

ΑΙΣΧΥΛΟΥ ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

Αρχαίο κείμενο και μετάφραση στα αγγλικά

Summary

The Danaids form the chorus and serve as the protagonists. They flee a forced marriage to their Egyptian cousins. When the Danaides reach Argos, they entreat King Pelasgus to protect them. He refuses pending the decision of the Argive people, who decide in the favor of the Danaids. Danaus rejoices the outcome, and the Danaids praise the Greek gods. Almost immediately, a herald of the Egyptians comes to attempt to force the Danaids to return to their cousins for marriage. Pelasgus arrives, threatens the herald, and urges the Danaids to remain within the walls of Argos. The play ends with the Danaids retreating into the Argive walls, protected. In the other two-thirds of the trilogy as it is generally reconstructed, following a war with the Aegyptids in which Pelasgus has been killed, Danaus becomes tyrant of Argos. The marriage is forced upon his daughters, but Danaus instructs them to murder their husbands on their wedding night. All do except for Hypermnestra, whose husband, Lynceus, flees. Danaus imprisons or threatens to kill Hypermnestra for her disobedience, but Lynceus reappears and kills Danaus; Lynceus becomes the new king of Argos, with Hypermnestra as his queen. Lynceus now must decide how to punish the forty-nine homicidal Danaids, when Aphrodite appears in *deus ex machina* fashion. She absolves them of the murders, as they were obeying their father; she then persuades them to abandon their chaste ways, and the trilogy closes with their marriages to forty-nine local Argive men. The trilogy was followed by the satyr play *Amynone*, which comically portrayed one of the Danaids' seduction by Poseidon.

ΑΙΣΧΥΛΟΣ, ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

The Suppliants

By Aeschylus

Written ca. 463 B.C.E

Translated by Herbert Weir Smyth

Dramatis Personae

DANAUS

THE KING OF ARGOS

HERALD OF AEGYPTUS

CHORUS OF THE DAUGHTERS OF DANAUS

Attendants

Scene

A sacred precinct near the shore in Argos. Several statues of the gods can be seen, as well as a large altar. As the play opens, DANAUS, and his fifty daughters, the maidens who compose the CHORUS, enter. Their costumes have an oriental richness about them not characteristic of the strictly Greek. They carry also the wands of suppliants. The CHORUS is singing.

Εισαγωγή, Πρόοι, Επεισόδια
Επιμαχίαι, Χορός, Επεισόδια

Χορός

Ζεὺς μὲν ἀφίκτωρ ἐπίδοι προφρόνως
 στόλον ἡμέτερον νάιον ἀρθέντ'
 ἀπὸ προστομίων λεπτοψαμάτων
 Νείλου. Δίαν δὲ λιποῦσαι
5 χθόνα σύγχορτον Συρία φεύγομεν,
 οὐτὶν' ἐφ' αἵματι δημηλασίαν
 ψήφω πόλεως γνωσθεῖσαν,
 ἀλλ' αὐτογενεῖ φυξανορία
 γάμον Αἰγύπτου παίδων ἀσεβῇ
10 ἔξονοταζόμεναι.

Δαναὸς δὲ πατήρ καὶ βούλαρχος
 καὶ στασίαρχος τάδε πεσσονομῶν
 κύδιον ἄχέων ἐπέκρανε,
 φεύγειν ἀνέδην διὰ κῦμ' ἄλιον,
15 κέλσαι δ' Ἄργους γαῖαν, ὅθεν δὴ
 γένος ἡμέτερον τῆς οἰστροδόνου
 βοὸς ἐξ ἐπαφῆς καὶ ἐπιπνοίας
 Διὸς εὐχόμενον τετέλεσται.
 τίν' ἂν οὖν χώραν εὐφρονα μάλλον
20 τῆσδ' ἀφικοίμεθα
 σὺν τοῖσδ' ἱκετῶν ἐγχειριδίῳ
 ἐριοστέπτοισι κλάδοισιν;
 ὦ πόλις, ὦ γῆ, καὶ λευκὸν ὕδωρ,

Chorus

May Zeus who guards suppliants look graciously upon our company, which boarded a ship and put to sea from the outlets of the fine sand of the Nile. For we have fled Zeus' land¹ [5] whose pastures border Syria, and are fugitives, not because of some public decree pronounced against blood crime, but because of our own act to escape the suit of man, since we abhor as impious all marriage with the sons of Aegyptus. [10]

It was Danaus, our father, adviser and leader, who, considering well our course, decided, as the best of all possible evils, that we flee with all speed over the waves of the sea [15] and find a haven on Argos' shore. For from there descends our race, sprung from the caress and breath of Zeus on the gnat-tormented heifer.

To what kinder land than this [20] could we come with these wool-wreathed branches in our hands, sole weapons of the suppliant? O realm, O land, and clear water; gods on high and earth-bound powers, grievous in your vengeance, [25] which

ὕπατοί τε θεοί, καὶ βαρύτιμοι
25 χθόνιοι θήκας κατέχοντες,
 καὶ Ζεὺς σωτὴρ τρίτος, οἰκοφύλαξ
 ὁσίων ἀνδρῶν, δέξασθ' ἱκέτην
 τὸν θηλυγενῆ στόλον αἰδοίω
 πνεύματι χώρας· ἄρσενοπληθῇ δ'
30 ἑσμὸν ὕβριστὴν Αἰγυπτογενῇ,
 πρὶν πόδα χέρσῳ τῇ δ' ἐν ἀσώδει
 θεῖναι, ξὺν ὅχῳ ταχυήρει
 πέμψατε πόντονδ'· ἔνθα δὲ λαίλαπι
 χειμωνοτύπῳ, βροντῇ στεροπῇ τ'
35 ὀμβροφόροισιν τ' ἀνέμοις ἀγρίας
 ἁλὸς ἀντήσαντες, ὄλαιντο,
 πρὶν ποτε λέκτρων, ὧν θέμις εἴργει,
 σφετεριζάμενοι πατραδέλφειαν
 τήνδ' ἀεκόντων ἐπιβῆναι
40 νῦν δ' ἐπικεκλομένα
 Δῖον πόρτιν ὑπερ-
 πόντιον τιμάορ', ἱνὶν τ'
 ἀνθονομούσας προγόνου
 βοὸς ἐξ ἐπιπνοίας
45 Ζηνὸς ἔφαψιν· ἐπωνυμία δ'
 ἐπεκραίνετο μόρσιμος αἰῶν
 εὐλόγως,
 Ἐπαφόν τ' ἐγέννασεν·

inhabit the tomb; and you, Zeus the Savior, invoked third², the
 guardian of the habitations of righteous men: receive as
 suppliants this band of women with the compassionate spirit of
 the land.

But [30] the thronging swarm of violent men born of Aegyptus,
 should they set foot upon this marshy land, drive them
 seaward—and with them their swift ship—and there may they
 encounter a cruel sea with thunder, lightning, and rain-charged
 winds, [35] and perish by the tempest's buffeting blasts, if they
 ever lay their hands on us, their cousins, and mount unwilling
 beds from which Right holds them aloof.

¹ Or “the land divine” (δαῖν with M) . But see l. 558.

² With reference to the order of invocation in libations: 1. Olympian Zeus; 2. the Heroes, cp. l. 25; 3. Zeus the Saviour. Cp. Frag. 55.

[40] And now I invoke, as our champion from beyond the sea,
 the calf born of Zeus, the offspring of the flower-grazing cow,
 our ancestress, [45] the caress of Zeus' breath. The appointed
 period confirmed itself in a name suited to the event—Epaphus¹,
 to whom she gave birth.

¹ Epaphus signifies “touch,” “caress.” See l. 315.

ὄντ' ἐπιλεξαμένα,
50 νῦν ἐν ποιονόμοις
 ματρὸς ἀρχαίας τόποις τῶν
 πρόσθε πόνων μνασάμενα,
 τά τε νῦν ἐπιδείξω
 πιστὰ τεκμήρια γαιονόμοις,
55 τὰ δ' ἄελπτά περ ὄντα φανεῖται.
 γνώσεται
 δὲ λόγους τις ἐν μάκει
 εἰ δὲ κυρεῖ τις πέλας οἰωνοπόλων
 ἔγγαιος οἶκτον [οἰκτρὸν] αἰών,
60 δοξάσει τις ἀκούειν ὅπα τᾶς Τηρεΐας
 Μήτιδος οἰκτρᾶς ἀλόχου,
 κιρκηλάτου τ' ἀηδόνης,
 ἅτ' ἀπὸ χλωρῶν πετάλων ἐργομένα
 πενθεῖ μὲν οἶκτον ἡθέων·
65 ξυντίθησι δὲ παιδὸς μόρον, ὥς αὐτοφόνως
 ὤλετο πρὸς χειρὸς ἔθεν
 δυσμάτορος κότου τυχών·
 τῶς καὶ ἐγὼ φιλόδυρ-
 τος Ἰαονίοισι νόμοισι
70 δάπτω τὰν ἀπαλὰν
 Νειλοθερῇ παρειᾶν
 ἀπειρόδακρύν τε καρδίαν.
 γοεδνὰ δ' ἀνθεμίζομαι

To him I cry for help. [50] And now in the region wherein our first mother pastured, by recounting the story of her distress of long ago, I shall now set forth reliable proofs to the inhabitants of the land; [55] and other evidence, though unexpected, will yet appear. Men will come to know the truth as my tale proceeds. Now if by chance there be some neighbor in the land who knows the song of birds, [60] when our complaint greets his ear, he will fancy that he hears the voice of Metis, Tereus' piteous wife, the hawk-chased nightingale. For she, constrained to leave her green leaves, laments pitifully her accustomed haunts, [65] and composes the tale of her own child's doom—how he perished, destroyed by her own hand, victim of the wrath of an unnatural mother.

Even so I, indulging my grief in Ionian strains, [70] pain my tender face summered by Nile's sun and my heart unexercised in tears; and I gather the flowers of grief, anxious whether there is any friendly kinsman here to champion our band [75] which has fled from the haze-shrouded land.

δειμαίνουσα φίλους, τᾱσδε φυγᾱς

75 ἀερίας ἀπὸ γᾱς

εἴ τις ἐστὶ κηδεμών.

ἀλλὰ, θεοὶ γενέται

κλύετ' εὖ τὸ δίκαιον ἰδόντες·

ἦβα μὴ τέλεον

80 δόντες ἔχειν παρ' αἴσαν,

ὔβριν δ' ἐτοίμως στυγοῦντες,

πέλοιτ' ἂν ἔνδικοι γάμοις.

ἔστι δὲ κακὸν πολέμου τειρομένοις

βωμὸς ἀρῆς φυγᾱσιν

85 ῥῦμα, δαιμόνων σέβας.

εὖ δ' εἴη Διόθεν παναληθῶς.

Διὸς ἴμερος οὐκ εὐθήρατος ἐτύχθη.

παντᾱ τοι φλεγέθει

κᾶν σκότῳ μελαίνα ξὺν τύχῃ

90 μερόπεσσι λαοῖς.

πίπτει δ' ἀσφαλὲς οὐδ' ἐπὶ νώτῳ,

κορυφᾱ Διὸς εἰ κρανθῇ, πρᾱγμα τέλειον.

δαυλοὶ γὰρ πρᾱπίδων

δάσκιοί τε τείνουσιν πόροι

95 κατιδεῖν ἄφραστοι.

ἰάπτει δ' ἐλπιδῶν

ἀφ' ὑψιπύργων πανώλεις

βροτούς, βίαν δ'

But, gods of our race, hear, and regard with favor the cause of righteousness; if you refuse youth [80] fulfillment of its arrogant desires, and readily abhor violence, you would be righteous toward marriage. Even for those who flee hard-pressed from war there is an altar, [85] a shelter against harm through respect for the powers of heaven.

But may Zeus grant that it go well with us. For Zeus' desire is hard to trace: it shines everywhere, even in gloom, together with fortune [90] obscure to mortal men. Safely it falls, and not upon its back, whatever deed comes to pass at Zeus' nod; for the pathways of his understanding stretch dark and tangled, [95] beyond comprehension.

From their high-towering hopes he hurls mankind to utter destruction; yet he does not marshal any armed violence —

οὔτιν' ἐξοπλίζει·

100 πᾶν ἄπονον δαιμονίων.

ἤμενος ὃν φρόνημά πως

αὐτόθεν ἐξέπραξεν ἔμπας

ἐδράνων ἐφ' ἄγνων.

ἰδέσθω δ' εἰς ὕβριν

105 βρότειον, οἷα νεάζει

πυθμὴν δι' ἄ-

μὸν γάμον τεθαλῶς

δυσπαραβούλοισι φρεσίν,

καὶ διάνοιαν μαινόλιν

110 κέντρον ἔχων ἄφυκτον, ἄταν δ'

ἀπάτα μεταγνούς.

τοιαῦτα πάθεα μέλεα θρεομένα λέγω

λιγέα βαρέα δακρυοπετῇ,

ἰὴ ἰή,

115 ἠλέμοισιν ἐμπρεπῇ· [θρεομένη μέλη]

ζῶσα γόοις με τιμῶ.

ἰλεοῦμαι μὲν Ἀπίαν βοῦνιν,

καρβᾶνα δ' αὐδάν

εὖ, γὰρ, κοννεῖς.

120 πολλάκι δ' ἐμπίτνω ξὺν λακίδι

λινοσινεῖ

Σιδονία καλύπτρα.

θεοῖς δ' ἐναγέα τέλεα πελομένων καλῶς

[100] all that is wrought by the powers divine is free from toil.
Seated on his holy throne, unmoved, in mysterious ways he
accomplishes his will.

So let him look upon human outrageousness [105] —in what
way it shoots up men in their wooing of us, sprouted from
thoughts of evil intent, [110] having a frenzied purpose as its
irresistible spur, and deluded, turning its thoughts to folly.
Such piteous strains of woe I utter in my pain, now shrill, now
deep, blended with falling tears —

Alas, alas! [115] groans appropriate to funeral wails; though I
live, I chant my own dirge. I invoke Apia's hilly land—for well,
O land, you understand my barbarous speech—, [120] and
many times I lay my hands upon my Sidonian veil and tear its
linen fabric to shred. Sacrifices in satisfaction of vows are given
freely to the gods when all fares well, if only there be escape
from death.

ἐπίδρομ', ὀπόθι θάνατος ἀπῆ.

125 ἰὼ ἰώ,

ἰὼ δυσάγκριτοι πόνοι.

ποῖ τόδε κῦμ' ἀπάξει;

ἰλεοῦμαι μὲν Ἀπίαν βοῦνιν,

καρβᾶνα δ' αὐδὰν

130 εὖ, γὰ, κοννεῖς.

πολλάκι δ' ἐμπίτνω ξὺν λακίδι

λινοσινεῖ

Σιδονία καλύπτρα.

πλάτα μὲν οὖν λινορραφῆς τε

135 δόμος ἄλα στέγων δορὸς

ἀχειμάτόν μ' ἔπεμπε σὺν πνοαῖς·

οὐδὲ μέφομαι·

τελευτὰς δ' ἐν χρόνῳ

πατήρ μοι παντόπτας

140 πρευμενεῖς κτίσειεν,

σπέρμα σεμνᾶς μέγα ματρὸς

εὐνὰς ἀνδρῶν, ἔ ἔ,

ἄγαμον ἀδάματον ἐκφυγεῖν.

θέλουσα δ' αὖ θέλουσαν ἀγνά μ'

145 ἐπιδέτω Διὸς κόρα,

ἔχουσα σέμν' ἐνώπι' ἀσφαλῶς,

παντὶ δὲ σθένει

διωγμοῖς ἀσχαλῶσ'

[125] Alas, alas, perplexing troubles! Where will this wave of trouble bear me away? I invoke Apia's hilly land—for [130] well, O land, you understand my barbarous speech—, and many times I lay my hands upon my Sidonian veil and tear its linen fabric to shreds.

Our oars, indeed, and our timbered ship, bound with yellow rope¹ [135] to withstand the sea, sped me on by help of favoring winds, unharmed by all tempests; nor have I reason for complaint. But may the all-seeing Father [140] establish a kindly issue in due time—

¹ Undergirding ropes (ὑποζώματα) to brace a ship's sides. Cp. l. 441.

