖν, ὦ θεῶν σοφώτατε,
 ἅττα χρὴ ποιεῖν ἐφ'esτὼς φράζε δημιουργικῶς·
 τᾶλλα δ' εὐρήσεις ὑπουργεῖν ὄντας ἡμῶς οὐ κακοὺς
- ΤΡ ἄγε δὴ, σὺ ταχέως ὕπεχε τὴν φιᾶλην, ὅπως 131
 ἔργῳ 'φιαλοῦμεν, εὐξάμενοι τοῖσιν θεοῖς.
- ΕΡ. σπονδὴ σπονδὴ
 εὐφημεῖτε εὐφημεῖτε
- ΤΡ. σπένδοντες εὐχόμεσθα τὴν νῦν ἡμέραν 135
 "Ελλησιν ἄρξαι πᾶσι πολλῶν καὶ γαθῶν,
 χῶστις προθύμως ξυλλάβοι τῶν σχοινίων,
 τοῦτον τὸν ἄνδρα μὴ λαβεῖν ποτ' ἀσπίδα.
- ΧΘ μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἐν εἰρήνῃ γε διάγειν τὸν βίον,
 ἔχονθ' ἐταίραν καὶ σκαλεύοντ' ἄνθρακας. 140
- ΤΡ. εἴ τις δορυξὺς ἢ κάπηλος ἀσπίδων,
 ἔν' ἐμπολᾷ βέλτιον, ἐπιθυμῇ μαχῶν,
 ληφθεὶς ὑπὸ ληστῶν ἐσθίοι κριθὰς μόνας.
- ΧΘ. κεῖ τις στρατηγεῖν βουλόμενος μὴ ξυλλάβῃ 150
 ἢ δοῦλος αὐτομολεῖν παρεσκευασμένος,

way from work, be brought to heel,
and whipp'd and broken on the wheel.
Lay everything come right again,
and all of us be blessed! Amen

Strike up the Hallelujah!

TRY Please leave out
The striking! Simply, Hallelujah, shout!

ALL. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

TRY. [*pouring the libation*]. To Hermes and the Hours
these gifts! The Graces, Aphrodite, Love!

CHOR. And War?

TRY. Not so.

CHOR. The War-god?

TRY. No.

CHOR. Now man the ropes and with good hopes prepare
to tug and shove.

HER. Heave ho!

TRY. Now let it go!

HER. Heave ho!

TRY. Heave ho!

CHOR. Heave ho! Heave ho!

TRY. It seems we're very slow.

CHOR. Heave ho! Heave ho!

TRY. Now let it go!

CHOR. There's someone hindering it, I know.

1 SEMI-CHOR. Come, gentlemen, we farmers are the only
men to do it.

TRY. It's going better, gentlemen. Now put your backs
into it.

2 SEMI-CHOR. He says it's going better. Then let all of us
be workers.

ἐπὶ τοῦ τροχοῦ γ' ἔλκοιτο μαστιγούμενος·
 ἡμῖν δ' ἀγαθὰ γένοιτ'. ἰὴ παιῶν, ἰή

ΤΡ. ἄφελε τὸ παῖειν, ἀλλ' ἰὴ μόνον λέγε.

ΧΟ ἰὴ ἰὴ τοῖνυν, ἰὴ μόνον λέγω. 155

ΤΡ. Ἑρμῇ, Χάρισιν, Ὡραιοσιν, Ἀφροδίτῃ, Πόθῳ,

ΧΟ. Ἄρει δὲ μῆ,

ΤΡ. μῆ.

ΧΟ. μηδ' Ἐνυαλίῳ γε;

— ΤΡ. μῆ.

ΧΟ. ὑπότεινε δὴ πῆς, καὶ κάταγε τοῖσιν κάλῳς. 159

ΕΡ. ὦ εἶα

ΤΡ. εἶα μάλα

ΕΡ. ὦ εἶα.

ΤΡ. εἶα νῆ Δία.

ΧΟ. ἀλλ' εἴς' οὐ κωλύουσιν.

ἄγ', ὦνδρες, αὐτοὶ δὴ μόνοι λαβώμεθ' οἱ γεωργοί.

ΕΡ. χωρεῖ γέ τοι τὸ πρᾶγμα πολλῶ μάλλον, ὦνδρες,
 ὑμῖν.

ΧΟ. χωρεῖν τὸ πρᾶγμά φησιν· ἀλλὰ πᾶς ἀνὴρ προ-
 θυμοῦ. 510

TRY. The farmers are your only men The rest of them
are shirkers

CHO. Heave it along, Steady and strong! Now we are
moving fast!

Stick to it there! Never despair! Look! We have done
it at last.

Heave ho, heave ho, heave ho!

*[They succeed in pulling the stones away, and PEACE rises
from the pit, accompanied by PLENTY and FESTIVITY]*

TRY Our Lady, Giver of the Grapes, how can I sing
your praise?

I want a phrase to suit the case, a thousand-gallon phrase—
In such a case there is no phrase that's worthy of your
Grace.

Good morning, Plenty And good-day to you, Festivity.
Why, what a pretty face you have. Festivity for me!

[He kisses her]

Your breath is perfume None can tell how fragrant-sweet
you are.

It warms the heart, and bids us dwell at peace for evermore.

CHO. It seems that this old gentleman is happy, by the way
He's going on.

TRY. Indeed I am, as everyone will say
Who sees me dressed in all my best for the lucky wedding-
day.

HIER. We won't detain the farmers, eh? Perhaps you'll
tell them so?

