THE
ORESTEIA OF AESCHYLUS
The Oresteia of Aeschylus
Agamemnon, Choephori, Eumenides

THE GREEK TEXT
as arranged for performance at Cambridge

WITH
AN ENGLISH VERSE TRANSLATION

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EDITOR’S NOTE

In arranging the text of the Oresteia for performance, the editor has endeavoured to preserve the balance of the composition, due regard being had to the fact that the modern orchestra enables the producer to obtain his lyrical effects more rapidly than was possible with the simpler ancient music. Though much has inevitably been sacrificed which he would have been glad to retain, he hopes that the Trilogy, as now arranged, will not appear to the reader to have become a series of disjointed episodes.

The text owes much to the critical work of the late Dr Walter Headlam. For two choral odes in the Eumenides (pp. 134 ff. and 140 ff.), the verse translation composed by the late Dr A. W. Verrall for an earlier performance of the Eumenides has been retained.

Mr R. C. Trevelyan’s verse translation, which, by his generous permission, is now printed for the first time, follows the original line for line, and aims at reproducing the metrical pattern of Greek in the lyrical parts.

The music for the Cambridge performance has been composed by Mr C. Armstrong Gibbs. The vocal score will shortly be published by Messrs Goodwin and Tabb, Ltd.

J. T. S.
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Agamemnon, King of Argos, son of Atreus.

Clytemnestra, his wife.

Orestes, his son.

Electra, his daughter.

Aegisthus, his cousin and enemy, paramour of Clytemnestra.

Pylades, son of Strophius, friend of Orestes.

Cassandra, daughter of Priam, King of Troy.

A Watchman, loyal to Agamemnon.

Herald of Agamemnon.

Nurse of Orestes.

Servant of Aegisthus.

Pythian Prophetess.

Apollo.

Athene.

Hermes.

Chorus of Argive Elders, Trojan Bondwomen, and Furies.

Retinue of Agamemnon, Women attendant on Clytemnestra, Bodyguard of Aegisthus, Areopagites, Athenian Women, etc.
THE AGAMEMNON

OF

AESCHYLUS
THE AGAMEMNON

Before the royal palace at Argos. Night.

WATCHMAN

The Gods have I besought for my release
This whole long year of vigil, wherein couched
On the Atreidæ’s roof on bent arms, dogwise,
I have learnt the nightly sessions of the stars,
Those chiefly that bring storm and heat to men,
The bright conspicuous dynasts of the sky.
Still am I watching for the signal flame,
A beam of fire carrying news from Troy
And tidings of its capture: so dictates
A woman’s sanguine heart to a man’s will joined.
Now when upon my restless dew-damp couch
I have laid me down, this bed of mine where dreams
Haunt not: for fear instead of sleep stands by—
Oft as I have a mind to sing or hum,
A tune in slumber’s stead by way of salve,
Then do I weep the fortunes of this house
No more so wisely managed as of old.
But now blessed release from toil be mine,
And the fire’s happy tidings shine through gloom.

Oh hail, thou lamp, that dawnest on the night
Like daybreak, heralding in Argos many
A choral dance for joy at this good hap!
Ioû! Ioû!
THE AGAMEMNON

Before the royal palace at Argos. Night.

ΦΥΛΑΞ

Θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶν ἀπαλλαγῆν πόνων φρουρὰς ἐτείας μῆκος, ἢν κοιμώμενος στέγαις Ἀτρειδῶν ἄγκαθεν, κυνὸς δίκην, ἀστρων κάτοιδα νυκτέρων ὁμήγυριν, καὶ τοὺς φέροντας χείμα καὶ θέρος βροτοῖς λαμπροὺς δυνάστας, ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι. καὶ νῦν φυλάσσω λαμπάδος τὸ σύμβολον, αὐγὴν πυρὸς φέρουσαν ἐκ Τροίας φάτων ἀλώσιμὸν τε βάξιν. ὥδε γὰρ κρατεῖ γυναικὸς ἀνδρόβουλον ἐλπίζον κέαρ.

εὑτ’ ἄν δὲ νυκτίπλαγκτον ἐνδροσὸν τ’ ἐχω ἐνυήν οἰνείροις οὐκ ἑπισκοπομένην ἐμὴν· φόβος γὰρ ἀνθ’ ὑπνοὺ παραστατεῖ· ὅταν δ’ ἀείδειν ἢ μινύρεσθαι δοκῶ, ὑπνοὺ τόδ’ αὐτίμολπον ἐντέμων ἄκος, κλαῖω τότ’ οἶκον τούδε συμφορὰν στένων οὐχ ὡς τὰ πρόσθ’ ἀριστα διαπονομένου. νῦν δ’ εὕτυχῆς γένοιτ’ ἀπαλλαγῇ πόνων εὐαγγέλου φανέντος ὀρφαιῶν πυρὸς.

ὦ χαῖρε λαμπτήρ, νυκτὸς ἡμερήσιον φάος πιφαύσκων καὶ χορῶν κατάστασιν πολλῶν ἐν Ἀργεί, τήσδε συμφορᾶς χάριν. ἵού ἵού.
Agamemnon's queen thus loudly do I summon
To arise from her couch and lift within
The house forthwith a shout of holy joy
To greet yon light, if verily Ilium's town
Be captured, as the announcing beacon boasts.
For the rest I keep silence: on my tongue
A great ox treads: though, had it speech, this house
Might tell a plain tale. I, for folk who know,
Speak gladly: for know-nothings I forget.

[Exit Watchman. Clytaemnestra's cry of triumph
is heard within. Enter Chorus of Elders.]

CHORUS
'Tis the tenth year now since Priam's mighty
Avenging foe,
Meneläus, and king Agamemnon too,
From the shores of Greece launched forth with a
Argive crews
[thousand
United in armed federation.
Loud rang their wrathful warcry forth,
As the scream of vultures robbed of their young,
When in mountain solitudes over their eyrie
They wheel and circle
With endless beating of oarlike wings,
Reft of the nestlings
Their watchful labour had tended.
But above there is one, be it Apollo,
Or Pan, or Zeus, who hearing the shrill
Sad cry of those birds, his suppliant wards,
Shall one day send
Retribution upon the offenders.
Unsolved the event
Still waiteth: and yet to an issue is moving.
Δηκατον μὲν ἔτος τὸδ' ἐπεὶ Πριάμου μέγας ἀντίδικος, 
Μενέλαος ἄναξ ἦδ' Ἀγαμέμνων, 
στόλον Ἀργείων χιλιοναύτην 
τῆςδ' ἀπὸ χώρας 
ἣναν, στρατιώτων ἀρωγῆς, 
μέγαν ἐκ θυμοῦ κλάζοντες Ἄρη 
τρόπον αἰγυπτιῶν, οἵτ' ἐκπατήσας 
ἀλγεσὶ παίδων ὑπατηλεχέων 
στροφοδινοῦνται 
πτερύγων ἐρετμοῦσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι, 
δεμνοτήρη 
πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες· 
ὑπατὸς δ' ἁίων ἦ τις Ἀπόλλων ἦ Πᾶν ἦ Ζεὺς οἰωνόθροον 
γόνον ἄξιβόαν τῶνδε μετοίκων, 
ὕστεροποιον 
πέμπει παραβάσιν Ἐρυνύν. 
ἔστι δ' ὀπὴ νῦν 
ἔστιν τελεῖται δ' ἐς τὸ πεπρωμένον.
Neither oil poured over nor fire lit beneath
Shall temper the stubborn
Wrath for the sacrifice unburnt.

[Enter Clytaemnestra.]

But thou, O daughter
Of Tyndareus, Clytaemnestra, Queen,
What hath chanced? What tidings have reached
That at every shrine [thine ears,
Thou commandest ritual oblations?
And of all those Gods that frequent our town,
From on high, from beneath,
Whether heavenly sublime, or of earthlier power,
Glowing with gifts are the altars.
And on all sides one by one bright flames
Skyward are leaping,
Medicined and nursed by the innocent spell
And soft persuasion of hallowed gums,
Rich unguent stored for a King's use.
Hereof what can and may be revealed
Deign thou to declare,
And so be the healer of this my doubt,
Which now to an evil boding sinks,
But anon from the sacrifice Hope grown kind
Drives back from the soul those ravening thoughts,
That grief that gnaws at the heart-roots.

I am come, Clytaemnestra, reverencing
Thy will; for it is just that we should honour
The sovereign's wife, when the throne lacks its lord.
Now whether certified, or but in hope
Of happy news, thou makest sacrifice,
Fain would I know; yet shall not grudge thee silence.
THE AGAMEMNON

οὕθ' ὑποκαίων οὔτ' ἐπιλείβων
ἀπύρων ἱερῶν
ὅργας ἀτενεῖς παραθέλξει.

[Enter Clytæmnestra.]

σὺ δὲ, Τυνδάρεως
θύγατερ, βασίλεια Κλυταμήστρα,
tί χρέος; τί νέον; τί δ' ἐπαισθομένη,
tῖνος ἄγγελίας

πευθοὶ περὶπεμπτα θυσκεῖς;
πάντων δὲ θεῶν τῶν ἀστυνόμων,
ὑπάτων, χθονίων,
tῶν τ' ὕπαρξιῶν τῶν τ' ἀγοραίων,

βωμοὶ δώροις φλέγονται;

ἀλλή δ' ἀλλοθεν ὑπανομήκης

λαμπᾶς ἀνίσχει,
φάρμασσομένη χρίματος ἅγνω
μαλακαίς ἀδόλοισι παρηγορίαις,

πελάνῳ μυχόθεν βασιλεῖάς.

tούτων λέξας' ὃ τι καὶ δυνατὸν
καὶ θέμις αἰνεῖν,

παιῶν τε γενοῦ τῆςδε μερίμνης,

ἡ νῦν τοτὲ μὲν κακόφρων τελέθει,
tότε δ' ἐκ τυσιῶν τὴν θυμοβόρον
φροντίδ' ἀπλήστουν

φαίνουσα' ἀγάν' ἐλπίς ἀμύνει.

ἤκω σεβίζων σὸν, Κλυταμήστρα, κράτος·

dίκη γάρ ἔστι φωτὸς ἄρχηγον τίειν
gυναίκ' ἐρηµοθέντος ἁρσενὸς θρόνου.

σὺ δ' εἴ τι κεδυνὸν εἴτε μὴ πεπυσµένη

εὐαγγέλουσιν ἐλπίσιν θυηπολεῖς,

κλύσιµ' ἀν εὐφρων· οὐδὲ σιγώση φθόνος.
With happy tidings, so the proverb runs,  
May the dawn issue from her mother night.  
But hear now joy greater than any hope:  
For the Argives have captured Priam’s town.  

Ch. How sayst thou? I scarce heard through unbelief.  
Cl. The Achaeans now hold Troy. Do I speak plain?  
Ch. Joy overwhelms me, calling forth a tear.  
Cl. Thine eye convicts thee of a loyal joy.  
Ch. But where’s thy warrant? Hast thou proof of this?  
Cl. I have. Why not? Unless a God deceives me.  
Ch. Dost thou respect a dream’s delusive phantoms?  
Cl. A drowsing mind’s fancy I should not utter.  
Ch. Hath some vague unwing’d rumour cheered thy soul?  
Cl. My wits thou wouldst disparage like a girl’s.  
Ch. How long then is it since the town was sacked?  
Cl. This very night that gives birth to yon dawn.  

Ch. And what messenger could arrive so speedily?  
Cl. Hephaestus, from Ida flinging the bright glare.  
Then beacon hitherward with posting flame  
Sped beacon; Ida first to Hermes’ rock  
On Lemnos; from whose isle Athos, the peak  
Of Zeus, was third to accept the mighty brand;  
Nor did the watch deny the far-sped glow,  
But made their bonfire higher than was enjoined.  
Then over lake Gorgopis the beam shot,  
And having reached mount Aigiplanctus, there  
Urged swift performance of the fiery rite.  
Kindling they launch with generous energy  
A mighty beard of flame which could o’erpass
ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ευάγγελος μέν, ὡσπερ ἡ παροιμία,
ἔως γένοιτο μητρὸς εὐφρόνης πάρα.
πεύσει δὲ χάρμα μείζον ἐλπίδος κλύειν·
Πριάμον γὰρ ἦρηκασιν Ἀργείων πόλιν.

Χο. πῶς φῆς; πέφευγε τούπος έξ ἀπιστίας.

Κλ. Τροίαν Ἀχαίων οὐσαν· ἡ τορός λέγω;

Χο. χαρά μ' υφέρτει δάκρυν ἐκκαλουμένη.

Κλ. εὖ γὰρ φρονοῦντος ὀμμα σοῦ κατηγορεῖ.

Χο. τί γὰρ τὸ πιστὸν; ἔστι τῶνδε σοι τέκμαρ;

Κλ. ἔστιν· τί δ' οὐχί; μὴ δολοσαντος θεοῦ.

Χο. πότερα δ' ὀνείρων φάσματ' εὐπιθῆ σέβεις;

Κλ. οὐ δόξαν ἂν λάκοιμι βριζούσης φρενὸς.

Χο. ἀλλ' ἢ σ' ἐπίανεν τις ἄπτερος φάτις;

Κλ. παιδὸς νέας ὧς κάρτ' ἐμομῆσω φρένας.

Χο. ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις;

Κλ. τῆς νῦν τεκούσης φῶς τὸ δ' εὐφρόνης λέγω.

Χο. καὶ τίς τὸδ' ἐξίκοιτ' ἂν ἀγγέλων τάχος;

Κλ. Ἡφαίστος Ἡδης λαμπρὸν ἐκπέμπτων σέλας.

φρυκτὸς δὲ φρυκτὸν δεῦρ' ἀπ' ἀγγάρου πυρὸς
ἐπεμπεν· Ἡδὴ μὲν πρὸς Ἐρμαιὸν λέπας
Ἀμίμνου· μέγαν δὲ παινὸν ἐκ νήσου τρίτον
"Αθων αἰπος Ζηνὸς ἔξεδέξατο.

φάος δὲ τηλεπομπὸν οὐκ ᾗναινετο
φουρὰ πλέον καίουσα τῶν εἰρημένων,
λίμνην δ' ὑπὲρ Γοργώπιν ἐσκηψεν φάος·
ὁρος τ' ἐπ' Ἀιγιπλαγκτὸν ἐξικνούμενον
ἀτρυνε θεσμὸν μὴ χρονίζεσθαι πυρὸς.

τέμπουσι δ' ἀνδαίοντες ἀφθόνῳ μένει
φλογὸς μέγαν πώγωνα, καὶ Ἀρωνικοῦ
The cliff that frowns o'er the Saronic gulf
Far flaring: then it alighted, then it reached
Arachne's sentinel peak, our city's neighbour.
And last here on the Atreidae's roof comes home
This light, true-fathered heir of Ida's fire.

These are the stages of my torch-racers,
Thus in succession each from each fulfilled.
But he's the winner who ran from first to last.
Such is the proof and token that I give thee,
This message sped to me by my lord from Troy.

Ch. Lady, the Gods hereafter would I praise.
But first would I fain satisfy my wonder
Hearing thy tale from point to point retold.

Cl. This day do the Achaeans possess Troy.
'Tis loud, I ween, with cries that blend not well.
Pour vinegar and oil in the same cruse,
And you would say they sundered without love.
Even so the cries of conquerors and captives
Sound distinct as their differing fortunes are.
These falling around the bodies of their husbands
And brothers slain, children it may be clasping
Gray-headed sires, from throats no longer free
Bewail the fate of those whom most they loved;
While these a weary night of roving sends
Hungry from battle to whatever fare
The town affords, not marshalled orderly,
Rather, as each has snatched his lot of luck,
Within the captured palaces of Troy
They are housing now, delivered from the frosts
And dews of the bare sky; and blessedly
Without watch will they sleep the whole night long.
Now if they show due reverence to the Gods
πορθμοῦ κάτοπτον πρῶν' ὑπερβάλλειν πρόσω
φλέγουσαν· εἰτ' ἐσκηὔεν, εἰτ' ἀφίκετο
'Αραχναίων αἴποι, ἀστυγείτονας σκοπᾶς·
cάπειτ' 'Ατρειδῶν ἔσ τόδε σκῆπτει στέγος
φῶς τόδ' οὐκ ἀπαπποῦν 'Ιδαίου πυρὸς.
tοιοίδε τοὶ μοι λαμπαδηφόρων νόμοι,
ἀλλος παρ' ἄλλου διαδοχαῖς πληρούμενοι·
nικὰ δ' ὁ πρῶτος καὶ τελευτᾶιος δραμῶν.
tέκμαρ τουοῦτο σύμβολον τε σοὶ λέγω
ἄνδρὸς παραγγείλαντος ἐκ Τροίας ἔμοι.
Χο. θεοῖς μὲν αὕθις, ὦ γύναι, προσεύξομαι.
λόγους δ' ἀκούσαι τούσδε κάποθαυμάσαι
dιηνεκῶς θέλοιμ' ἂν ὡς λέγοις πάλιν.
Κλ. Τροίαν 'Αχαιοὶ τῇ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.
 readdir βοήν ἅμικτον ἐν πόλει πρέπειν.
ὀξὸς τ' ἀλειφά τ' ἐγχέας ταῦτῳ κύτει
dιχοστατοῦτ' ἂν, οὐ φίλῳ, προσεύκτοις.
καὶ τῶν ἀλόντων καὶ κρατησάντων δίχα
φθογγάς ἀκούειν ῥῴτι συμφορᾶς διπλῆς.
oî μὲν γὰρ ἅμφί σώμασιν πεπτώκοτες
ἀνδρῶν κασιγυνότων τε καὶ φυταλμίων
παιδεῖς γερόντων οὐκέτ' ἐξ ἐλευθέρου
dέρης ἀποιμώζουσι φιλτάτων μόρον·
tους δ' αὖτε νυκτίπλαγκτος ἐκ μάχης πόνος
νῆστεις πρὸς ἀρίστουσιν ἄν ἔχει πόλις
tάσσει, πρὸς οὖν ἐν μέρει τεκμήριον,
ἀλλ' ὡς ἐκαστὸς ἐσπασεν τύχης πάλον,
ἐν αἰχμαλωτοῖς Τρωικοῖς οἰκήμασιν
ναιοῦσιν ἦδη, τῶν ὑπαιθρίων πάγων
dρόσων τ' ἀπαλλαχθέντες, ὡς δ' εὐδαιμόνες
ἀφύλακτον εὐδήσουσι πᾶσαν εὐφρόνην.
ei δ' εὑ σέβουσι τοὺς πολισσούχους θεοὺς
That guard the conquered land, and spare their shrines, 
Then may the spoilers not in turn be spoiled. 
But let no ill-timed lust assail the host 
Mastered by greed to plunder what they ought not. 
For they have need to win safe passage home. 
And if the returning host escape Heaven’s wrath, 
The hatred of the dead might haphazardly grow 
Less hostile—if no sudden ill befall. 
To such fears I, a woman, must give voice. 
Yet may good triumph manifestly past doubt; 
Of many blessings now would I taste the fruit. 

Ch. Lady, sober like a wise man’s is thy speech. 
Now, having heard proof so trustworthy from thee, 
I will address myself to thank the Gods. 
Their grace is recompense for all our toils. 

[Exit Clytaemnestra.] 

O sovereign Zeus! O gracious Night, 
Who hast won so measureless a glory! 
Who over the towers of Troy didst cast 
Such a close-drawn net, that none of the great, 
Nor yet of the young should escape the immense 
Ensnaring mesh 
Of thraldom and doom universal. 
Zeus, God of guest-right, great I confess him, 
Who hath wrought this vengeance; against Alexander 
His bow did he hold long bent, that neither 
Short of the mark his bolt should alight, 
Nor beyond the stars speed idly. 

From Zeus came the stroke that felled them: yea that 
Is sure truth: clearly may we trace it. 
As He determined, so they fared. The fool said,
τοὺς τῆς ἀλούσης γῆς θεῶν θ' ἱδρύματα, 145
οὐ τὰν ἐλόντες αὖθις ἀνθαλοίεν ἂν.
ἐρως δὲ μὴ τις πρότερον ἐμπίπτης στρατῷ
πορθέιν ἃ μὴ χρῆ, κέρδεσιν νικωμένους.
δεὶ γὰρ πρὸς οἶκους νοστίμου σωτηρίας·
θεοῖς δ' ἀναμπλάκητος εἰ μόλοι στρατὸς,
εὐήγορον τὸ πῆμα τῶν ὀλολότων
γένοιτ' ἂν—εἰ πρόσπαιν μὴ τύχοι κακά.
τοιαύτα τοι γυναικὸς ἐξ ἐμοῦ κλύεις·
τὸ δ' εὖ κρατοῖ, μὴ διχορρόπως ἱδεῖν.
πολλῶν γὰρ ἐσθλῶν τὴν ὀνήσιν εἰλόμην.
Χο. γύναι, κατ' ἄνδρα σώφρον' εὐφρόνως λέγεις. 155
ἐγὼ δ' ἀκούσας πιστὰ σον τεκμήρια
θεοὺς προσεπεῖν αὖ παρασκευάζομαι.
χάρις γὰρ οὐκ ἀτιμὸς εὐργασται πόνων.

[Exit Clytaemnestra.]

ὁ Ζεὺς βασιλεὺς καὶ νῦξ φιλία
μεγάλων κόσμων κτειτερα,
ητ' ἐπὶ Τροίας πύργοις ἐβάλες
στεγανῶν δίκτυν, ὡς μήτε μέγαν
μήτ' οὖν νεαρῶν τιν' ὑπερτελέσαι
μέγα δούλειας
γάγγαμον, ἄτης παναλώτον. 160
Δία τοι ξένιον μέγαν αἰδοῦμαι
τὸν τάδε πράξαντ' ἐπ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ
τείνοντα πάλαι τὸξον, ὅπως ἂν
μήτε πρὸ καιροῦ μήθ' ὑπὲρ ἀστρῶν
βέλος ἡλίθιον σκῆψειν.

'Διὸς πλαγὰν ἔχουσιν' εἶπειν 170
[στρ. α.
πάρεστιν, τοῦτο τ' ἐξιχνεῦσαι.
ἐπραξαν ως ἐκρανεν. οὐκ ἔφα τις
"The Gods above heed not when the loveliness
Of sanctity is trampled down
By mortals." Oh blasphemy!
'Tis plain now and manifest
The wage paid for reckless sin,
The doom due to insolent presumption,
Whene'er in kings' houses wealth superfluous
Beyond the mean teemeth. Yea, let there be
What contents without want
Soberly minded wisdom.
    No strong fortress against fate
    Hath that man who in wealth's pride
    Spurns from sight as a thing of naught
    The mighty altar of Justice.

Yet strong is that obstinate Temptation,
The dire child of fore-designing Ate.
Then all in vain is remedy: unhidden
The mischief glows: baleful is the gleam thereof.
Like metal base, touched and rubbed
By a testing stone, even so
In him too trial reveals
A black stain. Like a child
A winged bird vainly he pursueth.
A dire taint lays he on all his people.
To prayers the Gods' ears are deaf. Whosoe'er
Even consorts with such men,
Shares in their guilt and ruin.
    Even so Paris, a house-guest
    Honoured by the Atreidae,
    Did foul wrong to his host's board
    By his theft of a woman.
δὲ θεοὺς βροτὸν ἀξιούσθαι μέλειν
ὅσοις ἀθίκτων χάρις
πατοῖθ᾽ ὃ δ᾽ οὖκ εὐσεβής.
πέφανται δ᾽ ἐκτίνου-
σ᾽ ἀτολμήτων ἀρά,
πνεόντων μείζον ἢ δικαίως,
φλεόντων δωμάτων ὕπέρφευ
ὕπερ τὸ βέλτιστον. ἔστω δ᾽ ἀπή-
μαντον, ὥστ᾽ ἀπαρκεῖν
eὔ πραπίδων λαχύντα.
οὗ ἔστιν γὰρ ἐπαλξίς
πλούτου πρὸς κόρον ἀνδρὶ
λακτίσαντι μέγαν Δίκας
βωμὸν εἰς ἀφάνειαν.

βιάζαι δ᾽ ἀ τάλαϊν διεύθω,
προβουλοῦν παῖς ἀφερτος Ἅτας.
ἀκος δὲ παμμάταιον. οὐκ ἐκρύφθη,
πρέπει δὲ, φῶς αἰνολαμπές, σίνος·
κακοὶ δὲ χαλκοῦ τρόπον
τρίβω τε καὶ προσβολαῖς
μελαμπαγής πέλει
dικαιωθεῖς, ἐπεῖ
διόκει παῖς ποτανὸν ὀρνίν,
πόλει πρόστριμμ' ἀφερτον εὐθεῖς.
λιτάν δ᾽ ἀκούει μὲν οὗτοι θεῶν·
tὸν δ᾽ ἐπίστροφον τῶν
φῶτ᾽ ἄδικον καθαιρεῖ.
οἶος καὶ Πάρις ἔλθων
ἐς δόμον τὸν Ἀτρειδᾶν
ἡσυχινε ξενίαν τράπε-
ζαν κλοπαίσι γυναικός.
Bequeathing to her countrymen noise of shields
Together clashed, thronging spears, stir of vessels arming,
And bearing death instead of dower to Ilium,
With light step through the gates she is flown
On reckless venture. Sore the wailing then
Throughout the halls, doleful voices crying:
"Ah home of woe! Home and woeful princes, wail!
Ah woeful bed, printed yet with love’s embrace!
Behold the spouse! Bowed with shame, there he sits
In silent unreviling grief.

[apart
For her beyond seas he yearns:
Pined with dreams sits he, a sceptred phantom.
  Hateful now to his mood seems
  The grace of loveliest statues.
  Lost the light of her eyes, and lost
  Now the love they enkindled.

Anon there come dream-revealed semblances,
Beguiling shapes. Brief the joy, vain the sweet delusion.
For vainly, when he seems to view the phantom bliss,
Between his arms, lo! the vision is flown
And vanishes away beyond recall
On shadowy wings down the paths of slumber."
Beside the hearth, within the royal palace, such
The grief that haunts, yea and woes transcending these.
But for the host, all who once launched from Hellas’
Some woman now with suffering heart
[shore,
In every house mourning sits.
Wounds enough pierce them to the soul’s core.
  Whom they sent to the war, them
THE AGAMEMNON

λιποῦσα δ’ ἀστοῖσιν ἀσπιστορας [στρ. β. 205
κλόνους τε καὶ λογχίμους
ναυβάτας θ’ ὀπλισμοῦσι,
ἀγοναὰ τ’ ἀντίφερον Ἰλίῳ φθοράν
βέβακεν ῥίμφα διὰ πυλῶν
ἀτλητα τλάσα: πολλὰ δ’ ἐστενον
τόδ’ ἐννέποντες δόμων προφήται:
‘ιώ ιώ δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι,
ιώ λέχοι καὶ στίβοι φιλάνορες.
παρεστὶ σιγᾶς ἄτίμους ἀλοιδόρος
ἀλγιστ’ αφημένων ἵδειν.
πόθῳ δ’ ὑπερποντίας
φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν.
εὐμόρφων δὲ κολοσσῶν
ἐχθεταί χάρις ἀνδρός.
ὀμμάτων δ’ ἐν ἀκηνίας
ἐρρει πᾶσ’ Ἀφροδίτα.

όνειροφαντοὶ δὲ πειθήμονες [ἀντ. β.
παρεστὶ δόξαι φέρου-
sαι χάριν μαβαίαν.
μᾶταν γὰρ, εὖτ’ ἀν ἐσθλά τις δοκῶν ὀρᾶν— 225
παραλλάξασα διὰ χερῶν,
βέβακεν ὁψις οὐ μεθύστερον
πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦσ’ ὑπνοῦ κελεύθοις.‘
tὰ μὲν κατ’ ὀίκους ἐφ’ ἐστιάς ἀχη
τάδ’ ἐστὶ καὶ τῶνδ’ ὑπερβατῶτερα. 230
τὸ πᾶν δ’ ἀφ’ Ἐλλανος αἰας συνορμένοις
πενθεῖ ἀτλησικάρδιος
δόμων ἐκάστου πρέπει.
πολλὰ γοῦν θεργάνει πρὸς ἦπαρ.
οὗς μὲν γὰρ τὶς ἐπεμψεν 235

Δ. 2
They know: but now in the man's stead
Naught comes back to the home of each
Save an urn and some ashes.

The merchant Ares—dead men's bodies are his gold—
He whose scales weigh the poising fate of war,
From pyres beneath Ilium
To those that loved them sendeth home
Heavy sore-lamented dust,
Stowing ash that once was man
Into the compass of a jar.
Then mourning each they tell his praise,
How one in craft of war was skilled,
How that one nobly shed his blood,—
"All for a woman, wife to another,"
So an angry whisper snarls forth;
And against the sons of Atreus
An accusing grief spreads.
  Others under the wall, slain
  In their beauty, possess graves
  There 'neath Ilian earth, that now
  Hides in hate her possessors.

A people's talk, charged with wrath, is perilous.
Oft 'tis proved potent as a public curse.
My boding heart waits to hear
Some news that night shroudeth still.
For on men of blood the Gods'
Eyes are fixed; and late or soon
Will the dark Erinues doom
The man who thrives unrighteously
To waste and dwindle luckless down,
Until his light be quenched: and once
οἶδεν, ἀντὶ δὲ φωτῶν
τεῦχῃ καὶ σποδὸς εἰς ἐκά-
στοι δόμους ἀφικνεῖται.

ὁ χρυσαμοιβὸς δ’ Ἄρης σωμάτων
καὶ ταλαντοῦχος ἐν μάχῃ δορὸς
πυρωθὲν ἐξ Ἰλίου
φίλοισι πέμπει βαρὺ
ψῆγμα δυσδάκρυτον ἀν-
τήνορας σποδοῦ γεμί-
ζων λέβηται εὐθέτους.

στένουσι δ’ εὗ λέγοντες ἀν-
δρα τὸν μὲν ὡς μάχης ἴδρις,
tὸν δ’ ἐν φοναῖς καλῶς πεσόντ’—
‘ἀλλοτρίας διαὶ γυναικός, τάδε σὲ γά τις βαῦξει’.
φθονερὸν δ’ ὑπ’ ἅλγος ἔρπει
προδίκοις Ἀτρείδαις.

οἱ δ’ αὐτοῦ περὶ τεῖχος
θῆκας Ἰλιάδος γᾶς
εὐμορφοὶ κατέχουσιν. ἐ-
χθρὰ δ’ ἐχοντας ἐκρυψαν.

βαρεία δ’ ἀστῶν φάτις ἔνν κότω. ἡμιοκράντου δ’ ἀρᾶς τίνει χρέος.
μένει δ’ ἀκοῦσαι τί μου
μέριμνα νυκτηρεφέσ.

τῶν πολυκτόνων γὰρ οὐκ
ἀσκοποὶ θεοί. κελαι-
ναι δ’ Ἐρινύες χρόνῳ
τυχηρὸν ὄντ’ ἄνευ δίκας
παλιντυχεῖ τριβά βίον
τιθεῖσ’ ἄμαυρόν, ἐν δ’ ἀι-
Lost in the darkness, who shall help him?
In excess of glory is peril.
For on mortals overweening
Are the bolts of Zeus sped.
Mine be fortune unenvied.
No walled towns would I conquer,
Nor yet live to behold my age
Slave to alien masters.

[Enter a Herald.]

O land of Argos, thou my native soil,
To thee this tenth-born year do I return,
Of many broken hopes still grasping one.
Ne’er could I dream here in this Argive earth
Dying to share that burial I so longed for.
O palace of our kings, beloved abode,
Ye solemn seats, and ye, dawn-fronting Deities,
If e’er of old, with radiant eyes this day
Welcome with pomp our king so long time gone.
For to you and to all these alike returns
Prince Agamemnon, bringing light in gloom.
Come, ye must greet him joyfully, as beseems,
Who with the mattock of Avenging Zeus
Hath digged down Troy, and ploughed her soil to dust.
Having laid on Troy so fell a yoke, the elder
Of Atreus’ children, fortunate among princes,
Returns, of all men living worthiest praise.

Ch. Joy to thee, herald of the Achaean host!
Her. Joy is mine. Now let me die, if heaven so wills.
Ch. Hath longing for thy fatherland so tortured thee?
Her. So that for joy mine eyes weep tears upon it.
στοις τελέθοντος οὕτις ἀλκά·
tὸ δ' ὑπερκόπως κλύειν εὗ
βαρύ· βάλλεται γὰρ ὄσσοις
Διόθεν κεραυνὸς.
κρίνω δ' ἀφθονον ὀλβον·
μήτ' εἰην πτολιπόρθησ
μήτ' οὖν αὐτὸς ἄλοις ὑπ' ἄλ-
λω βίον κατίδοιμι.

[Enter a Herald.]

ΚΗΡΥΞ

ἰὼ πατρὸδον οὖδας Ἄργειας χθονὸς,
δεκάτῳ σὲ φέγγει τῶδ' ἀφικόμην ἔτους,
pολλῶν λαγεισῶν ἐλπίδοι διὸς τυχών.
οὐ γὰρ ποτ' ήὔχον τῇδ' ἐν Ἄργεια χθονὶ
θανῶν μεθέξειν φιλτάτου τάφου μέρος.
ἰὼ μέλαθρα βασιλέων, φίλαι στέγαι,
σεμνοῖ τε θάκοι, δαίμονές τ' ἀντήλιοι,
eῖ πον πώλαι, φαιδροῖς τοισίδ' ὁμμασι
dέξασθε κόσμῳ βασιλέα πολλῷ χρόνῳ.
ἡκε γὰρ ὑμῖν φῶς ἐν εὐφρόνῃ φέρων
cαὶ τοῖσδ' ἀπασι κοίνῳ Ἀγαμέμνων ἀναξ.

ἀλλ' εὗ νιν ἀσπάσασθε, καὶ γὰρ οὖν πρέπει,
Τροίαν κατασκάψαντα τοῦ δικηφόρου
Διός μακέλλῃ, τῇ κατείργασται πέδουn.
tοιόνδε Τροία περιβαλῶν ἥξικτήριον
ἀναξ Ἀτρείδης πρέσβυς εὐδαιμῶν ἀνήρ

ἡκε, τίςθαι δ' ἀξιώτατος βροτῷν.
Χο. κῆρυξ Ἀχαϊῶν χαίρε τῶν ἀπὸ στρατοῦ.
Κη. χαίρω. τεθναίην, οὐκέτ' ἀντερῶ θεοῖς.
Χο. ἔρως πατρῶς τῆςδε γῆς σ' ἐγύμνασεν.
Κη. ὡστ' ἐνδακρύειν γ' ὁμμασιν χαρᾶς ὑπο.
Ch. Sweet then was the disease with which you languished.

