

BACCHAE



Translated by Theodore Alois Buckley

Composed during Euripides' final years in Macedonia, at the court of Archelaus I of Macedon, this play was first performed posthumously at the Theatre of Dionysus in 405 BC as part of a tetralogy that also included *Iphigenia at Aulis* and *Alcmaeon in Corinth*. *Bacchae* was most likely first directed by Euripides' son and the drama won first prize in the City Dionysia festival competition. The play concerns the mythological story of King Pentheus of Thebes and his mother Agauë, who refuse to worship the god Dionysus and are therefore duly punished.

The Dionysus in Euripides' play is portrayed as a young god, angry that his mortal family, the royal house of Cadmus, has denied him a place of honour as a deity. As the play opens, Dionysus appears on stage to tell the audience who he is and his reasons for coming to Thebes. He explains the story of his birth and how the god Zeus had come down from Mount Olympus to lie with his mother. When she became pregnant, however, none of her family believed her story regarding her child's father. Zeus' wife, Hera, angry by his betrayal, disguised herself as an old nurse and convinced Semele to ask Zeus to appear to her in his true form. Zeus appeared to Semele as a lightning bolt and therefore killed her instantly. At the moment of her death however, Hermes saved the unborn Dionysus. To hide the baby from Hera, Zeus had the fetus sewn into his thigh until the child was ready to be born. However, Semele's family — her sisters Agave, Autonoe, and Ino, and her father, Cadmus — still doubted her story regarding the identity of the baby's father. Dionysus now explains that he has come to Thebes to vindicate his mother and establish his cult, though at first he meets grave resistance from the disbelieving King Pentheus.



'Pentheus torn apart by Ino and Agave', lekanis lid, c. 450-450 BC



Another contemporary depiction of Pentheus' death

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THE ARGUMENT.

Bacchus, the son of Jove by Semele, had made Thebes, his mother's birth-place, his favorite place of abode and worship. Pentheus, the then reigning king, who, as others say, preferred the worship of Minerva, slighted the new God, and persecuted those who celebrated his revels. Upon this, Bacchus excited his mother Agave, together with the sisters of Semele, Autonoe and Ino, to madness, and visiting Pentheus in disguise of a Bacchanal, was at first imprisoned, but, easily escaping from his bonds, he persuaded Pentheus to intrude upon the rites of the Bacchants. While surveying them from a lofty tree, the voice of Bacchus was heard inciting the Bacchants to avenge themselves upon the intruder, and they tore the miserable Pentheus piecemeal. The grief and banishment of Agave for her unwitting offense conclude the play.

THE BACCHÆ.

BACCHUS.

I, Bacchus, the son of Jove, am come to this land of the Thebans, whom formerly Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, brought forth, delivered by the lightning-bearing flame. And having taken a mortal form instead of a God's, I am present at the fountains of Dirce and the water of Ismenus. And I see the tomb of my thunder-stricken mother here near the palace, and the remnants of the house smoking, and the still living name of Jove's fire, the everlasting insult of Juno against my mother. But I praise Cadmus, who has made this place hallowed, the shrine of his daughter; and I have covered it around with the cluster-bearing leaf of the vine. And having left the wealthy lands of the Lydians and Phrygians, and the sun-parched plains of the Persians, and the Bactrian walls; and having come over the stormy land of the Medes, and the happy Arabia, and all Asia which lies along the coast of the salt sea, having fair-towered cities full of Greeks and barbarians mingled together; and there having danced and established my mysteries, that I might be a God manifest among men, I have come to this city first of the Grecian [cities,] and I have raised my shout first in Thebes of this land of Greece, fitting a deer-skin on my body, and taking a thyrsus in my hand, an ivy-clad weapon, because the sisters of my mother, whom, it least of all became, said that I, Bacchus, was not born of Jove; but that Semele, having conceived by some mortal, charged the sin of her bed upon Jove, a trick of Cadmus; on which account they said that Jove had slain her, because she told a false tale about her marriage. Therefore I have now driven them from the house with frenzy, and they dwell on the mountain, insane of mind; and I have compelled them to wear the dress of my mysteries. And all the female seed of the Cadmeans, as many as are women, have I driven maddened from the house. And they, mingled with the sons of Cadmus, sit on the roofless rocks beneath the green pines. For this city must know, even though it be unwilling, that it is not initiated into my Bacchanalian rites, and that I plead the cause of my mother, Semele, in appearing manifest to mortals as a God whom she bore to Jove. Cadmus then gave his honor and power to Pentheus, born from his daughter, who fights against the Gods as far as I am concerned, and drives me from sacrifices, and in his prayers makes no

mention of me; on which account I will show him and all the Thebans that I am a God. And having set matters here aright, manifesting myself, I will move to another land. But if the city of the Thebans should in anger seek by arms to bring down the Bacchæ from the mountain, I, general of the Mænads, will join battle. On which account I have changed my form to a mortal one, and transformed my shape into the nature of a man. But, O ye who have left Tmolus, the bulwark of Lydia; ye women, my assembly, whom I have brought from among the barbarians as assistants and companions to me; take your drums, your native instruments in the Phrygian cities, the invention of the mother Rhea and myself, and coming beat them around this royal palace of Pentheus, that the city of Cadmus may see it. And I, with the Bacchæ, going to the dells of Cithæron, where they are, will share their dances.

CHOR. Coming from the land of Asia, having left the sacred Tmolus, I dance in honor of Bromius, a sweet labor and a toil easily borne, celebrating the god Bacchus. Who is in the way? who is in the way? who is in the halls? Let him depart. And let every one be pure as to his mouth speaking propitious things; for now I will with hymns celebrate Bacchus according to custom: — Blessed is he, whoever being favored, knowing the mysteries of the gods, keeps his life pure, and has his soul initiated into the Bacchic revels, dancing o'er the mountains with holy purifications, and reverencing the mysteries of the mighty mother Cybele, and brandishing the thyrsus, and being crowned with ivy, serves Bacchus! Go, ye Bacchæ; go, ye Bacchæ, escorting Bromius, a God, the son of a God, from the Phrygian mountains to the broad streets of Greece! Bromius! whom formerly, being in the pains of travail, the thunder of Jove flying upon her, his mother cast from her womb, leaving life by the stroke of the thunder-bolt. And immediately Jupiter, the son of Saturn, received him in a chamber fitted for birth; and covering him in his thigh, shuts him with golden clasps hidden from Juno. And he brought him forth, when the Fates had perfected the horned God, and crowned him with crowns of snakes, whence the thyrsus-bearing Mænads are wont to cover their prey with their locks. O Thebes, thou nurse of Semele, crown thyself with ivy, flourish, flourish with the verdant yew bearing sweet fruit, and be ye crowned in honor of Bacchus with branches of oak or pine, and adorn your garments of spotted deer-skin with fleeces of white-haired sheep, and

