

ΑΙΣΧΥΛΟΥ ΠΡΟΜΗΘΕΥΣ ΔΕΣΜΩΤΗΣ

Αρχαίο κείμενο και μετάφραση στα αγγλικά

Summary

The play is composed almost entirely of speeches and contains little action since its protagonist is chained and immobile throughout. At the beginning, Kratos (strength), Bia (force), and the smith-god Hephaestus chain the Titan Prometheus to a mountain in the Caucasus and then depart. According to the author, Prometheus is being punished not only for stealing fire, but also for thwarting Zeus's plan to obliterate the human race. This punishment is especially galling since Prometheus was instrumental in Zeus's victory in the Titanomachy.

The Oceanids appear and attempt to comfort Prometheus by conversing with him. Prometheus cryptically tells them that he knows of a potential marriage that would lead to Zeus's downfall. A Titan named Oceanus commiserates with Prometheus and urges him to make peace with Zeus. Prometheus tells the chorus that the gift of fire to mankind was not his only benefaction; in the so-called Catalogue of the Arts (447-506), he reveals that he taught men all the civilizing arts, such as writing, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, metallurgy, architecture and agriculture. Prometheus is then visited by Io, a human maiden pursued by a lustful Zeus; the Olympian transformed Io into a cow, and a gadfly sent by Zeus's wife Hera has chased Io all the way from Argos. Prometheus forecasts Io's future travels, telling her that Zeus will eventually end her torment in Egypt, where she will bear a son named Epaphus. He says one of her descendants (an unnamed Heracles), thirteen generations hence, will release him from his own torment.

Finally, Hermes the messenger-god is sent down by the angered Zeus to demand that Prometheus tell him who threatens to overthrow him. Prometheus refuses, and Zeus strikes him with a thunderbolt that plunges Prometheus into the abyss.

ΑΙΣΧΥΛΟΣ, ΠΡΟΜΗΘΕΥΣ ΔΕΣΜΩΤΗΣ

Prometheus Bound

By Aeschylus

Written ca. 430 B.C.E

Translated by Herbert Weir Smyth

Dramatis Personae

KRATOS

BIA

HEPHAESTUS

PROMETHEUS

CHORUS OF THE OCEANIDES

OCEANUS

IO

Scene

Mountainous country, and in the middle of a deep gorge a Rock, towards which KRATOS and BIA carry the gigantic form of PROMETHEUS. HEPHAESTUS follows dejectedly with hammer, nails, chains, etc.

Εισαγωγή: Προβλήματα, Εισαγωγή

Κράτος

Χθονὸς μὲν ἐς τηλουρὸν ἤκομεν πέδον,
 Ἥφαιστε, σοὶ δὲ χρὴ μέλειν ἐπιστολὰς
 ἅς σοι πατήρ ἐφείτο, τόνδε πρὸς πέτραις
 ὑψηλοκρήμνοις τὸν λεωργὸν ὀχμάσαι **5**
 ἀδαμαντίνων δεσμῶν ἐν ἀρρήκτοις πέδαις.
 τὸ σὸν γὰρ ἄνθος, παντέχνου πυρὸς σέλας,
 θνητοῖσι κλέψας ὥπασεν. τοιᾷσδέ τοι
 ἀμαρτίας σφε δεῖ θεοῖς δοῦναι δίκην,
 ὥς ἂν διδαχθῇ τὴν Διὸς τυραννίδα **10**
 στέργειν, φιλανθρώπου δὲ παύεσθαι τρόπου.

Ἥφαιστος

Κράτος Βία τε, σφῶν μὲν ἐντολὴ Διὸς
 ἔχει τέλος δὴ κούδεν ἐμποδὼν ἔτι·
 ἐγὼ δ' ἄτολμός εἰμι συγγενῇ θεὸν
 δῆσαι βία φάραγγι πρὸς δυσχειμέρῳ. **15**
 πάντως δ' ἀνάγκη τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ τόλμαν σχεθεῖν·
 ἐξωριάζειν γὰρ πατρὸς λόγους βαρύν.
 τῆς ὀρθοβούλου Θέμιδος αἰπυμῆτα παῖ,
 ἄκοντά σ' ἄκων δυσλύτοις χαλκεύμασι
 προσπασσαλεύσω τῷδ' ἀπανθρώπῳ πάγῳ **20**
 ἵν' οὔτε φωνὴν οὔτε του μορφὴν βροτῶν

Power

To earth's remotest limit we come, to the Scythian land, an untrodden solitude. And now, Hephaestus, yours is the charge to observe the mandates laid upon you by the Father—to clamp this miscreant [5] upon the high craggy rocks in shackles of binding adamant that cannot be broken. For your own flower, flashing fire, source of all arts, he has purloined and bestowed upon mortal creatures. Such is his offence; for this he is bound to make requital to the gods, [10] so that he may learn to bear with the sovereignty of Zeus and cease his man-loving ways.

Hephaestus

Power and Force, for you indeed the behest of Zeus is now fulfilled, and nothing remains to stop you. But for me—I do not have the nerve myself [15] to bind with force a kindred god upon this rocky cleft assailed by cruel winter. Yet, come what may, I am constrained to summon courage to this deed; for it is perilous to disregard the commandments of the Father. Lofty-minded son of Themis who counsels straight, against my will, no less than yours, I must rivet you with brazen bonds [20] no hand can loose to this desolate crag, where neither voice nor

ὄψει, σταθευτὸς δ' ἡλίου φοῖβη φλογὶ
 χροιάς ἀμείψεις ἄνθος. ἀσμένω δέ σοι
 ἡ ποικιλείμων νύξ ἀποκρύψει φάος,
 πάχνην θ' ἑώαν ἥλιος σκεδᾷ πάλιν· 25
 αἰὲ δὲ τοῦ παρόντος ἀχθηδὼν κακοῦ
 τρύσει σ'· ὁ λωφήσων γὰρ οὐ πέφυκέ πω.
 τοιαῦτ' ἐπηύρω τοῦ φιλανθρώπου τρόπου.
 θεὸς θεῶν γὰρ οὐχ ὑποπτήσσω χόλον
 βροτοῖσι τιμὰς ὥπασας πέρα δίκης. 30
 ἀνθ' ὧν ἀτερπῇ τήνδε φρουρήσεις πέτραν
 ὀρθοστάδην, ἄυπνος, οὐ κάμπτων γόνυ·
 πολλοὺς δ' ὀδυρμούς καὶ γόους ἀνωφελεῖς
 φθέγξῃ· Διὸς γὰρ δυσπαραίτητοι φρένες.
 ἅπας δὲ τραχὺς ὅστις ἂν νέον κρατῇ. 35

Κράτος

εἶεν, τί μέλλεις καὶ κατοικτίζῃ μάτην;
 τί τὸν θεοῖς ἔχθιστον οὐ στυγεῖς θεόν,
 ὅστις τὸ σὸν θνητοῖσι προὔδωκεν γέρας;

Ἥφαιστος

τὸ συγγενές τοι δεινὸν ἢ θ' ὀμιλία.

Κράτος

σύμφημ'· ἀνηκουστεῖν δὲ τῶν πατρὸς λόγων 40
 οἷόν τε πῶς; οὐ τοῦτο δειμαίνεις πλέον;

Ἥφαιστος

αἰεὶ γε δὴ νηλὴς σὺ καὶ θράσους πλέως.

form of mortal man shall you perceive; but, scorched by the
 sun's bright beams, you shall lose the fair bloom of your flesh.
 And glad you shall be when spangled-robed night shall veil his
 brightness and [25] when the sun shall scatter again the frost of
 morning. Evermore the burden of your present ill shall wear
 you out; for your deliverer is not yet born. Such is the prize you
 have gained for your championship of man. For, god though
 you are, you did not fear the wrath of the gods, but [30] you
 bestowed honors upon mortal creatures beyond their due.
 Therefore on this joyless rock you must stand sentinel, erect,
 sleepless, your knee unbent. And many a groan and unavailing
 lament you shall utter; for the heart of Zeus is hard, [35] and
 everyone is harsh whose power is new.

Power

Well, why delay and excite pity in vain? Why do you not detest
 a god most hateful to the gods, since he has betrayed your
 prerogative to mortals?

Hephaestus

A strangely potent tie is kinship, and companionship as well.

Power

[40] I agree; yet to refuse to obey the commands of the Father is
 this possible? Do you not fear that more?

Hephaestus

Yes, you are ever pitiless and steeped in insolence.

Κράτος

ἄκος γὰρ οὐδὲν τόνδε θρηνεῖσθαι. σὺ δὲ
τὰ μηδὲν ὠφελοῦντα μὴ πόνει μάτην.

Ἥφαιστος

ὦ πολλὰ μισηθεῖσα χειρωναξία. 45

Κράτος

τί νιν στυγεῖς; πόνων γὰρ ὡς ἀπλῶ λόγῳ
τῶν νῦν παρόντων οὐδὲν αἰτία τέχνη.

Ἥφαιστος

ἔμπας τις αὐτὴν ἄλλος ὠφελεν λαχεῖν.

Κράτος

ἅπαντ' ἐπαχθῇ πλήν θεοῖσι κοιρανεῖν·
ἐλεύθερος γὰρ οὐ τις ἐστὶ πλήν Διός. 50

Ἥφαιστος

ἔγνωκα τοῖσδε κούδεν ἀντειπεῖν ἔχω.

Κράτος

οὐκουν ἐπεῖξῃ τῷδε δεσμὰ περιβαλεῖν,
ὥς μή σ' ἐλινύοντα προσδερχθῇ πατήρ;

Ἥφαιστος

καὶ δὴ πρόχειρα ψάλια δέρκεσθαι πάρα.

Κράτος

βαλὼν νιν ἀμφὶ χερσὶν ἐγκρατεῖ σθένει 55
ῥαιστῆρι θεῖνε, πασσάλευε πρὸς πέτραις.

Ἥφαιστος

περαίνεται δὴ κού ματᾶ τοῦργον τόδε.

Power

Yes, for it does not good to bemoan this fellow. Stop wasting
your labor at an unprofitable task.

Hephaestus

[45] Oh handicraft that I hate so much!

Power

Why hate it? Since in truth your craft is in no way to blame for
these present troubles.

Hephaestus

Nevertheless, i wish it had fallen to another's lot!

Power

Every job is troublesome except to be the commander of gods;
[50] no one is free except Zeus.

Hephaestus

I know it by this task; I cannot deny it.

Power

Hurry then to cast the fetters about him, so that the Father does
not see you loitering.

Hephaestus

Well, there then! The bands are ready, as you may see.

Power

[55] Cast them about his wrists and with might strike with your
hammer; rivet him to the rocks.

Hephaestus

There! The work is getting done and not improperly.

Κράτος

ἄρασσε μάλλον, σφίγγε, μηδαμῇ χάλα.
δεινὸς γὰρ εὐρεῖν καὶ ἀμηχάνων πόρον.

Ἥφαιστος

ἄραρεν ἦδε γ' ὠλένη δυσεκλύτως. 60

Κράτος

καὶ τήνδε νῦν πόρπασον ἀσφαλῶς, ἵνα
μάθῃ σοφιστὴς ὦν Διὸς νωθέστερος.

Ἥφαιστος

πλὴν τοῦδ' ἂν οὐδεὶς ἐνδίκως μέμψαιτό μοι.

Κράτος

ἀδαμαντίνου νῦν σφηνὸς αὐθάδη γνάθον
στέρνων διαμπὰξ πασσάλει' ἐρρωμένως. 65

Ἥφαιστος

αἰαῖ, Προμηθεῦ, σῶν ὑπερστένω πόνων.

Κράτος

σὺ δ' αὖ κατοκνεῖς τῶν Διὸς τ' ἐχθρῶν ὕπερ
στένεις; ὅπως μὴ σαυτὸν οἰκτιεῖς ποτε.

Ἥφαιστος

ὄρᾳς θέαμα δυσθέατον ὄμμασιν.

Κράτος

ὀρῶ κυροῦντα τόνδε τῶν ἐπαξίων. 70
ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ πλευραῖς μασχαλιστῆρας βάλε.

Power

Strike harder, clamp him tight, leave nothing loose; for he is wondrously clever at finding a way even out of desperate straits.

Hephaestus

[60] This arm, at least, is fixed permanently.

Power

Now rivet this one too and securely, so that he may learn, for all his cleverness, that he is a fool compared to Zeus.

Hephaestus

None but he could justly blame my work.

Power

Now drive the adamantine wedge's stubborn edge straight [65] through his chest with your full force.

Hephaestus

Alas, Prometheus, I groan for your sufferings.

Power

What! Shrinking again and groaning over the enemies of Zeus? Take care, so that the day does not come when you shall grieve for yourself.

Hephaestus

You see a spectacle grievous for eyes to behold.

Power

[70] I see this man getting his deserts. Come, cast the girths about his sides.

Ἥφαιστος

δρᾶν ταῦτ' ἀνάγκη, μηδὲν ἐγκέλευ' ἄγαν.

Κράτος

ἦ μὴν κελεύσω κάπιθωύξω γε πρὸς.
χώρει κάτω, σκέλη δὲ κίρκωσον βία.

Ἥφαιστος

καὶ δὴ πέπρακται τοῦργον οὐ μακρῷ πόνῳ. 75

Κράτος

ἐρρωμένως νῦν θεῖνε διατόρους πέδας·
ὥς οὐπιτιμητῆς γε τῶν ἔργων βαρὺς.

Ἥφαιστος

ὅμοια μορφῇ γλῶσσά σου γηρύεται.

Κράτος

σὺ μαλθακίζου, τὴν δ' ἐμὴν αὐθαδίαν
ὀργῆς τε τραχύτητα μὴ 'πίπλησέ μοι. 80

Ἥφαιστος

στείχωμεν, ὥς κώλοισιν ἀμφίβληστρ' ἔχει.

Κράτος

ἐνταῦθα νῦν ὕβριζε καὶ θεῶν γέρα
συλῶν ἐφημέροισι προστίθει. τί σοι
οἰοί τε θνητοὶ τῶνδ' ἀπαντλῆσαι πόνων;
ψευδωνύμως σε δαίμονες Προμηθεά 85
καλοῦσιν· αὐτὸν γάρ σε δεῖ προμηθέως,
ὅτῳ τρόπῳ τῆσδ' ἐκκυλισθήσῃ τέχνης.

Hephaestus

I must do this; spare me your needless ordering.

Power

Indeed, I'll order you, yes and more—I'll hound you on. Get down below, and ring his legs by force.

Hephaestus

[75] There now! The work's done and without much labor.

Power

Now hammer the piercing fetters with your full force; for the appraiser of our work is severe.

Hephaestus

The utterance of your tongue matches your looks.

Power

Be softhearted then, [80] but do not attack my stubborn will and my harsh mood.

Hephaestus

Let us be gone, since he has got the fetters on his limbs. *Exit*

Power

There now, indulge your insolence, keep on wresting from the gods their honors to give them to creatures of a day. Are mortals able to lighten your load of sorrow? [85] Falsely the gods call you Prometheus,¹ for you yourself need forethought to free yourself from this handiwork. *Exeunt Power and Force*

Προμηθεύς

ὦ δῖος αἰθήρ καὶ ταχύπτεροι πνοαί,
 ποταμῶν τε πηγαί, ποντίων τε κυμάτων
 ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα, παμμήτορ τε γῆ, **90**
 καὶ τὸν πανόπτην κύκλον ἡλίου καλῶ.
 ἴδεσθέ μ' οἷα πρὸς θεῶν πάσχω θεός.
 δέρχθηθ' οἷαις αἰκεΐαισιν
 διακναιόμενος τὸν μυριετῇ
 χρόνον ἀθλεύσω. **95**
 τοιόνδ' ὁ νέος ταγὸς μακάρων
 ἐξηῦρ' ἐπ' ἐμοὶ δεσμὸν ἀεικῆ.
 φεῦ φεῦ, τὸ παρὸν τό τ' ἐπερχόμενον
 πῆμα στενάχω, πῇ ποτε μόχθων
 χρὴ τέρματα τῶνδ' ἐπιτεῖλαι. **100**
 καίτοι τί φημι; πάντα προυξεπίσταμαι
 σκεθρῶς τὰ μέλλοντ', οὐδέ μοι ποταίνιον
 πῆμ' οὐδὲν ἥξει. τὴν πεπρωμένην δὲ χρὴ
 αἶσαν φέρειν ὡς ῥᾶστα, γινώσκονθ' ὅτι
 τὸ τῆς ἀνάγκης ἔστ' ἀδήριτον σθένος. **105**
 ἀλλ' οὔτε σιγᾶν οὔτε μὴ σιγᾶν τύχας
 οἷόν τέ μοι τάσδ' ἐστί. θνητοῖς γὰρ γέρα
 πορῶν ἀνάγκαις ταῖσδ' ἐνέζευγμαι τάλας.
 ναρθηκοπλήρωτον δὲ θηρῶμαι πυρὸς
 πηγὴν κλοπαίαν, ἣ διδάσκαλος τέχνης **110**
 πάσης βροτοῖς πέφηνε καὶ μέγας πόρος.

1 Such etymologizing “play” (Pro-metheus, **Fore-thought**) was a serious matter to the Greeks, who found in the name of a person a significant indication of his nature or his fate. Unlike Shakespeare, Aeschylus saw nothing even half-humorous in such etymological analysis; and elsewhere, in playing on the names Apollo, Clytaemestra, Polynices, the nomen is an omen.

Prometheus

O you bright sky of heaven, you swift-winged breezes, you river-waters, and [90] infinite laughter of the waves of ocean, O universal mother Earth, and you, all-seeing orb of the sun, to you I call! See what I, a god, endure from the gods. Look, with what shameful torture I am racked and must wrestle [95] throughout the countless years of time apportioned me. Such is the ignominious bondage the new commander of the blessed has devised against me. Woe! Woe! For present misery and misery to come I groan, not knowing where [100] it is fated that deliverance from these sorrows shall arise. And yet, what am I saying? All that is to be I know full well and in advance, nor shall any affliction come upon me unforeseen. I must bear my allotted doom as lightly as I can, knowing that [105] the might of Necessity permits no resistance. Yet I am not able to speak nor be silent about my fate. For it is because I bestowed good gifts on mortals that this miserable yoke of constraint has been bound upon me. I hunted out and stored in fennel stalk the stolen [110] source of fire that has proved a teacher to mortals in every art

τοιῶνδε ποινὰς ἀμπλακημάτων τίνω
 ὑπαιθρίοις δεσμοῖς πεπασσαλευμένος.
 ᾶ ᾶ ἔα ἔα.