Her. How so? Not yet do I understand your words.

Ch. Not unreturned was this thy yearning love.

Her. Our country pined then for its pining host?

Ch. Full oft with desolate heart we sighed for you.

Her. Whence came this gloom, clouding the host’s return?

Ch. Silence I have long used, as harm’s best cure.

Her. How so? The kings being gone, didst thou fear someone?

Ch. As thou didst say but now, ’twere joy to die.

Her. Because the event is well: though in all those years
Much may we reckon prosperously sped,
And much deplorably. Who save a God
May abide scathless everlastingly?
Were I to cite our hardships and ill-lodgings,
Comfortless berths on narrow decks—and what
Did we not lack by day, poor groaning wretches?
And then on land—there it was worse distress,
Bivouacked close beneath the enemy’s walls:
Down from the sky, and from the fenny ground
Rained drizzling dews, a never-ceasing plague,
Making our hairy garments full of vermin.
Or should I tell of that bird-killing cold,
Unbearable winter gusts from Ida’s snows,
Or of the heat, when in his noontide couch
Windless and waveless the sea sank to rest—
But what need to complain? Past is that misery.
Past is it for the dead, that nevermore
Will they take trouble even to rise again.
For us, the relics of the Argive host,
The gain prevails, the injury is outweighed.

Ch. Cheerfully I accept defeat in argument.
Xo. τερπνήσ ἀρ' ὑτε τήσδ' ἐπήβολοι νόσου.
Κη. πὼς δή; διδαχθείς τοῦδε δεσπόσω λόγου.
Xo. τῶν ἀντερούτων ἱμέρῳ πεπληγμένου.
Κη. ποθεῖν ποθοῦντα τήρδε γῆν στρατὸν λέγεις.
Xo. ὡς πόλλ᾿ ἀμαυρᾶς ἐκ φρενός μ᾿ ἀναστένειν. 300
Κη. πόθεν τὸ δύσφρον τοῦτ᾿ ἐπῆν, στύγος στράτῳ;
Xo. πάλαι τὸ σιγᾶν φάρμακον βλάβης ἔχω.
Κη. καὶ πῶς; ἀπόντων κοιράνων ἔτρεις τινάς;
Xo. ὡς νῦν, τὸ σὸν δῆ, καὶ θανεῖν πολλῆ χάρις.
Κη. εὖ γὰρ πέπρακται. ταῦτα δ᾿ ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ 305
τὰ μέν τις ἀν λέξειν εὑπετῶς ἔχειν,
tὰ δ᾿ αὕτε κατάμομμα. τίς δὲ πλὴν θεόν
ἀπαντᾷ ἀπήμων τὸν δι᾿ αἰῶνοι χρόνον;
μοῦθοις γὰρ εἰ λέγοιμι καὶ δυσαυλίας
σπαρναὺς παρείξεις καὶ κακοστρώτους, τί δ᾿ οὐ 310
στένωτες οὐ λαχώτες ἡματος μέρος;
tὰ δ᾿ αὕτε χέρσῳ καὶ πρὸς ἕν πλέον στύγος;
εὖναὶ γὰρ ἦσαν δαίων πρὸς τείχεσιν.
ἐξ οὐρανοῦ δὲ κατὸ γῆς λειμῶναι
δρόσοι κατεψάκαζον, ἐμπεδοῦν σίνος,
ἐσθημάτων τιθέντες ἐνθηρον τρίχα.
χειμῶνα δ᾿ εἰ λέγοι τις οἰωνοκτόνων,
οίον παρεῖχ᾿ ἀφρετον Ἰδαία χιών,
ἡ θάλπος, εὐτε πόντος ἐν μεσήμβριναις
κοίταις ἀκύμων ηνεύμων εὐδοι πεσών—
tὶ ταῦτα πενθεῖν δεῖ; παροίχεται πόνος;
παροίχεται δὲ, τοῖσι μὲν τεθυνκόσιν
τὸ μῆποτ᾿ αὖθις μηδ᾿ ἀναστήμαι μέλεων.
ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖσιν Ἀργείων στρατοῦ
νικᾶ τὸ κέρδος, πῆμα δ᾿ οὐκ ἀντιρρέπει. 325
Xo. νικώμενος λόγοισιν οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.
Old age is always young enough to learn.
But the house and Clytaemnestra this news most
Should interest, and make me too rich in joy.

Cl. I lifted up a jubilant cry long since,
When first by night came that fire-messenger
Telling of Ilium's capture and destruction.
But thou, why tell the full tale now to me?
Soon from the king's self shall I learn it all.
Rather, that I may best make speed to welcome
My revered husband to his home, (for what
More sweet to a wife's eyes than that day's light,
When to her spouse, whom heaven has saved from war,
She unbars the gate?) this to my lord declare:
Let him speed hither to meet his people's love;
And at home may he find a faithful wife,
Even such as he left her, a house-dog kind
To him she loves, to ill-wishers a foe,
And in all else unchanged, ne'er having yet
Broken one seal in all that length of time.
No more of dalliance, (no, nor of scandal's breath,)
With another man do I know, than of dipping bronze.

[Exit.]

Her. Big is the boast, though weighted well with truth,
Scarce seemly for a noble wife to utter.

Ch. Thus to thine understanding hath she spoken,
Most—speciously—to shrewd interpreters.

[A triumphal march. Enter Agamemnon,
Kassandra, etc.]

Come now, O king, despoiler of Troy,
Offspring of Atreus!
How shall I hail thee? How pay thee homage,
ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡβὰ τοῖς γέρουσιν εὑμαθεῖν.
δόμοις δὲ ταῦτα καὶ Κλυταιμήστρα μέλειν
εἰκὸς μάλιστα, σὺν δὲ πλουτίζειν ἐμὲ.

Κλ. ἀνωλόλυξα μὲν πάλαι χαρᾶς ὑπο,
οἳ' Ἡλῳ πρῶτος νῦχιος ἀγγελος πυρὸς,
φράζων ἀλωσίν Ἰλίου τ' ἄναστασιν.
καὶ νῦν τὰ μάσσω μὲν τι δεὶ σέ μοι λέγειν;
ἀνακτὸς αὐτοῦ πάντα πεῦσον κλόγων.
ὅπως δ' ἀριστα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰδοῖον πόσιν
σπεῦσω πάλιν μολόντα δέξασθαι—τι γὰρ
γυναίκι τοῦτον φέγγος ἥδιον δρακεῖν,
ἀπὸ στρατείας ἀνδρὶ σώσαντος θεοῦ
πύλας ἀνοίξαι;—ταῦτ' ἀπάγγειλον πόσει·
ἡκείν ὅπως τάχιστ' ἐράσμιον πόλει·
γυναίκα πιστὴν δ' ἐν δόμοις εὐροὶ μολὼν
οἰαντερ ὦν ἐλειπε, δωμάτων κύνα
ἐσθλὴν ἐκείνῳ, πολεμίαν τοῖς δύσφροσιν,
καὶ τάλλῳ ὁμοίαν πάντα, σημαντήριον
οὐδὲν διαφθείρασαν ἐν μήκει χρόνου.
οὐδ' οἶδα τέρψιν οὐδ' ἐπίψογον φῶτιν
ἀλλον πρὸς ἄνδρος μᾶλλον ἡ χαλκὸν βαφᾶς.

[Exit.]

Κη. τοιόσδ' ὁ κόμπος τῆς ἀληθείας γέμων
οὐκ αἰσχρὸς ὡς γυναίκι γενναία λακείν.

Χο. αὕτη μὲν οὕτως ἐἴπε μανθάνοντι σοι
τοροῦσιν ἐρμηνεύσιν εὐπρεπῶς λόγων.

[A triumphal march. Enter Agamemnon,
Kassandra, etc.]

ἀγε δῆ, βασιλεῦ, Τροίας πτολίπορθ',
'Ατρέως γένεθλον,
pῶς σε προσείπω; πῶς σε σεβίζω
Neither o'ershooting, nor yet scanting
Due gratulation?
For most men practising outward shows
Hide thoughts perverse and unrighteous.
Sighs prompt and apt for another's mischance
Each hath in plenty; yet ne'er doth an unfeigned
Sting of anguish pierce to the heart-strings:
And copying the looks of those that rejoice
They compel their lips to a counterfeit smile.
Yet should the wisely discerning shepherd
Ne'er be deceived by the eyes of fawners,
That dissembling a loyal and cordial love
Flatter him with watery affection.
And of old when thou wast levying war
For Helen's sake, then, I deny not,
Graceless indeed was the image I formed of thee;
Ill-steered did thy wits seem thus to be spending
The life-blood of heroes
To redeem a consenting adulteress.
But now we greet thee with heart-deep love.
Happy endings make happy labours.

[Enter Clytaemnestra.]
Thou by inquisition erelong shalt learn
Whose stewardship of thy state is now
Proved faithful, and whose unfaithful.

AGAMEMNON
First to Argos and her native Gods my prayers
Are due, since they have aided my return,
And the Justice I have wreaked upon the town
Of Priam. For the Gods, when they had heard
Our voiceless plea, into the vase of blood
μήθ' ὑπεράρας μήθ' ὑποκάμψας
καίρον χάριτος;
πολλοὶ δὲ βροτῶν τὸ δοκεῖν εἶναι
προτίουσι δίκην παραβάντες.
τῷ δυσπραγοῦντι δ' ἐπιστενάχειν
πᾶς τις ἔτοιμος· δήγμα δὲ λύπης
οὐδὲν ἐφ' ἴππαρ προσικνεῖται·
καὶ ξυνχαίρουσιν ὅμοιοπρεπεῖς
ἀγέλαστα πρόσωπα βιαζόμενοι.
ὁστὶς δ' ἀγαθός προβατογνώμων,
οὐκ ἔστι λαθεῖν ὄμματα φωτὸς,
τὰ δοκοῦντ' εὐφρονος ἐκ διανοίας
ὑδαρεῖ σαίνειν φιλότητι.
σὺ δὲ μοι τὸτε μὲν στέλλων στρατιῶν
Ἐλένης ἑυκῖ', οὐκ ἐπικεύσω,
κάρτ' ἀπομούσως ἤσθα γεγραμμένος,
οὐδ' εὗ πραπτίδων οὔικα νέμων
θάρσος ἐκούσιον
ἀνδράσι θυήσκουσι κομίζον.
νῦν δ' οὐκ ἀπ' ἀκρας φρενὸς οὐδ' ἀφίλως
eὐφρων πόνος εὗ τελέσασιν.

[Enter ClytaemnestrA.]

γνώσει δὲ χρόνῳ διαπευθόμενος
τὸν τε δικαίως καὶ τὸν ἀκαίρως
πόλιν οἰκουροῦντα πολιτῶν.

ἉΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

πρῶτον μὲν "Ἀργος καὶ θεοὺς ἐγχωρίους
δίκη προσεπεῖν, τοὺς ἔμοι μετατίους
νόστον δικαίων θ' ὄν ἐπραξάμην πόλιν
Πριάμου· δίκας γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γλώσσης θεοὶ
κλύοντες ἀνδροκυνήτας Ἰλίου φθορᾶς
For Ilium's overthrowing cast their votes
With one consent; while to the opposite urn
Hope of the hand came nigh, yet filled it not.
Her smoke still witnesseth the city's fall.
The coils of doom yet live, and dying with them
The ashes pant forth opulent breaths of richness.
For this a memorable return we now
Must pay the Gods, since we have woven high
Our wrathful toils, and for one woman stolen
A town has been laid low by the Argive monster,
The horse's brood, the grim shield-bearing folk,
Rousing to spring what time the Pleiads set.
Yea leaping o'er the wall like a fleshted lion
It lapped its fill of proud and princely blood.
This ample prelude to the Gods is due.
Now for thy hinting—I heard and bear in mind.
I say the same, and share in thy suspicions.
I speak with knowledge, having throughly learned
How friendship is a mirror, a shadow's ghost,
The hypocrite's pretence to wish me well.
But where we find need of medicinal cure,
By wise use of the knife or cautery
We will endeavour to expel disease.
Now to my palace and domestic hearth
I pass within, there first to greet the Gods,
Who sent me forth and thus have brought me home.
May victory still bide with me to the end.

Cl. Townsmen of Argos, reverend counsellors,
I blush not to confess to you my love
And woman's fondness. As years pass, timidity
Wanes in us all. No witness but my own
I need to tell what grievous life was mine
eis aîmatηrond têvchos ou' dihorropôws
ψήφous édênto. tòd d' énautiâ kûtei
êlpîs prosoâiê xeiropò ou' plhroumênu.
kapnâv d' álouês vûn êt' euðhmos póliς.
âtis thûellai zôsi: sînhêskousa dè
spodôs propeâmpoi pîônâs plôntou pnuàs.
toûtov theôsiû xhî polûmnístov xârîn
tînein, èpéeîper kai págaûs úperekôtou
éphrâxâmsêthâ kai gûnaiKòs óunêka
póliw dihûmathev 'Agâeïou dákos,
ìppou neoseôs, âspîdôstropîs lewîs,
pîhâm' orousâs amfî Pleiâdôn dûsîn:
úperekôrûn dê pûrghon ómêstîs léwv
âdhn èleixeîn aîmatos túranikû.
theôis mên èxeîteina fropîmîn tôde:
tà d' ès to' sòn frouîma, mémnêmîai klûwv,
kai fêmî tauûta kai sînhýgorôn m' èxeîs.
eîdôs légoîm' ân, eu' yàr èxeîpîstamai,
omilîas katópstron, eîdôlon sîkâs,
dokouvta eînai kârta prêvumenêîs èmoli.
ôtô dê kai deî fârmakûwn paüwîwv,
îtov kêântes èî teîmôtves eufrôvôs
peîrasîmêsthâ pîmâtos trêpsai nôson.
vûn d' ès mêlathra kai dômous èfèstîous
èlthôn theôsiî prôta deziôsômâi,
oîper prôsôw pêmỳsantès ãhagôn pálîw.
nîkê d' èpêîper èspet', èmpeîdôs mènou.

Kl. ândres polîtaî, prêsbîos 'Agâeïov tôde,
oûk aîsçhynoûmîn toûs filâvôras trôpous
lêxai prôs ãmâs: en xhônoû d' àpofthînê
tô târbos ânûrpmoîsîn. oûk àllwv pàra
mâhûs', èmûntêis dúsfôron lêxôw bîon
All that long while my lord lay beneath Ilium. 
First for a woman 'tis a woeful trial 
To sit at home forlorn, her husband far, 
Her ears filled ever with persistent tales, 
One close upon the other's heels with news 
Each of some worse disaster than the last. 
And as for wounds, if my lord had received 
As many as rumour deluged us withal, 
No net had been more full of holes than he. 
And had he died oft as report declared, 
A second Geryon with triple body 
A threefold vest of earth he might have boasted, 
Dying once for each several shape anew. 
By reason of such persistent rumours, oft 
Have others loosened from my neck perforce 
The hanging noose, foiling my fond desire. 
Hence too the boy Orestes, the true bond 
Of confidence between us, stands not here 
Beside me, as he should. Nor think it strange. 
He is in safe keeping with our good ally, 
Strophius the Phocian, who has warned me oft 
Of double mischief, thine own peril first 
Before Troy, and the fear lest turbulent anarchy 
Might risk some plot against us, as men's wont 
Is to spurn him the more who has been cast down. 
Such were my reasons, honest and without guile. 
But as for me, the fountains of my tears 
Have run themselves quite dry. No drop is left. 
And my late-watching eyes have suffered hurt 
Weeping thy nightly pomp of torch-bearers 
Neglected ever. And the wailing gnat 
With faintest pulse of wing would startle me
τοσόνδ’ ὅσον περ ὅτος ἦν ὑπ’ Ἰλίῳ.
tὸ μὲν γυναῖκα πρῶτον ἄρσενος δίχα
ἡσθαι δόμοις ἔρημον ἐκπαγλον κακόν,
pολλὰς κλύουσαν κληδόνας παλιγκότους:
καὶ τὸν μὲν ἥκειν, τὸν δ’ ἐπεσφέρειν κακῶ
κάκιον ἄλλο πῆμα, λάσκοντας δόμοις.
καὶ τραυμάτων μὲν εἰ τόσων ἐτύγχανεν
ἀνήρ ὅδ’, ὡς πρὸς οἶκον ὀχετεύετο
φάτις, τέτρηται δικτύου πλέουν λέγειν.
eἰ δ’ ἦν τεθνηκώς, ὡς ἐπλήθησαν λόγοι,
τρισώματός τὰν Γηρυῶν ὁ δεύτερος
χθονὸς τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξηύχει λαβεῖν,
ἀπαξ ἐκάστῳ καθβανῶν μορφώματι.
tοὐώνδ’ ἐκατε κληδόνων παλιγκότων
πολλὰς ἄνωθεν ἄρτανας ἐμῆς δέρης
ἐλυσαν ἄλλοι πρὸς βίαν λελιμμένης.
ἐκ τῶνδε τοι παῖς ἐνθάδ’ οὐ παραστατεῖ,
ἐμῶν τε καὶ σῶν κύριος πιστωμάτων,
ὡς χρῆν, Ὅρεστης: μηδὲ θαυμάσης τόδε.
τρέφει γὰρ αὐτὸν εὐμενὴς δορύξενος
Στρόφιος ὁ Φωκεύς, ἀμφίλεκτα πήματα
ἐμοὶ προφωνῶν, τὸν θ’ ὑπ’ Ἰλίῳ σέθεν
κάνδυνον, εἰ τε δημόθρους ἀναρχία
βουλὴν καταρράψειν, ὡστε σύγγυρον
βροτοῦσ' τὸν πεσόντα λακτίσαι πλέον.
τοιάδε μεντοι σκῆψις οὐ δόλον φέρει.
ἐμοιγε μὲν δὴ κλαυμάτων ἐπίσσυντοι
πηγαὶ κατεσβήκασιν, οὐδ’ ἐνι σταγών.
ἐν ὑψικότοις δ’ ὁμμασιν βλάβας ἐχω
τὰς ἀμφὶ σοι κλαίουσα λαμπτηροχίας
ἀτμηλῇτους αἰέν. ἐν δ’ ὄνειρασιν
λεπταῖς ὑπαὶ κόνωπος ἐξηγειρόμην.
From dreams wherein I saw thee pass through more
Than could befal within the time I slept.
Now after all these trials, with heart unpined,
I hail my husband watch-dog of the fold,
The ship's securing stay, the lofty roof's
Firm-grounded pillar, the father's sole-born child,
Or as land espied by seamen beyond hope,
Daylight as it looks fairest after storm,
A fresh spring to the thirsty wayfarer.
Such are the terms I choose to praise him fitly.
Let envy keep afar, since woes in plenty
We endured before. Now, most dear lord, descend
From yonder car; but set not upon earth
That foot, O king, wherewith thou hast trampled Troy.
Women, delay not. Know ye not your task?
Strew ye the path he treads with tapestries.
Straight let his way be carpeted with purple,
That Justice lead him to a home scarce hoped for.
For the rest a never-slumbering vigilance
Shall order justly as fate, I trust, intends.

Ag. Offspring of Leda, guardian of my home,
Lengthily, to the measure of my absence,
Hast thou stretched out thy speech: but seemly praise,
That tribute should proceed from other lips.
Moreover shame not me with womanish fopperies,
Nor grovel before me with loud-mouthed clamour,
As though I were some oriental king;
Nor with strown garments make my steps the gaze
Of envy. To the Gods such pomp belongs.
To tread, a mortal, over broidered fineries,
That to my conscience were a thing of fear.
As man, not God, I bid you reverence me.
ριπαίσι θωύσσοντος, ἀμφὶ σοι πάθῃ
όρωσα πλείω τοῦ ξυνεύδοντος χρόνου.

νῦν ταῦτα πάντα τλάσ’ ἀπενθήτω φρενί
λέγοιμ’ ἂν ἄνδρα τόνδε τῶν σταθμῶν κίνα,
σωτήρα ναὸς πρότονοι, ψηλῆς στέγης
στύλου ποδήρη, μονογενῆς τέκνου πατρί,
καὶ γῆν φανείσαι ναυτίλοισ παρ’ ἐλπίδα,
κάλλιστον ἦμαρ εἰσίδειν ἐκ χείματος,
ὸδοιπόρῳ διψῶντι πηγαίων ρέος.

τοιοῦδέ τοι νῦν ἄξιο προσφέρεσιν.
φθόνος δ’ ἀπέστω’ πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ πρὶν κακὰ
ἡνεχόμεσθα. νῦν δὲ μοι, φίλοιν κάρα,
ἔκβαιν’ ἀπίθες τήςδε, μὴ χαμαι τιθεῖς
τὸν σὸν πόδ’, ὁνάξ, Ἰλίου πορθήτορα.

δημαί, τί μέλλεθ’, αἰς ἑπέσταλται τέλος
πέδου κελεύθουν στρωνυναι πετίσμασιν;
ἐυθὺς γενέσθω πορφυρόστρωτος πόρος
ἔς δῶμ’ ἀελπτὸν ὡς ἂν ἡγήται δίκη.

τὰ δ’ ἄλλα φροντίς οὐχ ὑπνω νικωμένη
θῆσει δικαίως σὺν θεοῖς εἰμαρμένα.

Ἀγ. Δήδας γένεθλον, δωμάτων ἐμῶν φύλαξ,
ἀπουσίᾳ μὲν εἶπας εἰκότως ἐμή.

μακρὰν γὰρ ἐξετεινασ’ ἀλλ’ ἐναισίμως

ἀινείν, παρ’ ἄλλων χρῆ τόδ’ ἔρχεσθαι γέρας.
καὶ τάλλα μὴ γνωαίκὸς ἐν τρόποις ἐμὲ ἄβρυνε,
μηδὲ βαρβάρου φωτὸς δίκην
χαμαιπτεῖς βόαμα προσχάνης ἐμοὶ,
μηδ’ εἰμασὶ στρόσασ’ ἐπίθυθον πόρον

τίθει. θεοῖς τοι τοίσδε τιμαλφεῖν χρεών.
ἐν ποικίλοις δὲ θυντὸν ὁντα κάλλεσιν
βαίνειν ἐμοί μὲν οὐδαμῶς ἄνευ φόβου.
λέγω κατ’ ἄνδρα, μὴ θεόν, σέβειν ἐμέ.
No need of foot-cloths and embroideries:
Fame's voice rings loud enough. Heaven's greatest
Is a sane mind. Happy let him be called [gift
Whose life has ended in felicity.
Acting in all things thus, naught need I fear.

Cl. Come now, if judgment sanction, tell me this—
Ag. My judgment, be assured, I shall not change.
Cl. Would you in peril's hour have vowed this ritual?
Ag. Yes, had advised authority prescribed it.
Cl. What think you Priam had done, were his this triumph?
Ag. On broidered robes he doubtless would have trod.
Cl. Then let not human censure make thee ashamed.
Ag. Yet mighty is the people's murmuring voice.
Cl. Who stirs no jealousy, neither is he envied.
Ag. 'Tis not a woman's part to thirst for strife.
Cl. The fortunate may yield victory with grace.
Ag. Dost thou too deem this victory worth a contest?
Cl. Yield; victor still, since vanquished willingly.
Ag. Well, if it please thee, quick, let one unloose
My shoes, these insolent slaves beneath my feet;
Lest, as with these I walk the sacred purples,
Some evil glance should strike me from afar.
'Tis shame enough to waste our wealth by trampling
And spoiling silver-purchased tapestries.
Of that enough. This stranger damsel now
Receive with kindness. A gentle master wins
Approving glances from God's distant eye.
And she, the chosen flower of our rich spoil,
The army's gift, hath followed in my train.
Since then I am reduced herein to obey thee,
To the palace will I go trampling on purples.
χωρὶς ποδοψηφήστρων τε καὶ τῶν ποικίλων κληδῶν ἄντει. καὶ τὸ μὴ κακῶς φρονεῖν θεοῦ μέγιστον δῶρον. ὅλβισαι δὲ χρὴ βίον τελευτῆσαι τ' ἐν εὔεστοῖ φίλη. εἰπον τάδ' ὡς πράσσοιμ' ἀν εὐθαρσῆς ἐγώ. 480

Κλ. καὶ μὴν τόδ' εἰπὲ μὴ παρὰ γνώμην ἐμοὶ. 485

Αγ. γνώμην μὲν ἵσθι μὴ διαφθεροῦντ' ἐμὲ.

Κλ. ἡμίωθες θεοῖς δεῖσας ἀν ὀδ' ἐρθεὶν τάδε;

Αγ. εἰπέρ τις, εἰδὼς γ' εὗ, τὸδ' ἐξεῖπεν τέλος.

Κλ. τί δ' ἀν δοκεῖ σοι Πρίαμος, εἰ τάδ' ἤνυσεν;

Αγ. ἐν ποικίλοις ἀν κάρτα μοι βήναι δοκεῖ. 490

Κλ. μὴ νυν τὸν ἀνθρώπειον αἰδεσθῆς ψόγον.

Αγ. φήμην γε μέντοι δημόθρους μέγα σθένει.

Κλ. ὁ δ' ἀφθονητὸς γ' οὐκ ἐπιζηλος πέλει.

Αγ. οὔτοι γυναικὸς ἐστίν ἰμείρειν μάχης.

Κλ. τοῖς δ' ὀλβίοις γε καὶ τὸ νικᾶσθαι πρέπει. 495

Αγ. ἦ καὶ σὺ νίκην τὴνδ' δήριος τίεις;

Κλ. πιθοῦ· κρατεῖς μέντοι παρεῖς γ' ἕκατ' ἐμοὶ.

Αγ. ἄλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι ταῦθ', ύπαί τις ἀρβύλας λύοι τάχος, πρόδουλον ἐμβασιν ποδός, σὺν ταῖςδὲ μ' ἐμβαίνοινθ' ἀλουργήσιν θεῶν μὴ τὶς πρόσωθεν ὄμματος βάλοι φθόνος. 500

πολλὴ γὰρ αἴδως δωματοφθορεῖν ποσὶν φθείρουτα πλοῦτον ἀργυρωνήτους θ' ύφας. τούτων μὲν οὔτω· τὴν ξένην δὲ πρεμενῶς τὴνδ' ἐσκόμιζε· τὸν κρατοῦντα μαλθακῶς θεὸς πρόσωθεν εὐμενῶς προσδέρκεται. 505

αὕτη δὲ πολλῶν χρημάτων ἐξαιρετῶν ἀνθος, στρατοῦ δῷρημ', ἐμοὶ ξυνέσπετο. ἐπεὶ δ' ἀκούειν σοῦ κατέστραμμαί τάδε, εἰμ' ἔς δόμων μέλαθρα πορφύρας πατῶν. 510
Cl. There is the sea, (and who shall drain it dry?)
Breeding abundant purple, costly as silver,
Forever oozing fresh to dip robes in.
And of such, Heaven be thanked, good store, my king,
Is ours. This house knows naught of penury.
Full many a robe for trampling had I vowed,
Had the oracles enjoined it, when I sought
Some means to ransom home so dear a life.
Thou art the living root whence springs the foliage
That screens our house against the dog-star’s glare.
So thou returning to thy home and hearth
Betokenest warmth in winter’s midst returned.
And when Zeus from the unripe grape’s virginity
Matures wine, then like coolness in the house
Is the advent of the crowned and perfect lord.

[As Agamemnon goes in.]

Zeus, Zeus, who crownest all, crown now my prayers!
Thereafter as thou wilt mayst thou dispose.

[Clytaemnestra follows Agamemnon, but immediately returns.]

Cl. Thou too, get thee within, Kassandra, thou.
Ch. To thee she speaks, plain words, and pauses for thee.
    Snared as thou art within the toils of fate,
    If so thou canst, yield; or perchance thou canst not.
Cl. Nay, unless her speech be like a twittering swallow’s,
    Some barbarous, unintelligible tongue,
    She will understand my reasoning and obey.
Ch. Go with her. As things stand, she counsels best.
Cl. I have no leisure to stand trifling here
    Outside, when round the central hearth already
Κλ. ἐστὶν θάλασσα, τις δὲ νῦν κατασβέσει; τρέφουσα πολλῆς πορφύρας ἵσαργυρον κηκίδα παγκαίνιστον, εἰμάτων βαφᾶς. οἶκος δ' ὑπάρχει τόνδε σὺν θεοῖς, ἀναξ, ἔχειν· πένεσθαι δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται δόμος. πολλῶν πατησμῶν δ' εἰμάτων ἃν ηὐξάμην, δόμοις προυνεχθέντος ἐν χρηστηρίοις, ψυχῆς κόμιστρα τῆς δε μηχανωμένη. ρίζης γὰρ οὔσης φυλλᾶς ἵκετ' ἐσ δόμους, σκιᾶν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίων κυνός. καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἐστίν, θάλπος μὲν ἐν χειμῶνι σημαίνεις μολὼν· όταν δὲ τεῦχη Ζεὺς ἀπ' ὦμφακος πικρᾶς οἴνον, τότ' ἥδη ψύχος ἐν δόμοις πέλει, ἀνδρὸς τελείου δόμῳ ἐπιστρωφωμένου.

[As Agamemnon goes in.]

Ζεῦ Ζεῦ τέλειε, τὰς ἐμᾶς εὐχὰς τέλει· μέλοι δέ τοι σοί τῶντερ ἄν μέλλης τελεῖν.

[Clytemnestra follows Agamemnon, but immediately returns.]

Κλ. εἶσον κομίζον καὶ σὺ, Κασάνδραν λέγω.

Χο. σοὶ τοι λέγουσα παύεται σαφῆ λόγον.

ἐντὸς δ' ἀλοῦσα μορσίμων ἀγρευμάτων πείθοι ἃν, εἰ πείθοι· ἀπειθοῖς δ' ἵσως.

Κλ. ἀλλ' εἰπερ ἐστὶ μὴ χαλιδόνος δίκην ἀγνωτὰ φωνὴν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη, ἐσω φρενῶν λέγουσα πείθω νῦν λόγῳ.

Χο. ἐπού. τὰ λόγα τῶν παρεστῶτων λέγει.

Κλ. οὔτοι θυραία τῇ δ' ἐμοὶ σχολὴ πάρα τρίβειν· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐστίας μεσομφίλου
The victims wait the sacrifice of fire.  
No more will I waste words to be so served.

[Exit Clytaemnestra.]

Ch. And I, for I feel pity, will not chide.

Kassandra

Otototoi O Earth! Earth!  
O Apollo! O Apollo!

Ch. Why upon Loxias callest thou thus woefully?  
He is not one who needeth dirgelike litanies.

Ka. Otototoi O Earth! Earth!  
O Apollo! O Apollo!

Ch. Once more with ill-omened cries she calls that God  
Whose ears by lamentations are profaned.

Ka. Apollo! Apollo!  
God of Ways, Apollo indeed to me!  
For me thou hast this second time in truth destroyed.

Ch. Of her own woes it seems that she will prophesy.  
Heaven still inspires her mind, a slave's though it be.

Ka. Apollo! Apollo!  
God of Ways, Apollo indeed to me!  
Ah whither hast thou led me? yea, to what abode?

Ch. The Atreidae's palace. If thou knowest not that,  
Take my assurance: thou shalt not find it false.

Ka. Nay, 'tis abhorred of Heaven: much is it privy to,  
Unnatural murders and butcheries,  
A human shambles, sprinkled are the floors with blood.

Ch. Keen as a hound upon the scent she seems.  
This trail shall lead her soon where murder lies.

Ka. There are the witnesses—there am I certified!
οἶς τηκεν ἥδη μῆλα πρὸς σφαγὰς πυρὸς.
οὐ μὴν πλέω ρίψας ἀτιμασθήσομαι.

Exit Clytaemnestra.

Χο. ἐγὼ δ', ἐποικτείρω γὰρ, οὐ δυσμόσομαι.

ΚΑΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ὁτοτότοι πότοι δὰ. [στρ. α.]
ἀπολλοῦν ὀπολλοῦν.

Χο. τί ταῦτ' ἀνωτότυξας ἀμφὶ Δοξίου;
οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὡστε θρηνητοῦ τυχεῖν.

Κα. ὁτοτότοι πότοι δὰ. [ἀντ. α.]
ἀπολλοῦν ὀπολλοῦν.

Χο. ἢ δ' αὐτὲ δυσφημοῦσα τὸν θείον καλεῖ
οὐδὲν προσήκοντ' ἐν γόοις παραστατεῖν.

Κα. 'Απολλοῦν 'Απολλοῦν [στρ. β.]
ἀγνιάτ' ἀπὸλλων ἐμός.
ἀπώλεσας γὰρ οὐ μόλις τὸ δεύτερον.

Χο. χρῆσειν ἔοικεν ἀμφὶ τῶν αὐτῆς κακῶν.
μένει τὸ θείον δουλίᾳ περ ἐν φρενί.

Κα. 'Απολλοῦν 'Απολλοῦν [ἀντ. β.]
ἀγνιάτ' ἀπὸλλων ἐμός.
ἀ ποὶ ποτ' ἥγαγές με; πρὸς ποιαν στέγην;

Χο. πρὸς τὴν 'Ατρειδῶν· εἰ σὺ μὴ τόδ' ἐννοεῖς,
ἐγὼ λέγω σοι· καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἐρεῖς ψύθη.

Κα. μισόθεον μὲν οὖν, πολλὰ συνιστορά [στρ. γ.]
ἀυτοφόνα κακὰ καὶ ἀρταμα,
ἀνδροσφαγεῖον καὶ πέδου παντήριον.

Χο. ἔοικεν εὕρις ἢ ξένῃ κυνὸς δίκην
εἶναι, ματεύει δ' ὄν ἀνευρίσει φόνον.

Κα. μαρτυρίουσι γὰρ τοῖσδ' ἐπιπείθομαι. [ἀντ. γ.]
Babes yonder bewailing their sacrifice!
Wailing their flesh by a father roasted and devoured!

Ch. We were acquainted with thy mantic fame:
But of these things we seek no prophet here.

Ka. Alas! Ye Gods! What is she purposing?
What is this new and monstrous deed,
This deed of woe she purposes within this house,
Beyond love’s enduring,
Beyond cure? and aloof stands
Succouring strength afar.

Ch. I know not what these prophesyings mean.
The first I guessed: with them the whole city is loud.