sport in holy games with the insulting wands, straightway shall all the earth dance, when Bromius leads the bands to the mountain, to the mountain, where the female crowd abides, away from the distaff and the shuttle, driven frantic by Bacchus. O dwelling of the Curetes, and ye divine Cretan caves, parents to Jupiter, where the Corybantes with the triple helmet invented for me in their caves this circle o'erstretched with hide; and with the constant sweet-voiced breath of Phrygian pipes they mingled a sound of Bacchus, and put the instrument in the hand of Rhea, resounding with the sweet songs of the Bacchæ. And hard by the raving satyrs went through the sacred rites of the mother Goddess. And they added the dances of the Trieterides; in which Bacchus rejoices; pleased on the mountains, when after the running dance he falls upon the plain, having a sacred garment of deer-skin, seeking a sacrifice of goats, a raw-eaten delight, on his way to the Phrygian, the Lydian mountains; and the leader is Bromius, Evoe! but the plain flows with milk, and flows with wine, and flows with the nectar of bees; and the smoke is as of Syrian frankincense. But Bacchus bearing a flaming torch of pine on his thyrsus, rushes about arousing in his course the wandering Choruses, and agitating them with shouts, casting his rich locks loose in the air, — and with his songs he shouts out such words as this: O go forth, ye Bacchæ; O go forth, ye Bacchæ, delight of gold-flowing Tmolus. Sing Bacchus 'neath the loud drums, Evoe, celebrating the God Evius in Phrygian cries and shouts. When the sweet-sounding sacred pipe sounds a sacred playful sound suited to the frantic wanderers, to the mountain, to the mountain — and the Bacchant rejoicing like a foal with its mother at pasture, stirs its swift foot in the dance.

TIRESIAS. Who at the doors will call out Cadmus from the house, the son of Agenor, who, leaving the city of Sidon, erected this city of the Thebans? Let some one go, tell him that Tiresias seeks him; but he himself knows on what account I come, and what agreement I, an old man, have made with him, yet older; to twine the thyrsi, and to put on the skins of deer, and to crown the head with ivy branches.

CADMUS. O dearest friend! how I, being in the house, was delighted, hearing your voice, the wise voice of a wise man; and I am come prepared, having this equipment of the God; for we needs must extol him, who is the

son sprung from my daughter, Bacchus, who has appeared as a God to men, as much as is in our power. Whither shall I dance, whither direct the foot, and wave the hoary head? Do you lead me, you, an old man! O Tiresias, direct me, an old man; for you are wise. Since I shall never tire, neither night nor day, striking the earth with the thyrsus. Gladly we forget that we are old.

TI. You have the same feelings indeed as I; for I too feel young, and will attempt the dance.

CA. Then we will go to the mountain in chariots.

TI. But thus the God would not have equal honor.

CA. I, an old man, will lead you, an old man.

TI. The God will without trouble guide us thither.

CA. But shall we alone of the city dance in honor of Bacchus?

TI. [Ay,] for we alone think rightly, but the rest ill.

CA. We are long in delaying; but take hold of my hand.

TI. See, take hold, and join your hand to mine.

CA. I do not despise the Gods, being a mortal.

TI. We do not show too much wiseness about the Gods. Our ancestral traditions, and those which we have kept throughout our life, no argument will overturn them; not if any one were to find out wisdom with the highest genius. Some one will say that I do not respect old age, being about to dance, having crowned my head with ivy; for the God has made no distinction as to whether it becomes the young man to dance, or the elder; but wishes to have common honors from all; but does not at all wish to be extolled by a few.

CA. Since you, O Tiresias, do not see this light, I will be to you an interpreter of things. Hither is Pentheus coming to the house in haste, the

son of Echion, to whom I give power over the land. How fluttered he is! what strange thing will he say?

PENTHEUS. I happened to be at a distance from this land, and I hear of strange evils in this city, that the women have left our palace in mad-wandering Bacchic rites; and that they are rushing about in the shady mountains, honoring with dances this new God Bacchus, whoever he is; and that full goblets stand in the middle of their assemblies, and that flying each different ways into secrecy, they yield to the embraces of men, on pretence, indeed, as [being] worshiping Mænads; but that they consider Venus before Bacchus. As many then as I have taken, the servants keep them bound as to their hands in the public strong-holds, and as many as are absent I will hunt from the mountain, Ino, and Agave who bore me to Echion, and the mother of Actæon, I mean Autonoe; and having bound them in iron fetters, I will soon stop them from this ill-working revelry. And they say that some stranger has come hither, a juggler, a charmer, from the Lydian land, fragrant in hair with golden curls, florid, having in his eyes the graces of Venus, who days and nights is with them, alluring the young maidens with Bacchic mysteries — but if I catch him under this roof, I will stop him from making a noise with the thyrsus, and waving his hair, by cutting off his neck from his body. He says he is the God Bacchus, [He was once on a time sown in the thigh of Jove,] who was burned in the flame of lightning, together with his mother, because she falsely claimed nuptials with Jove. Are not these things deserving of a terrible halter, for a stranger to insult us with these insults, whoever he be? But here is another marvel — I see Tiresias the soothsayer, in dappled deer-skins, and the father of my mother, most great absurdity, raging about with a thyrsus — I deprecate it, O father, seeing your old age destitute of sense; will you not dash away the ivy? will you not, O father of my mother, put down your hand empty of the thyrsus? Have you persuaded him to this, O Tiresias? do you wish, introducing this new God among men, to examine birds and to receive rewards for fiery omens? If your hoary old age did not defend you, you should sit as a prisoner in the midst of the Bacchæ, for introducing these wicked rites; for where the joy of the grape-cluster is present at a feast of women, I no longer say any thing good of their mysteries.

CHOR. Alas for his impiety! O host, do you not reverence the Gods! and being son of Echion, do you disgrace your race and Cadmus, who sowed the earth-born crop?

TI. When any wise man takes a good occasion for his speech, it is not a great task to speak well; but you have a rapid tongue, as if wise, but in your words there is no wisdom; but a powerful man, when bold, and able to speak, is a bad citizen if he has not sense. And this new God, whom you ridicule, I am unable to express how great he will be in Greece. For, O young man, two things are first among men; Ceres, the goddess, and she is the earth, call her whichever name you will. She nourishes mortals with dry food; but he who is come as a match to her, the son of Semele, has invented the liquid drink of the grape, and introduced it among mortals, which delivers miserable mortals from grief, when they are filled with the stream of the vine; and gives sleep an oblivion of daily evils: nor is there any other medicine for troubles. He who is a God is poured out in libations to the Gods, that by his means men may have good things — and you laugh at him, as to how he was sewn up in the thigh of Jove; I will teach you that this is well — when Jove snatched him out of the lightning flame, and bore him, a young infant, up to Olympus, Juno wished to cast him down from heaven; but Jove had a counter contrivance, as being a God. Having broken a part of the air which surrounds the earth, he placed in it, giving him as a pledge, Bacchus, safe from Juno's enmity; and in time, mortals say, that he was nourished in the thigh of Jove; changing his name, because a God gave him formerly as a pledge to a Goddess, they having made agreement. But this God is a prophet — for Bacchanal excitement and frenzy have much divination in them. For when the God comes violent into the body, he makes the frantic to foretell the future; and he also possesses some quality of Mars; for terror flutters sometimes an army under arms and in its ranks, before they touch the spear; and this also is a frenzy from Bacchus. Then you shall see him also on the Delphic rocks, bounding with torches along the double-pointed district, tossing about, and shaking the Bacchic branch, mighty through Greece. But be persuaded by me, O Pentheus; do not boast that sovereignty has power among men, nor, even if you think so, and your mind is disordered, believe that you are at all wise. But receive the God into the land, and sacrifice to him, and play the Bacchanal, and crown your head. Bacchus will not compel women to

be modest with regard to Venus, but in his nature modesty in all things is ever innate. This you must needs consider, for she who is modest will not be corrupted by being at Bacchanalian revels. Dost see? Thou rejoicest when many stand at thy gates, and the city extols the name of Pentheus; and he, I ween, is pleased, when honored. I, then, and Cadmus whom you laugh to scorn, will crown ourselves with ivy, and dance, a hoary pair; but still we must dance; and I will not contend against the Gods, persuaded by your words — for you rave most grievously; nor can you procure any cure from medicine, nor are you now afflicted beyond their power.