τίς ἀχῶ, τίς ὁδμὰ προσέπτα μ' ἀφεγγής, **115**
 θεόσυτος, ἢ βρότειος, ἢ κεκραμένη;
 ἵκετο τερμόνιον ἐπὶ πάγον
 πόνων ἐμῶν θεωρός, ἢ τί δὴ θέλων;
 ὁρᾶτε δεσμώτην με δύσποτμον θεόν
 τὸν Διὸς ἐχθρόν, τὸν πᾶσι θεοῖς **120**
 δι' ἀπεχθείας ἐλθόνθ' ὅποσοι
 τὴν Διὸς αὐλήν εισοιχνεῦσιν,
 διὰ τὴν λίαν φιλότητα βροτῶν.
 φεῦ φεῦ, τί ποτ' αὖ κινάθισμα κλύω
 πέλας οἰωνῶν; αἰθήρ δ' ἐλαφραῖς **125**
 πτερύγων ῥιπαῖς ὑποσυρίζει.
 πᾶν μοι φοβερόν τὸ προσέρπον.

Χορός

μηδὲν φοβηθῆς· φιλία **128b**
 γὰρ ἄδε τάξις πτερύγων
 θοαῖς ἀμίλλαις προσέβα
 τόνδε πάγον, πατρώας **130**
 μόγισ παρειποῦσα φρένας.
 κραιπνοφόροι δέ μ' ἔπεμψαν αὖραι·
 κτύπου γὰρ ἀχὼ χάλυβος

and a means to mighty ends. Such is the offence for which I pay
 the penalty, riveted in fetters beneath the open sky.

Ha! Behold! [115] What murmur, what scent wings to me, its
 source invisible, heavenly or human, or both? Has someone
 come to this crag at the edge of the world to stare at my
 sufferings—or with what motive? Behold me, an ill-fated god,
 chained, [120] the foe of Zeus, hated of all who enter the court of
 Zeus, because of my very great love for mankind. Ha! What's
 this? What may be this rustling stir of birds I hear [125] again
 nearby? The air whirs with the light rush of wings. Whatever
 approaches causes me alarm.

The Daughters of Oceanus enter on a winged car

Chorus

Do not fear! For our group has come in swift rivalry of wings to
 this crag [130] as friend to you, having won our father's consent
 as best we might. The swift-coursing breezes bore me on; for the
 reverberation of the clang of iron pierced the depths of our caves

διῆξεν ἄντρων μυχόν, ἐκ **130b**
δ' ἔπληξέ μου τὰν θεμερῶπιν αἰδῶ·
σύθην δ' ἀπέδιλος ὄχῳ πτερωτῶ. **135**

Προμηθεύς

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ,
τῆς πολυτέκνου Τηθύος ἔκγονα,
τοῦ περὶ πᾶσάν θ' εἰλισσομένου
χθόν' ἀκοιμήτῳ ῥεύματι παῖδες
πατρός, Ὠκεανοῦ, **140**
δέρχθητ', ἐσίδεσθ' οἶψ' δεσμῶ,
προσπορπατὸς τῆσδε φάραγγος
σκοπέλοις ἐν ἄκροις
φρουρὰν ἄζηλον ὀχῆσω. **143b**

Χορός

λεύσσω, Προμηθεῦ· φοβερὰ
δ' ἐμοῖσιν ὅσοις ὁμίχλα **145**
προσῆξε πλήρης δακρύων
σὸν δέμας εἰσιδούσα
πέτραις προσαναινόμενον
ταῖσδ' ἀδαμαντοδέτοισι λύμαις.
νέοι γὰρ οἰακονόμοι
κρατοῦσ' Ὀλύμπου· νεοχμοῖς
δὲ δὴ νόμοις Ζεὺς ἀθέτως κρατύνει. **150**
τὰ πρὶν δὲ πελώρια νῦν ἀιστοῖ.

and drove my grave modesty away in fright; [135] unsaddled I
have hastened in a winged car.

Prometheus

Alas! Alas! Offspring of fruitful Tethys and of him who with his
sleepless current encircles the whole earth, children of your
[140] father Oceanus, behold, see with what fetters, upon the
summit crag of this ravine, I am to hold my unenviable watch.

Chorus

I see, Prometheus; [145] and over my eyes a mist of tears and
fear spread as I saw your body withering ignominiously upon
this rock in these bonds of adamant. For there are new rulers in
heaven, and Zeus governs with [150] lawless customs; that
which was mighty before he now brings to nothing.

Προμηθεύς

εἰ γάρ μ' ὑπὸ γῆν νέρθεν θ' Ἄιδου
τοῦ νεκροδέγμονος εἰς ἀπέρατον
Τάρταρον ἤκεν,
δεσμοῖς ἀλύτοις ἀγρίως πελάσας, 155
ὥς μήτε θεὸς μήτε τις ἄλλος
τοῖσδ' ἐπεγήθει.
νῦν δ' αἰθέριον κίνυγμ' ὁ τάλας
ἐχθροῖς ἐπίχαρτα πέπονθα.

Χορός

τίς ὧδε τλησικάρδιος 160
θεῶν, ὅτῳ τὰδ' ἐπιχαρῆ;
τίς οὐ ξυνασχαλᾷ κακοῖς
τεοῖσι, δίχα γε Διός; ὁ δ' ἐπικότως αἰεὶ
θέμενος ἄγναμπτον νόον
δάμναται Οὐρανίαν 165
γένναν, οὐδὲ λήξει, πρὶν ἢ κορέσῃ κέαρ ἢ παλάμα τινὶ
τὰν δυσάλωτον ἔλῃ τις ἀρχάν.

Προμηθεύς

ἦ μὴν ἔτ' ἐμοῦ, καίπερ κρατεραῖς
ἐν γυιοπέδαις αἰκιζομένου,
χρεῖαν ἔξει μακάρων πρύτανις, 170
δεῖξαι τὸ νέον βούλευμ' ὑφ' ὅτου
σκῆπτρον τιμᾶς τ' ἀποσυλᾶται.
καί μ' οὔτι μελιγλώσσοις πειθοῦς

Prometheus

Oh if only he had hurled me below the earth, yes beneath
Hades, the entertainer of the dead, into impassable Tartarus,
[155] and had ruthlessly fastened me in fetters no hand can
loose, so that neither god nor any other might have gloated over
this agony I feel! But, now, a miserable plaything of the winds, I
suffer pains to delight my enemies.

Chorus

[160] Who of the gods is so hard of heart as to exult in this? Who
does not sympathize with your woes—save only Zeus? But he in
malice, has set his soul inflexibly [165] and keeps in subjection
the race sprung from Uranus; nor will he stop, until he has
satiated his soul or another seizes his impregnable empire by
some device of guile.

Prometheus

Truly the day shall come when, although I am tortured in
stubborn fetters, [170] the prince of the blessed will need me to
reveal the new design whereby he shall be stripped of his
sceptre and his dignities. Not by persuasion's honeyed

ἐπαοιδᾶισιν θέλξει, στερεάς τ'
οὔποτ' ἀπειλὰς πτήξας τόδ' ἐγὼ 175
καταμηνύσω,
πρὶν ἂν ἐξ ἀγρίων δεσμῶν χαλάσῃ
ποινὰς τε τίνειν
τῇσδ' αἰκεΐας ἐθέλῃσῃ.

Χορός

σὺ μὲν θρασύς τε καὶ πικραῖς 180
δύαισιν οὐδὲν ἐπιχαλᾷς,
ἄγαν δ' ἐλευθεροστομεῖς.
ἐμὰς δὲ φρένας ἐρέθισε διάτορος φόβος·
δέδια δ' ἀμφὶ σαῖς τύχαις,
πᾶ ποτε τῶνδε πόνων 185
χρὴ σε τέρμα κέλ-
σαντ' ἐσιδεῖν· ἀκίχητα γὰρ ἦθεα καὶ κέαρ
ἀπαράμυθον ἔχει Κρόνου παῖς.

Προμηθεύς

οἶδ' ὅτι τραχὺς καὶ παρ' ἑαυτῷ
τὸ δίκαιον ἔχων Ζεὺς. ἀλλ' ἔμπας [οἶω] 190
μαλακογνώμων
ἔσται ποθ', ὅταν ταύτῃ ραίσθη·
τὴν δ' ἀτέραμνον στορέσας ὀργὴν
εἰς ἀρθμόν ἐμοὶ καὶ φιλότῃτα
σπεύδων σπεύδοντί ποθ' ἦξει. 195

enchantments will he charm me; [175] and I will never,
cowering before his dire threats, divulge this secret, until he
releases me from my cruel bonds and provides compensation
for this outrage.

Chorus

[180] You are bold, and do not yield to your bitter pangs; you
give too much license to your tongue. But my soul is agitated by
piercing fear, and I am in dread about your fate, [185]
wondering to what haven you must steer your ship to see an
end of your voyage of sorrow. For the heart of Cronus' son is
hardened against entreaty and his ways are inexorable.

Prometheus

I know that Zeus is harsh and [190] keeps justice in his own
hands; but nevertheless one day his judgement will soften,
when he has been crushed in the way that I know.¹ Then,
calming down his stubborn wrath, he shall at last bond with me
in union and friendship, [195] as eager as I am to welcome him.

¹ A veiled allusion to the secret hinted at in l.171.

Χορός

πάντ' ἐκκάλυψον καὶ γέγων' ἡμῖν λόγον, 196
ποιῶ λαβὼν σε Ζεὺς ἐπ' αἰτιάματι,
οὕτως ἀτίμως καὶ πικρῶς αἰκίζεται
δίδαξον ἡμᾶς, εἴ τι μὴ βλάπτει λόγῳ.

Προμηθεύς

ἀλγεινὰ μὲν μοι καὶ λέγειν ἐστὶν τάδε,
ἄλγος δὲ σιγᾶν, πανταχῇ δὲ δύσποτμα. 200
ἐπεὶ τάχιστ' ἤρξαντο δαίμονες χόλου
στάσις τ' ἐν ἀλλήλοισιν ὠροθύνετο,
οἱ μὲν θέλοντες ἐκβαλεῖν ἔδρας Κρόνον,
ὥς Ζεὺς ἀνάσσοι δῆθεν, οἱ δὲ τοῦμπαλιν
σπεύδοντες, ὥς Ζεὺς μήποτ' ἄρξειεν θεῶν, 205
ἐνταῦθ' ἐγὼ τὰ λῶστα βουλεύων πιθεῖν
Τιτᾶνας, Οὐρανοῦ τε καὶ Χθονὸς τέκνα,
οὐκ ἠδυνήθην. αἰμύλας δὲ μηχανὰς
ἀτιμάσαντες καρτεροῖς φρονήμασιν
ῥοντ' ἀμοχθεὶ πρὸς βίαν τε δεσπόσειν. 210
ἐμοὶ δὲ μήτηρ οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον Θέμις,
καὶ Γαῖα, πολλῶν ὀνομάτων μορφή μία,
τὸ μέλλον κραίνοιτο προυτεθεσπίζει,
ὥς οὐ κατ' ἰσχὺν οὐδὲ πρὸς τὸ καρτερόν
χρεῖη, δόλῳ δὲ τοὺς ὑπερσχόντας κρατεῖν. 215
τοιαῦτ' ἐμοῦ λόγοισιν ἐξηγουμένου
οὐκ ἠξίωσαν οὐδὲ προσβλέψαι τὸ πᾶν.

Chorus

Unfold the whole story and tell us upon what charge Zeus has caught you and painfully punishes you with such dishonor. Instruct us, unless, indeed, there is some harm in telling.

Prometheus

It is painful to me to tell the tale, [200] painful to keep it silent. My case is unfortunate every way. When first the heavenly powers were moved to wrath, and mutual dissension was stirred up among them—some bent on casting Cronus from his seat so Zeus, in truth, might reign; others, eager for [205] the contrary end, that Zeus might never win mastery over the gods—it was then that I, although advising them for the best, was unable to persuade the Titans, children of Heaven and Earth; but they, disdaining counsels of craft, in the pride of their strength [210] thought to gain the mastery without a struggle and by force. Often my mother Themis, or Earth (though one form, she had many names) , had foretold to me the way in which the future was fated to come to pass. That it was not by brute strength nor through violence, [215] but by guile that those who should gain the upper hand were destined to prevail.

And though I argued all this to them, they did not pay any

κράτιστα δὴ μοι τῶν παρεστώτων τότε
 ἐφαίνεται εἶναι προσλαβόντα μητέρα
 ἐκόνθ' ἐκόντι Ζηνὶ συμπαραστατεῖν. **220**
 ἐμαῖς δὲ βουλαῖς Ταρτάρου μελαμβαθῆς
 κευθμῶν καλύπτει τὸν παλαιγενῆ Κρόνον
 αὐτοῖσι συμμάχοισι. τοιάδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ
 ὁ τῶν θεῶν τύραννος ὠφελημένος
 κακαῖσι ποιναῖς ταῖσδε μ' ἐξημεῖψατο. **225**
 ἔνεστι γάρ πως τοῦτο τῇ τυραννίδι
 νόσημα, τοῖς φίλοισι μὴ πεποιθέναι.
 ὁ δ' οὖν ἐρωτᾷτ', αἰτίαν καθ' ἣντινα
 αἰκίζεται με, τοῦτο δὴ σαφηνιῶ.
 ὅπως τάχιστα τὸν πατρῶον ἐς θρόνον **230**
 καθέζετ', εὐθύς δαίμοσιν νέμει γέρα
 ἄλλοισιν ἄλλα καὶ διεστοιχίζετο
 ἀρχήν· βροτῶν δὲ τῶν τάλαιπῶρων λόγον
 οὐκ ἔσχεν οὐδέν', ἀλλ' αἰστώσας γένος
 τὸ πᾶν ἔχρηζεν ἄλλο φιτῦσαι νέον. **235**
 καὶ τοῖσιν οὐδείς ἀντέβαινε πλὴν ἐμοῦ.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἐτόλμησ'· ἐξελυσάμην βροτοὺς
 τὸ μὴ διαρραιοθέντας εἰς Αἴδου μολεῖν.
 τῷ τοι τοιαῖσδε πημοναῖσι κάμπτομαι,
 πάσχειν μὲν ἀλγειναῖσιν, οἰκτραῖσιν δ' ἰδεῖν **240**
 θνητοὺς δ' ἐν οἴκτῳ προθέμενος, τούτου τυχεῖν
 οὐκ ἠξιώθην αὐτός, ἀλλὰ νηλεῶς

attention to my words. With all that before me, it seemed best that, joining with my mother, I should place myself, [220] a welcome volunteer, on the side of Zeus; and it is by reason of my counsel that the cavernous gloom of Tartarus now hides ancient Cronus and his allies within it. Thus I helped the tyrant of the gods [225] and with this foul payment he has responded; for it is a disease that is somehow inherent in tyranny to have no faith in friends. However, you ask why he torments me, and this I will now make clear.

[230] As soon as he had seated himself upon his father's throne, he immediately assigned to the deities their several privileges and apportioned to them their proper powers. But of wretched mortals he took no notice, desiring to bring [235] the whole race to an end and create a new one in its place. Against this purpose none dared make stand except me— I only had the courage; I saved mortals so that they did not descend, blasted utterly, to the house of Hades.

This is why I am bent by such grievous tortures, [240] painful to suffer, piteous to behold. I who gave mortals first place in my pity, I am deemed unworthy to win this pity for myself, but am in this way mercilessly disciplined, a spectacle that shames the

ὦδ' ἐρρύθμισμαι, Ζηνὶ δυσκλεῆς θέα.

Χορός

σιδηρόφρων τε καὶ πέτρας εἰργασμένος 245

ὅστις, Προμηθεῦ, σοῖσιν οὐ συνασχαλᾷ

μόχθοις· ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐτ' ἂν εἰσιδεῖν τάδε

ἔχρηζον εἰσιδοῦσά τ' ἡλγύνθην κέαρ.

Προμηθεύς

καὶ μὴν φίλοις <γ' > ἐλεινὸς εἰσορᾶν ἐγώ.

Χορός

μὴ πού τι προύβης τῶνδε καὶ περαιτέρω;

Προμηθεύς

θνητοὺς γ' ἔπαυσα μὴ προδέρκεσθαι μόρον. 250

Χορός

τὸ ποῖον εὐρῶν τῆσδε φάρμακον νόσου;

Προμηθεύς

τυφλὰς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐλπίδας κατῶκισα.

Χορός

μέγ' ὠφέλημα τοῦτ' ἔδωρήσω βροτοῖς.

Προμηθεύς

πρὸς τοῖσδε μέντοι πῦρ ἐγὼ σφιν ὤπασα.

Χορός

καὶ νῦν φλογωπὸν πῦρ ἔχουσ' ἐφήμεροι; 255

Προμηθεύς

ἀφ' οὗ γε πολλὰς ἐκμαθήσονται τέχνας.

glory of Zeus.

Chorus

Iron-hearted and made of stone, Prometheus, [245] is he who feels no compassion at your miseries. For myself, I would not have desired to see them; and now that I see them, I am pained in my heart.

Prometheus

Yes, to my friends indeed I am a spectacle of pity.

Chorus

Did you perhaps transgress even somewhat beyond this offence?

Prometheus

[250] Yes, I caused mortals to cease foreseeing their doom.¹

Chorus

Of what sort was the cure that you found for this affliction?

Prometheus

I caused blind hopes to dwell within their breasts.

Chorus

A great benefit was this you gave to mortals.

Prometheus

In addition, I gave them fire.

Chorus

[255] What! Do creatures of a day now have flame-eyed fire?

Prometheus

Yes, and from it they shall learn many arts.

Χορός

τοιιοῖσδε δὴ σε Ζεὺς ἐπ' αἰτιάμασιν--

Προμηθεύς

αἰκίζεταί τε κούδαμῃ χαλᾷ κακῶν.

Χορός

οὐδ' ἔστιν ἄθλου τέρμα σοι προκείμενον;

Προμηθεύς

οὐκ ἄλλο γ' οὐδέν, πλὴν ὅταν κείνῳ δοκῇ. 260

Χορός

δόξει δὲ πῶς; τίς ἐλπίς; οὐχ ὁρᾷς ὅτι
ἡμαρτες; ὥς δ' ἡμαρτες οὐτ' ἐμοὶ λέγειν
καθ' ἡδονὴν σοί τ' ἄλγος. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν
μεθῶμεν, ἄθλου δ' ἔκλυσιν ζῆται τινά.