TRY. Oyez, oyez, good people all! Good farmers, you
may go.

Resume your farming implements, and go into the fields,

ΤΡ. οἷ ται γεωργοὶ τοῦργον ἐξέλκουσι, κἄλλος οὐδεὶς.

ΧΟ. ἄγε νυν, ἄγε πᾶς
καὶ μὴν ὁμοῦ 'στιν ἤδη.
μὴ νῦν ἀνώμεν, ἀλλ' ἐπεν-
τείνωμεν ἀνδρικώτερον. 515
ἤδη 'στὶ τοῦτ' ἐκείνο.
ὦ εἶα νῦν, ὦ εἶα πᾶς.
ὦ εἶα, εἶα, εἶα, εἶα, εἶα, εἶα.
ὦ εἶα, εἶα, εἶα, εἶα, εἶα, πᾶς

ΤΡ. ὦ πότνια βοτρυνόδωρε, τί προσείπω σ' ἔπος; 520
πόθεν ἂν λάβοιμι ῥήμα μυριάμφορον
ὅτῳ προσείπω σ'; οὐ γὰρ εἶχον οἴκοθεν.
ὦ χαῖρ' Ὀπώρα, καὶ σὺ δ', ὦ Θεωρία.
οἶον δ' ἔχεις τὸ πρόσωπον, ὦ Θεωρία.
οἶον δὲ πνεῖς, ὡς ἡδὺν κατὰ τῆς καρδίας, 525
γλυκύτατον, ὥσπερ ἀστρατείας καὶ μύρου.

ΧΟ. εὐδαιμονικῶς γ' ὁ πρεσ-
βύτης, ὅσα γ' ᾧδ' ἰδεῖν,
τὰ νῦν τάδε πράττει

ΤΡ. τί δῆτ', ἐπειδὴν νυμφίον μ' ὁράτε λαμπρὸν ὄντα;

ἘΡ. ἴθι νυν, ἄνειπε τοὺς γεωργοὺς ἀπιέναι. 550

ΤΡ. ἀκούετε λεῶ τοὺς γεωργοὺς ἀπιέναι
τὰ γεωργικὰ σκεύη λαβόντας εἰς ἀγρὸν
ὡς τάχιστα ἄνευ δορατίου καὶ ξίφους κάκοντίου.

Make haste You needn't stop to take your swords and
spears and shields,

For everything is full of peace and fatness, understand,
So speed along with a cheery song to labour on the land.

CHO What a day of joy and bliss! What a happiness it is
For us honest farming-men to be going home again!

After weary years of waiting I shall greet my vines with joy
And the fig-trees which I planted as a very little boy

TRY. One moment, gentles, if you please.

We first must sing the praise of Peace
Think of all our many blessings in the life of long-ago,
Joy and pleasure without measure. Everything to Peace
we owe

For the fruit she gave to you,

Figs and olives, myrtle too,

For the vintage, sweet and new,

For the violets which grew

On the margin of the well—

How we missed them, none can tell—

For all these blessings of the past

Praise to Peace, restored at last

CHO. Goddess, throned in earth and heaven, deign to
hear our praise,

Queen of frolic, mirth and marriage, grant us all thy grace.

From our quarrels and divisions,

From our cunning and suspicions

Set us free, that all may hail thee, holy Queen of Peace,

With a medicine of kindness mixed from all the hearts
of Greece

Make us gentle, and at last

Help us to forgive the past.

ὥς ἅπαντ' ἤδη 'στὶ μεστὰ τῶνθάδ' εἰρήνης σαπρᾶς.
ἀλλὰ πῶς χώρει πρὸς ἔργον εἰς ἀγρὸν παιωνίας.

ΧΟ ὦ ποθεινὴ τοῖς δικαίοις καὶ γαργοῖς ἡμέρα, 556
ἄσμενός σ' ἰδὼν προσειπεῖν βούλομαι τὰς ἀμπέλους·
τάς τε συκάς, ἵς ἐγὼ 'φύτευον ὦν νεώτερος,
ἀσπάσασθαι θυμὸς ἡμῖν ἐστὶ πολλοστῷ χρόνῳ.

ΤΡ. ἀλλ' ἀναμνησθέντες, ὦνδρες,
τῆς διαίτης τῆς παλαιᾶς,
ἣν παρεῖχ' αὕτη ποθ' ἡμῖν,
τῶν τε παλασίου ἐκείνων,
τῶν τε σύκων, τῶν τε μύρτων, 575
τῆς τρυγός τε τῆς γλυκείας,
τῆς ἰωνιάς τε τῆς πρὸς
τῷ φρέατι, τῶν τ' ἐλαῶν,
ὧν ποθοῦμεν,
ἀντὶ τούτων τήνδε νυνὶ
τὴν θεὸν προσείπατε.

ΧΟ. ὦ σεμνοτάτη βυσίλεια θεά,
πότνι' Εἰρήνη, 975
δέσποινα χορῶν, δέσποινα γάμων,
δέξαι θυσίαν τὴν ἡμετέραν.
λύσον δὲ μίχας καὶ κορκορυγὰς,
ἵνα Λυσιμάχην σε καλῶμεν.
παῦσον δ' ἡμῶν τὰς ὑπονοίας
τὰς περικόμλους,
αἷς στωμυλλόμεθ' εἰς ἀλλήλους· 990
μῖξον δ' ἡμᾶς τοὺς Ἑλληνας
πάλιν ἐξ ἀρχῆς
φιλίας χυλῷ, καὶ συγγνώμῃ
τινὶ πραοτέρῃ κεράσισα.

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