CHOR. O old man, thou dost not shame Apollo by thy words, and honoring Bromius, the mighty God, thou art wise.

CAD. My son, well has Tiresias advised you; dwell with us, not away from the laws. For now you flit about, and though wise are wise in naught; for although this may not be a God, as you say, let it be said by you that he is; and tell a glorious falsehood, that Semele may seem to have borne a God, and that honor may redound to all our race. You see the hapless fate of Actæon, whom his blood-thirsty hounds, whom he had reared up, tore to pieces in the meadows, having boasted that he was superior in the chase to Diana. This may you not suffer; come, that I may crown thy head with ivy, with us give honor to the God —

PEN. Do not bring your hand toward me; but departing, play the Bacchanal, and wipe not off your folly on me; but I will follow up with punishment this teacher of your madness; let some one go as quickly as possible, and going to his seat where he watches the birds, upset and overthrow it with levers, turning every thing upside down; and commit his crowns to the winds and storms; for doing this, I shall gnaw him most. And some of you going along the city, track out this effeminate stranger, who brings this new disease upon women, and pollutes our beds. And if you catch him, convey him hither bound; that meeting with a judgment of stoning he may die, having seen a bitter revelry of Bacchus in Thebes.

TI. O wretched man! how little knowest thou what thou sayest! You are mad now, and before you was out of your mind. Let us go, O Cadmus, and entreat the God, on behalf of him, savage though he be, and on behalf of the city, to do him no ill: but follow me with the ivy-clad staff, and try to

support my body, and I will yours; for it would be shameful for two old men to fall down: but let that pass, for we must serve Bacchus, the son of Jove; but beware lest Pentheus bring grief into thy house, O Cadmus. I do not speak in prophecy, but judging from the state of things, for a foolish man says foolish things.

CHOR. O holy venerable Goddess! holy, who bearest thy golden pinions along the earth, hearest thou these words of Pentheus? Hearest thou his unholy insolence against Bromius, the son of Semele, the first deity of the Gods, at the banquets where the guests wear beautiful chaplets! who has this office, to join in dances, and to laugh with the flute, and to put an end to cares, when the juice of the grape comes at the feast of the Gods, and in the ivy-bearing banquets the goblet sheds sleep over man? Of unbridled mouths and lawless folly misery is the end, but the life of quiet and wisdom remains unshaken, and supports a house; for the heavenly powers are afar indeed, but still inhabiting the air, they behold the deeds of mortals. But cleverness is not wisdom, nor is the thinking on things unfit for mortals. Life is short; and in it who, pursuing great things, would not enjoy the present? These are the manners of maniacs; and of ill-disposed men, in my opinion. Would that I could go to Cyprus, the island of Venus, where the Loves dwell, soothing the minds of mortals, and to Paphos, which the waters of a foreign river flowing with an hundred mouths, fertilize without rain — and to the land of Pieria, where is the beautiful seat of the Muses, the holy hill of Olympus. Lead me thither, O Bromius, Bromius, O master thou of Bacchanals! There are the Graces, and there is Love, and there is it lawful for the Bacchæ to celebrate their orgies; the God, the son of Jove, delights in banquets, and loves Peace, giver of riches, the Goddess the nourisher of youths. And both to the rich and the poor has she granted to enjoy an equal delight from wine, banishing grief; and he who does not care for these things, hates to lead a happy life by day and by friendly night — but it is wise to keep away the mind and intellect proceeding from over-curious men; what the baser multitude thinks and adopts, that will I say.

SERVANT. Pentheus, we are here; having caught this prey, for which you sent us: nor have we gone in vain; but the beast was docile in our hands, nor did he withdraw his foot in flight, but yielded not unwillingly; nor did

he [turn] pale nor change his wine-complexioned cheek, but laughing, allowed us to bind and lead him away; and remained still, making my work easy; and I for shame said, O stranger, I do not take you of my own will, but by order of Pentheus who sent me. And the Bacchæ whom you shut up, whom you carried off and bound in the chains of the public prison, they being set loose are escaped, and are dancing in the meadows, invoking Bromius as their God, and of their own accord the fetters were loosed from their feet, and the keys opened the doors without mortal hand, and full of many wonders is this man come to Thebes; but the rest must be thy care.

PEN. Take hold of him by the hands; for being in the toils, he is not so swift as to escape me: but in your body you are not ill-formed, O stranger, for women's purposes, on which account you have come to Thebes. For your hair is long, not through wrestling, scattered over your cheeks, full of desire, and you have a white skin from careful preparation; hunting after Venus by your beauty not exposed to strokes of the sun, but [kept] beneath the shade. First then tell me who thou art in family.

BAC. There is no boast; but this is easy to say; thou knowest by hearsay of the flowery Tmolus?

PEN. I know, [the hill] which surrounds the city of Sardis.

BAC. Thence am I; and Lydia is my country.

PEN. And whence do you bring these rites into Greece?

BAC. Bacchus persuaded us, the son of Jove.

PEN. Is Jove then one who begets new Gods?

BAC. No, but having married Semele here, —

PEN. Did he compel you by night, or in your sight [by day]?

BAC. Seeing me who saw him; and he gave me orgies.

PEN. And what appearance have these orgies?

BAC. It is unlawful for the uninitiated among mortals to know.

PEN. And have they any profit to those who sacrifice?

BAC. It is not lawful for you to hear, but they are worth knowing.

PEN. You have well coined this story, that I may wish to hear.

BAC. The orgies of the God hate him who works impiety.

PEN. For you say, forsooth, that you saw the God clearly what he was like?

BAC. As he chose; I did not order this.

PEN. This too you have well contrived, saying mere nonsense.

BAC. One may seem, speaking wisely to one ignorant, not to be wise.

PEN. And did you come hither first, bringing the God?

BAC. Every one of the barbarians celebrates these orgies.

PEN. [Ay,] for they are much less wise than Greeks.

BAC. In these things they are wiser, but their laws are different.

PEN. Do you practice these rites at night, or by day?

BAG. Most of them at night; darkness conveys awe.

PEN. This is treacherous toward women, and unsound.

BAC. Even by day some may devise base things.

PEN. You must pay the penalty of your evil devices.

BAC. And you of your ignorance, being impious to the God.

PEN. How bold is Bacchus, and not unpracticed in speech.

BAC. Say what I must suffer, what ill wilt thou do me?

PEN. First I will cut off your delicate hair.

BAC. The hair is sacred, I cherish it for the God.

PEN. Next yield up this thyrsus out of your hands.

BAC. Take it from me yourself, I bear it as the ensign of Bacchus.

PEN. And we will guard your body within in prison.

BAC. The God himself will release me when I wish.

PEN. Ay, when you call him, standing among the Bacchæ.

BAC. Even now, being near, he sees what I suffer.