Προμηθεύς

ἐλαφρόν ὅστις πημάτων ἔξω πόδα 265
ἔχει παραινεῖν νουθετεῖν τε τὸν κακῶς
πράσσοντ'· ἐγὼ δὲ ταῦθ' ἅπαντ' ἠπιστάμην.
ἐκὼν ἐκὼν ἡμαρτον, οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι·
θνητοῖς ἀρῆγων αὐτὸς ἠρόρῳ πόνους.
οὐ μὴν τι ποινᾷς γ' ὥόμην τοίαισί με 270
κατισχνανεῖσθαι πρὸς πέτραις πεδαρσίοις,
τυχόντ' ἐρήμου τοῦδ' ἀγέιτονος πάγου.
καί μοι τὰ μὲν παρόντα μὴ δύρεσθ' ἄχη,
πέδοι δὲ βᾶσαι τὰς προσερπούσας τύχας
ἀκούσαθ', ὥς μάθητε διὰ τέλους τὸ πᾶν. 275

Chorus

Then it was on a charge like this that Zeus—

Prometheus

Torments me and in no way gives me respite from pain.

Chorus

And is there no end assigned to your ordeal?

Prometheus

[260] No, none except when it seems good to him.

Chorus

But how will it seem good to him? What hope is there? Do you not see that you have wronged? And yet it is not pleasant for me to talk about how you have wronged, and for you it is pain. So, let us quit this theme; and may you seek some release from your ordeal.

1 "Doom" here signifies "doom of death."

Prometheus

[265] It is easy for him who keeps his foot free from harm to counsel and admonish him who is in misery. I have known this all the while. Of my own will, yes, of my own will I erred—I will not deny it. By helping mortals I found suffering for myself; [270] nevertheless I did not think I would be punished in this way—wasting away upon cliffs in mid-air, my portion this desolate and dreary crag. And now, bewail no more my present

πίθεσθέ μοι πίθεσθε, συμπονήσατε
τῷ νῦν μογοῦντι. ταῦτά τοι πλανωμένη
πρὸς ἄλλοτ' ἄλλον πημονή προσιζάνει.

Χορός

οὐκ ἀκούσαις ἐπεθώξας
τοῦτο, Προμηθεῦ. 280

καὶ νῦν ἐλαφρῶ ποδὶ κραιπνόστυον
θᾶκον προλιποῦς', αἰθέρα θ' ἄγνόν
πόρον οἰωνῶν, ὀκριοέσση
χθονὶ τῇδε πελῶ, τοὺς σοὺς δὲ πόνους
χρήζω διὰ παντὸς ἀκοῦσαι. 285

Ὠκεανός

ἦκω δολιχῆς τέρμα κελεύθου
διαμειψάμενος πρὸς σέ, Προμηθεῦ,
τὸν πτερυγῶκῃ τόνδ' οἰωνόν
γνώμη στομίῳν ἄτερ εὐθύνων·
ταῖς σαῖς δὲ τύχαις, ἴσθι, συναλγῶ. 290
τὸ τε γάρ με, δοκῶ, συγγενὲς οὕτως
ἐσαναγκάζει,
χωρὶς τε γένους οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτῳ
μείζονα μοῖραν νείμαιμ' ἢ σοί.
γνώση δὲ τάδ' ὥς ἔτυμ', οὐδὲ μάτην 295
χαριτογλωσσεῖν ἔνι μοι· φέρε γὰρ
σήμαιν' ὅ τι χρή σοι συμπράσσειν·

woes; alight on the ground and listen to my [275] oncoming fortunes so that you may be told them from end to end. Consent, I beg you, oh consent. Take part in the trouble of him who is now in sore distress. In truth, affliction wanders impartially abroad and alights upon all in turn.

Chorus

Not to unwilling ears have you made this appeal, [280] Prometheus. And so now with light foot I will quit my swift-speeding seat and the pure air, the pathway of birds and draw near to this rugged ground; for I want to hear [285] the whole story of your sorrows.

Enter Oceanus on a winged steed

Oceanus

I have come to the end of a long journey in my passage to you, Prometheus, guiding by my own will, without a bridle, this swift-winged bird. [290] For your fate, you may be sure, I feel compassion. Kinship, I think, constrains me to this; and, apart from blood ties, there is none to whom I should pay greater respect than to you. [295] You shall know this for simple truth and that it is not in me to utter vain and empty words; come, tell me; what aid can I render you? For you shall never say that you have a friend more loyal than Oceanus.

οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἐρεῖς ὡς Ὀκεανοῦ
φίλος ἐστὶ βεβαιότερός σοι.

Προμηθεύς

ἔα· τί χρεῖμα λεύσσω; καὶ σὺ δὴ πόνων ἐμῶν **300**
ἤκεις ἐπόπτης; πῶς ἐτόλμησας, λιπῶν
ἐπώνυμόν τε ῥεῦμα καὶ πετρηρεφῇ
αὐτόκτιτ' ἄντρα, τὴν σιδηρομήτορα
ἐλθεῖν ἐς αἶαν; ἢ θεωρήσων τύχας
ἐμὰς ἀφίξαι καὶ συνασχαλῶν κακοῖς; **305**
δέρκου θέαμα, τόνδε τὸν Διὸς φίλον,
τὸν συγκαταστήσαντα τὴν τυραννίδα,
οἷαις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πημοναῖσι κάμπτομαι.

Ὀκεανός

ὀρῶ, Προμηθεῦ, καὶ παραινέσαι γέ σοι
θέλω τὰ λῶστα, καίπερ ὄντι ποικίλῳ. **310**
γίγνωσκε σαυτὸν καὶ μεθάρμοσαι τρόπους
νέους· νέος γὰρ καὶ τύραννος ἐν θεοῖς.
εἰ δ' ὧδε τραχεῖς καὶ τεθηγμένους λόγους
ρίψεις, τάχ' ἂν σου καὶ μακρὰν ἀνωτέρω
θακῶν κλύοι Ζεὺς, ὥστε σοι τὸν νῦν ὄχλον **315**
παρόντα μόχθων παιδιὰν εἶναι δοκεῖν.
ἀλλ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἃς ἔχεις ὀργὰς ἄφες,
ζήτει δὲ τῶνδε πημάτων ἀπαλλαγὰς.
ἀρχαῖ' ἴσως σοι φαίνομαι λέγειν τάδε·
τοιαῦτα μέντοι τῆς ἄγαν ὑψηγόρου **320**

Prometheus

[300] Ha! What have we here? So then you too have come to stare upon my sufferings? How did you summon courage to quit the stream that bears your name and the rock-roofed caves you yourself have made and come to this land, the mother of iron? Is it that you have come [305] to gaze upon my state and join your grief to my distress? Look upon me here—a spectacle, the friend of Zeus, who helped him to establish his sovereign power, by what anguish I am bent by him!

Oceanus

I see, Prometheus; and I want to give you [310] the best advice, although you yourself are wily. Learn to know yourself and adapt yourself to new ways; for new also is the ruler among the gods. If you hurl forth words so harsh and of such whetted edge, perhaps Zeus may hear you, [315] though throned far off, high in the heavens, and then your present multitude of sorrows shall seem but childish sport. Oh wretched sufferer! Put away your wrathful mood and try to find release from these miseries. Perhaps this advice may seem to you old and dull; [320] but your plight, Prometheus, is only the wages of too boastful speech. You still have not learned humility, nor do you bend before misfortune, but would rather add even more miseries to

γλώσσης, Προμηθεῦ, τὰπίχειρα γίγνεται.
 σὺ δ' οὐδέπω ταπεινὸς οὐδ' εἵκεις κακοῖς,
 πρὸς τοῖς παροῦσι δ' ἄλλα προσλαβεῖν θέλεις.
 οὐκ οὐν ἔμοιγε χρώμενος διδασκάλω
 πρὸς κέντρα κῶλον ἐκτενεῖς, ὁρῶν ὅτι 325
 τραχὺς μόναρχος οὐδ' ὑπεύθυνος κρατεῖ.
 καὶ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν εἶμι καὶ πειράσομαι
 ἐὰν δύνωμαι τῶνδ' ἐκλύσαι πόνων.
 σὺ δ' ἡσύχαζε μηδ' ἄγαν λαβροστόμει.
 ἢ οὐκ οἶσθ' ἀκριβῶς ὦν περισσόφρων ὅτι 330

γλώσση ματαία ζημία προστρίβεται;

Προμηθεύς

ζηλῶ σ' ὁθύνεκ' ἐκτὸς αἰτίας κυρεῖς
 τούτων μετασχεῖν καὶ τετολμηκῶς ἐμοί.
 καὶ νῦν ἔασον μηδ' εἰ μελησάτω.
 πάντως γὰρ οὐ πείσεις νιν· οὐ γὰρ εὐπιθής. 335
 πάπτεινε δ' αὐτὸς μή τι πημανθῆς ὁδῶ.

Ὠκεανός

πολλῶ γ' ἀμείνων τοὺς πέλας φρενοῦν ἔφυς
 ἢ σαυτόν· ἔργω κοῦ λόγῳ τεκμαίρομαι.
 ὀρμώμενον δὲ μηδαμῶς ἀντισπάσης. 340
 αὐχῶ γὰρ αὐχῶ τήνδε δωρεὰν ἐμοὶ
 δώσειν Δί', ὥστε τῶνδ' ἐκλύσαι πόνων.

those you have. Therefore take me as your teacher [325] and do not add insult to injury, seeing that a harsh monarch now rules who is accountable to no one. So now I will depart and see whether I can release you from these sufferings. And may you hold your peace and be not too blustering of speech. [330] Or, can it be that for all your exceeding wisdom, you do not know that chastisement is inflicted on a wagging tongue?

Prometheus

I envy you because you have escaped blame for having dared to share with me in my troubles.¹ So now leave me alone and let it not concern you. [335] Do what you want, you cannot persuade him; for he is not easy to persuade. Beware that you do not do yourself harm by the mission you take.

Oceanus

In truth, you are far better able to admonish others than yourself. It is by fact, not by hearsay, that I judge. [340] So do not hold back one who is eager to go. For I am confident, yes, confident, that Zeus will grant me this favor, to free you from your sufferings.

¹ The reading of the MSS can only mean that Oceanus had participated throughout in the rebellion of Prometheus; whereas, in l. 236, Prometheus expressly declares that he had no confederate in his opposition to Zeus.

Προμηθεύς

τὰ μὲν σ' ἐπαινῶ κούδαμῃ λήξω ποτέ·
 προθυμίας γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐλλείπεις. ἀτὰρ **343b**
 μηδὲν πόνει. μάτην γὰρ οὐδὲν ὠφελῶν
 ἔμοι πονήσεις, εἴ τι καὶ πονεῖν θέλεις. **345**
 ἀλλ' ἡσύχαζε σαυτὸν ἐκποδῶν ἔχων·
 ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐκ, εἰ δυστυχῶ, τοῦδ' εἵνεκα
 θέλοιμ' ἄν ὡς πλείστοισι πημονὰς τυχεῖν.
 οὐ δῆτ' ἐπεὶ με καὶ κασιγνήτου τύχαι
 τείρουσ' Ἄτλαντος, ὃς πρὸς ἐσπέρους τόπους **350**
 ἔστηκε κίον' οὐρανοῦ τε καὶ χθονὸς
 ὥμοις ἐρείδων, ἄχθος οὐκ εὐάγκαλον.
 τὸν γηγενῇ τε Κιλικίων οἰκήτορα
 ἄντρων ἰδὼν ᾤκτιρα, δάιον τέρας
 ἑκατογκάρανον πρὸς βίαν χειρούμενον **355**
 Τυφῶνα θοῦρον· πᾶσιν [ὅς] ἀντέστη θεοῖς,
 σμερδναῖσι γαμφηλαῖσι συρίζων φόβον·
 ἐξ ὀμμάτων δ' ἤστραπτε γοργωπὸν σέλας,
 ὡς τὴν Διὸς τυραννίδ' ἐκπέρσων βία·
 ἀλλ' ἦλθεν αὐτῷ Ζηνὸς ἄγρυπνον βέλος, **360**
 καταβάτης κεραυνὸς ἐκπνέων φλόγα,
 ὃς αὐτὸν ἐξέπληξε τῶν ὑψηγόρων
 κομπασμάτων. φρένας γὰρ εἰς αὐτὰς τυπεῖς
 ἐφεψαλώθη κάξεβροντήθη σθένος.
 καὶ νῦν ἀχρεῖον καὶ παράορον δέμας **365**

Prometheus

I thank you for all this and shall never cease to thank you; in
 zeal you lack nothing, but do not trouble yourself; for your
 trouble will be vain and [345] not helpful to me—if indeed you
 want to take the pain. No, keep quiet and keep yourself clear of
 harm. For even if I am in sore plight, I would not wish affliction
 on everyone else. No, certainly, no! since, besides, I am
 distressed by the fate [350] of my brother Atlas, who, towards
 the west, stands bearing on his shoulders the pillar of heaven
 and earth, a burden not easy for his arms to grasp. Pity moved
 me, too, at the sight of the earth-born dweller of the Cilician
 caves curbed by violence, that destructive monster [355] of a
 hundred heads, impetuous Typhon. He withstood all the gods,
 hissing out terror with horrid jaws, while from his eyes
 lightened a hideous glare, as though he would storm by force
 the sovereignty of Zeus. [360] But the unsleeping bolt of Zeus
 came upon him, the swooping lightning brand with breath of
 flame, which struck him, frightened, from his loud-mouthed
 boasts; then, stricken to the very heart, he was burnt to ashes
 and his strength blasted from him by the lightning bolt. [365]
 And now, a helpless and a sprawling bulk, he lies hard by the
 narrows of the sea, pressed down beneath the roots of Aetna;
 while on the topmost summit Hephaestus sits and hammers the
 molten ore. There, one day, shall burst forth [370] rivers of
 fire,¹ with savage jaws devouring the level fields of Sicily, land of

κεῖται στενωποῦ πλησίον θαλασσίου
 ἱπόμενος ῥίζαισιν Αἰτναίαις ὑπο·
 κορυφαῖς δ' ἐν ἄκραις ἥμενος μυδροκτυπεῖ
 Ἥφαιστος· ἔνθεν ἐκραγήσονται ποτε
 ποταμοὶ πυρὸς δάπτοντες ἀγρίαις γνάθοις **370**
 τῆς καλλικάρπου Σικελίας λευροὺς γύας·
 τοιόνδε Τυφῶς ἐξαναζέσει χόλον
 θερμοῖς ἀπλάτου βέλεσι πυρπνόου ζάλης,
 καίπερ κεραυνῷ Ζηνὸς ἠνθρακωμένος.
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἄπειρος, οὐδ' ἐμοῦ διδασκάλου **375**
 χρήζεις· σεαυτὸν σῶζ' ὅπως ἐπίστασαι·
 ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν παροῦσαν ἀντλήσω τύχην,
 ἔστ' ἂν Διὸς φρόνημα λωφήσῃ χόλου.

Ὠκεανός

οὐκουν, Προμηθεῦ, τοῦτο γινώσκεις, ὅτι
 ὀργῆς νοσοῦσης εἰσὶν ἰατροὶ λόγοι; **380**

Προμηθεύς

ἐάν τις ἐν καιρῷ γε μαλθάσῃ κέαρ
 καὶ μὴ σφριγῶντα θυμὸν ἰσχυαίνει βία.

Ὠκεανός

ἐν τῷ προθυμεῖσθαι δὲ καὶ τολμᾶν τίνα
 ὀρᾶς ἐνοῦσαν ζημίαν; δίδασκέ με.

Προμηθεύς

μόχθον περισσὸν κουφόνουν τ' εὐηθίαν. **385**

fair fruit—such boiling rage shall Typho, although charred by
 the blazing lightning of Zeus, send spouting forth with hot jets
 of appalling, fire-breathing surge.

[375] But you are not inexperienced, and do not need me to
 teach you. Save yourself, as you know best; while I exhaust my
 present lot until the time comes when the mind of Zeus shall
 abandon its wrath.

1 The eruption of Aetna in 479/8 B.C. is also described in a famous passage of
 Pindar (**Pind. P 1.21**, written in 470 B.C.) , which Aeschylus has here in
 mind. The lyric poet dwells on the physical aspect of the eruption by day and
 night; the dramatist, on the damage done to the labor of the husbandman.

Oceanus

Do you not know then, Prometheus, that [380] words are the
 physicians of a disordered temper?

Prometheus

If one softens the soul in season, and does not hasten to reduce
 its swelling rage by violence.

Oceanus

What lurking mischief do you see when daring joins to zeal?
 Teach me this.

Prometheus

[385] Lost labor and thoughtless simplicity.

Ωκεανός

ἔα με τῇδε τῇ νόσῳ νοσεῖν, ἐπεὶ
κέρδιστον εὖ φρονοῦντα μὴ φρονεῖν δοκεῖν.

Προμηθεύς

ἐμὸν δοκήσει τὰμπλάκημ' εἶναι τόδε.

Ωκεανός

σαφῶς μ' ἐς οἶκον σὸς λόγος στέλλει πάλιν.

Προμηθεύς

μὴ γάρ σε θρῆνος οὐμὸς εἰς ἔχθραν βάλη. 390

Ωκεανός

ἦ τῷ νέον θακοῦντι παγκρατεῖς ἔδρας;

Προμηθεύς

τούτου φυλάσσου μή ποτ' ἀχθесσθῇ κέαρ.

Ωκεανός

ἦ σῇ, Προμηθεῦ, συμφορὰ διδάσκαλος.

Προμηθεύς

στέλλου, κομίζου, σῶζε τὸν παρόντα νοῦν.

Ωκεανός

ὀρμωμένῳ μοι τόνδ' ἐθώξας λόγον. 395

λευρὸν γὰρ οἶμον αἰθέρος ψαίρει πτεροῖς

τετρασκελῆς οἰωνός· ἄσμενος δέ τ' ἀν

σταθοῖς ἐν οἰκείοις κάμψειεν γόνυ.

Oceanus

Leave me to be affected by this, since it is most advantageous,
when truly wise, to be deemed a fool.

Prometheus

This fault will be seen to be my own.

Oceanus

Clearly the manner of your speech orders me back home.

Prometheus

[390] So that you won't win enmity for yourself by lamenting for
me.

Oceanus

In the eyes of the one who is newly seated on his omnipotent
throne?

Prometheus

Beware lest the time come when his heart is angered with you.

Oceanus

Your plight, Prometheus, is my instructor.

Prometheus

Go away, depart, keep your present purpose.