Ka. Oh cruel, cruel! Verily wilt thou so?
Him who hath shared thy nuptial bed,
When thou hast laved and cleansed him—how shall
Apace, see, the deed nears! [I tell the end?
With a swift reach she shoots forth
Murderous hand upon hand.

Ch. Not yet do I understand. Dark riddles first,
Dim-visioned oracles perplex me now.

Ka. Ey! Ey! Papai, papai!
What is this now I see?
Some net of death ’tis surely? [the crime
But she’s the snare, who shared the bed, who shares
Of blood. Let Strife, ravening against the race,
Utter a jubilant cry
O’er the abhorred sacrifice.

Ch. What fiend is this thou bidst lift o’er the house
A cry of triumph? Thy words bring me no cheer.
Back to my heart the drops yellow and pale have run,
As when o’er the face of one fallen in fight
κλαίομενα τάδε βρέφη σφαγάς,
όπτας τε σάρκας πρός πατρὸς βεβρωμένας.

Χο. ἦμεν κλέος σοῦ μαντικῶν πεπυσμένοι.
τούτων προφήτας δ᾽ οὕτως ματεύομεν.

Κα. ἰῶ πότοι, τί ποτε μῆδεται;
τί τόδε νέου ἄχος μέγα
μέγ᾽ εὖ δόμοισι τοῖσδε μῆδεται κακῶν
ἀφερτον φίλοισιν, δυσίατοι; ἀλκὰ δ᾽
ἐκάς ἀποστάτει.

Χο. τούτων ἀδρίς εἴμι τῶν μαντευμάτων.
ἐκεῖνα δ᾽ ἐγνών· πᾶσα γὰρ πόλις βοᾷ.

Κα. ἰῶ τάλανα, τόδε γὰρ τελεῖς,
τὸν ὀμοδέμνου πόσιν
λοιπὸν γὰρ ἀναργύρωσα—πῶς φράσω τέλος;
τάχος γὰρ τόδ᾽ ἔσται· προτείνει δὲ χειρ᾽ ἐκ
χερὸς ὀρεγέμεναν.

Χο. οὐπώ ξυνῆκα· νῦν γὰρ ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων
ἐπαργέμοισι θεσφάτοις ἀμηχανῶ.

Κα. ἐ ἔ, παπαί παπαί, τί τόδε φαίνεται;
ἡ δίκτυν τί γ᾽ Ἀιδοῦ;
ἀλλ᾽ ἄρκις ἡ ξύνευνος, ἡ ξυναίτια
φόνου. στάσις δ᾽ ἀκόρετος γένει
κατολολυξάτω θύματος λευσίμου.

Χο. ποιαν Ἐρμῦνν τήνδε δῶμασιν κέλει
ἐπορθιάζειν; οὔ με φαιδρύνει λόγος.
ἐπὶ δὲ καρδίαν ἐδραμε κροκοβαφής
σταγών, ἀτε καὶ δορὶ πτωσίμοις.
Pallor of death is spread
Timed with life's sinking rays;
And the end neareth swift.

Ka. Ah! Ah! Beware! Beware!
From his accursèd mate
Keep far the bull. In vestments
She entangles him, and with her black and crafty horn
Gores him. He falls into the cauldron's steam,
Treacherous murdering bath,
Thus thy dark story is told.

Ch. I cannot boast to be a skilful judge
Of oracles; but 'tis woe I spell from these.
When from a prophet's mouth ever to mortal ears
Have good tidings sped? 'Tis naught else but woe
Volubly chanted forth,
Teaching fear, fear alone,
In skilled monotone.

Ka. Alas, alas! What hapless sorrowful doom is mine!
For of my own sad fate, mingled with his, I tell.
Ah whither hast thou brought me now, the hapless one?
For naught save only to share death with thee? What

Ch. Frenzied and heaven-possessed, ever thine own
In wild, lawless strains
Thou art uttering, even as doth heart-sore,
Never with wailing satiate,
Some brown nightingale.
Ityn, Ityn she sighs, mourning in anguish all
Her woe-plenished life.

Ka. Alas, alas! The doom of the musical nightingale!
For with a winged and soft-featherèd form the Gods
ξυνανύτει βίου δύντος αύγαίς. ταχεῖα δ᾿ ἀτα πέλει.

Ka. ἃ ἂ, ἰδοὺ ἰδοὺ· ἀπεχε τῆς βοὸς τὸν ταῦρον· ἐν πέπλοισι μελαγκέρφω λαβοῦσα μηχανήματι τύπτει· πίνυε δ᾿ ἐν ἐνυδρῷ κύτει. δολοφόνου λέβητος τύχαν σοι λέγω.

Χο. οὐ κομπάσαιμ ἀν θεσφάτων γνώμων ἄκρος εἶναι, κακῷ δὲ τῷ προσείκαίζῳ τάδε. ἀπὸ δὲ θεσφάτων τίς ἄγαθά φάτις βροτοῖς στέλλεται; κακῶν γὰρ διὰ πολυεπεῖς τέχναι θεσπισμοῦ φόβου φέρουσιν μαθεῖν.

Ka. ἵδω ἵδω ταλαίνας κακόποτοι τύχαι· τὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν θροῶ πάθος ἐπεγχύδαν. ποὶ δὴ με δεύρο τὴν τάλαιναν ἡγαγες; οὐδέν ποτ᾿ εἰ μὴ ξυνθανομένην. τί γὰρ;

Χο. φρενομανὴς τίς εἰ θεοφόρητος, ἀμ- φὶ δ᾿ αὐτᾶς θροεῖς νόμον ἀνομὸν, οἷά τις ξονθὰ ἀκόρετος βοᾶς, φεῦ, ταλαίναις φρεσίν Ἰτυν Ἰτυν στένουσ᾿ ἀμφίθαλη κακοὶς ἀγηδῶν βίον.

Ka. ἵδω ἵδω λυγείας μόρον ἀγδόνος· περίβαλὼν γε οἱ πτεροφόρον δέμας
Arrayed her, a gentle suffering a tearless change.
But me awaits the cleaving of a two-edged blade.

**Ch.** Agony fierce and vain, passionate mantic throes,
Oh whence hast thou these,
Such a terrible chant in wild harsh cries
Fashioning forth, yet clear-voiced
In loud rhythmic strains?
What may it be that thus guides and inspires thy word
On its ill-boding path?

**Ka.** Lo now my oracle no more through a veil
Shall look forth dimly, like a bride new-wed;
But clear and strong towards the rising sun
Shall it come blowing, and before it roll
Wave-like against the light a woe than this
More huge. No longer in riddles will I monish you.
This house is ever haunted by a quire
Of hideous concord, for the song is foul.
Lo, drunken with human blood till they wax bold
And insolent, they abide within, a rout,
Hard to expel, of revelling kindred fiends.
They infest the chamber-doors chanting their chant
Of that first sin: anon they execrate
The abhorred defiler of a brother's bed.
Say, have I missed, or was my shaft aimed home?
Or am I a false seer, a prating vagabond?
Bear witness with an oath that well I know
The ancient tale of the sins of this house.

**Ch.** How should an oath, though ne'er so truly plighted,
Bring remedy? But I much admire that thou,
Though bred beyond the sea, shouldst speak as certainly
Of a strange land as though thou hadst sojourned
THE AGAMEMNON 45

θεοί γλυκῶν τ' ἀγώνα κλαυμάτων ἀτερ. ἐμοὶ δὲ μίμνει σχισμὸς ἀμφίκει δόρι.
Χο. πόθεν ἐπισούτους θεοφόρους τ' ἔχεις
ματαίους δύας,
tὰ δ' ἐπίφοβα δυσφάτω κλαγγὰ
μελωτυπεῖς ὅμοι τ' ὀρθίους ἐν νόμοις;
πόθεν ὅρους ἔχεις θεσπεσίας ὁδὸν
cακορρήμονας;

Κα. καὶ μὴν ὁ χρησμὸς οὐκέτ' ἐκ καλυμμάτων
ἔσται δεδορκῶς νεογάμου νύμφης δίκην;
λαμπρὸς δ' ἐοικεν ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολάς
πνέων ἑσάξειν, ὡστε κύματος δίκην
κλύξειν πρὸς αὐγάς τούδε πήματος πολὺ
μεῖζον· φρενώσω δ' οὐκέτ' ἔξ αἰνιγμάτων.

τὴν γὰρ στέγην τίμιον οὔποτ' ἐκλείπει χορὸς
σύμφθογγος οὐκ εὐφωνὸς· οὐ γὰρ εὐ λέγει.
καὶ μὴν πεπωκώς γ', ὡς θρασύνεσθαι πλέον,
βρότειον αἷμα κόμος ἐν δόμοις μένει,
δύσπεμπτος ἐξω, συγγόνων Ἐρινύων.

ὑμνούσι δ' ὕμων δῶμασιν προσήμεναι
πρώταρχον ἅτην· ἐν μέρει δ' ἀπέπτυσαν
εὐνάς ἄδελφου τῷ πατοῦντι δυσμενείς.

ἡμαρτον, ἡ θηρὼ τι τοξότης τις ὡς;
ἡ ψευδόμαντις εἰμι θυροκόπος φλέδων;
ἐκμαρτύρησον προμόσας τὸ μ' εἰδέναι
λόγῳ παλαιᾶς τοῦτο άμαρτίας δόμων.

Χο. καὶ πῶς ἀν ὄρκος, πῆγμα γενναίως παγέν,
παλώνιος γένοιτο; ταυμάξω δὲ σε
πόντου πέραν τραφείσαι ἀλλόθρουν πόλιν
κυρεῖν λέγουσαν, ὡσπερ εἰ παρεστάτεις.
Ka. The seer Apollo endowed me with this skill.
Ch. Smitten with love perchance, God though he be?
Ka. Hitherto shame forbade me to confess it.
Ch. Yes, we are all more delicate in prosperity.
Ka. Vehement and mighty was the love he breathed.
Ch. And in due course came you to child-bearing?
Ka. I gave consent, then kept not faith with Loxias.
Ch. Already wast thou possessed by power of prophecy?
Ka. Already Troy’s whole agony I foretold.
Ch. How then! Couldst thou escape the wrath of Loxias?
Ka. None would believe my words: so was I punished.
Ch. Yet to us thy words seem worthy of belief.
Ka. Ioû! Ioû! Oh agony!
   Again dire pangs of clear vision whirl
   And rack my soul with awful preludings.
   Behold them there, sitting before the house,
   Young children, like to phantom shapes in dream!
   Boys slain by their own kindred they appear.
   Their hands are filled with flesh, yea ’tis their own.
   The heart, the inward parts, see, they are holding,
   (Oh piteous burden,) whereof their father tasted.
   For this, I tell you, vengeance is devised
   By a recreant lion who lurking in the bed
   Keeps watch, ah me! for the returning lord;
   My lord; for the slave’s yoke I must endure.
   The fleet’s high captain, Ilium’s ravager,
   He knows not what the abhorred she-hound’s tongue
   After long-drawn fawning welcome—what accurst
   Treacherous stroke she aims with deadly stealth.
   O wickedness horrible! Of her lord the wife
Ka. μάντις μ’ Ἀπόλλων τῶν ἐπέστησεν τέλει.-
Χο. μῶν καὶ θεὸς περ ἰμέρῳ πεπληγμένος;
Ka. προτοῦ μὲν αἴδως ἦν ἐμοὶ λέγειν τάδε.
Χο. ἀβρύνεται γὰρ πᾶς τις εὖ πρᾶσσων πλέον. 650
Ka. ἀλλ’ ἦν παλαιστής κάρτ’ ἐμοὶ πνέων χάριν.
Χο. ἦ καὶ τέκνων εἰς ἐργον ἥλθετην νόμῳ;
Ka. ξυναινέσασα Δοξίαν ἐφευσάμην.
Χο. ἦδη τέχναισιν ἐνθέοις ἱρημένη;
Ka. ἦδη πολίταις πάντ’ ἑθέσπιζον πάθη. 655
Χο. πῶς δῆτ’; ἀνατὸς ἴσθα Λοξίου κότω;
Ka. ἐπειθοῦν οὐδέν οὐδέν, ὡς τάδ’ ἱμπλακοῦ.
Χο. ἦμιν γε μὲν δὴ πιστὰ θεσπίζειν δοκεῖς.
Ka. ίοῦ ίοῦ, ὦ ὦ κακά.

ύπ’ αὖ μὲ δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος 660
στροβεῖ ταράσσων φροιμίοις δυσφροιμίοις.
όρατε τούσδε τοὺς δόμοις ἐφημένους
νέους, ὁνείρων προσφερεῖσ μορφώμασι;
παῖδες θανόντες ὥσπερει πρὸς τῶν φίλων,
χείρας κρεόν πλήθοντες οἰκείας βορᾶς,
σὺν ἐντέροις τε σπλάγχν’, ἐποίκιστον γέμος,
πρέπουσ’ ἔχοντες, ὅν πατὴρ ἐγεύσατο.
ἐκ τῶνδε ποινὰς φημὶ βουλεύειν τινὰ
λέοντ’ ἀναλκιν ἐν λέχει στρωφώμενον
οἰκουρόν, οἰμοὶ, τῷ μολόντι δεσπότῃ 665
ἐμῷ· φέρειν γὰρ χρῆ τὸ δουλίου ζυγόν.
νεῶν δ’ ἔπαρχος Ἴλιον τ’ ἀναστάτης
οὐκ οἴδεν οία γλῶσσα μισητὴς κυνὸς
λέξασα κάκτεινασα φαιδρόνους, δίκην
ἀτης λαβραίου, τεῦξεται κακὴ τύχη.
τοιάδε τόλμῃ θῆλυς ἀρσενὸς φοινεύς 670

THE AGAMEMNON 47
Is murderess. By what loathsome monster’s name
Should I describe her fitly? An amphisbaena?
Or some cliff-lairing Scylla, bane of mariners,
A raging demon mother, breathing havoc
Against her dearest? And how she cried in triumph,
The all-shameless fiend, as when a battle breaks,
Feigning to glory in his safe return!
Herein though I gain no credence, ’tis all one.
What must be, shall be; and thou beholding soon
Shalt call me in pity a prophet all too true.

Ch. Thyestes’ banquet of his own children’s flesh
Shuddering I understood. Yea horror seized me
Hearing the true tale without fabling told.
But in all else I wander far astray.

Ka. Agamemnon’s death I say thou shalt behold.

Ch. Peace, wretched woman! Hush thy ill-omened lips.

Ka. This word no Healing God can remedy.

Ch. Not if it must be so: but Heaven avert it!

Ka. While thou prayest, the slayers are making ready.

Ch. What man is the contriver of this woe?

Ka. Wide indeed of my warning must thou have looked.

Ch. For I perceive not how the deed is possible.

Ka. See now, I know the Greek tongue all too well.

Ch. So doth the Pythoness: yet her words are dark.

Ka. Papai! What is this fire! It surges upon me!
   Ototoi! Lycean Apollo! Ay me, me!
   Yonder two-footed lioness, who shares
   The wolf’s couch, while the noble lion is far,
   Shall slay me, hapless woman. A vengeful charm
   She is brewing, and therein will mix my recompense.
ἔστιν. τί νῦν καλοῦσα δυσφιλές δάκος
tύχοιμ' ἂν; ἀμφίσβαιναν, ἡ Σκύλλαν τινὰ
οίκοῦσαν ἐν πέτραισι, ναυτίλουν βλάβην,
θύουσαν Ὄλιον μητέρ' ἄσπονδόν τ' ἄρην
φίλους πνέουσαν; ὡς δ' ἐπωλολύζατο
ἡ παντότολμος, ἡσπερ ἐν μάχης τροπῇ.
δοκεῖ δὲ χαίρειν νοστίμω σωτηρία.
καὶ τῶν' ὦμοιον εἰ τι μὴ πείθω· τί γάρ;
τὸ μέλλον ἢξει. καὶ σὺ μ' ἐν τάχει παρῶν
ἀγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτείρας ἐρείς.
Χο. τὴν μὲν Θυεστοῦ δαίτα παιδείων κρεών
ξυνήκα καὶ πέφρικα, καὶ φόβοις μ' ἐχει
κλύουν' ἀληθῶς οὐδὲν ἐξηκασμένα.
τὰ δ' ἀλλ' ἀκοῦσας ἐκ δρόμου πεσῶν τρέχω. 685
Κα. Ἀγαμέμνονος σὲ φημ' ἐπόψεσθαι μόρον.
Χο. εὐφήμον, ὥ τάλαινα, κοίμησον στόμα.
Κα. ἀλλ' οὕτι Παιών τῶν' ἐπιστατεῖ λόγῳ.
Χο. οὐκ, εἴπερ ἐσταί γ'· ἀλλὰ μὴ γένοιτό πως.
Κα. σὺ μὲν κατεύχει, τοῖς δ' ἀποκτείνειν μέλει. 695
Χο. τίνος πρὸς ἀνδρὸς τοῦτ' ἄχος πορούνεται;
Κα. ἢ κάρτα τάρ' ἄν παρεκόπης χρησμῶν ἐμῶν.
Χο. τοῦ γὰρ τελοῦντος οὐ ξυνήκα μηχανήν.
Κα. καὶ μὴν ἄγαν γ'' Ἐλλην' ἐπίσταμαι φάτιν.
Χο. καὶ γὰρ τὰ πυθόκραντα· δυσμαθή δ' ὦμως. 700
Κα. παπαί, οἶον τὸ πῦρ· ἐπέρχεται δὲ μοι.
ὅτοτοῖ, Λύκει' Ἀπόλλον, οἶ ἐγὼ ἐγώ.
αὐτὴ δίπους λέαινα συγκοιμωμένη
λύκω, λέοντος εὐγενοῦς ἀποουσία,
κτειεὶ με τὴν τάλαιναν· ὡς δὲ φάρμακον
τεῦχουσα κάμοι μισθὸν ἐνθήσει κότῳ

Α. 4
Sharpening her man-slaying sword, she vows
Bloodily to repay my bringing hither.
Why then to my own derision bear I these—
This wand, these mantic fillets round my neck?
Thee at least, ere I perish, will I destroy.
Down to the ground I cast you, and thus requite you.
Enrich some other, as ye did me, with doom.
But lo, Apollo himself strips off from me,
My prophet's robe, now the spectacle grows stale
Of his victim in these vestments laughed to scorn
By friends and foes alike, and all in vain—
And like a vagabond mountebank such names
As beggar, wretch or starveling I endured—
And now this seer, being finished with my seership,
Has brought me to be murdered in this place,
Where awaiteth me no altar of my home,
But a block whereon the last blood yet is warm.
Yet not forgotten of Heaven shall we die.
There shall come one to vindicate us, born
To slay his mother and avenge his sire.
A wandering homeless outlaw shall he return
To cope the fabric of ancestral sin.
For with a mighty oath the Gods have sworn,
His father's outstretched corpse shall draw him home.
Why then do I stand thus wailing piteously?
I will meet my fate: I will endure to die.
These gates, as they were Hades' gates, I hail
And that the stroke be mortal is my prayer:
So swiftly and easily shall my blood gush forth,
And without struggle shall I close my eyes.
Ch. Woman, so hapless, yet withal so wise,
Long hast thou held us listening; yet if verily
καπεύχεται θήγουσα φωτὶ φάσγανον ἐμῆς ἀγωγῆς ἀντιτίσασθαι φόνον.
τὸ δῆτ᾽ ἐμαυτῆς καταγέλωτ᾽ ἔχω τάδε, καὶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μαντεῖα περὶ δέρῃ στέφῃ; 710
σὲ μὲν πρὸ μοίρας τῆς ἐμῆς διαφθερῶ.
ἐτ᾽ ἐς φθόρον· πεσόντα θ’ ὅδ’ ἀμείψομαι.
ἀλλην τιν’ ἄτης ἀντ’ ἐμοῦ πλουτίζετε.
ίδον δ’ Ἄπολλων αὐτὸς ἐκδύων ἐμὲ
χρηστηρίαν ἔσθητ’, ἐποπτεύσας δὲ με 715
κὼν τοῖς κόσμοις καταγελωμένην μέγα
φίλων ὑπ’ ἔχθρον ὦν διχορρόπως, μάτην—
καλουμένη δὲ φοιτᾶς ὡς ἀγνήτρια
πτωχὸς τάλαινα λιμοθύμη ἀνεσχομην—
καὶ νῦν ὁ μάντις μάντιν ἐκπράξας ἐμὲ
ἀπήγαγ’ ἐς τοιῶσθε θανασίμους τύχας.
βωμοῦ πατρὸφον δ’ ἀντ’ ἐπίξηνον μένει,
θερμὸν κοπέντος φοινίῳ προσφώγματι.
οὐ μὴν ἀτιμοὶ γ’ ἐκ θεῶν τεθυνήξομεν.
ἡξει γὰρ ἡμῶν ἄλλος αὐ τιμώρος, 725
μητροκτόνον φίτυμα, ποινάτωρ πατρός·
φυγὰς δ’ ἀλήτης τῆςδε γῆς ἀπόξενος
κάτεισιν, ἅτα τάσδε θριγκόσων φίλοις·
ὁμώμοται γὰρ ὅρκος ἐκ θεῶν μέγας,
azure νῦν ὑπτίασμα κειμένου πατρός. 730
τὸ δῆτ᾽ ἐγὼ κάτοικτος ὅδ’ ἀναστένω;
ίουσα πράξῃ τλήσομαι τὸ καθανεῖν.
"Ἀδιόν πῦλας δὲ τάσὶ ἐγὼ προσευνέποι·
ἐπεύχομαι δὲ καιρίας πληγῆς τυχεῖν,
ὡς ἀσφάδαστος, αἰμάτων εὐθυνήσιμων
ἀπορρύντων, ὃμμα συμβάλω τόδε.
Χω. ὁ πολλὰ μὲν τάλαινα, πολλὰ δ’ αὐ σοφῇ
γύναι, μακρὰν ἔτεινας. εἰ δ’ ἐτητύμως
Thou knowest thine own doom, how, as some heaven-led victim,
Patently to the altar canst thou move?

Ka. There is no escape, friends, none, when time is full.

Ch. Yes, but time's last hour still is found the best.

Ka. The day is come. Little were gained by flight.

Ch. Truly a patient fortitude is thine.

Ka. Such praise none heareth to whom fate is kind.

Ch. Yet is there comfort in a glorious death.

Ka. Alas my father! thou and thy noble children!

Ch. Why dost thou start? What terror turns thee back?

Ka. Foul! Foul!

Ch. Why criest thou foul? Is it some brainsick loathing?

Ka. Horror this house exhales from blood-dript walls.

Ch. Nay, nay, 'tis naught but odours of hearth-sacrifice.

Ka. 'Tis such a reek as riseth from a sepulchre.

Yet will I enter, and there bewail my fate
And Agamemnon's. I have lived long enough.

Alas, my friends!
I clamour not like a bird that dreads a bush
Idly. When I am dead confirm my words,
When another woman for my death shall die,
And for a man ill-mated a man falls.

I claim this office as at point to die.

Ch. Poor wretch, I pity thy prophetic doom.

Ka. Yet once more would I speak—or is not this
My own dirge rather? To the sun I pray,
This last seen by me, that when my champions come,
My foes may pay murder's price for me too,

For this poor slave's death, their inglorious prey.
μόρον τὸν αὐτῆς οἶσθα, πῶς θεηλάτου βοῦς δίκην πρὸς βωμὸν εὐτόλμως πατεῖς;

Κα. ὦ κ ὦ ἐστὶ ἄλυξις, οὖ, ξένοι, χρόνον πλέω.

Χο. ὁ δ' ὡστατὸς γε τοῦ χρόνου πρεσβεύεται.

Κα. ἥκει τόδ' ἡμαρ' σμικρὰ κερδανὸ φυγῇ.

Χο. ἀλλ' ἵσθι τλήμων οὖν' ἀπ' εὐτόλμου φρενός.

Κα. οὐδεὶς ἄκουει ταῦτα τῶν εὐδαιμόνων.

Χο. ἀλλ' εὐκλεῶς τοι κατθανεῖν χάρις βροτῷ.

Κα. ἰδ' πάτερ σοῦ τῶν τε γενναίων τέκνων.

Χο. τί δ' ἐστὶ χρήμα; τίς σ' ἀποστρέφει φόβος;

Κα. φεῦ φεῦ.

Χο. τί τούτ' ἐφευξάς; εἰ τι μὴ φρενῶν στύγος.

Κα. φόνον δόμοι πνεόνσιν αἱματοσταγῇ.

Χο. καὶ πῶς; τόδ' ὅξει θυμάτων ἐφεστίων.

Κα. ὁμοίος ἀτμός ὦσπερ ἐκ τάφου πρέπει.

αλλ' εἶμι καὶ δόμοις κωκύσου' ἐμὴν Ἀγαμέμνονός τε μοιραν. ἀρκεῖτο βίος.

ἰδ' ξένοι.

οὗτοι δυσοίζω θάμνων ὡς ὄρνις φόβῳ ἄλλως· θανούσῃ μαρτυρεῖτέ μοι τόδε, ὅταν γυνὴ γυναικὸς ἀντ' ἐμοῦ θάνη, ἀνήρ τε δυσδάμαρτος ἀντ' ἀνδρὸς πέσῃ.

ἐπιζεουόμαι ταῦτα δ' ὡς θανομένη.

Χο. ὁ τλήμων, οἰκτείρω σε θεσφάτον μόρον.

Κα. ἄπαξ ἔτ' εὑπείν ρήσιν ᾧ θρῆνον θέλω ἐμὸν τὸν αὐτῆς. ἥλιον δ' ἐπεύχομαι πρὸς ὡστατον φῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς τιμαόροις ἐχθροὺς φόνευσιν τοὺς ἐμοὺς τίνειν ὁμοὶ δούλης θανοῦσης, εὔμαροὺς χειρώματος.
Alas for man's estate! His happiness
Shows like a sketch, a shadow: but his misery—
'Tis a picture by a wet sponge dashed clean out.
And this is the more pitiable by far.

[Exit.]

Ag. [within]. Ah me! I am smitten—to the heart, a mortal stroke!
Ch. Silence! Who is that cries out as smitten by a mortal wound?
Ag. Ah me! Again! A second time, a murderous stroke!
Ch. I. Done is now the deed, I fear me. That is the death-groan of the king.
Come let us consult, if haply some safe counsel we may find.

2. This is my counsel, that we summon hither
A rescue of the townsfolk to the palace.
3. And I say, with all speed let us burst in,
And prove the foul deed while the sword yet drips.

[As they are about to enter the palace, the scene opens and discloses Clytaemnestra standing over the bodies of Agamemnon and Kassandra.]

Cl. All that I spoke before to serve the time,
I shall feel no shame now to contradict.
For how by avowing open hate to enemies,
Presumed to be our friends, could we build up Destruction's toils too high to be overleapt?
By me long since against victory long-deferred Was planned this duel, yet at last it came.
Here stand I where I struck, my work achieved.
THE AGAMEMNON

55

ι'ω βρότεια πράγματ' ἐνυχοῦντα μὲν σκιά τις ἄν πρέψειεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχώθη, βολαῖς υγρώσσων σπόγγοις ἀλέσεν γραφήν. 770 καὶ ταῦτ' ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἴκτείρω πολύ.

[Exit.]

Αγ. ώμοι, πέπληγμαι καιρίαν πληγήν ἔσω.
Χό. σύγα· τίς πληγήν ἀυτεί καιρίως οὐτασμένος;
Αγ. ώμοι μάλ' αὖθις, δευτέραν πεπληγμένος.
Χο. τούργον εἰργάσθαι δοκεῖ μοι βασιλέως οἰμώματι.

775 ἀλλὰ κοινωσώμεθ' ἢν πως ἀσφαλὴ βουλεύματ'.—

2. ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῖν τὴν ἐμὴν γνώμην λέγω, πρὸς δόμα δεῦρ' ἀστοῖσι κηρύσσειν βοήν.—

3. ἐμοὶ δ' ὅπως τάχιστα γ' ἐμπεσεῖν δοκεῖ καὶ πρᾶγμ' ἐλέγχειν σὺν νεορρύτω ξίφει.— 780

[As they are about to enter the palace, the scene opens and discloses Clytaemnestra standing over the bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra.]

Κλ. πολλῶν πάροιθεν καιρίως εἰρημένων τάναντι' εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἐπαίσχυνθησομαι. πῶς γὰρ τις ἐχθροῖς ἐχθρὰ πορσύνων, φίλοις δοκούσιν εἶναι, πημοῦὴς ἀρκύστατ' ἄν φράξειεν, ύψως κρείσσον ἐκπηδήματος; 785 ἐμοὶ δ' ἀγνώ ὅδ' οὐκ ἀφρόντιστος πάλαι νείκης παλαιᾶς ἠλθε, σὺν χρόνῳ γε μὴν· ἔστηκα δ' ἐνθ' ἐπαίσ' ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις.
Even so I wrought—this too will I not deny—
That neither should he escape nor ward his doom.
A blind entanglement, like a net for fish,
I swathè around him, an evil wealth of robe.
And twice do I smite him, till at the second groan
There did his limbs sink down; and as he lies,
A third stroke do I deal him, unto Hades,
Safe-keeper of dead men, a votive gift.
Therewith he lies still, gasping out his life:
And spouting forth a vehement jet of blood
Strikes me with a dark splash of murderous dew,
No less rejoicing than in Heaven's sweet rain
The corn doth at the birth-throes of the ear.
The truth being such, ye grave elders of Argos,
Rejoice, if so ye may; but I exult.

Ch. We marvel at thine audacity of tongue
To glory in such terms over thy slain lord.

Cl. Ye assail me as though I were a witless woman.
But I with heart unshaken what all know
Declare—whether thou praise me or condemn,
'Tis all one—this is Agamemnon, mine
Own husband, done to death by this right hand's
Most righteous workmanship. The case stands so.

Ch. Woman, what earth-engendered
Venomous herb, or what evil drug,
Scum of the restless sea, canst thou have tasted of,
Thus to incur the loud fury of a people's curse?
Away thou hast cast, away thou hast cleft, away shall
the city fling thee,
A monstrous burden of loathing.

Cl. Yes, now for me thou doomest banishment,
A city's loathing and a people's curses:
οὔτω δ’ ἐπραξά, καὶ τάδ’ οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι. ὡς μῆτε φεύγειν μῆτ’ ἀμύνεσθαι μόρων, ἀπειρον ἀμφίβληστρον, ἁπτέρερ ἱχθύων, περιστιχίζω, πλοῦτον εἴματος κακῶν. παῖω δὲ μν δίς· καὶ δυοῖν οἰμώγμασιν μεθήκεν αὐτοῦ κόλα· καὶ πεπτωκότι τρίτην ἐπενδίδωμι, τοῦ κατὰ χθονὸς. “Αἶδου νεκρῶν σωτήρος εὐκταίαν χάριν. οὔτω τὸν αὐτοῦ θυμὸν ὅρμαινε πεσών· κάκφυσιών ὄξειαν αἱματος σφαγὴν βάλλει μ’ ἐρεμην ψακάδι φοινίας δρόσου, χαίρονσαν οὐδὲν ἱσσον ἢ διοσδότω γάνει σπορητὸς κάλυκος ἐν λοχεύμασιν. ὡς ὥδ’ ἐχοντὼν, πρέσβους Ἀργείων τὸδε, χαίροιτ’ ἄν, εἰ χαίροιτ’, ἐγὼ δ’ ἐπεύχομαι.

Χο. θαυμάξομεν σοι γλώσσαν, ὡς θρασύστομος, ἢτις τοιῶν’ ἐπ’ ἀνδρὶ κομπάζεις λόγον.

Κλ. πειράσθε μου γυναίκος ὡς ἀφράσμονος· ἐγὼ δ’ ἀτρέστω καρδία πρὸς εἰδότας λέγω· σὺ δ’ αἰνεῖν εἴτε με ψέγειν θέλεις ὄμοιον. οὔτος ἐστιν Ἀγαμέμνων, ἐμὸς πόσις, νεκρὸς δὲ, τῆσδε δεξιᾶς χερὸς ἔργον, δικαίας τέκτωνος. τάδ’ ὥδ’ ἐχει.

Χο. τὶ κακῶν, ὦ γυναι, χθονοτρεφὲς ἔδανον ἢ ποτὸν πασαμένα ῥυτᾶς έξ ἀλὸς ὄρμενον τόδ’ ἐπέθου θύος, δημοθρόους τ’ ἀρᾶς; ἀπέδικες τ’ ἀπέταμές τ’ ἀπόπολις δ’ ἐσεῖ μίσος ὃβριμον ἀστοῖς.

Κλ. νῦν μὲν δικάζεις ἐκ πόλεως φυγὴν ἐμοὶ καὶ μίσος ἀστῶν δημόθρους τ’ ἐχειν ἀρᾶς,
Yet once no whit didst thou withstand this man,
Who recking not, as 'twere a beast that died,
Although his woolly flocks bare sheep enough,
Sacrificed his own child, that dear delight
Born of my pangs, to charm the winds of Thrace.

\textit{Ch.} Insolent is thy mood,
Thine utterance arrogant. Therefore even
As with the deed of blood frenzied is now thy soul,
So doth a gory smear fitly adorn thy brow.
With none to avenge, none to befriend, verily yet shall
Stroke for stroke in reprisal. \[you pay\]

\textit{Cl.} This likewise shalt thou hear, my solemn oath:
By the Justice here accomplished for my child,
By the Sin and Doom, whose victim here I have slain,
Not for me doth Hope tread the halls of Fear,
While yet fire on my hearth is kindled by
Aegisthus, my kind friend as heretofore.
For yonder, no small shield for our assurance,
Lies low the man who outraged his own wife,
Darling of each Chryseis under Troy,
And by him this bond-slave and auguress,
His oracle-delivering concubine,
Who, as his faithful couch-mate, shared with him
The mariners' bench. But punished are they now.
For he fare thus: and she, now she has wailed
Swan-like her last lamenting song of death,
Lies there, his lover, adding a delicate
New seasoning to the luxury of my couch.

\textit{Ch.} Oh for a speedy death, painless without a throe,
No lingering bedridden sickness,
A gentle death, bearing sleep eternal,
οὐδὲν τότ’ ἄνδρι τῶδ’ ἐγαντίον φέρων’

δὲ οὖ προτιμῶν, ὡσπερεὶ βοτοῦ μόρον,

μῆλων φλεόντων εὐπόκοις νομεύμασιν,

ἔθυσεν αὐτοῦ παῖδα, φιλτάτην ἐμοὶ

ὡδίν’, ἐπιφέου Θρηκίων ἀημάτων.