That the mighty race of our honorable mother escape the embrace of man (ah me), unwedded, unvanquished.

[145] And may Zeus' pure daughter, she who holds securely the sacred wall, willingly, meeting my will, look upon me; and, grieved at our pursuit, come with all her might, a virgin to a virgin's aid, [150] to deliver me—

ἀδμήτας ἀδμήτα
150 ῥύσιος γενέσθω,
 σπέρμα σεμνᾶς μέγα ματρὸς
 εὐνᾶς ἀνδρῶν, ἔ ἔ,
 ἄγαμον ἀδάματον ἐκφυγεῖν.
 εἰ δὲ μή, μελανθὲς
 ἡλιόκτυπον γένος
155 τὸν γάιον,
 τὸν πολυξενώτατον
 Ζῆνα τῶν κεκμηκότων
 ἱξόμεθα σὺν κλάδοις
160 ἀρτάναις θανοῦσαι,
 μὴ τυχοῦσαι θεῶν Ὀλυμπίων.
 ἅ Ζήν, Ἰοῦς ἰῶ
 μῆνις μάστειρ' ἐκ θεῶν·
 κοννῶ δ' ἄγαν
165 γαμετᾶς οὐρανόνικον.
 χαλεποῦ γὰρ ἐκ
 πνεύματος εἴσι χειμών.
 καὶ τότε οὐ δικάίοις
 Ζεὺς ἐνέξεται λόγοις,
170 τὸν τᾶς βοῶς
 παῖδ' ἀτιμάσας, τὸν αὐ-
 τὸς ποτ' ἔκτισεν γόνῳ,
 νῦν ἔχων παλίντροπον

That the mighty race of our honorable mother may escape the embrace of man (ah me), unwedded, unvanquished.

Yet, if she will not, we, a dark, [155] sun-burned race, with suppliant boughs will invoke the underworld Zeus, Zeus the great host [160] of the dead; for if the gods of Olympus hear us not, we will hang ourselves.

Ah Zeus! On account of the poisonous hate of Io vengeance from the gods pursues us.¹ I know [165] your consort's sky-conquering spite; for a stormy sea follows a harsh wind.

¹ The assets of public debtors and exiles were ascertained and secured at Athens by officers called *μαστήρες*.

And Zeus shall then be liable to the charge of injustice [170] that he hates the child of the heifer, the child whom he himself begat long ago, his very own, and now he holds his face averted from our prayers. [175] May he from above hear our call!

ὄψιν ἐν λιταῖσιν;

175 ὑπόθεν δ' εὖ κλύοι καλούμενος.

162α <ᾶ Ζήν, Ἰοῦς ἰῶ ,

163α μῆνις μάστειρ' ἐκ θεῶν·

164α κοννῶ δ' ἄγαν

165α γαμετᾶς οὐρανόνικον

166α χαλεποῦ γὰρ ἐκ

167α πνεύματος εἴσι χειμών.>

Δαναός

176 παῖδες, φρονεῖν χρή· ξὺν φρονοῦντι δ' ἤκετε

πιστῶ γέροντι τῷ δε ναυκλήρῳ πατρί.

καὶ τὰπὶ χέρσου νῦν προμηθίαν λαβὼν

αἰνῶ φυλάξαι τᾶμ' ἔπη δελτουμένας.

180 ὁρῶ κόνιν, ἀναυδὸν ἄγγελον στρατοῦ·

σύριγγες οὐ σιγῶσιν ἀξονήλατοι·

ὄχλον δ' ὑπασπιστῆρα καὶ δορυσσόον

λεύσσω, ξὺν ἵπποις καμπύλοις τ' ὀχήμασιν·

τάχ' ἂν πρὸς ἡμᾶς τῆσδε γῆς ἀρχηγέται

185 ὀπτῆρες εἶεν ἀγγέλων πεπυσμένοι.

ἀλλ' εἴτ' ἀπήμων εἴτε καὶ τεθηγμένος

ὦμῃ ξὺν ὀργῇ τόνδ' ἐπόρνυται στόλον,

ἄμεινόν ἐστι παντὸς εἵνεκ', ὧ κόραι,

πάγον προσίζειν τόνδ' ἀγωνίων θεῶν.

190 κρεῖσσον δὲ πύργου βωμός, ἄρρηκτον σάκος

Danaus

My children, you must be prudent. A prudent captain of your voyage was your reliable old father here with whom you came. And now that I have considered with foresight what may befall us here on land, I charge you, record my injunctions on the tablets of your minds and guard them. [180] I see dust, the voiceless herald of an army; the axle-driven wheels are not silent in their sockets. I behold a throng, armed with shields and holding spears, with steeds and curved chariots. Perhaps they are the princes of the land [185] come to look on us, informed by messengers. But whether a harmless man or one driven by savage wrath rouses this expedition, it is better, damsels, in any case, to seat yourselves at that mound sacred to the assembled gods. ¹ [190] Stronger than a castle is an altar — an impenetrable

ἀλλ' ὥς τάχιστα βᾶτε, καὶ λευκοστεφεῖς
 ἰκετηρίας, ἀγάλματ' αἰδοίου Διός,
 σεμνῶς ἔχουσαι διὰ χερῶν εὐωνύμων,
 αἰδοῖα καὶ γοεδνὰ καὶ ζαχρεῖ' ἔπη

195 ξένους ἀμείβεσθ', ὥς ἐπήλυδας πρέπει,
 τορῶς λέγουσαι τάσδ' ἀναιμάκτους φυγᾶς.
 φθογγῇ δ' ἐπέσθω πρῶτα μὲν τὸ μὴ θρασύ,
 τὸ μὴ μάταιον δ' ἐκ μετωποσωφρόνων
 ἴτω προσώπων ὄμματος παρ' ἡσύχου.

200 καὶ μὴ πρόλεσχος μηδ' ἐφορκὸς ἐν λόγῳ
 γένῃ. τὸ τῇδε κάρτ' ἐπίφθονον γένος.
 μέμνησο δ' εἴκειν· χρεῖος εἰ ξένη φυγᾶς.
 θρασυστομεῖν γὰρ οὐ πρέπει τοὺς ἥσσονας.

Χορός

πάτερ, φρονούντως πρὸς φρονούντας ἐννέπεις.

205 φυλάξομαι δὲ τάσδε μεμνήσθαι σέθεν
 κεδνὰς ἐφετμάς. Ζεὺς δὲ γεννήτωρ ἴδοι·

Δαναός

ἴδοιτο δῆτα πρευμενοῦς ἀπ' ὄμματος·

Χορός

θέλοιμ' ἂν ἤδη σοὶ πέλας θρόνους ἔχειν.

Δαναός

μή νυν σχόλαζε, μηχανῆς δ' ἔστω κράτος.

shield. As quick as you can, gather in your left hands your white-wreathed suppliant boughs, sacred emblems of Zeus the merciful. [195] Reply to the strangers, as is fitting for aliens, in piteous and plaintive language of necessity, telling them clearly of your flight, how it was unstained by deed of blood. Above all let no arrogance accompany your speech, and reveal nothing impious in your peaceful eyes, from your respectful face. [200] In your speech neither interrupt, nor hesitate—for this would offend these people. And remember to be submissive: you are an alien, a fugitive, and in need. Bold speech does not suit the weak.

1 ἀγών has here the force of ἀγορά, place of assembly. Cp. l. 222.

Chorus

Father, your words are prudent, and they fall on prudent ears. [205] I will take heed of your wise words, and hold them in memory. May Zeus, the author of our race, behold us!

Danaus

May he indeed behold you, and with a gracious eye.

Chorus

I would like even now to be seated by your side.

Danaus

Then do not delay, but put your purpose into action.

Χορός

210 ὦ Ζεῦ, κόπων οἴκτιρε μὴ ἀπολωλότας.

Δαναός

κείνου θέλοντος εὖ τελευτήσει τάδε.

Χορός

*

Δαναός

καὶ Ζηνὸς ὄρνιν τόνδε νῦν κικλήσκετε.

Χορός

καλοῦμεν αὐγὰς ἡλίου σωτηρίους, —

Δαναός

ἀγνόν τ' Ἀπόλλω, φυγάδ' ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ θεόν.

Χορός

215 εἰδὼς ἂν αἶσαν τήνδε συγγοίῃ βροτοῖς.

Δαναός

συγγοῖτο δῆτα καὶ παρασταίῃ πρόφρων.

Χορός

τίν' οὖν κικλήσκω τῶνδε δαιμόνων ἔτι;

Δαναός

ὄρῳ τρίαῖναν τήνδε σημείον θεοῦ.

Χορός

ἀλλ' εὖ τ' ἔπεμψεν εὖ τε δεξάσθω χθονί.

Chorus

[210] O Zeus, have pity upon our troubles lest we are ruined.

Danaus

If he wishes it so, all will end well.

Chorus

<

*>

Danaus

Invoke now also that bird of Zeus

Chorus

We invoke the saving beams of the sun.

Danaus

Pure Apollo, too, who, though a god, was exiled once from heaven.

Chorus

[215] Knowing our lot, he may well have pity on mortals.

Danaus

May he have pity indeed, and stand by ready to defend.

Chorus

Whom, further, of these divinities must I invoke?

Danaus

I behold a trident here, the token of its god.

Chorus

Well did he send us here and well may he receive us in this land.

Δαναός

220 Ἑρμῆς ὃδ' ἄλλος τοῖσιν Ἑλλήνων νόμοις.

Χορός

ἐλευθέροις νυν ἐσθλὰ κηρυκευέτω.

Δαναός

πάντων δ' ἀνάκτων τῶνδε κοινοβωμίαν
σέβεσθ'· ἐν ἀγνῶ δ' ἐσμός ὡς πελειάδων
ἴζεσθε κίρκων τῶν ὁμοπτέρων φόβῳ,

225 ἐχθρῶν ὁμαίμων καὶ μαινόντων γένος.
ὄρνιθος ὄρνις πῶς ἂν ἀγνεύοι φαγών;
πῶς δ' ἂν γαμῶν ἄκουσαν ἄκοντος πάρα
ἀγνὸς γένοιτ' ἄν; οὐδὲ μὴ 'ν Αἴδου θανῶν
φύγη ματαίων αἰτίας, πράξας τάδε.

230 κἀκεῖ δικάζει τὰπλακῆμαθ', ὡς λόγος,
Ζεὺς ἄλλος ἐν καμοῦσιν ὑστάτας δίκας.
σκοπεῖτε, κἀμείβεσθε τόνδε τὸν τρόπον,
ὅπως ἂν ὑμῖν προῖχος εὖ νικᾷ τόδε.

Βασιλεύς

ποδαπὸν ὄμιλον τόνδ' ἀνελληνόστολον

235 πέπλοισι βαρβάροισι καὶ πυκνώμασι
χλίωντα προσφωνοῦμεν; οὐ γὰρ Ἀργολίς
ἐσθῆς γυναικῶν οὐδ' ἀφ' Ἑλλάδος τόπων.
ὅπως δὲ χώραν οὔτε κηρύκων ὕπο,
ἀπρόξενοί τε, νόσφιν ἡγητῶν, μολεῖν

240 ἔτλητ' ἀτρέστως, τοῦτο θαυμαστὸν πέλει.

Danaus

[220] Here, too, is Hermes, according to the Hellenic custom.

Chorus

May he then announce good tidings to the free!

Danaus

Honor to the mutual altar of all these protecting powers; and
seat yourselves on holy ground like a flock of doves in dread of
hawks of the same feathered tribe — [225] kindred, yet foes, who
would defile their race. If bird prey on bird, how can it be pure?
And how can man be pure who would seize from an unwilling
father an unwilling bride? For such an act, not even in Hades,
after death, shall he escape arraignment for outrage. [230] There
also among the dead, so men tell, another Zeus holds a last
judgment upon misdeeds. Take heed and reply in this manner,
that victory may attend your cause.

Enter the King of Argos with men-at-arms

King

From where comes this band we address, [235] clothed in
foreign attire and luxuriating in closely-woven and barbaric
robes? For your apparel is not that of the women of Argos, nor
yet of any part of Hellas. How you have gained courage thus
fearlessly to come to this land, unheralded and friendless and
without guides, [240] this makes me wonder. And yet, truly, I

κλάδοι γε μὲν δὴ κατὰ νόμους ἀφικτόρων
 κεῖνται παρ' ὑμῖν πρὸς θεοῖς ἀγωνίοις·
 μόνον τόδ' Ἑλλὰς χθὼν συνοίσεται στόχῳ.
 καὶ τᾶλλα πόλλ' ἔτ' εἰκάσαι δίκαιον ἦν,
245 εἰ μὴ παρόντι φθόγγος ἦν ὁ σημανῶν.

Χορός

εἶρηκας ἀμφὶ κόσμον ἀψευδῇ λόγον.
 ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς σέ ποτερον ὥς ἔτην λέγω,
 ἢ ῥήτορ' ἱεροράβδον, ἢ πόλεως ἀγόν;

Βασιλεύς

πρὸς ταῦτ' ἀμείβου καὶ λέγ' εὐθαρσῆς ἐμοί.
250 τοῦ γηγενοῦς γάρ εἰμ' ἐγὼ Παλαίχθονος
 ἱνὶς Πελασγός, τῆσδε γῆς ἀρχηγέτης.
 ἐμοῦ δ' ἄνακτος εὐλόγως ἐπώνυμον
 γένος Πελασγῶν τήνδε καρποῦται χθόνα.
 καὶ πᾶσαν αἶαν, ἥς δι' ἀγνὸς ἔρχεται
255 Στρυμῶν, τὸ πρὸς δύνοντος ἡλίου, κρατῶ.
 ὀρίζομαι δὲ τήν τε Περραΐβων χθόνα,
 Πίνδου τε τᾶπέκεινα, Παιόνων πέλας,
 ὄρη τε Δωδωναῖα. συντέμνει δ' ὄρος
 ὑγρᾶς θαλάσσης· τῶνδε τὰπὶ τάδε κρατῶ.
260 αὐτῆς δὲ χώρας Ἀπίας πέδον τόδε
 πάλαι κέκληται φωτὸς ἱατροῦ χάριν.
 Ἄπις γὰρ ἐλθὼν ἐκ πέρας Ναυπακτίας
 ἱατρόμαντις παῖς Ἀπόλλωνος χθόνα

see that branches usually carried by suppliants are laid by your side before the gods assembled here — as to this alone can Hellas guess with confidence.¹ As for the rest, there is still much I should with reason leave to conjecture, [245] if your voice were not here to inform me.

Chorus

You have not spoken falsely about our clothing. But, for my part, how am I to address you? As commoner, as spokesman, bearer of the sacred wand,² or as ruler of the realm?

King

As for that, answer and speak to me with confidence. [250] For I am Pelasgus, offspring of Palaechthon, whom the earth brought forth, and lord of this land; and after me, their king, is rightly named the race of the Pelasgi, who harvest the land. Of all the region through which the pure [255] Strymon flows, on the side toward the setting sun, I am the lord. There lies within the limits of my rule the land of the Perrhaebi, the parts beyond Pindus close to the Paeonians, and the mountain ridge of Dodona; the edge of the watery sea borders my kingdom. I rule up to these boundaries. [260] The ground where we stand is Apian land itself, and has borne that name since antiquity in honor of a healer. For Apis, seer and healer, the son of Apollo, came from Naupactus on the farther shore and purified this land of monsters deadly to man, which Earth, [265] defiled by the pollution of bloody deeds of old, caused to spring up — plagues

τήνδ' ἐκκαθαίρει κνωδάλων βροτοφθόρων,
265 τὰ δὴ παλαιῶν αἱμάτων μιάσμασιν
 χρανθεῖς ἀνῆκε γαῖα μηνιταῖ ἄχη
 δρακονθόμιλον δυσμενῇ ξυνοικίαν.
 τούτων ἄκη τομαῖα καὶ λυτήρια
 πράξας ἀμέμπτως Ἄπις Ἀργεῖα χθονὶ
270 μνήμην ποτ' ἀντίμισθον ἡὔρετ' ἐν λιταῖς.
 ἔχουσα δ' ἤδη τὰπ' ἐμοῦ τεκμήρια
 γένος τ' ἂν ἐξεύχοιο καὶ λέγοις πρόσω.
 μακρὰν γε μὲν δὴ ῥῆσιν οὐ στέργει πόλις.