Oceanus

[395] Your urging meets my eagerness; for my four-footed
winged beast fans with his wings the smooth pathway of the air;
and truly he will be glad to rest his knees in his stall at home.

Exit

Χορός

στένω σε τᾶς οὐλομένας τύχας, Προμηθεῦ·
 δακρυσίστακτα δ' ἀπ' ὅσων **400**
 ῥαδινὰν λειβομένα ῥέος παρειὰν
 νοτίοις ἔτεγξα παγαῖς·
 ἀμέγαρτα γὰρ τάδε Ζεὺς
 ἰδίοις νόμοις κρατύνων
 ὑπερήφανον θεοῖς τοῖς **405**
 πάρος ἐνδείκνυσιν αἰχμάν.
 πρόπασα δ' ἤδη στονόεν λέλακε χώρα,
 μεγαλοσχήμονα ἀρχαι-
 οπρεπῇ < > στένουσι τὰν σὰν
 ξυνομαιμόνων τε τιμάν, **410**
 ὁπόσοι τ' ἔποικον ἀγνᾶς
 Ἀσίας ἔδος νέμονται,
 μεγαλοστόνοισι σοῖς πῆ-
 μασι συγκάμνουσι θνατοί.
 Κολχίδος τε γᾶς ἔνοικοι **415**
 παρθένοι, μάχας ἄτρεστοι,
 καὶ Σκύθης ὄμιλος, οἱ γὰς
 ἔσχατον τόπον ἀμφὶ Μαι-
 ῶτιν ἔχουσι λίμναν,
 Ἀραβίας τ' ἄρειον ἄνθος, **420**
 ὑψίκρημνον οἱ πόλισμα
 Καυκάσου πέλας νέμονται,

Chorus

I mourn your unfortunate fate, Prometheus. [400] Shedding from my eyes a coursing flood of tears I wet my tender cheeks with their moist streams. For Zeus, holding this unenviable power by self-appointed laws, [405] displays towards the gods of old an overweening spirit.

Now the whole earth cries aloud in lamentation; . . . lament the greatness of the glory of your time-hallowed honor, [410] the honor that was yours and your brother's; and all mortals who make their dwelling place in holy Asia share the anguish of your most lamentable suffering; [415] And those who dwell in the land of Colchis, the maidens fearless in fight; and the Scythian multitude that inhabits the most remote region of the earth bordering the Maeotic lake;

[420] And the warlike flower of Arabia, which hold the high-cragged citadel near the Caucasus, a hostile host that roars

δάιος στρατός, ὅξυπρώ-
 ροισι βρέμων ἐν αἰχμαῖς.
 [μόνον δὴ πρόσθεν ἄλλον ἐν πόνοις 425
 δαμέντ' ἀδαμαντοδέτοις
 Τιτᾶνα λύμαις εἰσιδόμεν, θεόν,
 Ἄτλαντος [αἰέν]; ὑπέροχον σθένος κραταίον,
 <ὄς> οὐράνιον [τε] πόλον
 νώτοις <στέγων> ὑποστενάζει.] 430
 βοᾷ δὲ πόντιος κλύδων
 ξυμπίτνων, στένει βυθός,
 κελαινὸς δ' Ἄϊδος ὑποβρέμει μυχὸς γᾶς,
 παγαί θ' ἄγνορύτων ποταμῶν
 στένουσιν ἄλγος οἰκτρὸν. 435

Προμηθεύς

μή τοι χλιδῇ δοκεῖτε μηδ' αὐθαδία σιγᾶν με· συννοία δὲ
 δάπτομαι κέαρ, ὀρῶν ἐμαυτὸν ὧδε προυσελούμενον. καίτοι
 θεοῖσι τοῖς νέοις τούτοις γέρα
 τίς ἄλλος ἢ ἡ γὰρ παντελῶς διώρισεν; 440
 ἀλλ' αὐτὰ σιγῶ· καὶ γὰρ εἰδυῖαισιν ἂν ὑμῖν λέγοιμι· τὰν
 βροτοῖς δὲ πῆματα ἀκούσαθ', ὥς σφας νηπίους ὄντας τὸ πρὶν
 ἔννους ἔθηκα καὶ φρενῶν ἐπηβόλους.
 λέξω δέ, μέμψιν οὐτὶν' ἀνθρώποις ἔχων, 445
 ἀλλ' ὦν δέδωκ' εὖνοϊαν ἐξηγούμενος·
 οἱ πρῶτα μὲν βλέποντες ἔβλεπον μάτην, κλύοντες οὐκ
 ἤκουον, ἀλλ' ὄνειράτων ἀλίγκιοι μορφαῖσι τὸν μακρὸν βίον

among the sharp-pointed spears. [† [425] One other Titan god before this I have seen in distress, enthralled in torment by adamantine bonds—Atlas, pre-eminent in mighty strength, who moans as he supports [430] the vault of heaven on his back.†]
 The waves of the sea utter a cry as they fall, the deep laments, the black abyss of Hades rumbles in response, and the streams of pure-flowing rivers [435] lament your piteous pain.

Prometheus

No, do not think it is from pride or even from wilfulness that I am silent. Painful thoughts devour my heart as I behold myself maltreated in this way. And yet who else but I definitely assigned [440] their prerogatives to these upstart gods? But I do not speak of this; for my tale would tell you nothing except what you know. Still, listen to the miseries that beset mankind—how they were witless before and I made them have sense and endowed them with reason. [445] I will not speak to upbraid mankind but to set forth the friendly purpose that inspired my blessing. First of all, though they had eyes to see, they saw to no avail; they had ears, but they did not understand ; but, just as

ἔφυρον εἰκῇ πάντα, κοῦτε πλινθυφεῖς **450**
 δόμους προσείλους ἦσαν, οὐ ξυλουργίαν· κατώρυχες δ'
 ἔναιον ὥστ' ἀήσυροι
 μύρμηκες ἄντρων ἐν μυχοῖς ἀνηλίους. ἦν δ' οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς οὔτε
 χείματος τέκμαρ
 οὔτ' ἀνθεμῶδους ἦρος οὔτε καρπίμου **455**
 θέρους βέβαιον, ἀλλ' ἄτερ γνώμης τὸ πᾶν ἔπρασσον, ἔστε δὴ
 σφιν ἀντολὰς ἐγὼ ἄστρων ἔδειξα τάς τε δυσκρίτους δύσεις.
 καὶ μὴν ἀριθμόν, ἔσοχον σοφισμάτων,
 ἐξηῦρον αὐτοῖς, γραμμάτων τε συνθέσεις, **460**
 μνήμην ἀπάντων, μουσομήτορ' ἐργάνην. κᾶζευσά προῶτος ἐν
 ζυγοῖσι κνώδαλα ζεύγλαισι δουλεύοντα σάγμασιν θ', ὅπως
 θνητοῖς μεγίστων διάδοχοι μοχθημάτων
 γένοιθ', ὑφ' ἄρμα τ' ἥγαγον φιληνίους **465**
 ἵππους, ἀγαλμα τῆς ὑπερπλούτου χλιδῆς. θαλασσόπλαγκτα
 δ' οὔτις ἄλλος ἀντ' ἐμοῦ λινόπτερ' ἠῦρε ναυτίλων ὀχήματα.
 τοιαῦτα μηχανήματ' ἐξευρὼν τάλας
 βροτοῖσιν, αὐτὸς οὐκ ἔχω σόφισμ' ὅτῳ **470**
 τῆς νῦν παρούσης πημονῆς ἀπαλλαγῶ.

Χορός

πέπονθας αἰκὲς πῆμ'· ἀποσφαλεῖς φρενῶν πλανᾷ, κακὸς δ'
 ἱατρὸς ὥς τις ἐς νόσον πεσὼν ἀθυμεῖς καὶ σεαυτὸν οὐκ ἔχεις
 εὔρεῖν ὁποίοις φαρμάκοις ἰάσιμος. **475**

shapes in dreams, throughout their length of days, [450] without
 purpose they wrought all things in confusion. They had neither
 knowledge of houses built of bricks and turned to face the sun
 nor yet of work in wood; but dwelt beneath the ground like
 swarming ants, in sunless caves. They had no sign either of
 winter [455] or of flowery spring or of fruitful summer, on
 which they could depend but managed everything without
 judgment, until I taught them to discern the risings of the stars
 and their settings, which are difficult to distinguish. Yes, and
 numbers, too, chiefest of sciences, [460] I invented for them, and
 the combining of letters, creative mother of the Muses' arts, with
 which to hold all things in memory. I, too, first brought brute
 beasts beneath the yoke to be subject to the collar and the pack-
 saddle, so that they might bear in men's stead their [465]
 heaviest burdens; and to the chariot I harnessed horses and
 made them obedient to the rein, to be an image of wealth and
 luxury. It was I and no one else who invented the mariner's
 flaxen-winged car that roams the sea. Wretched that I am—such
 are the arts I devised [470] for mankind, yet have myself no
 cunning means to rid me of my present suffering.

Chorus

You have suffered sorrow and humiliation. You have lost your
 wits and have gone astray; and, like an unskilled doctor, fallen
 ill, you lose heart and cannot [475] discover by which remedies
 to cure your own disease.

Προμηθεύς

τὰ λοιπὰ μου κλύουσα θαυμάση πλέον, οἷας τέχνας τε καὶ
 πόρους ἐμησάμην. τὸ μὲν μέγιστον, εἴ τις ἐς νόσον πέσοι, οὐκ
 ἦν ἀλέξημ' οὐδέν, οὔτε βρώσιμον,
 οὐ χριστόν, οὐδὲ πιστόν, ἀλλὰ φαρμάκων **480**
 χρεῖα κατεσκέλλοντο, πρὶν γ' ἐγὼ σφισιν ἔδειξα κράσεις
 ἡπίων ἀκεσμάτων, αἷς τὰς ἀπάσας ἐξαμύνονται νόσους.
 τρόπους τε πολλοὺς μαντικῆς ἐστοίχισα,
 κᾶκρινα πρῶτος ἐξ ὄνειράτων ἃ χρὴ **485**
 ὕπαρ γενέσθαι, κληδόνας τε δυσκρίτους ἐγνώρισ' αὐτοῖς
 ἐνοδίους τε συμβόλους· γαμψωνύχων τε πτησιν οἰωνῶν
 σκεθρῶς διώρισ', οἵτινές τε δεξιῶι φύσιν
 εὐωνύμους τε, καὶ δίαιταν ἦντινα **490**
 ἔχουσ' ἕκαστοι, καὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους τίνες
 ἔχθραι τε καὶ στέργηθρα καὶ συνεδραῖ· σπλάγχχνων τε
 λειότητα, καὶ χροῖαν τίνα ἔχουσ' ἂν εἴη δαίμοσιν πρὸς
 ἡδονὴν
 χολή, λοβοῦ τε ποικίλην εὐμορφίαν. **495**
 κνίσῃ τε κῶλα συγκαλυπτὰ καὶ μακρὰν ὀσφῦν πυρώσας
 δυστέκμαρτον ἐς τέχνην ᾧδωσα θνητούς, καὶ φλογωπὰ
 σήματα ἐξωμμάτωσα, πρόσθεν ὄντ' ἐπάργεμα.
 τοιαῦτα μὲν δὴ ταῦτ'· ἔνερθε δὲ χθονὸς **500**
 κεκρυμμέν', ἀνθρώποισιν ὠφελήματα, χαλκόν, σίδηρον,
 ἄργυρον, χρυσόν τε τίς φήσειεν ἂν πάροιθεν ἐξευρεῖν ἐμοῦ;
 οὐδεῖς, σάφ' οἶδα, μὴ μάτην φλύσαι θέλων.

Prometheus

Hear the rest and you shall wonder the more at the arts and
 resources I devised. This first and foremost: if ever man fell ill,
 there was no defence—no healing food, [480] no ointment, nor
 any drink—but for lack of medicine they wasted away, until I
 showed them how to mix soothing remedies with which they
 now ward off all their disorders. And I marked out many ways
 by which they might read the future, [485] and among dreams I
 first discerned which are destined to come true; and voices
 baffling interpretation I explained to them, and signs from
 chance meetings. The flight of crook-taloned birds I
 distinguished clearly— which by nature are auspicious, [490]
 which sinister—their various modes of life, their mutual feuds
 and loves, and their consortings; and the smoothness of their
 entrails, and what color the gall must have to please [495] the
 gods, also the speckled symmetry of the liver-lobe; and the
 thigh-bones, wrapped in fat, and the long chine I burned and
 initiated mankind into an occult art. Also I cleared their vision to
 discern signs from flames, which were obscure before this.

[500] Enough about these arts. Now as to the benefits to men
 that lay concealed beneath the earth—bronze, iron, silver, and
 gold—who would claim to have discovered them before me? No
 one, I know full well, unless he likes to babble idly. [505] Hear

βραχεῖ δὲ μύθῳ πάντα συλλήβδην μάθε, 505
παῖσαι τέχναι βροτοῖσιν ἐκ Προμηθέως.

Χορός

μή νυν βροτοὺς μὲν ὠφέλει καιροῦ πέρα, σαυτοῦ δ' ἀκήδει
δυστυχοῦντος. ὥς ἐγὼ εὐελπίς εἰμι τῶνδ' ἐκ δεσμῶν ἔτι
λυθέντα μηδὲν μείον ἰσχύσειν Διός. 510

Προμηθεύς

οὐ ταῦτα ταύτῃ μοῖρᾳ πῶ τελεσφόρος κρᾶναι πέπρωται,
μυρίαῖς δὲ πημοναῖς δύαῖς τε καμφθεὶς ὧδε δεσμὰ φυγγάνω·
τέχνη δ' ἀνάγκης ἀσθενεστέρα μακρῶ.

Χορός

τίς οὖν ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν οἰακοστροφός; 515

Προμηθεύς

Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἑρινύες

Χορός

τούτων ἄρα Ζεὺς ἐστὶν ἀσθενέστερος;

Προμηθεύς

οὐκ οὐκ ἂν ἐκφύγοι γε τὴν πεπρωμένην.

Χορός

τί γὰρ πέπρωται Ζηνὶ πλὴν ἀεὶ κρατεῖν;

Προμηθεύς

τοῦτ' οὐκέτ' ἂν πύθοιο μηδὲ λιπάρει. 520

the sum of the whole matter in the compass of one brief word —
every art possessed by man comes from Prometheus.

Chorus

Do not benefit mortals beyond reason and disregard your own
distress; although, I am confident that you will be freed [510]
from these bonds and will have power in no way inferior to
Zeus.

Prometheus

Not in this way is Fate, who brings all to fulfillment, destined to
complete this course. Only when I have been bent by pangs and
tortures infinite am I to escape my bondage. Skill is weaker by
far than Necessity.

Chorus

[515] Who then is the helmsman of Necessity?

Prometheus

The three-shaped Fates and mindful Furies.

Chorus

Can it be that Zeus has less power than they do?

Prometheus

Yes, in that even he cannot escape what is foretold.

Chorus

Why, what is fated for Zeus except to hold eternal sway?

Prometheus

[520] This you must not learn yet; do not be over-eager.

Χορός

ἦ πού τι σεμνόν ἐστιν ὁ ξυναμπέχεις.

Προμηθεύς

ἄλλου λόγου μέμνησθε, τόνδε δ' οὐδαμῶς καιρὸς γεγωνεῖν,
ἀλλὰ συγκαλυπτέος ὅσον μάλιστα· τόνδε γὰρ σφύζων ἐγὼ
δεσμούς· ἀεικεῖς καὶ δῦας ἐκφυγγάνω. 525

Χορός

μηδ' ἄμ' ὅ πάντα νέμων
θεῖτ' ἐμᾷ γνώμα κράτος ἀντίπαλον Ζεὺς,
μηδ' ἐλινύσαιμι θεοὺς ὅσiais θοίναις ποτινισομένα 530
βουφόνοις παρ' Ὠκεανοῦ πατρὸς ἄσβεστον πόρον,
μηδ' ἀλίτοιμι λόγοις· 535
ἀλλὰ μοι τόδ' ἐμμένοι καὶ μήποτ' ἐκτακείη·
ἀδύ τι θαρσαλέαις
τὸν μακρὸν τείνειν βίον ἐλπίσι, φαναῖς
θυμὸν ἀλδαίνουσιν ἐν εὐφροσύναις. φρίσ-
σω δέ σε δερκομένα 540
μυρίοις μόχθοις διακναιόμενον < >.
Ζῆνα γὰρ οὐ τρομέων
ἰδία γνώμα σέβῃ θνατοὺς ἄγαν, Προμηθεῦ.
φέρ', ὅπως ἄχαρις χάρις, ὦ φίλος· 545
εἰπέ ποῦ τίς ἀλκά;
τίς ἐφαμερίων ἄρηξις; οὐδ' ἐδέρχθης
ὀλιγοδρανίαν ἄκικυν,
ἰσόνειρον, τὸ φωτῶν

Chorus

It is some solemn secret, surely, that you enshroud in mystery.

Prometheus

Think of some other subject, for it is not the proper time to speak of this. No matter what, this must be kept concealed; for it is by safeguarding it that [525] I am to escape my dishonorable bonds and outrage.

Chorus

May Zeus, who apportions everything, never set his power in conflict with my will, [530] nor may I be slow to approach the gods, with holy sacrifices of oxen slain, by the side of the ceaseless stream of Oceanus, my father; [535] and may I not offend in speech; but may this rule abide in my heart and never fade away. Sweet it is to pass all the length of life amid confident hopes, feeding the heart in glad festivities.

But I shudder [540] as I look on you, racked by infinite tortures. You have no fear of Zeus, Prometheus, but in self-will you reverence mortals too much.

[545] Come, my friend, how mutual was your reciprocity? Tell me, what kind of help is there in creatures of a day? What aid?