PEN. And where is he? for at least he is not apparent to my eyes.

BAC. Near me, but you being impious, see him not.

PEN. Seize him, he insults me and Thebes!

BAC. I warn you not to bind me: I in my senses command you not in your senses.

PEN. And I bid them to bind you, as being mightier than you.

BAC. You know not why you live, nor what you do, nor who you are.

PEN. Pentheus, son of Agave, and of my father Echion.

BAC. You are suited to be miserable according to your name.

PEN. Begone! confine him near the stable of horses that he may behold dim darkness! There dance; and as for these women whom you bring with you, the accomplices in your wickedness, we will either sell them away, or

stopping their hand from this noise and beating of skins, I will keep them as slaves at the loom.

BAC. I will go — for what is not right it is not right to suffer; but as a punishment for these insults Bacchus shall pursue you, who you say exists not; for, injuring us, you put him in bonds.

CHOR. O daughter of Achelous, venerable Dirce, happy virgin, for thou didst receive the infant of Jove in thy fountains when Jove who begat him saved him in his thigh from the immortal fire; uttering this shout: Go, O Dithyrambus, enter this my male womb, I will make you illustrious, O Bacchus, in Thebes, so that they shall call you by this name. But you, O happy Dirce, reject me having a garland-bearing company about you. Why dost thou reject me? Why dost thou avoid me? Yet, I swear by the clustering delights of the vine of Bacchus, yet shall you have a care for Bacchus. What rage, what rage does the earth-born race show, and Pentheus once descended from the dragon, whom the earth-born Echion begat, a fierce-faced monster, not a mortal man, but like a bloody giant, an enemy to the Gods, who will soon bind me, the handmaid of Bacchus, in halters, he already has within the house my fellow-reveler, hidden in a dark prison. Dost thou behold this, O son of Jove, Bacchus, thy prophets in the dangers of restraint? Come, O thou of golden face, brandishing your thyrsus along Olympus, and restrain the insolence of the blood-thirsty man. Where art thou assembling thy bands of thyrsus-bearers, O Bacchus, is it near Nysa which nourishes wild beasts, or in the summits of Corycus? or perhaps in the deep-wooded lairs of Olympus, where formerly Orpheus playing the lyre drew together the trees by his songs, collected the beasts of the fields; O happy Pieria, Evius respects you, and will come to lead the dance with revelings having crossed the swiftly-flowing Axius, he will bring the dancing Mænads, and [leaving] Lydia the giver of wealth to mortals, and the father whom I have heard fertilizes the country renowned for horses with the fairest streams.

BAC. Io! hear ye, hear ye my song, Io Bacchæ! O Bacchæ!

CHOR. Who is here, who? from what quarter did the shout of Evius summon me?

BAC. Io, Io, I say again! I, the son of Semele, the son of Jove!

CHOR. Io! Io! Master, master! come now to our company. O Bromius! Bromius! Shake this place, O holy Earth! O! O! quickly will the palace of Pentheus be shaken in ruin — Bacchus is in the halls. Worship him. We worship him. Behold these stone buttresses shaken with their pillars. Bacchus will shout in the palace.

BAC. Light the burning fiery lamp; burn, burn the house of Pentheus.

SEM. Alas! Dost thou not behold the fire, nor perceive around the sacred tomb of Semele the flame which formerly the bolt-bearing thunder of Jupiter left?

SEM. Cast on the ground your trembling bodies, cast them down, O Mænads, for the king turning things upside down is coming to this palace, [Bacchus,] the son of Jupiter.

BAC. O barbarian women! have ye fallen to the ground thus stricken with fear? Ye have felt, it seems, Bacchus shaking the house of Pentheus; but lift up your bodies, and take courage, casting off fear from your flesh.

CHOR. O thou most mighty light to us of Evian Bacchic rites, how gladly do I see thee, being before alone and desolate!

BAC. Ye came to despair, when I was sent in, as about to fall into the dark prison of Pentheus.

CHOR. How not? — who was my guardian if you met with misfortune? but how were you liberated, having met with an impious man?

BAC. I delivered myself easily without trouble.

CHOR. And did he not bind your hands in links of chains?

BAC. In this too I mocked him; for, thinking to bind me, he neither touched nor handled me, but fed on hope; and finding a bull in the stable, where having taken me, he confined me, he cast halters round the knees of that, and the hoofs of its feet; breathing out fury, stilling sweat from his

body, gnashing his teeth in his lips. But I, being near, sitting quietly, looked on; and, in the mean time, Bacchus coming, shook the house, and kindled flame on the tomb of his mother; and he, when he saw it, thinking the house was burning, rushed to and fro, calling to the servants to bring water, and every servant was at work toiling in vain; and letting go this labor, I having escaped, seizing a dark sword he rushes into the house, and then Bromius, as it seems to me, I speak my opinion, made an appearance in the palace, and he rushing toward it, rushed on and stabbed at the bright air, as if slaying me; and besides this, Bacchus afflicts him with these other things; and threw down his house to the ground, and every thing was shivered in pieces, while he beheld my bitter chains; and from fatigue dropping his sword, he falls exhausted — for he being a man, dared to join battle with a God: and I quietly getting out of the house am come to you, not regarding Pentheus. But, as it seems to me, a shoe sounds in the house; he will soon come out in front of the house. What will he say after this? I shall easily bear him, even if he comes vaunting greatly, for it is the part of a wise man to practice prudent moderation.

PEN. I have suffered terrible things, the stranger has escaped me, who was lately coerced in bonds. Hollo! here is the man; what is this? how do you appear near my house, having come out?

BAC. Stay your foot; and substitute calm steps for anger.

PEN. How come you out, having escaped your chains?

BAC. Did I not say, or did you not hear, that some one would deliver me?

PEN. Who? for you are always introducing strange things.

BAC. He who produces the rich-clustering vine for mortals.

PEN. This is a fine reproach you charge on Bacchus; I order ye to close every tower all round.

BAC. Why? do not Gods pass over walls too?

PEN. You are wise, wise at least in all save what you should be wise in.

BAC. In what I most ought, in that I was born wise; but first learn, hearing his words who is come from the mountain to bring a message to you; but we will await you, we will not fly.

MESSENGER. Pentheus, ruler o'er this Theban land, I come, having left Cithæron, where never have the brilliant flakes of white snow fallen.

PEN. But bringing what important news are you come?

MESS. Having seen the holy Bacchæ, who driven by madness have darted their fair feet from this land, have I come, wishing to tell you and the city, O king, what awful things they do, things beyond marvel; and I wish to hear whether in freedom of speech I shall tell you the matters there, or whether I shall repress my report, for I fear, O king, the hastiness of thy mind, and your keen temper, and too imperious disposition.

PEN. Speak, as you shall be in all things blameless as far as I am concerned; for it is not meet to be wrath with the just; and in proportion as you speak worse things of the Bacchæ, so much the more will we punish this man who has taught these tricks to the women.