Χορός

βραχὺς τορός θ' ὁ μῦθος· Ἀργεῖαι γένος
275 ἐξευχόμεσθα, σπέρματ' εὐτέκνου βοός·
 καὶ ταῦτ' ἀληθῇ πάντα προσφύσω λόγῳ.

Βασιλεύς

ἄπιστα μυθεῖσθ', ὦ ξένοι, κλύειν ἐμοί,
 ὅπως τόδ' ὑμῖν ἐστὶν Ἀργεῖον γένος.
 Λιβυστικάῃς γὰρ μᾶλλον ἐμφερέστεραι
280 γυναιξὶν ἐστε κοῦδαμῶς ἐγχωρίαις.
 καὶ Νεῖλος ἂν θρέψειε τοιοῦτον φυτόν,
 Κύπριος χαρακτήρ τ' ἐν γυναικεῖοις τύποις
 εἰκὼς πέπληκται τεκτόνων πρὸς ἀρσένων·
 τοίας τ' ἀκούω νομάδας ἵπποβάμοσιν
285 εἶναι καμήλοις ἀστραβιζούσας, χθόνα
 παρ' Αἰθίοψιν ἀστυγειτονουμένας.

charged with wrath, an ominous colony of swarming serpents.
 Of these plagues Apis worked the cure by sorcery and spells to
 the content of the Argive land, [270] and for reward thereafter
 earned for himself remembrance in prayers. Now that you have
 my testimony, declare your lineage and speak further — yet our
 people do not take pleasure in long discourse.

1 The original means “agree in forming a conjecture,” i.e. be satisfied with a guess.

2 Apparently a periphrasis for “herald”; but the Greek text is uncertain.

Chorus

Our tale is brief and clear. Argives [275] we claim to be by birth,
 offspring of a cow blest in its children. And the truth of this I
 shall confirm in full.

King

Foreign maidens, your tale is beyond my belief — how your race
 can be from Argos. For you are more similar to the [280] women
 of Libya and in no way similar to those native to our land. The
 Nile, too, might foster such a stock, and like yours is the Cyprian
 impress stamped upon female images by male craftsmen. And
 of such aspect, I have heard, are nomad women, who [285] ride
 on camels for steeds, having padded saddles, and dwell in a
 land neighboring the Ethiopians. And had you been armed
 with the bow, certainly I would have guessed you to be the

καὶ τὰς ἀνάνδρους κρεοβόρους τ' Ἀμαζόνας,
εἰ τοξοτευχεῖς ἦτε, κάρτ' ἂν ἤκασα
ύμᾱς. διδαχθεῖς <δ'> ἂν τόδ' εἰδείην πλέον,
290 ὅπως γένεθλον σπέρμα τ' Ἀργεῖον τὸ σόν.

Χορός

κληδοῦχον Ἥρας φασὶ δωμάτων ποτὲ
Ἰὼ γενέσθαι τῇ δ' ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονί;

Βασιλεύς

ἦν ὡς μάλιστα, καὶ φάτις πολλὴ κρατεῖ.

Χορός

295 μὴ καὶ λόγος τις Ζῆνα μειχθῆναι βροτῶ;

Βασιλεύς

κᾶκρυπτά γ' Ἥρας ταῦτα τὰμπαλάγματα.

Χορός

πῶς οὖν τελευτᾷ βασιλέων νείκη τάδε;

Βασιλεύς

βοῦν τὴν γυναῖκ' ἔθηκεν Ἀργεῖα θεός.

Χορός

300 οὐκ οὖν πελάζει Ζεὺς ἐπ' εὐκραίῳ βοῖ;

Βασιλεύς

φασίν, πρέποντα βουθόρῳ ταύρῳ δέμας.

Χορός

τί δῆτα πρὸς ταῦτ' ἄλοχος ἰσχυρὰ Διός;

unwed, flesh-devouring Amazons. But inform me, and I will better comprehend [290] how it is that you trace your race and lineage from Argos.

Chorus

Is there a report that once in this land of Argos Io was ward of Hera's house?

King

Certainly she was; the tradition prevails far and wide.

Chorus

[295] And is there some story, too, that Zeus was joined in love with a mortal?

King

This entanglement was not secret from Hera.

Chorus

What then was the result of this royal strife?

King

The goddess of Argos transformed the woman into a cow.

Chorus

[300] And while she was a horned cow, did not Zeus approach her?

King

So they say, making his form that of a bull lusting for a mate.

Chorus

What answer then did Zeus' stubborn consort give?

Βασιλεύς

τὸν πάνθ' ὀρῶντα φύλακ' ἐπέστησεν βοῖ.

Χορός

ποῖον πανόπτην οἰοβουκόλον λέγεις;

Βασιλεύς

305 Ἄργον, τὸν Ἑρμῆς παῖδα γῆς κατέκτανεν.

Χορός

τί οὖν ἔτευξεν ἄλλο δυσπότημῳ βοῖ;

Βασιλεύς

βοηλάτην μύωπα κινητήριον.

Χορός

οἷστρον καλοῦσιν αὐτὸν οἱ Νείλου πέλας.

Βασιλεύς

τοιγάρ νιν ἐκ γῆς ἤλασεν μακρῷ δρόμῳ.

Χορός

310 καὶ ταῦτ' ἔλεξας πάντα συγκόλλως ἐμοί.

Βασιλεύς

καὶ μὴν Κάνωβον καπὶ Μέμφιν ἵκετο.

Χορός

καὶ Ζεὺς γ' ἐφάπτωρ χειρὶ φιτῦει γόνον.

Βασιλεύς

τίς οὖν ὁ Δῖος πόρτις εὐχεται βοός;

Χορός

315 Ἐπαφος ἀληθῶς ῥυσίων ἐπώνυμος.

King

She placed the all-seeing one to stand watch over the cow.

Chorus

What manner of all-seeing herdsman with a single duty do you mean?

King

[305] Argus, a son of Earth, whom Hermes slew.

Chorus

What else did she contrive against the unfortunate cow?

King

A sting, torment of cattle, constantly driving her on.

Chorus

They call it a gadfly, those who dwell by the Nile.

King

Well then, it drove her by a long course out of the land.

Chorus

[310] Your account agrees with mine in all respects.

King

So she came to Canobus and to Memphis.

Chorus

And Zeus begot a son by the touching of his hand.

King

Who is it then that claims to be the cow's Zeus-begotten calf?

Chorus

[315] Epaphus, and truly named from "laying on of hands."

Βασιλεύς

*

Χορός

Λιβύη, μέγιστον γῆς <πέδον> καρπουμένη.

Βασιλεύς

*

Χορός

*

Βασιλεύς

τίν' οὖν ἔτ' ἄλλον τῆσδε βλαστημὸν λέγεις;

Χορός

Βῆλον δίπαιδα πατέρα τοῦδ' ἐμοῦ πατρός.

Βασιλεύς

320 τὸ πάνσοφον νῦν ὄνομα τοῦτό μοι φράσον.

Χορός

Δαναός, ἀδελφὸς δ' ἐστὶ πεντηκοντάπαις.

Βασιλεύς

καὶ τοῦδ' ἄνοιγε τοῦνομ' ἀφθόνῳ λόγῳ.

Χορός

Αἴγυπτος. εἰδὼς δ' ἀμὸν ἀρχαῖον γένος
πράσσοις ἂν ὥς Ἀργεῖον ἀνστήσης στόλον.

King

[And who was begotten of Epaphus?]

Chorus

Libya, who reaps the fruit of the largest portion of the earth.

King

[What offspring, then, did Libya have?]

Chorus

[Agenor was her first child born.]

King

And who was his offspring?

Chorus

Belus, who had two sons and was father of my father here.

King

[320] Now tell me his wisely-given name.¹

Chorus

Danaus: and he has a brother with fifty sons.

King

Reveal his name ungrudgingly.

¹ The epithet, properly applicable to the venerable Danaus, is transferred to his name, because, to the Greek, name often connoted personality. So "the dreaded name of Demogorgon."

Chorus

Aegyptus; and now that you know my ancient lineage, I pray

Βασιλεύς

325 δοκεῖτε <δή> μοι τῆσδε κοινωνεῖν χθονὸς
τάρχαϊον. ἀλλὰ πῶς πατρῶα δώματα
λιπεῖν ἔτλητε; τίς κατέσκηψεν τύχη;

Χορός

ἄναξ Πελασγῶν, αἰόλ' ἀνθρώπων κακά.
πόνου δ' ἴδοις ἂν οὐδαμοῦ ταῦτ' ὅν πετρόν·
330 ἐπεὶ τίς ἤρχει τήνδ' ἀνέλπιστον φυγὴν
κέλσειν ἐς Ἄργος κῆδος ἐγγενὲς τὸ πρίν,
ἔχθει μεταπτοιοῦσαν εὐναίων γάμων;

Βασιλεύς

τί φῆς ἱκνεῖσθαι τῶνδ' ἀγωνίων θεῶν,
λευκοστεφεῖς ἔχουσα νεοδρέπτους κλάδους;

Χορός

335 ὥς μὴ γένωμαι δμῶις Αἰγύπτου γένει.

Βασιλεύς

πότερα κατ' ἔχθραν, ἢ τὸ μὴ θέμις λέγεις;

Χορός

τίς δ' ἂν φίλους ὦνοῖτο τοὺς κεκτημένους;

Βασιλεύς

σθένος μὲν οὕτως μεῖζον αὖξεται βροτοῖς.

Χορός

καὶ δυστυχούντων γ' εὐμαρὴς ἀπαλλαγὴ.

you to help¹ a band that is Argive by descent.

King

[325] I think you indeed have some share in this land from old.
But how did you bring yourselves to leave the home of your
fathers? What stroke of fortune befell you?

Chorus

Lord of the Pelasgians, of varying color are the ills of mankind,
and nowhere can you find trouble of the same plume. [330] For
who dreamed that a kindred race, sprung of old, would thus in
unexpected flight find haven at Argos, fleeing in terror through
loathing of the marriage-bed?

King

Why have you come as suppliants of these gods congregated
here, holding in your hands those white-wreathed, fresh-
plucked boughs?

Chorus

[335] So as not to be made slave to Aegyptus' race.

King

By reason of hatred? Or do you speak of unlawfulness?

Chorus

Who would purchase their lords from among their kin?

King

In this way families have enhanced their power.

Chorus

And it is easy then, if things go ill, to separate from a wife.

Βασιλεύς

340 πῶς οὖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς εὐσεβῆς ἐγὼ πέλω;

Χορός

αἰτοῦσι μὴ ἔκδους παισὶν Αἰγύπτου πάλιν.

Βασιλεύς

βαρέα σύ γ' εἶπας, πόλεμον ἄρασθαι νέον.

Χορός

ἀλλ' ἡ δίκη γε ξυμμάχων ὑπερστατεῖ.

Βασιλεύς

εἶπερ γ' ἀπ' ἀρχῆς πραγμάτων κοινωνὸς ἦν.

Χορός

345 αἰδοῦ σὺν πρύμναν πόλεως ᾧδ' ἐστεμμένην.

Βασιλεύς

πέφρικα λεύσσω τάσδ' ἔδρας κατασκίους.

Χορός

βαρὺς γε μέντοι Ζηνὸς ἱκεσίου κότος

Παλαίχθονος τέκος, κλυθί μου

πρόφρονι καρδίᾳ, Πελασγῶν ἄναξ.

350 ἴδε με τὰν ἱκέτιν φυγάδα περιδρομον,

λυκοδίωκτον ὥς δάμαλιν ἄμ πέτραις

ἡλιβάτοις, ἔν' ἀλκᾷ πίσυνος μέμυ-

κε φράζουσα βοτῆρι μόχθους.

King

[340] How then am I to deal with you in accordance with my sacred duty?

Chorus

By not surrendering us at the demand of Aegyptus' sons.

King

A serious request—to take upon myself a dangerous war.

Chorus

But Justice protects her champions.

King

True, if she had a share in the matter from the beginning.

Chorus

[345] Show reverence for the ship of state thus crowned.²

King

I shrink as I gaze upon these shaded shrines.

¹ Literally “raise” from sanctuary.

² The gods, whose statues have been wreathed with the suppliants' branches, are regarded as the pilots who direct the ship of state. Possibly there is also a reference to the custom of crowning a vessel's stern with flowers.

Chorus

Yet heavy is the wrath of Zeus, god of the suppliant.

Son of Palaechthon, lord of the Pelasgians, hear me with a

benign heart. [350] Behold me, your suppliant, a fugitive,

running around like a heifer chased by wolves upon precipitous

Βασιλεύς

ὄρῳ κλάδοισι νεοδρόποις κατάσκιον

355 νεύονθ' ὄμιλον τόνδ' ἀγωνίων θεῶν.

εἴη δ' ἄνατον προῶγμα τοῦτ' ἀστοξένων.

μηδ' ἐξ ἀέλπτων κάπρομηθήτων πόλει
νεῖκος γένηται· τῶν γὰρ οὐ δεῖται πόλις.

Χορός

ἴδοιτο δῆτ' ἄνατον φυγὰν

360 ἱκεσία Θέμις Διὸς κλαρίου.

σὺ δὲ παρ' ὀψιγόνου μάθε γεραιόφρων·

ποτιτρόπαιον αἰδόμενος τοῦνπερ

ἱεροδόκατ' . .

θεῶν λήματ' ἀπ' ἀνδρὸς ἀγνοῦ.

Βασιλεύς

365 οὐτοὶ κάθησθε δωμάτων ἐφέστιοι

ἐμῶν. τὸ κοινὸν δ' εἰ μιαίνεται πόλις,

ξυνῇ μελέσθω λαὸς ἐκπονεῖν ἄκη.

ἐγὼ δ' ἂν οὐ κραίνοιμ' ὑπόσχεσιν πάρος,

ἀστοῖς δὲ πᾶσι τῶνδε κοινώσας πέρι.

Χορός

370 σὺ τοι πόλις, σὺ δὲ τὸ δάμιον.

πρύτανις ἄκριτος ὦν,

κρατύνεις βωμόν, ἐστίαν χθονός,

μονοψήφοισι νεύμασιν σέθεν,

μονοσκήπτροισι δ' ἐν θρόνοις χρέος

crag, where, confident in his help, she lows to tell the herdsman
of her distress.

King

I see [355] a company of assembled gods assenting beneath the
shade of fresh-plucked boughs. Nevertheless may this affair of
claimants to the friendship of our city bring no mischief in its
wake! And let no feud come upon the state from causes
unforeseen and unforested; for the state has no need of such
trouble.

Chorus

Indeed, [360] may Justice, daughter of Zeus the Apportioner,
Justice who protects the suppliant, look upon our flight that it
bring no mischief in its wake. But you, aged in experience, learn
from one of younger birth. If you show mercy to a suppliant ...
from a man of holiness.

King

[365] It is not my own house at whose hearth you sit. If the state
is stained by pollution in its commonalty, in common let the
people strive to work out the cure. For myself, I will pledge no
promise before I have communicated these events to all the
citizens.

Chorus

[370] You are the state, you are the people. Being subject to no
judge, you rule the altar, your country's hearth by your will's
sole ordinance; and, enthroned in sole sovereignty, [375] you

375 πᾶν ἐπικραίνεις· ἄγος φυλάσσου.

Βασιλεύς

ἄγος μὲν εἴη τοῖς ἐμοῖς παλιγκότοις,
 ὑμῖν δ' ἀρήγειν οὐκ ἔχω βλάβης ἄτερ.
 οὐδ' αὖ τόδ' εὖφρον, τάσδ' ἀτιμάσαι λιτάς.
 ἀμηχανῶ δὲ καὶ φόβος μ' ἔχει φρένας
 380 δρᾶσαί τε μὴ δρᾶσαί τε καὶ τύχην ἐλεῖν.

Χορός

τὸν ὑψόθεν σκοπὸν ἐπισκόπει,
 φύλακα πολυπόνων
 βροτῶν, οἳ τοῖς πέλας προσήμενοι
 δίκας οὐ τυγχάνουσιν ἐννόμου.