Did you not see the helpless infirmity, no better than a dream, in which the blind [550] generation of men is shackled? Never shall

ἀλαὸν γένος ἐμπεποδισμένον; οὔποτε < > 550
τὰν Διὸς ἀρμονίαν θνατῶν παρεξίασι βουλαί.
ἔμαθον τάδε σὰς προσιδούσ' ὀλο-
ὰς τύχας, Προμηθεῦ.
τὸ διαμφίδιον δέ μοι μέλος προσέπτα
τόδ' ἐκεῖνό θ', ὅ τ' ἀμφὶ λουτρὰ 555
καὶ λέχος σὸν ὑμεναίου
ιότατι γάμων, ὅτε τὰν ὁμοπάτριον ἔδνοις
ἄγαγες Ἡσιόναν πείθων δάμαρτα κοινόλεκτρον. 560

Ἰώ

τίς γῆ; τί γένος; τίνα φῶ λεύσσειν
τόνδε χαλινοῖς ἐν πετρίνοισιν
χειμαζόμενον;
τίνος ἀμπλακίας ποινὰς ὀλέκη;
σήμηνον ὅποι γῆς ἢ μογερὰ πεπλάνημαι. 565
ᾶ ᾶ, ἔ ἔ,
χρῖει τις αὖ με τὰν τάλαιναν οἴστρος,
εἰδῶλον Ἄργου γηγενοῦς, ἄλευ' ᾶ δᾶ· φοβοῦμαι
τὸν μυριωπὸν εἰσορῶσα βούταν.
ὁ δὲ πορεύεται δόλιον ὄμμ' ἔχων,
ὃν οὐδὲ κατθανόντα γαῖα κεύθει. 570

the counsels of mortal men transgress the ordering of Zeus.

I have learned this lesson from observing the luck, Prometheus, that has brought about your ruin. And the difference in the song stole into my thought [555] —this song and that, which, about your bridal bed and bath, I raised to grace your marriage, when you wooed with gifts [560] and won my sister Hesione to be your wedded wife.

*Enter Io*¹

Io

What land is this? What people? By what name am I to call the one I see exposed to the tempest in bonds of rock? What offence have you committed that as punishment you are doomed to destruction? [565] Tell me to what region of the earth I have wandered in my wretchedness?

¹ In vase-paintings after the time of Aeschylus, and possibly due to his influence, Io was often represented as wearing horns to symbolize her transformation into a heifer. The pure beast-type was the rule in earlier vases.

Oh, oh! Aah! Aah! A gad-fly, phantom of earth-born Argus is stinging me again! Keep him away, O Earth! I am fearful when I behold that myriad-eyed herdsman. He travels onward with his

ἀλλ', ἐμὲ τὰν τάλαιναν
 ἐξ ἐνέρων περῶν κυναγετεῖ, πλανᾶ
 τε νῆστιν ἀνὰ τὰν παραλίαν ψάμμαν.
 ὑπὸ δὲ κηρόπλαστος ὀτοβεῖ δόναξ
 ἀχέτας ὑπνοδόταν νόμον· 575
 ἰὼ ἰὼ πόποι, ποῖ μ' ἄγουσι τη-
 λέπλαγκτοι πλάναι;
 τί ποτέ μ', ὦ Κρόνιε παῖ, τί ποτε ταῖσδ'
 ἐνέζευξας εὐρῶν ἀμαρτοῦσαν ἐν
 πημοναῖσιν; ἔξ, 580
 οἰστρηλάτῳ δὲ δείματι
 δειλαίαν παρὰκοπον ὥδε τείρεις;
 πυρί <με> φλέξον, ἢ χθονὶ κάλυψον, ἢ
 ποντίοις δάκεσι δὸς βοράν,
 μηδέ μοι φθονήσης
 εὐγμάτων, ἄναξ.
 ἄδην με πολύπλανοι πλάναι 585
 γεγυμνάκασιν, οὐδ' ἔχω μαθεῖν ὅπα
 πημονὰς ἀλύξω.
 κλύεις φθέγμα τᾶς βούκερῳ παρθένου;

crafty gaze upon me; [570] not even in death does the earth
 conceal him, but passing from the shades he hounds me, the
 forlorn one, and drives me famished along the sands of the
 seashore. [575] The waxen pipe drones forth in accompaniment
 a clear-sounding slumberous strain.

Alas, alas! Where is my far-roaming wandering course taking
 me? In what, O son of Cronus, in what have you found offence
 so that you have bound me [580] to this yoke of misery—aah!
 are you harassing a wretched maiden to frenzy by this terror of
 the pursuing gadfly? Consume me with fire, or hide me in the
 earth, or give me to the monsters of the deep to devour; but do
 not grudge, O Lord, the favor that I pray for. [585] My far-
 roaming wanderings have taught me enough, and I cannot
 discern how to escape my sufferings. Do you hear the voice of
 the horned virgin?

Προμηθεύς

πῶς δ' οὐ κλύω τῆς οἰστροδινῆτος κόρης,
τῆς Ἰναχείας; ἦ Διὸς θάλπει κέαρ **590**
ἔρωτι, καὶ νῦν τοὺς ὑπερμήκεις δρόμους
Ἥρα στυγητὸς πρὸς βίαν γυμνάζεται.

Ἴω

πόθεν ἐμοῦ σὺ πατρὸς ὄνομ' ἀπύεις; **593**
εἰπέ μοι τᾷ μογερᾷ τίς ὦν;
τίς ἄρα μ', ὦ τάλας, τὰν τάλαιναν ὧδ' **595**
ἔτυμα προσθορεῖς;
θεόσυτόν τε νόσον ὠνόμασας, ἃ
μαραίνει με χρίουσα κέντροις, <ἰώ>,
φοιταλέοισιν ἔῃ·
σκιρτημάτων δὲ νήστισιν
αἰκείαις λαβρόσυτος ἦλθον, <Ἥρας > **600**
ἐπικότοισι μήδεσι δαμεῖσα. δυσ-
δαιμόνων δὲ τίνες οἶ, ἔῃ,
οἷ' ἐγὼ μογοῦσιν;
ἀλλὰ μοι τορῶς
τέκμηρον ὅ τι μ' ἐπαμμένει **605**
παθεῖν, τί μῆχαρ, ἢ τί φάρμακον νόσου,
δειξον, εἵπερ οἶσθα·
θρόει, φράζε τᾷ δυσπλάνῳ παρθένῳ.

Prometheus

How can I fail to hear the maiden frenzied by the gadfly, the
[590] daughter of Inachus? It is she who fires the heart of Zeus
with passion, and now, through Hera's hate, is disciplined by
force with interminable wandering.

Io

Why do you call my father's name? Tell me, the unfortunate
maid, who you are, [595] unhappy wretch, that you thus
correctly address the miserable maiden, and have named the
heaven-sent plague that wastes and stings me with its
maddening goad. Ah me! In frenzied bounds I come, [600]
driven by torturing hunger, victim of Hera's vengeful purpose.
Who of the company of the unfortunate endures—aah! aah!—
sufferings such as mine? Oh make it clear to me [605] what
misery I am fated to suffer, what remedy is there, what cure, for
my affliction. Reveal it, if you have the knowledge. Oh speak,
declare it to the unfortunate, wandering virgin.

Προμηθεύς

λέξω τορῶς σοι πᾶν ὅπερ χρήζεις μαθεῖν,
οὐκ ἐμπλέκων αἰνίγματ', ἀλλ' ἀπλῶ λόγῳ, **610**
ὥσπερ δίκαιον πρὸς φίλους οἶγιν στόμα.
πυρὸς βροτοῖς δοτῆρ' ὄρα's Προμηθέα.

Ἴω

ὦ κοινὸν ὠφέλημα θνητοῖσιν φανείς,
τλήμον Προμηθεῦ, τοῦ δίκην πάσχεις τάδε;

Προμηθεύς

ἀρμοὶ πέπαυμαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς θρηνῶν πόνους. **615**

Ἴω

οὐκουν πόροις ἂν τήνδε δωρεὰν ἐμοί;

Προμηθεύς

λέγ' ἦντιν' αἰτῇ· πᾶν γὰρ ἂν πύθοιό μου.

Ἴω

σήμηνον ὅστις ἐν φάραγγί σ' ὥχμασεν.

Προμηθεύς

βούλευμα μὲν τὸ Δῖον, Ἥφαίστου δὲ χεῖρ.

Ἴω

ποινὰς δὲ ποίων ἀμπλακημάτων τίνεις; **620**

Προμηθεύς

τοσοῦτον ἀρκῶ σοι σαφηνίσας μόνον.

Ἴω

καὶ πρὸς γε τούτοις τέρμα τῆς ἐμῆς πλάνης
δεῖξον, τίς ἔσται τῇ ταλαιπώρῳ χρόνος.

Prometheus

I will tell you plainly all that you would like to know, [610] not weaving riddles, but in simple language, since it is right to speak openly to friends. Look, I whom you see am Prometheus, who gave fire to mankind.

Io

O you who have shown yourself a common benefactor of mankind, wretched Prometheus, why do you suffer so?

Prometheus

[615] I have only just now finished lamenting my own calamities.

Io

You will not then do this favor for me?

Prometheus

Say what it is you wish; for you can learn all from me.

Io

Tell me who has bound you fast in this ravine.

Prometheus

Zeus by his will, Hephaestus by his hand.

Io

[620] And for what offence do you pay the penalty?

Prometheus

It suffices that I have made clear to you this much and no more.

Io

Now, also tell me the end of my wandering—what time is set for

Προμηθεύς

τὸ μὴ μαθεῖν σοι κρεῖσσον ἢ μαθεῖν τάδε.

Ἴω

μήτοι με κρύψης τοῦθ' ὅπερ μέλλω παθεῖν. 625

Προμηθεύς

ἀλλ' οὐ μεγαίρω τοῦδέ σοι δωρήματος.

Ἴω

τί δῆτα μέλλεις μὴ οὐ γεγωνίσκειν τὸ πᾶν;

Προμηθεύς

φθόνος μὲν οὐδεῖς, σὰς δ' ὀκνῶ θράξαι φρένας.

Ἴω

μή μου προκήδου μᾶσσον ὥς ἐμοὶ γλυκύ.

Προμηθεύς

ἐπεὶ προθυμῇ, χρὴ λέγειν. ἄκουε δῆ. 630

Χορός

μήπω γε· μοῖραν δ' ἡδονῆς κᾶμοι πόρε.

τὴν τῆσδε πρῶτον ἱστορήσωμεν νόσον,

αὐτῆς λεγούσης τὰς πολυφθόρους τύχας·

τὰ λοιπὰ δ' ἄθλων σοῦ διδαχθήτω πάρα.

Προμηθεύς

σὸν ἔργον, Ἰοῖ, ταῖσδ' ὑπουργῆσαι χάριν, 635

ἄλλως τε πάντως καὶ κασιγνήταις πατρός.

ὥς τὰποκλαῦσαι κάποδύρασθαι τύχας

ἐνταῦθ', ὅπου μέλλοι τις οἴσεσθαι δάκρυ

πρὸς τῶν κλυόντων, ἀξίαν τριβὴν ἔχει.

wretched me.

Prometheus

It would be better not to know than to know, in your case.

Io

[625] I beg you, do not hide from me what I am doomed to suffer.

Prometheus

No, it is not that I do not want to grant your request.

Io

Why then your reluctance to tell me everything?

Prometheus

I am not unwilling; but I hesitate to crush your spirit.

Io

Do not be more kind to me than I myself desire.

Prometheus

[630] Since you insist, I must speak. Listen, then.

Chorus

No, not yet. Grant us too a portion of the pleasure. Let us first inquire the story of her affliction and let her with her own lips relate the events that brought horrid calamity upon her. Then let her be instructed by you as to the toils still to come.

Prometheus

[635] It is for you, Io, to grant them this favor, especially since they are your father's sisters. For it is worthwhile to indulge in weeping and in wailing over evil fortunes when one is likely to

Ἴώ

οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως ὑμῖν ἀπιστῆσαί με χρή, 640
 σαφεῖ δὲ μύθῳ πᾶν ὅπερ προσχρήζετε
 πεύσεσθε· καίτοι καὶ λέγουσ' αἰσχύνομαι
 θεόσσυτον χειμῶνα καὶ διαφθορὰν
 μορφῆς, ὅθεν μοι σχετλία προσέπτατο.
 αἰεὶ γὰρ ὄψεις ἔννυχοι πωλεύμεναι 645
 ἐς παρθενῶνας τοὺς ἐμούς παρηγόρουν
 λείοισι μύθοις "ὦ μέγ' εὐδαιμον κόρη,
 τί παρθενεύει δαρὸν, ἐξόν σοι γάμου
 τυχεῖν μεγίστου; Ζεὺς γὰρ ἱμέρου βέλει
 πρὸς σοῦ τέθαλπται καὶ συναίρεσθαι Κύπριν 650
 θέλει· σὺ δ', ὦ παῖ, μὴ 'πολακτίσης λέχος
 τὸ Ζηνός, ἀλλ' ἐξέλθε πρὸς Λέρνης βαθὺν
 λειμῶνα, ποιμένας βουστάσεις τε πρὸς πατρός,
 ὥς ἂν τὸ Δῖον ὄμμα λωφήσῃ πόθου."
 τοιοῖσδε πάσας εὐφρόνας ὀνειράσι 655
 συνειχόμεν δύστηνος, ἔστε δὴ πατρὶ
 ἔτλην γεγωνεῖν νυκτίφοιτ' ὀνειράτα.
 ὁ δ' ἔς τε Πυθῶ καὶ Πιττωδῶν πικνούς
 θεοπρόπους ἱάλλεν, ὥς μάθοι τί χρή
 δρῶντ' ἢ λέγοντα δαίμοσιν πρᾶσσειν φίλα. 660
 ἦκον δ' ἀναγγέλλοντες αἰολοστόμους
 χρησμούς ἀσήμους δυσκρίτως τ' εἰρημένους.

win the tribute of a tear from the listener.

Io

[640] I do not know how to refuse you. You shall learn in truthful speech all that you would like to know. Yet I am ashamed to tell about the storm of calamity sent by Heaven, of the marring of my form, and of the source from which it swooped upon me, wretched that I am.

[645] For visions of the night, always haunting my maiden chamber, sought to beguile me with seductive words, saying: "O damsel greatly blessed of fortune, why linger in your maidenhood so long when it is within your power to win a union of the highest? Zeus is inflamed by passion's dart [650] for you and is eager to unite with you in love.

Do not, my child, spurn the bed of Zeus, but go forth to Lerna's meadow land of pastures deep and to your father's flocks and where his cattle feed, so that the eye of Zeus may find respite from its longing."

[655] By such dreams was I, to my distress, beset night after night, until at last I gained courage to tell my father of the dreams that haunted me. And he sent many a messenger to Pytho and Dodona so that he might discover [660] what deed or word of his would find favor with the gods.

But they returned with report of oracles, riddling, obscure, and darkly worded. Then at last there came an unmistakable

τέλος δ' ἐναργῆς βάξις ἦλθεν Ἰνάχῳ
 σαφῶς ἐπισκῆπτουσα καὶ μυθουμένη
 ἔξω δόμων τε καὶ πάτρας ὠθεῖν ἐμέ, 665
 ἄφετον ἀλᾶσθαι γῆς ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις ὄροις·
 κεῖ μὴ θέλοι, πυρωπὸν ἐκ Διὸς μολεῖν
 κεραυνόν, ὃς πᾶν ἐξαῖστώσοι γένος.
 τοιοῖσδε πεισθεὶς Λοξίου μαντεύμασιν
 ἐξήλασέν με κατέκλησε δωμάτων 670
 ἄκουσαν ἄκων· ἀλλ' ἐπηνάγκαζέ νιν
 Διὸς χαλινὸς πρὸς βίαν πράσσειν τάδε.
 εὐθύς δὲ μορφὴ καὶ φρένες διάστροφοι
 ἦσαν, κεραστὶς δ', ὥς ὄρατ', ὄξυστόμῳ
 μύωπι χρυσθεῖσ' ἐμμανεῖ σκιρτήματι 675
 ἦσσον πρὸς εὐποτόν τε Κερχνεῖας ῥέος
 Λέρνης τε κρήνην· βουκόλος δὲ γηγενῆς
 ἄκρατος ὀργὴν Ἄργος ὠμάρτει, πυκνοῖς
 ὄσσοις δεδορκῶς τοὺς ἐμούς κατα στίβους.
 ἀπροσδόκητος δ' αὐτὸν ἀφνίδιος μόρος 680
 τοῦ ζῆν ἀπεστέρησεν. οἰστροπλήξ δ' ἐγὼ
 μάστιγι θεία γῆν πρὸ γῆς ἐλαύνομαι.
 κλύεις τὰ πραχθέντ'· εἰ δ' ἔχεις εἰπεῖν ὅ τι
 λοιπὸν πόνων, σήμαινε· μηδέ μ' οἰκτίσας
 ξύνθαλπε μύθοις ψευδέσιν· νόσημα γὰρ 685
 αἰσχιστον εἶναί φημι συνθέτους λόγους.

utterance to Inachus, charging and commanding him clearly that [665] he must thrust me forth from home and native land to roam at large to the remotest confines of the earth; and, if he would not, a fiery thunderbolt would come from Zeus that would utterly destroy his whole race.

Yielding obedience to such prophetic utterances of Loxias, [670] he drove me away and barred me from his house, against his will and mine; but the constraint of Zeus forced him to act by necessity. Immediately my form and mind were distorted, and with horns, as you see, upon my forehead, [675] stung by a sharp-fanged gadfly I rushed with frantic bounds to Cerchnea's sweet stream and Lerna's spring. But Argus, the earth-born herdsman, untempered in his rage, pursued me, peering with his many eyes upon my steps. [680] A sudden death robbed him of life unexpectedly; while I, still tormented by the gadfly, am driven on from land to land before the heaven-sent plague.

That is what happened ; and if you can declare what toils still remain, reveal them. Do not, from pity, seek [685] to soothe me with untrue words ; for I consider false words to be the foulest sickness.

Χορός

ἔα ἔα, ἄπεχε, φεῦ·
οὔποτ' οὔποτ' ἠὔχουν <ᾧδε> ξένους
μολεῖσθαι λόγους εἰς ἀκοὰν ἐμάν,
οὐδ' ᾧδε δυσθέατα καὶ δύσοιστα **690**
πήματα, λύματα, [δείματα] ἀμ-
φάκει κέντρῳ τύψειν ψυχὰν ἐμάν.
ἰὼ [ἰὼ] μοῖρα μοῖρα,
πέφρικ' εἰσιδοῦσα πρᾶξιν Ἰοῦς. **695**

Προμηθεύς

πρῶ γε στενάζεις καὶ φόβου πλέα τις εἶ·
ἐπίσχες ἔστ' ἂν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ προσμάθης.

Χορός

λέγ', ἐκδίδασκε· τοῖς νοσοῦσί τοι γλυκὺ
τὸ λοιπὸν ἄλγος προυξεπίστασθαι τορῶς.