Xo. μεγαλόμεντις εἰ, περίφρονα δ’ ἠλακές’ ὡσπερ οὖν

φονολιβεῖ τύχα φρήν ἐπιμαίνεται.

λέπος ἐπ’ ὀμμάτων αἴματος ἐμπρέπει:

ἀτίετον δ’ ἐτι σὲ χρή στερομέναν φίλων

τύμμα τύμματι τίσαι.

Κλ. καὶ τήνδ’ ἀκούεις ὄρκίων ἐμῶν θέμιν’

μᾶ τὴν τέλειον τῆς ἐμῆς παιδὸς Δίκην,

’Ἀτην’ Ἐρινὺν θ’, αἰσθανὸς ἐσφαξ’ ἐγὼ,

οὐ μοι φόβου μέλαθρον ἐλπίς ἐμπατεῖ,

eus ἂν αἰθή πῦρ ἐφ’ ἐστίας ἐμῆς

Ἀγισθός, ως τὸ πρόσθεν εὖ φρονοῦν ἐμοὶ.

οὐτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀστίς οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους.

κεῖται γυναικὸς τῆςδε λυμαντήριος.

Χρυσήδων μειλιγμα τῶν ὑπ’ Ἡλίῳ

ἡ τ’ αἰχμάλωτος ἢδε καὶ τερασκότος

καὶ κοινόλεκτος τοῦδε, θεσφατηλόγος

πιστὴ ξύνευνοι, ναυτίλοις δὲ σελμάτων

ἰσοτριβῆς. ἅτιμα δ’ οὐκ ἐπραξάτην.

ὁ μὲν γὰρ οὕτως, ἢ δὲ τοι κύκνου δίκην

τὸν ὑστατον μέλψασα θανάσιμον γόον

κεῖται φιλήτωρ τῶδ’, ἐμοὶ δ’ ἐπήγαγεν

εὐνῆς παροψώνημα τῆς ἐμῆς χλιδῆν.

Χο. φεῦ, τῆς ἄν ἐν τάχει, μὴ περιώδυνος,

μηδὲ δεμιοστήρης,

μόλοι τὸν οὐ δέι φέρονς’ ἐν ἡμῖν
Sleep without end, for to us the kindest,
Truest of guardians is lost,
Who for a woman’s sin endured toils untold;
Yea, and by a woman’s hand he fell.
Demon, who o’er the house broodest, and o’er the twi-
Branching Tantalid offspring,
And through the wives, equals in destruction,
Wieldest a power, to my heart an anguish!
Now on the carcase like a loathed
Carrion crow perched he stands, and gloryingly
Chanting forth croaks his tuneless hymn.

Cl. Now thy judgment hast thou amended,
Since thou accusest
The thrice-gorged demon of this whole lineage.
For from him is bred this lust of the heart
For blood to be lapped—ere yet the old woe
Is over and gone, ever fresh gore.

Ch. Ay me! Ay me! My king, my king!
How shall I weep thee?
What word shall I speak from a loving heart?
In this spider’s web to be lying thus caught,
By a foul death gasping thy soul forth!
Ah me, me! couched thus shamefully like a slave,
Stricken down by a deadly hand
Craftily armed with a cleaving sword-blade!

Cl. Do you dare to avouch this deed to be mine?
Nay, fancy not even
That in me Agamemnon’s spouse you behold:
But disguised as the wife of the man who is slain
Yonder, the ancient wrathful Avenger
Of Atreus, that grim feaster, hath found
Μοῦρ' ἀτέλευτον ὑπ' θαλασσών ἔκμενεστάτου
πολέα τλάντος γυναικῶς διαί; ὁπεφθάσθαι.
δαίμονι, ὅς ἔμπινεις δόμασι καὶ
dιψύχεσθαι Τανταλίδαισινιν,
κράτος τ' ἰσοφυχον ἐκ γυναικῶν
καρδιόδηκτον ἐμοὶ κρατύνεις.
ἐπὶ δὲ σῶματος δίκαν μοι
κόρακος ἔχθρον σταθεῖσ' ἐκνόμως
ὑμνον ὑμνεῖν ἐπεύχεται.

Κλ. νῦν δ' ὀρθωσας στόματος γνώμην,
τὸν τριπάχυντον
daιμονια γένης τήσε κικλήσκων.
ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ ἐρως αἰματολοίχος
νεμιστροφεῖται, πρὶν καταλήξαι
τὸ παλαιὸν άξος, νέος ἰχώρ.

Χο. ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεύ βασιλεύ,
pῶς ἐς δακρύσω;
φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ' εἴπω;
κεῖσαι δ' ἀράχυνς ἐν υφάσματi τῶδ'
ἀσεβεῖθανάτω βίον ἐκπνέων.

Κλ. αὖχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τούργον ἐμὸν·
μηδ' ἐπιλεξθῆς
"Αγαμεμνονίαν εἶναι μ' ἀλοχον.

φανταξόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ
τοῦδ' ὁ παλαιὸς δριμὺς ἀλάστωρ
 ''.Ἀτρέως χαλεποῦ θουνατῆρος
Yonder a full-grown
Victim for the ghosts of the children.

Ch. That thou of the blood here shed
Art innocent, who shall essay to witness?
No, no! Yet the fiend avenging
The father's sin may have aided.
And swept along on floods of gore
From slaughtered kindred by the red
Deity of Strife, he comes where he must pay now
For the caked blood of the mangled infants.

Cl. What, did not he too wreak on his household
As crafty a crime?
Nay but the branch he grafted upon me,
My long-wept-for Iphigeneia,
Even as he dealt with her, so is he faring:
Therefore in Hades let him not boast now.
As he sinned by the sword,
So is death by the sword his atonement.

Ch. In blank amaze, reft of thought's resourceful
Counselling aid, I know not
Which way to turn, now the house is falling.
I dread the fierce, crashing storm that wrecks the home,
The storm of blood. Ceased is now the small rain.
But Justice is but whetting for some other deed
Of bale her sword's edge on other whetstones.

Ay me! Earth, Earth! Would thou hadst covered me,
Or ere in the silver-sided bath
Outstretched in death I had seen him!
Who shall make his grave? Who shall sing his dirge?
Who by the tomb of the deified hero weeping
τόνδ᾽ ἀπέτισεν,
τέλεον νεαροῖς ἐπιθύσασ.

Χο. ὡς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἶ
tούδε φόνου τίς ὁ μαρτυρίσων;
πῶ πῶ; πατρὸθεν δὲ συλλή-
πτωρ γένοιτ' ἄν ἀλάστωρ.
βιαζέται δ' ὁμοσπόροις
ἐπιρροαίσιν αἰμάτων
μέλας "Ἀρης, ὅποι δίκαιον προβαίνων
πάχνα κουροβόρῳ παρέξει.

Κλ. οὐδὲ γὰρ οὕτος δολιάν ἦτην
οἰκοισιν ἐθηκ᾽;
ἀλλ᾽ ἐμὸν ἐκ τοῦδ᾽ ἔρνος ἀερθὲν,
tην πολυκλαύτην Ἰφιγενείαιν,
ἀξία δράσας ἀξία πάσχων
μηδὲν ἐν"Αἰδοὺ μεγαλαυχεῖτω,
ξιφοδηλήτῳ
θανάτῳ τίσας ἀπερ ἠρξεν.

Χο. ἀμηχανῶ φροντίδος στερηθεὶς
eὐπάλαμον μέριμναν
ὁπα τράπωμαι, πάτοντος οἶκου.
δέδοικα δ' ὁμβρου κτύπου δομοσφαλῆ
tὸν αἴματρον. ἡσακὰς δὲ λήγει.
Δίκη δ' ἐπ' ἀλλο πράγμα θηγάνει βλάβης
πρὸς ἄλλαις θηγάναισιν ἄρο.

ἰῶ γὰρ γὰ, εἴθ' ἐμ' ἐδέξω,
πρὶν τόνδ' ἐπιδεῖν ἀργυροτοίχου
δροῦτας κατέχοντα χαμεύνην.
tὶς ὁ θάψων νυν; τὶς ὁ θρηνήσων;
tὶς δ' ἐπιτύμβιον αἰνοῦν ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θείῳ
Shall chant his praise, and bowed down
In unfeigned grief of heart lament him?

Cl. Thee it beseems not herein to concern thee:
No, for beneath us
He bowed, he lay dead, and below shall we bury him,
Not to a mourning household’s dirges,
But Iphigeneia with welcome blithe,
As a daughter should,
Shall encounter her sire at the swift-flowing strait
Of Wailing, and there
Fling around him her arms and shall kiss him.

Ch. Reviling thus answereth reviling.
Hard to adjudge the strife seems.
The spoiler is spoiled, the slayer pays reprisal.
While on his throne Zeus abides, abides the truth:
Who doth the deed, suffereth: so the law stands.
Who from the house shall cast the brood of curses forth?
The whole race is welded fast to ruin.

Cl. When you stumbled upon this saw, 'twas truth
Led thee. But I now
With the fiend of the Pleisthenid race consent
This treaty to swear: what is done, we accept,
Hard be it to bear, if he will but quit
Henceforth this house, and afflict with kindred
Murder some other race instead.
Though mine be a small
Portion of wealth, that in full shall suffice me,
If I thus may cleanse
These halls from the frenzy of blood-feud.


THE AGAMEMNON 65

xiv δακρύοις ἱάπτων
ἀλαθεία φρενῶν πονήσει;

Κλ. οὐ σὲ προσήκει τὸ μέλημ’ ἄλεγειν
tούτον· πρὸς ἡμοῦν
κάππεσε, κάθαυε, καὶ καταθάψομεν
ουχ ὑπὸ κλαυθμῶν τῶν ἐξ οἴκων,...
ἀλλ’ Ἰφιγένεια νῦν ἀσπασίως
θυγάτηρ, ὡς χρῆ,
pατέρ’ ἀντιάσασα πρὸς ὠκύπορον
πόρθμευμ’ ἀχέων
peri χειρε βαλουσα φιλήσει.

Χο. ὦνειδος ἢκει τὸδ’ ἀντ’ ὦνείδους.
dύσμαχα δ’ ἔστι κρίναι.
φέρει φέροντ’, ἑκτίνει δ’ ὁ καίνων.
μέμνει δὲ μίμουτος ἐν θρόνῳ Διὸς
παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα· θέσμοι γάρ.
tίς ἀν γονῶν ἀραιὸν ἐκβάλοι δόμων;
κεκόλληται γένος πρὸς άτα.

Κλ. ἐς τὼνδ’ ἐνέβης ἐξὸν ἀληθεία
χρησμών. ἐγὼ δ’ οὐν
ἐθέλω δαίμονι τῷ Πλεισθενίδῶν
ὄρκους θεμένη τάδε μὲν στέργειν,
dύστλητα περ ἄνθ’. δ’ δὲ λοιπὸν, ἵνατ’
ἐκ τὼνδε δόμων ἀλλην γενεὰν
τρίβειν θανάτοις αὐθένταις·
κτείνων τε μέρος
βαιῶν ἐχούσῃ πάν ἀπόχρη μοι
μανίας μελάθρων
ἀλληλοφόνους ἀφελούσῃ.

Α. 5
[Enter Aegisthus attended by a body-guard of spearmen.]

AEGISTHUS

O glad dawn of the day that brings redress! Now can I say that from above earth Gods Look down to avenge the sorrows of mankind, Now that I see this man in woven robes Of Retribution stretched dead to my joy, Paying in full for a father's crafty sin. For Atreus, lord of Argos, this man's sire, Atreus, with zeal scarce welcome to my father, Feigning to hold a joyful feasting day, Served him a banquet of his children's flesh. The extremities, the feet and fingered hands, He kept concealed, the rest disguised he set Before Thyestes, where he sat apart: Who at the first unwitting took and ate That food now proved unwholesome to his race. Then, recognizing the unhallowed deed, He groaned, and falls back vomiting the sacrifice, And calls a fell doom on the sons of Pelops, Kicking the table away to aid his curse: That thus might perish all the race of Pleisthenes. For such cause do you see this man laid low; And justly so did I contrive this slaughter. While yet I dwelt abroad I reached my foe, Weaving this dark conspiracy's whole plot. Thus glorious were death itself to me, Now I have seen him caught in toils of Justice. Ch. Aegisthus, I scorn to insult distress: But dost thou own wilfully to have slain him, And alone to have contrived this woeful murder,
[Enter Aegisthus attended by a body-guard of spearmen.]

ΛΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ω φέγγος εὑφρον ἠμέρας δικηφόρου. 940

φαίην ἀν ἥδη νῦν βροτῶν τιμαόρους

θεοὺς ἀνωθεν γῆς ἐποπτεύειν ἅχη,

ἰδὼν υφαντοῖς ἐν πέπλοις Ἑρμύων

tὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε κείμενον φίλως ἐμοί,

χερὸς πατρόφας ἐκτίνοντα μηχανάς.

'Ατρέυς γὰρ ἄρχων τήςδε γῆς, τούτου πατήρ

'Ατρέυς, προδύμως μᾶλλον ἡ φίλως, πατρὶ
tῶμῷ, κρεουργὸν ἠμαρ εὐθύμως ἂγειν

dοκῶν, παρέσχε δαίτα παιδείων κρεῶν.

tὰ μὲν ποδήρη καὶ χερῶν ἄκρους κτένας

ἐκρυπτ' ἀνωθεν ἄνδρ' ἐκάς καθήμενον

ἀσηµ'. ὁ δ' αὐτὸν αὐτίκ' ἀγνολὰ λαβὼν

ἔσθει βορὰν ἁσωτον, ὡς ὀρᾶς, γένει.

καὶπεῖτ' ἐπιγνοὺς ἔργον οὐ κατασίον

μομωξεν, ἀμπιπτει δ' ἀπὸ σφαγῆν ἔρων,

μόρον δ' ἀφερτον Πελοπίδαιες ἐπεύχεται,

λάκτισμα δείπνου ξυνδίκως τιθείς ἄρῃ,

οὕτως ὀλέσθαι πάν τὸ Πλευρθένους γένος.

ἐκ τῶνδε σοι πεσόντα τόνδ' ἰδεῖν πάρα.

καγὼ δίκαιος τούδε τοῦ φόνου ῥαφεύς.

καὶ τούδε τάνδρος ἡψάμην θυραῖος ὄν,

πάσαν συνάψας μηχανὴν δυσβουλίας.

οὕτω καλὸν δὴ καὶ τὸ καθανεῖν ἐμοί,

ἰδόντα τούτου τῆς δίκης ἐν ἔρκεσιν.

Χο. Λίγισθ', ὑβρίζειν ἐν κακοῖσιν οὐ σέβω.

σὺ δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε φής ἐκὼν κατακτανεῖν,

μόνος δ' ἐποικτον τόνδε βουλεύσαι φόνου.
Know thine own head, judged guilty, shall not scape
The curses of a people flung in stones.

_Ae._ Thou to prate so, benched at the lowest oar,
While those of the upper tier control the ship!
Your old age shall be told how bitter it is
To be schooled in discreetness at your years.
Bonds and the pangs of hunger are supreme
Physicians to instruct even senile minds
In wisdom. Doth not this sight make thee see?
Kick not against the pricks, lest the wound smart.

_Ch._ Thou woman, in wait for returning warriors,
Lurking at home, defiling a man’s bed—
For a mighty captain didst thou plot this death?

_Ae._ These words likewise shall prove the source of tears.

_Ch._ Thou to be despot of our Argive folk,
Who durst not, when thou hadst contrived his death,
Durst not achieve the crime with thine own hand.

_Ae._ The beguiling was the wife’s part manifestly.
I was suspected, a foe by my birth.
Now with the dead king’s treasure will I strive
To rule this people: but the mutinous man
I shall yoke sternly, not like a corn-fed colt
In traces; no, but grim starvation, lodged
With darkness, shall not leave him till he is tamed.

_Ch._ Why, craven soul, didst thou not kill thy foe
Unaided, but must join with thee a woman,
Defilement of our country and its Gods,
To slay him? Oh, is Orestes living yet,
That he by fortune’s grace returning home
Victoriously may put both these to death?

_Ae._ Nay, if thus in word and deed you threaten, soon
shall you be taught.
οὐ φῆμ' ἀλύξειν ἐν δίκη τὸ σὸν κάρα δημορρίφεις, σάφ' ἵσθι, λευσίμους ἀράς.

Αι. σὺ ταῦτα φωνεῖς νερτέρα προσήμενος κῶπη, κρατούντων τῶν ἐπὶ ξυγῷ δορὸς; γνώσει γέρων ὁν ὡς διδάσκεσθαι βαρῦ τὸ τηλικοῦτῳ, σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον. δεσμὸς δὲ καὶ τὸ γῆρας αἲ τε νήστιδες δύαι διδάσκειν ἐξοχώταταί φρενῶν ἰαστρομάντεις. οὐχ ὅρας ὅρων τάδε; πρὸς κέντρα μὴ λάκτιζε, μὴ παίσας μογής.

Χο. γύναι, σὺ τοὺς ἥκοντας ἐκ μάχης μένων οἰκουρὸς εὐήν ἀνδρὸς αἰσχύνων ἁμα ἀνδρὶ στρατηγῷ τόνδ' ἐβούλευσας μόρον;

Αι. καὶ ταῦτα τάπη κλαυμάτων ἀρχηγενί.

Χο. ὡς δὴ σὺ μοι τύραννος Ἀργείων ἔσει, ὃς οὐκ, ἐπειδὴ τόδ' ἐβούλευσας μόρον, δρᾶσαι τόδ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔτλησ αὐτοκτόνως.

Αι. τὸ γὰρ δολῶσαι πρὸς γυναικὸς ἦν σαφῶς: ἐγὼ δὲ ὑποπτὸς ἔχθρος ἡ παλαιγενής. ἐκ τῶν δὲ τοῦδε χρημάτων πειράσομαι ἀρχεῖν πολιτῶν· τὸν δὲ μὴ πειθάνορα ἥξω χαρείας οὔτι μοι σειραφόρον κριθώντα πῶλον. ἀλλ' ὁ δυσφιλεῖ σκότῳ  ἀιμὸς ἔνοικος μαλθακὸν σφ' ἐπόψεται.

Χο. τί δὴ τὸν ἀνδρα τόνδ' ἀπὸ ψυχῆς κακῆς οὐκ αὐτὸς ἦναρίζες, ἀλλὰ ὧν γυνὴ χόρας μίαμα καὶ θεῶν ἐγχωρίων ἔκτειν'; Ὁρέστης ἢρα που βλέπει φάος, ὅπως κατελθὼν δεύρῳ πρεμυμενεῖ τύχῃ ἀμφότερον γένεται τούνδε παγκρατῆς φονεὺς;

Αι. ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ δοκεῖς τάδ' ἐρδεῖν καὶ λέγειν, γνώσει τάχα.
Forward now, my trusty spearmen! Here is work for us at hand.

_Soldiers_

Forward now! His sword unsheathing, each man stand upon his guard.

_Ch._ Nay, I too, my sword unsheathing, shrink not back, though I must die.

_So._ Die, thou sayest. The word is welcome. Ours be now to make it good.

_Cl._ Nay forbear, my dearest husband. Let us do no further ill.

Miseries are here to reap in plenty, a pitiable crop.

Harm enough is done already: let no blood by us be spilt.

Then if haply these afflictions prove enough, there let us stop,

Sorely smitten thus already by the heavy heel of fate.

Sodoth a woman’s reason counsel, if so be that any heed.

_Ae._ But for these to let their foolish tongues thus blossom into speech,

Flinging out such overweening words, as though to tempt their fate!

_Ch._ Never was it Argive fashion to fawn upon a villainous man.

_Ae._ Well, I’ll visit this upon you soon or late in days to come.

_Ch._ That thou shalt not, if but Heaven guide Orestes back to his home.

_Ae._ Yes, I know full well myself how banished men will feed on hopes.

_Ch._ Do thy worst; wax fat, befouling righteousness, while yet thou mayest.
εἰὰ δή, φίλοι λοχίται, τοῦργον οὐχ ἐκαίς τόδε.

ΔΟΧΙΤΑΙ

εἰὰ δή, ξίφος πρόκωπον πᾶς τις εὐτρεπτιζέτω.

Χο. ἀλλὰ μὴν κἀγὼ πρόκωπος οὐκ ἀναίνομαι θανεῖν.

Λο. δεχομένοις λέγεις θανεῖν σε· τὴν τύχην δ' αἱροῦ-μεθα.

Κλ. μηδαμῶς, ὁ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶι, ἀλλὰ δρᾶσωμεν κακά.

ἀλλὰ καὶ τάδ' ἔξαμήσαι πολλὰ δύστηνον θέρος· πημονῆς δ' ἄλις γ' ὑπάρχει· μηδεν οἱματώμεθα.

εἰ δὲ τοι μόχθων γένοιτο τῶνδ' ἄλις, δεχοῖμεθ' ἄν,

δαίμονος χηλῆ βαρεία δυστυχώς πεπληγμένοι.

ὁδ' ἔχει λόγος γυναικός, εἰ τις ἄξιοι μαθεῖν.

Αι. ἀλλὰ τοὔσδ' ἐροὶ ματαίαν γῆδαςαν ὁδ' ἀπανθίσαι

κάβαλειν ἔπῃ τοιαύτα δαίμονος πειρωμένους.

Χο. οὐκ ἂν 'Αργείων τόδ' εἴη, φῶτα προσσαίνειν κακόν.

Λι. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ σ' ἐν ύστεραίσιν ἡμέραις μέτειμ' ἐτὶ.

Χο. οὐκ, ἔαν δαίμων Ἐρέστην δεῦρ' ἀπευθύνῃ μολεῖν.

Αι. οἶδ' ἐγὼ φεύγοντας ἀνδρας ἐπίδας σιτουμένους.

Χο. πρᾶσσε, πιαίνοι, μιαίνων τὴν δίκην, ἐπεὶ πάρα.
Ae. Take my warning; for this folly thou shalt make amends some day.

Ch. Brag: be valiant like a cock who crows and struts beside his hen.

Cl. Treat with the contempt they merit these vain yelpings. Thou and I,

Now the masters in this palace, will rule all things righteously.
Αι. ἵσθι μοι δῶσων ἀποινα τῆς δε μωρίας χρόνῳ.
Χο. κόμπασον θαρσῶν, ἀλέκτωρ ὡστε θηλείας πέλας.
Κλ. μὴ προτιμήσῃς ματαιῶν τῶν ὑλαγμάτων· ἐγὼ καὶ σὺ θήσομεν κρατοῦντε τῶν ὀν δωμάτων καλῶς. 1019
THE
CHOEPHORI
OF
AESCHYLUS
THE CHOEPHORI

[The grave of Agamemnon, near the palace of Argos.]

ORESTES

Nether Hermes, guardian of paternal rights,
Preserve me and fight with me at my prayer.
Over this grave's mound on my sire I call
To hearken, to give heed.
I was not there, father, to wail thy death,
Nor did I stretch my hand towards thy bier.

[Enter Electra and the Chorus.]

What is it I see? What is this troop of women
Approaching in conspicuous black robes
Of mourning? To what cause should I assign it?
Hath some new sorrow fallen upon the house?
Or should I guess they are bringing these libations
To appease my father in the world below?
Naught else? Yonder, it must be, walks Electra,
My sister. By the bitterness of her grief
I know her. O Zeus, grant me now to avenge
My sire's death; on my side deign thou to fight.
Pylades, stand we aside, that I may learn
More surely who these suppliant women are.

CHORUS

"Go," said she, "from the palace bear
Libations forth, with sharp resounding stroke of hand."
Behold, my cheek is newly scarred with crimson,
THE CHOEPHORI

[The grave of Agamemnon, near the palace of Argos.]

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

'Ερμή χθόνιε πατρῷ ἐποπτεύων κράτη,  
σωτήρ γενοῦ μοι ἤμμαχός τ' αἰτουμένῳ  
tύμβου δ' ἐπ' ὀχθῷ τῷ δ ληβύσσῳ πατρὶ  
κλέειν, ἄκοῦσαι.  
oὐ γὰρ παρὼν φῦμωξα σὸν, πάτερ, μόρον  
oὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ ἐπ' ἐκφορὰ νεκροῦ.

[Enter Electra and the Chorus.]

tί χρήμα λεύσσω; τὸς ποθ᾽ ἢδ᾽ ὀμήγυρις  
στείχει γυναικῶν φάρεσίν μελαγχίμοις  
πρέπουσα; ποία ἤμμφορὰ προσεικάσω;  
πότερα δόμοισι πῆμα προσκυρεῖ νέον;  
ἡ πατρὶ τῶμῳ τάσδ᾽ ἐπεικάσας τῷ ὁχῳ  
χαὶς φερούσας νερτέρους μειλύγματα;  
oὐδέν ποτ' ἄλλο. καὶ γὰρ Ἡλέκτραν δοκὼ  
στείχειν ἀδελφὴν τὴν ἔμην πένθει λυγρῷ  
πρέπουσαν. ὁ Ζεῦ, δός με τίσασθαι μόρον  
pατρός, γενοῦ δὲ σύμμαχος θέλων ἔμοι.  
Πυλάδη, σταθῶμεν ἐκποδῶν, ὡς ἄν σαφῶς  
mάθω γυναικῶν ἥτις ἦδε προστροπῆ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ιαλτὸς ἐκ δόμων ἔβαν  
χοᾶς προπομπός ὀξύχειρι σὺν κτύπῳ.  
πρέπει παρηῖς φοινίοις ἀμυγμοῖς

[στρ. α.]

Rent by the bloodily furrowing nail!
At all hours feeds my heart on lamentation ceaselessly.
A scream was heard of linen torn,
As in my agony I ripped it up,
These folds o'er my breast,
Robes cruelly mangled,
Victims of my joyless task.

For thrilling Fear with lifted hair,
Prophetic to the house in dreams, and breathing wrath
From sleep, at dead of night with panic outcry
Uttered a shriek from the inner recess,
A fierce wail, bursting on the chamber where the women
And they who read this dream declared, [slept.
Pledging a verity by heaven revealed,
That ghosts underground,
Souls wrathfully plaintive,
Still against their slayers raged.

To avert such horror, the impious woman who sends
(Alas, Earth, Mother!) [me forth,
Plans a vain appeasement
That can ne'er appease. But I
Fear to speak the words she bade.
For what redemption can there be for blood once
Woe for this miserable hearth! [spilt?
Woe for this house to ruin doomed!
A sunless gloom, abhorred of men,
A shroud of hate broods o'er a house
Death-bereaved of its master.

That venerable, resistless, invincible majesty,
That once found a way through
The ears and hearts of all men,
THE CHOEPHORI

δινυχος ἄλοκι νεοτόμῳ,
δι' αἰώνοις δ' ἵναμοις βόσκεται κέαρ.
λιυνοθόροι δ' υφασμάτων
λακίδες ἐφλαδοῦ ὑπ' ἄλγεσιν,
πρόστερνοι στολμοὶ
πέπλων ἀγελάστοις
ξυμφοραῖς πεπληγμένων.

τορὸς γὰρ ὀρθόθρις φόβως,
δόμων ὑπερομαντις, ἐξ ὑπνοῦ χότον
πνεύμων, ἀωφόνυκτον ἄμβοαμα
μυχόθεν ἐλακε περὶ φόβῳ,
γυναικείοισιν ἐν δόμασιν βαρὺς πίτνων.
κριταὶ τε τῶν ὑμεράτων
θεόθεν ἐλακοῦ ὑπέγγυοι
μέμφεσθαι τοὺς γὰς
νέρθεν περιθύμως
τοῖς κταυνοῦσί τ' ἐγκοτεῖν.

toióndve χάριν ἀχάριτον ἀπότροπον κακῶν,

[πρ. β.

ιὼ γαῖα μαῖα,
μωμένα μ' ἱάλλει
δύσθεος γυνᾶ. φοβοῦ-
μαί δ' ἔπος τοῦ ἐκβαλεῖν.
τῷ γὰρ λύτρον πεσόντος αἵματος πέδοι;
ιὼ πάνοιξυς ἑστία,
ιὼ κατακαφαι δόμων.
ἀνήλιοι βροτοστυγεῖς
dνόφοι καλύπτουσι δόμοις
dεσποτῶν θανάτουσι.

σέβας δ' ἄμαχον ἄδαματον ἀπόλεμον τὸ πρὶν [πρ. β.

dι' ὀτού φρενός τε
δαμίας περαίνου

79
Now has fallen away. 'Tis Fear Reigns instead. Prosperity—
That among mortals is a god, and more than god.
But Justice, watching with her scale,
On some by daylight swiftly swoops,
Or in the borderland of dark
Her lingering wrath ripening bides:
Others utterly the night whelms.

ELECTRA
Maidens, who serve our house and give it order,
While I pour forth these funeral offerings,
How must I speak, how pray, to appease my sire?
Shall I say that I bring a gift of love
From wife to loving husband—from my mother?
Nay, that I dare not. I know not what to say.

Ch. While you pour, utter blessings for the loyal.
El. To whom shall I give that name among our friends?
Ch. First to thyself, and all who hate Aegisthus.
El. For myself must I pray then, and for thee?
Ch. You know the truth: 'tis yours now to decide.
El. Whom else then to this company should I add?
Ch. Remember Orestes, banished though he be.
El. 'Tis well said. Wisely have you admonished me.
Ch. Next, mindful of those guilty of that bloodshed—
El. Well, what? Direct me: instruct my ignorance.
Ch. Pray that upon them come some god or mortal—
El. To judge or to avenge? Which do you mean?
Ch. Say simply this: "one to take life for life."
El. Is that a holy prayer for me to utter?
Ch. Why not?—to requite foes with injury!
El. Mighty Herald between worlds above and under,
    Aid me, O nether Hermes, summoning
THE CHOEPHORI

νῦν ἀφίσταται. φοβεῖ·
tai δὲ τις. τὸ δ' εὐτυχεῖν
tὸδ' ἐν βροτοῖς θεός τε καὶ θεοῦ πλέον.
ῥοπὴ δ' ἐπισκοπεῖ δίκας
tαχεῖα τοὺς μὲν ἐν φάει,
tὰ δ' ἐν μεταίχμιοι σκότου
μένει χρονίζοντι βρύει,
tοὺς δ' ἄκρατος ἕχει νῦξ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δμφαὶ γυναικεῖς, δωμάτων εὐθύμονες,
tί φῶ χέουσα τάσδε κηδείους χοᾶς;
πῶς εὐφρον' εἶπω, πῶς κατεύξωμαι πατρί;
πότερα λέγουσα παρὰ φίλης φίλῳ φέρειν
γυναικὸς ἄνδρι, τῆς ἔμης μητρὸς πάρα;
tῶν' οὐ πάρεστι θάρσος, οὐδ' ἔχω τί φῶ.

Χο. φθέγγου χέουσα κεδνὰ τοῖσιν εὐφροσιν.

ΗΛ. τίνας δὲ τούτοις τῶν φίλων προσενέπτω;  70
Χο. πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὴν χωστὶς Αὔγισθον στυγεῖ.
ΗΛ. ἐμοί τε καὶ σοὶ τάρ' ἐπεύξωμαι τάδε;
Χο. αὐτῇ σὺ ταύτα μανθάνουσ' ἣδη φράσαι.
ΗΛ. τίν' οὖν ἐτ' ἄλλου τῇδε προστιθὼ στάσει;
Χο. μέμνησι' Ὄρεστον, κεὶ θυραῖος ἑσθ' ὀμοις.
ΗΛ. εὗ τούτο, κἀφρένωσας οὐχ ἥκιστά με.
Χο. τοῖσ αἰτίοισ νυν τοῦ φόνου μεμνημένη
ΗΛ. τί φῶ; δίδασκ' ἀπειρον ἔξηγομυμένη.
Χο. ἑλθεὶν τιν' αὐτοῖς δαίμον' ἢ βροτῶν τινα
ΗΛ. πότερα δικαστὴν ἢ δικηφόρον λέγεις;
Χο. ἀπλῶς τι φράξουσ', ὀστὶς ἀνταποκτενεῖ.
ΗΛ. καὶ ταύτα μοῦστιν εὐσεβῆ θεῶν πίρα;
Χο. πῶς δ' οὖ τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἀνταμείβεσθαι κακοῖς;
ΗΛ. κῆρυξ μέγιστε τῶν ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω,

άρηξον, Ἐρμῆ χθόνιε, κηρύξας ἐμοί,
The powers beneath the earth to hear my prayers
Uttered for wrongs done to a father's home.
Pouring this lustral water to dead men,
I call upon my sire: Have pity on me.
With dear Orestes kindle thy dark halls.
And for me grant that I prove chaster far
Than was my mother, more innocent my hand.
For us these prayers. But for our adversaries
One to avenge thee, father, I bid rise,
And that thy slayers justly in turn be slain.