385 μένει τοι Ζηνὸς ἱκταίου κότος
 δυσπαραθέλκτοις παθόντος οἴκτοις.

Βασιλεύς

εἴ τοι κρατοῦσι παῖδες Αἰγύπτου σέθεν
 νόμῳ πόλεως, φάσκοντες ἐγγύτατα γένους
 εἶναι, τίς ἂν τοῖσδ' ἀντιωθῆναι θέλοι;
 390 δεῖ τοί σε φεύγειν κατὰ νόμους τοὺς οἴκοθεν,
 ὥς οὐκ ἔχουσιν κῦρος οὐδὲν ἀμφὶ σοῦ.

Χορός

μή τί ποτ' οὖν γενοίμαν ὑποχείριος
 κράτεσιν ἀρσένων. ὕπαστρον δέ τοι
 μῆχαρ ὀρίζομαι γάμου δύσφρονος
 395 φυγάν· ξύμμαχον δ' ἐλόμενος δίκαν

determine every issue. Beware pollution!

King

Pollution on my enemies! But without harm I do not know how to help you. And yet again, it is not well advised to slight these supplications. I am perplexed, and fear possesses my soul [380] whether to act, or not to act and take what fortune sends.

Chorus

Look to him who looks down from above, to him, the guardian of mortals sore-distressed, who appeal to their neighbors, yet do not obtain the justice that is their right. [385] The wrath of Zeus, the suppliant's god, remains, and will not be softened by a sufferer's complaints.

King

If the sons of Aegyptus have authority over you by the law of your country claiming that they are nearest of kin, who would wish to contest it? [390] You must plead in accordance with the laws of the land you have fled, that they have no authority over you.

Chorus

Never, oh never, may I fall subject to the power and authority of these men. I am determined to flee to escape this marriage that offends my soul, piloting my course by the stars. [395] Take Justice as your ally, and render judgment for the cause deemed

κρίνε σέβας τὸ πρὸς θεῶν.

Βασιλεύς

οὐκ εὐκριτον τὸ κρίμα. μή μ' αἰροῦ κριτήν.
εἶπον δὲ καὶ πρίν, οὐκ ἄνευ δήμου τάδε
πράξαίμ' ἄν, οὐδέ περ κρατῶν, μή καί ποτε
400 εἶπη λεώς, εἴ πού τι μὴ τοῖον τύχοι,
“ἐπήλυδας τιμῶν ἀπώλεσας πόλιν.”

Χορός

ἀμφοτέρους ὁμαίμων τάδ' ἐπισκοπεῖ
Ζεὺς ἑτερορρεπής, νέμων εἰκότως
ἄδικα μὲν κακοῖς, ὅσια δ' ἐννόμοις.
405 τί τῶνδ' ἐξ ἴσου ῥεπομένων μεταλ-
γεῖς τὸ δίκαιον ἔρξας;

Βασιλεύς

δεῖ τοι βαθείας φροντίδος σωτηρίου,
δίκην κολυμβητῆρος, ἐς βυθὸν μολεῖν
δεδορκὸς ὄμμα, μὴδ' ἄγαν ὦνωμένον,
410 ὅπως ἄνατα ταῦτα πρῶτα μὲν πόλει,
αὐτοῖσί θ' ἡμῖν ἐκτελευτήσει καλῶς,
καὶ μήτε δήρις ῥυσίων ἐφάψεται
μήτ' ἐν θεῶν ἔδραισιν ᾧδ' ἰδρυμένας
ἐκδόντες ὑμᾶς τὸν πανώλεθρον θεὸν
415 βαρὺν ξύνοικον θησόμεσθ' ἀλάστορα,
ὃς οὐδ' ἐν Αἴδου τὸν θανόντ' ἐλευθεροῖ.
μῶν οὐ δοκεῖ δεῖν φροντίδος σωτηρίου;

righteous by the gods.

King

The judgment is not easy—do not make me the judge. I have declared already that, though I am ruler, I will not do this thing without the consent of my people, lest hereafter, [400] if any evil befall, the people should say, “You honored aliens and brought ruin upon your own land.”

Chorus

Kindred to both in blood, Zeus surveys both sides alike in this dispute with an impartial scale, apportioning, as is due, to the wicked their wrongdoing and to the godly their works of righteousness. [405] When these things are thus equally balanced, why do you fear to act justly?

King

Surely there is need of deep and salutary counsel; need for a keen-sighted eye, not confused, to descend, like some diver, into the depths; [410] that to the state above all things this matter may not work mischief, but may end well for us; that strife may not seize you for its prize, nor yet that we surrender you from these seats of sanctuary, [415] and bring upon ourselves the dire, abiding vengeance of the all-destroying god, who, even in the realm of Death, does not set his victim free. Surely you cannot think there is no need of salutary counsel?

Χορός

φρόντισον καὶ γενοῦ
πανδίκως εὐσεβῆς

420 πρόξενος· τὰν φυγάδα μὴ προδῶς,
τὰν ἑκαθεν ἐκβολαῖς
δυσθέοις ὀρμέναν·

μηδ' ἴδης μ' ἐξ ἐδρᾶν
πολυθέων ῥυσια-

425 σθεῖσαν, ὧ πᾶν κράτος ἔχων χθονός.
γνῶθι δ' ὕβριν ἀνέρων
καὶ φύλαξαι κότον.

μή τι τλῆς τὰν ἰκέτιν εἰσιδεῖν
ἀπὸ βρετέων βία

430 δίκας ἀγομέναν
ἱππηδὸν ἀμπύκων,
πολυμίτων πέπλων τ' ἐπιλαβὰς ἐμῶν.
ἴσθι γάρ· παισὶ τάδε καὶ δόμοις,

435 μένει ἄρ' ἐκτίνειν
ὁμοῖαν θέμιν.

τάδε φράσαι δίκαια Διόθεν κράτη.

Βασιλεύς

καὶ δὴ πέφρασμαι. δεῦρο δ' ἐξοκέλλεται.
ἢ τοῖσιν ἢ τοῖς πόλεμον αἵρεσθαι μέγαν

Chorus

Take counsel, and, as is your sacred duty, prove yourself our sacred [420] champion. Do not betray the fugitive who has been impiously cast out and driven from afar.

And see me not ravished from this sanctuary of many gods, [425] oh you who hold sovereign power over the land. Recognize men's wantonness, and guard against wrath.

Do not see your suppliant dragged, in spite of justice, from the images of the gods, [430] like a horse by the bridle, and see rude hands laid upon my fine-woven robes.

For be assured of this—whichever end you bring to pass, to your children and house [435] does it remain to make full payment.¹ Consider these just ordinances of God.

¹ The condensed phrase “pay equal (measure of) justice,” though emphasizing the notion of just retribution for evil, includes that of just reward for good—the act comes back upon the doer (δράσαντι παθεῖν) .

King

I have considered them; and I am driven to this cruel predicament. I must take upon myself a mighty war against one

440 πᾶσ' ἔστ' ἀνάγκη, καὶ γεγόμενται σκάφος
στρέβλαισι ναυτικαῖσιν ὥς προσηγμένον.

ἄνευ δὲ λύπης οὐδαμοῦ καταστροφή.

καὶ χρημάτων μὲν ἐκ δόμων πορθουμένων,
τᾶτην γε μείζω καὶ μέγ' ἐμπλήσας γόμου†

445 γένοιτ' ἂν ἄλλα Κτησίου Διὸς χάριν·

καὶ γλῶσσα τοξεύσασα μὴ τὰ καίρια,

γένοιτο μύθου μῦθος ἂν θελκτήριος
[ἀλγεινὰ θυμοῦ κάρτα κινητήρια].

ὅπως δ' ὅμαιμον αἶμα μὴ γενήσεται,

450 δεῖ κάρτα θύειν καὶ πεσεῖν χρηστήρια

θεοῖσι πολλοῖς πολλά, πημονῆς ἅκη.

ἧ κάρτα νείκους τοῦδ' ἔσω παροίχομαι

θέλω δ' αἰδρις μᾶλλον ἢ σοφὸς κακῶν

εἶναι. γένοιτο δ' εὖ παρὰ γνώμην ἐμήν.

Χορός

455 πολλῶν ἄκουσον τέρματ' αἰδοίων λόγων.

Βασιλεύς

ἤκουσα, καὶ λέγοις ἄν. οὐ με φεύζεται.

Χορός

ἔχω στρόφους ζώνας τε, συλλαβὰς πέπλων.

Βασιλεύς

τάχ' ἂν γυναιξὶ ταῦτα συμπρεπῇ πέλοι.

Χορός

ἐκ τῶνδε τοίνυν, ἴσθι, μηχανὴ καλή—

side or the other. [440] There is no escape, it is as firmly fixed as a ship's hull drawn tight by windlasses. There is no result without grievous hurt. Now when goods are plundered from a homestead, [445] other goods may come by grace of Zeus, guardian of household wealth; as a tongue that has shot arrows beside the mark, one speech may be the healer of another. But to avoid the shedding of kindred blood, [450] surely there is need of sacrifice and that many a victim fall to many a god as a deliverance from impending harm. For truly, it is to my undoing that I have come into this quarrel; and yet I prefer to be unskilled rather than practised in the lore of foretelling ill. But may my judgment belie itself and all go well!

Chorus

[455] Hear now the end of my appeals for compassion.

King

I hear; say on. It shall not escape me.

Chorus

I have breast-bands and girdles to gather up my robes.

King

Such things are proper, no doubt, for women.

Chorus

In these then, be sure, I have a beautiful instrument—

Βασιλεύς

460 λέξον τίν' αὐδὴν τήνδε γηρυθεῖς ἔση.

Χορός

εἰ μή τι πιστὸν τῷδ' ὑποστήσεις στόλῳ—

Βασιλεύς

τί σοι περαίνει μηχανὴ συζωμάτων;

Χορός

νέοις πίναξι βρέτεια κοσμήσαι τάδε.

Βασιλεύς

αἰνιγματῶδες τοῦπος· ἀλλ' ἀπλῶς φράσον.

Χορός

465 ἐκ τῶνδ' ὅπως τάχιστ' ἀπάγξασθαι θεῶν.

Βασιλεύς

ἤκουσα μαστικτῆρα καρδίας λόγον.

Χορός

ξυνῆκας· ὠμμάτωσα γὰρ σαφέστερον.

Βασιλεύς

καὶ πολλαχῇ γε δυσπάλαιστα πράγματα,

κακῶν δὲ πλήθος ποταμὸς ὥς ἐπέρχεται·

470 ἄτης δ' ἄβυσσον πέλαγος οὐ μάλ' εὐπορον

τόδ' ἐσβέβηκα, κούδαμοῦ λιμὴν κακῶν.

εἰ μὲν γὰρ ὑμῖν μὴ τόδ' ἐκπράξω χρέος,

μίασμ' ἔλεξας οὐχ ὑπερτοξεύσιμον.

εἰ δ' αὖθ' ὁμαίμοις παισὶν Αἰγύπτου σέθεν

475 σταθεῖς πρὸ τειχέων διὰ μάχης ἦξω τέλους,

King

[460] Tell me what speech you plan to utter.

Chorus

If you will not give some pledge to this group—

King

What will the contrivance of the sashes do for you?

Chorus

To adorn these images with tablets of strange sort.

King

Your words are riddling; come, explain in simple speech.

Chorus

[465] To hang ourselves from the statues of these gods.

King

I detect a threat that is a lash upon my heart.

Chorus

You have grasped my intention, for I have cleared your vision.

King

And on many sides there are difficulties hard to wrestle with; for, like a flood, a multitude of ills bursts on me. [470] It is a sea of ruin, fathomless and impassable, which I am launched upon, and nowhere is there a haven from distress. For should I not pay the debt due to you, the pollution you name is beyond all range of speech; yet if [475] I take my stand before the walls and try the issue of battle with the sons of Aegyptus, your kinsmen,

πῶς οὐχὶ τὰνάλωμα γίγνεται πικρόν,
 ἄνδρας γυναικῶν οὖνεχ' αἰμάξαι πέδον;
 ὅμως δ' ἀνάγκη Ζηνὸς αἰδεῖσθαι κότον
 ἱκτῆρος· ὕψιστος γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖς φόβος.
480 σὺ μὲν, πάτερ γεραιὲ τῶνδε παρθένων,
 κλάδους τε τούτους αἶψ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις λαβὼν
 βωμοὺς ἐπ' ἄλλους δαιμόνων ἐγχωρίων
 θές, ὥς ἴδωσι τῆσδ' ἀφίξεως τέκμαρ
 πάντες πολῖται, μὴδ' ἀπορριφθῇ ψόγος
485 ἐμοῦ· κατ' ἀρχῆς γὰρ φιλαίτιος λεώς.
 καὶ γὰρ τάχ' ἂν τις οἰκτίσας ἰδὼν τάδε
 ὕβριν μὲν ἐχθήρειεν ἄρσενος στόλου,
 ὕμιν δ' ἂν εἴη δῆμος εὐμενέστερος·
 τοῖς ἥσσοσιν γὰρ πᾶς τις εὐνοίας φέρει.

Δαναός

490 πολλῶν τὰδ' ἡμῖν ἐστὶν ἡξιωμένα,
 αἰδοῖον εὐρεθέντα πρόξενον λαβεῖν.
 ὀπάονας δὲ φράστοράς τ' ἐγχωρίων
 ξύμπεμψον, ὥς ἂν τῶν πολισσούχων θεῶν
 βωμοὺς προνάους καὶ ἑπολισσοῦχων ἔδρας
495 εὖρωμεν, ἀσφάλεια δ' ἧ δι' ἄστεως
 στείχουσι· μορφῆς δ' οὐχ ὁμόστολος φύσις.
 Νεῖλος γὰρ οὐχ ὅμοιον Ἰνάχῳ γένος
 τρέφει. φύλαξαι μὴ θράσος τέκη φόβον·
 καὶ δὴ φίλον τις ἔκταν' ἀγνοίας ὕπο.

how will the cost not mount to a cruel price — men's blood to
 stain the ground for women's sake?

And yet the wrath of Zeus who guards the suppliant compels
 my reverence; for supreme among mortals is the fear of him.
 [480] Aged father of these maidens, take these boughs
 straightway in your arms and place them upon other altars of
 the country's gods, that all the natives may see the sign that you
 have come in suppliance. And let no random word fall against
 [485] me; for the people could complain against authority. It
 may well be that some, stirred to compassion at the sight, will
 hate the wantonness of the troop of males, and that the people
 will be more friendly towards you; for all men are well disposed
 to the weaker cause.

Danaus

[490] We consider it worth much to have gained a champion
 who is compassionate. Yet send escorts and guides of the
 country's people with me so we may find where the gods who
 protect your city have their altars at the temple porches and
 their . . . seats, [495] and that we may go safely through the
 town. My shape is unlike yours, for Nile and Inachus rear a
 different race. Beware lest boldness give birth to fear; for
 through ignorance men have slain those they love.

Βασιλεύς

500 στείχοιτ' ἄν, ἄνδρες· εὖ γὰρ ὁ ξένος λέγει.
 ἡγεῖσθε βωμούς ἀστικούς, θεῶν ἔδρας·
 καὶ ξυμβολοῦσιν οὐ πολυστομεῖν χρεῶν
 ναύτην ἄγοντας τόνδ' ἐφέστιον θεῶν.

Χορός

τούτῳ μὲν εἶπας, καὶ τεταγμένος κίοι·
 505 ἐγὼ δὲ πῶς δρῶ; ποῦ θράσος νέμεις ἐμοί;

Βασιλεύς

κλάδους μὲν αὐτοῦ λείπε, σημεῖον πόνου.

Χορός

καὶ δὴ σφε λείπω χειρὶ καὶ λόγοις σέθεν.

Βασιλεύς

λευρὸν κατ' ἄλσος νῦν ἐπιστρέφου τόδε.

Χορός

καὶ πῶς βέβηλον ἄλσος ἂν ῥύοιτό με;

Βασιλεύς

510 οὗτοι πτερωτῶν ἀρπαγαῖς <σ> ἐκδώσομεν.