Προμηθεύς

τὴν πρὶν γε χρεῖαν ἠνύσασθ' ἐμοῦ πάρα **700**
κούφως· μαθεῖν γὰρ τῇσδε πρῶτ' ἐχρήζετε
τὸν ἀμφ' ἐαυτῆς ἄθλον ἐξηγουμένης·
τὰ λοιπὰ νῦν ἀκούσαθ', οἷα χρή πάθη
τλῆναι πρὸς Ἥρας τήνδε τὴν νεάνίδα.
σύ τ' Ἰνάχειον σπέρμα, τοὺς ἐμούς λόγους **705**
θυμῷ βάλλ', ὥς ἂν τέρματ' ἐκμάθης ὁδοῦ.
πρῶτον μὲν ἐνθένδ' ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολὰς
στρέψασα σαυτὴν στεῖχ' ἀνηρότους γύας·

Chorus

Oh, ah, go away, alas! Never, oh never, did I dream that words
so strange would greet my ears; [690] or that sufferings so
grievous to look upon, yes, and so grievous to endure, a tale of
outrage, would strike my soul as if with double-pronged goad.
Alas, O Fate, O Fate, [695] I shudder to behold the plight that
has befallen Io.

Prometheus

You lament and are full of fear all too soon. Wait until you have
learned the rest as well.

Chorus

Proceed, tell all. It is comforting for the sick to know clearly
beforehand what pain still awaits them.

Prometheus

[700] You gained your former request easily from me; for you
first desired the story of her ordeal from her own lips. Hear now
the sequel, the sufferings this maid is fated to endure at Hera's
hand. [705] And may you, daughter of Inachus, lay to heart my
words so that you may learn the end of your wanderings.
First, from this spot, turn yourself toward the rising sun and
make your way over untilled plains; and you shall reach the
Scythian nomads, who dwell [710] in thatched houses, perched
aloft on strong-wheeled wagons and are equipped with far-

Σκύθας δ' ἀφίξη νομάδας, οἱ πλεκτὰς στέγας
 πεδάρσιοι ναίουσ' ἐπ' εὐκύκλοις ὄχοις **710**
 ἐκηβόλοις τόξοισιν ἐξηρτυμένοι·
 οἷς μὴ πελάζειν, ἀλλ' ἀλιστόνοις πόδας
 χρίμπτουσα ῥαχίαισιν ἐκπερᾶν χθόνα.
 λαιᾶς δὲ χειρὸς οἱ σιδηροτέκτονες
 οἰκοῦσι Χάλυβες, οὓς φυλάξασθαί σε χρή. **715**
 ἀνήμεροι γὰρ οὐδὲ πρόσπλατοι ξένοις.
 ἦξεις δ' Ὑβριστὴν ποταμὸν οὐ ψευδώνυμον,
 ὃν μὴ περάσης, οὐ γὰρ εὐβάτος περᾶν,
 πρὶν ἂν πρὸς αὐτὸν Καύκασον μόλης, ὁρῶν
 ὕψιστον, ἔνθα ποταμὸς ἐκφυσᾷ μένος **720**
 κροτάφων ἀπ' αὐτῶν. ἀστρογείτονας δὲ χρή
 κορυφὰς ὑπερβάλλουσας ἐς μεσημβρινὴν
 βῆναι κέλευθον, ἔνθ' Ἀμαζόνων στρατὸν
 ἦξεις στυγάνορ', αἱ Θεμίσκυράν ποτε
 κατοικιοῦσιν ἀμφὶ Θερμώδονθ', ἵνα **725**
 τραχεῖα πόντου Σαλμυδησσία γνάθος
 ἐχθρόξενος ναύταισι, μητρυιὰ νεῶν·
 αὐταῖ σ' ὀδηγήσουσι καὶ μάλ' ἀσμένως.
 ἰσθμὸν δ' ἐπ' αὐταῖς στενοπόροις λίμνης πύλαις
 Κιμμερικὸν ἦξεις, ὃν θρασυσπλάγχχνως σε χρή **730**
 λιποῦσαν αὐλῶν' ἐκπερᾶν Μαιωτικόν·
 ἔσται δὲ θνητοῖς εἰσαεὶ λόγος μέγας
 τῆς σῆς πορείας, Βόσπορος δ' ἐπώνυμος

darting bows. Do not approach them, but keeping your feet near
 the rugged shore, where the sea breaks with a roar, pass on
 beyond their land. On the left hand dwell the workers in iron,
 [715] the Chalybes, and you must beware of them, since they are
 savage and are not to be approached by strangers.

Then you shall reach the river Hybristes,¹ which does not belie
 its name. Do not cross this, for it is hard to cross, until you come
 to Caucasus itself, [720] loftiest of mountains, where from its
 very brows the river pours out its might in fury. You must pass
 over its crests, which neighbor the stars, and enter upon a
 southward course, where you shall reach the host of the
 Amazons, who loathe all men. They shall in time to come [725]
 inhabit Themiscyra on the Thermodon, where, fronting the sea,
 is Salmydessus' rugged jaw, evil host of mariners, step-mother
 of ships. The Amazons will gladly guide you on your way.

Next, just at the narrow portals of the harbor, you shall reach
 [730] the Cimmerian isthmus. This you must leave with stout
 heart and pass through the channel of Maeotis; and ever after
 among mankind there shall be great mention of your passing,
 and it shall be called after you the Bosphorus.² Then, leaving the

κεκλήσεται. λιποῦσα δ' Εὐρώπης πέδον
ἤπειρον ἤξεις Ἀσιάδ'. ἄρ', ὑμῖν δοκεῖ 735
ὁ τῶν θεῶν τύραννος ἐς τὰ πάνθ' ὁμῶς
βίαιος εἶναι; τῇδε γὰρ θνητῇ θεὸς
χρήζων μιγῆναι τάσδ' ἐπέρριψεν πλάνας.
πικροῦ δ' ἔκυρσας, ὦ κόρη, τῶν σῶν γάμων
μνηστήρος. οὐς γὰρ νῦν ἀκήκοας λόγους, 740
εἶναι δόκει σοι μηδέπω 'ν προοιμίῳ.

Ἰώ

ἰὼ μοί μοι, ἔ ἔ.

Προμηθεύς

σὺ δ' αὖ κέκραγας κἀναμυχιζῇ; τί που
δράσεις, ὅταν τὰ λοιπὰ πυνθάνη κακά;

Χορός

ἦ γὰρ τι λοιπὸν τῇδε πημάτων ἐρεῖς; 745

Προμηθεύς

δυσχεῖμερόν γε πέλαγος ἀτηρᾶς δύης.

soil of Europe, [735] you shall come to the Asian continent. Does it not seem to you that the tyrant of the gods is violent in all his ways? For this god, desirous of union with this mortal maid, has imposed upon her these wanderings. Maiden, you have gained a cruel suitor [740] for your hand. As to the tale you now have heard — understand that it has not even passed the introduction.

¹ Ὑβριστής, "Violent" from ὕβρις, "violence."

² Βόσπορος, by popular etymology derived from βοῦς and πόρος, "passing of the cow," is, according to Wecklein, a Thracian form of Φωσφόρος, "light-bearing," an epithet of the goddess Hecate. The dialectical form, once misunderstood, was then, it is conjectured, transferred from the Thracian (cp. **Aesch. Pers. 746**) to the Crimean strait. In the Suppliants Aeschylus makes Io cross the **Thracian** Bosphorus.

Io

Ah me, ah me, alas!

Prometheus

What! You are crying and groaning again? What will you do, I wonder, when you have learned the sufferings still in store for you?

Chorus

[745] What! Can it be that you have sufferings still left to recount to her?

Prometheus

Yes, a tempestuous sea of calamitous distress.

Ιώ

τί δῆτ' ἐμοὶ ζῆν κέρδος, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐν τάχει
ἔρριψ' ἐμαυτὴν τῆσδ' ἀπὸ στύφλου πέτρας,
ὅπως πέδοι σκήψασα τῶν πάντων πόνων
ἀπηλλάγην; κρεῖσσον γὰρ εἰσάπαξ θανεῖν **750**
ἢ τὰς ἀπάσας ἡμέρας πάσχειν κακῶς.

Προμηθεύς

ἢ δυσπετῶς ἂν τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἄθλους φέροις,
ὅτῳ θανεῖν μέν ἐστιν οὐ πεπρωμένον·
αὕτη γὰρ ἦν ἂν πημάτων ἀπαλλαγὴ·
νῦν δ' οὐδέν ἐστι τέρμα μοι προκείμενον **755**
μόχθων, πρὶν ἂν Ζεὺς ἐκπέσῃ τυραννίδος.

Ιώ

ἢ γὰρ ποτ' ἔστιν ἐκπεσεῖν ἀρχῆς Δία;

Προμηθεύς

ἦδοι' ἂν, οἶμαι, τήνδ' ἰδοῦσα συμφορὰν.

Ιώ

πῶς δ' οὐκ ἂν, ἥτις ἐκ Διὸς πάσχω κακῶς;

Προμηθεύς

ὥς τοίνυν ὄντων τῶνδ' σοι μαθεῖν πάρα. **760**

Ιώ

πρὸς τοῦ τυράννα σκῆπτρα συληθήσεται;

Προμηθεύς

πρὸς αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ κενοφρόνων βουλευμάτων.

Io

What gain have I then in life? Why did I not hurl myself straightaway from this rugged rock, so that I was dashed to earth and freed from [750] all my sufferings? It is better to die once and for all than linger out all my days in misery.

Prometheus

Ah, you would hardly bear my agonies to whom it is not foredoomed to die; for death would have freed me from my sufferings. [755] But now no limit to my tribulations has been appointed until Zeus is hurled from his sovereignty.

Io

What! Shall Zeus one day be hurled from his dominion?

Prometheus

You would rejoice, I think, to see that happen.

Io

Why not, since it is at the hand of Zeus that I suffer?

Prometheus

[760] Then you may assure yourself that these things are true.

Io

By whom shall he be despoiled of the sceptre of his sovereignty?

Prometheus

By himself and his own empty-headed purposes.

Ἴώ

ποιῶ τρόπῳ; σήμενον, εἰ μή τις βλάβη.

Προμηθεύς

γαμεῖ γάμον τοιοῦτον ᾧ ποτ' ἀσχαλᾷ.

Ἴώ

θέορτον, ἢ βρότειον; εἰ ῥητόν, φράσον. 765

Προμηθεύς

τί δ' ὄντιν'; οὐ γὰρ ῥητόν αὐδᾷσθαι τόδε.

Ἴώ

ἢ πρὸς δάμαρτος ἐξανίσταται θρόνων;

Προμηθεύς

ἢ τέξεταί γε παῖδα φέρτερον πατρός.

Ἴώ

οὐδ' ἔστιν αὐτῷ τῆσδ' ἀποστροφὴ τύχης;

Προμηθεύς

οὐ δῆτα, πλήν ἔγωγ' ἂν ἐκ δεσμῶν λυθείς. 770

Ἴώ

τίς οὖν ὁ λύσων ἔστιν ἄκοντος Διός;

Προμηθεύς

τῶν σῶν τιν' αὐτὸν ἐγγόνων εἶναι χρεών.

Ἴώ

πῶς εἶπας; ἢ ἴμὸς παῖς σ' ἀπαλλάξει κακῶν;

Προμηθεύς

τρίτος γε γένναν πρὸς δέκ' ἄλλαισιν γοναῖς.

Io

In what way? Oh tell me, if there be no harm in telling.

Prometheus

He shall make a marriage that shall one day cause him distress.

Io

[765] With a divinity or with a mortal? If it may be told, speak out.

Prometheus

Why ask with whom? I may not speak of this.

Io

Is it by his consort that he shall be dethroned?

Prometheus

Yes, since she shall bear a son mightier than his father.

Io

And has he no means to avert this doom?

Prometheus

[770] No, none — except me, if I were released from bondage.

Io

Who then is to release you against the will of Zeus?

Prometheus

It is to be one of your own grandchildren.

Io

What did you say? A child of mine will release you from your misery?

Ἴώ

ἥδ' οὐκέτ' εὐξύμβλητος ἡ χρησμοδία. 775

Προμηθεύς

καὶ μηδὲ σαυτῆς ἐκμαθεῖν ζήτει πόνους.

Ἴώ

μή μοι προτείνων κέρδος εἴτ' ἀποστέρει.

Προμηθεύς

δυοῖν λόγοιν σε θατέρω δωρήσομαι.

Ἴώ

ποίοιν; πρόδειξον, αἶρεσίν τ' ἐμοὶ δίδου.

Προμηθεύς

δίδωμ'· ἐλοῦ γάρ, ἢ πόνων τὰ λοιπά σοι 780

φράσω σαφηνῶς, ἢ τὸν ἐκλύσοντ' ἐμέ.

Χορός

τούτων σὺ τὴν μὲν τῇδε, τὴν δ' ἐμοὶ χάριν

θέσθαι θέλησον, μηδ' ἀτιμάσης λόγον·

καὶ τῇδε μὲν γέγωνε τὴν λοιπὴν πλάνην,

ἐμοὶ δὲ τὸν λύσοντα· τοῦτο γὰρ ποθῶ. 785

Προμηθεύς

ἐπεὶ προθυμεῖσθ', οὐκ ἐναντιώσομαι

τὸ μὴ οὐ γεγωνεῖν πᾶν ὅσον προσχρήζετε.

σοὶ πρῶτον, Ἰοῖ, πολύδονον πλάνην φράσω,

ἣν ἐγγράφου σὺ μνήμοσιν δέλτοις φρενῶν.

ὅταν περάσης ῥεῖθρον ἡπεύροιον ὄρον, 790

πρὸς ἀντολὰς φλογώπας ἡλιοστιβεῖς

Prometheus

The third in descent after ten generations.

Io

[775] Your prophecy is not easy to understand.

Prometheus

Yes, so do not seek to learn the full extent of your own sufferings.

Io

Do not offer me a favor and then withdraw it.

Prometheus

I will present you with one or other of two tales.

Io

Which two? Set them forth and offer me the choice.

Prometheus

[780] I am making the offer: choose whether I shall reveal the sufferings still in store for you or the one who will be my deliverer.

Chorus

Consent to bestow on her one of these favors, and on me the other; do not deny me the tale. Tell her about her further wanderings; [785] tell me who will deliver you—for I would like to know this.

Prometheus

Well, since you are bent on this, I will not refuse to proclaim all that you still crave to know. First, to you, Io, will I declare your

*

πόντου περῶσα φλοῖσβον, ἔστ' ἂν ἐξίκη
 πρὸς Γοργόνεια πεδία Κισθήνης, ἵνα
 αἱ Φορκίδες ναίουσι δηναῖαι κόραι
 τρεῖς κυκνόμορφοι, κοινὸν ὄμμ' ἐκτημέναι, **795**
 μονόδοντες, ἅς οὔθ' ἥλιος προσδέρεται
 ἀκτῖσιν οὔθ' ἡ νύκτερος μήνη ποτέ.
 πέλας δ' ἀδελφαὶ τῶνδε τρεῖς κατάπτεροι,
 δρακοντόμαλλοι Γοργόνες βροτοστυγεῖς,
 ἅς θνητὸς οὐδεὶς εἰσιδὼν ἔξει πνοάς. **800**
 τοιοῦτο μὲν σοι τοῦτο φρούριον λέγω·
 ἄλλην δ' ἄκουσον δυσχερῇ θεωρίαν·
 ὀξυστόμους γὰρ Ζηνὸς ἀκραγεῖς κύνας
 γρυῦπας φύλαξαι, τὸν τε μουνῶπα στρατὸν
 Ἀριμασπὸν ἵποβάμον', οἱ χρυσόρρυτον **805**
 οἰκοῦσιν ἀμφὶ νᾶμα Πλούτωνος πόρου·
 τούτοις σὺ μὴ πέλαζε. τηλουρὸν δὲ γῆν
 ἦξεις, κελαινὸν φυλόν, οἱ πρὸς ἡλίου
 ναίουσι πηγαῖς, ἔνθα ποταμὸς Αἰθίοψ.
 τούτου παρ' ὄχθας ἔρψ', ἕως ἂν ἐξίκη **810**
 καταβασμόν, ἔνθα Βιβλίνων ὀρῶν ἄπο
 ἦσι σεπτὸν Νεῖλος εὐποτον ῥέος.
 οὗτός σ' ὁδώσει τὴν τρίγωνον ἐς χθόνα
 Νειλῶτιν, οὗ δὴ τὴν μακρὰν ἀποικίαν,
 Ἰοῖ, πέπρωται σοί τε καὶ τέκνοις κτίσαι. **815**

much-vexed wandering, and may you engrave it on the recording tablets of your mind. [790] When you have crossed the stream that bounds the two continents, toward the flaming east, where the sun walks,..... crossing the surging sea until you reach the Gorgonean plains of Cisthene, where the daughters of Phorcys dwell, ancient maids, [795] three in number, shaped like swans, possessing one eye amongst them and a single tooth; neither does the sun with his beams look down upon them, nor ever the nightly moon. And near them are their three winged sisters, the snake-haired Gorgons, loathed of mankind, [800] whom no one of mortal kind shall look upon and still draw breath. Such is the peril that I bid you to guard against. But now listen to another and a fearsome spectacle. Beware of the sharp-beaked hounds of Zeus that do not bark, the gryphons, [805] and the one-eyed Arimaspians folk, mounted on horses, who dwell about the flood of Pluto's¹ stream that flows with gold. Do not approach them. Then you shall come to a far-off country of a dark race that dwells by the waters of the sun, where the river Aethiop is. [810] Follow along its banks until you reach the cataract, where, from the Byblis mountains, Nile sends forth his hallowed and sweet stream. He will conduct you on your way to the three-angled land of Nilotis, where, at last, it is ordained for you, [815] O Io, and for your children to found your far-off colony. If anything of this is confusing to you and hard to understand, may you question me yet again, and gain a

τῶν δ' εἴ τί σοι ψελλόν τε καὶ δυσεύρετον,
ἐπανδίπλαζε καὶ σαφῶς ἐκμάνθανε·
σχολή δὲ πλείων ἢ θέλω πάρεστί μοι.

Χορός

εἰ μὲν τι τῇδε λοιπὸν ἢ παρειμένον
ἔχεις γεγωνεῖν τῆς πολυφθόρου πλάνης, 820
λέγ'· εἰ δὲ πάντ' εἴρηκας, ἡμῖν αὖ χάριν
δὸς ἥνπερ αἰτούμεσθα, μέμνησαι δέ που.