Or. Tell the Gods that thy prayers have been fulfilled,
And pray hereafter for like good success.
El. Why, for what boon have I to thank them now?
Or. The sight of that for which thou hast prayed so long.
El. Whom canst thou know that I was summoning?
Or. Whom but Orestes, the idol of thy soul?
El. And what proof have I that my prayers are answered?
Or. Here am I. Seek no nearer friend than me.
El. O Sir, is this some snare you are weaving round me?
Or. Against myself then am I framing it.
El. I see you wish to mock at my afflictions.
Or. Then at my own too, if indeed at thine.
El. As if thou wert Orestes then I bid thee....
Or. Nay, 'tis himself thou seest and wilt not know.
El. O thou sweet eye, glancing for me with love
Fourfold! To thee must needs be given the name
Of father: to thee falls the love I owe
To a mother—mine has merited utmost hate—
And to a sister, cruelly sacrificed.
Proved now a brother true, I reverence thee.
Only may Power and Justice, and with these
Zeus, mightiest of all, be on thy side.
τούς γῆς ἐνερθὲ δαίμονας κλύειν ἐμὰς εὐχάς, πατρὼν δωμάτων ἐπισκόπους. καὶ ὁ χέουσα τάσδε χέρνιβας βροτοῖς λέγω καλοῦσα πατέρ', ἐποίκτειρον τ' ἐμὲ φίλον τ' Ὀρέστην φῶς ἀναψον ἐν δόμοις. αὐτῇ τέ μοι δὸς σωφρονεστέραν πολὺ μητρὸς γενέσθαι χείρα τ' εὐσεβεστέραν. ἦμιν μὲν εὐχὰς τάσδε, τοὺς δ' ἐναντίος λέγω φανήναι σου, πάτερ, τιμάρον, καὶ τοὺς κτανόντας ἀντικαθανεῖν δίκῃ. Ὀρ. εὐχὸς τὰ λοιπὰ, τοῖς θεοῖς τελεσφόροις εὐχὰς ἐπαγγέλλουσα, τυγχάνειν καλῶς. Ηλ. ἐπει τί νῦν ἐκατι δαιμόνων κυρῶ; Ὀρ. εἰς ὅψιν ἥκεις ὀνπερ ἐξηὐχὸ πάλαι. Ηλ. καὶ τίνα σύνοισθα μοï καλουμένη βροτῶν; Ὀρ. σύνοιδ' Ὀρέστην πολλά σ' ἐκπαγγλουμένην. Ηλ. καὶ πρὸς τί δῆτα τυγχάνω κατευματῶν; Ὀρ. δ' εἵμι· μὴ μάτεν' ἐμοὶ μᾶλλον φίλον. Ηλ. ἀλλ' ἡ δόλον τιν', ὃ ἔξεν', ἀμφὶ μοι πλέκεις; Ὀρ. αὐτὸς καθ' αὐτοῦ τάρα μηχανορραφὸ. 105 Ηλ. ἀλλ' ἐν κακοῖσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς γελῶν θέλεις. Ὀρ. κἂν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἄρ', εἰπέρ ἐν γε τοῖς σοῖς. Ηλ. ὡς ὄντ', Ὀρέστην τάρ' ἐγὼ σε προοννέπω; Ὀρ. αὐτὸν μὲν οὖν ὀρῶσα δυσμαθεῖς ἐμὲ. Ηλ. ὥς τερπνὸν ὠμα τέσσαρας μοίρας ἔχον ἐμοὶ· προσαυδᾶν δ' ἐστ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχον πατέρα τε, καὶ τὸ μητρὸς ἐσ' σέ μοι ῥέπει στέργηθρον· ἢ δὲ πανδίκως ἐχθαίρεται· καὶ τῆς τυθείσης νηλεῶς ὀμοσπόρου· πιστὸς δ' ἀδελφὸς ἦσθ', ἐμοὶ σέβας φέρων· μόνον Κράτος τε καὶ Δίκη σὺν τῷ τρίτῳ πάντων μεγίστῳ Ζημὶ συγγένοιτό σοι.
Or. Zeus, Zeus, look down; witness what here is done.  
Behold this orphan brood of an eagle sire  
That perished in the twines and writhing coils  
Of a fell viper. Fatherless are they, gripped  
By hungry want, for strength is not yet theirs  
To bring home to the nest their father's prey.  
Like them mayst thou behold me; and her too,  
Electra, children fatherless and forlorn,  
Both suffering the same exile from our home.

Ch. O children, saviours of the ancestral hearth,  
Silence, I pray, lest someone overhear,  
And to ease a babbling tongue report all this  
To those that rule. Ah may I one day watch  
Their corpses in the spluttering resinous flame!

Or. Never shall Loxias' mighty oracle  
Betray us. He it was who bade me endure  
This peril, threatening oft with voice uplifted  
Woes to make cold as winter my warm heart,  
If I avenged not those that slew my sire.  
The wrath rising from earth of hostile powers  
His voice proclaimed to men, citing such plagues  
As leprous ulcers crawling o'er the flesh,  
Eating its health away with cruel jaws:  
And how upon this plague a white down grows.  
Yet other onslaughts of the avenging fiends  
Sprang from a father's blood, so he foretold:  
For the unseen weapon of the nether powers,  
Stirred by slain kinsmen calling for revenge,  
Frenzy and causeless terror of the night,  
Perturb and harass; till by the brazen scourge  
His marred carcase is chased forth from the town.  
At last without rites, without friends, he dies,
THE CHOEPHORI

Oπ. Ζεύς Ζεύς, θεωρός τωνδε πραγμάτων γενούν·

ιδού δὲ γένναν εύνην αἰετοῦ πατρός,

θανόντος ἐν πλεκταῖς καὶ σπειράμασι

deinῆς ἐχίδνης. τοὺς δὲ ἀπωρφανισμένους

νήστις πιέζει λιμός· οὐ γὰρ ἐντελεῖς

θῆραν πατρόψ ταινίαν σκηνήμασιν.

οὔτω δὲ κἀμὲ τίμιδε τ’, Ἡλέκτραν λέγω,

ἰδεῖν πάρεστι σοι, πατροστερὴ γόνον,

ἀμφοὶ φυγὴν ἔχοντε την αὐτῇν δόμων.

Χο. ὁ παίδες, ὁ σωτηρεῖς ἐστίας πατρός,

συγάθ’, ὅπως μὴ πεύσεται τις, ὃ τέκνα,

gλώσσης χάριν δὲ πάντ’ ἀπαγγείλῃ τάδε

πρὸς τοὺς κρατοῦντας· οὐς ἰδοιμ’ ἐγὼ ποτε

θανόντας ἐν κηκίδι πισσήρει φλογός.

Oπ. οὔτοι προδώσει Δοξίου μεγασθενῆς

χρησμὸς κελεύων τόνδε κάνδυνον περαῖν,

κάξορθιάζων πολλὰ καὶ δυσχειμέρους

ἀτας ύφ’ ἦπαρ θερμὸν ἐξαινώμενος,

εἰ μὴ μέτειμι τοῦ πατρός τους αἰτίους·

τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ γῆς δυσφρόνους μηνίματα

βροτοῖς πιφαυσκών εἰπὲ, τάσδ’ αἰνῶν νόσους—

σαρκῶν ἐπαμβατήρας ἀγρίας γνάθοις

λειχήνας ἐξέσθοντας ἀρχαίαν φύσιν,

λευκὰς δὲ κόρσας τῇδ’ ἐπαντέλλειν νόσῳ.

ἀλλὰς τ’ ἐφώνει προσβολὰς ’Ἐρινύων

ἐκ τῶν πατρόψ ταινίαν τελουμένας·

τὸ γὰρ σκοτεινὸν τῶν ἐνερτήρων βέλος

ἐκ προστροπαίων ἐν γένει πεπτωκότων,

καὶ λύσσα καὶ μάταιος ἐκ νυκτῶν φόβους

κινεῖ, ταράσσει, καὶ διώκεσθαι πόλεως

χαλκηλάτω πλάστυγι γλυμανθέν δέμας,

πάντων δ’ αἰτίμου κάφιλον θυσίσκειν χρόνῳ
Utterly wasted to a vile mummied corpse.
Should I not trust such oracles as these?
Though I trust them not, the deed must yet be done.

*Ch.* O powerful Fates, let Zeus now send
Prosperous fortune
Unto us whom righteousness aideth.
"Enmity of tongue for enmity of tongue
Be paid in requital," cries Justice aloud,
Exacting the debt that is owed her.
"Murderous blow for murderous blow
Let him take for his payment." "To the deed its
So speaks immemorial wisdom.

*Or.* Father, O father of woe, what word
Am I to speak, or what do
To waft this message afar to thee,
Where in the grave thou couchest?
As darkness and light are sundered,
Loving rites cannot reach thee,
The dirge chanted of old to praise
Kings of the house of Atreus.

*Ch.* My son, the ravening jaw
Of fire subdues not wholly
The spirit of him who is dead.
Someday his mood he revealeth.
When the slain man is bewailed, then
Is the injurer discovered.
And a rightful lamentation
For a parent hunts and ranges
With wide search, till the guilt is tracked down.

*El.* Hear then, O father, as we in turn
Utter our tearful anguish.
κακῶς ταριχευθέντα παμφθάρτῳ μόρῳ.

τοιοίσιδε χρησμοῖς ἄρα χρὴ πεποιθέναι; κεί μὴ πέποιθα, τούργουν ἔστ' ἐργαστέου.

Χο. ἀλλ' ὁ μεγάλαι Μοῖραι, Διόθεν
tῆδε τελευτάν,

ἡ το δίκαιον μεταβαίνει.

'αντὶ μὲν ἐχθρᾶς γλώσσης ἐχθρὰ γλώσσα τελείσθω τούφειλόμενον πράσσουσα Δίκη μέγ' ἀντεῖ;

'αντὶ δὲ πληγῆς φονίας φονίαν πληγήν τινέτω. 'δράσαντι παθεῖν,' τρυγέρων μῦθος τάδε φωνεῖ.

Ορ. ὃ πάτερ αἰνοπαθές, τί σοι
φάμενος ἢ τί πέξας
tύχοιμ' ἀγκαθεν οὐρίσας,
ἐνθα σ' ἑχουσιν εὑναί;

σκότω φάος ἀντίμοιρον. χάριτες δ' ὀμοίως κέκληνται γόος εὐκλείης προσθοδόμοις 'Ατρείδαις.

Χο. τέκνον, φρόνημα τοῦ
θανόντος οὐ δαμάζει
πυρὸς μαλερὰ γνάθος,
φαίνει δ' ὑστερον ὀργάς;

ὁτοτύξεται δ' ὁ θυήσκων,
ἀναφαίνεται δ' ὁ βλάπτων.

πατέρων τε καὶ τεκόντων
γόος ἐνδικοὶ ματεύει
tὸ παῦν ἀμφιλαφῆς ταραχθεῖς.

Ηλ. κλῦθι νυν, ὃ πάτερ, ἐν μέρει
πολυδάκρυτα πένθη.
Thy two children are we whose dirge
Wails for thee o'er thy grave-mound.
The suppliant and the exile
To thy tomb we draw near.
What here is well? What is free from woe?
Vain with our doom to wrestle.

_Ch._ I beat my breast to an Arian dirge, and in the mode
Of Kissian wailing-women slaves, [hands
With clutching and bespattering strokes behold my
In quick succession uplifted higher and higher still
To fall in battering blows, until my miserable
Belaboured head resounds beneath the cruel shock.

_El._ Oh fie on thee! Cruel fiend!
Thou wicked mother! Cruel was that funeral.
Without kinsfolk, him, a king,
Without lament, unbewailed,
Thou hadst the heart so to inter a husband.

_Or._ No rites at all! Was it so then? Oh shame!
Nay verily, for my father's shaming
By help of heaven she shall pay,
By help of these hands of mine.
And then, when I have slain her, let me perish.

_Ch._ This also know, his limbs were lopped and mangled.
'Twas her design, hers who so could bury him,
To make his death such that thou
Shouldst not endure still to live.
Thou now hast heard how thy sire was outraged.

_Or._ On thee I call; father, stand beside thine own.
_El._ And I to his, all in tears, would add my voice.
_Ch._ And we too all cry aloud with one accord:


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dípasís toí σ’ épitúmbios
θρήνος ἀναστενάζει.
táφος δ’ ἴκετας δέδεκται
φυγάδας θ’ ὤμοίως.
tί τῶνδ’ εὖ, τί δ’ ἀτερ κακῶν;
οὐκ ἄτριακτος ἄτα;

Χο. ἐκοψά κομμὸν Ἀριων ἐν τε Κισσίας
νόμοις ἤλεμιστρίας,
ἀπριγκτόπληκτα πολυπάλακτα δ’ ἦν ἰδεῖν
ἐπασσυτεροτρίβη τὰ χερῶς ὀρέγματα
ἀνωθεν ἀνέκαθεν, κτύπῳ δ’ ἐπιρροθεὶ
kροτητὸν ἀμὸν πανάθλιον κάρα.

Ηλ. ἰὼ ἰὼ δαία
πάντολμε μάτερ, δαίας ἐν ἑκφοραῖς
ἀνευ πολιτᾶν ἄνακτ’,
ἀνευ δὲ πενθημάτων
ἐτλας ἀνοίμωκτον ἀνδρὰ θάψαι.

Ὀρ. ταφὰς ἀτίμους ἐλέξας, οἴμοι;
pατρὸς δ’ ἀτίμωσιν ἅρα τίσει
ἐκατι μὲν δαιμόνων,
ἐκατι δ’ ἀμὰν χερῶν.
ἐπειτ’ ἐγὼ νοσφίσας ὀλοίμαν.

Χο. ἐμασχαλίσθη δὲ γ’, ὡς τὸδ’ εἰδῆς,
ἐπρασσε δ’ ἀπερ νῦν ὣδε θάπτει,
μόρον κτίσαι μωμένα
ἀφερτὸν αἰῶνι σὺ.
κλύεις πατρίφους δύας ἀτίμους.

Ὀρ. σὲ τοι λέγω, ἔγγεγον, πάτερ, φίλοις.

Ηλ. ἐγὼ δ’ ἐπιφθέγγομαι κεκλαυμένα.
Χο. στάσις δὲ πάγκοινος ἂδ’ ἐπιρροθεὶ.
Or. El. Ch. Oh hearken; visit thou the light:
   Aid us against our foes' hate.

Or. Let sword with sword, right encountering meet with right.

El. Ye deities, judge the right with righteousness.

Ch. A shudder steals o'er me, as I hear such prayers.

Or. El. Ch. Though destiny hath bided long,
   Yet shall your prayer reveal it.

Or. O father, who wast so unkingly slain,
   Grant, I implore thee, lordship in thy house.

El. A like boon, father, do I ask of thee:
   Let me escape, and let Aegisthus perish.

Or. O Earth, release my sire to guide me in fight.

El. O Persephassa, grant fair victory.

Or. Remember the bath wherewith they slew thee, father.

El. Remember what strange cloak-net they devised.

Or. In fetters no smith forged thou wast snared, father.

El. Yes, in a wrapping plotted for thy shame.

Or. Art thou not wakened by these tauntings, father?

El. Dost thou not lift up thy beloved head?

Or. Either send Justice to fight beside thine own,
   Or grant us the like grip of them in turn,
   If thou by victory wouldst retrieve defeat.

El. Hearken once more to this last cry, father.
   Behold these nestlings crouching at thy tomb,
   And pity us both, thy daughter and thy son.

Or. And blot not out this seed of Pelops' line:
   For thus, though thou hast died, thou art not dead.

Ch. Come, amply have you lengthened out your dirge,
   Due tribute to the tomb's unwept dishonour.
   For the rest, since now thy heart is set on deeds,
   Get thee to work forthwith, and test thy fortune.
Oρ. Ηλ. Χο. ἂκουσον ἐς φάως μολῶν, ἡν δὲ γενοῦ πρὸς ἔξθροὺς.

Oρ. "Ἀρης Ἀρεί ξυμβαλεῖ, Δίκαι Δίκαι.

Ηλ. ἰάθεοί, κραίνετ' ἐνδίκος δίκαι.

Χο. τρόμος μ' ύφερπει κλύουσαν εὐγμάτων.

Oρ. Ηλ. Χο. τὸ μόρσιμον μένει πάλαι, εὐχομένοις δ' ἂν ἔλθοι.

Oρ. πάτερ, τρόποισιν οὐ τυραννικοῖς θανῶν, αἰτουμένῳ μοι δὸς κράτος τῶν σῶν δόμων.

Ηλ. κᾶγώ, πάτερ, τοιάνδε σου χρείαν ἔχω, οἰκεῖν μετ' ἀνδρὸς θείσαν Αἰγίσθῳ μόρον.

Oρ. ὁ γαῖ', ἄνες μοι πατέρ' ἐποπτεύσαι μάχην.

Ηλ. ὁ Περσέφασσα, δὸς δὲ γ' εὐμορφον κράτος.

Oρ. μέμνησο λουτρῶν οἰς ἐνοσφίσθης, πάτερ.

Ηλ. μέμνησο δ' ἀμφίβληστρον ὡς ἐκαίνισας—

Oρ. πέδας γ' ἀχαλκέυτοισι θηρευθεῖς, πάτερ,—

Ηλ. αἰσχρός τε βουλευτοῖσιν ἐν καλύμμασιν.

Oρ. ἀρ' ἐξεγείρει τοῖς' ὀνείδεσιν, πάτερ;

Ηλ. ἀρ' ὀρθῶν αἴρεις φίλτατον τὸ σὸν κάρα;

Oρ. ἢτοι δίκην ἅλλε σύμμαχον φίλοις, ἡ τὰς ὁμοίας ἀντίδος λαβᾶς λαβεῖν, εἰπερ κρατηθεῖς γ' ἀντινικῆσαι θέλεις.

Ηλ. καὶ τῆσδ' ἄκουσον λοισθίου βοήθ, πάτερ, ἵδων νεοσσοὺς τούσδ' ἐφημένους τάφων οἰκτειρέ θήλυν ἀρσενὸς θ' ὀμοῦ γόου.

Oρ. καὶ μὴ ἴσαλείψῃ σπέρμα Πελοτιδῶν τόδε.

Οὐτω γὰρ οὖ τέθυνκας οὐδὲ περ θανῶν.

Χο. καὶ μὴν ἀμεμφῆ τόνδ' ἐτεινάτῃ λόγων,

τίμημα τύμβου τῆς ἀνοιμωκτον τύχης. τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἐπειδὴ ὥρᾶν κατώρθωσαι φρειῦ, ἔρδοις ἄν ἦδη δαίμονος πειρώμενος.
Or. That will I. Yet first it were well to enquire,
Wherefore she sent libations; what could move her
So late to make amends for wrongs past cure?
Ch. I know, my son; for I was there. By dreams
And prowling terrors of the night perturbed,
The godless woman sent these offerings.
Or. And did you learn the dream? Then tell it me.
Ch. She gave birth in her dream to a snake, she says,
And couched it like a babe in swaddling bands.
Or. For what food did it crave, this new-born monster?
Ch. She offered it her own breast in her dream,
And with the milk it sucked a curd of blood.
Then she awoke from sleep shrieking for terror;
And many a lamp, whose light the dark had blinded,
Flared up throughout the house at the queen's need.
Therefore these pious offerings she sends,
In hope to lance and cure the mischief so.
Or. Now to this earth and to my father's grave
I pray that in me this dream may be fulfilled.
She who thus nursed so dread a prodigy
Must die by force, and I, enserpented,
Shall be her slayer, as this dream foretells.
Ch. I accept thy divination of these signs.
So may it prove. Teach now thy friends their part,
Telling what each should do or should not do.
Or. 'Tis simple. Let Electra go within.
These women I bid keep concealed my plan.
Then as by craft they slew a noble prince,
By craft they shall be caught in the same noose,
And perish, even as Loxias foretold.
For like a traveller, and in full disguise,
To the main gate will I come with Pylades here,
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Ορ. ἔσται· πυθέσθαι δ' οὐδὲν ἐστ' ἐξώ δρόμου, πόθεν χοὰς ἐπεμψεν, ἐκ τίνος λόγου μεθύστερον τιμῶσ' ἀνήκεστον πάθος;

Χο. οἴδ', ὃ τέκνον, παρῇ γάρ· ἐκ τ' ὅνειράτων καὶ νυκτιπλάγκτων δειμάτων πεπαλμένη χοὰς ἐπεμψε τάσδε δύσθεος γυνή.

Ορ. ἢ καὶ πέπυσθε τούναρ, ὡστ' ὅρθως φράσαι;

Χο. τεκεῖν δράκουτ' ἐδοξείν, ὡς αὐτῇ λέγει. κἀν σπαργάνοις παίδος ὀρμίσαι δίκην.

Ορ. τίνος βορᾶς χρήζοντα, νεογενές δάκος;

Χο. αὐτῇ προσέσχε μαζίν ἐν τὸνείρατι ὡστ' ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβου αἵματος ἱπάσαι. ἡ δ' ἐξ ὑπονό κέκραγεν ἐπτομήνην. πολλοὶ δ' ἄνηθον, ἐκτυφλωθέντες σκότῳ, λαμπτήρεις ἐν δόμοις δεσποίνης χάριν· πέμπτε τ' ἐπείτα τάσδε κηδεῖους χοὰς, ἀκος τομαῖον ἐλπίσασα πημάτων.

Ορ. ἀλλ' εὐχόμαι γῇ τῆδε καὶ πατρὸς τάφῳ τούνειρον εἶναι τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ τελεσφόρον. δεῖ τοῦ νυν, ὡς ἔθρεψεν ἐκπαγλον τέρας, θανείων βιαίως· ἐκδρακοντῳδείς δ' ἐγὼ κτείνω νυν, ὡς τούνειρον ἐννέπει τόδε.

Χο. τερασκόπον δὴ τῶνδε σ' αἴρούμαι πέρι. γένοιτο δ' οὔτως. τάλλα δ' ἐξηγοῦν φίλοις, τοὺς μὲν τι ποιεῖν, τοὺς δὲ μὴ τι δραν λέγω.

Ορ. ἀπλοὺς ὁ μῦθος· τήνδε μὲν στείχειν ἔσω, αἰνῷ δὲ κρύπτειν τάσδε συνθήκας ἐμᾶς, ὡς ἄν δόλῳ κτείναντες ἀνδρὰ τίμουν δόλοις καὶ ληφθῶσιν ἐν ταύτῳ βρόχῳ θανόντες, ἢ καὶ Λοξίας ἐφήμισεν.

ξένῳ γὰρ εἰκῶς, παντελῇ σαγήν ἐχών, ἥξω σὺν ἄνδρὶ τῷ ἐφ' ἐρκείους πύλασ
A guest to the house, aye and its spear-guest too. And both of us will don Parnassian speech, Copying the accent of a Phocian tongue. Then once I have crossed the threshold of the court, And found him seated in my father's throne, Or if afterwards he meet me face to face And speak—dropping his craven eyes, be sure— Ere he can say, "Whence comes this stranger?" dead, Snared by my nimble weapon, will I smite him. The Avenging Spirit, stinted ne'er of slaughter, Shall drink in blood unmixed her third last draught. Do thou then keep good watch within the house. And you, I charge you, bear a cautious tongue For speech or silence as the moment needs. Last thou, friend, follow me and stand at watch To succour me in the contest of the sword. Ho, slave! open the gates! You hear me knock. Is any there within doors?—Ho, slave, ho! Enough! I hear. Of what land are you? Whence? Announce me to the masters of the house. The tidings I come bringing are for them. And make haste; for night's dusky chariot Comes on apace. 'Tis time we travellers found Some public guest-house to cast anchor in. Friends, speak your wishes. At your service here Are all such comforts as be seem this house, Warm baths, and to refresh your weariness, Soft couches, and true eyes to attend your wants. But if you have affairs of weightier counsel, That is work for men, to whom we will impart it.
Πυλάδη. Ξένος δὲ καὶ δορύξενος δόμων·
άμφω δὲ φωνὴν ἡσομεν Παρνησίδα,
γλώσσης ἀντὴν Φακίδος μιμουμένω.
ei δ' οὖν ἀμείβω βαλὼν ἑρκείων πυλῶν
κάκεινον ἐν θρόνοις εὐρήσω πατρός,
ἡ καὶ μολὼν ἐπειτά μοι κατὰ στόμα
ἐρεῖ, σάφ' ἵσθι, καὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς βαλεῖ,
πρὶν αὐτὸν εἰπεῖν 'ποδαπὸς ὁ Ξένος;', νεκρὸν
θῆσω, ποδόκει περιβαλὼν χαλκεύματι.
φόνου δ' 'Ερμύνῳ οὖν ὑπεσπανισμένη
ἀκρατον αἷμα πίεται τρίτην πόσιν.
νῦν οὖν σὺ μὲν φύλασσε τὰν οἴκω καλῶς,
ὑμῖν δ' ἐπαινῶ γλώσσαν εὐφημον φέρειν,
σιγὰν θ' ὅπου δεῖ καὶ λέγειν τὰ καίρια.
τὰ δ' ἀλλὰ τοῦτῳ δεῦρ' ἐποπτεῦσαι λέγω,
ξιφηφόρους ἀγώνας ὀρθώσαντι μοι.

παῖ παῖ, θύρας ἄκουσον ἑρκείας κτύπων.
τίς ἐνδον, ὃ παῖ—παῖ, μάλ' αὐ, τίς ἐν δόμοις;

OIKETHΣ

ἐίεν, ἄκουω· ποδαπὸς ὁ Ξένος; πόθεν;

Oρ. ἀγγελλέ τοῖσι κυρίοισι δωμάτων,
πρὸς οὖσπερ ἥκω καὶ φέρω καυνοὺς λόγους.
τάχυνε δ', ὡς καὶ νυκτὸς ἀρμ' ἐπείγεται
σκοτεινόν, ὡρα δ' ἐμπόρους καθίειναι
ἀγκυραν ἐν δόμοισι πανδόκοις ξένων.

KΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

Ξένωι, λέγοιτ' ἃν εἰ τι δεῖ· πάρεστι γὰρ
ὁποίατερ δόμοισι τοῖοδ' ἐπεικότα,
καὶ θερμὰ λουτρὰ καὶ πόνων θελκτήριος
στρωμνῆ, δικαίων τ' ὄμμάτων παρουσία.
εἰ δ' ἀλλο πρᾶξαι δεῖ τι βουλιώτερον,
ἀνδρῶν τῷ ἐστὶν ἔργον, οἷς κοινώσομεν.
Or. I am a Daulian traveller from Phocis.
As at my own risk I was carrying goods
To Argos, where now my long journey ends,
There met me a man I knew not, nor he me,
Strophius, a Phocean, so I learnt in talk.
Having asked my way and told me his, he said:
"Since anyhow you are bound for Argos, Sir,
Bear heedfully in mind to tell his parents
That Orestes is dead. Do not forget.
So whether his friends resolve to fetch him home,
Or bury him, our denizen and guest
Forever, bring me their injunctions back.
Meanwhile the curved sides of a brazen urn
Enclose his ashes, in due form bewept."
I have told my whole message. Whether now
I am speaking to the rulers, and his kindred,
I know not; but his parent should be told.

Cl. Ah me! we are taken ruthlessly by storm.
O thou all-conquering curse that haunts this house,
How wide thy vision! with sure aim thy shafts
Strike even that we have hidden with care afar,
Stripping my dear ones from me, unhappy woman!

Or. For my part certainly I could have wished
With happier tidings to commend myself
To hosts so princely, and earn their entertainment.

Cl. Nay, due reward shall none the less be thine,
Nor shall you find yourself less welcome here.
Some other would have brought this news instead.
But now 'tis the hour when guests, tired by the day's
Long journey, should be tended as befits.
Take him and lodge him well in the men's chambers
With these his fellow-travellers and attendants.
Ορ. ξένος μέν εἰμι Δαυλίευς ἐκ Φωκέων·
στείχοντα δ' αὐτόφορτον οἰκείας σαγή
εἰς 'Ἀργος, ὥσπερ δεύρ' ἀπεξύγην πόδα,
ἀγνὸς πρὸς ἀγνωτ' εἰπε συμβαλὼν ἀνήρ,
ἐξιστορῆσας καὶ σαφηνίσας ὁδόν,
Στρόφιος ὁ Φωκεύς· πεῦθομαι γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ.
'ἐπείπερ ἄλλως, ὦ ξέν', εἰς 'Αργος κύεις,
πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας πανδίκως μεμνημένος
τεθνεῶτ' 'Ορέστην εἰπὲ, μηδαμῶς λάθη.
eἰτ' οὖν κομίζειν δόξα νικήσει φίλων,
eἰτ' οὖν μέτοικον, εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἄει ξένου,
θάπτειν, ἑφετμᾶς τάσδε πόρθμενον πάλιν.

Κλ. οὐ 'γώ, κατ' ἄκρας νηλεῶς πορθούμεθα.
ἀ δυσπάλαιστε τῶνδε δωμάτων ἁρά,
ὡς πόλλ' ἐπωπᾶς κάκτοδῶν εὑ χείμενα,
τόξος πρόσωθεν εὐσκόποις χειρομένη,
φίλων ἀποψίλοις με τὴν παναθλίαν.

Ορ. ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ξένοισιν ὃδ' εὐδαίμοσι
κεδυῖν ἐκατὶ πραγμάτων ἂν ἧθελον
γνωστὸς γενέσθαι καὶ ξενωθῆναι· τί γὰρ;

Κλ. οὔτοι κυρίσεις μεῖον ἄξιων σὲθεν,
ουδ' ἰσον ἄν γένοιο δῶμασιν φίλος.
ἄλλος δ' ὄμοιός ἴλθεν ἄν τάδ' ἄγγελῶν.
ἀλλ' ἐσθ' ὁ καιρὸς ἡμερεύοντας ξένους
μακρᾶς κελεύθον τυγχάνειν τὰ πρόσφορα.
ἀγ' αὐτὸν εἰς ἀνδρῶνας εὐξένους δόμοιν,
ὄπισθοπος τε τούσδε καὶ ἐνυμπόρους.
Let them receive there what beseems our house.
I warn you, for their comfort you must answer.
This news meanwhile we will impart to those
Who bear rule here. Having no lack of friends,
We will take counsel on this sad event.

Ch. O reverend Earth, O reverend mound,
Thou that beneath thee coverest the outworn
Dust of the armed fleet's kingly commander,
Deign now to hearken, deign to give succour.
Now is the hour when guileful Deceit
Must enter to aid us, and Chthonian Hermes,
Patron of stealth, stand sentinel over
This deadly encounter of sword-blades.

Our traveller, it seems, is working mischief.
Yonder I see Orestes' nurse in tears.
Where are you going, Kilissa, through the gates,
With grief to bear you company unhired?

NURSE

The mistress bids me summon Aegisthus home
As quick as may be, to meet these stranger guests,
And learn more certainly as man from man
This new-told rumour—while before her servants
Behind eyes of pretended gloom she hides
A laugh at work done excellently well
For her, but miserably for this house,
Hearing the tale these strangers told so plain.
That heart of his I warrant will be glad
When he has learnt their story. Wellaway!
All other troubles patiently I bore:
But dear Orestes, the babe I spent my soul on,
κάκει κυρούντων δόμασιν τὰ πρόσφορα. αίνω δὲ πράσσειν ως ὑπευθύνω τάδε. ἡμεῖς δὲ ταῦτα τοῖς κρατοῦσι δωμάτων κοινώσομεν τε κοῦ σπανίζοντες φίλοις Βουλευσόμεσθα τήσδε συμφοράς πέρι. 340

Χο. ὁ πότνια χθονὶ καὶ πότνι’ ἀκτῇ χώματος, ἡ νῦν ἐπὶ ναυάρχω σώματι κεῖσαι τῷ βασιλείῳ, νῦν ἐπάκουσον, νῦν ἐπάρηξον· νῦν ἑαρ ἀκμάζει Πειθῶ δολίαν ξυγκαταβῆμαι, χθόνιον δ’ Ἐρμῆν καὶ τὸν νῦχιον τοῖς’ ἐφορεῦσαι ξιφὸδηλήτοισιν ἴγώσιν.

ἐοικεν ἀνήρ ὁ ξένος τεῦχειν κακὸν· τροφὸν δ’ Ὁρέστου τὴν’ ὅρῳ κεκλαμμένην. 350 ποὶ δὴ πατεῖς, Κίλισσα, δωμάτων πύλας; λύπη δ’ ἀμισθὸς ἔστὶ σοι ξυνέμπορος.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

Δύμισθον ἡ κρατοῦσα τοῖς ξένοις καλεῖν ὅπως τάχιστ’ ἀνωγεν, ὡς σαφέστερον ἀνήρ ἀπ’ ἀνδρός τὴν νεάγγελτον φάτιν ἐλθὼν πῦθηται τήνδε, πρὸς μὲν οἰκέτας θετοσκυθρωπῶν ἐντὸς ὁμμάτων γέλων κεύθουν’ ἐπ’ ἔργοις διαστεπραγμένους καλῶς κεύνη, δόμοις δὲ τοίσδε παγκάκως ἔχει, φήμης ὕφ’ ἢς ἡγγειλαν οἱ ξένοι τορῶς. 355 ἡ δὴ κλύων ἐκείνος εὔφρανεί νόον, εὔτ’ ἀν πῦθηται μῦθον. ὃ τάλαυν’ ἐγὼ· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλα τλημόνως ἤντλουν κακὰ· φίλον δ’ Ὁρέστην, τής ἐμῆς ψυχῆς τριβήν,
Whom straight from his mother’s womb I took to nurse....
And then those shrill cries summoning me by night,
And all those weary tasks, mere trouble wasted
They were: for a senseless thing one needs must nurse
Like a dumb beast—how else—? by humouring it.
The cry of a boy in swaddlings tells you nothing,
Whether hunger, thirst or wanting to make water
Grips him: a child’s young body will have its way.
These wants I would forecast; but often, it may be,
Would guess wrong, and so have to cleanse his linen,
Laundress and nurse reckoning as one office.
Aye, these two handicrafts both fell to me,
When I received Orestes from his father.
Now, woe is me! I learn that he is dead.
So I must fetch the man who has brought this house
To ruin. Glad will he be to hear my tale.

Ch. Tell us, how does she bid him come arrayed?

Nu. “Arrayed?” Speak plain. I understand you not.

Ch. Whether with escort, or may be alone?

Nu. She bids him bring a bodyguard of spearmen.

Ch. Bear no such message then to our hated master,
    But bid him come alone, that he may hear
    Without alarm, at once, with cheerful heart.

Nu. Can you be looking kindly on these tidings?

Ch. But what if Zeus should change ill winds to fair?

Nu. How, when Orestes, hope of the house, is gone?

Ch. Not yet. A seer of small skill might know that.

Nu. What! Know you aught outside what has been told?

Ch. Go, take thy message. Do as thou wert charged.
    That which concerns the Gods is their concern.