Χορός

ἀλλ' εἰ δρακόντων δυσφρόνων ἐχθίοισιν;

King

[500] Come, men, the stranger speaks well. Be his guides to the altars of the city and to the sanctuaries of the gods. Do not speak at length with whomever you meet on the way while you are bringing this seafarer to be a suppliant at the hearths of the gods.

Exit Danaus with attendants

Chorus

You told him, and let him go as directed. [505] But what of me? What am I to do? Where do you assign security to me?

King

Leave your boughs here, tokens of your distress.

Chorus

Behold, I leave them at your signal and command.

King

Go now along this level space about the sanctuary.¹

Chorus

But it is not holy ground. How can it keep me safe?

King

[510] Be assured, we will not surrender you to winged creatures' ravishment.

Chorus

But what about those whom we dread worse than evil serpents?

Βασιλεύς

εὐφημον εἶη τοῦπος εὐφημουμένη.

Χορός

οὔτοι τι θαῦμα δυσφορεῖν φόβῳ φρενός.

Βασιλεύς

ἀεὶ γ' ἀναρκτόν ἐστι δεῖμ' ἐξαίσιον.

Χορός

515 σὺ καὶ λέγων εὐφραине καὶ πράσσω φρένα.

Βασιλεύς

ἀλλ' οὔτι δαρὸν χρόνον ἐρημώσει πατήρ.

ἐγὼ δὲ λαοὺς συγκαλῶν ἐγχωρίους

στείχω, τὸ κοινὸν ὥς ἂν εὐμενὲς τιθῶ.

καὶ σὸν διδάξω πατέρα ποῖα χρὴ λέγειν.

520 πρὸς ταῦτα μίμνε καὶ θεοὺς ἐγχωρίους

λιταῖς παραιτοῦ τῶν σ' ἔρως ἔχει τυχεῖν.

ἐγὼ δὲ ταῦτα πορσυνῶν ἐλεύσομαι.

πειθὼ δ' ἔποιτο καὶ τύχη πρακτήριος.

King

Speak with good omen, as I have spoken auspiciously to you.

Chorus

No wonder I am fretful through alarm of mind.

King

Excessive fear is always uncontrolled.

Chorus

[515] Cheer my heart by deeds as well as words.

King

Your father will not leave you here alone for long. I am going now to call together the people of the land, that I may make the masses friendly; and I will instruct your father in what things he should say. [520] Now stay here and beseech the gods of the land with prayers to grant what you desire, while I go to advance your cause. May persuasion and efficacious fortune attend me!

Exit with attendants

1 With the mound, crowded with the images of the gods and their common altar (l. 222) , the maidens here contrast a level space, adjacent to the sanctuary yet accessible to all. Some ἄλση were open to the public (βέβηλα) , while others formed part of the sacred precinct proper. The poets, according to Strabo 9.412, used the word ἄλσος to denote all sanctuaries, even if they were not planted with trees.

Χορός

ἄναξ ἀνάκτων, μακάρων

525 μακάρτατε καὶ τελέων

τελειότατον κράτος, ὄλβιε Ζεῦ,

πιθοῦ τε καὶ γένει σῶ

ἄλευσον ἀνδρῶν ὕβριν εὖ στυγήσας.

λίμνα δ' ἔμβαλε πορφυροειδεῖ

530 τὰν μελανόζυγ' ἄταν.

τὸ πρὸς γυναικῶν <δ'> ἐπιδῶν

παλαίφατον ἀμέτερον

γένος φιλίας προγόνου γυναικὸς

νέωσον εὐφρον' αἶνον,

535 γενοῦ πολυμνάστωρ, ἔφαπτορ Ἰοῦς·

Διαί τοι γένος εὐχόμεθ' εἶναι

γᾶς ἀπὸ τᾶσδ' ἄποικοι

παλαιὸν, δ' εἰς ἶχνος μετέσταν

ματέρος ἀνθονόμους ἐπωπᾶς,

540 λειμῶνα βούχιλον, ἔνθεν Ἰὼ

οἷστρω ἐρεθομένα

φεύγει ἀμαρτίνοος,

πολλὰ βροτῶν διαμειβομένα

φῦλα, διχῇ δ' ἀντίπορον

545 γαῖαν ἐν αἴσᾳ διατέμ-

νουσα πόρον κυματίαν ὀρίζει·

ἰάπτει δ' Ἀσίδος δι' αἴας

Chorus

Lord of lords, [525] most blessed among the blessed, power most perfect among the perfect, O blessed Zeus, hear! And from your offspring ward off in utter abhorrence the lust of men, and into the purple sea cast [530] their black-benched madness!

Look benignly upon the women's cause, look upon our race ancient in story, and recall the happy tale of our ancestress, the woman of your love.

[535] Show that you remember all, you who laid your hand upon Io. It is from Zeus that we claim descent, and it is from this, our homeland, that we went forth. I have come here to the prints of ancient feet, my mother's, even to the region where she was watched while she browsed among the flowers — [540] into that pasture, from which Io, tormented by the gad-fly's sting, fled in frenzy, traversing many tribes of men, and [545] according to fate, cut in two the surging strait, marking off the land upon the farther shore.

And through the land of Asia she gallops, straight through

μηλοβότου Φρυγίας διαμπάξ.
 περὰ δὲ Τεύθραντος ἄστρῳ Μυσῶν,
550 Λύδια τε γύαλα,
 καὶ δι' ὄρων Κιλικίων
 Παμφύλων τε [γένῃ] διορνυμένα
 καὶ ποταμούς ἀενάους
 καὶ βαθύπλουτον χθόνα καὶ
555 τὰν Ἀφροδίτας πολύπυρον αἶαν.
 ἰκνεῖται δὴ σινουμένα βέλει
 βουκόλου πετρόεντος
 Δῖον πάμβοτον ἄλσος,
 λειμῶνα χιονόβοσκον, ὄντ' ἐπέρχεται
560 Τυφῶ μένος,
 ὕδωρ τε Νείλου νόσοις ἄθικτον,
 μαινομένα πόνοις ἀτί-
 μοις ὀδύναις τε κεντροδα-
 λήτισι, θυιάς Ἥρας.
565 βροτοὶ δ', οἱ γὰς τότε ἦσαν ἔννομοι
 χλωρῷ δείματι θυμὸν
 πάλλοντ' ὄψιν ἀήθη,
 βοτὸν ἐσορῶντες δυσχερὲς μειζόμβροτον,
 τὰν μὲν βοός,
570 τὰν δ' αὖ γυναικός· τέρας δ' ἐθάμβουν.
 καὶ τότε δὴ τίς ἦν ὁ θέλ-
 ξας πολύπλαγκτον ἀθλίαν

sheep-pasturing Phrygia, and she passes the city of Teuthras among the Mysians, [550] and the hollow vales of Lydia, across the mountains of the Cilicians and the Pamphylians, speeding over ever-flowing rivers and earth deep and rich,

and [555] the land of Aphrodite that teems with wheat. Harassed by the sting of the winged herdsman she gains at last the fertile groves sacred to Zeus, that snow-fed pasture assailed [560] by Typho's fury, and the water of the Nile that no disease may touch—maddened by her ignominious toils and frenzied with the pain of Hera's torturing goad.

[565] And mortals, who in those days dwelled in the land, shook with pallid terror at the terrible sight as they beheld a being fearsome, half-human, part cow [570] and part of woman; and they were astonished at the monstrous thing. And then, at last, who was it who calmed the far-wandering, the wretched, the sting-tormented Io?

οίστροδόνητον Ἰώ;
δι' αἰῶνος κρέων ἀπαύστου

575 Ζεὺς...

Διὸς δ' ἀπημάντῳ σθένει
καὶ θείαις ἐπιπνοίαις
παύεται, δακρύων δ' ἀπο-
στάζει πένθιμον αἰδῶ.

580 λαβοῦσα δ' ἔρμα Δῖον ἀψευδεῖ λόγῳ
γείνατο παῖδ' ἀμεμφῇ,
δι' αἰῶνος μακροῦ πάνολβον·

ἔνθεν πᾶσα βοᾷ χθών,
“φυσιζόου γένος τόδε

585 Ζηνός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς·
τίς γὰρ ἂν κατέπαυσεν Ἥ-
ρας νόσους ἐπιβούλους;”

Διὸς τόδ' ἔργον καὶ τόδ' ἂν γένος λέγων
ἐξ Ἑπάφου κυρήσας.

590 τίν' ἂν θεῶν ἐνδικωτέροισιν
κεκλοίμαν εὐλόγως ἐπ' ἔργοις;
<αὐτὸς ὁ> πατήρ φυτουργὸς αὐτόχειρ ἄναξ
γένους παλαιόφρων μέγας
τέκτων, τὸ πᾶν μῆχαρ οὐριος Ζεὺς.

595 ὑπ' ἀρχᾶς δ' οὐ τινος θοάζων
τὸ μείον κρεισσόνων κρατύνει.
οὐτινος ἄνωθεν ἡμένου σέβει κράτη.

Zeus, it was, through endless time, the lord, [575] . . . and by the unharmed might of his hand, and by his divine breath, she gained rest, and let fall the sorrowing shame of tears.

[580] And, taking Zeus as her support, according to a true story, she bore a blameless son—Throughout long ages blessed.

All the earth cries aloud, “This [585] is in very truth the offspring of life-giving Zeus; for who else could have endured the suffering plotted by Hera?”

Call this the work of Zeus and this his race sprung from Epaphus and you will hit the truth.

[590] Which of the gods has accomplished deeds which, with good reason, warrant more justly my appeal to him? Father himself and lord, he planted us with his own hand; he is the mighty fashioner of our race, ancient in wisdom, who devises everything, whose breath makes all things prosper, Zeus himself.[595] He does not sit upon his throne by mandate of another and hold his dominion beneath a mightier. No one sits above him whose power he holds in awe. He speaks, and it is

πάρεστι δ' ἔργον ὥς ἔπος
σπεῦσαί τι τῶν βούλιος φέρει φρήν.

done—he hastens to execute whatever his counselling mind
conceives.¹

¹ The full force of this majestic and awe-inspiring passage, recalling the solemnity of Isaiah, can be reproduced only by paraphrase. Nearer the original is: “He does not, sitting <upon his throne> by the authority of any, bear a lesser sway delegated by superiors ... But with him the deed is as the word to do swiftly anything that his counselling mind conceives.”

Re-enter Danaus

Δαναός

600 θαρσεῖτε παῖδες. εὖ τὰ τῶν ἐγχωρίων·
δήμου δέδοκται παντελῇ ψηφίσματα.

Χορός

ὦ χαῖρε πρέσβυ, φίλτατ' ἀγγέλλων ἐμοί
ἔνισπε δ' ἡμῖν ποῖ κεκύρωται τέλος,
δήμου κρατοῦσα χεὶρ ὅπη πληθύνεται.

Δαναός

605 ἔδοξεν Ἀργείοισιν οὐ διχορρόπως,
ἀλλ' ὥστ' ἀνηβῆσαί με γηραιᾷ φρενί·
πανδημία γὰρ χερσὶ δεξιωνύμοις
ἔφριξεν αἰθὴρ τόνδε κραινόντων λόγον:
ἡμᾶς μετοικεῖν τῇσδε γῆς ἐλευθέρους
610 κάρρουσιάστους ξύν τ' ἀσυλία βροτῶν·
καὶ μήτ' ἐνοίκων μήτ' ἐπηλύδων τινὰ

Danaus

[600] Be of good cheer, my children, all goes well on the part of
the citizens. Decrees, carrying full authority, have been passed.

Chorus

Hail, our envoy, harbinger of tidings most welcome! But tell
us—to what end has the decision been carried, and to what
course does the majority of the people's votes incline?

Danaus

[605] Action was taken by the Argives, not by any doubtful vote
but in such a way as to make my aged heart renew its youth. For
the air bristled with right hands held aloft as, in full vote, they
ratified this resolution into law: “That we are settlers in this
land, and are free, [610] subject to no seizure, and secure from
robbery of man; that no one, native or alien, lead us captive; but,

ἄγειν· ἂν δὲ προστιθῇ τὸ καρτερόν,
τὸν μὴ βοηθήσαντα τῶνδε γαμόρων
ἄτιμον εἶναι ξὺν φυγῇ δημηλάτῳ.
615 τοιάνδ' ἔπειθεν ῥῆσιν ἄμφ' ἡμῶν λέγων
ἄναξ Πελασγῶν, ἱκεσίου Ζηνὸς κότον
μέγαν προφωνῶν μήποτ' εἰσόπιν χρόνου
πόλιν παχύναι, ξενικὸν ἀστικόν θ' ἅμα
λέγων διπλοῦν μίασμα πρὸ πόλεως φανέν
620 ἀμήχανον βόσκημα πημονῆς πέλειν.
τοιαῦτ' ἀκούων χερσὶν Ἀργεῖος λεῶς
ἔκραν' ἄνευ κλητῆρος ὥς εἶναι τάδε.
δημηγόρους δ' ἤκουσεν εὐπιθῆς στροφὰς
δῆμος Πελασγῶν· Ζεὺς δ' ἐπέκρανεν τέλος

Χορός

625 ἄγε δὴ, λέξωμεν ἐπ' Ἀργείοις
εὐχὰς ἀγαθὰς, ἀγαθῶν ποινάς.
Ζεὺς δ' ἐφορεύοι ξένιος ξενίου
στόματος τιμὰς ἐπ' ἀληθείᾳ,
τέρμον' ἄμεμπτον προσαπαντᾶν.

630 νῦν ὅτε καί, θεοὶ
διογενεῖς, κλύοιτ' εὐ-
κταῖα γένει χεύουσας·
μήποτε πυρίφατον
γᾶν Πελασγίαν [πόλιν]

635 τὸν ἄκορον βοᾶς,

if they turn to violence, any landholder who refuses to rescue us, should both forfeit his rights and suffer public banishment."

[615] Such was the persuasive speech that the king of the Pelasgians delivered on our behalf, uttering the solemn warning that never in the future should the city feed the great wrath of Zeus, protector of the suppliant; and declaring that, should a twofold defilement—from strangers and from natives at once—arise before the city, [620] it would become fodder for distress past all relief. Hearing these words, the Argive people, waiting for no proclamation of crier, voted by uplifted hand that this should be so. It was the Pelasgian people, won readily to assent, who heard the subtle windings of his speech; but it was Zeus who brought the end to pass.

Chorus

[625] Come, let us invoke blessings upon the Argives in return for blessings. And may Zeus, god of strangers, behold the offerings of gratitude voiced by a stranger's lips, that they may in true fulfilment reach their perfect goal.

[630] Divinely-born gods! Hear now as I pour forth libations for blessings upon our kindred. Never may the wanton lord of war,
[635] insatiate of battle-cry,

κτίσαι μάχλον Ἄρη,
τὸν ἀρότοις θερί-
ζοντα βροτοὺς ἐν ἄλλοις,
οὔνεκ' ὥκτισαν ἡμᾶς,
640 ψῆφον δ' εὐφρον' ἔθεντο,
αἰδοῦνται δ' ἰκέτας Διός,
ποίμναν τάνδ' ἀμέγαρτον·
οὐδὲ μετ' ἀρσένων
ψῆφον ἔθεντ' ἀτιμώ-
645 σαντες ἔριν γυναικῶν,
Δῖον ἐπιδόμενοι
πράκτορά [τε] σκοπὸν
δυσπολέμητον, ὃν [οὐ]
τίς ἂν δόμος ἔχοι
650 ἐπ' ὀρόφων μιαι-
νοντα; βαρὺς δ' ἐφίξει.
ἄζονται γὰρ ὀμαίμους
Ζηνὸς ἱκτορας ἀγνοῦ.
τοιγάρτοι καθαροῖσι βω-
655 μοῖς θεοὺς ἀρέσσονται.
τοιγὰρ ὑποσκίων
ἐκ στομάτων ποτά-
σθω φιλότιμος εὐχά,
μήποτε λοιμὸς ἀνδρῶν
660 τάνδε πόλιν κενώσαι·

Ares, who reaps a human harvest in alien fields, destroy this Pelasgian land by fire; for they had compassion for us, [640] and cast a vote in our favor, respecting our pitiable flock, suppliants in the name of Zeus.