Προμηθεύς

τὸ πᾶν πορείας ἦδε τέρμ' ἀκήκοεν.
ὅπως δ' ἂν εἰδῇ μὴ μάτην κλύουσά μου,
ἃ πρὶν μολεῖν δεῦρ' ἐκμεμόχθηκεν φράσω, 825
τεκμήριον τοῦτ' αὐτὸ δοὺς μύθων ἐμῶν.
ὄχλον μὲν οὖν τὸν πλεῖστον ἐκλείψω λόγων,
πρὸς αὐτὸ δ' εἵμι τέρμα σῶν πλανημάτων.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἦλθες πρὸς Μολοσσὰ γάπεδα,
τὴν αἰπύνωτόν τ' ἀμφὶ Δωδώνην, ἵνα 830
μαντεῖα θᾶκός τ' ἐστὶ Θεσπρωτοῦ Διός,
τέρας τ' ἄπιστον, αἱ προσήγοροι δρῦες,
ὕφ' ὧν σὺ λαμπρῶς κούδεν αἰνικτηρίως
προσηγορεύθης ἢ Διὸς κλεινὴ δάμαρ
μέλλουσ' ἔσεσθαι. τῶνδε προσσαίνει σέ τι ; 835
έντεῦθεν οἰστρήσασα τὴν παρακτίαν
κέλευθον ἤξας πρὸς μέγαν κόλπον Ῥέας,
ἀφ' οὗ παλιμπλάγκτοισι χειμάζει δρόμοις·

clear account; for I have more leisure than I crave.

¹ Πλούτον is an abbreviation of Πλουτοδότης or Πλουτοδοτήρ, “giver of wealth”; hence the apparent confusion with Πλούτος.

Chorus

If there is anything still remaining or passed over [820] of her direful wandering that you have to tell, oh speak. But if you have told all, grant us in turn the favor we request—you probably have it still in memory.

Prometheus

She has now heard the full end of her travels; yet so she may know that she has heard no vain tale from me, [825] I will describe the toils she has endured before she came here, giving this as a sure proof of my account.

Most of the weary tale I shall leave out and come to the very close of your wanderings. For when you reached the Molossian plains [830] and the sheer ridge that encircles Dodona, where lies the prophetic seat of Thesprotian Zeus and that marvel, passing all belief, the talking oaks, by which you clearly, and in no riddling terms, were saluted as the renowned [835] bride-to-be of Zeus (is any of this pleasing to you?) , then, stung by the gadfly, you rushed along the pathway by the shore to the great gulf of Rhea, from where you are tossed in backward-wandering course; and for all time to come a recess of the sea,

χρόνον δὲ τὸν μέλλοντα πόντιος μυχός,
 σαφῶς ἐπίστασ', Ἴόνιος κεκλήσεται, **840**
 τῆς σῆς πορείας μνήμα τοῖς πᾶσιν βροτοῖς.
 σημεία σοι τάδ' ἐστὶ τῆς ἐμῆς φρενός,
 ὥς δέρεται πλέον τι τοῦ πεφασμένου.
 τὰ λοιπὰ δ' ὑμῖν τῇδε τ' ἐς κοινὸν φράσω,
 ἐς ταῦτ' ἐλθὼν τῶν πάλαι λόγων ἵχνος. **845**
 ἔστιν πόλις Κάνωβος ἐσχάτη χθονός,
 Νείλου πρὸς αὐτῷ στόματι καὶ προσχώματι·
 ἐνταῦθα δὴ σε Ζεὺς τίθησιν ἔμφρονα
 ἐπαφῶν ἀταρβεῖ χειρὶ καὶ θιγὼν μόνον.
 ἐπ' αὐτὸν δὲ τῶν Διὸς γεννημάτων **850**
 τέξεις κελαινὸν Ἐπαφον, ὃς καρπώσεται
 ὅσῃν πλατύρρους Νεῖλος ἀρδεύει χθόνα·
 πέμπτη δ' ἀπ' αὐτοῦ γέννα πεντηκοντάπαις
 πάλιν πρὸς Ἄργος οὐχ ἑκούσ' ἐλεύσεται
 θηλύσπορος, φεύγουσα συγγενῇ γάμον **855**
 ἀνεψιῶν· οἱ δ' ἐπτοημένοι φρένας,
 κίρκοι πελειῶν οὐ μακρὰν λελειμμένοι,
 ἥξουσι θηρεύοντες οὐ θηρασίμους
 γάμους, φθόνον δὲ σωμάτων ἔξει θεός·
 Πελασγία δὲ δέξεται θηλυκτόνῳ **860**
 Ἄρει, δαμέντων νυκτιφρουρήτῳ θράσει.
 γυνὴ γὰρ ἄνδρ' ἕκαστον αἰῶνος στερεῖ,
 δίθηκτον ἐν σφαγαῖσι βάψασα ξίφος·

[840] be well assured, shall bear the name Ionian, as a memorial of your crossing for all mankind. These, then, are the tokens to you of my understanding, to show that it discerns more than has been made manifest. The rest I shall declare both to you and her, [845] returning to the track of my former tale.

There is a city, Canobus, on the extremity of the land at the very mouth and silt-bar of the Nile. There at last Zeus restores you to your senses by the mere stroke and touch of his untterrifying hand. [850] And you shall bring forth dark Epaphus,¹ thus named from the manner of Zeus' engendering; and he shall gather the fruit of all the land watered by the broad-flowing Nile. Fifth in descent from him, fifty maidens shall return to Argos, not of their own [855] free choice, but fleeing marriage with their cousin kin; while these, their hearts ablaze with passion, like falcons eagerly pursuing doves, shall come in pursuit of wedlock unlawful to pursue; but God shall grudge them enjoyment of their brides. [860] Pelasgian soil shall offer the maids a home, when, in the watches of the night, their husbands have been slain by a deed of daring wrought by the women's murderous blows. For each bride shall take the life of her lord, dyeing a two-edged sword in his blood—in such ways may Love come upon my enemies! [865] However, love's desire shall charm one of the maidens not to slay her mate; rather, her

τοιάδ' ἐπ' ἐχθροὺς τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἔλθοι Κύπρις.
 μίαν δὲ παίδων ἵμερος θέλξει τὸ μὴ 865
 κτείνειν σύνευνον, ἀλλ' ἀπαμβλυνθήσεται
 γνώμην· δυοῖν δὲ θάτερον βουλήσεται,
 κλύειν ἀναλκίς μᾶλλον ἢ μαιφόνος·
 αὕτη κατ' Ἄργος βασιλικὸν τέξει γένος.
 μακροῦ λόγου δεῖ ταῦτ' ἐπεξελεῖν τορῶς. 870
 σπορᾶς γε μὴν ἐκ τῆσδε φύσεται θρασὺς
 τόξοισι κλεινός, ὃς πόνων ἐκ τῶνδ' ἐμὲ
 λύσει. τοιόνδε χρησμὸν ἢ παλαιγενὴς
 μήτηρ ἐμοὶ διήλθε Τιτανίς Θέμις·
 ὅπως δὲ χῶπη, ταῦτα δεῖ μακροῦ λόγου 875
 εἰπεῖν, σύ τ' οὐδὲν ἐκμαθοῦσα κερδανεῖς.
Ἴω
 ἐλελεῦ ἐλελεῦ,
 ὑπὸ μ' αὖ σφάκελος καὶ φρενοπληγεῖς
 μανίαι θάλπους, οἷστρου δ' ἄρδις
 χρίει μ' ἄπυρος 880
 κραδία δὲ φόβῳ φρένα λακτίζει.
 τροχοδινεῖται δ' ὄμμαθ' ἐλίγδην,
 ἔξω δὲ δρόμου φέρομαι λύσσης
 πνεύματι μάργῳ, γλώσσης ἀκρατῆς·
 θολεροὶ δὲ λόγοι παῖουσ' εἰκῇ 885
 στυγνῆς πρὸς κύμασιν ἄτης.

resolve will lose its edge; for she will make her choice between
 two evil names to be called coward rather than murderess. She it
 is who shall give birth in Argos to a royal line— [870] a long
 story is necessary to explain this clearly; of her seed, however,
 shall be born a man of daring, renowned with the bow, who
 shall deliver me from these toils.² Such is the oracle recounted to
 me by my mother, Titan Themis, born long ago. [875] The
 manner and the means—these need lengthy speech to tell, and
 to learn them all would not be of any benefit.

¹ Epaphus, "Touch-born," named from the touch (ἔφαξις) of the hand of Zeus. Cp. *Aesch. Supp.* 45, 48.

² Heracles. Accidentally wounded by the poisoned arrow of this descendant of Io, the centaur Chiron offered himself as a substitute for Prometheus, thus fulfilling the prophecy contained in ll. 1026 ff. In a fragment of the *Prometheus Unbound* Heracles is represented as aiming his arrow against the eagle that feasted on the body of Prometheus (l. 1022) .

Io

Oh! Oh! Alas! Once again convulsive pain and frenzy, striking
 my brain, inflame me. I am stung by the gadfly's barb, [880]
 unforged by fire. My heart knocks at my ribs in terror; my
 eyeballs roll wildly round and round. I am carried out of my
 course by a fierce blast of madness; I've lost all mastery over my
 tongue, [885] and a stream of turbid words beats recklessly
 against the billows of dark destruction. *Exit*

Χορός

ἦ σοφὸς ἦ σοφὸς [ἦν] ὃς
 πρῶτος ἐν γνώμῃ τόδ' ἐβάστασε καὶ γλώσ-
 σα διεμυθολόγησεν,
 ὥς τὸ κηδεῦσαι καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἀριστεύει μακρῶ, **890**
 καὶ μήτε τῶν πλούτῳ διαθρυπτομένων
 μήτε τῶν γέννῃ μεγαλυνομένων
 ὄντα χερνήταν ἐραστεῦσαι γάμων.
 μήποτε μήποτε μ', ὦ
 <πότνιαι> Μοῖραι, λεχέων Διὸς εὐνά- **895**
 τειραν ἴδοισθε πέλουσιν·
 μηδὲ πλαθείην γαμέτα τινὶ τῶν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.
 ταρβῶ γὰρ ἀστεργάνορα παρθενίαν
 εἰσορῶσ' Ἰοῦς ἀμαλαπτομένην
 δυσπλάνοις Ἥρας ἀλατείαις πόνων. **900**
 ἐμοὶ δ' ὅτε μὲν ὁμαλὸς ὁ γάμος,
 ἄφοβος· [οὐ δέδια·] μηδὲ κρεισσόνων θεῶν
 ἔρως ἄφυκτον ὄμμα προσδράκοι με.
 ἀπόλεμος ὅδε γ' ὁ πόλεμος, ἄπορα πόριμος·
 οὐδ' ἔχω τίς ἂν γενοίμαν. **905**
 τὰν Διὸς γὰρ οὐχ ὀρῶ
 μῆτιν ὅπα φύγοιμ' ἄν. **906b**
Προμηθεύς
 ἦ μὴν ἔτι Ζεὺς, καίπερ αὐθάδης φρενῶν,
 ἔσται ταπεινός, οἷον ἐξαρτύεται

Chorus

Ah, sage, sage indeed, was he who first pondered this truth in his mind and with his tongue gave it utterance— [890] that to marry in one's own class is far the best—a poor man should not desire to marry among those who are pampered by riches, or who are mighty in pride of birth.

Never, oh never, [895] immortal Fates, may you see me the partner of the bed of Zeus, and may I be wedded to no bridegroom who descends to me from heaven. For I shudder when I behold the loveless maidenhood of Io, cruelly crushed like this [900] by her toilsome wanderings sent by Hera.

When marriage is on equal terms, in my opinion it is no cause for dread; so never may the love of the mightier gods cast on me its irresistible glance. That would indeed be a war that cannot be fought, a source of resourceless misery; and [905] I do not know what would be my fate, for I do not see how I could escape the designs of Zeus.

Prometheus

Yes, truly, the day will come when Zeus, although stubborn of

γάμον γαμῆν, ὃς αὐτὸν ἐκ τυραννίδος
 θρόνων τ' αἶστον ἐκβαλεῖ· πατρὸς δ' ἄρα 910
 Κρόνου τότε ἤδη παντελῶς κρανθήσεται,
 ἦν ἐκπίτνων ἡρᾶτο δηναίων θρόνων.
 τοιῶνδε μόχθων ἐκτροπὴν οὐδεὶς θεῶν
 δύναιτ' ἂν αὐτῷ πλήν ἐμοῦ δεῖξαι σαφῶς.
 ἐγὼ τὰδ' οἶδα χῶ τρόπῳ. πρὸς ταῦτά νυν 915
 θαρσῶν καθήσθω τοῖς πεδαρσίοις κτύποις
 πιστός, τινάσσων τ' ἐν χεροῖν πύρπνουν βέλος.
 οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτῷ ταῦτ' ἐπαρκέσει τὸ μὴ οὐ
 πεσεῖν ἀτίμως πτώματ' οὐκ ἀνασχετά·
 τοῖον παλαιστὴν νῦν παρασκευάζεται 920
 ἐπ' αὐτὸς αὐτῷ, δυσμαχώτατον τέρας·
 ὃς δὴ κεραυνοῦ κρείσσον' εὐρήσει φλόγα,
 βροντῆς θ' ὑπερβάλλοντα καρτερόν κτύπον·
 θαλασσίαν τε γῆς τινάκτειραν νόσον
 τρίαῖναν, αἰχμὴν τὴν Ποσειδῶνος, σκεδᾶ. 925
 πταίσας δὲ τῷδε πρὸς κακῷ μαθήσεται
 ὅσον τό τ' ἄρχειν καὶ τὸ δουλεύειν δίχα.
Χορός
 σύθην ἅ χρήζεις, ταῦτ' ἐπιγλωσσᾶ Διός.
Προμηθεύς
 ἅπερ τελεῖται, πρὸς δ' ἅ βούλομαι λέγω.
Χορός
 καὶ προσδοκᾶν χρὴ δεσπόσειν Ζηνός τινα; 930

soul, shall be humbled, seeing that he plans a marriage that shall
 [910] hurl him into oblivion from his sovereignty and throne;
 and then immediately the curse his father Cronus invoked as he
 fell from his ancient throne, shall be fulfilled to the uttermost.
 Deliverance from such ruin no one of the gods can show him
 clearly except me. [915] I know the fact and the means. So let
 him sit there in his assurance, putting his trust in the crash
 reverberating on high and brandishing his fire-breathing bolt in
 his hands. For these shall not protect him from falling in
 ignominious and unendurable ruin. [920] Such an adversary is
 he now preparing despite himself, a prodigy irresistible, even
 one who shall discover a flame mightier than the lightning and a
 deafening crash to out roar the thunder; a prodigy who shall
 shiver the trident, [925] Poseidon's spear, that scourge of the sea
 and shaker of the land.¹ Then, wrecked upon this evil, Zeus shall
 learn how different it is to be a sovereign and a slave.

Chorus

Surely, it is only your own desire that you utter as a curse
 against Zeus.

Prometheus

I speak what shall be brought to pass and, moreover, my own
 desire.

Chorus

[930] Must we really look for one to gain mastery over Zeus?

Προμηθεύς

καὶ τῶνδ' ἔξει δυσλοφωτέρους πόνους.

Χορός

πῶς δ' οὐχὶ ταρβεῖς τοιάδ' ἐκρίπτων ἔπη;

Προμηθεύς

τί δ' ἂν φοβοίμην ὧ̄ θανεῖν οὐ μόρσιμον;

Χορός

ἀλλ' ἄθλον ἂν σοι τοῦδ' ἔτ' ἀλγίῳ πόροι.

Προμηθεύς

ὁ δ' οὖν ποιείτω πάντα προσδοκητά μοι. 935

Χορός

οἱ προσκυνοῦντες τὴν Ἀδράστειαν σοφοί.

Προμηθεύς

σέβου, προσεύχου, θῶπτε τὸν κρατοῦντ' αἰεί.

ἐμοὶ δ' ἔλασσον Ζηνὸς ἢ μηδὲν μέλει.

δράτω, κρατεῖτω τόνδε τὸν βραχὺν χρόνον,

ὅπως θέλει· δαρὸν γὰρ οὐκ ἄρξει θεοῖς. 940

ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ τόνδε τὸν Διὸς τρόχιν,

τὸν τοῦ τυράννου τοῦ νέου διάκονον·

πάντως τι καινὸν ἀγγελῶν ἐλήλυθεν.

Prometheus

Yes, and he shall bear upon his neck pangs more galling than these of mine.

Chorus

How is it that you are not afraid to utter such taunts?

Prometheus

Why should I fear since I am fated not to die?

Chorus

But he might inflict on you an ordeal even more bitter than this.

Prometheus

[935] Let him, for all I care! I am prepared for anything.

Chorus

Wise are they who do homage to Necessity.²

Prometheus

Worship, adore, and fawn upon whoever is your lord. But for Zeus I care less than nothing. Let him do his will, let him hold his power [940] for his little day— since he will not bear sway over the gods for long. But wait, for over there I see his messenger, the servant of our new lord and master. Certainly he has come to announce some news.

¹ The poet adopts the legend that Poseidon was a rival with Zeus for the hand of Thetis, of whose son it had been prophesied by Themis that he should be mightier than his father. The prophecy was fulfilled in the person of Peleus' son, Achilles.

² Adrasteia, "the inescapable," another name of Nemesis, punished presumptuous words and excessive happiness.

Ἑρμῆς

σὲ τὸν σοφιστήν, τὸν πικρῶς ὑπέρπικρον,
τὸν ἑξαμαρτόντ' εἰς θεοὺς ἐφημέροις **945**
πορόντα τιμάς, τὸν πυρὸς κλέπτην λέγω·
πατὴρ ἄνωγέ σ' οὔστινας κομπεῖς γάμους
αὐδᾶν, πρὸς ὧν ἐκεῖνος ἐκπίπτει κράτους.
καὶ ταῦτα μέντοι μηδὲν αἰνικτηρίως,
ἀλλ' αὖθ' ἕκαστα φράζε· μηδέ μοι διπλᾶς **950**
όδούς, Προμηθεῦ, προσβάλης· ὁρᾶς δ' ὅτι
Ζεὺς τοῖς τοιούτοις οὐχὶ μαλθακίζεται.

Προμηθεύς

σεμνόστομός γε καὶ φρονήματος πλέως
ὁ μῦθος ἐστίν, ὡς θεῶν ὑπηρέτου.
νέον νέοι κρατεῖτε καὶ δοκεῖτε δὴ **955**
ναίειν ἀπενθῇ πέργαμ'· οὐκ ἐκ τῶνδ' ἐγὼ
δισσοὺς τυράννους ἐκπεσόντας ἡσθόμην;
τρίτον δὲ τὸν νῦν κοιρανοῦντ' ἐπόψομαι
αἰσχιστὰ καὶ τάχιστα. μή τί σοι δοκῶ
ταρβεῖν ὑποπτῆσσειν τε τοὺς νέους θεοὺς; **960**
πολλοῦ γε καὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἐλλείπω. σὺ δὲ
κέλευθον ἦνπερ ἦλθες ἐγκόνει πάλιν·
πεύση γὰρ οὐδὲν ὧν ἀνιστορεῖς ἐμέ.