Nu. Well, I will go, following thy advice.
    May it prove all for the best by the Gods’ grace.
THE CHOEPHORI

365
δὴ εἰξέθρεψα μητρόθεν δεδεμένη,—
κακῷ νυκτιπλάγκτων ὀρθίων κελευμάτων
καὶ πολλὰ καὶ μοχθήρ' ἀνωφέλητ' ἐμοὶ
tλάση'—τὸ μὴ φρονοῦν γὰρ ὡςπερεύ' βοστὸν
tρέφειν ἀνάγκη, πῶς γὰρ οὐ; τρόπῳ φρενὸς;
oὐ γὰρ τι φονεῖ παῖς ἔτ' ὃν ἐν σπαργάνοις,
ἡ λιμός, ἡ δύσ' εἰ τις, ἡ λυγυρία
ἐχεῖ' νέα δὲ νηδὺς αὐτάρκης τέκνων.
tοῦτων πρόμαντις οὐσα, πολλὰ δ', οἴομαι,
ψευσθείσα, παιδὸς σπαργάνων φαιδρύντρια,
κναφεὺς τροφεύς τε ταύτὸν εἰχέτην τέλος.
370
ἐγὼ διπλᾶς δὲ τάσδε χειρωναξίας
ἐχουσ' Ὀρέστην ἐξεδεξάμην πατρί·
tεθυνκότος δὲ νῦν τάλαινα πεῦθομαι.
στείχῳ δ' ἐπ' ἄνδρα τόνδε λυμαντήριον
οἴκων, θέλων δὲ τόνδε πεῦσεται λόγον.
375
Χο. πῶς οὖν κελεύει νιν μολεῖν ἑσταλμένον;
Τρ. τί πῶς; λέγῃ αὕθις, ὡς μάθω σαφέστερον.
Χο. εἰ ξὺν λοχίταις εἴτε καὶ μονοστιβῆ.
Τρ. ἀγείν κελεύει δορυφόρους ὑπάονας.
Χο. μὴ νυν σὺ ταύτ' ἀγγέλλε δεσπότους στύγει:
380
ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐλθεῖν, ὡς ἀδειμάντως κλύη,
ἀνωχθ' ὡςν τάχιστα γηθοῦση φρενί.
Τρ. ἀλλ' ἡ φρονεῖσ εὑ τοις νῦν ἡγγελμένοις;
Χο. ἀλλ' εἰ τροπαίαν Ζεὺς κακῶν θῆσει ποτὲ.
385
Τρ. καὶ πῶς; Ὀρέστης ἐλπὶς οἶχεται δόμων.
Χο. οὕπω· κακὸς γε μάντις ἄν γνοῖ οὖν τάδε.
Τρ. τί φῆς; ἔχεις τι τῶν κελεγμένων δίχα;
Χο. ἀγγελλ' ἴούσα, πρᾶσσε τάπεσταλμένα.
μέλει θεοῦν ὄνπερ ἄν μέλη πέρι.
390
Τρ. ἀλλ' εἶμι καὶ σοῖς ταύτα πείσομαι λόγοις.
γένοιτο δ' ὡς ἄριστα σὺν θεῶν δόσει.
Ch. O reverend Earth, O reverend mound,
Thou that beneath thee coverest the outworn
Dust of the armed fleet's kingly commander,
Deign now to hearken, deign to give succour.
Now is the hour when guileful Deceit
Must enter to aid us, and Chthonian Hermes,
Patron of stealth, stand sentinel over
This deadly encounter of sword-blades.

Aegisthus
I am come in answer to a summoning message.
A strange tale has been brought, so I am told,
By travellers, news of no pleasant sort.
Orestes' death—a horror-dripping burden
Would that prove, were it too laid on this house
Already mauled and festering with past bloodshed.
What should I think? Is it the living truth?
Or else mere talk, begotten of women's fears,
That leaps into the air to die in smoke?
Can you say aught to clear my mind of doubt?

Ch. We heard indeed—But go in to the strangers,
And ask of them. No messenger so sure
As to enquire oneself of him who knows.

Ae. This messenger I must see and question further,
Whether he was present at the death himself,
Or from some phantom rumour learnt his tale.
Be sure they shall not cheat a clear-eyed mind.

Ch. Zeus, Zeus, what speech shall I find? Whence now
Shall begin my fervent prayer to thy Godhead?
How in loyal zeal
Give utterance due to my longing?
For now is the hour when either the blood-stained
Χο. ὣς πότινα χθῶν καὶ πότιν' ἀκτῇ
χῶματος, ἦ νῦν ἐπὶ ναυάρχῳ
σώματι κεῖσαι τῷ βασιλείῳ,
νῦν ἑπάκουσον, νῦν ἑπάρηξον.
νῦν γὰρ ἀκμάζει Πειθῶ δολίαν
ξυγκαταβήναι, χθόνιον δ' Ἐρμήν
καὶ τὸν νύχιον τοῖσδ' ἐφορεύσαι
ξιφοδηλήτοισιν ἀγῶσιν.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἡκὼ μὲν οὐκ ἀκλητος, ἀλλ' ὑπάγγελος·
νέαν φάτιν δὲ πεύθομαι λέγειν τινὰς
ξένους μολόντας οὐδαμῶς εἱφύερον,
μόρον δ' Ὀρέστου. καὶ τὸδ' ἀμφέρειν δὸμοις
γένοιτ' ἂν ἀχθος αἱματοσταγῆς φόνῳ
τῷ πρόσθεν ἐλκαίνουσι καὶ δεδημένους.
πῶς ταῦτ' ἄληθῆ καὶ βλέποντα δοξάσω;
ἡ πρὸς γυναικῶν δειματούμενοι λόγοι
πεδάρσιοι θρόσκουσι, θυήσκοντος μάτην;
τί τῶν' ἂν εἴποις ὡστε δηλῶσαι φρενί;

Χο. ἠκουσαμεν μέν, πυνθάνον δὲ τῶν ξένων
eἰσῳ παρελθὼν. οὐδὲν ἄγγελων σθένος
ὡς αὐτὸς' αὐτῶν ἀνδρα πεύθεσθαι πέρι.

Αἱ. ἵδειν ἐλέγξαι τ' αὖ θέλω τὸν ἄγγελον,
eἰτ' αὐτὸς ἦν θυήσκοντος ἐγγύθεν παρὼν,
eἰτ' ἐξ ἀμαυρᾶς κληδόνος λέγει μαθῶν.
οὕτοι φρέν' ἂν κλέψειεν ὀμματωμένην.

Χο. Ζεύ Ζεῦ, τί λέγω, πόθεν ἄρξωμαι
τάδ' ἐπευχομένῃ κατ' θεείζουσ',
ὑπὸ δ' εὐνοίας
πῶς ἠσον εἰποῦσ' ἀνύσωμαι;
νῦν γὰρ μέλλουσι μιανθεῖσαι
Edges of cleaving man-slaying sword-blades
Must utterly whelm in destruction the house
Of great Agamemnon for all time;
Or else he, kindling a fire and a light
For the cause of freedom and lawful rule,
Shall win the great wealth of his fathers.
Such now is the prize for which, one against two,
Our heaven-guided champion Orestes
Must wrestle. Oh yet may he conquer.

Ae. (within). Eh! Eh! Otototoi!

Ch. Ah! What is it?

How is it now? How doth Fate crown the event?
Stand we aside while the issue is in doubt,
That so we may seem blameless of these woes.
For 'tis by the sword the verdict must be sealed.

SERVANT

Woe is me! Utter woe! My lord is slain.
Woe yet once more, a third last farewell cry!
Aegisthus is no more. But open, open,
And with all speed. Unbar the women's gates.
Draw the bolts. And right lusty hands are needed—
Though not to help the dead—what use were that?
Ioû! Ioû!

I am shouting to the deaf and wasting words
On idle sleepers. Where is Clytaemnestra?
What doth she? Her own neck is like to fall
Beside the block beneath the stroke of Justice.

Cl. What is it now? What clamour are you raising?

Ser. The dead, I tell you, are murdering the living.

Cl. Ay me! I read the purport of your riddle.

Even as by craft we slew, so must we perish.
Haste, someone, give me a man-destroying axe.
πειραὶ κοπάνων ἀνδροδαίκτων

ἡ πάνω θήσεως Ἀχαιομνοῦν
οἷκων ὅλεθρον διὰ παντὸς,

ἡ πῦρ καὶ φῶς ἐπὶ ἐλευθερία
δαίων ἀρχῶς τε πολισσοῦμοι

πατέρων θ’ ἔξει μέγαν ὀλβον.

τοιάνδε πάλην μόνος ἂν ἐφεδρὸς
dισσοὶς μέλλει θείος Ὀρέστης

ἀψειν. εἴη δ’ ἐπὶ νίκη.

Αἰ. ἔγι, ὅτοτοτοὶ.

Χο. ἔα ἔα μάλα·

πῶς ἔχει; πῶς κέκρανται δόμοις;

ἀποσταθὼμεν πράγματος τελουμένου,

ὅπως δοκῶμεν τῶν ἀναίτια κακῶν

ἐναι· μάχης γὰρ δὴ κεκύρωται τέλος.

ΟΙΚΕΤΣ

οἴμοι, πανοίμοι δεσπότου πεπληγμένου·

οἴμοι μάλ’ αὐθίς ἐν τρίτοις προσφθέγμασιν.

Ἄγιος θος οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν. ἄλλ’ ἀνοίξατε

ὅπως τάχιστα, καὶ γυναικείους πύλας

μοχλοῖς χαλατε· καὶ μᾶλ’ ἢβωντος δὲ δεῖ,

οὐχ ὡστ’ ἄρηξαι διαπεπραγμένω· τὸ γάρ;

ἰοῦ ἰοῦ.

κωφοῖς ἀντῶ καὶ καθεύδουσιν μάτην

ἀκραντα βάξω. ποί Κλυταίμήσταρα; τί δρά;

ἐοικε νῦν αὐτῆς ἐπειξήμου πέλας

αὐχὴν πεσεῖσθαι πρὸς δίκην πεπληγμένος.

Κλ. τί δ’ ἐστί χρῆμα; τίνα βοήν ἰστής δόμοις;

Οἱ. τὸν ξόντα καίνειν τοὺς τεθνηκότας λέγω.

Κλ. οἱ ’γω. ἐμνήκα τούτος ἐξ αἰνημάτων.

δόλοις ὅλομεθ’, ᾧσπερ οὖν ἐκτείναμεν.

δοῖη τις ἀνδροκρήτητα πέλεκυν ὡς τάχος.
Let us know if we are conquerors or conquered. To such a pass this woeful way has brought me.

Or. 'Tis thee I seek. For him, it is enough.
Cl. Ah me, beloved Aegisthus! Art thou dead?
Or. Thou Lovest the man? Why then in the same grave Shalt thou lie, ne'er to abandon him in death.
Cl. Forbear, my son. Reverence this, dear child, This breast at which thou oft, slumbering the while, Didst suck with toothless gums the fostering milk.
Or. How, Pylades? Should awe make me spare my mother?

PYLADES

Who then will heed henceforth the voice of Loxias, His Pythian oracles, aye and the faith of oaths? Rather hold all men enemies than the Gods.

Or. I approve thy sentence. Well dost thou exhort me. Come now. I mean to slay you at yon man's side. In his life you deemed him better than my sire; Sleep with him then in death; since he is the man You love, and him you should have loved, you hate.

Cl. I reared thee, and with thee would I grow old.
Or. My father's murderess, wouldst thou share my home?
Cl. Nay, child, the blame in part must lie with Fate.
Or. Then this doom also Fate has brought to pass.
Cl. Hast thou no awe, child, of a parent's curse?
Or. A mother's, who could cast me forth to misery.
Cl. To a friendly house! That was no casting forth.
Or. Foully was I sold, I, son of a free sire.
Cl. Where is the price then I received for thee?
Or. That taunt for shame I cannot plainly utter.
Cl. Nay, but speak likewise of thy father's follies.
eιδῶμεν εἰ νικῶμεν, ἢ νικῶμεθα.
ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ τοῦδ' αφικόμην κακοῦ.

Ὀρ. σὲ καὶ ματεύω: τῶδε δ' ἀρκούντως ἔχει.
Κλ. οὐ γὰρ. τέθυκας, φίλτατ' Λεγίσθου βία.
Ὀρ. φιλεῖς τὸν ἄνδρα; τοιγὰρ ἐν ταύτῳ τάφῳ
κείσει. θανόντα δ' οὕτ᾽ μὴ προδός ποτε.
Κλ. ἐπίσχες, ὥ παί, τόνδε δ' αἴδεσαι, τέκνον,
μαστόν, πρὸς ὃ σὺ πολλὰ δὴ βριζὼν ἀμα
ουλοίσων ἐξήμελξας εὑραφῆς γάλα.
Ὀρ. Πυλάδη, τί δράσω; μητέρ' αἴδεσθῳ κτανεῖν;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ποὺ δὴ τὰ λοιπὰ Δοξίου μαντεύματα
τὰ πυθόχρηστα, πιστὰ τ' εὐροκώματα;
ἀπαντας ἔχθροις τῶν θεῶν ἡγοῦ πλέον.
Ὀρ. κρίνω σὲ νικᾶν, καὶ παραίνεις μοι καλῶς.
ἐπού, πρὸς αὐτὸν τόνδε σὲ σφάξαι θέλω.
καὶ ξόντα γὰρ νυν κρείσσον' ἡγήσω πατρός·
tοῦτῳ θανοὺσα ξυγκάθευδ', ἐπεὶ φιλεῖς
τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον, ὅν δ' ἔχρην φιλεῖν στυγεῖς.
Κλ. ἐγὼ σ' ἔθρεψα, σὺν δὲ γηράναι θέλω.
Ὀρ. πατροκτονοῦσα γὰρ ξυνοικίςεις ἐμοί;
Κλ. ἡ Μοίρα τούτων, ὁ τέκνον, παραιτία.
Ὀρ. καὶ τόνδε τοῖς Ἔορ' ἐπόρσυνεν μόρον.
Κλ. οὐδὲν σεβίζει γενεθλίους ἀράς, τέκνον;
Ὀρ. τεκοῦσα γὰρ μ' ἔρριψας ἐς τὸ δυστυχές.
Κλ. οὕτοι σ' ἀπέρριψ' ἐς δόμους δορυξένους.
Ὀρ. αἰσχρός ἐπράθην ὅν ἐλευθέρου πατρός.
Κλ. ποὺ δὴθ' ὁ τίμος, ὁντιν' ἀντεδεξάμην;
Ὀρ. αἰσχύνομαι σοι τοῦτ' ὄνειδίσαι σαφῶς.
Κλ. ἀλλ' εἴφ' ὁμοίως καὶ πατρός τοῦ σοῦ μάτας.
Or. Idling at home, censure not him who toils.
Cl. 'Tis grief for a woman, child, to lack a mate.
Or. Yet man's labour maintains her in idleness.
Cl. Thou meanest then, my child, to slay thy mother.
Or. 'Tis thou wilt be thine own slayer, not I.
Cl. Look to it! Beware the hounds of a mother's fury.
Or. How escape my father's, if I shirk this task?
Cl. Words then are vain as a dirge to a dead tomb.
Or. Vain, for my sire's fate brings his doom upon thee.
Cl. Aye me! This is the snake I bare and suckled.
Or. Yes, a true prophet was that dream-born terror.
You slew whom you ought not: suffer what you should not.

Ch. As upon Priam's sons punishment came at last,
Heavily fraught with doom,
So to the royal house of Agamemnon came
A twofold lion, a twofold sword;
Yea to the utmost end
The Pytho-crowned fugitive,
Sped by the voice divine, his race now has run.

Utter a cry of joy, now that our master's house
Thus hath escaped its woes, yea and the waste of
By an unclean and guilty pair— [wealth
A hard, weary road!

Now upon him who loved treacherous fight, is come
Cunningly plotted doom.
And in the strife 'twas she guided aright his hand,
The veritable child of Zeus:
Justice the name whereby
She is called by men truthfully.
Deadly the wrath she breathes against those she hates.
Or. μὴ ἀληχῆ τὸν πονοῦντ’ ἐσώ καθημένη.
Kl. ἀλγος γυναιξίν ἀνδρὸς εἰργεσθαί, τέκνον.
Or. τρέφει δὲ γ’ ἀνδρὸς μόχθος ἴμενας ἐσώ. 490
Kl. κτενεῖν ἐοικας, ὦ τέκνον, τὴν μητέρα.
Or. σύ τοι σεαυτήν, οὐκ ἐγώ, κατακτενεῖς.
Kl. ὁρα, φύλαξαι μητρὸς ἐγκότους κύνας.
Or. τὰς τοῦ πατρὸς δὲ πῶς φύγω, παρεῖς τάδε;
Kl. ἐοικα θρηνεῖν ζῶσα πρὸς τύμβου μάτην. 495
Or. πατρὸς γὰρ αἶσα τόνδε σφρίζει μόρον.
Kl. οἶ ἡ γω τεκούσα τόνδ’ ὧφιν ἐθρεψάμην.
Or. ἡ κάρτα μάντις οὐξ ὄνειράτων φόβος.
ἐκανες ὅν οὐ χρῆν, καὶ τὸ μη χρεών πάθε.

Xo. ἐμολε μὲν δίκα Πριαμίδαις χρόνῳ,
βαρύδικος ποινᾶ·
ἐμολε δ’ ἐς δόμον τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος
διπλοὺς λέων, διπλοὺς Ἄρης.
ἐλάσε δ’ ἐς τὸ πῶν
ὁ πυθόχρηστος φυγᾶς
θεόθεν εὐ φραδαίσιν ὄρμημένοις.
ἐπολολύζαι’ ὁ δεσποσύνων δόμων
ἀναφυγᾶς κακῶν καὶ κτείνων τριβᾶς
ὑπὸ δυνῶν μιαστόρων,
δυσοίμου τύχας. 505
ἐμολε δ’ ὃ μέλει κρυπταδίου μάχας
δολιόφρων ποινά·
ἐθυγε δ’ ἐν μάχα χερὸς ἐτήτυμος
Διὸς κόρα—Δίκαν δέ νῦν
προσαγορεύομεν βροτοὶ τυχόντες καλῶς— 510
ολέθριον πνέοις’ ἐν ἐχθροῖς κότον’.
Kindled is now the light: gone is the mighty curb
Holding the house in thrall.
Up then, arise, ye halls! Grovelling on the ground
Too long have ye been lying.

Or. Behold this twofold tyranny of our land,
They that slew the father and despoiled the house.
Stately they were once, seated on their thrones,
And loving even now, as from their plight
Is manifest. True to its pledge their oath still stands.
Both swore my father’s murder, and to die
Together. That too has been faithfully kept.
Behold too, ye that judge these deeds of woe,
The snare wherewith my unhappy sire was bound,
For his hands a fetter, for his feet a trap.
Open it out, and standing round, display
This man-enwrapping sheet, that so the Father,
Not mine, but he whose eye sees all things here,
The sun, may behold my mother’s unclean work,
And some day at my trial may appear
To witness that I wrought this slaying justly,
My mother’s, (for Aegisthus’ death I count not:
His the seducer’s penalty by law:)
But she who planned this horror against her lord,
Whose children she had borne beneath her girdle,
That once dear burden, proved now a deadly foe,
What think you of her? Were she sea-snake or viper,
Her touch would rot another’s flesh unbitten,
If cruelty and wicked will could do it.
What can I name it, speak I ne’er so mildly?
A trap for a beast? Or else a coffin-cloth
To wrap the feet of a corpse? Nay, ’tis a net:
πάρα τὸ φῶς ἰδείν. μέγα τῷ ἀφηρέθη
ψάλιον οἰκετῶν,
ἀναγε μὰν δόμοι: πολὺν ᾠγαν χρόνον
χαμαιπετεῖς ἐκείσθε.

Ὅπ. ἰδεσθε χώρας τὴν διπλῆν πυρανύθια
πατροκτόνους τε δωμάτων πορθήτορας.
σεμνοὶ μὲν ἦσαν ἐν θρόνοις τὸθ ἦμενοι,
φίλοι δὲ καὶ νῦν, ὡς ἐπεικάσαι πάθη
πάρεστιν, ὅρκος τ' ἐμμένει πιστώμασι.

ἐξονόμοις μὲν θάνατον ἀθλίῳ πατρί
cαὶ ἐξουθανεῖσθαι· καὶ τάδ' εὐόρκως ἔχει.
ἰδεσθε δὲ αὕτε, τῶν ἐπήκουοι κακῶν,
tὸ μηχάνημα, δεσμὸν ἀθλίῳ πατρί,
pέδας τε χειρῶν καὶ ποδῶν ἕρωρίδα.

ἐκτείνατ' αὐτὸ καὶ κύκλῳ παραστάδον
στέγαστρον ἀνδρόσ δείξαθ', ὅς ἰδὼ πατήρ,
oὐχ οὐμός, ἀλλ' ὁ πάντ' ἐποπτεύων τάδε
"Ηλιος, ἀναγνα μητρός ἐργα τῆς ἐμῆς,
ὡς ἄν παρῆ μοι μάρτυς ἐν δίκῃ ποτὲ,
ὡς τῶν ἐγὼ μετήλθων ἐνδίκως μόρον
tὸν μητρός. Αἰγίσθου γὰρ οὐ λέγω μόρον·
ἔχει γὰρ αἰσχυντήρος, ὡς νόμος, δίκην·
ἡτις δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ τοῦτ' ἐμήσατο στῦγος,
ἔξ' οὖ τέκνων ἦμεγχ' ὑπὸ ξώνην βάρος,
φίλον τέως, νῦν δ' ἐχθρόν, ὡς φαίνει, κακὸν,
tὶ σοι δοκεῖ; μύραινα γ' ἐκ' ἔχιδν' ἐφ' ἀν
σήπειν θυγοῦτ' ἀν ἄλλων οὐ δεδηγμένον
tόλμης ἐκατι καίδικον φρονήματος.
tὶ νῦν προσείπω, κἀν τύχω μάλ' εὑστομῶν;
ἀγρευμα θηρός, ἡ νεκροῦ ποδενδυτον
δροιτῆς κατασκήνωμα; δίκτυον μὲν οὖν,
Toils you might say, or long foot-trammelling robes; Just such a thing some cozener might contrive, One who tricks travellers, practising the trade Of robbery. Many with this knavish snare Might he destroy, and his heart often glow. With such a woman never may I share My home. Sooner let heaven slay me, childless.

Ch. Ah me! Ah me! 'Twas a wicked deed. By a terrible death thou art laid low. Alas! Woe is flowering too for the living.

Or. Did she the deed, or did she not? I call This robe to witness, dyed by Aegisthus' sword. 'Tis gushing blood that here hath aided time In spoiling the embroidery's many hues. Now can I praise, now wail him where he fell: And as I address this web that slew my sire, I grieve for the crime, the penance, the whole race. Such victory wins not envy, but pollution.

Ch. No mortal man may pass through his life Without scathe, if he pay not in sorrow. Alas! Woe must be, to-day or hereafter.

Or. Now hear me, for I know not how it will end— Yea, like a driver mastered by his steeds, My restive wits are whirling me astray Far from the course; while Terror fain would sing To my heart, and set her dancing to his tune. So while I am sane, proclaiming to my friends I say, with justice did I slay my mother, My sire's foul murderess, abhorred of heaven.
ἀρκὸν τ’ ἀν εἴποις καὶ ποδιστήρας πέπλους.
τοιοῦτον ἀν κτήσατο φηλήτης ἀνήρ,
ζένων ἀπαιόλημα κάργυροστερῆ 550
βίον νομίζων, τῶδε τ’ ἀν δολώματι
πολλοὺς ἀναίρον πολλὰ θερμαίνοι φρένα.
τοιάδ’ ἐμοὶ ξύνοικος ἐν δόμοις μὴ
γένοιτ’ ὄλοίμην πρόσθεν ἐκ θεῶν ἄπαις.

Xo. αἰαὶ αἰαὶ μελέων ἔργων·
στυγερῷ θανάτῳ διεπράχθης.
ἐ ἐ, μίμνουτι δὲ καὶ πάθος ἀνθεί.

Oρ. ἐδρασεν ἢ οὐκ ἐδρασε; μαρτυρεῖ δὲ μοι
φῶρος τόδ’, ὡς ἐβαψεν Ληγίσθου ξίφος.
φόνου δὲ κηκὶς ξύν χρόνῳ ξυμβάλλεται,
πολλὰς βαφάς φθείρουσα τοῦ ποικίλματος.
νῦν αὐτὸν αἰνῶ, νῦν ἀποιμώζω παρὼν,
πατροκτόνον θ’ ύφασμα προσφωνῶν τόδε
ἀλγῶ μὲν ἔργα καὶ πάθος γένος τε πᾶν,
ἅξηλα νίκης τῆςδ’ ἔχων μιάσματα.

Xo. οὕτις μερόπων ἀσινῇ βλότον
diὰ παντὸς ἀνατὸς ἀμεῖψει.
ἐ ἐ, μόχθος δ’ ὁ μὲν αὐτίχ’, ὁ δ’ ἡξει.

Oρ. ἀλλ’ ὦς ἂν εἶδητ’, οὐ γὰρ οἶδ’ ὅπη τελεῖ—
ὡσπερ ξύν ὑποίσ ἧμιοστρόφον δρόμον
ἐξωτέρῳ φέρουσι γὰρ νυκώμενον
φρένες δύσαρκτοι· πρὸς δὲ καρδία φόβοις
ἀδειν ἐτοιμὸς ἢ δ’ ὑπορχεῖσθαι κότῳ.
ἐῶς δ’ ἐτ’ ἐμφρων εἰμὶ, κηρύσσω φίλοις,
κτανεῖν τε φήμι μητέρ’ οὐκ ἄνευ δίκης,
πατροκτόνον μίασμα καὶ θεῶν στῦγος.

A.
And for the spells that nerved me to this deed,
I cite the Pythian oracle of Loxias,
That should I act thus, I were clear of blame,
But if I failed to act—how name the penalty?
So now behold me: furnished with this bough
Enwreathed with wool, a suppliant will I go
To the mid-navel shrine, the home of Loxias,
And to that fire-light, famed imperishable,
Exiled for kindred bloodshed. To no hearth
Save his did Loxias bid me turn for refuge.
A wandering, homeless fugitive, I leave
Behind me, in life or death, such fame as this.

Ch. Nay, thou hast done well. Yoke not then thy lips
To ill-omened speech, nor utter boding words.

Or. Ah! Ah!
Bondwomen, see them yonder, Gorgon-like,
In dusky raiment, twined about with coils
Of swarming snakes! I cannot stay here more.

Ch. What fantasies toss thee, dearest of all sons
To a father? Stay; fear nothing. Thou hast vanquished.

Or. To me these horrors are no fantasies,
But indeed the sleuth-hounds of my mother's wrath.

Ch. 'Tis that the blood is yet fresh on thy hands.
Hence the confusion that invades thy soul.

Or. Sovereign Apollo, yonder they come now thronging!
And from their eyes is dripping a loathsome gore.

Ch. In, in! The purge of Loxias with a touch
Shall free thee from such visionary horrors.

Or. Ye do not see these beings, but I see them.
I am hunted by them. I can stay no more.

Ch. Blessings go with thee, and may gracious Gods
Watch over and keep thee safe with happy chance.
καὶ φίλτρα τόλμης τῆς δε πλειστηρίζομαι
tῶν πυθόμαντιν λοξίαν, χρήσαντ' ἐμοὶ
πράξαιτε μὲν ταῦτ' ἐκτὸς αἰτίας κακῆς
ἐίναι, παρέντα δ'—οὐκ ἐρῶ τὴν ξημίαν·
καὶ ὑνὸν ὀρᾶτέ μ', ὡς παρεσκευασμένος
ξὺν τῶδε θαλλὼ καὶ στεφεῖ προσίξομαι
μεσόμφαλον θ' ἱδρυμα, λοξίου πέδου,
πυρός τε φέγγος ἀφθιτον κεκλημένον,
φεύγων τὸδ' αἷμα κοινόν· οὐδ' ἐφ' ἐστίαν
ἀλλην τραπέζθαν λοξίας ἐφίετο.
ἔγω δ' ἀλήτης τῆςδε γῆς ἀπόξενος,
ζών καὶ τεθνηκὼς τάσδε κληθόνας λιπῶν—
Xo. ἀλλ' εὐ' ἔπραξας, μηδ' ἐπιζευχήθης στόμα
φήμη πονηρᾶ μηδ' ἐπιγλωσσῶ δακᾶ.

Or. ἄ, ἄ.
dμωαί γυναίκες αἴδε Γοργόνων δίκην
φαιοχίτωνες καὶ πεπλεκταμήνειν
πυκνοῖς δράκονσιν· οὐκέτ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.
Xo. τίνες σὲ δόξαι, φίλτατ' ἀνθρώπων πατρί,
στροβούσιν; ἵσχε, μη φοβοῦ, νικών πολύ.
Or. οὐκ εἰσὶ δόξαι τῶν ἡμάτων ἐμοί·
σαφῶς γὰρ αἴδε μητρὸς ἐγκοτοί κύνες.
Xo. ποταίνων γὰρ αἵμα σοι χεροῖν ἔτι·
ἐκ τῶν τε τοι ταραγμός ἐς φρένας πίννει.

Or. ἀναξ Ἀπολλον, αἴδε πληθύνουσι δή,
καξ ὅμματων στάξουσιν αἴμα δυσφίλες.
Xo. εἰς σοι καθαρμός· λοξίας δὲ προσθεγγον
ἐλεύθερον σε τῶν ἡμάτων κτίσει.
Or. ὑμεῖς μὲν οὐχ ὀρᾶτε τᾶσδ', ἐγώ δ' ὀρῶ·
ἐλαύνομαι δὲ κούκετ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.
Xo. ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης, καὶ σ' ἐποπτευόν πρόφρων
θέος φυλάσσοι καρίοισι συμφοραῖς.
Thus again for a third time, risen from the race,  
Hath a storm swept over  
The house of our kings and subsided.  
First was the cruel doom of the children  
Slain at the banquet.  
Next was the anguish of a man, of a king,  
When the Achaeans’ warrior chieftain  
In the bath fell slain.  
Now comes yet a third, a deliverer, nay,  
Rather destroyer.  
What end shall there be? When shall the fury  
Of revenge sink lulled into slumber?
οδε τοι μελάθροις τοῖς βασιλείοις
τρίτος αὖ χειμῶν
πνεύσας γονίας ἐτελέσθη.
παιδοβόροι μὲν πρῶτον ὑπῆρξαν
μόχθοι τάλανες:
δεύτερον ἄνδρος βασίλεια πάθη
λουτροδάικτος δ' ὥλετ' Ἀχαιῶν
πολέμαρχος ἄνηρ:
νῦν δ' αὖ τρίτος ἢλθε ποθεν σωτήρ,
ἢ μόρον εἴπω;
ποι δήτα κρανεῖ, ποι καταλήξει
μετακοιμισθέν μένος ἀτης;
THE EUMENIDES

OF

AESCHYLUS
THE EUMENIDES

[Before the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Enter the Pythian Prophetess.]

THE PROPHETESS

First of all gods I worship in my prayer
The first diviner Earth; after her Themis,
The second, legend saith, to take her seat
Here in her mother’s shrine. Third in succession,
With her consent, no violence done to any,
Another Titan child of Earth took seat,
Phoebe: who as a birthday gift bestowed it
On Phoebus, bearing a name from her derived.
His mind with divine art did Zeus inspire,
And seated him, fourth prophet, on this throne,
As Loxias, spokesman of his father Zeus.
These gods I worship in my opening prayer.
Pallas our neighbour too I name with reverence.
I adore the Nymphs who haunt the caverned rock
Corycis, loved by birds, by gods frequented.
The springs of Pleistos and Poseidon’s might
I invoke, and Zeus supreme, the crown of all,
Then seat myself as prophetess on my throne.
May they now bless my entrance more than ever
In past days. Let all Hellenes present here
Approach, as custom bids, by fall of lot.
As the God leads me, so do I give response.

[The Prophetess enters the shrine, but quickly returns.]

Things terrible to speak, terrible to see,
Have driven me forth again from Loxias’ house.
THE EUMENIDES

[Before the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Enter the Pythian Prophetess.]

ΠΥΘΙΑΣ

Πρῶτον μὲν εὐχῇ τῇ δε πρεσβεύω θεῶν τὴν πρωτόμαντιν Γαῖαν· ἐκ δὲ τῆς Θέμιν,
ἡ δὴ τὸ μήτρος δευτέρα τὸδ᾽ ἔζετο μαντείον, ὡς λόγος τις· ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ
λάχει, θελούσης, οὔτε πρὸς βίαν τινός,
Τίτανίς ἄλλη παῖς Χθονὸς καθέζετο,
Φοῖβη· δίδωσι δ᾽ ἡ γενέθλιον δόσιν
Φοῖβῳ· τὸ Φοῖβης δ᾽ ὁνομέ εἶχε παρώνυμον.
τέχνης δὲ νῦν Ζεὺς ἐνθεον κτίσας φρένα
ἵπτερον τοῖσδε μάντιν ἐν θρόνους·
Δίως προφήτης δ᾽ ἐστὶ Λοξίας πατρός.
τούτους ἐν εὐχαίς φρομμάξομαι θεοῦς.
Παλλάς προναία δ᾽ ἐν λόγοις πρεσβεύεται.
σέβω δὲ νύμφας, ἐνθα Κωρυκίς πέτρα
κοίλη, φίλορνυς, δαιμόνων ἀναστροφή·
Πλειστοῦ τε πηγάς καὶ Ποσειδῶνος κράτος
καλοῦσα καὶ τέλειον ὕψιστον Δία,
ἔπειτα μάντις ἐς θρόνους καθιζάω.
καὶ νῦν τυχεῖν με τῶν πρὶν εἰσόδων μακρῷ
ἀριστα δοῖεν· κεὶ παρ᾽ Ἐλλήνων τινές,
ἐτῶν πάλῳ λαχόντες, ὡς νομίζεται.
μαντεύομαι γὰρ ὡς ἂν ἤγηται θεὸς.

[The Prophetess enters the shrine, but quickly returns.]

ἡ δεινὰ λέξαι, δεινὰ δ᾽ ὀφθαλμοῖς δρακεῖν,
πάλιν μ᾽ ἐπεμψεν ἐκ δόμων τῶν Λοξίου,
When I drew near the wreath-decked inmost cell,  
Upon the navel-stone I saw a man  
Polluted, in a suppliant attitude.  
With blood his hands were dripping, and he held  
A drawn sword and a high-grown branch of olive,  
Humbly enwreathed with a broad band of wool.  
Between me and this man a fearful troop  
Of women slumbered, seated upon chairs.  
Yet not women: Gorgons call them rather.  
Dusky they are, and loathsome altogether.  
They snore with such blasts none may venture near;  
And from their eyes a foul rheum oozes forth.  
Their garb is neither fit to approach the statues  
Of deities, nor to enter homes of men.  
For what may ensue, let mightiest Loxias,  
Who is master of this house, himself provide.  
He is healing seer and judge of prodigies,  
And can purge houses other than his own.

[Exit Prophetess. The interior of the shrine is dis-  
closed. Apollo, Hermes, Orestes and the  
sleeping Furies are discovered.]