MESS. I was just now driving up to the heights the herd of calves, when the sun sends forth his rays warming the land, and I see three companies of dances of women, of one of which Autonoe was chief; of a second, thy mother, Agave; and Ino led the third dance; and they were all sleeping, relaxed in their bodies, some resting their locks against the leaves of pine, and some laying their heads at random on the leaves of oak in the ground, modestly, not, as you say, that, drunk with the goblet and the noise of the flute, they solitary hunt Venus through the wood. But thy mother standing in the midst of the Bacchæ, raised a shout, to wake their bodies from sleep, when she heard the lowing of the horned oxen; but they, casting off refreshing sleep from their eyes, started upright, a marvel to behold for their elegance, young, old, and virgins yet unyoked, And first they let loose their hair over their shoulders; and arranged their deer-skins, as many as had had the fastenings of their knots unloosed, and they girded the dappled hides with serpents licking their jaws — and some having in their arms a kid, or the wild whelps of wolves, gave them white milk, all those who, having lately had children, had breasts still full, having left

their infants, and they put on their ivy chaplets, and garlands of oak and blossoming yew; and one having taken a thyrsus, struck it against a rock, whence a dewy stream of water springs out; another placed her wand on the ground, and then the God sent up a spring of wine. And as many as had craving for the white drink, scratching the earth with the tips of their fingers, obtained abundance of milk; and from the ivy thyrsus sweet streams of honey dropped, so that, had you been present, beholding these things, you would have approached with prayers that God whom you now blame. And we came together, herdsmen and shepherds, to reason with one another concerning this strange matter, what terrible things and worthy of marvel they do; and some one, a wanderer about the city, and practiced in speaking, said to us all, O ye who inhabit the holy downs of the mountains, will ye that we hunt out Agave, the mother of Pentheus, back from the revels, and do the king a pleasure? And he seemed to us to speak well, and hiding ourselves, we lay in ambush in the foliage of the thickets; and they, at the appointed hour, waved the thyrsus in their solemnities, calling on Bacchus with united voice, the son of Jove, Bromius; and the whole mountain and the beasts were in a revel; and nothing was unmoved by their running; and Agave was bounding near to me, and I sprang forth, as wishing to seize her, leaving my ambush where I was hidden. But she cried out, O my fleet hounds, we are hunted by these men; but follow me, follow, armed with thyrsi in your hands. We then flying, avoided the tearing of the Bacchæ, but they sprang on the heifers browsing the grass with unarmed hand, and you might see one rending asunder a fatted lowing calf, and others rent open cows, and you might see either ribs, or a cloven-footed hoof, tossed here and there, and hanging beneath the pine-trees the fragments were dripping, dabbled in gore; and the fierce bulls before showing their fury with their horns, were thrown to the ground, overpowered by myriads of maiden hands; and quicker were the coverings of flesh torn asunder by the royal maids than you could shut your eyes; and like birds raised in their course, they proceed along the level plain, which by the streams of the Asopus produce the fertile crop of the Thebans, and falling on Hysiaë and Erythræ, which, are below Cithæron, they turned every thing upside down; they dragged children from the houses; and whatever they put on their shoulders stuck there without chains, and fell not on the dark plain, neither brass nor iron; and they bore fire on their tresses, and it burned not; but some from rage betook

themselves to arms, being plundered by the Bacchæ, the sight of which was fearful to behold, O king! For their pointed spear was not made bloody, but the women hurling the thyrsi from their hands, wounded them, and turned their backs to flight, women [defeating] men; not without the aid of some God. And they went back again to whence they had departed, to the same fountains which the God had caused to spring up for them, and they washed off the blood; and the snakes with their tongues cleaned off the drops from their cheeks. Receive then, O master, this deity, whoever he be, in this city, since he is mighty in other respects, and they say this too of him, as I hear, that he has given mortals the vine which puts an end to grief, — for where wine exists not there is no longer Venus, nor any thing pleasant to men.

CHOR. I fear to speak unshackled words to the king, but still they shall be spoken; Bacchus is inferior to none of the Gods.

PEN. Already like fire does this insolence of the Bacchæ extend thus near, a great reproach to the Greeks. But I must not hesitate; go to the Electra gates, bid all the shield-bearers and riders of swift-footed horses to assemble, and all who brandish the light shield, and twang with their hand the string of the bow, as we will make an attack upon the Bacchæ; but it is too much, if we are to suffer what we are suffering at the hands of women.

BAC. O Pentheus, you obey not at all hearing my words; but although suffering ill at your hands, still I say that you ought not to take up arms against a God, but to rest quiet; Bromius will not endure your moving the Bacchæ from their Evian mountains.

PEN. You shall not teach me; but be content, having escaped from prison, or else I will again bring punishment upon you.

BAC. I would rather sacrifice to him than, being wrath, kick against the pricks; a mortal against a God.

PEN. I will sacrifice, making a great slaughter of the women, as they deserve, in the glens of Cithæron.

BAC. You will all fly, (*and that will be shameful,*) so as to yield your brazen shields to the thyrsi of the Bacchæ.

PEN. We are troubled with this impracticable stranger, who neither suffering nor doing will be silent.

BAC. My friend, there is still opportunity to arrange these things well.

PEN. By doing what? being a slave to my slaves?

BAC. I will bring the women here without arms.

PEN. Alas! you are contriving some trick against me.

BAC. Of what sort, if I wish to save you by my contrivances?

PEN. You have devised this together, that ye may have your revelings forever.

BAC. And indeed, know this, I agreed on it with the God.

PEN. Bring hither the arms! and do you cease to speak.

BAC. Hah! Do you wish to see them sitting on the mountains?

PEN. Very much, if I gave countless weight of gold for it.

BAC. But why? have you fallen into a great wish for this?

PEN. I should like to see them drunk grievously [for them].

BAC. Would you then gladly see what is grievous to you?

PEN. To be sure, sitting quietly under the pines.

BAC. But they will track you out, even though you come secretly.

PEN. But [I will come] openly, for you have said this well.

BAC. Shall I then guide you? and will you attempt the way?

PEN. Lead me as quickly as possible; for I do not grudge you the time.

BAC. Put on then linen garments on your body.

PEN. What then, shall I be reckoned among women, being a man?

BAC. Lest they slay you if you be seen there, being a man.

PEN. You say this well, and you have been long wise.

BAC. Bacchus taught me this wisdom.

PEN. How then can these things which you advise me be well done?

BAC. I will attire you, going into the house.

PEN. With what dress — a woman's? but shame possesses me.

BAC. Do you no longer wish to be a spectator of the Mænads?

PEN. But what attire do you bid me put on my body?

BAC. I will spread out your hair at length on your head.

PEN. And what is the next point of my equipment?

BAC. A garment down to your feet; and you shall have a turban on your head.

PEN. Shall you put any thing else on me besides this?

BAC. A thyrsus in your hand, and the dappled hide of a deer.

PEN. I can not wear a woman's dress.

BAC. But you will shed blood if you join battle with the Bacchæ.

PEN. True; we must first go and see.

BAC. That is wiser at least than to hunt evils with evils.

PEN. And how shall I go through the city escaping the notice of the Cadmeans?

BAC. We will go by deserted roads, and I will guide you.

PEN. Every thing is better than for the Bacchæ to mock me.

BAC. We will go into the house and consider what seems best.

PEN. We can do what we like; my part is completely prepared. Let us go; for either I will go bearing arms, or I will be guided by your counsels.