Enter Hermes

Hermes

To you, the clever and crafty, bitter beyond all bitterness, [945] who has sinned against the gods in bestowing honors upon creatures of a day—to you, thief of fire, I speak. The Father commands that you tell what marriage you boast of, whereby he is to be hurled from power—and this, mark well, set forth in no riddling fashion, [950] but point by point, as the case exactly stands; and do not impose upon me a double journey, Prometheus—you see Zeus is not appeased by dealings such as yours.

Prometheus

Bravely spoken, in truth, and swollen with pride is your speech, as befits a minion of the gods. [955] Young you are, as young your power, and you think indeed that you inhabit heights beyond the reach of grief. Have I not seen two sovereigns cast out from these heights? A third, the present lord, I shall live to see cast out in ruin most shameful and most swift. Do you think [960] I quail, perhaps, and cower before these upstart gods? Far from it—no, not at all. But scurry back the way you came; for you shall learn nothing about which you question me.

Ἑρμῆς

τοιιοῖσδε μέντοι καὶ πρὶν αὐθαδίσμασιν
ἐς τάσδε σαυτὸν πημονὰς καθώρμισας. 965

Προμηθεύς

τῆς σῆς λατρείας τὴν ἐμὴν δυσπραξίαν,
σαφῶς ἐπίστασ', οὐκ ἂν ἀλλάξαιμι' ἐγώ.

Ἑρμῆς

κρεῖσσον γὰρ οἶμαι τῇδε λατρεύειν πέτρα
ἢ πατρὶ φῦναι Ζηνὶ πιστὸν ἄγγελον.

Προμηθεύς

οὕτως ὑβρίζειν τοὺς ὑβρίζοντας χρεών. 970

Ἑρμῆς

χλιδᾶν ἔοικας τοῖς παροῦσι πράγμασι.

Προμηθεύς

χλιδῶ; χλιδῶντας ὧδε τοὺς ἐμούς ἐγώ
ἐχθροὺς ἴδοιμι· καὶ σὲ δ' ἐν τούτοις λέγω.

Ἑρμῆς

ἦ καμὲ γάρ τι συμφοραῖς ἐπαιτιᾷ;

Προμηθεύς

ἀπλῶ λόγῳ τοὺς πάντας ἐχθαίρω θεούς, 975
ὅσοι παθόντες εὖ κακοῦσί μ' ἐκδίκως.

Ἑρμῆς

κλύω σ' ἐγὼ μεμνηνὸτ' οὐ σμικρὰν νόσον.

Προμηθεύς

νοσοῖμ' ἂν, εἰ νόσημα τοὺς ἐχθροὺς στυγεῖν.

Hermes

Yet it was by such proud wilfulness before, too, [965] that you
brought yourself to this harbor of distress.

Prometheus

For your servitude, rest assured, I'd not barter my hard lot, not I.

Hermes

Better, no doubt, to serve this rock than be the trusted
messenger of Father Zeus!

Prometheus

[970] Such is the proper style for the insolent to offer insult.

Hermes

I think you revel in your present plight.

Prometheus

I revel? Oh, I wish that I might see my enemies revelling in this
way! And you, too, I count among them.

Hermes

What! You blame me in some way for your calamities?

Prometheus

[975] In one word, I hate all the gods that received good at my
hands and with ill requite me wrongfully.

Hermes

Your words declare you stricken with no slight madness.

Prometheus

Mad I may be—if it is madness to loathe one's enemies.

Ἑρμῆς

εἴης φορητὸς οὐκ ἄν, εἰ πράσσοις καλῶς.

Προμηθεύς

<ῶμοι.>

Ἑρμῆς

ῶμοι; τόδε Ζεὺς τοῦπος οὐκ ἐπίσταται. 980

Προμηθεύς

ἀλλ' ἐκδιδάσκει πάνθ' ὁ γηράσκων χρόνος.

Ἑρμῆς

καὶ μὴν σὺ γ' οὐπω σωφρονεῖν ἐπίστασαι.

Προμηθεύς

σὲ γὰρ προσηύδων οὐκ ἄν ὄνθ' ὑπηρέτην.

Ἑρμῆς

ἐρεῖν ἔοικας οὐδὲν ὦν χρήζει πατήρ.

Προμηθεύς

καὶ μὴν ὀφείλων γ' ἄν τίνοιμ' αὐτῷ χάριν. 985

Ἑρμῆς

ἐκερτόμησας δῆθεν ὥς παῖδ' ὄντα με.

Προμηθεύς

οὐ γὰρ σὺ παῖς τε κᾶτι τοῦδ' ἀνούστερος

εἰ προσδοκᾷς ἐμοῦ τι πεύσεσθαι πάρα;

οὐκ ἔστιν αἵκισμ' οὐδὲ μηχανήμ' ὅτῳ

προτρέφεταί με Ζεὺς γεγωνῆσαι τάδε, 990

πρὶν ἄν χαλασθῇ δεσμὰ λυμαντήρια.

πρὸς ταῦτα ῥιπτέσθω μὲν αἰθαλοῦσσα φλόξ,

Hermes

You would be unbearable if you were prosperous.

Prometheus

[980] Alas!

Hermes

"Alas"? That is a word unknown to Zeus.

Prometheus

But ever-ageing Time teaches all things.

Hermes

Yes, but you at least have not yet learned to keep a sober mind.

Prometheus

Or else I would not have addressed you, an underling.

Hermes

It seems you will answer nothing that the Father demands.

Prometheus

[985] Yes, truly, I am his debtor and I should repay favor to him.

Hermes

You taunt me as though, indeed, I were a child.

Prometheus

And are you not a child and even more witless than a child if you expect to learn anything from me? There is no torment or device by which [990] Zeus shall induce me to utter this until these injurious fetters are loosed. So then, let his blazing lightning be hurled, and with the white wings of the snow and thunders of earthquake let him confound the reeling world.

λευκοπτέρῳ δὲ νιφάδι καὶ βροντήμασι
χθονίοις κυκάτω πάντα καὶ ταρασσέτω.
γνάμψει γὰρ οὐδὲν τῶνδ' ἐμ' ὥστε καὶ φράσαι 995
πρὸς οὗ χρεῶν νιν ἐκπεσεῖν τυραννίδος.

Ἑρμῆς

ὄρα νυν εἴ σοι ταῦτ' ἀρωγὰ φαίνεται.

Προμηθεύς

ὦπται πάλαι δὴ καὶ βεβούλευται τάδε.

Ἑρμῆς

τόλμησον, ὦ μάταιε, τόλμησόν ποτε
πρὸς τὰς παρούσας πημονὰς ὀρθῶς φρονεῖν, 1000

Προμηθεύς

ὀχλεῖς μάτην με κῦμ' ὅπως παρηγορῶν.
εἰσελθέτω σε μήποθ' ὥς ἐγὼ Διὸς
γνώμην φοβηθεῖς θηλύνους γενήσομαι,
καὶ λιπαρήσω τὸν μέγα στυγούμενον
γυναικομίμοις ὑπτιάσμασιν χερῶν 1005
λῦσαί με δεσμῶν τῶνδε τοῦ παντὸς δέω.

Ἑρμῆς

λέγων ἔοικα πολλὰ καὶ μάτην ἐρεῖν·
τέγγη γὰρ οὐδὲν οὐδὲ μαλθάσση λιταῖς
ἐμαῖς· δακῶν δὲ στόμιον ὥς νεοζυγῆς
πῶλος βιάζῃ καὶ πρὸς ἡνίας μάχῃ. 1010
ἀτὰρ σφοδρύνῃ γ' ἀσθενεῖ σοφίσματι·
αὐθαδία γὰρ τῷ φρονοῦντι μὴ καλῶς

[995] For nothing of this shall bend my will even to tell at whose hands he is fated to be hurled from his sovereignty.

Hermes

Look now whether this course seems to profit you.

Prometheus

Long ago has this my course been foreseen and resolved.

Hermes

Bend your will, perverse fool, oh bend your will at last [1000] to wisdom in face of your present sufferings.

Prometheus

In vain you trouble me, as though it were a wave you try to persuade. Never think that, through terror at the will of Zeus, I shall become womanish and, with hands upturned, aping woman's ways, [1005] shall importune my greatly hated enemy to release me from these bonds. I am far, far from that.

Hermes

I think that by speaking much I will only speak in vain; for you are not soothed nor are you softened by my entreaties. You take the bit in your teeth like a new-harnessed [1010] colt and struggle against the reins. Yet it is a paltry device that prompts your vehemence, for in the foolish-minded mere self-will of

αὐτὴ καθ' αὐτὴν οὐδενὸς μεῖζον σθένει.
 σκέψαι δ', ἐὰν μὴ τοῖς ἑμοῖς πεισθῇς λόγοις,
 οἷός σε χειμῶν καὶ κακῶν τρικυμία **1015**
 ἔπεισ' ἄφυκτος · πρῶτα μὲν γὰρ ὀκρίδα
 φάραγγα βροντῇ καὶ κεραυνία φλογὶ
 πατήρ σπαράξει τήνδε, καὶ κρύψει δέμας
 τὸ σόν, πετραία δ' ἀγκάλη σε βαστάσει.
 μακρὸν δὲ μῆκος ἐκτελευτήσας χρόνου **1020**
 ἄσπορρον ἥξεις εἰς φάος· Διὸς δέ τοι
 πτηνὸς κύων, δαφοινὸς αἰετός, λάβρως
 διαρταμήσει σώματος μέγα ῥάκος,
 ἄκλητος ἔρπων δαιταλεὺς πανήμερος,
 κελαινόβρωτον δ' ἥπαρ ἐκθoinήσεται. **1025**
 τοιοῦδε μόχθου τέρμα μή τι προσδόκα,
 πρὶν ἂν θεῶν τις διάδοχος τῶν σῶν πόνων
 φανῇ, θελήσῃ τ' εἰς ἀναύγητον μολεῖν
 Ἄιδην κνεφαῖά τ' ἀμφὶ Ταρτάρου βάθῃ.
 πρὸς ταῦτα βούλευ'· ὥς ὃδ' οὐ πεπλασμένος **1030**
 ὁ κόμπος, ἀλλὰ καὶ λίαν εἰρημένος ·
 ψευδηγορεῖν γὰρ οὐκ ἐπίσταται στόμα
 τὸ Διον, ἀλλὰ πᾶν ἔπος τελεῖ· σὺ δὲ
 πάπταινε καὶ φρόντιζε, μηδ' αὐθαδίαν
 εὐβουλίας ἀμείνον' ἡγήσῃ ποτέ. **1035**

itself avails less than anything at all. But if you will not be won to belief by my words, [1015] think of what a tempest and a towering wave of woe shall break upon you past escape. First, the Father will shatter this jagged cliff with thunder and lightning-flame, and will entomb your frame, while the rock shall still hold you clasped in its embrace. [1020] But when you have completed a long stretch of time, you shall come back again to the light. Then indeed the winged hound of Zeus, the ravening eagle, coming an unbidden banqueter the whole day long, with savage appetite shall tear your body piecemeal into great rents and feast his fill [1025] upon your liver until it is black with gnawing.

Look for no term of this your agony until some god shall appear to take upon himself your woes and of his own free will descend into the sunless realm of Death and the dark deeps of Tartarus. [1030] Therefore be advised, since this is no counterfeited vaunting but utter truth; for the mouth of Zeus does not know how to utter falsehood, but will bring to pass every word. May you consider warily and reflect, and never deem [1035] stubbornness better than wise counsel.

Χορός

ἡμῖν μὲν Ἑρμῆς οὐκ ἄκαιρα φαίνεται
λέγειν. ἄνωγε γάρ σε τὴν αὐθαδίαν
μεθέντ' ἐρευνᾶν τὴν σοφὴν εὐβουλίαν.
πιθοῦ· σοφῶ γὰρ αἰσχροὺς ἐξαμαρτάνειν.

Προμηθεύς

εἰδότι τοί μοι τάσδ' ἀγγελίας **1040**
ὄδ' ἐθώυξεν· πάσχειν δὲ κακῶς
ἐχθρὸν ὑπ' ἐχθρῶν οὐδὲν ἀεικές.
πρὸς ταῦτ' ἐπ' ἐμοὶ ῥιπτέσθω μὲν
πυρὸς ἀμφήκης βόστρυχος, αἰθὴρ δ'
ἐρεθιζέσθω βροντῇ σφακέλω τ' **1045**
ἀγρίων ἀνέμων· χθόνα δ' ἐκ πυθμένων
αὐταῖς ῥίζαις πνεῦμα κραδαίνοι,
κῦμα δὲ πόντου τραχεῖ ῥοθίῳ
συγχώσειεν τῶν οὐρανίων
ἄστρον διόδου· εἰς τε κελαινὸν **1050**
Τάρταρον ἄρδην ῥίψει δέμας
τοῦμὸν ἀνάγκης στερραῖς δίναις·
πάντως ἐμέ γ' οὐ θανατώσει.

Ἑρμῆς

τοιάδε μέντοι τῶν φρενοπλήκτων
βουλεύματ' ἔπη τ' ἔστιν ἀκοῦσαι. **1055**
τί γὰρ ἐλλείπει μὴ <οὐ> παραπαίειν
ἢ τοῦδ' εὐχή; τί χαλᾷ μανιῶν;

Chorus

To us, at least, Hermes seems not to speak untimely; for he bids you to lay aside your stubbornness and seek the good counsel of wisdom. Be advised! It is shameful for the wise to persist in error.

Prometheus

[1040] No news to me, in truth, is the message this fellow has proclaimed so noisily. Yet for enemy to suffer ill from enemy is no disgrace. Therefore let the lightning's forked curl be cast upon my head and let the sky [1045] be convulsed with thunder and the wrack of savage winds; let the hurricane shake the earth from its rooted base, and let the waves of the sea mingle with their savage surge the courses [1050] of the stars in heaven; and let him lift me on high and hurl me down to black Tartarus with the swirling floods of stern Necessity: do what he will, me he shall never bring to death.

Hermes

Such indeed are the thoughts and the words [1055] one hears from men deranged. Where does his prayer fall short of raving? Where does he abate his frenzy?—But, at all events, may you

ἀλλ' οὖν ὑμεῖς γ' αἰ πημοσύναις
συγκάμνουσαι ταῖς τοῦδε τόπων
μετά ποι χωρεῖτ' ἐκ τῶνδε θοῶς, **1060**
μὴ φρένας ὑμῶν ἡλιθιώση
βροντῆς μύκημ' ἀτέραμνον.

Χορός

ἄλλο τι φώνει καὶ παραμυθοῦ μ'
ὅ τι καὶ πείσεις· οὐ γὰρ δὴ που
τοῦτό γε τλητὸν παρέσυρας ἔπος. **1065**
πῶς με κελεύεις κακότητ' ἀσκεῖν;
μετὰ τοῦδ' ὅ τι χρὴ πάσχειν ἐθέλω
τοὺς προδότας γὰρ μισεῖν ἔμαθον,
κοῦκ ἔστι νόσος
τῆσδ' ἦντιν' ἀπέπτυσα μᾶλλον. **1070**

Ἑρμῆς

ἀλλ' οὖν μέμνησθ' ἀγὼ προλέγω
μηδὲ πρὸς ἄτης θηραθεῖσαι
μέμψησθε τύχην, μηδέ ποτ' εἴπηθ'
ὥς Ζεὺς ὑμᾶς εἰς ἀπρόοπτον
πῆμ' εἰσέβαλεν· μὴ δῆτ' αὐταὶ δ' **1075**
ὑμᾶς αὐτάς. εἰδυῖαι γὰρ
κοῦκ ἐξαίφνης οὐδὲ λαθραίως
εἰς ἀπέρατον δίκτυον ἄτης
ἐμπλεχθήσεσθ' ὑπ' ἀνοίας.

who sympathize with his anguish, [1060] withdraw in haste
from this spot so that the relentless roar of the thunder does not
stun your senses.

Chorus

Use some other strain and urge me to some other course in
which you are likely to convince me. This utterance [1065] in
your flood of speech is, I think, past all endurance. How do you
charge me to practise baseness? With him I am content to suffer
any fate; for I have learned to detest traitors, and there is no pest
[1070] I abhor more than this.

Hermes

Well then, bear my warning in memory and do not blame your
fortune when you are caught in the toils of calamity; nor ever
say that it was Zeus who cast you [1075] into suffering
unforeseen. Not so, but blame yourselves. For well forewarned,
and not suddenly or secretly shall you be entangled in the
inextricable net of calamity by reason of your folly.

Exit

Προμηθεύς

καὶ μὴν ἔργῳ κούκέτι μύθῳ **1080**
 χθῶν σεσάλευται
 βρυχία δ' ἤχῳ παραμυκᾶται
 βροντῆς, ἔλικες δ' ἐκλάμπουσι
 στεροπῆς ζάπυροι, στρόμβοι δὲ κόνιν
 εἰλίσσουσι· σκιρτᾷ δ' ἀνέμων **1085**
 πνεύματα πάντων εἰς ἄλληλα
 στάσιν ἀντίπνουν ἀποδεικνύμενα·
 ξυντετάρακται δ' αἰθήρ πόντῳ.
 τοιάδ' ἐπ' ἐμοὶ ῥιπὴ Διόθεν
 τεύχουσα φόβον στείχει φανερώς. **1090**
 ὦ μητρὸς ἐμῆς σέβας, ὦ πάντων
 αἰθὲρ κοινὸν φάος εἰλίσσων,
 ἐσορᾷς μ' ὥς ἔκδικα πάσχω.

Prometheus

[1080] Indeed, now it has passed from word to deed—the earth rocks, the echoing thunder-peal from the depths rolls roaring past me; the fiery wreathed lightning-flashes flare forth, and whirlwinds toss the [1085] swirling dust; the blasts of all the winds leap forth and set in hostile array their embattled strife; the sky is confounded with the deep. Behold, this stormy turmoil advances against me visibly, [1090] sent by Zeus to frighten me. O holy mother mine, O you firmament that revolves the common light of all, you see the wrongs I suffer! Amid thunder and lightning Prometheus vanishes from sight; and with him disappear the daughters of Oceanus

THE END