Nor did they cast their votes for the side of the males, [645] disregarding the women's cause, since they honored the avenging eye of Zeus, against which there is no battling, and what house would have it [650] defiling its roof?¹ For he sits heavily upon it. They take reverent heed of their kin, petitioners of holy Zeus; therefore with pure [655] altars shall they please the gods.

¹ By a sudden shift of metaphor, the eye of Zeus is likened to a foul bird whose pollution of the roof is an evil omen to the inmates of the house.

μηδ' ἐπιχωρίοις <ἔρις>
 πτώμασιν αἱματίσαι πέδον γᾶς.
 ἦβας δ' ἄνθος ἄδρεπτον
 ἔστω, μηδ' Ἀφροδίτας
665 εὐνάτωρ βροτολοιγὸς Ἀ-
 ρης κέρσειεν ἄωτον.
 †καὶ γεραροῖσι πρε-
 σβυτοδόκοι γεμόν-
 των† θυμέλαι φλεγόντων.
670 τὼς πόλις εὖ νέμοιτο
 Ζῆνα μέγαν σεβόντων,
 τὸν ξένιον δ' ὑπερτάτως,
 ὃς πολιῷ νόμῳ αἴσαν ὀρθοῖ.
 τίκτεσθαι δ' ἐφόρους γᾶς
675 ἄλλους εὐχόμεθ' αἰεί,
 Ἄρτεμιν δ' Ἑκάταν γυναι-
 κῶν λόχους ἐφορεύειν.
 μηδέ τις ἀνδροκμῆς
 λοιγὸς ἐπελθέτω
680 τάνδε πόλιν δαΐζων,
 ἄχορον ἀκίθαριν
 δακρυογόνον Ἄρη
 βοάν τ' ἔνδημον ἐξοπλίζων.
 νούσων δ' ἐσμὸς ἀπ' ἀστῶν
685 ἵζοι κρατὸς ἀτερπής·

Therefore let there fly forth from our overshadowed¹ lips a prayer of gratitude. Never may pestilence [660] empty this city of its men nor strife stain the soil of the land with the blood of slain inhabitants. But may the flower of its youth be unplucked, and may Ares, [665] the partner of Aphrodite's bed, he who makes havoc of men, not shear off their bloom. And may the altars, where the elders gather, blaze in honor of venerable men.

¹ Overshadowed by the suppliant branches, which, though now laid on the altar (l. 507) , are still in imagination held before the faces of the maidens.

[670] Thus may their state be regulated well, if they hold in awe mighty Zeus, and, most of all, Zeus the warden of the guest, who by venerable enactment guides destiny straight. [675] We pray that other guardians be always renewed, and that Artemis-Hecate¹ watch over the childbirth of their women.

¹ Artemis and Hecate were identified in Attic cult as early as the fifth century B.C. Cp. *Corp. Inscr. Att.* 1.208. The epithet **ἐκάτη** “far-darter,” “archer” was, it seems, not applied as a common adjective to Artemis.

And let no murderous havoc come upon [680] the realm to ravage it, by arming Ares—foe to the dance and lute, parent of tears—and the shout of civil strife. [685] And may the joyless swarm of diseases settle far from the heads of the inhabitants,

εὐμενῆς δ' ὁ Λύκειος ἔ-
 στω πάσα νεολαία.
 καρποτελῇ δέ τοι
 Ζεὺς ἐπικραινέτω
690 φέρματι γᾶν πανώρῳ.
 πρόνομα δὲ βότ' ἀγροῖς
 πολύγονα τελέθου·
 τὸ πᾶν τ' ἐκ δαιμόνων λάχοιεν.
 εὖφραμον δ' ἐπὶ βωμοῖς
695 μοῦσαν θείατ' αἰδοί.
 ἄγνων τ' ἐκ στομάτων φερέ-
 σθω φάμα φιλοφόρμιγξ.
 φυλάσσοι τ' ἀτρεμαῖα τιμᾶς
 τὸ δάμιον, τὸ πτόλιν κρατύνει,
700 προμαθὶς εὐκοινόμενις ἀρχά.
 ξένοισι τ' εὐξυμβόλους,
 πρὶν ἐξοπλίζειν Ἄρη,
 δίκας ἄτερ πημάτων διδοῖεν.
 θεοὺς δ' οἱ γᾶν ἔχουσιν ἀεὶ,
705 τίοιεν ἐγχωρίοις πατρώαις
 δαφνηφόροις βουθύτοις τιμαῖς.
 τὸ γὰρ τεκόντων σέβας
 τρίτον τόδ' ἐν θεσμίῳις
 Δίκας γέγραπται μεγιστοτίμου.

and to all the young people may Lyceus¹ be graciously disposed.

¹ The epithet Lyceus, often applied to Apollo, was commonly connected with the belief that he was the destroyer and protector of wolves (λύκοι). As a destructive power he is invoked to ward off enemies (Aesch. Seven 145); as an averter of evil he protects herds, flocks, and the young. According to Pausanias (Paus. 2.19.3) Danaus established a sanctuary in honor of Lyceus at Argos, where, in later times, the most famous of all Apollo's temples was consecrated to him under the title of "Wolf-god."

May Zeus cause the earth to bring forth its tribute of fruit [690] by the produce of every season; may their grazing cattle in the fields have abundant increase, and may they obtain all things from the heavenly powers. [695] May minstrels sing hymns of praise at the altars; and from pure lips let there proceed the phorminx-loving chant. May the people who control the state guard its privileges free from fear — [700] a prudent government counselling wisely for the public prosperity. And should they have recourse to arms may they inflict no loss, but grant just rights of covenant to the stranger within their gates.

And may they worship forever the gods who possess the land [705] with native honors of laurel bough held aloft, and oxen slain, even as their fathers did before their time. Since reverence for parents stands written third among the statutes of Justice, to whom honor supreme is due.

Δαναός

710 εὐχὰς μὲν αἰνῶ τάσδε σώφρονας, φίλοι.

ὕμεῖς δὲ μὴ τρέσητ' ἀκούσασαι πατρὸς
ἀπροσδοκίτους τούσδε καὶ νέους λόγους.

ἵκεταδόκου γὰρ τῆσδ' ἀπὸ σκοπῆς ὁρῶ
τὸ πλοῖον. εὖσημον γὰρ οὐ με λανθάνει.

715 στολμοὶ τε λαίφους καὶ παραρρύσεις νεῶς,

καὶ πρῶρα πρόσθεν ὄμμασιν βλέπουσ' ὁδόν,
οἴακος εὐθυντήρος ὑστάτου νεῶς

ἄγαν καλῶς κλύουσα, τοῖσιν οὐ φίλη.

πρέπουσι δ' ἄνδρες νάιοι μελαγχίμοις

720 γυίοισι λευκῶν ἐκ πεπλωμάτων ἰδεῖν,

καὶ τᾶλλα πλοῖα πᾶσά θ' ἡ' πικουρία

εὐπρεπτος· αὐτὴ δ' ἡγεμὼν ὑπὸ χθόνα

στείλασα λαῖφος παγκρότως ἐρέσσεται.

ἀλλ' ἡσύχως χρή καὶ σεσωφρονισμένως

725 πρὸς πρᾶγμ' ὀρώσας τῶνδε μὴ ἀμελεῖν θεῶν.

ἐγὼ δ' ἄρωγους ξυνδίκους θ' ἥξω λαβών.

ἴσως γὰρ ἂν κῆρυξ τις ἢ πρέσβη μόλοι,

ἄγειν θέλοντες ῥυσίων ἐφάπτορες.

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἔσται τῶνδε· μὴ τρέσητέ νιν.

730 ὅμως <δ'> ἄμεινον, εἰ βραδύνοιμεν βοῇ,

ἀλκῆς λαθέσθαι τῆσδε μηδαμῶς ποτε.

θάρσει· χρόνῳ τοι κυρίῳ τ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ

θεοὺς ἀτίζων τις βροτῶν δώσει δίκην.

Danaus

[710] I commend these sensible prayers, dear children; but do not be troubled yourselves when you hear the unexpected and startling tidings your father has to tell. From my post of look-out here on the sanctuary of suppliants I see that ship; for it is well-marked and does not escape me: [715] the trimming of its sail, its side-guards, and the prow that with its eyes scans its onward course, obeying—all too well for those to whom it is unfriendly—the guiding rudder at the stern. The men on board are plainly seen, their black [720] limbs showing from their white attire. The rest of the ships and all the assisting fleet stand clear in view: but the leading ship herself has furled her sail and draws near the shore with full sweep of sounding oars. Yet [725] you must face the matter calmly and with self-control, and not be unmindful of these gods. For my part, I will secure allies and advocates to urge our cause, and return. Perhaps some herald or envoys may come, eager to seize you as a prize and drag you away, but nothing will happen· do not fear them. [730] Yet in the event that we should be slow in bringing aid, it would be better not to forget for a moment the means of help you have here at hand. Courage! In good time, assuredly, and on the day ordained, he who dishonors the gods will suffer punishment.

Χορός

πάτερ, φοβοῦμαι, νῆες ὥς ὠκύπτεροι
735 ἤκουσι· μῆκος δ' οὐδέν ἐν μέσῳ χρόνου.
 περίφοβόν μ' ἔχει τάρβος ἐτητύμως
 πολυδρόμου φυγᾶς ὄφελος εἴ τί μοι.
 παροίχομαι, πάτερ, δείματι.

Δαναός

ἐπεὶ τελεία ψῆφος Ἀργείων, τέκνα,
740 θάρσει, μαχοῦνται περὶ σέθεν, σάφ' οἶδ' ἐγώ.

[Χορός]

ἐξῶλές ἐστι μάργον Αἰγύπτου γένος
 μάχης τ' ἄπληστον· καὶ λέγω πρὸς εἰδότα.
 δοριπαγεῖς δ' ἔχοντες κυανώπιδας
 νῆας ἔπλευσαν ὧδ' ἐπιτυχεῖ κότῳ
745 πολεῖ μελαγχίμῳ σὺν στρατῷ.

Δαναός

πολλοὺς δέ γ' εὐρήσουσιν ἐν μεσημβρίας
 θάλλει βραχίον' εὖ κατερρινημένους.

[Χορός]

μόνην δὲ μὴ πρόλειπε· λίσσομαι, πάτερ.
 γυνὴ μονωθεῖσ' οὐδέν· οὐκ ἔνεστ' Ἄρης.
750 οὐλόφρονες δὲ καὶ δολιομήτιδες
 δυσάγνοις φρεσίν, κόρακες ὥστε, βω-
 μῶν ἀλέγοντες οὐδέν.

Chorus

Father, I am afraid. With what swift wings the ships [735]
 approach! There is not much time left.

I am possessed by dreadful fear if truly my long flight has been
 of no profit. Father, I am consumed with fright.

Danaus

Since the vote of the Argives was final, [740] be of good cheer,
 my children; they will fight in your defence, I know this well.

[Chorus]

Abominable is the lustful race of Aegyptus and insatiate of
 battle; and you know that all too well.

In ships, stout-timbered and dark-prowed, they have sailed
 here, [745] attended by a mighty black host, and in their wrath
 overtaken us.

Danaus

But they will find here a force with arms well-seasoned by the
 noonday heat.

[Chorus]

Do not leave me forlorn, I implore you, father. A woman
 abandoned to herself is nothing. There is no Ares in her.

[750] They are of evil mind, and guileful of purpose, with
 impure hearts, thinking no more of altars than carrion birds.

Δαναός

καλῶς ἂν ἡμῖν συμφέροι ταῦτ' ὧ τέκνα,
εἰ σοί τε καὶ θεοῖσιν ἐχθαιορίατο.

[Χορός]

755 οὐ μὴ τριαίνας τάσδε καὶ θεῶν σέβῃ
δείσαντες ἡμῶν χεῖρ' ἀπόσχονται, πάτερ.
περίφρονες δ' ἄγαν ἀνιέρω μένει
μεμαργωμένοι κυνοθρασεῖς, θεῶν
οὐδὲν ἐπαῖοντες.

Δαναός

760 ἀλλ' ἔστι φήμη τοὺς λύκους κρείσσους κυνῶν
εἶναι· βύβλου δὲ καρπὸς οὐ κρατεῖ στάχυν.

[Χορός]

ὥς καὶ ματαίων ἀνοσίων τε κνωδάλων
ἔχοντας ὀργάς, χρὴ φυλάσσεσθαι τάχος.

Δαναός

οὗτοι ταχεῖα ναυτικοῦ στρατοῦ στολή,
765 οὐδ' ὄρμος, οὐ δεῖ πεισμάτων σωτήρια
ἐς γῆν ἐνεγκεῖν, οὐδ' ἐν ἀγκυρουχίαις
θαρσοῦσι ναῶν ποιμένες παραυτίκα,
ἄλλως τε καὶ μολόντες ἀλίμενον χθόνα
ἐς νύκτ' ἀποστείχοντος ἡλίου. φιλεῖ
770 ὠδῖνα τίκτειν νύξ κυβερνήτη σοφῷ.
οὕτω γένοιτ' ἂν οὐδ' ἂν ἐκβασίς στρατοῦ
καλή, πρὶν ὄρμῳ ναῦν θρασυνθῆναι. σὺ δὲ

Danaus

This would profit us well, my children, should they incur both
Heaven's hate and yours.

[Chorus]

[755] Father, no fear of tridents or of things held sacred in the
sight of Heaven will ever keep their hands from us.
They are overweening, maddened, with unholy rage, shameless
dogs that do not respect the gods.

Danaus

[760] Yet there is a saying that wolves are stronger than dogs;
the papyrus-fruit does not conquer the wheat-ear.¹

[Chorus]

Since they have the tempers of lewd and impious beasts, we
must guard against them quickly.

Danaus

A fleet in getting under way is not so speedy, [765] nor yet in
anchoring, when the securing cables must be brought ashore;
and even at anchorage shepherds of ships do not feel
immediately secure, above all if they have arrived on a
harborless coast when the sun is sinking into night. [770] In a
cautious pilot night is likely to beget anxiety. Then, too, the
disembarking of an army cannot be effected with success before
a ship has gained confidence in her moorings. But, for all your
terror, remember not to neglect the gods. [I will return] when I

φρόνει μὲν ὡς ταρβοῦσα μὴ ἀμελεῖν θεῶν·

*

πράξας ἀρωγήν· ἄγγελον δ' οὐ μέμψεται
775 πόλις γέρονθ', ἥβῶντα δ' εὐγλώσσῳ φρενί.

Χορός

ἰὼ γὰρ βοῦνι, πάνδικον σέβας,
τί πεισόμεσθα; ποῖ φύγωμεν Ἀπίας
χθονός, κελαινὸν εἴ τι κεῦθός ἐστί που;
μέλας γενοίμαν καπνὸς
780 νέφεσσι γειτονῶν Διός·
τὸ πᾶν δ' ἄφαντος
ἀμπετὴς αἰδνὸς ὡς
κόνις ἄτερθε πτερύγων ὀλοίμαν.
ἄφυκτον δ' οὐκέτ' ἂν πέλοι κακόν·
785 κελαινόχρως δὲ πάλλεταιί μου καρδία.
πατρὸς σκοπαὶ δέ μ' εἶλον· οἴχομαι φόβῳ.
θέλοιμι δ' ἂν μορσίμου
βρόχου τυχεῖν ἐν ἀρτάναις,
πρὶν ἄνδρ' ἀπευκτὸν
790 τῷδε χριμφθῆναι χροῖ.
πρόπαρ θανούσας <δ'> Αἴδας ἀνάσσοι.

have secured aid. The city will find no fault with a messenger,
[775] old in years, but with youth in his heart and on his tongue.

Exit

1 Distinctive foods mark national differences—the Egyptians are no match for the Argives. Theophrastus, in his *History of Plants* 4.8, reports that the inhabitants of Egypt chew papyrus, raw, boiled, or roasted.

Chorus

O land of hills, land of our righteous veneration, what is to be our lot? To what region in the Apian land are we to flee, if anywhere there be some dark hiding-place? Ah that I might become black smoke [780] that draws near to the clouds of Zeus; or, soaring aloft without wings, vanish out of sight like viewless dust and dissolve into nothingness! The evil is no longer escapable;

[785] my heart is darkened and trembling; the look-out my father held has brought me ruin. I am undone with terror. Rather would I meet my doom in a noose [790] than suffer the embraces of a man I loathe.

Death before that, with Hades for my lord and master!

πόθεν δέ μοι γένοιτ' ἂν αἰθέρος θρόνος,
πρὸς ὃν νέφη μυδηλὰ γίγνεται χιών,
ἢ λισσὰς αἰγίλιψ ἀπρόσ-

795 δεικτος οἰόφρων κρεμάς

γυπιάς πέτρα, βαθὺ
πτῶμα μαρτυροῦσά μοι,
πρὶν δαΐκτορος βία
καρδίας γάμου κυρῆσαι;

800 κυσὶν δ' ἔπειθ' ἔλωρα κάπιχωρίοις
ὄρνισι δεῖπνον οὐκ ἀναίνομαι πέλειν·

τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν ἐλευθεροῦ-
ται φιλαιάκτων κακῶν. [ἐλθέτω]

ἐλθέτω μόρος, πρὸ κοί-

805 τας γαμηλίου τυχῶν.

ἀμφυγᾶς τίν' ἔτι πόρον
τέμνω γάμου λυτῆρα;
ἴυξε δ' ὁμφὰν οὐρανίαν
<μέλεα> μέλη λιτανὰ θεοῖς·

810 τέλεα δέ πως πελόμενά μοι
λύσιμά τ' ἄχιμά τ' ἔπιδε, πάτερ,
βίαια μὴ φαιδρῶς ὀρῶν
ὄμμασιν ἐνδίκους.

815 σεβίζου δ' ἱκέτας σέθεν,
γαιάοχε παγκρατὲς Ζεῦ.
γένος γὰρ Αἰγύπτειον ὕβριν

Ah that somewhere in the upper air I might find a seat against
which the dank clouds turn into snow, or some bare,
inaccessible crag, [795] beyond sight, brooding in solitude,
beetling, vulture-haunted, to bear witness to my plunge into the
depths before I am ever forced into a marriage that would pierce
my heart!

[800] Thereafter I refuse not to become a booty for dogs and a
banquet for the local birds; for death is freedom from misery-
loving evils. Come death, death be my doom, [805] before the
marriage-bed!

How can I yet find some means of escape to deliver me from
marriage? Shriek aloud, with a cry that reaches heaven, strains
of supplication to the gods;

[810] O father, give heed that they are somehow accomplished
to my safety and tranquility. Behold deeds of violence with no
kind glance in your just eyes!

[815] Have respect for your suppliants, O Zeus, omnipotent
upholder of the land! For the males of the race of Aegyptus,

δύσφορον ἀρσενογενές
 μετά με δρόμοισι διόμενοι
820 φυγάδα μάταισι πολυθρόοις
 βίαια δίζηνται λαβεῖν.
 σὸν δ' ἐπίπαν ζυγὸν
 ταλάντου. τί δ' ἄνευ σέθεν
 θνατοῖσι τέλειόν ἐστιν;
825 ὁ ὁ ὁ, ἄ ἄ ἄ:
 ὅδε μάρπτis νάιος γάιος.
 τῶν πρό, μάρπτi, κάμνοις·
 τίόφ .. ὅμ .. αὖθι κάκκας νυ
 δυῖαν βοᾶν ἀμφαίνω.†
830 ὀρῶ τάδε φροίμια †πράξαν πόνων
 βιαίων ἐμῶν. ἡὲ ἡέ.
 βαῖνε φυγᾶ πρὸς ἀλκάν·
 †βλοσυρόφρονα χλιδᾶ
 δύσφορα ναῖ κᾶν γᾶ.
835 γαῖάναξ προτάσσου.†

<Κηρῦξ>

σοῦσθε σοῦσθ' ἐπὶ βᾶ-
 ριν ὅπως ποδῶν <ἔχετε>
 †οὔκοῦν οὔκοῦν†
 τιλμοὶ τιλμοὶ καὶ στιγμοί,
840 πολυαίμων φόνιος

intolerable in their wantonness, chase after me, [820] a fugitive,
 with clamorous lewdness and seek to lay hold of me with
 violence.

But yours alone is the beam of the balance, and without you
 what is accomplished for mortals?

The herald of the Egyptians is seen at a distance, with armed followers.

[825] Ho! Ha! Here on the land is the pirate from the ship! Before
 that, pirate, may you perish . . . [830] I see in this the prelude of
 suffering wrought by violence. Oh! Oh! Fly for protection!
 Savagery beyond bearing by its insolence on sea and land alike.
 [835] Lord of the land, protect us!

[Herald]

Away with you, away to the ship, as fast as your feet can carry
 you! If you won't, your hair shall be torn out; you'll be pricked
 with goads, and off will come your heads [840] with abundant
 letting of gory blood.

ἀποκοπὰ κρατός.
σουῖσθε σουῖσθ' ἢ ὀλύμεναι ὀλόμεν' ἐπαμίδα.

<Χορός>

εἴθ' ἀνὰ πολύρυτον
ἀλμήεντα πόρον
845 δεσποσίῳ ξὺν ὕβρει,
γομποδέτω τε δόρει διώλου.
ταῖμονες ὥς ἐπάμιδα
ησυδουπιάπιτα†

<Κηρῦξ>

†κελεύω βοᾶν μεθέσθαι
850 ἵχαρ φρενί τ' ἄταν.†
ιοῦ ιοῦ.
λεῖφ' ἔδρανα, κί' ἐς δόρυ.
ἀτίετον ἄπολιν οὐ σέβω.

Χορός>

μήποτε πάλιν ἴδοιμ'
855 ἀλφρεσίβοιον ὕδωρ,
ἔνθεν ἀεξόμενον
ζώφυτον αἶμα βροτοῖσι θάλλει.
ἔγγαιος ἐγὼ βαθυχαῖος
860 †βαθρείας βαθρείας, γέρον.†

Κηρῦξ>

σὺ δ' ἐν ναῖ ναῖ βάση
τάχα θέλεος ἀθέλεος,

Away with you, away — and curses on you! — to the ships.

[Chorus]

Would that you had perished on your course over the great
briny flood [845] along with your lordly arrogance and your
riveted ship! ...

[Herald]

I order you to stop your shrieking. [850] ... Ho there! leave the
sanctuary: be off to the ship! I do not respect one without honor
and city.

[Chorus]

Never again may my eyes behold [855] the cattle-nurturing
stream from which increase comes to men and vigor of the
blood of life. I am a native here, of ancient nobility [860] . . . old
man.

[Herald]

You will get yourself speedily on board, on board, I say,
whether you will or not, by force, by force. . . . [865]

βία βία τε πολλᾶ φροῦδα.
†βάται βαθυμιτροκακὰ παθῶν†
865 [ὀλόμεναι παλάμαις].

Χορός>

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ.
αἶ γὰρ δυσπαλάμως ὅλοιο
δι' ἀλίρρυτον ἄλσος,
κατὰ Σαρπηδόνιον
870 χῶμα πολύψαμμον ἀλαθείς
Εὐρεΐαισιν αὔραις.

Κῆρυξ

ἴυζε καὶ λάκαζε καὶ κάλει θεούς.
Αἰγυπτίαν γὰρ βᾶριν οὐχ ὑπερθορῇ.
[ἴυζε καὶ]
875 βόα, χέον πικρότερον οἰζύος νόμον.

Χορός>

οἰοῖ οἰοῖ,
λύμας, ἃ σὺ πρὸ γᾶς ὑλάσκων
περί, χάμψα, βρυάζεις·
ὃς ἐπωπᾶ σ', ὁ μέγας
880 Νεῖλος, ὑβρίζοντά σ' ἀποτρέ-
ψειεν ἄιστον ὕβριν.

Κηρῦξ

βαίνειν κελεύω βᾶριν εἰς ἀμφίστροφον
ὅσον τάχιστα· μηδέ τις σχολαζέτω.

[Chorus]

Alas, alas! So may you perish past all help, driven from your course over the surging waves by eastern breezes off [870] the sandy tomb of Sarpedon!

Herald

Wail and shout and call upon the gods—you will not escape the Egyptian ship. [875] Cry out, utter a strain of woe more bitter still.

[Chorus]

Alas, alas the brutal outrage with which, you crocodile, you boast arrogantly, bellowing on the sea. May the mighty [880] Nile, who watches you, overwhelm your arrogance and destroy you.

Herald

Go to the double-prowed ship as quickly as possible. Let no one delay, for dragging by force has no mercy on locks of hair.

όλκη γὰρ οὔτοι πλόκαμον οὐδάμ' ἄζεται.

Χορός

885 οἰοῖ, πάτερ, βρέτεος ἄρος

ἀτᾶ μ'· ἄλαδ' ἄγει

ἄραχνος ὡς βάδην.

ὄναρ ὄναρ μέλαν,

ὀτοτοτοτοῖ,

890 μᾶ Γᾶ μᾶ Γᾶ, βοᾶν

φοβερόν ἀπότρεπε,

ὦ πᾶ, Γᾶς παῖ, Ζεῦ.

Κηρῦξ

οὔτοι φοβοῦμαι δαίμονας τοὺς ἐνθάδε·

οὐ γάρ μ' ἔθρεψαν, οὐδ' ἐγήρασαν τροφῇ.

Χορός

895 μαιμᾶ πέλας δίπους ὄφεις·

*

ἔχιδνα δ' ὥς μέ τις

πόδα δακοῦσ' ἔχει.

ὀτοτοτοτοῖ,

μᾶ Γᾶ μᾶ Γᾶ βοᾶν

900 φοβερόν ἀπότρεπε,

ὦ πᾶ, Γᾶς παῖ, Ζεῦ.

Κηρῦξ

εἰ μή τις ἐς ναῦν εἴσιν αἰνέσας τάδε,

λακίς χιτῶνος ἔργον οὐ κατοικτιεῖ.

Chorus

[885] Alas, father; the help of the sacred images deludes me.

Like a spider, he is carrying me seaward step by step — a

nightmare, a black nightmare! Oh! Oh! [890] Mother Earth,

mother Earth, avert his fearful cries! O father Zeus, son of Earth!

Herald

I do not fear the native gods, be assured. They did not rear me,

nor by their nurture did they bring me to old age.

Chorus

[895] He rages close to me, the two-footed serpent. Like some

viper he lays hold of me and bites my foot. Alas, alas! Mother

Earth, mother Earth, [900] avert his fearful cries! O father Zeus,

son of Earth!

Herald

If you will not resign yourself and get to the ship, rending will

Χορός

διωλόμεσθ' ἄσεπτ', ἄναξ, πάσχομεν—

Κηρῦξ

905 πολλοὺς ἄνακτας, παῖδας Αἰγύπτου τάχα
ὄψεσθε· θαρσεῖτ', οὐκ ἐρεῖτ' ἀναρχίαν.

<Χορός>

ὦ πόλεως ἀγοὶ πρόμοι, δάμναμαι.

<Κήρυχ>

ἔλξιν ἔοιχ' ὑμᾶς ἀποσπάσας κόμης,

910 ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἀκούετ' ὅξυ τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων.

Βασιλεύς

οὗτος, τί ποιεῖς; ἐκ ποίου φρονήματος
ἀνδρῶν Πελασγῶν τήνδ' ἀτιμάζεις χθόνα;
ἀλλ' ἢ γυναικῶν ἐς πόλιν δοκεῖς μολεῖν;
κάρβανος ὦν δ' Ἑλλησιν ἐγχλῖεις ἄγαν.
915 καὶ πόλλ' ἀμαρτῶν οὐδὲν ὠρθώσας φρενί.

Κηρῦξ

τί δ' ἡμπλάκηται τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ δίκης ἄτερ;

have no pity on the fabric of your garments.

Chorus

We are lost! O King, we are suffering impious violence!

Herald

[905] Oh, you will soon see many kings in Aegyptus' sons. Be of good cheer: you will not have to blame lack of government.

[Chorus]

Listen! Chiefs and rulers of the city, I am threatened with violence!

[Herald]

I think I will have to seize you by the hair and drag you off [910] since you are slow to heed my orders.

Enter the King with retainers

King

You there! What are you doing? What kind of arrogance has incited you to do such dishonor to this realm of Pelasgian men? Indeed, do you think you have come to a land of women? For a barbarian dealing with Hellenes, you act insolently. [915] Many are the misses of your wits, and your hits are none.

Herald

And in this case where have I gone wrong and transgressed my right?

Βασιλεύς

ξένος μὲν εἶναι πρῶτον οὐκ ἐπίστασαι.

Κηρῦξ

πῶς δ' οὐχί; τᾶμ' ὀλωλόθ' εὐρίσκων ἄγω.

Βασιλεύς

ποίοισιν εἰπὼν προξένοις ἐγχωρίοις;

Κηρῦξ

920 Ἑρμῇ μεγίστῳ προξένῳ μαστηρίῳ.

Βασιλεύς

θεοῖσιν εἰπὼν τοὺς θεοὺς οὐδὲν σέβῃ.

Κηρῦξ

τοὺς ἀμφὶ Νεῖλον δαίμονας σεβίζομαι.

Βασιλεύς

οἱ δ' ἐνθάδ' οὐδέν, ὥς ἐγὼ σέθεν κλύω;

Κηρῦξ

ἄγοιμ' ἄν, εἴ τις τάσδε μὴ 'ξαιρήσεται.

Βασιλεύς

925 κλάοις ἄν, εἰ ψάυσειας, οὐ μάλ' ἐς μακρὰν.

Κηρῦξ

ἤκουσα τοῦπος <δ'> οὐδαμῶς φιλόξενον.

Βασιλεύς

οὐ γὰρ ξενοῦμαι τοὺς θεῶν συλήτορας.

King

First of all, you do not know how to act as a stranger.

Herald

I not know? How so, when I simply find and take my own that I had lost?

King

To what patrons of your land was your notice given?

Herald

[920] To Hermes, the Searcher, greatest of patrons.

King

For all your notice to the gods, you do them no reverence.

Herald

I revere the deities by the Nile.

King

While ours are nothing, as I understand you?

Herald

I shall carry off these maids unless someone tears them away.

King

[925] If you so much as touch them, you will regret it, and right soon.

Herald

I hear you; and your speech is far from hospitable.

King

No, since I have no hospitality for despoilers of the gods.

Κηρῦξ

λέγοιμ' ἂν ἐλθὼν παισὶν Αἰγύπτου τάδε.

Βασιλεύς

ἄβουκόλητον τοῦτ' ἐμῷ φρονήματι.

Κηρῦξ

930 ἀλλ' ὥς ἂν εἰδῶς ἐννέπω σαφέστερον, —

καὶ γὰρ πρέπει κήρυκ' ἀπαγγέλλειν τορῶς

ἕκαστα, — πῶς φῶ, πρὸς τίνος τ' ἀφαιρεθεὶς

ἦκειν γυναικῶν αὐτανέψιον στόλον;

οὔτοι δικάζει ταῦτα μαρτύρων ὕπο

935 Ἄρης· τὸ νεῖκος δ' οὐκ ἐν ἀργύρου λαβῇ

ἔλυσεν· ἀλλὰ πολλὰ γίγνεται πάρος

πεσήματ' ἀνδρῶν κάπολακτισμοὶ βίου.

<Βασιλεύς>

τί σοι λέγειν χρὴ τοῦνομ'; ἐν χρόνῳ μαθὼν

εἴσῃ σύ τ' αὐτὸς χοῖ ξυνέμποροι σέθεν.

940 ταύτας δ' ἐκούσας μὲν κατ' εὖνοιαν φρενῶν

ἄγοις ἂν, εἶπερ εὐσεβῆς πίθοι λόγος.

τοία δὲ δημόπρακτος ἐκ πόλεως μία

ψῆφος κέκρανται, μήποτ' ἐκδοῦναι βία

στόλον γυναικῶν· τῶνδ' ἐφήλωται τορῶς

945 γόμφος διαμπάξ, ὥς μένειν ἀραρότως.

ταῦτ' οὐ πίναξιν ἐστὶν ἐγγεγραμμένα

οὐδ' ἐν πτυχαῖς βίβλων κατεσφραγισμένα,

σαφῇ δ' ἀκούεις ἐξ ἐλευθεροστόμου

Herald

I will go and tell Aegyptus' sons about this.

King

My proud spirit will not ponder on this threat.

Herald

[930] But that I may know and tell a plainer tale — for it is fitting

that a herald make exact report on each detail — what message

am I to deliver? Who is it, am I to tell on my return, that has

despoiled me of this band of women, their own cousins? It is

not, I suppose, by voice of witnesses that the god of battle

judges cases like this; [935] nor is it by the gift of silver that he

settles dispute; no! If that be the case, many a one shall fall and

shuffle off his life.

[King]

My name? Why should I tell you? In due course of time you will

learn it, you and your companions. [940] As for these maids, if,

convinced by god-fearing argument, they consent of their own

free will and heartily, you may take them. But to this purpose a

decree has been passed by the unanimous resolve of the people

of the State, never, under compulsion, to surrender this

association of women. Through their resolve [945] the rivet has

been driven home, to remain fixed and fast. Not on tablets is this

inscribed, nor has it been sealed in folds of books: you hear the

truth from free-spoken lips. Now get out of my sight

immediately!

γλώσσης. κομίζου δ' ὥς τάχιστ' ἐξ ὀμμάτων.

<Κηρῦξ>

950 ἔοιγμεν ἤδη πόλεμον ἀρεῖσθαι νέον.

εἷη δὲ νίκη καὶ κράτη τοῖς ἄρσεσιν.

<Βασιλεύς>

ἀλλ' ἄρσενάς τοι τῆσδε γῆς οἰκήτορας

εὐρήσετ' οὐ πίνοντας ἐκ κριθῶν μέθυ.

ὕμεῖς δὲ πᾶσαι σὺν φίλαις ὀπάοσι

955 θράσος λαβοῦσαι στείχετ' εὐερκῇ πόλιν,

πύργων βαθείᾳ μηχανῇ κεκλημένην.

καὶ δώματ' ἐστὶ πολλὰ μὲν τὰ δῆμια,

δεδωμάτωμαι δ' οὐδ' ἐγὼ σμικρᾷ χειρί.

ἔνθ' ὑμῖν ἐστὶν εὐτύκους ναίειν δόμους

960 πολλῶν μετ' ἄλλων· εἰ δέ τις μεῖζων χάρις,

πάρεστιν οἰκεῖν καὶ μονορρύθμους δόμους.

τούτων τὰ λῶστα καὶ τὰ θυμηδέστατα

πάρεστι, λωτίσασθε. προστάτης δ' ἐγὼ

ἄστοί τε πάντες, ὧνπερ ἦδε κραίνεται

965 ψῆφος. τί τῶνδε κυριωτέρους μένεις;

Χορός

ἀλλ' ἀντ' ἀγαθῶν ἀγαθοῖσι βρύοις,

δῖε Πελασγῶν.

πέμψον δὲ πρόφρων δεῦρ' ἡμέτερον

πατέρ' εὐθαρσῇ Δαναόν, πρόνοον

970 καὶ βούλαρχον. τοῦ γὰρ προτέρα

[Herald]

[950] I think we are about to involve ourselves in a new war. But may victory and authority rest with the men!

[King]

It is men, I believe, you will find in the dwellers of this land; and they are no drinkers of diluted wine.

Exit Herald.

But [955] take courage, all of you, and together with your handmaidens, proceed to our well-fenced town, encircled by sturdy devices of towers. As for places inside to lodge, there are plenty of the public sort. For on no modest scale do I myself live, where, [960] in company with many others, you may occupy abodes suitably prepared; or, if it is more pleasing to you, it is free for you also to make your home in dwellings of separate sort. Of these select what is best and most to your desires. A protector you have in me and in all the inhabitants, whose resolve this is that now takes effect. [965] Why wait for others of higher authority?

Chorus

In blessings may you abound, noble Pelasgian, in requital for your blessings! But, if it pleases you, send our brave father Danaus here to be our adviser [970] and leader of our counsels. For it befits him, rather than ourselves, to advise us where we

μητις, ὅπου χρη δώματα ναίειν
καὶ τόπος εὐφρων. πᾶς τις ἐπειπεῖν
ψόγον ἄλλοθρόοις
εὐτυχος· εἴη δὲ τὰ λῶστα.

975 σύν τ' εὐκλεία καὶ ἀμηνίτῳ
βάξει λαῶν ἐγχώρων

*

τάσσεσθε, φίλαι δμῳίδες, οὕτως
ὥς ἐφ' ἐκάστη διεκλήρωσεν
Δαναὸς θεραποντίδα φερνήν.

Δαναός

980 ὦ παῖδες, Ἀργείοισιν εὐχεσθαι χρεών,
θύειν τε λείβειν θ', ὥς θεοῖς, Ὀλυμπίοις,
σπονδάς, ἐπεὶ σωτῆρες οὐ διχορρόπως.
καί μου τὰ μὲν πραχθέντα πρὸς τοὺς ἐγγενεῖς
φίλους πικρῶς ἤκουσαν αὐτανεψίοις·

985 ἐμοὶ δ' ὀπαδοὺς τούσδε καὶ δορυσσοὺς
ἔταξαν, ὥς ἔχοιμι τίμιον γέρας,
καὶ μὴ 'ξ ἀέλπτων δορικανεῖ μόρῳ θανῶν
λάθοιμι, χώρᾳ δ' ἄχθος ἀείζων πέλοι.

τοιῶνδε τυγχάνοντας ἐκ πρυμνῆς φρενὸς

990 χάριν σέβεσθαι τιμιωτέραν χρεών.
καὶ ταῦθ' ἅμ' ἐγγράψασθε πρὸς γεγραμμένοις
πολλοῖσιν ἄλλοις σωφρονίσμασιν πατρός,

should establish our home and what neighborhood is friendly.
All the world is ready to cast reproach on those who speak a
foreign tongue. But may all be for the best!

Exit the King.

[975] And you, dear handmaidens, preserving your fair fame
and provoking no angry utterances on the part of the native
folk, take up your stations even as Danaus has allotted her duty
of attendance unto each.

Enter Danaus with a bodyguard

Danaus

[980] My children, it is right to offer prayers to the Argives and
to sacrifice and pour libations to them as to Olympian gods; for
they are our saviors in no doubtful manner. They heard from
my lips the conduct of your cousins toward their own kinfolk,
and were moved to bitterness against them; [985] but to me they
assigned this escort of spearmen, that I might have rank and
honor, and might not be ambushed and perish by the death of
the spear, and so an ever-living burden come upon the land.

Recipients of such favors as these, [990] it becomes us to hold
gratitude in yet higher honor from the bottom of our hearts.
And in addition to the many other wise injunctions of your
father recorded in your memory, inscribe this too—that an

ἀγνῶθ' ὄμιλον ἐξελέγχεσθαι χρόνῳ.
 πᾶς δ' ἐν μετοίκῳ γλῶσσαν εὐτυκον φέρει
995 κακὴν, τό τ' εἰπεῖν εὐπετέες μύσαγμα πάως.
 ὑμᾶς δ' ἐπαινῶ μὴ καταισχύνειν ἐμέ,
 ὥραν ἐχούσας τήνδ' ἐπίστρεπτον βροτοῖς.
 τέρειν' ὁπώρα δ' εὐφύλακτος οὐδαμῶς·
 θῆρες δὲ κηραίνουσι καὶ βροτοί, τί μὴν;
1000 καὶ κνώδαλα πτεροῦντα καὶ πεδοστιβῆ.
 †καρπώματα στάζοντα κηρύσσει Κύπρις
 καλωρα κωλύουσιν θωσμένειν ἐρῶ,†
 καὶ παρθένων χλιδαῖσιν εὐμόρφοις ἔπι
 πᾶς τις παρελθὼν ὄμματος θελκτήριον
1005 τόξευμ' ἔπεμψεν, ἡμέρου νικώμενος.
 πρὸς ταῦτα μὴ πάθωμεν ὧν πολὺς πόνος
 πολὺς δὲ πόντος οὔνεκ' ἡρόθη δορί,
 μὴδ' αἶσχος ἡμῖν, ἡδονὴν δ' ἐχθοῖς ἐμοῖς
 πράξωμεν. οἴκησις δὲ καὶ διπλῇ πάρα
1010 τὴν μὲν Πελασγός, τὴν δὲ καὶ πόλις διδοί,
 οἰκεῖν λάτρων ἄτερθεν· εὐπετὴ τάδε.
 μόνον φύλαξαι τάσδ' ἐπιστολὰς πατρός,
 τὸ σωφρονεῖν τιμῶσα τοῦ βίου πλέον.
Χορός
 τᾶλλ' εὐτυχοῖμεν πρὸς θεῶν Ὀλυμπίων.
1015 ἐμῆς δ' ὁπώρας οὔνεκ' εὐ θάρσει, πάτερ.
 εἰ γάρ τι μὴ θεοῖς βεβούλευται νέον,

unknown company is proved by time. For in an alien's case, all
 the world bears an evil tongue in readiness, [995] and it is easy
 lightly to utter defiling slander. Therefore I would have you
 bring no shame upon me, now when your youthful loveliness
 attracts men's gaze. The tender ripeness of summer fruit is in no
 way easy to protect; beasts despoil it—and men, why not?—
 [1000] and brutes that fly and those that walk the earth. Love's
 goddess spreads news abroad of fruit bursting ripe. . . . So all
 men, as they pass, [1005] mastered by desire, shoot an alluring
 arrow of the eye at the delicate beauty of virgins. See to it,
 therefore, that we do not suffer that in fear for which we have
 endured great toil and ploughed the great waters with our ship;
 and that we bring no shame to ourselves and exultation to our
 enemies. Housing of two kinds is at our disposition, [1010] the
 one Pelasgus offers, the other, the city, and to occupy free of
 cost. These terms are easy. Only pay heed to these behests of
 your father, and count your chastity more precious than your
 life.

Chorus

May the Olympian gods grant us good fortune in all the rest!
 [1015] But, concerning the bloom of my virginity, father, be of
 good cheer, for, unless some evil has been devised of Heaven, I

ἵχνος τὸ πρόσθεν οὐ διαστρέψω φρενός.

Χορός <Δαναΐδων>

ἴτε μὲν ἀστυάνακτας

μάκαρας θεοὺς γανάοντες πολιούχους

1020 τε καὶ οἱ χεῦμ' Ἐρασίνου

περιναΐουσιν παλαιόν.

ὑποδέξασθε <δ'> ὁπαδοὶ

μέλος· αἶνος δὲ πόλιν τήνδε Πελασγῶν

ἔχέτω, μηδ' ἔτι Νείλου

1025 προχοὰς σέβωμεν ὕμνοις.

ποταμοὺς δ' οἱ διὰ χώρας

θελεμὸν πῶμα χέουσιν πολύτεκνοι,

λιπαροῖς χεύμασι γαίας

τόδε μελίσσοντες οὔδας.

1030 ἐπίδοι δ' Ἀρτεμις ἀγνὰ

στόλον οἰκτιζομένα, μηδ' ὑπ' ἀνάγκας

γάμος ἔλθοι Κυθερείας·

στυγίων πέλοι τόδ' ἄθλον.

Χορός Θεραπεινῶν

Κύπριδος <δ'> οὐκ ἀμελεῖ θεσμός ὃδ' εὐφρων

1035 δύναται γὰρ Διὸς ἄγχιστα σὺν Ἥρᾳ.

τίεται δ' αἰολόμητις

θεὸς ἔργοις ἐπὶ σεμνοῖς.

μετάκοινοι δὲ φίλα ματρὶ πάρεισιν

Πόθος <ᾧ> τ' οὐδὲν ἄπαρνον

will not swerve from the former pathway of my thoughts.

Chorus [of the Danaids]

Come now away, glorifying the blessed gods, lords of the city both those who guard the town [1020] and those who dwell about Erasinus' ancient stream. And you handmaidens take up the song. Let the theme of our praise be this city of the Pelasgians, and no longer [1025] let the homage of our hymns be paid to Nile's floods where they seek the sea, But to the rivers that pour their gentle draught through the land and increase the birth of children, soothing its soil with their fertilizing streams.

[Chorus of Handmaidens]

Yet there is no disdain of Cypris in this our friendly hymn; [1035] for she, together with Hera, holds power nearest to Zeus, and for her solemn rites the goddess of varied wiles is held in honor. And in the train of their mother are Desire and she to whom nothing is denied, [1040] winning Persuasion;

1040 τελέθει θέλκτορι Πειθοῖ.
δέδοται δ' Ἀρμονία μοῖρ' Ἀφροδίτας
ψεδυρᾶ τρίβω τ' Ἑρώτων.
φυγάδεσσιν δ' ἐπιπνοίας κακά τ' ἄλγη
πολέμους θ' αἱματόεντας προφοβοῦμαι.

1045 τί ποτ' εὐπλοῖαν ἔπραξαν
ταχυπόμποισι διωγμοῖς;
ὅ τί τοι μόρσιμόν ἐστιν, τὸ γένοιτ' ἄν.
Διὸς οὐ παρβατός ἐστιν
μεγάλα φρὴν ἀπέρατος·

1050 μετὰ πολλῶν δὲ γάμων ἄδε τελευτὰ
προτέρων πέλοι γυναικῶν.

<Δαναῖς>

ὁ μέγας Ζεὺς ἀπαλέξαι
γάμον Αἰγυπτογενῇ μοι.

<Θεράπαινα>

τὸ μὲν ἄν βέλτατον εἴη·

<Δαναῖς>

1055 σὺ δὲ θέλγοις ἄν ἄθελκτον.

<Θεράπαινα>

σὺ δέ γ' οὐκ οἶσθα τὸ μέλλον.

<Δαναῖς>

τί δὲ μέλλω φρένα Δίαν
καθορᾶν, ὅψιν ἄβυσσον;

and to Harmonia has been given a share of Aphrodite, and to
the whispering touches of the Loves.

But for the fugitives I have boding fears of blasts of harm and
cruel distress and bloody wars. [1045] How did they make such
a smooth voyage when pursuit followed fast upon their track?
Whatever is fated, that will come to pass. The mighty,
untrammelled will of Zeus cannot be transgressed. [1050]
Marriage has been the destiny of many women before our time.

[A Danaid]

May mighty Zeus defend me from marriage with Aegyptus'
race!

[A Handmaiden]

That would indeed be best.

[A Danaid]

[1055] But you would move the immovable.

[A Handmaiden]

And you do not know what the future has in store.

[A Danaid]

How should I scan the mind of Zeus, a sight unfathomable?

<Θεράπεινα>

μέτριον νῦν ἔπος εὖχου·

<Δαναῖς>

1060 τίνα καιρόν με διδάσκεις;

<Θεράπεινα>

τὰ θεῶν μηδὲν ἀγάζειν.

Χορός>

Ζεὺς ἄναξ ἀποστεροί-

η γάμον δυσάνορα

δάιον, ὅσπερ Ἴω

1065 πημονᾶς ἐλύσατ' εὖ

χειρὶ παιωνία κατασχεθῶν,

εὐμενῇ βίαν κτίσας.

καὶ κράτος νέμοι γυναι-

ξίν· τὸ βέλτερον κακοῦ

1070 καὶ τὸ δίμοιρον αἰνῶ,

καὶ δίκᾳ δίκας ἔπε-

σθαι, ξὺν εὐχαῖς ἑμαῖς, λυτηρίοις

μαχαναῖς θεοῦ πάρα.

[A Handmaiden]

Let the words of your prayer be moderate.

[A Danaid]

[1060] What sense of proportion would you now teach me?

[A Handmaiden]

Do not ask too much of the gods.

[Chorus of Danaids and Handmaidens]

May sovereign Zeus spare me cruel marriage with a man I hate, that very Zeus who [1065] mercifully freed Io from pain, restoring her with healing hand by kindly force.

[Chorus of Danaids and Handmaidens]

And may he award victory to the women! [1070] I praise that which is better than evil, two parts of good mixed with one of bad; and I praise that, through god-given means of deliverance, conflicting rights, in accordance with my prayers, should follow the course of justice.

Exeunt omnes

THE END