BAC. O women! the man is in the toils, and he will come to the Bacchæ, where, dying, he will pay the penalty. Now, Bacchus, 'tis thine office, for you are not far off. Let us punish him; but first drive him out of his wits, inspiring vain frenzy, since, being in his right mind, he will not be willing to put on a female dress, but driving him out of his senses he will put it on; and I wish him to furnish laughter to the Thebans, being led in woman's guise through the city, after his former threats, with which he was terrible. But I will go to fit on Pentheus the dress, which, having taken, he shall die, slain by his mother's hand. And he shall know Bacchus, the son of Jupiter, who is in fact to men at once the most terrible, and the mildest of deities.

CHOR. Shall I move my white foot in the night-long dance, honoring Bacchus, exposing my neck to the dewy air, sporting like a fawn in the verdant delights of the mead, when it has escaped a fearful chase beyond the watch of the well-woven nets, (*and the huntsman cheering hastens on the course of his hounds,*) and with toil like the swift storm rushes along the plain that skirts the river, exulting in the solitude apart from men, and in the thickets of the shady-foliaged wood? What is wisdom, what is a more glorious gift from the Gods among mortals than to hold one's hand on the heads of one's enemies? What is good is always pleasant; divine strength is roused with difficulty, but still is sure, and it chastises those mortals who honor folly, and do not extol the Gods in their insane mind. But the Gods cunningly conceal the long foot of time, and hunt the impious man; for it is not right to determine or plan any thing beyond the

laws: for it is a light expense to deem that that has power whatever is divine, and that what has been law for a long time has its origin in nature. What is wisdom, what is a more noble gift from the Gods among men, than to hold one's hand on the heads of one's enemies? what is honorable is always pleasant. Happy is he who has escaped from the wave of the sea, and arrived in harbor. Happy, too, is he who has overcome his labors; and one surpasses another in different ways, in wealth and power. Still are there innumerable hopes to innumerable men, some result in wealth to mortals, and some fail, but I call him happy whose life is happy day by day.

BAC. You, who are eager to see what you ought not, and hasty to do a deed not of haste, I mean Pentheus, come forth before the house, be seen by me, having the costume of a woman, of a frantic Bacchant, as a spy upon your mother and her company! In appearance, you are like one of the daughters of Cadmus.

PEN. And indeed I think I see two suns, and twin Thebes, and seven-gated city; and you seem to guide me, being like a bull, and horns seem to grow on your head. But were you ever a beast? for you look like a bull.

BAC. The God accompanies us, not propitious formerly, but now at truce with us. You see what you should see.

PEN. How do I look? Does not my standing seem like that of Ino, or of Agave, my mother?

BAC. I seem to see them as I behold you; but this lock of hair of yours is out of its place, not as I dressed it beneath the turban.

PEN. Moving it within doors backward and forward, and practicing Bacchic revelry, I disarranged it.

BAC. But we who ought to wait upon you will again rearrange it. But hold up your head.

PEN. Look, do you arrange it, for we depend on you.

BAC. And your girdle is loosened, and the fringes of your garments do not extend regularly round your legs.

PEN. They seem so to me, too, about the right foot at least; but on this side the robe sits well along the leg.

BAC. Will you not think me the first of your friends when, contrary to your expectation, you see the Bacchæ acting modestly?

PEN. But shall I be more like a Bacchant holding the thyrsus in my right hand, or in this?

BAC. You should [hold it in] your right hand, and raise it at the same time with your right foot; and I praise you for having changed your mind.

PEN. Could I bear on my shoulders the glens of Cithæron, Bacchæ and all?

BAC. You could if you were willing; but you had your mind unsound before; but now you have such as you ought.

PEN. Shall we bring levers, or shall I tear them up with my hands, putting my shoulder or arm under the summits?

BAC. No, lest you ruin the habitations of the Nymphs, and the seats of Pan where he plays his pipes.

PEN. You speak well, — it is not with strength we should conquer women; but I will hide my body among the pines.

BAC. Hide you the hiding in which you should be hidden, coming as a crafty spy on the Mænads.

PEN. And, indeed, I think to catch them in the thickets, like birds in the sweet nets of beds.

BAC. You go then as a watch for this very thing; and perhaps you will catch them, if you be not caught first.

PEN. Conduct me through the middle of the Theban land, for I am the only man of them who would dare these things.

BAC. You alone labor for this city, you alone; therefore the labors, which are meet, await you. But follow me, I am your saving guide, some one else will guide you away from thence.

PEN. Yes, my mother.

BAC. Being remarkable among all.

PEN. For this purpose do I come.

BAC. You will depart being borne.

PEN. You allude to my delicacy.

BAC. In the hands of your mother.

PEN. And wilt thou compel me to be effeminate?

BAC. Ay, with such effeminacy.

PEN. I lay mine hands to worthy things.

BAC. You are terrible, terrible: and you go to terrible sufferings; so that you shall find a renown reaching to heaven. Spread out, O Agave, your hands, and ye, her sister, daughters of Cadmus! I lead this young man to a mighty contest; and the conqueror shall be I and Bacchus! The rest the matter itself will show.

CHOR. Go, ye fleet hounds of madness, go to the mountain where the daughters of Cadmus hold their company; drive them raving against the frantic spy on the Mænads, — him in woman's attire. First shall his mother from some smooth rock or paling, behold him in ambush; and she will cry out to the Mænads: Who is this of the Cadmeans who has come to the mountain, the mountain, as a spy on us, who are on the mountain? Io Bacchæ! Who brought him forth? for he was not born of the blood of women: but, as to his race, he is either born of some lion, or of the Libyan

Gorgons. Let manifest justice go forth, let it go with sword in hand, slaying the godless, lawless, unjust, earth-born offspring of Echion through the throat; who, with wicked mind and unjust rage about your orgies, O Bacchus, and those of thy mother, with raving heart and mad disposition proceeds as about to overcome an invincible deity by force. To possess without pretext a wise understanding in respect to the Gods, and [a disposition] befitting mortals, is a life ever free from grief. I joyfully hunt after wisdom, if apart from envy, but the other conduct is evidently ever great throughout life, directing one rightly the livelong day, to reverence things honorable. Appear as a bull, or a many-headed dragon, or a fiery lion, to be seen. Go, O Bacchus! cast a snare around the hunter of the Bacchæ, with a smiling face falling upon the deadly crowd of the Mænads.

MESS. O house, which wast formerly prosperous in Greece! house of the Sidonian old man, who sowed in the land the earth-born harvest of the dragon; how I lament for you, though a slave. But still the [calamities] of their masters are a grief to good servants.

CHOR. But what is the matter? Tellest thou any news from the Bacchæ?

MESS. Pentheus is dead, the son of his father Echion.

CHOR. O, king Bacchus! truly you appear a great God!

MESS. How sayest thou? Why do you say this? Do you, O woman, delight at my master being unfortunate?

CHOR. I, a foreigner, celebrate it in foreign strains; for no longer do I crouch in fear under my fetters.

MESS. But do you think Thebes thus void of men?

CHOR. Bacchus, Bacchus, not Thebes, has my allegiance.

MESS. You, indeed may be pardoned; still, O woman, it is not right to rejoice at the misfortunes which have been brought to pass.

CHOR. Tell me, say, by what fate is the wicked man doing wicked things dead, O man?