Apollo

I shall not fail. To the end will I protect thee.  
Near shall I be, even though far away:  
Nor will I prove soft to thy enemies.  
Awhile thou seest yon raveners subdued.  
Lo sunken in sleep the loathly virgins lie,  
These hoary ancient maidens, with whom never  
Hath any god mingled, nor man, nor beast.  
Evil was cause of their creation, evil  
The murky pit of Tartarus where they dwell  
Abhorred by men and by the Olympian gods.
éγὼ μὲν ἔρπω πρὸς πολυστεφῇ μυχόν· 25
όρῳ δ' ἐπ' ὠμφαλῷ μὲν ἄνδρα θεομυσῆ
ἔδραν ἔχοντα προστρόπαιον, αἵματι
στάξοντα χείρας καὶ νεοσπάνατας ξίφος
ἔχοντ' ἐλαιάς θ' ψυγένητον κλίδοιν,
λήνει μεγίστῳ σωφρόνως ἐστεμένου,
πρόσθεν δὲ τάυτρός τούδε θαυμαστός λόχος
εὑδείς γυναικῶν ἐν θρόνοισιν ἴμηνος.
οὐτοὶ γυναῖκας, ἀλλὰ Γοργώνας λέγω
ταύτας, μέλαιναί δ' εἰς τὸ πάν βδέλυκτροποι·
ῥέγκουσι δ' οὖ πλατοῖσι φυσιάμασιν· 35
ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων λείβουσι δυσφιλῇ λίβα·
καὶ κόσμος οὐτε πρὸς θεῶν ἀγάλματα
filerων δίκαιοι οὔτ' εἰς ἄνθρωπον στέγας.
ταὐτεῦθεν ἣδη τῶνδε δεσπότῃ δόμων
αὐτῷ μελέσθω Λοξία μεγασθενεί.
ιατρόμαντις δ' ἐστὶ καὶ τεραςκόπος
καὶ τοῖσιν ἄλλοις δωμάτων καθάρσιος.

[Exit Prophetess. The interior of the shrine is disclosed. Apollo, Hermes, Orestes and the sleeping Furies are discovered.]
Yet do not thou grow faint, but fly far hence:
For they will chase thee across the long mainland,
Ever new soil beneath thy wandering tread,
And beyond seas and past wave-girded towns.
Let not thy heart faint brooding on thy penance,
Till thou take refuge in the city of Pallas
And clasp her ancient image in thy arms.
There before judges of thy cause, with speech
Of soothing power, we will discover means
To set thee free for ever from these woes.
For I did counsel thee to slay thy mother.

ORESTES
Sovereign Apollo, what is just thou knowest:
Now therefore study to neglect it not.
Thy power to succour needs no warranty.

 Aph. Remember: let not fear subdue thy soul.
And thou, born of one father, my own brother,
Hermes, protect him: prove thy title true
As Guide, by shepherding my suppliant here.
The sanctity of an outlaw Zeus respects,
When thus with prosperous escort he is sped.

[APOLLO vanishes. ORESTES leaves the temple, guided by HERMES. Enter the GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA
Sleep, would you? Shame! What need of sleepers here?
And I by you thus held in slight regard
Among the other dead, and followed still
By the reproach of murder among the shades,
Yet wronged so fouly by my nearest kin,
No spirit power shows wrath on my behalf,
Though slaughtered by the hands of a matricide.
Look now upon these wounds; look with thy soul.
THE EUMENIDES 125

όμως δὲ φεύγε, μηδὲ μαλθακὸς γένη,
ἐλώσι γάρ σε καὶ δι’ ἥπειρον μακρᾶς
βιβώντ’ ἁν’ αἰεὶ τὴν πλανοστὶβὴ χθόνα
ὑπέρ τε πόντου καὶ περιρρύτας πόλεις.
καὶ μὴ πρόκαμψε τόνδε θουκολούμενος
πόνον· μολὼν δὲ Παλλάδος ποτὶ πτόλιν
ζου παλαιὸν ἀγκαθέν λαβὼν βρέτας.
κακεὶ δικαστάς τόνδε καὶ θελετηρίους
μύθους ἔχοντες μηχανὰς εὔρήσομεν
ὡς’ ἐς τὸ πάν σε τῶν ἀπαλλάξαι πόλων.
καὶ γὰρ κτανεῖν σ’ ἐπείσα μητρῴον δέμας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀναξ Ἀπολλών, οἰσθα μὲν τὸ μὴ ’δικεῖν’
ἐπεί δ’ ἐπίστα, καὶ τὸ μὴ ’μελεῖν μάθε.
σθένος δὲ ποιεῖν εὖ φερέγγυν τὸ σὸν.

Ἀπ. μέμνησο, μὴ φόβοι σὲ νικᾶτω φρένας.

[Apollo vanishes. Orestes leaves the temple, guided
by Hermes. Enter the Ghost of Clytaemnestra.]
For while it sleeps, the mind is lit with eyes.  
Oft indeed of my offerings have you lapped,  
Wineless libations, sober soothing draughts,  
Dread midnight banquets, when no god but you  
Is worshipped, on the altar would I sacrifice.  
All this, I see, is spurned beneath your feet.  
The man is gone, escaping like a fawn,  
Ay, from the very snares' midst has he sprung  
Lightly, making great mouths at you in scorn.  
Hear me. 'Tis for my very soul I plead.  
Awake, O goddesses of the nether world.  
In dream now do I, Clytaemnestra, call you.  

CHORUS

(Mutterings.)

Cl. Yes, whimper! But the man is gone, fled far.
Ch. (Mutterings.)

Cl. Too deep you drowse, and pity not my wrong.  
    Fled is Orestes, who slew me, his mother.
Ch. (Moanings.)

Cl. Whining and drowsing! Come, rise up forthwith.
Ch. (Moanings.)

Cl. Sleep and fatigue, puissant conspirators,  
    Have spoiled the dreadful dragoness of her might.
Ch. (Mutterings redoubled and louder.)
    Follow, follow, follow, follow! Mark there!

Cl. In dream you hunt your prey, and give tongue like  
    A hound, whose fancy never quits the chase.  
    What dost thou? Arise! Let not fatigue defeat thee.  
    Let thy heart wince at merited rebuke,  
    Which to the righteous is a very goad.  
    Waft thou thy blood-hot breath upon the man:
εὖδουσὰ γὰρ φρὴν ὀμμασὶν λαμπρύνεται. ἦ πολλὰ μὲν δὴ τῶν ἐμῶν ἐλείξατε, χοάς τ᾽ ἀοίνους, νηφάλια μειλίγματα, καὶ νυκτίσεμνα δεῖπν᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάρᾳ πυρὸς ἑθνοῦ, ὥραν οὐδεῖνος κοινῆν θεῶν. καὶ πάντα ταῦτα λὰξ ὁρῶ πατούμενα. οἶ δ᾽ ἐξαλύξας οἶχεται νεβροῦ δίκην, καὶ ταῦτα κούφως ἐκ μέσων ἀρκυστάτων ὄρουσεν ὑμῖν ἐγκατιλλώψας μέγα. ἀκούσαθ᾽ ὡς ἔλεξα τῆς ἐμῆς περὶ ψυχῆς, φρονήσατ᾽, ὡ κατὰ χθονὸς θεαί. ὅναρ γὰρ ύμᾶς νῦν Κλυταιμήστρα καλῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

(μυγμός.)
Κλ. μῦξοιτ᾽ ἄν, ἄνηρ δ᾽ οἶχεται φεύγων πρόσω.
Χο. (μυγμός.)
Κλ. ἅγαν ὑπνώσεις κοῦ κατοικτίζεις πάθος· φονεῦς δ᾽ Ὁρέστης τήσδε μητρὸς οἶχεται.
Χο. (ἀγμός.)
Κλ. ὠξείς, ὑπνώσεις· οὐκ ἀναστήσει τάχος;
Χο. (ἀγμός.)
Κλ. ὑπνος πόνος τε κύριοι συνωμόται δεινῆς δρακαίνης ἐξεκάραναν μένος.
Χο. (μυγμός διπλοῦς ὀξύς.)
λαβέ ὁ λαβὲ ὁ λαβὲ ὁ λαβέ, φράζοι.
Κλ. ὅναρ διώκεις θήρα, κλαγγαίνεις δ᾽ ἀπερ κύων μέριμναν οὕποτ᾽ ἐκλείπων πόνον. τί δρὰς; ἀνίστω, μὴ σε νικάτω πόνος. ἀλγησοῦ ἦπαρ ἐνδίκοις ὀνείδεσιν· τοῖς σώφροσιν γὰρ ἀντίκεντρα γίγνεται. σὺ δ᾽ αἰματηρὸν πνεῦμ᾽ ἐπουρίσασα τῷ,
Shrivel him with thy belly's fiery blast.
Follow him; wither him with a fresh pursuit.

[Exit the Ghost of Clytaemnestra.]

Ch. Awake!—Do thou wake her—while I wake thee.
Dost thou sleep? Rise; and spurning sleep afar,
Let us see if this warning dream prove false.

Behold! Behold! Oh shame! See, we have suffered wrong!
Much painful toil have I endured, and all in vain.
Bitter indeed the wrong done to us. Oh the shame!
Defeat hard to bear!

Our game has slipped right through the meshes, and
By sleep subdued, lo! I have lost, lost the prey.

[APOLLO re-appears.]

Aha, son of Zeus! Thou art a thief, and knave.
Thy youth rides trampling over elder deities.
What is thy suppliant? What but a godless man,
A cruel son? Yet him,
This matricide, thou hast stolen from us, thou, a god.
Who dares pretend—none—that such deeds are just?

Ap. Out, I command you, from these precincts! Hence
With speed! Begone from my prophetic shrine;
Lest smitten by a wingèd glistening snake
Sped from my gold-wrought bow-string, thou in anguish
Shouldst spit forth foam darkened with human blood.
This is no dwelling fit for your approach.
Go rather where doomed heads are lopped, eyes gouged,
Throats cut; where by destruction of the seed
ἀτμῷ κατισχναίνουσα, νηδύος πυρί,
ἔπου, μάραινε δευτέροις διώγμασιν.

[Exit the Ghost of Clytemnestra.]

Χο. ἐγειρ', ἐγειρε καὶ σὺ τὴν', ἐγὼ δὲ σέ.
eὔδεις; ἄνιστω, κἀπολακτίσας' ὑπνον,
ἰδώμεθ' εἰ τι τούδε φροιμίον ματά.

 iota iota πόταξ. ἐπάθομεν, φίλαι,—
ἡ πολλὰ δὴ παθοῦσα καὶ μάτην ἐγώ,—
ἐπάθομεν πάθος δυσαχές, ὁ πόποι,
ἀφερτον κακόν.
ἐξ ἀρκύων πέπτωκεν οὐχεταί θ' ὁ θήρ—
ὑπνῷ κρατηθεὶς' ἄγραν ὀλέσα.

[Apollo re-appears.]

ἰὼ παί Διός, ἐπίκλοπος πέλει,—
νέος δὲ γραίας δαίμονας καθισπάσω,—
τὸν ἰκέταν σέβων, ἀθεον ἁνδρα καὶ
tοκεύσων πικρόν,
τὸν μητραλοίαν δ' ἐξέκλεψας ὦν θεός.—
tὶ τῶν' ἔρει τις δικαίως ἔχειν;

Ἀπ. ἐξω, κελεύω, τῶνδε δωμάτων τάχος
χωρεῖτ', ἀπαλλάσσεσθε μαντικῶν μυχῶν,
μὴ καὶ λαβοῦσα πτηνὸν ἄργηστήν ὄφων,
χρυσηλάτου θώμιγγος ἐξορμώμενον,
ἀνὴς ὑπ' ἄλγους μέλαν' ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων ἄφρον.
οὕτω δόμοις τοῖσδε χρίμπτεσθαι πρέπει·
ἀλλ' οὐ καρανιστήρες ὀφθαλμοίρυχοι
dίκαι σφαγαί τε σπέρματός τ' ἀποφθορᾶ

A.
The virile strength of boys is maimed, where men
Are sliced or stoned, or wail in long-drawn moans
Impaled beneath the spine. Do you hear me? Go,
Vile flock without a shepherd; get you hence!
For such a herd no god has love to give.

Ch. Sovereign Apollo, hear now our reply.
Thou thyself art not guilty of this in part:
Thou alone didst all; the whole guilt is thine.


Ch. Thy voice enjoined this man to slay his mother.

Ap. I enjoined him to avenge his sire. What then?

Ch. We hunt forth mother-slayers from all homes.

Ap. How deal you then with wives who slay their lords?

Ch. That were no true murder of kindred blood.

Ap. Then of slight honour and no worth you make
The troth-plight between Zeus and crowning Hera.
The fate-sealed marriage bed of man and wife,
Fenced with its rights, is mightier than all oaths.
Then without justice you pursue Orestes.
But Pallas at this trial shall arbitrate.

Ch. And I, drawn by a mother's blood, pursue
This man with vengeance, till I hunt him down.

Ap. And I will aid my suppliant and protect him.
For dreaded among men and gods alike
Is the appealer's wrath, should I forsake him.

[Exeunt omnes. The scene changes to Athens. Enter
Orestes, who takes sanctuary at a shrine of
Athena.]

Or. Goddess Athena, by command of Loxias
I come. Receive this outcast graciously,
No suppliant unabsolved with hand unpurged;
παίδων κακοῦταί χλοῦνισ, ἧδι ἀκρωνία, λευσμός τε, καὶ μύζουσιν οἴκτισμον πολὺν ὑπὸ ράχιν παγέντες. ἢρ ἀκούετε; χωρεῖτ' ἀνευ βοτήροις αἰπολούμεναι· ποίμνης τοιαύτης δ' οὕτω εὐφίλης θεῶν.

Χο. ἀναξ' Ἀπολλον, ἀντάκουσον ἐν μέρει. αὐτὸς σὺ τούτων οὐ μεταίτιος πέλει, ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἐπράξας ὡν παναίτιος.

Απ. πῶς δή; τοσοῦτο μῆκος ἕκτεινον λόγον.

Χο. ἔχρησας ὡστε τὸν ξένον μητροκτονεῖν. 145

Απ. ἔχρησα ποινᾶς τοῦ πατρὸς πρᾶξαι. τί μὴν;

Χο. τοὺς μητραλοίας ἐκ δόμων ἑλαύνομεν.

Απ. τί γὰρ γυναικὸς ἦτις ἀνδρα νοσφίση; 

Χο. οὐκ ἂν γένοιθι ὀμαιμος αὐθέντης φόνος.

Απ. ἡ κάρτ' ἀτιμα καὶ παρ' οὐδὲν ἦρκέσω 150

"Ηρας τελείας καὶ Διὸς πιστώματα.

εὐνὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὶ καὶ γυναικὶ μόρσιμος ὀρκοῦν στὶ μείζων τῇ δίκῃ φρουρομένη.

οὐ φημ. 'Ορέστην σ' ἐκίκωσ ἀνδρηλατεῖν.

δίκαιος δὲ Παλλᾶς τὸν ἐποπτεύσει θεῖα.

Χο. ἔγω δ', ἄγει γὰρ αἴμα μητρὼν, δίκαιος μέτειμι τόνδε φῶτα κάκκυνγετῶ.

Απ. ἔγω δ' ἀρήξω τὸν ἵκετην τε ῥύσομαι· 

dεινὴ γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖσι καὶ θεοῖς πέλει 

tοῦ προστροπαίον μῆνις, εἰ προδῶ σφ' ἐκών. 160

[Exeunt omnes. The scene changes to Athens. Enter Orestes, who takes sanctuary at a shrine of Athena.]

Ορ. ἀνασσ' Ἀθάνα, Δοξίου κελεύσμασιν ἥκω, δέχου δὲ πρεμυνώς ἀλώστορα, 

οὐ προστρόπαιον οὐδ' ἀφοίβαντον χέρα,
Long since the stain is dimmed and worn away
By sojournings and journeyings among men.
Obedient now to Loxias' oracles
I approach thy dwelling and thine image, Goddess.
Here clinging, will I wait my trial's end.

[Enter the Furies.]

Ch. Good! Here is a clear trace of the man.
The smell of human blood smiles sweetly upon me.

Again, search again! Spy into every nook,
For fear the matricide stealthily slip from our wrath.
Yes, there again safe he lurks,
Clinging around the image of the deathless god:
Trial he now would claim for his foul handiwork.
But it may not be: a mother's blood, once spilt, is
To gather up; hard indeed.

That which on earth is shed vanishes and is gone.
Now thou in turn must yield me from thy living self,
Ruddy and rich from the heart, liquor to lap: and on
I mean to thrive, evil draught though it be. [thee
I'll wither thee alive and drag thee down below,
There to atone, pang for pang, thy mother's agony.

Or. Schooled by my miseries, I have experience
In purifying rites. Where speech befits
I know, where silence too. But in this case
A wise instructor charges me to speak.
For the blood sleeps and is fading from my hand:
The stain of matricide is washed away.
While yet fresh, at divine Apollo's hearth
It was expelled by purging blood of swine.
αλλ’ ἀμβλύν ἡδῆ προστετριμένον τε πρὸς ἀλλοισιν οἴκοις καὶ πορεύμασιν βροτῶν.

σῷζων ἐφετμός Λοξίου χρηστηρίους, πρόσειμι δῶμα καὶ βρέτας τὸ σῶν, θεά, αὐτοῦ φυλάσσον ἀμμενῶ τέλος δίκης.

[Enter the Furies.]

Χο. εἰεν· τόδ’ ἐστὶ πάντως ἐκφανὲς τέκμαρ.

όσμιν βροτείων αἰμάτων με προσγελά.

ὁρα ὁρα μάλ’ αὖ

λεύσσε τε πάντα, μὴ

λάθη φύγα βᾶς

ματροφόνος ἀτίτας.—

ὁ δ’ αὐτὲ γ’ ἀλκάν ἔχων

περὶ βρέτει πλεχθείς θεάς ἀμβρότου

ὑπόδικος θέλει γενέσθαι χερῶν.—

τὸ δ’ οὐ πάρεστιν· αἶμα μητρῷον χαμαὶ

dυσαγκόμιστον, παπαί,

τὸ διερῶν πέδοι χύμενον οἴχεται.—

ἀλλ’ ἀντιδοῦναι δεὶ σ’ ἀπὸ ξῶντος ῥοφεῖν

ἔρυθρον ἐκ μελῶν πέλαιον· ἀπὸ δὲ σοῦ

φεροῖμαν βοσκάν πώματος δυσπότου.—

καὶ ξῶντα σ’ ἰσχυάνασ’ ἀπόξομαι κάτω,

ἀντίποι’ ὡς τίνης ματροφόνου δύας.

Ορ. ἐγὼ διδαχθεὶς ἐν κακοῖς ἐπίσταμαι

πολλοὺς καθαρμοὺς, καὶ λέγειν ὅπου δίκη

σιγὰν θ’ ὅμοιος· ἐν δὲ τόδε πράγματι

φωνεῖν ἐτάχθην πρὸς σοφοῦ διδασκάλου·

βρίζει γὰρ αἶμα καὶ μαραίνεται χερός,

μητροκτόνου μίασμα δ’ ἐκπλυτοῦ πέλει.

ποταίνοι γὰρ ὅν πρὸς ἐστία θεοῦ

Φοίβου καθαρμοῖς ἠλάθη χοιροκτόνοις.
Now with pure lips, religiously, I call
On this land's Queen, Athena, that she come
Hither to aid me.
Oh haste—a god hears even from afar—
And bring with thee deliverance from these woes.

Ch. Ne'er shall Apollo nor Athena's might
Protect thee; but abandoned shalt thou perish,
Finding no place for gladness in thy soul.
Wilt thou not answer, wilt thou scorn my words,
Though for me thou art bred and consecrated?
Alive, slain at no altar, shalt thou feed me.
Now shalt thou hear a hymn to bind thee fast.

Let us now\(^1\) with solemn step move in accord,
And show in accord
The enthralling might of our music.
Come now let us preach to the sons of men:
Yea let us tell them of our vengeance:
Yea let us all make mention of justice.
Whoso showeth hands that are undefiled,
Lo he shall suffer nought of us ever,
But shall go unharmed to his ending.
But, if he hath sinned, like unto this man,
And covereth hands that are blood-stained,
Then is our witness true to the slain man;
And we sue for the blood, sue and pursue for it,
So that at the last there is payment.

Mother mine who bare me,
Oh Mother Night,
To be feared of them who see and see not—hear!

\(^1\) This Ode (lines 206–240) was translated by the late Dr A. W. Verrall.
καὶ νῦν ἀφ᾽ ἀγνοῦ στόματος εὐφήμως καλῶν χώρας ἀνασσαν τῆς Ἀθηναίαν ἐμοὶ μολεῖν ἀρωγόν.

ἐλθοι,—κλύει δὲ καὶ πρόσωπεν ὁν θεός,— ὀπως γένοιτο τῶν ἐμοὶ λυτήριος.

Χο. οὔτοι σ᾽ 'Ἀπόλλων οὔτ᾽ 'Ἀθηναίας σθένος ῥύσατ' ἀν ὡστε μὴ οὐ παρημελημένου ἐρρευ, τὸ χαίρειν μὴ μαθόνθ᾽ ὀπον φρενῶν· οὔτ᾽ ἀντιφωνεῖς, ἀλλ᾽ ἀποπτύεις λόγους ἐμοὶ τραφεῖς τε καὶ καθιερωμένος;
καὶ ξῶν με δαίσεις οὔδε πρὸς βωμῷ σφαγεῖς· ὕμνον δ᾽ ἀκούσει τόνδε δέσμιον σέθεν.

ἄγε δὴ καὶ χορὸν ἀψωμεν, ἐπεὶ μοῦσαν στυγερὰν ἀποφαίνεσθαι δεδόκηκεν,

λέξαι τε λάχη, τὰ κατ᾽ ἀνθρώπους ὃς ἐπινομὰ στάσις ἀμά.
eὐθυδίκαιοι δ᾽ οἴομεθ᾽ εἶναι·

τὸν μὲν καθαρὰς χεῖρας προνέμοντ᾽ οὔτις ἐφέρπει μήνις ἀφ᾽ ἡμῶν, ἀσινης δ᾽ αἰώνα διοιχνεῖ·

οστις δ᾽ ἀλιτῶν ὥσπερ ὃδ᾽ ἀνήρ χεῖρας φονίας ἐπικρύπτει,

μάρτυρες ὃρθαι τοῖς θανοῖς παραγυμόμεναι πράκτορες αἵματος αὐτῶ τελέως ἐφάνημεν.

μάτερ ἀ ὡ μ᾽ ἐτίκτες, ὃ μάτερ

Νὺξ, ἀλαοίσι καὶ δεδορκόσιν ποιῶν,
The young god Apollo, he jests at our justice,
Covers yon cowering culprit, albeit a mother’s blood
hath marked him mine.
Sing then the spell, Sisters of Hell;
Chant him the charm, mighty to harm,
Binding the blood, madding the mood;
Such the music that we make:
Quail, ye sons of men, and quake;
Bow the heart, and bend, and break.

Even so 'tis written
(Oh sentence sure!)
Upon all that wild in wickedness dip hand
In the blood of their birth, in the fount of their
flowing:
So shall he pine until the grave receive him—to find
no grace even in the grave.
Sing then the spell, Sisters of Hell;
Chant him the charm, mighty to harm,
Binding the blood, madding the mood;
Such the music that we make:
Quail, ye sons of men, and quake;
Bow the heart, and bend, and break.

ATHENA

I heard a suppliant cry from far away
Beside Scamander’s stream.
Thence came I speeding with unwearied foot,
To the wingless rustling of my bellying aegis.
Beholding these strange visitants in my land,
The sight dismays me not, though it astounds.
Who are you? I would question all alike,
Both him who sits a suppliant at my image,
And you, so unlike aught begotten of seed.
κλῦθ᾽. ὁ Λατόνς γὰρ ἵνα μ᾽ ἀτιμὸν τίθησι
tόνδ᾽ ἀφαιρούμενος
πτώκα, ματρᾷν ἄγνισμα κύριον φόνου.

ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ
τόδε μέλος, παρακοπά,
παραφορὰ φρενοδαλής,
ὑμνὸς εξ Ἐρινύων,
δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρμικτος, αὐνὰ βροτοῖς.

τούτῳ γὰρ λάχος διανταί
Μοῖρ᾽ ἐπέκλωσεν ἐμπέδως ἔχειν, θνατῶν
tοῖσιν αὐτοφυγίαις ἕμμενεσσόσιν μάταιοι,
tοῖς ὁμαρτείν, ὁφρ′ ἂν
γὰν ύπελθῆ. θανῶν δ᾽ οὐκ ἄγαν ἐλεύθερος.

ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῃ
τόδε μέλος, παρακοπά,
παραφορὰ φρενοδαλῆς,
ὑμνὸς εξ Ἐρινύων,
δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρμικτος, αὐνὰ βροτοῖς.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

πρόσωθεν ἐξήκουσα κληδόνος βοὴν
ἀπὸ Σκαμάνδρου.
ἐνθεν διώκουσ᾽ ἠλθον ἄτρυτον πόδα,
πτερῶν ἀτερ ῥοιβδοῦσα κόλπον αἰγίδος.
καὶνὴν δ᾽ ὀρῶσα τίνῳ ὀμιλίαιν χθονὸς
ταρβῷ μὲν οὐδέν, θαῦμα δ᾽ ὀμμασίν πάρα.
τίνεις ποτε ἔστε; πάσι δ᾽ ἐς κοῦνον λέγω.
βρέτας τε τοῦμον τῷ ἐφημένῳ ἡμνῷ,
ὑμᾶς θ᾽ ὀμοίας οὐδενὶ σπαρτῶν γένει.
Ch. Thou shalt hear all in brief, daughter of Zeus.
   We are Night's eternal children. In our homes
   Below the earth, the Curses are we called.
   Slayers of men we hunt forth from all homes.

Ath. And the slayer's flight—where is the end of it?
Ch. Where happiness is no more to be found.
Ath. Is the flight such whereon you hound this man?
Ch. Yes, for he dared to be his mother's murderer.
Ath. Was there no other power, whose wrath he feared?
Ch. What goad so strong as to compel matricide?
Ath. There are two parties here, and but one plea.
Ch. Well, question him, then judge with equity.

Ath. What reply, stranger, wouldst thou make to this?
   But tell me first thy country and thy lineage,
   And thy misfortunes; then repel this charge.

Or. Sovereign Athena,
   I seek no absolution, nor with hand
   Polluted to thine image do I cling.
   Long since have I been duly purified
   Elsewhere, with victim and with lustral stream.
Hear now my race. In Argos was I born.
My sire, to whom thy question fitly leads,
Was Agamemnon, chieftain of warrior seamen,
With whose aid thou didst make the city of Troy
No more a city. He returning home
Died shamefully, by my black-souled mother slain,
Enveloped in a cunning snare, that still
Remained as witness of that murderous bath.
So I slew her who bare me, I deny it not,
Requiting thus my beloved father's blood.
And herein Loxias shares the guilt with me.
If I did right or no, be thou the judge.
Whate'er my fate, from thee will I accept it.
Xo. πεύσει τὰ πάντα συντόμως; Δίος κόρη.

ήμεις γάρ ἐσμεν Νυκτὸς αἰανῆ τέκνα.

'Αραί δ' ἐν οἴκοις γῆς ὑπαί κεκλήμεθα.

βροτοκτονοῦντας ἐκ δόμων ἐλαύνομεν.

Λ. θ. καὶ τῷ κτανόντι ποῦ τὸ τέρμα τῆς φυγῆς;

Xo. ὅπου τὸ χαίρειν μηδαμοῦ νομίζεται.

Λ. θ. ἦ καὶ τοιαύτας τῶν ἐπιρροοῦσίς φυγάς;

Xo. φονεύς γάρ εἶναι μητρὸς ἡξιώσατο.

Λ. θ. ἄλλαις ἀνάγκαις, ἦ τινος τρέων κότον;

Xo. ποῦ γὰρ τοσοῦτο κέντρον ὡς μητροκτονεῖν;

Λ. θ. δυνοὶ παρόντων ἡμῖνος λόγος πάρα.

Xo. ἀλλ' ἔξελεγχε, κρῖνε δ' εὐθείαν δίκην.

Λ. θ. τί πρὸς τάδ' εἰπεῖν, ὦ ἥγεν', ἐν μέρει θέλεις;

λέξας δὲ χώραν καὶ γένος καὶ ἐμφόρας

τὰς σᾶς, ἐπειτὰ τῶν ἀμυναθοῦ ψόγου.

Ορ. ἰνασσ᾽ Ἀθάνα,

οὐκ εἰμὶ προστρόπαιος, οὔτ' ἐχὼν μύσος

πρὸς χειρὶ τῆμη τὸ σὸν ἐφεξόμην βρέτας.

πάλαι πρὸς ἄλλοις ταῦτ' ἀφιερώμεθα

οὐκοισι, καὶ βοτοίσι καὶ ρυτοῖς πόροις.

γένος δὲ τοῦμὸν ὡς ἔχει πεύσει τάχα.

'Αργεῖος εἰμὶ, πατέρα δ' ἱστορεῖς καλῶς,

'Αγαμέμνον', ἀνδρῶν ναυβατῶν ἀρμόστορα;

ξιν' φ' σὺ Τροίαν ἀπολιν Ἰλίου πόλιν

ἔθηκας. ἔφθιβ' οὕτος οὐ γαλῶς, μολῶν

eis oikou. ἀλλαὶ νῦν κελαινόφρων ἐμῇ

μῆτηρ κατέκτα, ποικίλοις ἀγρεύμασι

κρύψασ', ἀ λουτρῶν ἐξεμαρτύρει φόνον·

ἐκτείνα τὴν τεκούσαν, οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι,

ἀντικτόνως ποιναίσι φιλτάτου πατρός.

καὶ τώνε δε κοινὴ Δοξίας μεταίτιος.

σὺ δ' εἰ δικαίως εἴτε μὴ κρίνων δίκην

πράξας γὰρ ἐν σοὶ πανταχ' τάδ' αἰνέωσω.
The matter is too grave for any mortal
To presume to try it: nor may I myself
Lawfully judge a case of passionate murder.
But since this cause has lighted on our city,
I will appoint judges of murder, bound
By oath, to be an ordinance for all time.
When I have chosen the best among my citizens,
I will return to sift this matter truly.

Now shall justice wholly fail,
Fade and faint, cease to be,
If the slayer's wrongful plaint,
Here in plea, dare prevail.
Such a deed
Not a sinner but shall find
All too featly to his mind.

Give to fear her proper seat.
Still to watch the wanton thought
Let her sit, as just and meet:
Sigh and tear,
Wisdom must with these be bought.

Praise not thou the slavish lot,
And the lawless, praise it not,
Praise it not.
Blest is the mean; go thou ever between, and God
shall prosper the going.
Wisely sayeth the ancient rede,
“Naughtiness gendereth pride, as the fruit of the
But in the wholesome heart [seed]:
Good hopes, good wishes start:
And good rewards the sowing.

1 This Ode (lines 291–341) was translated by the late Dr A. W. Verrall.
Δθ. τὸ πράγμα μεῖζον, εἴ τις οἴεται τὸδε
βροτὸς δικάζειν· οὖνδε μὴν ἔμοι θέμις
φόνου διαίρειν δξυμηνίτους δίκας·
ἐπεὶ δὲ πράγμα δεύρ’ ἐπέσκηψεν τὸδε,
φόνων δικαστὰς ὀρκίους αἴρουμένη
θεσμὸν τὸν εἰς ἀπαντ’ ἕγω θήσω χρόνον.
κρίνασα δ’ ἀστῶν τῶν ἔμοι τὰ βέλτατα
ηξω, διαίρειν τοῦτο πράγμ’ ἐτητύμως.

Χο. νῦν καταστροφαὶ νέων
θεσμίων, εἰ κρατή-
σει δίκα τε καὶ βλάβα
tοῦδε ματροκτόνου.
πάντας ἢδη τὸδ’ ἔργον εὐχερεὶ-
α συναρμόσει βροτοὺς.
ἐσθ’ ὧπου τὸ δεινὸν εὖ,
καὶ φρενῶν ἐπίσκοπον
dei μένειν καθήμενον:
ξυμφέρει
σωφρονεῖν ὕπὸ στένει.
μῆτ’ ἀνάρχετον βίον
μῆτε δεσποτοῦμενον
αἰνέσης.
παντὶ μέσῳ τὸ κράτος
θεὸς ὑπασεῖν, ἂλλ’
ἀλλα δ’ ἐφορεύει.
ξύμμετρον δ’ ἔπος λέγω,
δυσσεβίας μὲν ύβρις
tέκος ὡς ἐτύμως·
ἐκ δ’ ὑγιεί-
ας φρενῶν ὁ πάμφιλος
καὶ πολύευκτος ὀλβος.
Then be this thy constant law,
Throned Right to hold in awe,
Hold in awe:
Which if thou spurn for a profit to earn, wait awhile,
then weep thy deception,
When the balance stands redrest.
Honour then father and mother, who looks to be
Give to the stranger too
Within the gates his due:
Let him have large reception.

Who free of will
Doeth right, shall prosper still;
Mercy comes behind him.
Destroyed quite
Sure ye shall not find him.
The bold in sin
By transgression shall not win;
Nor gathered heap
Of guilty spoil shall keep.
Perforce he scatters bulk and bale.
When from the tops the halyard drops,
When sinks the sail,—then mind him!

He prays—he raves—
Wrestles—Ah! the grasping waves
Will not be prevented,
But laugh, Aha!
Ha! for spite contented!
The fool, whose pride
Wind and waters' worst defied,
With helpless hand
Beating off he beats to land!
ἐσ τὸ πᾶν δὲ σοι λέγω,
βωμὸν αἳδεσαι δίκας·
μηδὲ νῦν
κέρδος ἰδὼν ἠθέρ
ποδὶ λαξ ἀτίσης·
ποινὰ γὰρ ἐπέσται.
κύριον μὲνει τέλος.
πρὸς τάδε τις τοκέων
σέβας εὐ προτίων
καὶ ξενοτίμους δόμων ἐπιστροφᾶς
αιδόμενός τις ἐστω.

ἐκὼν δ' ἀνάγκας ἀτερ δίκαιος ὄν
οὐκ ἀνολβος ἐσται·
πανώλεθρος δ' οὐποτ' ἀν γένοιτο.
tὸν ἀντίτολον δὲ φαμι παρβάδαν
ἀγοντα πολλὰ παντόφυρτ' ἀνευ δίκας
βιαιως ξὺν χρόνῳ καθήσεων
λαῖφος, ὅταν λάβη πόνος
θραυσμένας κεραίας.

καλεὶ δ' ἀκούοντας οὐδὲν ἐν μέσα
δυσπαλεῖ τε δίνα·
γελὰ δὲ δαίμων ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θερμῷ,
tὸν οὐποτ' αὐχοῦντ' ἰδὼν ἀμαχάνοις
δύαις λαπαδύνον οὐδ' ὑπερθεόντ' ἀκραν·
One touch of fate with swift surprise
Wrecks the gay freight; he sinks, he dies,
Lost and of none lamented!