MESS. When having left Therapnæ of this Theban land, we crossed the streams of Asopus, we entered on the height of Cithæron, Pentheus and I, for I was following my master, and the stranger who was our guide in this search, for the sight: first, then, we sat down in a grassy vale, keeping our steps and tongues in silence, that we might see, not being seen; and there was a valley surrounded by precipices, irrigated with streams, shaded around with pines, where the Mænads were sitting employing their hands in pleasant labors, for some of them were again crowning the worn-out thyrsus, so as to make it leafy with ivy; and some, like horses quitting the painted yoke, shouted in reply to another a Bacchic melody. And the miserable Pentheus, not seeing the crowd of women, spake thus: O stranger, where we are standing, I can not come at the place where is the dance of the Mænads; but climbing a mound, or pine with lofty neck, I could well discern the shameful deeds of the Mænads. And on this I now see a strange deed of the stranger; for seizing hold of the extreme lofty branch of a pine, he pulled it down, pulled it, pulled it to the dark earth, and it was bent like a bow, or as a curved wheel worked by a lathe describes a circle as it revolves, thus the stranger, pulling a mountain bough with his hands, bent it to the earth; doing no mortal's deed; and having placed Pentheus on the pine branches, he let it go upright through his hands steadily, taking care that it should not shake him off; and the pine stood firm upright to the sky, bearing on its back my master, sitting on it; and he was seen rather than saw the Mænads, for sitting on high he was apparent, as not before. And one could no longer see the stranger, but there was a certain voice from the sky; Bacchus, as one might conjecture, shouted out: O youthful women, I bring you him who made you and me and my orgies a laughing-stock: but punish ye him. And at the same time he cried out, and sent forth to heaven and earth a light of holy fire; and the air was silent, and the fair meadowed grove kept its leaves in silence, and you could not hear the voice of the beasts; but they not distinctly receiving the voice, stood upright, and cast their eyes around. And again he proclaimed his bidding. And when the daughters of Cadmus' recognized the distinct command of Bacchus, they rushed forth, having in the eager running of their feet a speed not less than that of a dove; his mother,

Agave, and her kindred sisters, and all the Bacchæ: and frantic with the inspiration of the God, they bounded through the torrent-streaming valley, and the clefts. But when they saw my master sitting on the pine, first they threw at him handfuls of stones, striking his head, mounting on an opposite piled rock; and with pine branches some aimed, and some hurled their thyrsi through the air at Pentheus, wretched mark; but they failed of their purpose; for he having a height too great for their eagerness, sat, wretched, destitute through perplexity. But at last thundering together some oaken branches, they tore up the roots with levers not of iron; and when they could not accomplish the end of their labors, Agave said, Come, standing round in a circle, seize each a branch, O Mænads, that we may take the beast who has climbed aloft, that he may not tell abroad the secret dances of the God. And they applied their innumerable hands to the pine, and tore it up from the ground; and sitting on high, Pentheus falls to the ground from on high, with numberless lamentations; for he knew that he was near to ill. And first his mother, as the priestess, began his slaughter, and falls upon him; but he threw the turban from his hair, that the wretched Agave, recognizing him, might not slay him; and touching her cheek, he says, I, indeed, O mother, am thy child, Pentheus, whom you bore in the house of Echion; but pity me, O mother! and do not slay me, thy child, for my sins. But she, foaming and rolling her eyes every way, not thinking as she ought to think, was possessed by Bacchus, and he did not persuade her; and seizing his left hand with her hand, treading on the side of the unhappy man, she tore off his shoulder, not by [her own] strength, but the God gave facility to her hands; and Ino completed the work on the other side, tearing his flesh. And Autonoe and the whole crowd of the Bacchæ pressed on; and there was a noise of all together; he, indeed, groaning as much as he had life in him, and they shouted; and one bore his arm, another his foot, shoe and all; and his sides were bared by their tearings, and the whole band, with gory hands, tore to pieces the flesh of Pentheus: and his body lies in different places, part under the rugged rocks, part in the deep shade of the wood, not easy to be sought; and as to his miserable head, which his mother has taken in her hands, having fixed it on the top of a thyrsus, she is bearing it, like that of a savage lion, through the middle of Cithæron, leaving her sisters in the dances of the Mænads; and she goes along rejoicing in her unhappy prey, within these walls, calling upon Bacchus, her fellow-huntsman, her fellow-workman in

the chase, of glorious victory, by which she wins a victory of tears. I, therefore, will depart out of the way of this calamity before Agave comes to the palace; but to be wise, and to reverence the Gods, this, I think, is the most honorable and wisest thing for mortals who adopt it.

CHOR. Let us dance in honor of Bacchus; let us raise a shout for what has befallen Pentheus, the descendant of the dragon, who assumed female attire and the wand with the beautiful thyrsus, — a certain death, having a bull as his leader to calamity. Ye Cadmean Bacchants, ye have accomplished a glorious victory, illustrious, yet for woe and tears. It is a glorious contest to plunge one's dripping hand in the blood of one's son. But — for I see Agave, the mother of Pentheus, coining to the house with starting eyes; receive the revel of the Evian God.

AGAVE. O Asiatic Bacchæ!

CHOR. To what dost thou excite me? O!

AG. We bring from the mountains a fresh-culled wreathing to the house, a blessed prey.

CHOR. I see it, and hail you as a fellow-reveler, O!

AG. I have caught him without a noose, a young lion, as you may see.

CHOR. From what desert?

AG. Cithæron.

CHOR. What did Cithæron?

AG. Slew him.

CHOR. Who was it who first smote him?

AG. The honor is mine. Happy Agave! We are renowned in our revels.

CHOR. Who else?

AG. Cadmus's.

CHOR. What of Cadmus?

AG. Descendants after me, after me laid hands on this beast.

CHOR. You are fortunate in this capture.

AG. Partake then of our feast.

CHOR. What shall I, unhappy, partake of?

AG. The whelp is young about the chin; he has just lost his soft-haired head-gear.

AG. For it is beautiful as the mane of a wild beast.

CHOR. Bacchus, a wise huntsman, wisely hurried the Mænads against this beast.

CHOR. For the king is a huntsman.

AG. Do you praise?

CHOR. What? I do praise.

AG. But soon the Cadmeans.

CHOR. And thy son Pentheus his mother —

AG. — will praise, as having caught this lion-born prey.

CHOR. An excellent prey.

AG. Excellently.

CHOR. You rejoice.

AG. I rejoice greatly, having accomplished great and illustrious deeds for this land.

CHOR. Show now, O wretched woman, thy victorious booty to the citizens, which you have come bringing with you.

AG. O, ye who dwell in the fair-towered city of the Theban land, come ye, that ye may behold this prey, O daughters of Cadmus, of the wild beast which we have taken; not by the thonged javelins of the Thessalians, not by nets, but by the fingers, our white arms; then may we boast that we should in vain possess the instruments of the spear-makers; but we, with this hand, slew this beast, and tore its limbs asunder. Where is my aged father? let him come near; and where is my son Pentheus? let him take and raise the ascent of a wattled ladder against the house, that he may fasten to the triglyphs this head of the lion which I am present having caught.

CAD. Follow me, bearing the miserable burden of Pentheus; follow me, O servants, before the house; whose body here, laboring with immeasurable search, I bear, having found it in the defiles of Cithæron, torn to pieces, and finding nothing in the same place, lying in a thicket, difficult to be searched. For I heard from some one of the daring deeds of my daughters just as I came to the city within the walls, with the old Tiresias, concerning the Bacchæ; and having returned again to the mountain, I bring back my child, slain by the Mænads. And I saw Autonoe, who formerly bore Actæon to Aristæus, and Ino together, still mad in the thicket, unhappy creatures; but some one told me that Agave was coming hither with frantic foot; nor did I hear a false tale, for I behold her, an unhappy sight.

AG. O father! you may boast a great boast, that you of mortals have begotten by far the best daughters; I mean all, but particularly myself, who, leaving my shuttle at the loom, have come to greater things, to catch wild beasts with my hands. And having taken him, I bear in my arms, as you see, these spoils of my valor, that they may be suspended against your house. And do you, O father, receive them in your hands; and rejoicing over my successful capture, invite your friends to a feast; for you are blessed, blessed since I have done such deeds.

CAD. O, woe! and not to be seen, of those who have accomplished a slaughter not to be measured by wretched hands; having stricken down a glorious victim for the Gods, you invite Thebes and me to a banquet. Alas me, first for thy ills, then for mine own; how justly, but how severely, has king Bromius destroyed us, being one of our own family!

AG. How morose is old age in men! and sullen to the eye; would that my son may be fond of hunting, resembling the disposition of his mother, when with the Theban youths he would strive after the beasts — but he is only fit to contend with Gods. He is to be admonished, O father, by you and me, not to rejoice in clever evil. Where is he? Who will summon him hither to my sight, that he may see me, that happy woman?

CAD. Alas, alas! knowing what ye have done, ye will grieve a sad grief; but if forever ye remain in the condition in which ye are, not fortunate, you will seem not to be unfortunate.

AG. But what of these matters is not well, or what is grievous?

CAD. First cast your eyes up to this sky.

AG. Well; why do you bid me look at it?

CAD. Is it still the same, or think you it is changed?

AG. It is brighter than formerly, and more divine.

CAD. Is then this fluttering still present to your soul?

AG. I understand not your word; but I become somehow sobered, changing from my former mind.

CAD. Can you then hear any thing, and answer clearly?

AG. How I forget what we said before, O father!

CAD. To what house did you come in marriage?

AG. You gave me, as they say, to the sown Echion.

CAD. What son then was born in your house to your husband?

AG. Pentheus, by the association of myself and his father.

CAD. Whose head then have you in your arms?

AG. That of a lion, as those who hunted him said.

CAD. Look now rightly; short is the toil to see.

AG. Ah! what do I see? what is this I bear in my hands?

CAD. Look at it, and learn more clearly.

AG. I see the greatest grief, wretch that I am!

CAD. Does it seem to you to be like a lion?

AG. No: but I, wretched, hold the head of Pentheus.

CAD. Ay, much lamented before you recognized him.

AG. Who slew him, how came he into my hands?

CAD. O wretched truth, how unseasonably art thou come!

AG. Tell me, since delay causes a quivering at my heart.

CAD. You and your sisters slew him.

AG. And where did he die, in the house, or in what place?

CAD. Where formerly the dogs tore Actæon to pieces.

AG. But why did he, unhappy, go to Cithæron?

CAD. He went deriding the God and your Bacchic revels.

AG. But on what account did we go thither?

CAD. Ye were mad, and the whole city was frantic with Bacchus.

AG. Bacchus undid us — now I perceive.

CAD. Being insulted with insolence — for ye thought him not a God.

AG. But the dear body of my child, O father!

CAD. I having with difficulty traced it, bring it all.

AG. What! rightly united in its joints? * * * *

AG. But what part had Pentheus in my folly?

CAD. He was like you, not reverencing the God, therefore he joined all in one ruin, both ye and this one, so as to ruin the house, and me, who being childless of male children, see this branch of thy womb, O unhappy woman! most miserably and shamefully slain — whom the house respected; you, O child, who supported my house, born of my daughter, and was an object of fear to the city; and no one wished to insult the old man, seeing you; for he would have received a worthy punishment. But now I shall be cast out of my house dishonored, I, the mighty Cadmus, who sowed the Theban race, and reaped a most glorious crop; O dearest of men, for although no longer in being, still thou shalt be counted by me as dearest of my children; no longer touching this, my chin, with thy hand, addressing me, your mother's father, wilt thou embrace me, my son, saying, Who injures, who insults you, O father, who harasses your heart, being troublesome I say, that I may punish him who does you wrong, O father. But now I am miserable, and thou art wretched, and thy mother is pitiable, and thy relations are wretched. But if there is any one who despises the Gods, looking on this man's death, let him acknowledge the Gods.

CHOR. I grieve for thy state, O Cadmus; but your child has the punishment of your daughter, deserved indeed, but grievous to you.

AG. O father, for you see how I am changed ...

BAC ... changing, you shall become a dragon, and your wife becoming a beast, shall receive in exchange the form of a serpent, Harmonia, the daughter of Mars, whom you had, being a mortal. And as the oracle of Jove says, you shall drive with your wife a chariot of heifers, ruling over barbarians; and with an innumerable army you shall sack many cities; and when they plunder the temple of Apollo, they shall have a miserable return, but Mars shall defend you and Harmonia, and shall settle your life in the islands of the blessed. I say this, I, Bacchus, not born of a mortal father, but of Jove; and if ye had known how to be wise when ye would not, ye would have been happy, having the son of Jupiter for your ally.

CAD. Bacchus, we beseech thee, we have erred.

BAC. Ye have learned it too late; but when it behooved you, you knew it not.

CAD. I knew it, but you press on us too severely.

BAC. [Ay,] for I, being a God, was insulted by you.

CAD. It is not right for Gods to resemble mortals in anger.

BAC. My father, Jove, long ago decreed this.

AG. Alas! a miserable banishment is the decree [for us,] old man.

BAC. Why do ye then delay what must needs be?

CAD. O child, into what terrible evil have we come; both you wretched and your * * * * sisters, and I miserable, shall go, an aged sojourner, to foreigners. Still it is foretold that I shall bring into Greece a motley barbarian army, and leading their spears, I, a dragon, shall lead the daughter of Mars, Harmonia, my wife, having the fierce nature of a dragon, to the altars and tombs of the Greeks. Nor shall I, wretched, rest from ills, nor even sailing over the Acheron below shall I be at rest.

AG. O, my father! and I being deprived of you shall be banished.

CAD. Why do you embrace me with your hands, O unhappy child, as a white swan does its exhausted parent?

AG. For whither can I turn, cast out from my country?

CAD. I know not, my child; your father is a poor ally.

AG. Farewell, O house! farewell, O ancestral city! I leave you in misfortune a fugitive from my chamber.

CAD. Go then, my child, to the land of Aristæus * * * *.

AG. I bemoan thee, O father!

CAD. And I thee, my child; and I lament your sisters.

AG. Terribly indeed has king Bacchus brought this misery upon thy house.

BAC. [Ay,] for I have suffered terrible things from ye, having a name unhonored in Thebes.

AG. Farewell, my father.

CAD. And you farewell, O miserable daughter; yet you can not easily arrive at this.

AG. Lead me, O guides, where I may take my miserable sisters as the companions of my flight; and may I go where neither accursed Cithæron may see me, nor I may see Cithæron with my eyes, and where there is no memory of the thyrsus hallowed, but they may be a care to other Bacchæ.

CHOR. There are many forms of divine things; and the Gods bring to pass many in an unexpected manner: both what has been expected has not been accomplished, and God has found out a means for doing things unthought of. So, too, has this event turned out.