_Ath._ Proclaim now, Herald: bid the folk be still.
And let the Tyrrhene trumpet, with shrill note
Piercing the heavens, filled with breath of man,
Utter its high-pitched message to the throng.
In silence let my ordinance be heard
By this whole city, for all time to come,
And by these, that their suit be rightly judged.
Sovereign Apollo, rule what is thine own.
How in this business, pray, art thou concerned?

_Ap._ I come, first to give witness,—for my house,
My hearth received this man as suppliant,
And it was I who purged him of this murder,—
To plead too for myself; for I was cause
Of his mother's slaying. Open thou the case
In such form as thy wisdom may think best.

_Ath._ The word is now with you. The case is opened.

_Ch._ Many we are, but briefly will we speak.
Sentence for sentence do thou make reply.
Say first, art thou thy mother's murderer?

_Or._ I slew her. That fact there is no denying.

_Ch._ Of the three falls already here is one.
But how it was you slew her, you must say.

_Or._ I will. With a sword I stabbed her in the throat.

_Ch._ And who suggested, who advised the deed?

_Or._ The oracle of this God. He bears me witness.

_Ch._ Did he, the seer, prompt you to matricide?

_Or._ Apollo, be thou witness now: pronounce
Whether it was with justice that I slew her.
δι' αἰώνος δὲ τον πρὶν ὄλβον
ἐρματι προσβαλὼν δίκας
ὡλετ' ἁκλαυτος, ἁστος.

Αθ. κήρυσσε, κηρυξ, καὶ στρατὸν κατειργαθοῦ, ἥ τ' οὖν διάτορος αἰθέρος Τυρσηνικὴ
σάλπιγξ βροτεῖον πνεύματος πληρομμένη
ὑπέρτονον γῆρυμα φαινέτω στρατῷ.

σιγᾶν ἀρίγει καὶ μαθεῖν θεσμοὺς ἐμοὺς
πόλιν τε πᾶσαν ἐς τὸν αἰανὴ χρόνον
καὶ τούσδ', ὅπως ἄν εὖ διαγνωσθῇ δίκη—
ἀναξ' Απολλων, ὅ้ว ἔχεις αὐτὸς κράτει.

τί τούδε σοι μέτεστι πράγματος λέγε.

Απ. καὶ μαρτυρήσων ἥλθον—ἔστι γὰρ νόμῳ
ἰκέτης ὁδ' ἀνήρ καὶ δόμων ἐφέστιος
ἐμῶν, φόνου δὲ τοῦ ἐγὼ καθάρσιος—
καὶ ξυνδικήσων αὐτὸς· αἰτίαν δ' ἔχω
τής τούδε μητρὸς τοῦ φόνου. σὐ δ' εἴσαγε

ὅπως τ' ἐπίστα τήνδε κύρωσον δίκην.

Αθ. ὕμων ὁ μῦθος, εἰςάγω δὲ τὴν δίκην.

Χο. πολλαὶ μὲν ἔσμεν, λέξομεν δὲ συντόμως.
ἔπος δ' ἀμείβου πρὸς ἔπος ἐν μέρει τιθείς.
τὴν μητέρ' εἰπὲ πρῶτον εἰ κατέκτοις.

Ορ. ἔκτεινα. τοῦτον δ' οὕτως ἄρνησις πέλει.
Χο. ἐν μὲν τὸδ' ἥδη τῶν τριῶν παλαισμάτων.
eἰπεῖν γε μέντοι δεὶ σ' ὅπως κατέκτανες.

Ορ. λέγω. ξιφουλκῶ χειρὶ πρὸς δέρην τεμών.
Χο. πρὸς τοῦ δ' ἔπεισθης καὶ τίνος βουλεύμασι; 365
Ορ. τοῖς τούδε θεσφάτοισι· μαρτυρεῖ δὲ μοι.
Χο. ὃ μάντις ἐξηγεῖτό σοι μητροκτονεῖν;
Ορ. ἥδη σὺ μαρτυρήσον. ἐξηγεῖ δὲ μοι,

'Απολλων, εἴ σφε σὺν δίκη κατέκτανον.
To you, the high court of Athena, honest
Shall be my words. A prophet may not lie.
Never from mantic throne have I said aught
Save by command of Zeus, the Olympian Father.

So Zeus gave thee this oracle, that bade
This Orestes to avenge his father's blood
Regardless of a mother's claim to awe?

Nay, it was far worse shame that a noble man,
Endowed with god-given royalty, should die,
And that by a woman's hand.

So a father's fate, you say, wins more respect
From Zeus, who himself enchained his old sire Cronos.

O loathly, brutish monsters, heaven-abhorred!
Fetters he might undo: there is cure for that;
Yea many the means to loosen what is bound.
But when the dust hath swallowed a man's blood,
Once dead, there is no raising of him then.
No healing charm hath Zeus my father made
For that: all else now high now low he shifts
And turns about with no least breath of toil.

See what it means, thy plea in his defence.
His mother's kindred blood he spilt on the earth.
Shall his father's house in Argos yet be his?
What altar of public worship shall he use?
What brotherhood will admit him to its rites?

This too will I expound; and mark how justly.
The mother of her so-called child is not
Parent, but nurse of the young life sown in her.
The male is parent: she, but a stranger to him,
Keeps safe his growing plant, unless fate blight it.
Of this truth I will show you evidence.
A sire may beget without a mother. Here
THE EUMENIDES

Απ. λέξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς τὸν Ἄθηναιάς μέγαν θεσμὸν δικαίως, μάντις ὦν δ' οὐ ψεύσομαι. οὐπώποτε ἐπὶ μαντικοῖς ἐν θρόνοις, ὥ μὴ κελεύσαι Ζεὺς Ὀλυμπίων πατήρ.

Χο. Ζεὺς, ὥς λέγεις σὺ, τὸν δέ χρησμὸν ὑπασε, φράζειν Ὅρεστῃ τῶδε, τὸν πατρὸς φόνον πράξαντα μητρὸς μηδαμοῦ τιμᾶς νέμειν; 375

Απ. οὐ γὰρ τι ταῦτα ἄνδρα γενναίον θανείν διοσδότοις σκήπτρουσι τιμαλφούμενον, καὶ ταῦτα πρὸς γυναικὸς.

Χο. πατρὸς προτιμᾶ Ζεὺς μόρον τῷ σῷ λόγῳ· αὐτὸς δ' ἐδησε πατέρα πρεσβύτην Κρόνου. 380

Απ. ὁ παντομισθή κνώδαλα, στῦγη θεῶν, πέδαι μὲν ἀν λυθεῖν, ἐστὶ τοὐδ' ἄκος, καὶ κάρτα πολλή μυχαίη λυτήριος· ἄνδρός δ' ἐπειδὰν αἵμ' ἀναστάσῃ κόνις ἀπαξ θανόντος, οὕτως ἐστ' ἀνάστασις. τοῦτων ἐπιφάνεις οὐκ ἐποίησεν πατήρ οὐμός, τὰ δ' ἀλλα πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω στρέφων τίθησιν οὐδὲν ἀσθμαίνων μένει. 385

Χο. πῶς γὰρ τὸ φεύγειν τοὐδ' ὑπερδικεῖσ ὁρα· τὸ μητρὸς αἵμ' ὁμαίμοιν ἐκχέας πέδοι ἐπειτ' ἐν Ἀργεὶ δώματ' οἰκήσει πατρός; ποίοσι βωμοὶς χρώμενοι τοῖς δημίοισ; ποία δὲ χέρνυψ φρατέρων προσδέεται; 390

Απ. καὶ τοῦτο λέξω, καὶ μάθ' ὧς ὅρθως ἐρῶ. οὐκ ἐστὶ μῆτηρ ἡ κεκλημένου τέκνου τοκεύς, τροφὸς δὲ κύματος νεοστόρου. τίκτει δ' ὁ θρόσκων, ἡ δ' ἀπερ ξένω ξένη ἐσωσεν ἔρνος, οὐσὶ μὴ βλάψῃ θεός. τεκμήριον δὲ τοῦτο σοι δεῖξο λόγον· 395

πατήρ μὲν ἂν γένοιτ' ἄνευ μητρός· πέλασ
My witness stands, child of Olympian Zeus, 
Who grew not in the darkness of a womb, 
Yet plant so fair no goddess could bring forth. 

_Ath._ Has enough now been said; and may I bid 
These judges give their true and honest vote? 

_Ch._ For our part, all our shafts have now been shot. 
I wait to hear how the issue shall be judged. 

_Ath._ And you? Are you content I order so? 

_Ap._ You have heard what you have heard. Friends, give your votes; 
And let your hearts pay reverence to your oath. 

_Ath._ Hear now my ordinance, people of Athens, 
Judges of the first trial for shed blood. 
Here for all time to come shall Aegeus’ folk 
Meet as a jurors’ council on this rock, 
The Hill of Ares. Thereon Reverence, 
And Fear, its kinsman, among my citizens 
Shall check wrong-doing night and day alike. 
Neither ungoverned nor tyrannical, 
Such rule I bid you venerate and maintain. 
Nor wholly from the city banish dread; 
For what mortal is righteous who fears naught? 
Such be your reverence and your righteous awe, 
And you shall have, to guard your land and town, 
A bulwark such as none elsewhere possess, 
Not mid the Scythians, nor in Pelops’ isle. 
Pure from corruption, reverend, quick to wrath, 
Such the tribunal I establish here, 
A vigilant guardian of the land’s repose. 
To exhort my citizens for times to come, 
At such length have I spoken. Now let each rise 
And take his ballot, and decide the cause 
With reverence for his oath. My words are ended.
μάρτυς πάρεστι παῖς Ὀλυμπίου Δίος, οὖκ ἐν σκότοις νηδύος τεθραμμένη, ἀλλ’ οἶον ἔρνος οὕτως ἄν τέκοι θεός.

Α. θ. ἦδη κελεύω τούσδ’ ἀπὸ γνώμης φέρειν ψήφον δικαίαν, ὡς ἄλις λελεγμένων;

Χ. ο. ὑμῖν μὲν ἦδη πὰν τετὸξευται βέλους. μένω δ’ ἄκοισαι πῶς ἄγων κριθήσεται.

Α. θ. τί γὰρ; πρὸς ὑμῶν πῶς πιθεῖ σ’ ἀμομφος ὃ;

Α. π. ἠκούσαθ’ ὧν ἠκούσσα, ἐν δὲ καρδία
ψήφον φέροντες ὀρκον αἴδευσθε, ξένοι.

Α. θ. κλύοιτ’ ἄν ἦδη θεσμόν, Ἀττικὸς λεώς,
πρῶτας δίκας κρίσσουντες αἵματος χυτοῦ. ἐσται δὲ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν Ἀιγέως στρατὸς
αἰεὶ δικαστῶν τούτῳ βουλευτήριον,
πέτρα, πάγος τ’ Ἀρείους. ἐν δὲ τῷ σέβας
ἀστῶν φόβος τε ἔνιγγείης τὸ μὴ ἓρκεῖν
σχῆσεὶ τὸ τ’ ἤμαρ καὶ κατ’ εὐφρόνην ὁμῶς.
τὸ μήτ’ ἄναρχον μήτε δεσποτούμενον
ἀστοῖς περιστέλλουσι βουλεύω σέβειν,
καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πὰν πόλεως ἐξω βαλείν.
τίς γὰρ δεδοκὼς μηδὲν ἐνδίκος βροτῶν;
τοιοῦδε τοῖς παρβοῦντες ἐνδίκος σέβας
ἐρμαί τε χώρας καὶ πόλεως σωτηρίουν
ἐχούτ’ ἀν, οἶον οὕτως ἄνθρώπων ἐχει,
οὗτ’ ἐν Σκύθαισι ὑπερ Πέλοπος ἐν τόποις.
κερδῶν ἀθικτὸν τοῦτο βουλευτήριον,
αἰδοῖον, ὄξυθυμον, εὐθύνων ὑπερ
ἐγρηγορὸς φρούρημα γῆς καθέσταμαι.
ταύτην μὲν ἐξέτειν’ ἐμοῖς παραίνεσιν
ἀστοῖσιν ἐς τὸ λοιπὸν. ὀρθοῦσθαι δὲ χρὴ
cαὶ ψήφον αἴρειν καὶ διαγνώσαι δίκην
αἰδοιουμένους τὸν ὀρκον. εἰρηται λόγος.
Dangerous visitants are we to your land.
Do not affront us then, I counsel you.

And I say, dread my oracles, wherein
Zeus also speaks his will. Foil not their fruit.

You talk! But I, if I gain not my cause,
Will soon revisit and chastise this land.

Among the young gods and the elder too
You are despised. The victory shall be mine.

Since thy young violence over-rides our age,
I wait to hear the verdict, still in doubt
Whether to wreak my wrath against the town.

Mine shall this task be, to give judgment last;
And this my vote to Orestes will I reckon.
For of no mother was I born: in all,
Save to be wedded, with whole heart I approve
The male. I am strongly of the father's side.
Therefore a wife's fate shall I less esteem,
Who slew her husband, the master of her house.
Orestes wins, even with equal votes.
Forthwith turn out the ballots from the urns,
You judges to whom that function is assigned.

O bright Apollo, how will the judgment go?
O Night, dark Mother, dost thou behold these things?
For me 'tis now the noose, or life's light still.

For us, ruin, or worship without end.
Number aright the votes cast out, my friends.
As you divide them, reverence honesty.

This man is acquitted of blood-guiltiness;
For equal is the number of the lots.

O Pallas! O thou saviour of my house!
Yea, thus to my lost fatherland hast thou
Restored me: and through Hellas men shall say,
THE EUMENIDES

Χο. καὶ μὴν βαρεῖαν τήνδ᾿ ὀμιλίαν χθονὸς 
ξυμβουλὸς εἰμι μηδαμώς ἀτιμᾶσαι.

Ἀπ. κάγωνε χρήσους τούς ἐμοὺς τε καὶ Διὸς 
ταρβεῖν κελευὼ μηδ᾿ ἀκαρπῶτος κτίσαι.

Χο. λέγεις· ἐγὼ δὲ μὴ τυχοῦσα τῆς δίκης 
βαρεῖα χώρα τῆδ᾿ ὀμιλήσω πάλιν.

Ἀπ. ἄλλ᾿ ἐν τε τοῖς νέοισι καὶ παλαιτέροις 
θεοῖς ἀτίμος εἰ σὺ· νικήσω δ᾿ ἐγώ.

Χο. ἔπει καθιστάζει με πρεσβύτων νέος, 
δίκης γενέσθαι τῆσδ᾿ ἐπίκοος μένω, 
ὡς ἀμφίβουλος οὔσα θυμοῦσθαι πόλει.

Ἀθ. ἔμοι τὸδ᾿ ἔργον, λοισθίαν κρίναι δίκην·
ψήφου δ᾿ ὁρέστῃ τήνδ᾿ ἐγὼ προσθήσομαι.
μήτηρ γὰρ οὔτις ἔστιν ἡ μ᾿ ἐγείνατο,
τὸ δ᾿ ἄρσεν αἶνῳ πάντα, πλὴν γάμου τυχεῖν,
ἀπαντὶ θυμῷ, κάρτα δ᾿ εἰμὶ τοῦ πατρός.
οὔτω γυναικὸς οὐ προτιμήσω μόρον
ἀνδρα κτανούσης δωμάτων ἐπίσκοπον.
νικᾷ δ᾿ ὁρέστῃ, καὶ ἴσόψηφος κριθῆ.
ἐκβάλλεθ᾿ ὡς τάχιστα τευχέων πάλους,
ὀσοῖς δικαστῶν τοῦτ᾿ ἐπέσταλται τέλος.

Ὀρ. ὁ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων, πῶς ἄγων κριθῆσεται;
Χο. ὁ Νυξ μέλαινα μήτερ, ἄρ᾿ ὀρᾶς τάδε;
Ὀρ. νῦν ἀγχοῦνης μοι τέρματ᾿, ἡ φάος βλέπειν.
Χο. ἡμῖν γὰρ ἔρρειν, ἡ πρόσω τιμᾶς νέμειν.
Ἀπ. πεμπάζετ ὀρθῶς ἐκβολᾶς ψήφων, ξένωι,
τὸ μὴ δίκειν σέβοντες ἐν διαφέσει.

Ἀθ. ἀνὴρ ὅδ᾿ ἐκπέφευγεν αἵματος δίκην·
ἰσον γὰρ ἐστὶ τάριθμῳ τῶν πάλων.
Ὀρ. ὁ Παλλᾶς, ὁ σῶσασα τοὺς ἐμοὺς δόμους,
γαῖας πατρφας ἐστερημένου σὺ τοι
κατόκισας μὲ· καὶ τις Ἑλλῆνων ἔρει,
"He is again an Argive, and may dwell
In his sire's heritage, by help of Pallas,
And Loxias, last of Him who ordaineth all,
The Saviour." Pitying my sire's fate, he looked
On these, my mother's advocates, and saved me.
Farewell. May thou and this thy city's people
Grapple your foes in a resistless grip,
Till safety and victorious arms be yours.

[Exit Orestes.]

Ch. Oh shame, ye younger deities! The old, holy laws
Ye have ridden down, and stolen from our hands the
prey.
But I, dishonoured, grief-afflicted, heavily wroth,
On this land accurst
Poison, poison, woe for woe, drops of sterile influence
Will I drip down to earth, hot from my heart; and
thence
Birth-killing blight, bud-withering, (Oh revenge!)
Scattering over the ground,
Shall sow the soil with man-destroying blots of
Oh wail! wail!—How act now? [plague.
I am mocked, mocked.—A sore grief
To Athens be my wrongs!
Alas, heavy the wrongs
We bear, Maids of Night,
Mourning our loss of honour.

Ath. I pray you, do not grieve thus bitterly.
You are not vanquished; but in equal votes
The cause ends, fairly, not to your dishonour.
Then be not passionate; hurl no wrathful threats
Against this land, nor cause sterility
"Ἄργειος ἄνήρ αὖθις ἐν τε χρήμασιν οἶκεὶ πατρῷοι, Παλλάδος καὶ Δοξίου ἐκατί, καὶ τοῦ πάντα κραίνοντος τρίτου σωτήρος," ὥς πατρῷον αἰδεσθεὶς μόρον σφέζει με, μετρὸς τάσδε συνδίκους ὀρῶν. καὶ χαίρε, καὶ σὺ καὶ πολισσούχος λεώς· πάλαισμ’ ἁφυκτὸν τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἔχοις, σωτηρίον τε καὶ δορὸς νικηφόρον.

[Exit Orestes.]

Χο. ἵωθεοὶ νεώτεροι, παλαιοὺς νόμους καθιτπάσασθε κὰκ χερῶν εἰλεσθέ μοι. ἐγὼ δ’ ἄτιμος ἀ τάλαϊνα βαρύκτος ἐν γὰ τάδε, φεῦ, ἵνα τίν ἄντιπενθῇ μεθεισα καρδίας, σταλαγμοῖν χθονί ἄφορον· ἐκ δὲ τοῦ λειχὴν ἄφυλλος, ἄτεκνος, ἰὼ δίκα, πέδου ἐπισύμενος βροτοφθόρους κηλίδας ἐν χώρα βαλεί. στενάξω; τί βέξω; γελόμαι· δύσοιστα πολίταις ἐπαθον· ἰὼ μεγάλα τοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς Νυκτὸς ἀτιμοπευθεῖς.

Α. ἐμοὶ πίθεσθε μὴ βαρυστόνως φέρειν. οὐ γὰρ νεικίσθ’ ἀλλ’ ἵσώψιφος δίκη ἐξῆλθ’ ἀληθῶς, οὐκ ἀτιμία σέθεν· ύμεῖς δὲ μὴ θυμοῦσθε μηδὲ τῇ δε γῇ βαρῶν κότον σκῆψητε, μηδ’ ἀκαρπίαν.
By shedding venomous drops of magic dew.
For here I promise you most faithfully
A cavern for your shrine in sacred ground,
Where on bright altars you shall sit enthroned,
Adored and worshipped by my citizens.

Ch. Oh wail! wail!—How act now?
   I am mocked, mocked.—A sore grief
To Athens be my wrongs!
Alas, heavy the wrongs
We bear, Maids of Night,
Mourning our loss of honour.

Ath. Ye are not dishonoured: then restrain your wrath.
   Being gods, plague not with spells a land of mortals.
   I put my trust in Zeus: what need to say it?
   Alone of gods I know the keys that open
   The chamber where the thunder is sealed up.
   But of that there is no need. Be counselled by me:
   Sow not the earth with fruit of a wild tongue.
   Calm the black billowing wave’s fierce violence:
   Become the revered partner of my home.

Ch. We to endure such a shame!
   We the primævally wise! thus domiciled, thus
Dishonouring, shameful thought! housed!
I breathe forth passionate rage, uttermost wrath.
Oh! Oh! Shame! Foul!
What is this agony—this that assails my breast?
Hear my fury, O Mother tricks,
Night: for the gods have robbed me by vile crafty
Stolen my ancient honours, brought low my pride.

Ath. I will indulge thy moods, for thou art elder.
   But if you pass to a land of other folk,


τεύξητ’, ἀφείσαι δαιμόνων σταλάγματα. 495
ἐγὼ γὰρ υμῖν πανδίκως ὑπίσχομαι
έδρας τε καὶ κευθμόνας ἐνδίκου χθονὸς
λιπαροθρόνοισιν ἡμένας ἐπ’ ἐσχάραις
ἐξειν ὑπ’ ἀστῶν τῶν δε τιμαλφομένας.

Χο. στενάξω; τί βέξω;
γελῶμαι· δύσοιστα
πολίταις ἔπαθον.
ἰὼ μεγάλα τοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς
Νυκτὸς ἀτιμοπενθεῖς.

Ἀθ. οὔκ ἐστ’ ἀτιμοὶ, μηδ’ ὑπερθύμως ἄγαν
θεαὶ βροτῶν κτίσητε δύσκηλον χθόνα.
κάγῳ πέποιθα Ζηνι, καὶ τί δεὶ λέγειν;
καὶ κλῆδας οἶδα δῶματος μόνη θεῶν,
ἐν ὕ κεραυνός ἐστιν ἐσφραγισμένος·
ἀλλ’ οὐδέν αὐτοῦ δεὶ· σὺ δ’ εὐπτιθῆς ἐμοὶ
γλώσσης ματαίας μὴ ἱβάλης ἐπὶ χθονί,
καρπὸν φέροντα πάντα μὴ πράσσειν καλῶς.
κοίμα κελαινοῦ κύματος πικρῶν μένος
ὡς σεμνότιμος καὶ ξυνοικίτωρ ἐμοὶ.

Χο. ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε, φεῦ,
ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα κατά τε γάς οἰκεῖν,
φεῦ, ἀτίετον μύσος.
πνέω τοι μένος ἀπαντά τε κότον.
οὐδ’ δὰ, φεῦ.
τίς μ’ ὑποδύεται, τίς ὄδύνα πλευράς;
θυμὸν ἀιε, μάτερ

Νῦξ: ἀπὸ γὰρ με τι-
μᾶν δαναιὰν θεῶν
dυσπάλαιμοι παρ’ οὐδὲν ἥραν δόλοι.

Ἀθ. ὀργὰς ξυνοίσω σοι· γεραῖτέρα γὰρ εἰ.
ὕμεῖς δ’ ἐς ἀλλόφυλον ἐλθοῦσιν χθόνα
You will regret our Athens, I forewarn you. For to her citizens time's stream shall flow With larger honour; whilst thou, honourably Enshrined by Erechtheus' temple, shalt receive From adoring troops of men and women, more Than thou couldst hope in the wide world beside.

_Ch._ We to endure such a shame!
We the primaevaly wise! thus domiciled, thus Dishonouring, shameful thought! [housed!

_Ath._ I will not weary of speaking thee fair words. No, if divine Persuasion, the soothing charm And magic of my tongue, be sacred to thee, Then here abide: but if thou wouldst not stay, Thou canst not justly afflict this city's folk With wrath or hate, or do them any hurt. For thou mayst claim thy portion in her soil Rightfully, with all honourable worship.

_Ch._ Athena, what is this home thou offerest me? 
_Ath._ One from all sorrow free. Accept it now.

_Ch._ Say I accept: what privilege shall be mine? 
_Ath._ That without thee no household shall have increase.

_Ch._ Canst thou endow me with such power as that? 
_Ath._ Aye, we will bless thy votaries with good fortune.

_Ch._ And wilt thou give me warrant for all time? 
_Ath._ No need to promise what I would not do.

_Ch._ I feel thy soothing charm: my wrath abates.

We accept.
Here with Pallas let us dwell.
Scorn we not her citadel
By almighty Zeus and Ares cherished
As the fortress of the gods,
γῆς τῆς ἔρασθήσεσθε: προωνύπω τάδε.
oυπιρρέων γὰρ τιμιώτερος χρόνος
ἔσται πολύτατος τοῖςδε. καὶ σὺ τιμίαν
ἐδραν ἔχουσα πρὸς δόμοις Ἕρεξθέως
teûxi par' ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικείων στόλων, 530
ὁσῶν παρ' ἄλλων οὐποτ' ἄν σχέθοις βροτῶν.

Χο. ἐμὲ παθεὶν τάδε, φεῦ,
ἐμὲ παλαίοφρονα κατά τε γὰς οἰκεῖν,
φεῦ, ἀτίετον μῦσος.

Λθ. οὕτω καμοῦμαί σοι λέγουσα τάγαθα.
ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἁγνὸν ἐστὶ σοι Πειθοῦς σέβας,
γλώσσης ἐμῆς μείλιγμα καὶ θελκτήριον,
σὺ δ' οὖν μένοις ἂν: εἰ δὲ μὴ θέλεις μένειν,
οὐ τὰν δικαίως τῇδ' ἐπιρρέποις πόλει
μὴν ἢν τῶν κότων τῷ ἤ βλάβην στρατῷ.
540
ἐξεστὶ γὰρ σοι τῆςδε γαμόρω χθονὸς
εἴναι δικαίως ἐς τὸ πᾶν τιμωμένη.

Χο. ἀνασο' Ἀθάνα, τῖνα με φῆς ἐχειν ἐδραν;
Λθ. πάσης ἀπῆμον οἰξύς: δέχομαι δὲ σύ.
Χο. καὶ δὴ δέδεγμαι· τὸς δὲ μοι τιμὴ μένει;
Λθ. ὡς μὴ τῶν οἶκου εὐθενεῖν ἀνευ σέθεν.
Χο. σὺ τούτῳ πράξεις, ὡστε με σθένειν τόσον;
Λθ. τῷ γὰρ σέβομαι συμφορὰς ὀρθόσωμεν.
Χο. καὶ μοι πρὸπαντος ἐγγύην θήσει χρόνου;
Λθ. ἐξεστὶ γὰρ μοι μὴ λέγειν ἄ μὴ τελώ.
550
Χο. θέλξειν μ' ἐοικας καὶ μεθίσταμαι κότον.

dέξομαι Παλλάδος ξυνοικίαν,
οὐδ' ἀτιμάσω τόλιν,
tὰν καὶ Ζεῦς ὁ παγκρατίς Ἀρης τε
φρούριον θεῶν νέμει,
Crown of Hellas, guarding
The altars of her deities.

Evil breath
Never blow to hurt her trees:
Such to Athens be my grace.
Never trespass hither scorching wind
To nip the budding eyes of plants.
May no blast of sterile
Blighting plague assail her fields.
And with double births let Pan
At the appointed season bless
The mothers of the thriving flock; and may rich
Teem with abundant offspring,

[Earth Gifts to thank the bounteous gods.

Ath. Hear with what wise speech into the pathway
Of blessing they enter.
Stern and terrible though they appear, yet
Great gain shall they bring you, people of Athens.
If you repay them for kindness with kindness
And reverent worship, this shall your fame be,
To guide both your land
And city in the straight path of justice.

Ch. Joy to you, joy in the wealth that is each man’s
Joy be to this city’s folk!
Lovers are you, and beloved,
Of the Virgin throned by Zeus.
Timely wisdom now is yours,
Sheltered under Pallas’ wings,
Sacred in the Father’s eyes.

Ath. Joy to you also! But before you I go;
For now will I show you your cavern shrines
THE EUMENIDES

ρυσίβωμον Ἐλλάνων ἀγαλμα δαιμόνων.

dενδροπήμων δὲ μὴ πνέοι βλάβα,
tὰν ἐμὰν χάριν λέγω.
φλογμὸς τ' ὀμματοστερῆς φυτῶν, τὸ
μὴ περάν ὄρον τόπων,
μηδ' ἀκαρπὸς αἰαν
νῆς ἐφερπέτω νόσος,
μῆλά τ' εὐθενοῦντα Πάν
ξὺν διπλοῖσιν ἐμβρύοις
tréfoi χρόνω τεταγμένῳ· γόνος δὲ γὰς
πλουτόχθων ἐρμαίαν
dαιμόνων δόσιν τίοι.

Ἀθ. ἀρα φρονοῦσαι γλώσσης ἀγαθῆς
όδὸν εὐρίσκουσ';
ἐκ τῶν φοβερῶν τῶιδε προσώπων
μέγα κέρδος ὥρῳ τοῖσδε πολίταις·
tάσδε γὰρ εὐφρονας εὐφρονες ἦεἰ
μέγα τιμῶντες καὶ γῆν καὶ πόλιν
ὅρθοδικαίον
πρέψετε πάντως διάγοντες.

Χο. χαίρετε χαίρετ' ἐν αἰσιμίαισι πλούτου.
χαίρετ' ἀστικὸς λεώς,
ἔκταρ ἡμένας Διὸς
παρθένου φίλας φίλοι
σωφρονοῦντες ἐν χρόνῳ.
Παλλάδος δ' ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
ὀντας ἅξεται πατήρ.

Ἀθ. χαίρετε χύμεισ· προτέραν δ' ὡμ ἔμε χρή
στείχειν θαλάμους ἀποδείξουσαν.
By the sacred light of these your conductors.
With solemn sacrifice now let us speed you
To your homes in the earth. What will hurt this city,
Emprison it there; but whate'er bringeth gain,
Send forth to increase her with glory.
Lead now these newcomers on their way,
You my citizens, children of Kranaos:
And still in your hearts
For a kind deed let there be kind thoughts.

Ch. Joy to you, joy yet again with a double blessing,
All ye dwellers in this land
Deities and mortal men!
While in Pallas' town ye dwell,
And our rights as denizens
Reverence still, you shall not find
In your life's lot aught unkind.

Ath. Your prayers of benediction I commend,
And by bright-gleaming torch-light will conduct you
Unto your nether subterraneous homes,
Escorted by these ministrants, who guard
My image, (and with right; for 'tis the eye
Of Theseus' land), a fair-famed company
Of maidens and of wives and aged dames.
Drape now our guests in honourable robes
Of crimson. Let the lights move on before.
Erelong shall these new residents show their love
By prospering the manhood of our land.

CHORUS OF THE ESCORT
Pass on your way in the pride of your worship,
Night's dread Children, with glad-hearted escort.
(Silence now for our sacred song!)
πρὸς φῶς ἱερὸν τῶνδε προπομπῶν.
ите καὶ σφαγέων τῶνδ’ ὑπὸ σεμνῶν
κατὰ γῆς σύμεναι τὸ μὲν ἄτηρόν
χώρᾳ κατέχειν, τὸ δὲ κερδαλέον
πέμπειν πόλεως ἐπὶ νίκη.

全力以 δ’ ἵγείσθε, πολυσσοῦχοι
πάιδες Κραναοῦ, ταΐσδε μετοίκοις.
ἐἰη δ’ ἄγαθῶν
ἄγαθή διάνοια πολίταις.

Χο. χαίρετε, χαίρετε δ’ αἵθις, ἔπη διπλάξω,
πάντες οἱ κατὰ πτόλιν,
δαίμονές τε καὶ βροτοί,
Παλλάδος πόλιν νέμον-
tες· μετοικίαν δ’ ἐμὴν
ὲν σέβοντες οὕτι μέμ-
ψεσθε συμφορὰς βίου.

Αθ. αἶνῳ τε μῦθοις τῶνδε τῶν κατευγμάτων
πέμψω τε φέγγης λαμπάδων σελασφόρων
ἐς τους ἔνερθε καὶ κάτω χθονὸς τόπους
ξύν προσπόλοισιν, αὐτε φρουρόσιν βρέτας
τοῦμον δικαίως. ὄμμα γὰρ πάσης χθονὸς
Θησῆδος. ἐξικοῦτ’ ἂν εὐκλείης λόχος
παῖδων, γυναικῶν, καὶ στόλος πρεσβυτίδων.
φωικοβάπτοις εὐδυτοῖς ἐσθήμασι
τιμᾶτε, καὶ τὸ φέγγος ὀρμάσθω πάρος,
ὅπως ἂν εὐφρων ἦδ’ ὀμιλία χθονὸς
tὸ λοιπὸν εὐάνδροισι συμφοράις πρέπη.

ΠΡΟΠΟΜΠΟΙ

βαθ’ ὀδόν, ὦ μεγάλαι φιλότιμοι
Νυκτὸς παίδες, ὑπ’ εὐφρωνι πομπᾶ,
εὐφάμειτε δέ, χωρίται,
There within Earth’s immemorial caverns
Ritual worship and offerings await you.
(Silence all as we wend along!)

Kind and loyal of heart to our land,
Come, ye revered ones, pleased with the festive
Flame-devoured torch, as you pass to your home.
(Cry aloud a refrain to our chorus!)

Let Peace follow with flaring of torches.
Burghers of Pallas, unto this ending
Zeus the all-seeing and Fate have conspired.
(Cry aloud a refrain to our chorus!)
γὰς ὑπὸ κεύθεσιν ὁγυγίοισιν,
tιμαῖς καὶ θυσίαις περίστημι,
eὐφαμεῖτε δὲ πανδαμεῖ.

[ἀντ. α.]

ἐλαοὶ δὲ καὶ εὐθύφρονες γὰ
δεῦρ' ἵτε, σεμναί, ξύν πυριδάπτῳ
λαμπάδι τερπόμεναι καθ' ὄδόν.
ὸλολύξατε νῦν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς.

[ὑπρ. β.]

σπονδαὶ δ' εἰσόπιν ἐνδαίδες ὅτων.
Παλλάδος ἀστῶρ Ζεὺς ὁ πανόπτας
οὔτω Μοῖρα τε συγκατέβα.
ὸλολύξατε νῦν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς.