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Euripides

Euripides



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EURIPIDES

III



EURIPIDES, SKENE AND DIONYSUS.
RELIEF FROM SMYRNA IMPERIAL MUSEUM, CONSTANTINOPLE.

Alexander Finsd

E U R I P I D E S

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY
ARTHUR S. WAY, D.LIT.

IN FOUR VOLUMES

III

BACCHANALS
MADNESS OF HERCULES
CHILDREN OF HERCULES
PHOENICIAN MAIDENS
SUPPLIANTS



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE BACCHANALS	1
THE MADNESS OF HERCULES	125
THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES	249
THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS	339
SUPPLIANTS	493

G. REED

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THE BACCHANALS

VOL. III.

B

ARGUMENT

Semele the daughter of Cadmus, a mortal bride of Zeus, was persuaded by Hera to pray the God to promise her with an oath to grant her whatsoever she would. And, when he had consented, she asked that he would appear to her in all the splendour of his godhead, even as he visited Hera. Then Zeus, not of his will, but constrained by his oath, appeared to her amidst intolerable light and flashings of heaven's lightning, whereby her mortal body was consumed. But the God snatched her unborn babe from the flames, and hid him in a cleft of his thigh, till the days were accomplished wherein he should be born. And so the child Dionysus sprang from the thigh of Zeus, and was hidden from the jealous malice of Hera till he was grown. Then did he set forth in victorious march through all the earth, bestowing upon men the gift of the vine, and planting his worship everywhere. But the sisters of Semele scoffed at the story of the heavenly bridegroom, and mocked at the worship of Dionysus. And when Cadmus was now old, Pentheus his grandson reigned in his stead, and he too defied the Wine-giver, saying that he was no god, and that none in Thebes should ever worship him.

And herein is told how Dionysus came in human guise to Thebes, and filled her women with the Bacchanal possession, and how Pentheus, essaying to withstand him, was punished by strange and awful doom.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΒΑΚΧΩΝ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

DIONYSUS, *the Wine-god, who is called also Bacchus, and Iacchus, and Bromius, the Clamour-king.*

TEIRESIAS, *a prophet, old and blind.*

CADMUS, *formerly king of Thebes.*

PENTHEUS, *king of Thebes, grandson of Cadmus.*

SERVANT of Pentheus.

HERDMAN.

MESSENGER, *servant of Pentheus.*

AGAVE, *mother of Pentheus, daughter of Cadmus.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Bacchanals, Asiatic women who have followed Dionysus.*

Guards, attendants.

SCENE : before the royal palace of Thebes.

B A K X A I

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ

"Ηκω Διὸς παῖς τήνδε Θηβαίων χθόνα
Διόνυσος, δν τίκτει ποθ' ἡ Κάδμου κόρη
Σεμέλη λοχευθεῖσ' ἀστραπηφόρῳ πυρί·
μορφὴν δ' ἀμείψας ἐκ θεοῦ βροτησίαν
πάρειμι Δίρκης νάματ' Ἰσμηνοῦ θ' ὑδωρ.
οὐρῶ δὲ μητρὸς μνῆμα τῆς κεραυνίας
τόδ' ἐγγὺς οἴκων καὶ δόμων ἐρείπια
τυφόμενα Δίου πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαν φλόγα,
ἀθάνατον" Ήρας μητέρ' εἰς ἐμὴν ὕθριν.
αὖν δὲ Κάδμου, ἄβατον δος πέδον τόδε
τίθησι, θυγατρὸς σηκόν· ἀμπέλου δέ νιν
πέριξ ἐγὼ 'κάλυψα βοτρυώδει χλόῃ.
λιπὼν δὲ Λυδῶν τοὺς πολυχρύσους γύας
Φρυγῶν τε, Περσῶν θ' ἡλιοβλήτους πλάκας
Βάκτριά τε τείχη τήν τε δύσχιμον χθόνα
Μήδων ἐπελθὼν Ἀραβίαν τ' εὐδαιμόνα
'Ασίαν τε πᾶσαν, ἡ παρ' ἀλμυρὰν ἄλα
κεῖται μιγάσιν" Ελλησι βαρβάροις θ' ὁμοῦ
πλήρεις ἔχουσα καλλιπυργώτους πόλεις,
εἰς τήνδε πρώτον ἡλθον Ἐλλήνων πόλιν,
τάκει χορεύσας καὶ καταστήσας ἐμὰς
τελετάς, ἵν' εἴην ἐμφανῆς δαίμων βροτοῖς.
πρώτας δὲ Θήβας τῆσδε γῆς Ἐλληνίδος

10

20

THE BACCHANALS

Enter DIONYSUS.

DIONYSUS

I to this land of Thebes have come, Zeus' Son
Dionysus, born erstwhile of Cadmus' child
Semele, brought by levin-brand to travail.
My shape from God to mortal semblance changed,
I stand by Dirce's springs, Ismenus' flood.
I see my thunder-blasted mother's tomb
Here nigh the halls : the ruins of her home
Smoulder with Zeus's flame that liveth yet—
Hera's undying outrage on my mother.
Cadmus doth well, that he ordains this close, 10
His child's grave, hallowed : with the clustering
green
Of vines I, even I, embowered it round.
Leaving the gold-abounding Lydian meads
And Phrygian, o'er the Persian's sun-smit tracts,
By Bactrian strongholds, Media's storm-swept land,
Still pressing on, by Araby the Blest,
And through all Asia, by the briny sea
Lying with stately-towered cities thronged,
Peopled with Hellenes blent with aliens,
To this of Hellene cities first I come, 20
Having established in far lands my dances
And rites, to be God manifest to men.
So, of all Hellas, Thebes with my acclaim

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

άνωλόλυξα, νεβρίδ' ἔξαψας χροὸς
 θύρσον τε δοὺς εἰς χείρα, κίσσινον βέλος·
 ἐπεὶ μ' ἀδελφαὶ μητροῖς, ἀς ἡκιστ' ἔχρην,
 Διόνυσον οὐκ ἔφασκον ἐκφῦναι Διός,
 Σεμέλην δὲ νυμφευθεῖσαν ἐκ θυητοῦ τινος
 εἰς Ζῆν' ἀναφέρειν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν λέχους,
 30 Κάδμου σοφίσμαθ', ὃν νιν εἶνεκα κτανεῖν
 Ζῆν' ἔξεκαυχῶνθ', ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο.
 τοιγάρ νιν αὐτὰς ἐκ δόμων φστρησ' ἔγω
 μανίαις· ὅρος δ' οἰκοῦσι παράκοποι φρενῶν·
 σκευήν τ' ἔχειν ἡνάγκασ' ὄργίων ἐμῶν,
 καὶ πᾶν τὸ θῆλυ σπέρμα Καδμείων ὅσαι
 γυναῖκες ἥσαν ἔξέμηνα δωμάτων·
 ὅμοιον δὲ Κάδμου παισὶν ἀναμεμιγμέναι
 χλωραῖς ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀνορόφοις ἥνται πέτραις.
 δεῖ γὰρ πόλιν τήνδ' ἐκμαθεῖν, κεί μὴ θέλει,
 40 ἀτέλεστον οὖσαν τῶν ἐμῶν βακχευμάτων,
 Σεμέλης τε μητρὸς ἀπολογήσασθαί μ' ὑπερ
 φανέντα θυητοῖς δαίμον', δν τίκτει Διί.
 Κάδμος μὲν οὖν γέρας τε καὶ τυραννίδα
 Πενθεῖ δίδωσι θυγατρὸς ἐκπεφυκότι,
 δος θεομαχεῖν τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ καὶ σπονδῶν ἄπο
 ὥθεῖ μ', ἐν εὐχαῖς τ' οὐδαμοῦ μνείαν ἔχει.
 ὃν εἶνεκ' αὐτῷ θεὸς γεγὼς ἐνδείξομαι
 πᾶσίν τε Θηβαίοισιν. εἰς δ' ἄλλην χθόνα,
 τάνθένδε θέμενος εὖ, μεταστήσω πόδα,
 50 δεικνὺς ἐμαυτόν· ἦν δὲ Θηβαίων πόλις
 ὄργῃ σὺν ὅπλοις ἔξ ὅρους Βάκχας ἄγειν
 ξητῇ, συνάψω μαινάσι στρατηλατῶν.
 ὃν εἶνεκ' εἴδος θυητὸν ἄλλάξας ἔχω
 μορφήν τ' ἐμὴν μετέβαλον εἰς ἀνδρὸς φύσιν.
 ἄλλ, ὡ λιποῦσαι Τμῶλον ἔρυμα Λυδίας,

THE BACCHANALS

I first thrilled, there with fawn-skin girt her
limbs,
And gave her hand the ivied thyrsus-spear,
Because my mother's sisters, to their shame,
Proclaimed Dionysus never born of Zeus ;
But Semele by a man undone, said they,
Charged upon Zeus her sin of wantonness—
A subtle wile of Cadmus ! Hence, they vaunted, 30
Zeus slew the liar who named him paramour.
So frenzy-stung themselves I have driven from
home,
And mid the hills with soul distraught they dwell,
The vesture of my revels forced to wear ;
And all the woman-seed of Cadmus' folk,
Yea all, I drove forth raving from their homes :
And there, with Cadmus' daughters mingled, these
'Neath green pines sit on crags all shelterless.
For this Thebes needs must learn, how loth soe'er,
What means it not to be in my great rites 40
Initiate, learn that I plead Semele's cause
To men God manifest, whom she bare to Zeus.
Now Cadmus gave his crown and royal estate
To Pentheus, of another daughter born,
Who wars with Heaven in me, and from libations
Thrusts, nor makes mention of me in his prayers.
Therefore to him my godhead will I prove,
And to all Thebans. To another land
Then, after triumph here, will I depart,
And manifest myself. If Thebes in wrath 50
Take arms to chase her Bacchants from the hills,
Leading my Maenads I will clash in fight.
For this cause have I taken mortal form,
And changed my shape to fashion of a man.
Ho, ye who Lydia's rock-wall, Tmolus, left,

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

θίασος ἐμός, γυναικες, ἀς ἐκ Βαρθάρων
ἐκόμιστα παρέδρους καὶ ξυνεμπόρους ἐμοί,
αἴρεσθε τάπιχώρι' ἐν πόλει Φρυγῶν
τύμπανα, 'Ρέας τε μητρὸς ἐμά θ' εὐρήματα,
60 βασίλειά τ' ἀμφὶ δώματ' ἐλθοῦσαι τάδε
κτυπεῖτε Πενθέως, ὡς ὁρᾶ Κάδμου πόλις.
ἔγω δὲ Βάκχαις, εἰς Κιθαιρώνος πτυχὰς
ἐλθών, ἵν' εἰσί, συμμετασχήσω χορῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

• Ἀσίας ἀπὸ γαίας στρ. α'
ἰερὸν Τμῶλον ἀμείψασα θοάζω
Βρομίφ πόνον ἥδὺν κάματόν τ' εὐ-
κάματον, Βάκχιον εὐαζομένα.

70 τίς ὄδῷ τίς ὄδῳ; τίς ἀντ. α'
μελάθροις ; ἔκτοπος ἔστω, στόμα τ' εὔφη-
μον ἅπας ἔξοσιούσθω· τὰ νομισθέν-
τα γὰρ ἀεὶ Διόνυσον ὑμνήσω.

80 ὡ μάκαρ, ὅστις εὐδαιμων στρ. β'
τελετὰς θεῶν εἰδὼς
βιοτὰν ἀγιστεύει
καὶ θιασεύεται ψυχάν,
ἐν ὅρεσσι βακχεύων
ὅσιοις καθαρμοῖσιν
τά τε ματρὸς μεγάλας ὅρ-
για Κυβέλας θεμιτεύων
ἀνὰ θύρσον τε τινάσσων
κισσῷ τε στεφανωθεὶς

THE BACCHANALS

Women, my revel-rout, from alien homes .
To share my rest and my wayfaring brought,
Uplift the cymbals to the Phrygian towns
Native, great Mother Rhea's device and mine,
And smite them, compassing yon royal halls 60
Of Pentheus, so that Cadmus' town may see.
I to Cithaeron's glens will go, where bide
My Bacchanals, and join the dances there. [Exit.
*Enter CHORUS, waving the thyrsus-wands, and clashing
their timbrels.*

CHORUS

O happy to whom is the blessedness given (*Str. 2*)
To be taught in the Mysteries sent from heaven,
Who is pure in his life, through whose soul the
unsleeping

Revel goes sweeping !
Made meet by the sacred purifying
For the Bacchanal rout o'er the mountains flying,
For the orgies of Cybele mystery-folden,
 Of the Mother olden,
Wreathed with the ivy sprays,
The thyrsus on high doth he raise,

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

Διόνυσον θεραπεύει.
 ἵτε Βάκχαι, ἵτε Βάκχαι,
 Βρόμου παῖδα θεὸν θεοῦ
 Διόνυσον κατάγουσαι
 Φρυγίων ἐξ ὁρέων Ἑλλάδος εἰς
 εὐρυχόρους ἀγυιάς, τὸν Βρόμιον.

90 ὅν ποτ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ὡδίνων
 λοχίαις ἀνάγκαισι
 πταμένας Διὸς βροντᾶς
 ηδύος ἔκβολον μάτηρ
 ἔτεκεν, λιπούσ' αἰώ-
 να κεραυνίᾳ πλαγῇ·
 λοχίοις δ' αὐτίκα νιν δέ-
 ξατο θαλάμοις Κρονίδας Ζεύς·
 κατὰ μηρῷ δὲ καλύψας
 χρυσέαισιν συνερείδει
 περόναις κρυπτὸν ἀφ' Ἡρας.
 ἔτεκεν δ', ἀνίκα Μοῖραι

100 τέλεσαν, ταυρόκερων θεὸν
 στεφάνωσέν τε δρακόντων
 στεφάνοις, ἐνθεν ἄγραν θυρσοφόροι
 Μαινάδες ἀμφιβάλλονται πλοκάμοις.

ω Σεμέλας τροφοὶ Θῆ-
 βαι στεφανοῦσθε κισσῷ.
 βρύετε βρύετε χλοήρει
 μίλακι καλλικάρπῳ
 καὶ καταβακχιοῦσθε
 δρυὸς ἡ ἐλάτας κλάδοισι,
 στικτῶν τ' ἐνδυτὰ νεβρίδων
 στέφετε λευκοτρίχων πλοκάμων

ἀντ. β'

στρ. γ'

THE BACCHANALS

Singing the Vine-god's praise—

Come, Bacchanals, come !

The Clamour-king, child of a God,

O'er the mountains of Phrygia who trod,

Unto Hellas's highways broad

Bring him home, bring him home !—

(*Ant.* 2)

The God whom his mother,—when anguish tore
her

Of the travail restless that deathward bore her

On the wings of the thunder of Zeus down-flying,— 90

Brought forth at her dying,

An untimely birth, as her spirit departed

Stricken from life by the flame down-darted :

But in birth-bowers new did Zeus Cronion

Receive his scion ;

For, hid in a cleft of his thigh,

By the gold-clasps knit, did he lie

Safe hidden from Hera's eye

Till the Fates' day came ;

Then a God bull-horned Zeus bare,

100

And with serpents entwined his hair :

And for this do his Maenads wear

In their tresses the same.

Thebes, nursing-town of Semele, crown (Str. 3)

With the ivy thy brows, and be

All bloom, embowered in the starry-flowered

Lush green of the briony,

While the oak and pine thy tresses entwine

In thy bacchanal-eccstasy.

110

And thy fawn-skin flecked, with a fringe be it
decked

Of wool white-glistering

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

μαλλοῖς· ἀμφὶ δὲ νάρθηκας ὑβριστὰς
όσιοῦσθ· αὐτίκα γὰ πᾶσα χορεύσει,
Βρόμιος εὗτ' ἀν ἄγη θιάσους
εἰς ὅρος εἰς ὅρος, ἐνθα μένει
θηλυγενῆς ὅχλος
ἀφ' ἵστων παρὰ κερκίδων τ'
οἰστρηθεὶς Διονύσῳ.

120

ῳ θαλάμευμα Κουρή-
των ζάθεοί τε Κρήτας
Διογενέτορες ἔναυλοι,
ἐνθα τρικόρυθες ἄντροις
βυρσότονον κύκλωμα
τόδε μοι Κορύβαντες ηύρον·
ἀνὰ δὲ βάκχια συντόνῳ
κέρασαν ἀδυβόᾳ Φρυγίων
αὐλῶν πνεύματι, ματρός τε Ρέας εἰς
χέρα θῆκαν, κτύπον εὐάσμασι Βακχᾶν·
130 παρὰ δὲ μαινόμενοι Σάτυροι
ματέροις ἔξανύσαντο θεᾶς,
εἰς δὲ χορεύματα
συνῆψαν τριετηρίδων,
αἷς χαίρει Διόνυσος.

ἀντ. γ'

130

ἡδὺς ἐν οὔρεσιν, εὗτ' ἀν
ἐκ θιάσων δρομαίων
πέσῃ πεδόσε, νεβρίδος ἔχων
ἰερὸν ἐνδυτόν, ἀγρεύων
αἷμα τραγοκτόνου, ὡμοφάγον χάριν,

ἐπωδ.

140

14

THE BACCHANALS

In silvery tassels ;—O Bacchus' vassals,
High-tossed let the wild wands swing !
One dancing-band shall be all the land
When, led by the Clamour-king,
His revel-rout fills the hills—the hills
Where thy women abide till he come
Whom the Vine-god chasing, in frenzy racing,
Hunted from shuttle and loom.

(Ant. 3)

O cavern that rang when Curetès sang, 120
O bower of the Babe .Zeus' birth, [glancing
Where the Corybants, dancing with helm-crests
Through the dark halls under the earth,
This timbrel found whose hide-stretched round
We smite, and its Bacchanal mirth
They blent with the cry ringing sweet and high
From the flutes of the Phrygian land,
And its thunder, soaring o'er revel-shouts' roaring,
They gave unto Rhea's hand ;
But the gift passed on from the Mother, was won 130
By the madding Satyr-band ;
And to Semele's child gave the woodfolk wild
The homage he holdeth dear,
When to feet white-flashing the timbrels clashing
Are wedded in each third year.

O trance of rapture, when, reeling aside (Epode)
From the Bacchanal rout o'er the mountains
flying,
One sinks to the earth, and the fawn's flecked hide
Covers him lying
With its sacred vesture, wherein he hath chased 140
The goat to the death for its blood—for the taste
Of the feast raw-reeking, when over the hills

15

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ιέμενος εἰς ὅρεα Φρύγια, Λύδια,
ο δ' ἔξαρχος Βρόμιος, εὐοῖ.

ρεῖ δὲ γάλακτι πέδον, ρεῖ δ' οἶνῳ, ρεῖ δὲ με-
λισσᾶν
νέκταρι, Συρίας δ' ὡς λιβάνου καπνός.
ο Βακχεὺς δ' ἔχων
πυρσώδη φλόγα πεύκας
ἐκ νάρθηκος ἀΐσσει
δρόμῳ καὶ χοροῖς ἐρεθίζων πλανάτας
ἰαχαῖς τ' ἀναπάλλων,
150 τρυφερὸν πλόκαμον εἰς αἰθέρα ρίπτων.
ἄμα δ' ἐπ' εὐάσμασιν ἐπιβρέμει
τοιάδ'. Ὡ ἵτε Βάκχαι,
ώ ἵτε Βάκχαι,
Τμώλου χρυσορόου χλιδά,
μέλπετε τον Διόνυσον
βαρυβρόμων ὑπὸ τυμπάνων,
εῦια τὸν εὐιον ἀγαλλόμεναι θεὸν
ἐν Φρυγίαισι βοαῖς ἐνοπαῖσι τε,
160 λωτὸς ὅταν εὐκέλαδος
ἱερὸς ἱερὰ παίγματα
βρέμῃ, σύνοχα φοιτάσιν
εἰς ὅρος εἰς ὅρος· ἡδομένα δ' ἄρα,
πῶλος ὅπως ἄμα ματέρι φορβάδι,
κῶλον ἄγει ταχύπονη σκιρτήμασι Βάκχα.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

170 τίς ἐν πύλαισι; Κάδμον ἐκκάλει δόμων
'Αγήνορος παῖδ', δος πόλιν Σιδωνίαν
λιπὼν ἐπύργωσ' ἄστυ Θηβαίων τόδε.

THE BACCHANALS

Of Phrygia, of Lydia, the wild feet haste, [thrills
And the Clamour-king leads, and his "Evoë!"
Our hearts replying!

Flowing with milk is the ground, and with wine is it
flowing, and flowing [Araby soars;
Nectar of bees; and a smoke as of incense of
And the Bacchant, uplifting the flame of the brand
of the pine ruddy-glowing,
Waveth it wide, and with shouts, from the point of
the wand as it pours, [and throwing
Challengeth revellers straying, on-racing, on-dancing, 150
Loose to the breezes his curls, while clear through
the chorus that roars
Cleaveth his shout,—“On, Bacchanal-rout,
On, Bacchanal maidens, ye glory of Tmolus the hill
gold-welling, [thunder-knelling,
Blend the acclaim of your chant with the timbrels
Glad-pealing the glad God’s praises out
With Phrygian cries and the voice of singing,
When upsoareth the sound of the melody-
fountain,
Of the hallowed ringing of flutes far-flinging 160
The notes that chime with the feet that climb
The pilgrim-path to the mountain!”
And with rapture the Bacchanal onward racing,
With gambollings fleet [grazing,
As of foals round the mares in the meads that are
Speedeth her feet.

Enter TEIRESIAS.

TEIRESIAS

Gate-warder, ho! call Cadmus forth the halls, 170
Agenor’s son, who came from Sidon-town,
And with towers girded this the Thebans’ burg.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἵτω τις, εἰσάγγελλε Τειρεσίας ὅτι
ξητεῖ νιν· οἶδε δ' αὐτὸς ὡν ἥκω πέρι,
ἄ τε ξυνεθέμην πρέσβυς ὡν γεραιτέρω,
θύρσους ἀνάπτειν καὶ νεβρῶν δορὰς ἔχειν
στεφανοῦν τε κράτα κισσίνοις βλαστήμασιν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

180

ὦ φίλταθ', ώς σὴν γῆρυν ἡσθόμην κλύων
σοφὴν σοφοῦ παρ' ἀνδρός, ἐν δόμοισιν ὡν
ἥκω δ' ἔτοιμος τήνδ' ἔχων σκευὴν θεοῦ.
δεῖ γάρ νιν ὄντα παῖδα θυγατρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς,
Διόνυσον δς πέφηνεν ἀνθρώποις θεός,
ὅσον καθ' ἡμᾶς δυνατὸν αὐξεσθαι μέγαν.
ποὶ δεῖ χορεύειν, ποῖ καθιστάναι πόδα
καὶ κράτα σεῖσαι πολιόν ; ἔξηγοῦ σύ μοι
γέρων γέροντι, Τειρεσίᾳ· σὺ γάρ σοφός.
ώς οὐ κάμοιμ' ἀν οὔτε νύκτ' οὐθ' ἡμέραν
θύρσῳ κροτῶν γῆν· ἐπιλελήσμεθ' ἡδεώς
γέρουτες ὄντες.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

190

ταῦτ' ἐμοὶ πάσχεις ἄρα·
κάνγὼ γὰρ ἡβῶ κάπιχειρήσω χοροῖς.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκούν δχοισιν εἰς δρος περάσομεν ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως ἀν ὁ θεὸς τιμὴν ἔχοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

γέρων γέρουτα παιδαγωγήσω σ' ἐγώ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὁ θεὸς ἀμοχθὶ κεῦσε νῷν ἡγήσεται.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μόνοι δὲ πόλεως Βακχίῳ χορεύσομεν ;

THE BACCHANALS

Go, one ; say to him that Teiresias
Seeks him—he knoweth for what cause I come,
The old man's covenant with the elder-born
To entwine the thyrsi and the fawnskin don,
And crown our heads with wreaths of ivy-sprays.

Enter CADMUS.

CADMUS

Dear friend, within mine house I heard thy voice,
And knew it, the wise utterance of the wise.
Ready I come, thus in the God's garb dight. 180
For him, who is my daughter's very son,
Dionysus, who to men hath shown his godhead,
Ought we with all our might to magnify.
Where shall we dance now, and where plant the foot,
And toss the silvered head ? Instruct thou me ;
Let eld guide eld, Teiresias : wise art thou.
I shall not weary, nor by night nor day,
Smiting on earth the thyrsus. We forget
In joy our age.

TEIRESIAS

Thine heart is even as mine.

I too am young, I will essay the dance.

190

CADMUS

Come, to the mountain fare we, chariot-borne.

TEIRESIAS

Nay, riding should we honour less the God.

CADMUS

Age ushering age, I will escort thee on.

TEIRESIAS

We shall not tire ; the God will lead us thither.

CADMUS

Shall we alone of Thebes to Bacchus dance ?

19

c 2

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

μόνοι γὰρ εὐ φρονοῦμεν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι κακῶς.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μακρὸν τὸ μέλλειν· ἀλλ' ἐμῆς ἔχου χερός.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἰδού, ξύναπτε καὶ ξυνωρίζου χέρα.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐ καταφρονῶ· γὰρ τῶν θεῶν θυητὸς γεγών.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

200 οὐδὲν σοφιζόμεσθα τοῖσι δαίμοσι.

πατρίους παραδοχὰς ἂς θ' ὅμηλικας χρόνῳ
κεκτήμεθ', οὐδεὶς αὐτὰ καταβαλεῖ λογος,
οὐδὲ εἰ δι' ἄκρων τὸ σοφὸν ηὔρηται φρενῶν.
ἔρει τις ὡς τὸ γῆρας οὐκ αἰσχύνομαι,
μέλλων χορεύειν κράτα κισσώσας ἐμόν.
οὐ γὰρ διήρηχ' ὁ θεὸς εἴτε τὸν νέον
ἐχρῆν χορεύειν εἴτε τὸν γεραίτερον,
ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀπάντων βούλεται τιμᾶς ἔχειν
κοινάς, δι' ἀριθμῶν δ' οὐδὲν αὔξεσθαι θέλει.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

210 ἐπεὶ σὺ φέγγος, Τειρεσία, τόδ' οὐχ ὄρᾶς,
ἔγὼ προφήτης σοι λόγων γενήσομαι.
Πενθεὺς πρὸς οἴκους ὅδε διὰ σπουδῆς περᾶ,
Ἐχίονος παῖς, ὃ κράτος δίδωμι γῆς.
ὡς ἐπτόηται τί ποτ' ἔρει νεώτερον;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐκδημος ὁν μὲν τῆσδ' ἐτύγχανον χθονός,
κλύω δὲ νεοχμὰ τήνδ' ἀνὰ πτόλιν κακά,
γυναῖκας ἡμῖν δώματ' ἐκλελοιπέναι
πλασταῖσι βακχείαισιν, ἐν δὲ δασκίοις
ὅρεσι θοάζειν, τὸν νεωστὶ δαίμονα

220 Διόνυσον, ὅστις ἔστι, τιμώσας χοροῖς.

THE BACCHANALS

TEIRESIAS

Yea, we alone are wise ; the rest be fools.

CADMUS

Too long we linger. Come, grasp thou mine hand.

TEIRESIAS

Lo there : clasp close the interlinking hand.

CADMUS

Not I contemn the Gods, I, mortal-born !

TEIRESIAS

'Tis not for us to reason touching Gods.

200

Traditions of our fathers, old as time,

We hold : no reasoning shall cast them down,—

No, though of subtlest wit our wisdom spring.

Haply shall one say I respect not eld,

Who ivy-crowned address me to the dance.

Nay, for distinction none the God hath made

Whether the young or stricken in years must dance :

From all alike he claims his due of honour :

By halves he cares not to be magnified.

CADMUS

Since thou, Teiresias, seest not this light,

210

I will for thee be spokesman of thy words.

Lo to these halls comes Pentheus hastily,

Echion's son, to whom I gave the throne. [tell ?

How wild his mood ! What strange thing will he

Enter PENTHEUS.

PENTHEUS

It chanced that, sojourning without this land,

I heard of strange misdeeds in this my town,

How from their homes our women have gone forth

Feigning a Bacchic rapture, and rove wild

O'er wooded hills, in dances honouring

Dionysus, this new God—whoe'er he be.

220

21

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- πλήρεις δὲ θιάσοις ἐν μέσοισιν ἔσταναι
 κρατῆρας, ἄλλην δ' ἄλλοσ' εἰς ἐρημίαν
 πτώσσουσαν εύναις ἀρσένων ὑπηρετεῖν,
 πρόφασιν μὲν ὡς δὴ Μαινάδας θυοσκόους,
 τὴν δ' Ἀφροδίτην πρόσθ' ἄγειν τοῦ Βακχίου.
 ὅσας μὲν οὖν εἴληφα, δεσμίους χέρας
 σφέζουσι πανδήμοισι πρόσπολοι στέγαις·
 ὅσαι δ' ἄπεισιν, ἐξ ὅρους θηράσομαι,
 'Ινώ τ' Ἀγαύην θ' ἥ μ' ἔτικτ' Ἐχίονι,
 'Ακταίονός τε μητέρ', Αὐτονόην λέγω.
 230 καὶ σφᾶς σιδηρᾶς ἀρμόστας ἐν ἄρκυσι
 παύσω κακούργου τῆσδε βακχείας τάχα.
 λέγουσι δ' ὡς τις εἰσελήλυθε ξένος
 γόης ἐπωδὸς Λυδίας ἀπὸ χθονός,
 ξανθοῖσι βοστρύχοισιν εὔοσμῶν κομῶν,
 οἰνωπός, ὅσσοις χάριτας Ἀφροδίτης ἔχων,
 δις ἡμέρας τε κεύφρόνας συγγίγνεται
 τελετὰς προτείνων εὐίους νεάνισιν.
 εὶ δ' αὐτὸν εἴσω τῆσδε λήψομαι στέγης,
 240 παύσω κτυποῦντα θύρσον ἀνασείοντά τε
 κόμας, τράχηλον σώματος χωρὶς τεμών.
 ἐκεῖνος εἶναι φησι Διόνυσον θεόν,
 ἐκεῖνος ἐν μηρῷ ποτ' ἐρράφθαι Διός,
 δις ἐκπυροῦται λαμπάσιν κεραυνίαις
 σὺν μητρὶ, Δίους δὴ γάμους ἐψεύσατο.
 ταῦτ' οὐχὶ δεινῆς ἀγγόνης ἐπάξια,
 ὕβρεις ὑβρίζειν, ὅστις ἔστιν ὁ ξένος;
- ἀτὰρ τόδ' ἄλλο θαῦμα, τὸν τερασκόπον
 ἐν ποικίλαισι νεβρίσι Τειρεσίαν ὄρῳ
 250 πατέρα τε μητρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς, πολὺν γέλων,
 νάρθηκι βακχεύοντ· ἀναίνομαι, πατερ,

THE BACCHANALS

And midst each revel-rout the wine-bowls stand
Brimmed : and to lonely nooks, some here, some
there,
They steal, to work with men the deed of
shame,
In pretext Maenad priestesses, forsooth,
But honouring Aphrodite more than Bacchus.
As many as I have seized my servants keep
Safe in the common prison manacled.
But those yet forth, will I hunt from the hills—
Ino, Agave, who bare me to Echion,
Autonoe withal, Actaeon's mother.

230

In toils of iron trapped, full soon shall they
Cease from this pestilent Bacchic revelling.
Men say a stranger to the land hath come,
A juggling sorcerer from Lydia-land,
With essenced hair in golden tresses tossed,
Wine-flushed, Love's witching graces in his eyes,
Who with the damsels day and night consorts,
Making pretence of Evian mysteries.

If I within these walls but prison him,
Farewell to thyrsus-taboring, and to locks
Free-tossed ; for neck from shoulders will I hew.

240

He saith that Dionysus is a God !
Saith, he was once sewn up in Zeus's thigh—
Who, with his mother, was by lightning-flames
Blasted, because she lied of Zeus's love.
Is not this worthy hanging's ruthless doom,
Thus to blaspheme, whoe'er the stranger be ?

But lo, another marvel this—the seer
Teiresias, in dappled fawnskins clad !
Yea, and my mother's sire—O sight for laughter !—
Tossing the reed-wand ! Father, I take shame

250

23

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

τὸ γῆρας ὑμῶν εἰσορῶν νοῦν οὐκ ἔχον.
οὐκ ἀποτινάξεις κισσόν; οὐκ ἐλευθέραν
θύρσου μεθήσεις χεῖρ', ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάτερ;
σὺ ταῦτ' ἔπεισας, Τειρεσία· τόνδ' αὖ θέλεις
τὸν δαίμον' ἀνθρώποισιν εἰσφέρων νέον
σκοπεῦν πτερωτοὺς κάμπυρων μισθοὺς φέρειν.
εὶς μή σε γῆρας πολιὸν ἔξερρύετο,
καθῆσ' ἀν ἐν Βάκχαισι δέσμοις μέσαις,
260 τελετὰς πονηρὰς εἰσάγων γυναιξὶ γάρ
ὅπου βότρυος ἐν δαιτὶ γίγνεται γάνος,
οὐχ ὑγιές οὐδὲν ἔτι λέγω τῶν ὄργίων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῆς δυσσεβείας. ὁ ξέν', οὐκ αἰδεῖ θεοὺς
Κάδμον τε τὸν σπείραντα γηγενῆ στάχυν;
Ἐχίονος δ' ὧν παῖς καταισχύνεις γένος;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὅταν λάβῃ τις τῶν λόγων ἀνήρ σοφὸς
καλὰς ἀφορμάς, οὐ μέγ' ἔργον εὖ λέγειν.
σὺ δ' εὔτροχον μὲν γλῶσσαν ὡς φρονῶν ἔχεις,
ἐν τοῖς λόγοισι δ' οὐκ ἔνεισί σοι φρένες.
θρασὺς δέ, δυνατὸς καὶ λέγειν οἶος τ' ἀνήρ,
270 κακὸς πολίτης γίγνεται νοῦν οὐκ ἔχων.
οὗτος δ' ὁ δαίμων ὁ νέος δὲν σὺ διαγελᾶς,
οὐκ ἀν δυναίμην μέγεθος ἔξειπεῖν δσος
καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἔσται. δύο γάρ, ὁ νεανία,
τὰ πρῶτ' ἐν ἀνθρώποισι. Δημήτηρ θεά·
γῆ δ' ἔστιν, δηνομα δ' ὁ πότερον βούλει κάλει·
αὕτη μὲν ἐν ξηροῖσιν ἐκτρέφει βροτούς.
δις δ' ἡλθ' ἔπειτ', ἀντίπαλον ὁ Σεμέλης γόνος
βότρυος ὑγρὸν πῶμ' ηῦρε κείσηνέγκατο
280 θυητοῖς, δὲ παύει τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτούς
λύπης, ὅταν πλησθῶσιν ἀμπέλου ροῆς,

THE BACCHANALS

Beholding these grey hairs so sense-bereft.
Fling off the ivy ; let the thyrsus fall,
And set thine hand free, O my mother's sire.
Thou didst, Teiresias, draw him on to this :
'Tis thou wouldest foist this new God upon men
For augury and divination's wage !
Except thine hoary hairs protected thee,
Thou shouldst amid the Bacchanals sit in chains,
For bringing in these pestilent rites ; for when 260
In women's feasts the cluster's pride hath part,
No good, say I, comes of their revelry.

CHORUS

Blasphemy !—Stranger, dost not reverence heaven,
Nor Cadmus, sower of the earth-born seed ?
Son of Echion, thou dost shame thy birth !

TEIRESIAS

Whene'er a wise man finds a noble theme
For speech, 'tis easy to be eloquent.
Thou—roundly runs thy tongue, as thou wert wise ;
But in these words of thine sense is there none.
The rash man, armed with power and ready of speech, 270
Is a bad citizen, as void of sense.

But this new God, whom thou dost laugh to
scorn,

I cannot speak the greatness whereunto
In Hellas he shall rise. Two chiefest Powers,
Prince, among men there are : divine Demeter—
Earth is she, name her by which name thou wilt ;—
She upon dry food nurtureth mortal men :
Then followeth Semele's Son ; to match her gift
The cluster's flowing draught he found, and gave
To mortals, which gives rest from grief to men 280
Woe-worn, soon as the vine's stream filleth them.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ὑπνον τε λήθην τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν κακῶν
 δίδωσιν, οὐδὲ ἔστ' ἄλλο φάρμακον πόνων.
 οὗτος θεοῖσι σπένδεται θεὸς γεγώς,
 ὃστε διὰ τοῦτον τάγάθ' ἀνθρώπους ἔχειν.
 καὶ καταγελᾶς νιν, ὡς ἐνερράφη Διὸς
 μηρῷ; διδάξω σ' ὡς καλῶς ἔχει τόδε.
 ἐπεὶ νιν ἥρπασ' ἐκ πυρὸς κεραυνίου
 Ζεύς, εἰς δ "Ολυμπον βρέφος ἀνήγαγεν, θεὸν
 290 "Ηρα νιν ἥθελ' ἐκβαλεῖν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ·
 Ζεὺς δ' ἀντεμηχανήσαθ' οἴα δὴ θεός.
 ῥήξας μέρος τι τοῦ χθόν' ἐγκυκλουμένου
 αἰθέρος, ἔθηκε τόνδ' ὅμηρον, ἐκδιδοὺς
 Διόνυσον "Ηρας νεικέων· χρόνῳ δέ νιν
 βροτοὶ τραφῆναι φασιν ἐν μηρῷ Διός,
 ὄνομα μεταστήσαντες, ὅτι θεᾶ ἡ θεός
 Ηρα ποθ' ὡμήρευσε, συνθέντες λόγον.
 μάντις δ' ὁ δαιμῶν ὅδε· τὸ γὰρ βακχεύσιμον·
 300 καὶ τὸ μανιῶδες μαντικὴν πολλὴν ἔχει·
 ὅταν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸ σῶμ' ἔλθῃ πολὺς,
 λέγειν τὸ μέλλον τοὺς μεμηνότας ποιεῖ.
 "Αρεώς τε μοῖραν μεταλαβὼν ἔχει τινά·
 στρατὸν γὰρ ἐν ὅπλοις ὅντα κάππι τάξεις
 φόβος διεπτόησε πρὶν λόγχης θιγεῖν·
 μανία δὲ καὶ τοῦτ' ἔστι Διονύσου πάρα.
 ἔτ' αὐτὸν ὄψει κάπι Δελφίσιν πέτραις
 πηδῶντα σὺν πεύκαισι δικόρυφον πλάκα,
 πάλλοντα καὶ σείοντα Βακχεῖον κλάδον,
 μέγαν τ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδ'. ἀλλ' ἐμοί, Πενθεῦ, πιθοῦ·

THE BACCHANALS

And sleep, the oblivion of our daily ills,
He gives—there is none other balm for toils.
He is the Gods' libation, though a God,
So that through him do men obtain good things.

And dost thou mock him, as in Zeus's thigh
Sewn? I will show thee all the legend's beauty :
When Zeus had snatched him from the levin-fire,
And bare the babe to Olympus, Hera then
Fain would have cast his godhead out of heaven. 290
Zeus with a God's wit framed his counterplot.

A fragment from the earth-enfolding ether
He brake, and wrought to a hostage,¹ setting so
Dionysus safe from Hera's spite. In time
Men told how he was nursed in Zeus's thigh.
Changing the name, they wrought a myth thereof,
Because the God was hostage once to Hera.

A prophet is this God : the Bacchic frenzy
And ecstasy are full-fraught with prophecy :
For, in his fullness when he floods our frame,
He makes his maddened votaries tell the future. 300
Somewhat of Ares' dues he shares withal :
Hosts harness-clad, in ranks arrayed, sometimes
Are thrilled with panic ere a spear be touched ;
This too is a frenzy Dionysus sends.
Yet shalt thou see him even on Delphi's crags
With pine-brands leaping o'er the cloven crest,
Tossing on high and waving Bacchus' bough,—
Yea, great through Hellas. Pentheus, heed thou
me :

¹ i.e. Gave this counterfeit Dionysus to Hera, as a hostage against his investing her rival's child with the honours of divinity. The argument is based on the similarity of *μέπος*, "fragment"; *μηρός*, "thigh"; *δμηρός*, "hostage."

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

310 μὴ τὸ κράτος αὐχεῖ δύναμιν ἀνθρώποις ἔχειν,
μηδ', ἡν δοκῆσ μέν, ἡ δὲ δόξα σου νοσῆ,
φρονεῖν δόκει τι· τὸν θεὸν δ' εἰς γῆν δέχου
καὶ σπένδε καὶ βάκχευε καὶ στέφου κάρα.
οὐχ ὁ Διόνυσος σωφρονεῖν ἀναγκάσει
γυναικας εἰς τὴν Κύπριν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει
τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἔνεστιν εἰς τὰ πάντ' ἀει.
τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή· καὶ γὰρ ἐν βακχεύμασιν
οὗσ' ἡ γε σώφρων οὐ διαφθαρήσεται.
ὅρᾶς, σὺ χαίρεις, ὅταν ἐφεστῶσιν πύλαις
πολλοί, τὸ Πενθέως δ' ὄνομα μεγαλύνῃ πόλις·
κάκεῖνος, οἴμαι, τέρπεται τιμώμενος.
ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν καὶ Κάδμος, δν συ διαγελᾶς,
κισσῷ τ' ἐρεψόμεσθα καὶ χορεύσομεν,
πολιά ξυνωρίς, ἀλλ' ὅμως χορευτέον,
κούν θεομαχήσω σῶν λόγων πεισθεὶς ὅπο.
μαίνει γὰρ ὡς ἄλγιστα, κοῦτε φαρμάκοις
ἄκη λάβοις ἄν, οὗτ' ἄνευ τούτων νοσεῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ῳ πρέσβυν, Φοῖβόν τ' οὐ καταισχύνεις λόγοις,
τιμῶν τε Βρόμιον σωφρονεῖς μέγαν θεόν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

330 ὡ παῖ, καλῶς σοι Τειρεσίας παρήνεσεν·
οἴκει μεθ' ἡμῶν, μὴ θύραζε τῶν νόμων.
νῦν γὰρ πέτει τε καὶ φρονῶν οὐδὲν φρονεῖς.
κεὶ μὴ γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ θεός οὗτος, ὡς συ φής,
παρὰ σοὶ λεγέσθω· καὶ καταψεύδου καλῶς
ὡς ἔστι, Σεμέλη θ' ἵνα δοκῆ θεὸν τεκεῖν,
ἡμῖν τε τιμὴ παντὶ τῷ γένει προσῆ.
ὅρᾶς τὸν Ἀκταίωνος ἄθλιον μόρον,
δν ὡμόσιτοι σκύλακες ἀς ἐθρέψατο
διεσπάσαντο, κρείσσον' ἐν κυναγίαις

THE BACCHANALS

Boast not that naked force hath power o'er men ;
Nor, if it seem so to thy jaundiced eye,
Deem thyself wise. The God into thy land
Welcome : spill wine, be bacchant, wreathè thine head.

310

Dionysus upon women will not thrust
Chastity : in true womanhood inborn
Dwells temperance touching all things evermore.
This must thou heed ; for in his Bacchic rites
The virtuous-hearted shall not be undone.

Lo, thou art glad when thousands throng thy gates,
And all Thebes magnifieth Pentheus' name :
He too, I wot, in homage taketh joy.
I, then, and Cadmus, whom thou laugh'st to scorn,
Will wreathè our heads with ivy, and will dance—
A greybeard pair, yet cannot we but dance.
Not at thy suasion will I war with Gods.
Most grievous is thy madness, and no spell
May medicine thee, though spells have made thee mad.

320

CHORUS

Old sire, thou sham'st not Phoebus in thy speech,
And wisely honourest Bromius, mighty God.

CADMUS

My son, well hath Teiresias counselled thee.
Dwell with us, not without the pale of wont.
Thou'rt now in cloudland : naught thy wisdom is :
For, though this God were no God,—as thou sayest,—
God be he called of thee : in glorious fraud
Be Semele famed as mother of a God :
So upon all our house shall honour rest.

330

Rememberest thou Actaeon's wretched doom,
Whom the raw-ravelling hounds himself had reared
Rent limb from limb in the meads, for that high boast

29

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

340

Αρτέμιδος είναι κομπάσαντ', ἐν ὄργασιν.
δι μὴ πάθης σύ, δεῦρό σου στέψω κάρα
κισσῷ· μεθ' ἡμῶν τῷ θεῷ τιμὴν δίδου.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οὐ μὴ προσοίσεις χεῖρα, βακχεύσεις δ' ἵων,
μηδ' ἔξομόρξει μωρίαν τὴν σὴν ἐμοί;
τῆς σῆς δ' ἀνοίας τόνδε τὸν διδάσκαλον
δίκην μέτειμ. στειχέτω τις ώς τάχος,
ἐλθὼν δὲ θάκους τοῦδ' ἵν' οἰωνοσκοπεῖ
μοχλοῖς τριαίνου κάνατρεψον ἔμπαλιν,
ἄνω κάτω τὰ πάντα συγχέας ὁμοῦ,
καὶ στέμματ' ἀνέμοις καὶ θυέλλαισιν μέθεις.
μάλιστα γάρ νιν δήξομαι δράσας τάδε.
οἱ δ' ἀνὰ πόλιν στείχοντες ἔξιχνεύσατε
τὸν θηλύμορφον ξένουν, δις εἰσφέρει νόσον
καινὴν γυναιξὶ καὶ λέχη λυμαίνεται.
κάνπερ λάβητε, δέσμιον πορεύσατε
δεῦρ' αὐτόν, ώς ἀν λευσίμου δίκης τυχὼν
θάνη πικρὰν βάκχευσιν ἐν Θήβαις ἴδων.

ΤΕΙΡΕΞΙΑΣ

360

ω σχέτλι', ώς οὐκ οἰσθα ποῦ ποτ' εἰ λόγων.
μέμηνας ἥδη, καὶ πρὶν ἔξεστης φρενῶν.
στείχωμεν ἡμεῖς, Κάδμε, καξαιτώμεθα
ὑπέρ τε τούτου καίπερ ὅντος ἀγρίου
ὑπέρ τε πόλεως, τὸν θεὸν μηδὲν νέον
δρᾶν. ἀλλ' ἔπου μοι κισσίνου βάκτρου μέτα·
πειρῶ δ' ἀνορθοῦν σῶμ' ἐμόν, κάγῳ τὸ σόν·
γέροντε δ' αἰσχρὸν δύο πεσεῖν· ἵτω δ' ὅμως·
τῷ Βακχίῳ γάρ τῷ Διὸς δουλευτέον.
Πενθεὺς δ' ὅπως μὴ πένθος εἰσοίσει δόμοις
τοῖς σοῖσι, Κάδμε· μαντικῇ μὲν οὐ λέγω,
τοῖς πράγμασιν δέ· μῶρα γάρ μῶρος λέγει.

30

THE BACCHANALS

That Artemis in hunting he excelled ?
Lest such be thy fate, let me crown thine head
With ivy : honour thou with us the God.

340

PENTHEUS

Hence with thine hand ! Go, play the Bacchant
thou,
Neither besmirch me with thy folly's stain.
This seer, thy monitor in senselessness,
Will I chastise. Let someone go with speed—
(To an attendant) Thou, hie thee to his seat of augury ;
Upheave with levers, hurl it to the ground ;
All in confusion turn it upside down ;
His holy fillets fling to wind and storm :
For, doing so, I most shall wring his heart
Some—ye, range through the city, and track down
That girl-faced stranger, who upon our wives
Bringeth strange madness, and defiles our beds.
And if ye catch him, hale him bound with chains
Hither, that death by stoning be his meed,
And so he rue his revelry in Thebes.

350

TEIRESIAS

Ah wretch, thou knowest not what thou hast said !
Thou'rt stark-mad now, who erst wast sense-bereft.
Let us go, Cadmus, and make intercession
Both for this man, brute savage though he be,
And Thebes, that no strange vengeance of the God
Smite them. Come with me, ivy-wand in hand,
Essay to upbear my frame, as I do thine.
Shame if two greybeards fell !—nay, what of that ?
For Bacchus, Son of Zeus, we needs must serve.
Cadmus, beware lest *Pentheus* bring his echo,
Repentance, to thine house :—not prophecy here
Speaks, but his deeds. A fool, he speaketh folly.

360

[*Exeunt.*

31

BAKXAI

ХОРОХ

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------|
| 370 | <p>Οσία πότνα θεῶν,
 Οσία δ' ἀ κατὰ γάν
 χρυσέαν πτέρυγα φέρεις,
 τάδε Πενθέως ἀίεις ;
 ἀίεις οὐχ ὁσίαν
 ὕβριν εἰς τὸν Βρόμιον,
 τὸν Σεμέλας, τὸν παρὰ καλλιστεφάνοις
 εὐφροσύναις δαίμονα πρώ-
 του μακάρων ; δις τάδ' ἔχει,
 θιασεύειν τε χοροῖς
 μετά τ' αὐλοῦ γελάσαι
 ἀποπαῦσαι τε μερίμνας,
 ὅπόταν βότρυος ἐλθῇ
 γάνος ἐν δαιτὶ θεῶν,
 κισσοφόροις δ' ἐν θαλίαις
 ἀνδράσι κρατήρι ὑπνον ἀμφιβάλλῃ.</p> | στρ. α' |
| 380 | <p>ἀχαλίνων στομάτων
 ἀνόμου τ' ἀφροσύνας
 τὸ τέλος δυστυχία·
 ὁ δὲ τᾶς ἡσυχίας
 βίοτος καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν
 ἀσάλευτόν τε μένει
 καὶ συνέχει δώματα· πόρσω γὰρ ὅμως
 αἰθέρα ναίοντες ὄρῳ-
 σιν τὰ βροτῶν οὐρανίδαι.
 τὸ σοφὸν δ' οὐ σοφία
 τό τε μὴ θυητὰ φρονεῖν
 βραχὺς αἰών· ἐπὶ τούτῳ
 δέ τις ἀν μεγάλα διώκων
 τὰ παρόντ' οὐχὶ φέροι.</p> | ἀντ. α' |
| 390 | | |

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

O Sanctity, thou who dost bear dominion (Str. 1) 370

Over Gods, yet low as this earthly ground,

Unto usward, stopest thy golden pinion,—

Hear'st thou the words of the king, and the sound
Of his blast of defiance, of Pentheus assailing
The Clamour-king?—hear'st thou his blasphemous
railing

On Semele's son, who is foremost found

Of the Blest in the festival beauty-crowned?—

Who hath for his own prerogative taken

To summon forth feet through his dances to
leap,

When blent with the flutes light laughters awaken, 380

And the children of care have forgotten to weep,

Whensoever revealed is the cluster's splendour

In the banquet that men to the high Gods tender,

And o'er ivy-wreathed revellers drinking deep

The wine-bowl droppeth the mantle of sleep.

Of the reinless lips that will own no master, (Ant. 1)

Of the folly o'er law's pale stubborn to stray—

One is the end of them, even disaster;

But the calm life, still as a summer day,

But the foot whose faring discretion guideth, 390

Their steadfast state unshaken abideth,

And the home still findeth in such its stay.

Ah, the Heavenly Ones dwell far away,

Yet look they on men from their cloudy portals.

O, not with knowledge is Wisdom bought;

And the spirit that soareth too high for mortals

Shall see few days: whosoever hath caught

At the things too great for a man's attaining,

Even blessings assured shall he lose in the gaining.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

400

μαινομενων δ' οἵδε τρόποι
καὶ κακοβούλων παρ' ἔμοιγε φωτῶν.

410

ἰκοίμαν ποτὶ Κύπρου,
νᾶσον τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας,
ἐν ᾧ θελξίφρονες νέμον-
ται θνατοῖσιν Ἐρωτες,
χθόνα¹ θ' ἀν ἑκατόστομοι
βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ ροὰι
καρπίζουσιν ἄνομβρον.
ποῦ δ' ἀ καλλιστευομένα
Πιερία μούσειος ἔδρα,
σεμνὰ κλιτὺς Ὄλύμπου;
ἔκεισ' ἄγε με, Βρόμιε Βρόμιε,
πρόβακχ' εὗιε δαῖμον.
ἔκει Χάριτες, ἔκει δὲ Πόθος·
ἔκει δὲ Βάκχαις θέμις ὀργιάζειν.

420

ὁ δαίμων ὁ Διὸς παιᾶς
χαίρει μὲν θαλίαισιν,
φιλεῖ δ' ὀλβοδότειραν Εἰ-
ρήναν, κουροτρόφον θεάν.
ἴσα δ' εἴς τε τὸν ὄλβιον
τόν τε χείρονα δῶκ' ἔχειν
οἴνου τέρψιν ἄλυπον·
μισεῖ δ' ω̄ μὴ ταῦτα μέλει,
κατὰ φάος νύκτας τε φίλας
εὐαίωνα διαξῆν·
σοφὸν δ' ἀπέχειν πραπίδα φρένα τε

¹ Meineke and Nauck : for MSS. Πάφον.

στρ. β'

ἀντ. β'

THE BACCHANALS

Such paths as this, meseemeth, be sought 400
Of the witless folly that roves distraught.

(Str. 2)

O to flee hence unto where Aphrodite
Doth in Cyprus, the paradise-island, dwell,
The sea-ringed haunt of the Love-gods mighty
To weave the soul-enchanting spell,
Or the fields where untold is the harvest's gold,
Where the stream of the hundred mouths hath
rolled,

Whereon rain never fell !

But O for the land that in beauty is peerless,¹
The Pierian haunt where the Muses sing ! 410
On Olympus the hallowed to stand all fearless
Thitherward lead me, O Clamour-king !
O Revel-god, guide where the Graces abide
And Desire,—where danceth, of no man denied,
The Bacchanal ring.

(Ant. 2)

Our God, the begotten of Zeus, hath pleasure
In the glee of the feast where his chalices
shine ;
And Peace doth he love, who is giver of treasure,
Who of Youth is the nursing-mother divine. 420
On the high, on the low, doth his bounty bestow
The joyance that maketh an end of woe,
The joyance of wine.
But he hateth the man that in scorn refuseth
A life that on pinions of happiness flies
Through its days and its nights, nor the good part
chooseth.
Wisely shalt thou from the over-wise

¹ Macedonia ; where Euripides composed this play.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

περισσῶν παρὰ φωτῶν.

430 τὸ πλῆθος ὃ τι τὸ φαυλότερον
ἐνόμισε χρῆται τε, τόδ' ἀν δεχοίμαν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

Πενθεῦ, πάρεσμεν τήνδ' ἄγραν ἡγρευκότες
ἔφ' ήν ἐπεμψας, οὐδὲ ἄκρανθ' ὠρμήσαμεν.
οὐ θὴρ δ' ὅδ' ἡμῖν πρᾶος οὐδέν ὑπέσπασε
φυγῇ πόδ', ἀλλ' ἔδωκεν οὐκ ἄκων χέρας,
οὐδέν ὡχρός, οὐδέν ἡλλαξεν οἰνωπὸν γένυν,
γελῶν δὲ καὶ δεῖν κάπάγειν ἐφίετο

440 ἔμενέ τε, τούμὸν εὐπετὲς ποιούμενος.
κάγῳ δὶ' αἰδοῦς εἶπον· ὁ ξέν', οὐχ ἐκὼν
ἄγω σε, Πενθέως δ' ὃς μ' ἐπεμψ' ἐπιστολαῖς.
ἀς δ' αὖ σὺ Βάκχας εἰρξας, ἀς συνήρπασας
καῦδησας ἐν δεσμοῖσι πανδήμου στέγης,
φροῦδαί γ' ἐκεῖναι λελυμέναι πρὸς ὄργαδας
σκιρτῶσι Βρόμιον ἀνακαλούμεναι θέον·
αὐτόματα δ' αὐταῖς δεσμὰ διελύθη πεδῶν,
κλῆδές τ' ἀνήκαν θύρετρ' ἄνευ θυητῆς χερός.
πολλῶν δ' ὅδ' ἀνὴρ θαυμάτων ἥκει πλέως
εἰς τάσδε Θήβας. σοὶ δὲ τἄλλα χρὴ μέλειν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

μαίνεσθε· χειρῶν τοῦδ' ἐν ἄρκυσιν γὰρ ὧν
οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως ὡκὺς ὥστε μ' ἐκφυγεῖν.
ἀτὰρ τὸ μὲν σῶμ' οὐκ ἄμορφος εἰ, ξένε,
ώς εἰς γυναῖκας, ἐφ' ὅπερ εἰς Θήβας πάρει·
πλόκαμός τε γάρ σου ταναός, οὐ πάλης ὅποι,
γένυν παρ' αὐτὴν κεχυμένος, πόθου πλέως·
λευκὴν δὲ χροιὰν ἐκ παρασκευῆς ἔχεις,
οὐχ ἡλίου βολαῖσιν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ σκιᾶς,
τὴν Ἀφροδίτην καλλονῆ θηρώμενος.
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι λέξον ὅστις εἰ γένος.

460

THE BACCHANALS

Hold thee apart : but the faith of the heart 430
Of the people, that lives in the works of the mart,
For me shall suffice.

*Re-enter PENTHEUS. Enter SERVANT, with attendants,
bringing DIONYSUS bound.*

SERVANT

Pentheus, we come, who have run down this prey
For which thou sentest us, nor sped in vain.
This wild-beast found we tame : he darted not
In flight away, but yielded, nothing loth,
His hands, nor paled, nor changed his cheeks' rose-hue,
But smiling bade us bind and lead him thence,
And tarried, making easy this my task.

440

Then shamed I said, " Not, stranger, of my will,
But by commands of Pentheus, lead I thee."

The captured Bacchanals thou didst put in ward,
And in the common prison bind with chains,
Fled to the meadows are they, loosed from bonds,
And dance and call on Bromius the God.

The fetters from their feet self-sundered fell ;
Doors, without mortal hand, unbarred themselves.
Yea, fraught with many marvels this man came
To Thebes ! To thee the rest doth appertain.

450

PENTHEUS

Ye are mad ! Once in the toils of these mine hands,
He is not so fleet as to escape from me.
Ha ! of thy form thou art not ill-favoured, stranger,
For woman's tempting—even thy quest at Thebes.
No wrestler thou, as show thy flowing locks
Down thy cheeks floating, fraught with all desire ;
And white, from heedful tendance, is thy skin,
Smit by no sun-shafts, but made wan by shade,
While thou dost hunt desire with beauty's lure.

First, tell me of what nation sprung thou art.

460

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐ κόμπος οὐδεῖς· ράδιον δ' εἰπεῖν τόδε.
τὸν ἀνθεμώδη Τμῶλον οἰσθά που κλύων.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οἰδ', δις τὸ Σάρδεων ἄστυ περιβάλλει κύκλῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐντεῦθέν εἰμι, Λυδία δέ μοι πατρίς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πόθεν δὲ τελετὰς τάσδ' ἄγεις ἐς Ἑλλάδα;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς εἰσέβησ', ὁ τοῦ Διός.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

Ζεὺς δ' ἔστ' ἐκεῖ τις, δις νέους τίκτει θεούς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκ, ἀλλ' ὁ Σεμέλην ἐνθάδε ζεύξας γάμοις.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πότερα δὲ νύκτωρ σ' ἦ κατ' ὅμμ' ἡνάγκασεν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

470 ορῶν ὄρωντα, καὶ δίδωσιν ὅργια.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὰ δ' ὅργι' ἔστὶ τίν' ἵδεαν ἔχοντά σοι;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄρρητ' ἀβακχεύτοισιν εἰδέναι βροτῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἔχει δ' ὄνησιν τοῖσι θύουσιν τίνα;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐ θέμις ἀκοῦσαι σ', ἔστι δ' ἄξι' εἰδέναι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εὖ τοῦτ' ἐκιβδήλευσας, ἵν' ἀκοῦσαι θέλω.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀσέβειαν ἀσκοῦντ' ὅργι' ἔχθαιρει θεαῦ.

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

No high vaunt this—'tis easy to declare :
Of flowery Tmolus haply thou hast heard.

PENTHEUS

I know : it compasseth the Sardians' town.

DIONYSUS

Thence am I : Lydia is my fatherland.

PENTHEUS

Wherefore to Hellas bringest thou these rites ?

DIONYSUS

Dionysus, Zeus' son, made me initiate.

PENTHEUS

Lives a Zeus there, who doth beget new gods ?

DIONYSUS

Nay, the same Zeus who wedded Semele here.

PENTHEUS

Dreaming or waking wast thou made his thrall ?

DIONYSUS

Nay, eye to eye his mysteries he bestowed. 470

PENTHEUS

Ay, of what fashion be these mysteries ?

DIONYSUS

'Tis secret, save to the initiate.

PENTHEUS

What profit bring they to his votaries ?

DIONYSUS

Thou mayst not hear : yet are they worth thy knowing.

PENTHEUS

Shrewd counterfeiting, to whet lust to hear !

DIONYSUS

His rites loathe him that worketh godlessness.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὸν θεὸν ὄρᾶν γὰρ φῆσ σαφῶς, ποῖός τις ἦν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

όποῖος ἥθελ· οὐκ ἐγὼ τασσον τόδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τοῦτ' αὖ παρωχέτευσας εὑ̄ κούδεν λέγων.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

480 δόξει τις ἀμαθεῖ σοφὰ λέγων οὐκ εὑ̄ φρονεῖν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἥλθεις δὲ πρῶτα δεῦρ' ἄγων τὸν δαιμόνα;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πᾶς ἀναχορεύει βαρβάρων τάδ' ὅργια.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

φρονοῦσι γὰρ κάκιον Ἑλλήνων πολύ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τάδ' εὑ̄ γε μᾶλλον· οἱ νόμοι δὲ διάφοροι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τά δ' ἴερὰ νύκτωρ ἡ μεθ' ἡμέραν τελεῖς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

νύκτωρ τὰ πολλά· σεμνότητ' ἔχει σκότος.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τοῦτ' εἰς γυναικας δόλιόν ἔστι καὶ σαθρόν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

κὰν ἡμέρᾳ τό γ' αἰσχρὸν ἔξεύροι τις ἄν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

δίκην σε δοῦναι δεῖ σοφισμάτων κακῶν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

490 σὲ δ' ἀμαθίας γε κάσεβοῦντ' εἰς τὸν θεόν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ώς θρασὺς ὁ Βάκχος κούκ ἀγύμναστος λόγων.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

εἴφ' ὅ τι παθεῖν δεῖ· τί με τὸ δεινὸν ἐργάσει;

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Thou saw'st the God : what fashion was he of ?

DIONYSUS

As seemed him good : that did not I enjoin.

PENTHEUS

This too thou hast shrewdly parried, telling naught.

DIONYSUS

Wise answers seem but folly to a fool.

480

PENTHEUS

Cam'st thou the first to bring his godhead hither ?

DIONYSUS

All Asians through these mystic dances tread.

PENTHEUS

Ay, far less wise be they than Hellene men.

DIONYSUS

Herein far wiser. Diverse wont is theirs.

PENTHEUS

By night or day dost thou perform his rites ?

DIONYSUS

Chiefly by night : gloom lends solemnity.

PENTHEUS

Ay—and for women snares of lewdness too.

DIONYSUS

In the day too may lewdness be devised.

PENTHEUS

Now punished must thy vile evasions be.

DIONYSUS

Ay, and thy folly and impiety.

490

PENTHEUS

How bold our Bacchant is, in word-fence skilled !

DIONYSUS

What is my doom ? What vengeance wilt thou wreak ?

41

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ἀβρὸν βόστρυχον τεμῷ σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἱερὸς ὁ πλόκαμος· τῷ θεῷ δ' αὐτὸν τρέφω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἔπειτα θύρσον τόνδε παράδος ἐκ χεροῖν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτός μ' ἀφαιροῦ· τόνδε Διονύσου φορῶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

είρκταισί τ' ἔνδον σῶμα σὸν φυλάξομεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

λύσει μ' ὁ δαίμων αὐτός, ὅταν ἐγὼ θέλω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ὅταν γε καλέσῃς αὐτὸν ἐν Βάκχαις σταθείς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

500 καὶ νῦν ἂ πάσχω πλησίον παρὼν ὄρᾳ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ ποῦ "στιν; οὐ γὰρ φανερὸς ὅμμασίν γ' ἐμοῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

παρ' ἐμοί· σὺ δ' ἀσεβὴς αὐτὸς ὃν οὐκ εἰσορᾶς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λάζυσθε· καταφρονεῖ με καὶ Θήβας ὅδε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐδῶ με μὴ δεῖν σωφρονῶν οὐ σώφροσιν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ δεῖν γε κυριώτερος σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκ οἰσθ' ὅ τι ζῆς, οὐδὲ δρᾶς, οὐδὲ ὅστις εἰ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

Πενθεὺς Ἀγαύης παῖς, πατρὸς δ' Ἐχίονος.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Thy dainty tresses first will I cut off.

DIONYSUS

Hallowed my locks are, fostered for the God.

PENTHEUS

Next, yield me up this thyrsus from thine hands.

DIONYSUS

Take it thyself. 'Tis Dionysus' wand.

PENTHEUS

Thy body in my dungeon will I ward.

DIONYSUS

The God's self shall release me, when I will.

PENTHEUS

Ay—when mid Bacchanals thou call'st on him !¹

DIONYSUS

Yea, he is now near, marking this despite.

500

PENTHEUS

Ay, where?—not unto mine eyes manifest.

DIONYSUS

Beside me. Thou, the impious, seest him not.

PENTHEUS

Seize him! This fellow mocketh me and Thebes.

DIONYSUS

I warn ye, bind not!—Reason's rede to folly.

PENTHEUS

I bid them bind, who have better right than thou.

DIONYSUS

Thy life nor acts thou know'st, nor what thou art.

PENTHEUS

Pentheus—Agave's and Echion's son.

¹ i.e. Never, for you shall not escape to rejoin them.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ένδυστυχῆσαι τούνομ' ἐπιτήδειος εἰ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

χώρει· καθείρξατ' αὐτὸν ἵππικαις πέλας
φάτναισιν, ως ἀν σκότιον εἰσορᾶ κνέφας.
ἔκει χόρευε· τάσδε δ' ἀς ἄγων πάρει
κακῶν συνεργοὺς ή διεμπολήσομεν
η χεῖρα δούπου τοῦδε καὶ βύρσης κτύπου
παύσας, ἐφ' ἵστοῖς δμωίδας κεκτήσομαι.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

στείχοιμ' ἄν· δ τι γὰρ μὴ χρεών, οὗτοι χρεὼν
παθεῖν. ἀτάρ τοι τῶνδ' ἀποιν' ὑβρισμάτων
μέτεισι Διόνυσός σ', δν οὐκ εἶναι λέγεις·
ἡμᾶς γὰρ ἀδικῶν κεῖνον εἰς δεσμοὺς ἄγεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

520 'Αχελώου θύγατερ,
πότνι' εὐπάρθενε Δίρκα,
σὺ γὰρ ἐν σαῖς ποτε παγαῖς
τὸ Διὸς βρέφος ἔλαβεις,
ὅτε μηρῷ πυρὸς ἐξ ἀ-
θανύτου Ζεὺς ὁ τεκὼν ἥρ-
πασέ νιν, τάδ' ἀναβοάσας·
ἴθι, Διθύραμβ', ἐμὰν ἄρ-
σενα τάνδε βâθι νηδύν·
ἀναφαίνω σε τόδ', ω Βάκ-
χε, Θήβαις ὀνομάζειν.
530 σὺ δέ μ', ω μύκαιρα Δίρκα,
στεφανηφόρους ἀπωθεῖ
θιάσους ἔχουσαν ἐν σοί.
τί μ' ἀναίνει; τί με φεύγεις;

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

Yea, fitly named to be in misery pent.

PENTHEUS

Away ! Enjail him in the horses' stalls
Hard by, that he may see but murky gloom. [thee, 510
There dance ! These women thou hast brought with
Thy crimes' co-workers, I will sell for slaves,
Or make my weaving-damsels, and so hush
Their hands from cymbal-clang and smitten drum.

DIONYSUS

I go. The fate that Fate forbids can ne'er
Touch me. On thee Dionysus shall requite
These insults—he whose being thou hast denied.
Outraging me, thou halest him to bonds.

[*Exeunt DIONYSUS guarded, and PENTHEUS.*

CHORUS

All hail, Achelōüs' Daughter,¹ (Str.)
Dirce the maiden, majestic and blest !—in thy cool-
welling water

520

Thou receivedst in old time the offspring of Zeus
'neath thy silvery plashing,

When Zeus, who begat him, had snatched from the
levin unquenchably flashing, [the Father cry,

And sealed up the babe in his thigh, and aloud did
“Come ! into this, Dithyrambus, the womb of no
mother, pass thou :—

By this name unto Thebes I proclaim thee, O God
of the Bacchanals, now.”

Ah Dirce, thou thrustest me hence, when I bring
thee the glorious vision

530

Of his garlanded revels !—now why am I scouted,
disowned, and abhorred ?

¹ The river Achelōüs was in legend the Father of all Greek streams. Dirce was the sacred fountain of Thebes.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἔτι ναὶ τὰν βοτρυώδη
Διονύσου χάριν οἴνας
ἔτι σοι τοῦ Βρομίου μελήσει.

[οῖαν οἶαν ὄργαν] ἀντ.

ἀναφαίνει χθόνιον
γένος ἐκφύς τε δράκοντός
ποτε Πενθεύς, δν Ἐχίων
ἐφύτευσε χθόνιος,
ἀγριωπὸν τέρας, οὐ φῶ-
τα βρότειον, φόνιον δ' ὕστ-
τε γίγαντ' ἀντίπαλον θεοῖς.
δις ἐμὲ βρόχοισι τὰν τοῦ
Βρομίου τάχα ξυνάψει,
τὸν ἐμὸν δ' ἐντὸς ἔχει δώ-
ματος ἥδη θιασώταν
σκοτίασι κρυπτὸν ἐν είρκταις.

550 ἐσορᾶς τάδ', ὡ Διὸς παῖ
Διόνυσε, σοὺς προφήτας
ἐν ἀμύλλαισιν ἀνάγκας;
μόλε, χρυσῶπα τινάσσων,
ἄνα, θυρσον κατ' Ὀλυμπον,
φονίου δ' ἀνδρὸς ὕβριν κατάσχεις.

πόθι Νύσας ἄρα τᾶς θη-

ἐπωδ.

ροτρόφου θυρσοφορεῖς
θιάσους, ὡ Διόνυσ', ἦ
κορυφαῖς Κωρυκίαις;
τάχα δ' ἐν τοῖς πολυδένδρεσ-
σιν Ὀλύμπου θαλάμαις, ἔν-
θα ποτ' Ορφεὺς κιθαρίζων
σύναγεν δένδρεα μούσαις,
σύναγεν θῆρας ἀγρώτας.

560

THE BACCHANALS

Yet there cometh—I swear by the full-clustered
grace of the vine Dionysian—

An hour when thine heart shall accept Dionysus,
shall hail him thy lord.

Lo, his earth-born lineage bewrayeth (*Ant.*)
Pentheus; the taint of the blood of the dragon of
old he betrayeth,

The serpent that came of the seed of the earth-
born Titan Echion. [mortal's scion, 540]

It hath made him a grim-visaged monster, and not as a

But as that fell giant brood that in strife with
immortals stood.

He is minded to fetter me, Bromius' handmaid,
with cords straightway : [revel this day,

He hath prisoned his palace within my companion in
Dungeoned in gloom ! Son of Zeus, are his deeds
of thine eye unbeholden,

550

Dionysus ?—thy prophets with tyranny wrestling in
struggle and strain ?

Sweep down the slope of Olympus, uptossing thy
thrysus golden : [refrain.]

Come to us, King, and the murderer's insolent fury
(*Epode*)

Ah, where dost thou linger on Nysa the mother of
beasts of the wold,

Waving thy revellers on with thy wand, or where
heavenward soar [fold

Crests of Corycia, or haply where far forest-solitudes 560

Round the flanks of Olympus, where Orpheus con-
strained by his minstrelsy-lore

Trees round him adoring to press, and the beasts
of the wilderness,

As he harped of yore ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

μάκαρ ὁ Πιερία,
σέβεται σ' Εύιος, ἥξει
τε χορεύσων ἄμα βακχεύ-
μασι, τόν τ' ὡκυρόαν
διαβὰς Ἀξιὸν εἴλισ-
σομένας Μαινάδας ἥξει,
Λυδίαν τε, τὸν εὐδαιμονίας
βροτοῖς δλβοδόταν
πατέρα τε, τὸν ἔκλυνον
εὔιππον χώραν ὕδασιν
καλλίστοισι λιπαίνειν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἰώ,
κλύετ' ἐμᾶς κλύετ' αὐδᾶς,
ἰὼ Βάκχαι, ιὼ Βάκχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ὅδε, τίς πόθεν ὁ κέλαδος ἀνά μ' ἐκάλεσεν
Εύίον;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἰὼ ιώ, πάλιν αὐδῶ,
ὁ Σεμέλας, ὁ Διὸς παῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ιὼ δέσποτα δέσποτα,
μόλε νυν ἡμέτερον εἰς
θίασον, ὁ Βρόμιε Βρόμιε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σεΐε πέδον χθονὸς ἔνοσι πότνια.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄ ἄ,
τάχα τὰ Πενθέως
μέλαθρα διατινάξεται πεσήμασιν.

570

THE BACCHANALS

Thrice blessèd Pieria-land,
Evius honoureth thee!—lo, he cometh, he cometh,
on-leading
His dances with Bacchanal chants, over Axius' flood
swift-speeding
He shall pass, he shall marshal the leaping feet in
the dance-rings sweeping,
The feet of his Maenad-band.

570

On shall he haste over Lydias the river,
O'er the father of streams, the blessing-giver,
Whose waters fair, as the tale hath told,
O'er the land of the gallant war-steed rolled,
Spread fatness on every hand.

DIONYSUS (*within*).

What ho! Give heed to my voice, give heed!
Ho, Bacchanal-train, my Bacchanal-train!

(*Members of CHORUS answer severally.*)

CHORUS 1

What cry was it?—whence did it ring? 'Twas the
voice of mine Evian King!

DIONYSUS (*within*)

What ho! What ho! I call yet again, 580
I, Semele's offspring, Zeus's seed.

CHORUS 2

What ho! Our Lord, our Lord! What ho!
Come to our revel-band thou,
Clamour-king, Clamour-king, now!

DIONYSUS (*within*)

Earth-floor, sway to and fro in mighty earthquake-throe!

(*Earthquake*).

CHORUS 3

Ha, swiftly shall Pentheus' hall,
Sore shaken, crash to its fall!

49

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ο Διόνυσος ἀνὰ μέλαθρα·
σέβετέ νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

590 σέβομεν ὥ.

ἴδετε λάινα κίοσιν ἔμβολα
διάδρομα τάδε·
Βρόμιος ἀλαλάζεται στέγας ἔσω.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄπτε κεραύνιον αἴθοπα λαμπάδα·
σύμφλεγε σύμφλεγε δώματα Πενθέος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀ ἄ,
πῦρ οὐ λεύσσεις οὐδ' αὐγάζει
Σεμέλας ιερὸν ἀμφὶ τάφον, ἃν
ποτε κεραυνόβολος ἐλιπε φλόγα
Δίου βροντᾶς;

600 δίκετε πεδόσε δίκετε τρομερὰ
σώματα, Μαινάδες·
ο γὰρ ἄναξ ἄνω κάτω τιθεὶς ἐπεισι
μέλαθρα τάδε Διὸς γόνος.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

βάρβαροι γυναῖκες, οὗτως ἐκπεπληγμέναι φόβῳ
πρὸς πέδῳ πεπτώκατ'; Ζεύσθησθ', ὡς ἔοικε,
Βακχίου
διατινάξαντος τὰ Πενθέως δώματ'.¹ ἀλλ' ἀνί-
στατε
σῶμα καὶ θαρσεῖτε σαρκὸς ἔξαμείψασαι τρόμον.

¹ Musgrave : for MSS. δῶμα Πενθέως.

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS 4

Dionysus within yon halls is his godhead revealing !
With homage adore him.

CHORUS 5

We bow us before him.

590

(*Earthquake*).

Lo, how the lintels of stone over yonder pillars are
reeling ! [the halls go pealing.

Now doth the Clamour-king's triumph-shout through
DIONYSUS (*within*).

Kindle the torch of the levin lurid-red : [spread.

Let the compassing flames round the palace of Pentheus
(A great blaze of light enwraps the palace and the
monument of Semele.)

CHORUS 6

Ha ! dost thou see not the wildfire enwreathed
Round the holy tomb—

Lo, dost thou mark it not well ?—
Which Semele thunder-blasted bequeathed,
Her memorial of doom

By the lightning from Zeus that fell ?

Fling to the earth, ye Maenads, fling

600

Your bodies that tremble with sore dismay !

For he cometh, our King, Zeus' scion, to bring
Yon halls to confusion and disarray.

CHORUS fall on their faces. Enter DIONYSUS from the palace.

DIONYSUS

Ho, ye Asian women, are ye so distraught with sheer
affright [meseems, the sight

That ye thus to earth be fallen ? Ye beheld,
When the house of Pentheus reeled as Bacchus
shook it. Nay, upraise

From the earth your limbs, and banish from your
bodies fear's amaze.

51

e 2

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώ φάος μέγιστου ήμân εύίου βακχεύματος,
ώς ἐσεîδον ἀσμένη σε, μονάδ' ἔχουσ' ἐρημίαν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

610 εἰς ἀθυμίαν ἀφίκεσθ', ἡνίκ' εἰσεπεμπόμην,
Πενθέως ώς εὶς σκοτεινὰς ὄρκάνας πεσούμενος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ οὖ; τίς μοι φύλαξ ἦν, εἰ σὺ συμφο-
ρᾶς τύχοις;
ἀλλὰ πῶς ἡλευθερώθης ἀνδρὸς ἀνοσίου τυχών;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὸς ἔξεσωσ' ἐμαυτὸν ῥᾳδίως ἄνευ πόνου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδέ σου συνῆψε χεῖρε δεσμοίσιν ἐν βρόχοις;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ταῦτα καὶ καθύβρισ' αὐτόν, ὅτι με δεσμεύειν
δοκῶν
οὕτ' ἔθιγεν οὕθ' ἥψαθ' ἡμῶν, ἐλπίσιν δ'
ἐβόσκετο.

πρὸς φάτναις δὲ ταῦρον εύρων, οὖ καθεῖρξ' ἡμᾶς
ἄγων,

τῷδε περὶ βρόχους ἔβαλλε γόνασι καὶ χηλαῖς
ποδῶν,

620 θυμὸν ἐκπνέων, ἵδρωτα σώματος στάζων ἄπο,
χείλεσίν διδοὺς ὁδόντας πλησίον δ' ἐγὼ παρὼν
ἥσυχος θάσσων ἔλευσσον. ἐν δὲ τῷδε τῷ
χρόνῳ
ἀνετίναξ' ἐλθὼν ὁ Βάκχος δῶμα, καὶ μητρὸς
τάφῳ
πῦρ ἀνῆψ'. ὁ δ' ώς ἐσεῖδε, δώματ' αἴθεσθαι
δοκῶν

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

Hail to thee, to us the mightiest light of Evian
revelry! [on thee!

With what rapture, late so lonely and forlorn, I look
DIONYSUS

Ha, and did your hearts for terror fail you when I
passed within, [Pentheus' dungeon-gin? 610.

Deeming I should sink to darkness, caught in

CHORUS

Wherfore not? What shield had I, if thou into
mischance shouldst fall? [tyrant's thrall?

Nay, but how didst thou escape, who wast a godless

DIONYSUS

I myself myself delivered, lightly, with nor toil nor
strain.

CHORUS

Nay, but bound he not thine hands with coiling mesh
of chain on chain?

DIONYSUS

My derision there I made him, that he deemed he
fettered me, [empty phantasy.

Yet nor touched me, neither grasped me, fed on
Nay, a bull beside the stalls he found where he
would pen me fast:

Round the knees and round the hoofs of this he 'gan
his cords to cast,

Breathing fury out, the while the sweat-gouts poured
from every limb, [watching him 620

While he gnawed upon his lips—and I beside him
Calmly at mine ease was sitting. Even then our
Bacchus came,

And as with an earthquake shook the house, and lit
a sudden flame [he saw his halls

On his mother's tomb. The king beholding thought

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἢσσ' ἐκεῖσε κἀτ' ἐκεῖσε, δμωσὶν Ἀχελῷον φέρειν
ἐννέπων, ἅπας δ' ἐν ἔργῳ δοῦλος ἦν, μάτην
πονῶν.

διαμεθεὶς δὲ τόνδε μόχθου, ώς ἐμοῦ πεφευγότος,
ἴεται ξίφος κελαινὸν ἀρπάσας δόμων ἔσω.

630 κἀθ' ὁ Βρόμιος, ώς ἐμοιγε φαίνεται, δόξαν λέγω,
φάσμ' ἐποίησεν κατ' αὐλήν· ὁ δ' ἐπὶ τούθῳ
ώρμημένος

ἢσσε κάκέντει φαεννὸν αἰθέρ', ώς σφάζων ἐμέ.

πρὸς δὲ τοῦσδ' αὐτῷ τάδ' ἄλλα Βάκχιος
λυμαίνεται.

δώματ' ἔρρηξεν χαμᾶζε· συντεθράνωται δ' ἄπαν
πικροτάτους ἰδόντι δεσμοὺς τοὺς ἐμούς· κόπουν
δ' ὑπο-

διαμεθεὶς ξίφος παρεῖται. πρὸς θεὸν γὰρ ὅν
ἀνήρ

εἰς μάχην ἐλθεῖν ἐτόλμησ'. ἢσυχος δ' ἐκβὰς ἐγὼ
δωμάτων ἥκω πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Πενθέως οὐ φροντίσας.
ώς δέ μοι δοκεῖ, ψιφεῖ γοῦν ἀρβύλῃ δόμων ἔσω,
εἰς προιώπι αὐτίχ' ἥξει. τί ποτ' ἄρ' ἐκ τούτων
ἔρει;

640 ῥαδίως γὰρ αὐτὸν οἶσω, καν πνέων ἐλθῃ μέγα.
πρὸς σοφοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἀσκεῖν σώφρουν' εὐοργη-
σίαν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πέπονθα δεινά· διαπέφευγέ μ' ὁ ξένος,
δος ἄρτι δεσμοῖς ἦν κατηναγκασμένος.
ἴα ἕα.

οδ' ἐστὶν ἀνήρ· τί τάδε; πῶς προιώπιος
φαίνει πρὸς οἴκους τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἔξω βεβώς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

στῆσον πόδ', ὀργῇ δ' ὑπόθεες ἢσυχον πόδα.

THE BACCHANALS

Flame-enwrapped, and hither, thither, rushed he,
wildly bidding thralls [toiling there.
Bring the water. Now was every bondman vainly
Then he let this labour be, as deeming I had 'scaped
the snare : [his falchion fell.
Straight within the building rushed he, drawing forth
Then did Bromius, as to me it seemed—'tis but my
thought I tell,— [thereon straightway,
Fashion in his halls a wraith : he hurled himself 630
Rushed, and stabbed the light-pervaded air, as
thinking me to slay. [pride to pass ;
Then did Bacchus bring a new abasement of his
For he hurled to earth the building. There it lies,
a ruin-mass,— [with toil outworn,
Sight to make my bonds full bitter to him ! Now,
Letting drop the sword, he falleth fainting. He,
the mortal-born, [passed I through,
Dare to brave a God to battle ! Then unhindered
Recking nought of Pentheus : so from forth his halls
I come to you. [fall's sound there is,—
But, methinks,—for there within the house a foot—
He shall straightway come without. Ha, what shall
he say unto this ? [stress ;
Lightly shall I bear his bluster, whatsoe'er his fury's 640
For it is the wise man's part to rein his wrath in
soberness.

Enter PENTHEUS. PENTHEUS
Foul outrage this !—the stranger hath escaped,
Though bound but now in fetters fast as fate.
Ha !
There is the man ! What means this ? How hast thou
Won forth to stand before my very halls ?
DIONYSUS
Stay there, and let thy fury softly tread.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πόθεν σὺ δεσμὰ διαφυγὼν ἔξω περᾶς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκ εἰπον—ἢ οὐκ ἥκουσας—ὅτι λύσει μέ τις;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

650 τίς; τοὺς λόγους γάρ εἰσφέρεις καινοὺς ἀεί.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

δις τὴν πολύβοτρην ἄμπελον φύει βροτοῦς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

* * * * *

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀνείδισας δὴ τοῦτο Διονύσῳ καλόν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

κλήειν κελεύω πάντα πύργον ἐν κύκλῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δ'; οὐχ ὑπερβαίνουσι καὶ τείχη θεοί;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

σοφὸς σοφὸς σύ, πλὴν ἀ δεῖ σ' εἶναι σοφόν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀ δεῖ μάλιστα, ταῦτ' ἔγωγ' ἔφυν σοφός.
κείνου δ' ἀκούσας πρῶτα τοὺς λόγους μάθε,
δις ἔξ δρους πάρεστιν ἀγγελῶν τί σοι·
ἡμεῖς δέ σοι μενοῦμεν, οὐ φευξούμεθα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

660 Πενθεῦ κρατύνων τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονός,
ἥκω Κιθαιρῶν' ἐκλιπών, ἵν' οὐποτε
λευκῆς ἀνεῖσαν χιόνος εὐαγεῖς βολαί.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἥκεις δὲ ποίαν προστιθεὶς σπουδὴν λόγου;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Βάκχας ποτνιάδας εἰσιδών, αἱ τῆσδε γῆς
οἴστροισι λευκὸν κῶλον ἔξηκόντισαν,

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

How hast thou 'scaped thy bonds and comest forth ?

DIONYSUS

Said I not—or didst hear not?—“ One will free me?”

PENTHEUS

Who ? Strange and ever strange thine answers are. 650

DIONYSUS

He who makes grow for men the clustered vine.

PENTHEUS

[Ay—who drives women frenzied from the home !]

DIONYSUS

’Tis Dionysus’ glory, this thy scoff.

PENTHEUS (*to attendants*)

I bid ye bar all towers round about.

DIONYSUS

Why ? Cannot Gods pass even over walls ?

PENTHEUS

Wise art thou, wise—save where thou shouldst be wise.

DIONYSUS

Where most needs wisdom, therein am I wise.

But listen first to yon man, hear his tale

Who with some tidings from the mountains comes.

I will await thee : fear not lest I fly.

Enter HERDMAN.

HERDMAN

Pentheus, thou ruler of this Theban land,

660

I from Cithaeron come, whence never fail

The glistering silver arrows of the snow.

PENTHEUS

Bringing what weighty tidings comest thou ?

HERDMAN

I have seen wild Bacchanals, who from this land

Have darted forth with white feet, frenzy-stung.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ηκω φράσαι σοὶ καὶ πόλει χρήζων, ἄναξ,
ώς δεινὰ δρῶσι θαυμάτων τε κρείσσονα.
θέλω δὲ ἀκοῦσαι, πότερά σοι παρρησίᾳ
φράσω τὰ κεῖθεν ἡ λόγου στειλώμεθα·
τὸ γὰρ τάχος σου τῶν φρενῶν δέδοικ', ἄναξ,
καὶ τούξυθυμου καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν λίαν.

670

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λέγ', ώς ἀθῷος ἔξ ἐμοῦ πάντως ἔσει·
τοῖς γὰρ δικαίοις οὐχὶ θυμοῦσθαι χρεών.
ὅσῳ δὲ ἀν εἴπης δεινότερα Βακχῶν πέρι,
τοσῷδε μᾶλλον τὸν ὑποθέντα τὰς τέχνας
γυναιξὶ τόνδε τῇ δίκῃ προσθήσομεν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀγελαῖα μὲν βοσκήματ' ἄρτι πρὸς λέπας
μόσχων ὑπεξήκριζον, ἥνιχ' ἥλιος
ἀκτῖνας ἔξιησι θερμαίνων χθόνα.
όρῳ δὲ θιάσους τρεῖς γυναικείων χορῶν,
ῶν ἥρχ' ἐνὸς μὲν Αὔτονόη, τοῦ δευτέρου
μήτηρ Ἄγανη σή, τρίτου δὲ Ἰνὼ χοροῦ.
ηὐδον δὲ πᾶσαι σώμασιν παρειμέναι,
αἱ μὲν πρὸς ἐλάτης νῶτ' ἐρείσασαι φόβην,
αἱ δὲ ἐν δρυὶς φύλλοισι πρὸς πέδῳ κάρα
εἰκῇ βαλοῦσαι σωφρόνως, οὐχ ώς σὺ φῆς
ώνωμένας κρατῆρι καὶ λωτοῦ ψόφῳ
θηρᾶν καθ' ὅλην Κύπριν ἡρημωμένας.

680

ἡ σὴ δὲ μήτηρ ὠλόλυξεν ἐν μέσαις
σταθεῖσα Βάκχαις, ἔξ ὑπνου κινεῖν δέμας,
μυκήμαθ' ώς ἥκουσε κεροφόρων βοῶν.
αἱ δὲ ἀποβαλοῦσαι θαλερὸν ὄμμάτων ὑπνον
ἀνῆξαν ὄρθαι, θαῦμ' ἵδεῖν εὐκοσμίας,
νέαι παλαιαὶ παρθένοι τ' ἔτ' ἄξυγες.
καὶ πρῶτα μὲν καθεῖσαν εἰς ὅμους κόμας

58

THE BACCHANALS

I come, King, fain to tell to thee and Thebes
What strange, what passing wondrous deeds they do.
Yet would I hear if freely I may tell
Things there beheld, or reef my story's sail.
For; King, I fear thy spirit's hasty mood,
Thy passion and thine over-royal wrath.

670

PENTHEUS

Say on: of me shalt thou go all unscathed,
For we may not be wroth with honest men.
The direr sounds thy tale of the Bacchanals,
The sterner punishment will I inflict
On him who taught our dames this wickedness.

HERDMAN

Thine herds of pasturing kine were even now
Scaling the steep hillside, what time the sun
First darted forth his rays to warm the earth,
When lo, I see three Bacchant women-bands,—
Autonoë chief of one, of one thy mother
Agave, and the third band Ino led.
All sleeping lay, with bodies restful-strown;
Some backward leaned on leafy sprays of pine,
Some, with oak-leaves for pillows, on the ground
Flung careless;—modestly, not, as thou say'st,
Drunken with wine, amid the sighing of flutes
Hunting desire through woodland shades alone.
Then to her feet sprang in the Bacchanals' midst
Thy mother, crying aloud, "Shake from you
sleep!"

680

When fell our horned kine's lowing on her ear.
They, dashing from their eyelids rosy sleep,
Sprang up,—strange, fair array of ordered ranks,—
Young wives, old matrons, maidens yet unwed.
First down their shoulders let they stream their hair:

690

59

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

νεβρίδας τ' ἀνεστείλανθ' ὅσαισιν ἀμμάτων
σύνδεσμ' ἐλέλυτο, καὶ καταστίκτους δορὰς
ὅφεσι κατεξώσαντο λιχμῶσιν γένυν.

700

αἱ δ' ἀγκάλαισι δορκάδ' ἡ σκύμνοντος λύκων
ἀγρίους ἔχουσαι λευκὸν ἐδίδοσαν γάλα,
ὅσαις νεοτόκοις μαστὸς ἦν σπαργῶν ἔτι
βρέφη λιπούσαις· ἐπὶ δ' ἔθεντο κισσίνους
στεφάνους δρυός τε μίλακός τ' ἀνθεσφόρου.
Θύρσον δέ τις λαβοῦντος ἔπαισεν εἰς πέτραν,
ὅθεν δροσώδης ὕδατος ἐκπηδᾷ νοτίς·
ἄλλη δὲ νάρθηκ' εἰς πέδον καθῆκε γῆς,
καὶ τῇδε κρήνην ἔξανήκ' οἴνου θεός·
ὅσαις δὲ λευκοῦ πώματος πόθος παρῆν,
ἄκροισι δακτύλοισι διαμῶσαι χθόνα
γάλακτος ἐσμοὺς εἰχον· ἐκ δὲ κισσίνων
θύρσων γλυκεῖαι μέλιτος ἔσταξον ρόαι.

710

ωστ', εἰ παρῆσθα, τὸν θεὸν τὸν νῦν ψέγεις
εὐχαῖσιν ἀν μετῆλθες εἰσιδὼν τάδε.
ξυνήλθομεν δὲ βουκόλοι καὶ ποιμένες,
κοινῷ λόγῳ δώσοντες ἄλληλοις ἔριν,
ώς δεινὰ δρῶσι θαυμάτων τ' ἐπάξια·
καὶ τις πλάνης κατ' ἄστυ καὶ τρίβων λόγων
ἔλεξεν εἰς ἄπαντας· ὡς σεμνὰς πλάκας
ναίοντες ὄρέων, θέλετε θηρασώμεθα
Πενθέως Ἀγαύην μητέρ' ἐκ βακχευμάτων
χάριν τ' ἄνακτι θώμεθ; εὖ δ' ἡμῖν λέγειν
ἔδοξε, θάμνων δὲ ἐλλοχίζομεν φόβαις
κρυψαντες αὐτούς· αἱ δὲ τὴν τεταγμένην
ῶραν ἐκίνουν θύρσον εἰς βακχεύματα,
Ἴακχον ἀθρόῳ στόματι τὸν Διὸς γόνον
Βρόμιον καλοῦσαι· πᾶν δὲ συνεβάκχευ· ὅρος

720

THE BACCHANALS

Then looped they up their fawnskins,—they whose bands
Had fallen loose,—and girt the dappled fells [while. Round them with snakes that licked their cheeks the Some, cradling fawns or wolf-cubs in their arms, Gave to the wild things of their own white milk,— 700 Young mothers they, who had left their babes, that still [heads Their breasts were full. Then did they wreath their With ivy, oak, and flower-starred briony. One grasped her thrysus-staff, and smote the rock, And forth upleapt a fountain's showery spray : One in earth's bosom planted her reed-wand, And up therethrough the God a wine-fount sent : And whoso fain would drink white-foaming draughts Scarred with their finger-tips the breast of earth, And milk gushed forth unstinted : dripped the while 710 Sweet streams of honey from their ivy-staves.

Hadst thou been there, thou hadst, beholding this, With prayer approached the God whom now thou spurnest.

Then we, thine herdmen and thy shepherds, drew Together, each with each to hold dispute Touching their awful deeds and marvellous. And one, a townward truant, ready of speech, To all cried, “Dwellers on the terraces Of hallowed mountains, will ye that we chase From Bacchus' revel Agave, Pentheus' mother, 720 And do our lord a kindness ?” Well, thought we, He spake, and we in ambush hid ourselves Mid leaves of copses. At the appointed time They waved the thrysus for the revel-rites, With one voice calling Iacchus, Clamour-king, Zeus' seed. The hills, the wild things all, were thrilled

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

καὶ θῆρες, οὐδὲν δ' ἥν ἀκίνητον δρόμῳ.
 κυρεῖ δ' Ἀγαύη πλησίον θρώσκουσά μου·
 κάγὼ ἔεπήδησ' ὡς συναρπάσαι θέλων,
 λόχημην κενώσας ἔνθ' ἐκρυπτόμην δέμας.
 ἡ δ' ἀνεβόησεν ὡς δρομάδες ἐμαὶ κύνες,
 θηρώμεθ' ἀνδρῶν τῶνδ' ὑπ'. ἀλλ' ἔπεσθέ μοι,
 ἔπεσθε θύρσοις διὰ χερῶν ὠπλισμέναι.
 ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν φεύγοντες ἔξηλύξαμεν
 Βακχῶν σπαραγμόν, αἱ δὲ νεμομέναις χλόην
 μόσχοις ἐπῆλθον χειρὸς ἀσιδήρου μέτα.
 καὶ τὴν μὲν ἄν προσεῖδες εὐθηλον πόριν
 μυκωμένην ἔλκουσαν ἐν χεροῖν δίχα,¹
 ἄλλαι δὲ δαμάλας διεφόρουν σπαράγμασιν.
 εἰδες δ' ἄν ἡ πλεύρ' ἡ δίχηλον ἔμβασιν
 ῥιπτόμεν' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω· κρεμαστὰ δὲ
 ἔσταζ' ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀναπεφυρμέν' αἴματι.
 ταῦροι δ' ὑβρισταὶ κεὺς κέρας θυμούμενοι
 τὸ πρόσθεν ἐσφάλλοντο πρὸς γαῖαν δέμας,
 μυριάσι χειρῶν ἀγόμενοι νεανίδων.
 θᾶσσον δὲ διεφοροῦντο σαρκὸς ἐνδυτὰ
 ἡ σὲ ξυνάψαι βλέφαρα βασιλείοις κόραις.
 χωροῦσι δ' ὥστ' ὅρνιθες ἀρθεῖσαι δρόμῳ
 πεδίων ὑποτάσεις, αἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ροαῖς
 εὔκαρπον ἐκβάλλουσι Θηβαίων στάχυν.
 'Τσιάς τ' Ἐρυθράς θ', αἱ Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας
 νέρθεν κατωκήκασιν, ὥστε πολέμιοι
 ἔπεισπεσοῦσαι πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω
 διέφερον· ἥρπαζον μὲν ἐκ δόμων τέκνα·
 ὅπόσα δ' ἐπ' ὤμοις ἔθεσαν, οὐ δεσμῶν ὑπὸ²
 προσείχετ' οὐδὲ ἐπιπτεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον,
 οὐ χαλκός, οὐ σίδηρος· ἐπὶ δὲ βοστρύχοις

¹ Reiske : for MSS ἔχουσαν . . . δίκα.

THE BACCHANALS

With ecstasy : naught but shook as on they rushed.
Now nigh to me Agave chanced to leap,
And forth I sprang as who would seize on her,
Leaving the thicket of mine ambush void.

730

Then shouted she, " What ho, my fleetfoot hounds,
We are chased by these men ! Ho ye, follow me—
Follow, the thyrsus-javelins in your hands ! "
O then we fled, and fleeing scantily 'scaped
The Bacchanals' rending grasp. Down swooped they
then

Upon our pasturing kine with swordless hand.
Then hadst thou seen thy mother with her hands
Rend a deep-uddered heifer bellowing loud :
And others tore the calves in crimson shreds.

740

Ribs hadst thou seen and cloven hoofs far hurled
This way and that, and flakes of flesh that hung
And dripped all blood-bedabbled 'neath the pines.

Bulls chafing, lowering fiercely along the horn
Erewhile, were tripped and hurled unto the earth,
Dragged down by countless-clutching maiden hands.
More swiftly was the flesh that lapped their bones
Stripped, than thou couldst have closed thy kingly
eyes.

On swept they, racing like to soaring birds,
To lowland plains which by Asopus' streams
Bear the rich harvests of the Theban folk :
Hysiae, Erythrae, 'neath Cithaeron's scuar
Low-nestling,—swooping on them like to foes,
This way and that way hurled they all their goods,
Yea, from the houses caught they up the babes :
These, and all things laid on their shoulders, clung
Unfastened ; nothing to the dark earth fell,
Nor brass nor iron ; and upon their hair

63

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

760

πῦρ ἔφερον, οὐδὲ ἔκαιεν. οἱ δὲ ὄργης ὅποι
εἰς ὅπλ' ἔχώρουν φερόμενοι Βακχῶν ὅποι·
οὐπερ τὸ δεινὸν ἦν θέαμ' ἵδεῖν, ἄναξ.
τοὺς μὲν γὰρ οὐχ ἡμαστεῖ λογχωτὸν βέλος,
κεῖναι δὲ θύρσους ἔξανιεῖσαι χερῶν
ἔτραυμάτιζον κάπενώτιζον φυγῆ
γυναικες ἄνδρας, οὐκ ἄνευ θεῶν τινος.
πάλιν δὲ ἔχωρουν ὅθεν ἐκίνησαν πόδα,
κρήνας ἐπ' αὐτὰς ἀς ἀνῆκ' αὐταῖς θεός.
νίψαντο δὲ αἷμα, σταγόνα δὲ ἐκ παρηίδων
γλώσση δράκοντες ἔξεφαιδρυνον χροός.
τὸν δαίμον' οὖν τόνδ' ὅστις ἔστι, ὡς δέσποτα,
δέχου πόλει τῇδ', ως τά τ' ἀλλ' ἔστιν μέγας,
κάκεῦνό φασιν αὐτόν, ως ἐγὼ κλύω,
τὴν παυσίλυπον ἀμπελον δοῦναι βροτοῖς.
οἵνου δὲ μηκέτ' ὅντος οὐκ ἔστιν Κύπρις
οὐδὲ ἄλλο τερπνὸν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔτι.

770

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταρβῶ μὲν εἰπεῖν τὸν λόγους ἐλευθέρους
εἰς τὸν τύραννον, ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰρήσεται·
Διόνυσος ἥσσων οὐδενὸς θεῶν ἔφυ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

780 ηδη τόδ' ἐγγὺς ὥστε πῦρ ὑφάπτεται
ὑβρισμα Βακχῶν, ψόγος ἐς "Ελληνας μέγας.
ἀλλ' οὐκ ὀκνεῖν δεῖ· στεῖχ' ἐπ' Ἡλέκτρας ἴων
πύλας· κέλευε πάντας ἀσπιδηφόρους
ἴππων τ' ἀπαντᾶν ταχυπόδων ἐπεμβάτας
πέλτας θ' ὅσοι πάλλουσι καὶ τόξων χερὶ¹
ψάλλουσι νευράς, ως ἐπιστρατεύσομεν
Βάκχαισιν οὐ γὰρ ἀλλ' ὑπερβάλλει τάδε,
εἰ πρὸς γυναικῶν πεισόμεσθ' ἀ πάσχομεν.

THE BACCHANALS

•

They carried fire unscorched. The folk, in wrath
To be by Bacchanals pillaged, rushed to arms :
Whereupon, King, was this strange sight to see :— 760

From them the steel-tipt javelin drew not blood,
But they from their hands darting thyrsus-staves
Dealt wound on wound; and they, the women, turned
To fight men, for some God's hand wrought therein.
Then drew they back to whence their feet had come,
To those same founts the God sent up for them,
And washed the gore, while from their cheeks the
snakes

Were licking with their tongues the blood-gouts
clean.

Wherefore, whoe'er this God be, O my lord,
Receive him in this city ; for, beside 770
His other might, they tell of him, I hear,
That he gave men the grief-assuaging vine.
When wine is no more found, then Love is not,
Nor any joy beside is left to men.

CHORUS

Words wherein freedom rings I dread to speak
Before the King ; yet shall my thought be voiced :
Dionysus is not less than any God.

PENTHEUS

Lo, it is on us, kindling like a flame,
The Bacchanal outrage, our reproach through
Greece !

We may not dally :—to Electra's gate 780
Go thou ; bid all my warriors that bear shield
To meet me, and all riders of fleet steeds,
And all that shake the buckler, all who twang
The bowstring ; for against the Bacchanals
Forth will we march. Yea, this should pass all bounds,
To endure of women that we now endure !

65

VOL. III.

F

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πείθει μὲν οὐδέν, τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων κλύων,
Πενθεῦ· κακῶς δὲ πρὸς σέθεν πάσχων ὅμως
οὐ φημι χρῆναι σ' ὅπλ' ἐπαίρεσθαι θεῷ,
ἀλλ' ἡσυχάζειν· Βρόμιος οὐκ ἀνέξεται
κινοῦντα Βάκχας εὐίων ὄρῶν ἄπο.

790

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οὐ μὴ φρενώσεις μ', ἀλλὰ δέσμος φυγὰν
σώσει τόδ'; ή σοὶ πάλιν ἀναστρέψω δίκην.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

θύοιμ' ἀν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον ἢ θυμούμενος
πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζοιμι θυητὸς ὧν θεῷ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

θύσω, φόνον γε θῆλυν, ὕσπερ ἄξιαι,
πολὺν ταράξας ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

φεύξεσθε πάντες· καὶ τόδ' αἰσχρόν, ἀσπίδας
θύρσοισι Βακχῶν ἐκτρέπειν χαλκηλάτους.

800

ἀπόρῳ γε τῷδε συμπεπλέγμεθα ξένῳ,
ὅς οὔτε πάσχων οὔτε δρῶν συγήσεται.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὼ τᾶν, ἔτ' ἔστιν εὐ καταστῆσαι τάδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί δρῶντα; δουλεύοντα δουλείαις ἐμαῖς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἔγῳ γυναικας δεῦρ' ὅπλων ἄξω δίχα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οἴμοι τόδ' ἥδη δόλιον εἴς με μηχανᾶ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πόιόν τι, σῶσαι σ' εἰ θέλω τέχναις ἐμαῖς;

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

No whit thou yieldest, though thou hear'st my words,
Pentheus. Yet, though thou dost despite to me,
I warn thee—bear not arms against a God;
But bide still. Bromius will not brook that thou 790
Shouldst drive his Bacchanals from their revel-hills.

PENTHEUS

School thou not me; but, having 'scaped thy bonds,
Content thee: else again I punish thee.

DIONYSUS

Better slay victims unto him than kick
Against the pricks, man raging against God.

PENTHEUS

Victims? Ay, women-victims, fitly slain,—
Wild work of slaughter midst Cithaeron's glens!

DIONYSUS

Flee shall ye all; and shame were this, that shields
Brass-forged from wands of Bacchanals turn back.

PENTHEUS

This stranger—vainly wrestle we with him: 800
Doing nor suffering will he hold his peace.

DIONYSUS

Friend, yet this evil may be turned to good.

PENTHEUS

How?—by becoming my bondwomen's thrall?

DIONYSUS

I without arms will bring the women hither.

PENTHEUS

Ha! here for me thou plottest treachery!

DIONYSUS

Treachery?—I would save thee by mine art!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ξυνέθεσθε κοινῇ τάδ', ἵνα βακχεύητ' ἀεί.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ξυνεθέμην τοῦτό γ', ἵσθι, τῷ θεῷ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐκφέρετέ μοι, δεῦρ' ὅπλα· σὺ δὲ παῦσαι λέγων.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄ·

βούλει σφ' ἐν δρεσὶ συγκαθημένας ἴδεῖν;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

μάλιστα, μυρίον γε δοὺς χρυσοῦ σταθμόν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δ' εἰς ἔρωτα τοῦδε πέπτωκας μέγαν;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λυπρῶς νιν εἰσίδοιμ' ἀν ἐξωνωμένας.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὅμως δ' ἴδοις ἀν ἡδέως ἃ σοι πικρά;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

σάφ' ἵσθι, συγῇ γ' ὑπ' ἐλάταις καθήμενος.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐξιχνεύσουσίν σε, κὰν ἔλθῃς λάθρᾳ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἀλλ' ἐμφανῶς· καλῶς γὰρ ἐξεῖπας τάδε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄγωμεν οὖν σε κάπιχειρήσεις ὁδῷ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἄγ' ὡς τάχιστα, τοῦ χρόνου δέ σοι φθονῶ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

στεῖλαί νιν ἀμφὶ χρωτὶ βυσσίνους πέπλους.

810

820

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Ye have made this covenant, so to revel aye.

DIONYSUS

Nay : know, that covenant made I with the God.

PENTHEUS (*to attendants*)

Bring forth mine arms !—thou, make an end of speech.

DIONYSUS

Ho thou !

810

Wouldst thou behold them camped upon the hills ?

PENTHEUS¹

Ay—though with sumless gold I bought the sight.

DIONYSUS

Why on this mighty longing hast thou fallen ?

PENTHEUS

To see them drunk with wine—a bitter sight !

DIONYSUS

Yet wouldst thou gladly see a bitter sight ?

PENTHEUS

Yea, sooth, in silence crouched beneath the pines.

DIONYSUS

Yet will they track thee, stealthily though thou come.

PENTHEUS

Openly then !—yea, well hast thou said this.

DIONYSUS

Shall I then guide thee ? Wilt essay the path ?

PENTHEUS

Lead on with speed : I grudge thee all delay !

820

DIONYSUS

Array thee now in robes of linen fine.

¹ From this time Pentheus speaks as one hypnotized.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί δὴ τόδ'; εἰς γυναῖκας ἔξ ἀνδρὸς τελῶ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μή σε κτάνωσιν, ἦν ἀνὴρ ὁφθῆσ έκει.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εὐ γ' εἶπας αὐτό, καὶ τις εἰ πάλαι σοφός.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ἔξεμούσωσεν τάδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πῶς οὖν γένοιτ' ἀν ἢ σύ με νουθετεῖς καλῶς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἔγώ στελῶ σε δωμάτων εἴσω μολών.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τίνα στολήν; ἡ θῆλυν; ἀλλ' αἰδώς μ' ἔχει.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκέτι θεατής Μαινάδων πρόθυμος εἰ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

στολὴν δὲ τίνα φῆς ἀμφὶ χρῶτ' ἐμὸν βαλεῖν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

κόμην μὲν ἐπὶ σῷ κρατὶ ταναὸν ἐκτενῶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὸ δεύτερον δὲ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τί μοι;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πέπλοι ποδήρεις ἐπὶ κάρᾳ δ' ἔσται μίτρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἡ καὶ τι πρὸς τοῖσδ' ἄλλο προσθήσεις ἐμοί;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

θύρσον γε χειρὶ καὶ νεθροῦ στικτὸν δέρας.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οὐκ ἀν δυναίμην θῆλυν ἐνδῦναι στολήν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀλλ' αἵμα θήσεις συμβαλὼν Βάκχαις μάχην.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Wherefore? From man shall I to woman turn?

DIONYSUS

Lest they should kill thee, seeing thee there as man.

PENTHEUS

Well said—yea, shrewd hast thou been heretofore.

DIONYSUS

Such science Dionysus taught to me.

PENTHEUS

How then shall thy fair rede become mine act?

DIONYSUS

I will into thine halls, and robe thee there.

PENTHEUS

What robe? A woman's?—nay, but I think shame.

DIONYSUS

Is thy desire to watch the Maenads dead?

PENTHEUS

In what garb, say'st thou, wouldst thou drape my form? 830

DIONYSUS

Thine head with flowing tresses will I tire.

PENTHEUS

And the next fashion of my vesture—what?

DIONYSUS

Long robes: and on thine head a coif shall be.

PENTHEUS

Naught else but these wouldst thou add unto me?

DIONYSUS

Thyrsus in hand, and dappled fell of fawn.

PENTHEUS

I cannot drape me in a woman's robe!

DIONYSUS

Then fight the Maenads—spill thy people's blood.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

όρθως· μολεῦν χρή πρώτου εἰς κατασκοπήν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σοφώτερον γοῦν ἡ κακοῖς θηρᾶν κακά.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

840 καὶ πῶς δι' ἀστεως εἴμι Καδμείους λαθών;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

όδοὺς ἐρήμους ἵμεν ἐγὼ δ' ἡγήσομαι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πᾶν κρεῖσσον ὥστε μὴ γγελᾶν Βάκχας ἐμοί.
ἔλθόντ' ἐς οἴκους δὲν δοκῆ βουλεύσομεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἔξεστι· πάντῃ τὸ γ' ἐμὸν εὐτρεπὲς πάρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

στείχοιμ' ἄν· ἡ γὰρ ὅπλ' ἔχων πορεύσομαι
ἡ τοῖσι σοῖσι πείθομαι βουλεύμασιν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

γυναικες, ἀνὴρ εἰς βόλον καθίσταται·
ηὗει δὲ Βάκχας, οὐθανὰν δώσει δίκην.

850 Διόνυσε, νῦν σὸν ἔργον, οὐ γὰρ εἰ πρόσω·
τισώμεθ' αὐτόν. πρῶτα δ' ἔκστησον φρενῶν,
ἐνεὶς ἐλαφρὰν λύσσαν· ὡς φρονῶν μὲν εὐ
οὐ μὴ θελήσῃ θῆλυν ἐνδύναι στολὴν,
ἔξω δ' ἐλαύνων τοῦ φρονεῖν ἐνδύσεται.
χρήζω δέ νιν γέλωτα Θηβαίοις ὀφλεῖν
γυναικόμορφον ἀγόμενον δι' ἀστεως
ἐκ τῶν ἀπειλῶν τῶν πρίν, αἰσι δεινὸς ἦν.
ἀλλ' εἴμι κόσμον ὄνπερ εἰς "Αιδου λαβὼν
ἀπεισι, μητρὸς ἐκ χεροῦν κατασφαγείς,
Πενθεῖ προσάψων γνώσεται δὲ τὸν Διὸς
Διόνυσον, δις πέφυκεν ἐν τέλει θεὸς
δεινότατος, ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἡπιώτατος.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Ay, true :—first must I go and spy them out.

DIONYSUS

Sooth, wiser so than hunt thee ills with ills.

PENTHEUS

Yet, how through Cadmus' city pass unseen ?

840

DIONYSUS

By lone paths will we go. Myself will guide.

PENTHEUS

Better were anything than Bacchants' mock !
We will pass in . . . what fits will I devise.

DIONYSUS

So be it : Howe'er thou choose, mine help thou hast.

PENTHEUS

I go . . . I shall march haply sword in hand,
Or—or—do haply as thou counsellest. [Exit.

DIONYSUS

Women, the man sets foot within the toils.
The Bacchants—and death's penalty—shall he find.
Dionysus, play thy part now ; thou art near :
Let us take vengeance. Craze thou first his brain, 850
Indarting sudden madness. Whole of wit,
Ne'er will he yield to don the woman's robe :
Yet shall he don, driven wide of reason's course
I long withal to make him Thebes' derision,
In woman-semblance led the city through,
After the erstwhile terrors of his threats.

I go, to lay on Pentheus the attire
Which he shall take with him to Hades, slain
By a mother's hands. And he shall know Zeus'
son

Dionysus, who hath risen at last a God 860
Most terrible, yet kindest unto men. [Exit.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀρ' ἐν πανυγχίοις χοροῖς
θήσω ποτὲ λευκὸν
πόδ' ἀναβακχεύουσα, δέραν
εἰς αἰθέρα δροσερὸν
ρίπτουσ', ὡς νεβρὸς χλοεραῖς
ἐμπαίζουσα λείμακος ἡδοναῖς,
ἡνίκ' ἀν φοβεράν φύγη
θήραν ἔξω φυλακᾶς
εὐπλέκτων ὑπὲρ ἀρκύων,
θωῦσσων δὲ κυναγέτας
συντείνη δρόμημα κυνῶν
μόχθοις τ' ὠκυδρόμοις τ' ἀέλ-
λαις θρώσκει πεδίον
παραποτάμιον, ἡδομένα
βροτῶν ἐρημίαις
σκιαροκόμου τ' ἐν ἔρνεσιν ὕλας.

στρ.

870

τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον
παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς
ἢ χεῖρ' ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς
τῶν ἔχθρῶν κρείσσω κατέχειν;
ὅτι καλὸν φίλον ἀεί.

880

δρμάται μόλις, ἀλλ' ὅμως
πιστόν τι τὸ θεῖον
σθένος ἀπευθύνει δὲ βροτῶν
τούς τ' ἀγνωμοσύναν
τιμῶντας καὶ μὴ τὰ θεῶν
αὔξοντας σὺν μαινομένᾳ δόξᾳ.
κρυπτεύοντι δὲ ποικίλως
δαρὸν χρόνου πόδα καὶ

ἀντ.

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

Ah, shall my white feet in the dances gleam (Str.)

The livelong night again ? Ah, shall I there
Float through the Bacchanal's ecstatic dream,
Tossing my neck into the dewy air?—

Like to a fawn that gambols mid delight
Of pastures green, when she hath left behind
The chasing horror, and hath sped her flight
Past watchers, o'er nets deadly-deftly twined,

Though shouting huntsmen cheer the racing hounds 870
Onward, the while with desperate stress and strain
And bursts of tempest-footed speed she bounds
Far over reaches of the river-plain,

Till sheltering arms of trees around her close,
The twilight of the tresses of the woods ;—
O happy ransomed one, safe hid from foes
Where no man tracks the forest-solitudes !

What wisdom's crown, what guerdon, shines more
glorious
That Gods can give the sons of men, than this—
O'er crests of foes to stretch the hand victorious ? 880
Glory is crown and sum of human bliss !

Slowly on-sweepeth, but unerringly, (Ant.)
The might of Heaven, with sternest lessoning
For men who in their own mad fantasy
Exalt their unbelief, and crown it king—

Mortals who dare belittle things divine !
Ah, but the Gods in subtle ambush wait :
On treads the foot of time ; but their design
Is unrelinquished, and the ruthless fate.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

890

θηρῶσιν τὸν ἄσεπτον· οὐ
γὰρ κρείσσον ποτε τῶν νόμων
γιγνώσκειν χρὴ καὶ μελετᾶν.
κούφα γὰρ δαπάνα νομί-
ζειν ἵσχυν τόδ' ἔχειν,
ὅ τι ποτ' ἄρα τὸ δαιμόνιον,
τό τ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ
νόμμον αὖτις φύσει τε πεφυκός.

900

τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον
παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς
ἢ χεῖρ' ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς
τῶν ἔχθρῶν κρείσσω κατέχειν;
ὅ τι καλὸν φίλον αὖτις.

910

εὐδαίμων μὲν δος ἐκ θαλάσσας
ἔφυγε χεῖμα, λιμένα δ' ἔκιχεν.
εὐδαίμων δ' δος ὑπερθε μόχθων
ἐγένεθ'. ἔτερα δ' ἔτερος ἔτερον
ὅλβῳ καὶ δυνάμει παρῆλθεν.
μυρίαι δὲ μυρίοισιν
ἔτ' εἴσ' ἐλπίδες· αἱ μὲν
τελευτῶσιν ἐν ὅλβῳ
βροτοῖς, αἱ δ' ἀπέβησαν.
τὸ δὲ κατ' ἡμαρ ὅτῳ βίοτος
εὐδαίμων, μακαρίζω.

ἐπωδ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σὲ τὸν πρόθυμον δύνθ' ἀ μὴ χρεὼν ὄρâν
σπεύδοντά τ' ἀσπούδαστα, Πενθέα λέγω,
ἔξιθι πάροιθε δωμάτων, δόφθητί μοι
σκευὴν γυναικὸς μαινάδος Βάκχης ἔχων,
μητρός τε τῆς σῆς καὶ λόχου κατάσκοπος·
πρέπεις δὲ Κάδμου θυγατέρων μορφὴν μιᾶ.

THE BACCHANALS

Quests as a sleuth-hound till it shall have tracked 890
The godless down in that relentless hunt.

We may not, in the heart's thought or the act,
Set us above the law of use and wont.

Little it costs, faith's precious heritage,
To trust that whatsoe'er from Heaven is sent
Hath sovereign sway, whate'er through age on age
Hath gathered sanction by our nature's bent.

What wisdom's crown, what guerdon, shines more
glorious

That Gods can give the sons of men, than this—
O'er crests of foes to stretch the hand victorious ? 900
Glory is crown and sum of human bliss !

Blest who from ravening seas (*Epode*)
Hath 'scaped to haven-peace,
Blest who hath triumphed in endeavour's toil and
throe.

Some men to higher height
Attain, of wealth, of might, [glow :
Than others ; myriad hopes in myriad hearts still
To fair fruition brought
Are some, some come to naught : 910
Happy is he whose bliss from day to day doth grow.

Enter DIONYSUS.

DIONYSUS

Thou wh^o dost burn to see forfended things,
Pentheus, O zealous with an evil zeal,
Come forth before thine halls : be seen of me
Womanlike clothed in frenzied Bacchant's garb,
To spy upon thy mother and her troop.

Enter PENTHEUS.

So !—like a daughter of Cadmus is thy form.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ μὴν ὄρâν μοι δύο μὲν ἡλίους δοκῶ,
δισσὰς δὲ Θήβας καὶ πόλισμ' ἐπτάστομον·
καὶ ταῦρος ἡμῖν πρόσθεν ἥγεῖσθαι δοκεῖς
καὶ σῷ κέρατα κρατὶ προσπεφυκέναι.
ἀλλ' ἡ ποτ' ἥσθα θήρ; τεταύρωσαι γὰρ οὖν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὁ θεὸς ὁμαρτεῖ, πρόσθεν ὃν οὐκ εὔμενής,
ἔνσπονδος ἡμῖν νῦν δ' ὄρᾶς ἢ χρῆ σ' ὄρâν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί φαινόμαι δῆτ'; οὐχὶ τὴν Ἰνοῦς στάσιν
ἢ τὴν' Αγαύης ἐστάναι μητρός γ' ἐμῆς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὰς ἐκείνας εἰσορâν δοκῶ σ' ὄρῶν.
ἀλλ' ἔξ ἔδρας σοι πλόκαμος ἐξέστηχ' ὅδε,
οὐχ ως ἐγώ νιν ὑπὸ μίτρᾳ καθήρμοσα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἔνδον προσείων αὐτὸν ἀνασείων τ' ἐγὼ
καὶ βακχιάζων ἔξ ἔδρας μεθώρμισα.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἡμεῖς, οἷς σε θεραπεύειν μέλει,
πάλιν καταστελοῦμεν ἀλλ' ὅρθου κάρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἰδού, σὺ κόσμει· σοὶ γὰρ ἀνακείμεσθα δῆ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ζῶναι τέ σοι χαλῶσι κούχ ἔξῆς πέπλων
στολίδες ὑπὸ σφυροῦσι τείνουσιν σέθεν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

κάμολ δοκοῦσι παρά γε δεξιὸν πόδα·
τάνθένδε δ' ὅρθῶς παρὰ τένοντ' ἔχει πέπλος.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἢ πού με τῶν σῶν πρῶτον ἥγήσει φίλων,
ὅταν παρὰ λόγον σωφρονας Βάκχας ἴδης.

920

930

940

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Aha ! meseemeth I behold two suns,
A twofold Thebes, our seven-gated burg !
A bull thou seem'st that leadeth on before ; 920
And horns upon thine head have sprouted forth.
How, *wast* thou brute ?—bull art thou verily now !

DIONYSUS

The God attends us, gracious not ere this,
Leagued with us now : now seest thou as thou shouldst.

PENTHEUS

Whose semblance bear I ? Have I not the mien
Of Ino, or my mother Agave's port ?

DIONYSUS

Their very selves I seem to see in thee.
Yet, what ?—this tress hath from his place escaped,
Not as I braided it beneath the coif.

PENTHEUS

Tossing it forth and back within, in whirls 930
Of Bacchic frenzy, I disordered it.

DIONYSUS

Nay, I, who have taken thy tire-maiden's part,
Will rearrange it. Come, hold up thine head.

PENTHEUS

Lo there—thou lay it smooth : I am in thine hands.

DIONYSUS

Now is thy girdle loose ; thy garment's folds
Droop not below thine ankles evenly.

PENTHEUS

Yea, by my right foot so, meseems, it is.
To left, true by the sinew hangs the robe.

DIONYSUS

Me wilt thou surely count thy chiefest friend,
When sight of sober Bacchants cheats thine hopes. 940

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πότερα δὲ θύρσον δεξιὰ λαβὼν χερὶ¹
ἢ τῇδε, Βάκχη μᾶλλον εἰκασθήσομαι;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐν δεξιᾷ χρὴ χάμα δεξιῷ ποδὶ²
αἴρειν νιν· αἰνῶ δ’ ὅτι μεθέστηκας φρενῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἀρ’ ἀν δυναίμην τὰς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχὰς
αὐτὰῖσι Βάκχαις τοῦς ἐμοῖς ὄμοις φέρειν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

δύναι’ ἄν, εἰ βούλοιο· τὰς δὲ πρὸν φρένας
οὐκ ἔιχες ὑγιεῖς, νῦν δ’ ἔχεις οἵας σε δεῖ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

950 μοχλοὺς φέρωμεν; ἢ χεροῦν ἀνασπάσω
κορυφαῖς ὑποβαλὼν ὄμον ἢ βραχίονα;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μὴ σύ γε τὰ Νυμφῶν διολέσῃς ἴδρυματα
καὶ Πανὸς ἔδρας, ἔνθ’ ἔχει συρίγματα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· οὐ σθένει νικητέον
γυναῖκας, ἐλάταισιν δ’ ἐμὸν κρύψω δέμας.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

κρύψει σὺ κρύψιν ἦν σε κρυφθῆναι χρεὼν
ἔλθοντα δόλιον Μαινάδων κατάσκοπον.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ μὴν δοκῶ σφᾶς ἐν λόχμαις ὅρνιθας ὡς
λέκτρων ἔχεσθαι φιλτάτοις ἐν ἔρκεσιν.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

This thrysus—shall I hold it in this hand,
Or this, the more to seem true Bacchanal?

DIONYSUS

In the right hand, and with the right foot timed
Lift it :—all praise to thy converted heart!

PENTHEUS

Could I upon my shoulders raise the glens¹
Of Mount Cithaeron, yea, and the Bacchanals?

DIONYSUS

Thou mightest, an thou wouldest : erewhile thy soul
Was warped ; but now 'tis even as befits.

PENTHEUS

With levers?—or shall mine hands tear it up
With arm or shoulder thrust beneath its crests?

950

DIONYSUS

Now nay—the shrines of Nymphs destroy not thou,
And haunts of Pan that with his piping ring.

PENTHEUS

True—true : we must not overcome by force
The women. I will hide me midst the pines.

DIONYSUS

Hide?—thou shalt hide as Fate ordains thine hiding,
Who com'st with guile, a spy on Bacchanals.

PENTHEUS

Methinks I see them mid the copses caught,
Like birds, in toils of their sweet dalliance.

¹ Among signs of incipient madness is a failure to discriminate resistance, so that the patient, while raising slight weights (here, the thrysus), imagines himself to be putting forth strength enough to raise enormous ones.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ούκουν ἐπ' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀποστέλλει φύλαξ·
960 λήψει δ' ἵσως σφᾶς, ήν σὺ μὴ ληφθῆς πάρος.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

κόμιξε διὰ μέσης με Θηβαίας πόλεως.
μόνος γάρ εἰμ' αὐτῶν ἀνὴρ τολμῶν τόδε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μόνος σὺ πόλεως τῆσδ' ὑπερκάμνεις, μόνος·
τοιγάρ σ' ἀγώνες ἀναμένουσιν οὖς ἔχρην.
ἔπου δέ· πομπὸς δ' εἴμ' ἐγὼ σωτήριος,
κεῖθεν δ' ἀπάξει σ' ἄλλος,—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἡ τεκοῦσά γε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐπίσημον ὅντα πᾶσιν—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐπὶ τόδ' ἔρχομαι.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

φερόμενος ἥξεις—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἀβρότητ' ἐμὴν λέγεις.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐν χερσὶ μητρός.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ τρυφᾶν μ' ἀναγκάσεις.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τρυφάς γε τοιάσδ—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἀξίων μὲν ἄπτομαι.

970

82

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

To this end then art thou appointed watchman :
Perchance shalt catch them—if they catch not thee. 960

PENTHEUS

On through the midst of Thebes' town usher me !
I am their one *man*, I alone dare this !

DIONYSUS

Alone for Thebes thou travailest, thou alone ;
Wherefore for thee wait struggle and strain fore-doomed.

Follow : all safely will I usher thee.
Another thence shall bring thee,—

PENTHEUS

Ay, my mother !

DIONYSUS

To all men manifest—

PENTHEUS

For this I come.

DIONYSUS

High-borne shalt thou return—

PENTHEUS

Soft ease for me ?

DIONYSUS

On a mother's hands.

PENTHEUS

Thou wouldst thrust pomp on me !

DIONYSUS

Nay, 'tis but such pomp—

PENTHEUS

As is my desert.

970

83

g 2

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΖΟΣ

δεινὸς σὺ δεινὸς κάπὶ δείν' ἔρχει πάθη,
ῶστ' οὐρανῷ στηρίζον εύρήσεις κλέος.

ἔκτειν', Ἀγαύη, χεῖρας αἴ θ' ὁμόσποροι
Κάδμου θυγατέρες· τὸν νεανίαν ἄγω
τόνδ' εἰς ἀγῶνα μέγαν, ὁ νικήσων δὲ ἐγὼ
καὶ Βρόμιος ἔσται. τἄλλα δ' αὐτὸ σημανεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴτε θοαὶ Λύσσας κύνες ἵτ' εἰς ὅρος, στρ.
θίασον ἐνθ' ἔχουσι Κάδμου κόραι,
ἀνοιστρήσατέ νιν
980 ἐπὶ τὸν ἐν γυναικομίμῳ στολᾶ
λυσσώδῃ κατάσκοπον Μαινάδων.

μάτηρ πρῶτά νιν λευρᾶς ἀπὸ πέτρας
ἡ σκόλοπος ὅψεται
δοκεύοντα, Μαινάσιν δὲ ἀπύσει·
τίς ὅδε Καδμείων
μαστὴρ ὀρειδρόμων
ἐς ὅρος ἐς ὅρος ἔμολεν, ὡς Βάκχαι;
τίς ἄρα νιν ἔτεκεν;
οὐ γὰρ ἐξ αἷματος γυναικῶν ἔφυ,
λεαίνας δέ τινος ὅδος ἡ Γοργόνων
990 Λιβυσσᾶν γένος.

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

Strange, strange man ! Strange shall thine experience
be.

So shalt thou win renown that soars to heaven.

[*Exit PENTHEUS.*]

Agave, stretch forth hands ; ye sisters, stretch,
Daughters of Cadmus ! To a mighty strife
I bring this prince. The victor I shall be
And Bromius. All else shall the issue show. [*Exit.*]

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

Up, ye swift hell-hounds of Madness ! Away to the
mountain-glens, where [fury, to tear
Cadmus's daughters hold revel, and sting them to
Him who hath come woman-vestured to spy on the
Bacchanals there,

Frenzy-struck fool that he is !—for his mother shall 980
foremost descry [tree he would spy
Him, as from water-worn scaur or from storm-riven
That which they do, and her shout to the Maenads
shall peal from on high :—

“ Who hath come hither, hath trodden the paths to
the mountain that lead,
Spying on Cadmus's daughters, the maids o'er the
mountains that speed,
Bacchanal-sisters ?—what mother hath brought to
the birth such a seed ?

Who was it ?—who ?—for I ween he was born not of
womankind's blood : [of the wood ;
Rather he sprang from the womb of a lioness, scourge
Haply is spawn of the Gorgons of Libya, the demon-
brood.”

990

BAKXAI

ἴτω δίκα φανερός, ίτω ξιφηφόρος
φονεύουσα λαιμῶν διαμπάξ
τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος
τόκον γηγενῆ:

δις ἄδικῷ γυνώμᾳ παρανόμῳ τ' ὄργῃ ἀντ.

περὶ σά, Βάκχι', ὄργια ματρός τε σᾶς
μανείσᾳ πραπίδι

1000 παρακόπῳ τε λήματι στέλλεται,
τάνικατον ώς κρατήσων βίᾳ.

γυνώμαν σώφρον', ἀ θνατοῖς ἀπροφάσιστος
εἰς τὰ θεῶν ἔφυ,

βροτείαν τ' ἔχειν, ἄλυπος βίος.

τὸ σοφὸν οὐ φθόνῳ

χαίρω θηρεύουσα,

τὰ δ' ἔτερα μεγάλα φανερά τ' ὅντ' ἀεί,

ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ βίον

ἡμαρ εἰς νύκτα τ' εὐαγοῦντ' εὔσεβεῖν,

1010 τὰ δ' ἔξω νόμιμα δίκας ἐκβαλόν-
τα τιμᾶν θεούς.

ἴτω δίκα φανερός, ίτω ξιφηφόρος
φονεύουσα λαιμῶν διαμπάξ
τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος
τόκον γηγενῆ.

THE BACCHANALS

Justice, draw nigh us, draw nigh, with the sword of
avenging appear : [born, and shear
Slay the unrighteous, the seed of Echion the earth-
Clean through his throat, for he feareth not God,
neither law doth he fear.

(Ant.)

Lo, how in impious mood, and with lawless intent,
and with spite [he cometh to fight,
Madness-distraught, with thy rites and thy mother's
Bacchus—to bear the invincible down by his im-
potent might !

1000

Thus shall a mortal have sorrowless days, if he
keepeth his soul [control,
Sober in spirit, and swift in obedience to heaven's
Murmuring not, neither pressing beyond his mor-
tality's goal.

Not their presumptuous wisdom I covet : I seek for
mine own— [so may be known,
Yea, in the quest is mine happiness—things that not
Glorious wisdom and great, from the days ever-
lasting forth-shown,

Even to fashion in pureness my life and in holiness
aye, [of the day,
Following ends that are noble from dawn to the death
Honouring Gods, and refusing to walk in injustice's
way.

1010

Justice, draw nigh us, draw nigh, with the sword of
avenging appear : [born, and shear
Slay the unrighteous, the seed of Echion the earth-
Clean through his throat ; for he feareth not God,
neither law doth he fear.

87

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

φάνηθι ταῦρος ἡ πολύκρανος ἵδεῖν
δράκων ἡ πυριφλέγων
όρâσθαι λέων.

1020 Ἱθ', ὡ Βάκχε, θηραγρευτὰ Βακχᾶν
γελῶντι προσώπῳ περθαλε
βρόχον ἐπὶ θανάσιμον
ἀγέλαν πεσόντι τὰν Μαινάδων.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ δῶμ' ὁ πρίν ποτ' ηὐτύχεις ἀν' Ἑλλάδα,
Σιδωνίου γέροντος, ὃς τὸ γηγενὲς
δράκοντος ἔσπειρ' ὅφεος ἐν γαίᾳ θέρος,
ὡς σε στενάζω, δοῦλος ὃν μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως
χρηστοῖσι δούλοις συμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν ; ἐκ Βακχῶν τι μηνύεις νέον ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1030 Πενθεὺς δλωλε, παῖς Ἐχίονος πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦναξ Βρόμιε· θεὸς φαίνει μέγας.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πῶς φήσ ; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας ; ἢ πὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς
χαίρεις κακῶς πράσσουσι δεσπόταις, γύναι ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὐάζω ξένα μέλεσι βαρβάροις·
οὐκέτι γὰρ δεσμῶν ὑπὸ φόβῳ πτήσσω.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θήβας δ' ἀνάνδρους ὡδ' ἄγεις* * * *

* * * * * * * * ;

THE BACCHANALS

(*Epode*)

O Dionysus, reveal thee!—appear as a bull to behold,
Or be thou seen as a dragon, a monster of heads
manifold, [of him rolled.
Or as a lion with splendours of flame round the limbs

Come to us, Bacchus, and smiling in mockery com- 1020
pass him round [hunter be bound,
Now with the toils of destruction, and so shall the
Trapped mid the throng of the Maenads, the quarry
his questing hath found.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSANGER

O house of old through Hellas prosperous
Of that Sidonian patriarch, who sowed
The earth-born serpent's dragon-teeth in earth,
How I bemoan thee! Though a thrall I be,
Their lords' calamities touch loyal thralls.

CHORUS

What now?—hast tidings of the Bacchanals?

MESSANGER

Pentheus is dead: Echion's son is dead.

1030

CHORUS

Bromius my King! thou hast made thy godhead plain!

MESSANGER

How, what is this thou say'st? Dost thou exult,
Woman, upon my lord's calamities?

CHORUS

An alien I, I chant glad outland strain,
Who cower no more in terror of the chain.

MESSANGER

Deemest thou Thebes so void of men, [that ills
Have left her powerless to punish thee?]

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ό Διόνυσος ὁ Διόνυσος, οὐ Θῆβαι
κράτος ἔχουσ' ἐμόν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

συγγυνωστὰ μέν σοι, πλὴν ἐπ' ἔξειργασμένοις
κακοῖσι χαίρειν, ὡς γυναικες, οὐ καλόν.

1040

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔννεπέ μοι, φράσον, τίνι μόρῳ θνήσκει
ἀδικος ἄδικά τ' ἐκπορίζων ἀνήρ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐπεὶ θεράπνιας τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονὸς
λιπόντες ἔξεβημεν Ἀσωποῦ ῥοάς,
λέπας Κιθαιρώνειον εἰσεβάλλομεν
Πειθεύς τε κάγω, δεσπότη γάρ εἰπόμην,
ξένος θ' δις ἡμῖν πομπὸς ἦν θεωρίας.
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν ποιηρὸν ἵζομεν νάπος,
τά τ' ἐκ ποδῶν σιγηλὰ καὶ γλώσσης ἅπο
σώζοντες, ὡς ὄρφῳεν οὐχ ὄρώμενοι.

1050

ἡν δ' ἄγκος ἀμφίκρημνον, ὕδασι διάβροχον,
πεύκαισι συσκιάζον, ἔνθα Μαινάδες
καθῆντ' ἔχουσαι χεῖρας ἐν τερπνοῖς πόνοις.
αἱ μὲν γάρ αὐτῶν θύρσον ἐκλελοιπότα
κισσῷ κομήτην αὐθις ἔξανέστεφον,
αἱ δ' ἐκλιπούσαι ποικίλ' ὡς πῶλοι ζυγὰ
βακχείον ἀντέκλαζον ἀλλήλαις μέλοις.
Πειθεύς δ' ὁ τλήμων θῆλυν οὐχ ὄρῶν ὄχλον
ἔλεξε τοιάδ· ὧ ξέν', οὐ μὲν ἔσταμεν,
οὐκ ἔξικνοῦμαι Μαινάδων δσσοις νόθων.
ὄχθον δ' ἐπεμβὰς ἡ ἐλάτην ὑψαύχενα
ἴδοιμ' ἀν ὄρθως Μαινάδων αἰσχρουργίαν.
τούντευθεν ἡδη τοῦ ξένου τι θαῦμ' ὄρω·
λαβὼν γάρ ἐλάτης οὐράνιον ἄκρον κλάδον

1060

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

Dionysus it is, 'tis the King of the Vine
That hath lordship o'er me, no Thebes of thine !

MESSENGER

This might be pardoned, save that base it is,
Women, to joy o'er evils past recall.

1040

CHORUS

Tell to me, tell,—by what doom died he,
The villain devising villainy ?

MESSENGER

When, from the homesteads of this Theban land
Departing, we had crossed Asopus' streams,
Then we began to breast Cithaeron's steep,
Pentheus and I,—for to my lord I clave,—
And he who ushered us unto the scene.
First in a grassy dell we sat us down
With footfall hushed and tongues refrained from
speech,
That so we might behold, all unbeheld.

1050

There was a glen crag-walled, with rills o'erstreamed,
Closed in with pine-shade, where the Maenad girls
Sat with hands busied with their gladsome toils.

The faded thyrsus some with ivy-sprays
Twined, till its tendril-tresses waved again :

Some, blithe as colts from carven wain-yokes loosed,
Re-echoed each to each the Bacchic chant.

But hapless Pentheus, seeing not the throng
Of women, spake thus : " Stranger, where we stand,
Are these mock-maenad maids beyond my ken.

1060

Some knoll or pine high-crested let me climb,
And I shall see the Maenads' lewdness well."

A marvel then I saw the stranger do :
A soaring pine-shaft by the top he caught,

91

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

κατῆγεν, ἥγεν, ἥγεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον·
 κυκλούτο δ' ὥστε τόξον ἡ κυρτὸς τροχὸς
 τόρνῳ γραφόμενος περιφορὰν ἔλκει δρόμον·
 ὡς κλῶν' ὄρειον ὁ ξένος χεροῖν ἄγων
 ἔκαμπτεν εἰς γῆν, ἔργυματ' οὐχὶ θιητὰ δρῶν.
 1070 Πενθέα δ' ἰδρύσας ἐλατίνων δζῶν ἔπι,
 ὀρθὸν μεθίει διὰ χερῶν βλάστημ' ἄνω
 ἀτρέμα, φυλάσσων μὴ ἀναχαιτίσειέ νιν.
 ὀρθὴ δ' ἐς ὀρθὸν αἰθέρ' ἐστηρίζετο
 ἔχουσα νώτοις δεσπότην ἐφήμενον.
 ὥφθη δὲ μᾶλλον ἡ κατεῖδε Μαινάδας·
 ὅσον γάρ οὕπω δῆλος ἦν θάσσων ἄνω,
 καὶ τὸν ξένον μὲν οὐκέτ' εἰσορᾶν παρῆν,
 ἐκ δ' αἰθέρος φωνή τις, ὡς μὲν εἰκάσαι ✓
 Διόνυσος, ἀνεβόησεν· ὡς νεάνιδες,
 1080 ἄγω τὸν ὑμᾶς κάμε τάμα τ' ὅργια
 γέλων τιθέμενον· ἀλλὰ τιμωρεῖσθε νιν.
 καὶ ταῦθ' ἅμ' ἥγόρευε καὶ πρὸς οὐρανὸν
 καὶ γαῖαν ἐστήριζε φῶς σεμνοῦ πυρός.
 σίγησε δ' αἰθήρ, σῆγα δ' ὕλιμος νάπη
 φύλλ' εἰχε, θηρῶν δ' οὐκ ἀν ἥκουσας βοήν.
 αἱ δ' ὡσὶν ἥχην οὐ σαφῶς δεδεγμέναι
 ἐστησαν ὄρθαι καὶ διήνεγκαν κόρας.
 ὁ δ' αὐθις ἐπεκέλευσεν· ὡς δ' ἐγνώρισαν
 σαφῆ κελευσμὸν Βακχίου Κάδμου κόραι,
 1090 ἥξαν πελείας ὡκύτητ' οὐχ ἥσσονες
 ποδῶν ἔχουσαι συντόνοις δρομήμασι,
 μήτηρ Ἀγαύη σύγγονοί θ' ὁμόσποροι
 πᾶσαί τε Βάκχαι· διὰ δὲ χειμάρρου νάπης
 ἀγμῶν τ' ἐπήδων θεοῦ πνοαῖσιν ἐμμανεῖς.
 ὡς δ' εἶδον ἐλάτη δεσπότην ἐφήμενον,
 πρῶτον μὲν αὐτοῦ χερμάδας κραταιβόλους

THE BACCHANALS

And dragged down—down—still down to the dark earth.

Arched as a bow it grew, or curving wheel
That on the lathe sweeps out its circle's round :
So bowed the stranger's hands that mountain-stem,
And bent to earth—a deed past mortal might !
Then Pentheus on the pine boughs seated he 1070
And let the trunk rise, sliding through his hands
Gently, with heedful care to unseat him not.
Far up into the heights of air it soared,
Bearing my master throned upon its crest,
More by the Maenads seen than seeing them.

For scarce high-lifted was he manifest,
When lo, the stranger might no more be seen ;
And fell from heaven a voice—the voice, most like,
Of Dionysus,—crying, “ O ye maids,
I bring him who would mock at you and me, 1080
And at my rites. Take vengeance on him ye ! ”
Even as he cried, up heavenward, down to earth,
He flashed a pillar-splendour of awful flame.
Hushed was the welkin ; all the forest-glade
Held hushed its leaves ; no wild thing's cry was heard.
But they, whose ears not clearly caught the sound,
Sprang up, and shot keen glances right and left.

Again he cried his hest : then Cadmus' daughters
Knew certainly the Bacchic God's command,
And darted : and the swiftness of their feet 1090
Was as of doves in onward-straining race—
His mother Agave and her sisters twain,
And all the Bacchanals. Through torrent gorge,
O'er boulders, leapt they, with the God's breath mad.
When seated on the pine they saw my lord,
First torrent-stones with might and main they hurled,

- έρριπτον, ἀντίπυργον ἐπιβᾶσαι πέτραν,
δῖοισί τ' ἐλατίνοισιν ἡκουντίζετο·
ἄλλαι δὲ θύρσους ἔεσαν δι' αὐθέρος
1100 Πενθέως, στόχον δύστηνον· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἥνυτον.
κρείσσον γάρ ὑψος τῆς προθυμίας ἔχων
καθῆστο τλήμων, ἀπορίᾳ λελημένος.
τέλος δὲ δρυῖνους συγκεραυνοῦσαι κλάδους,
ρίζας ἀνεσπάρασσον ἀσιδήροις μοχλοῖς.
ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθων τέρματ' οὐκ ἔξηνυτον,
ἔλεξ' Ἀγανή· φέρε, περιστᾶσαι κύκλῳ
πτόρθου λάβεσθε, Μαινάδες, τὸν ἀμβάτην
θῆρ' ὡς ἔλωμεν, μηδ' ἀπαγγείλῃ θεοῦ
χοροὺς κρυφαίους. αἱ δὲ μυρίαν χέρα
1110 προσέθεσαν ἐλάτῃ καξανέσπασαν χθονός.
ὑψοῦ δὲ θάσσων ὑφόθεν χαμαιπετῆς
πίπτει πρὸς οὐδας μυρίοις οἰμώγμασι
Πενθεύς· κακοῦ γὰρ ἐγγὺς ὧν ἐμάνθανε.
πρώτη δὲ μήτηρ ἡρξεν Ἱερία φόνου
καὶ προσπίτνει νιν· ὁ δὲ μίτραν κόμης ἅπο
έρριψεν, ὡς νιν γνωρίσασα μὴ κτάνοι
τλήμων Ἀγαύη, καὶ λέγει, παρηίδος
ψαύων· ἐγώ τοι, μήτερ, εἰμὶ παῖς σέθεν
Πενθεύς, διν ἔτεκες ἐν δόμοις Ἐχίονος.
οἴκτειρε δ' ὁ μήτέρ με, μηδὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς
ἀμαρτίαισι παῖδα σὸν κατακτάνῃς.
ἡ δ' ἀφρὸν ἔξιεῖσα καὶ διαστρόφους
κόρας ἐλίσσουσ', οὐ φρονοῦσ' ἢ χρὴ φρονεῖν,
ἐκ Βακχίου κατείχετ', οὐδ' ἔπειθε νιν.
λαβοῦσα δ' ὡλέναις ἀριστερὰν χέρα,
πλευραῖσιν ἀντιβᾶσα τοῦ δυσδαιμονος
ἀπεσπάραξεν ὡμον, οὐχ ὑπὸ σθένους,
ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς εὐμάρειαν ἐπεδίδον χεροῖν.

THE BACCHANALS

Scaling a rock, their counter-bastion,
And javelined him with branches of the pine :
And others shot their thyrsi through the air
At Pentheus—woeful mark !—yet nought availed. 1100
For, at a height above their fury's pitch,
Trapped in despair's gin, horror-struck he sat.
Last, oak-limbs from their trunks they thundered
down,
And heaved at the roots with levers—not of iron.
But when they won no end of toil and strain,
Agave cried, “ Ho, stand we round the trunk,
Maenads, and grasp, that we may catch the beast
Crouched there, that he may not proclaim abroad
Our God's mysterious rites ! ” Their countless
hands
Set they unto the pine, tore from the soil :— 1110
And he, high-seated, crashed down from his height ;
And earthward fell with frenzy of shriek on shriek
Pentheus, for now he knew his doom at hand.
His mother first, priest-like, began the slaughter,
And fell on him : but from his hair the coif
He tore, that she might know and slay him not,—
Hapless Agave !—and he touched her cheek,
Crying, “ 'Tis I, O mother !—thine own son
Pentheus—thou bar'st me in Echion's halls !
Have mercy, O my mother !—for my sin 1120
Murder not thou thy son—thy very son ! ”
But she, with foaming lips and eyes that rolled
Wildly, and reckless madness-clouded soul,
Possessed of Bacchus, gave no heed to him ;
But his left arm she clutched in both her hands,
And set against the wretch's ribs her foot,
And tore his shoulder out—not by her strength,
But the God made it easy to her hands.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1130 Ἰνώ δὲ τάπι θάτερ' ἔξειργάζετο
 ρήγνυσα σάρκας, Αὔτονόη τ' ὅχλος τε πᾶς
 ἐπεῖχε Βακχῶν· ἦν δὲ πᾶσ' ὁμοῦ βοή,
 ὃ μὲν στενάζων ὅσον ἐτύγχανεν πνέων,
 αἱ δ' ἡλάλαξον. ἔφερε δὲ μὲν ὠλένην,
 ἡ δ' ἵχνος αὐταῖς ἀρβύλαις· γυμνοῦντο δὲ
 πλευραὶ σπαραγμοῖς· πᾶσα δὲ ήματωμένη
 χεῖρας διεσφαίριζε σάρκα Πενθέως.
 κεῖται δὲ χωρὶς σῶμα, τὸ μὲν ὑπὸ στύφλους
 πέτραις, τὸ δὲ ὕλης ἐν βαθυξύλῳ φόβῃ,
 οὐ ράδιον ζήτημα· κράτα δὲ ἄθλιον,
 ὅπερ λαβοῦσα τυγχάνει μῆτηρ χεροῖν,
 πήξασ' ἐπ' ἄκρον θύρσον ὡς ὀρεστέρου
 φέρει λέοντος διὰ Κιθαιρῶνος μέσου,
 λιποῦσ' ἀδελφὰς ἐν χοροῖσι Μαινάδων.
 χωρεῖ δὲ θήρᾳ δυσπότμῳ γαυρουμένη
 τειχέων ἔσω τῶνδ', ἀνακαλοῦσα Βάκχιον
 τὸν ξυγκυναγόν, τὸν ξυνεργάτην ἄγρας
 τὸν καλλίνικον, ἢ δάκρυα νικηφορεῖ.
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τῇδ' ἐκποδὼν τῇ ξυμφορᾷ
 ἀπειμ'. Ἀγαύην πρὶν μολεῦν πρὸς δώματα.
 τὸ σωφρονεῦν δὲ καὶ σέβειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν
 κάλλιστον οἷμαι δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ σοφώτατον
 θιητοῖσιν εἶναι κτῆμα τοῖσι χρωμένοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀναχορεύσωμεν Βάκχιον,
 ἀναβοάσωμεν ξυμφορὰν
 τὰν τοῦ δράκοντος ἐκγενέτα Πενθέως,
 ὃς τὰν θηλυγενῆ στολὰν
 νάρθηκά τε πιστὸν "Αἰδαν
 ἔλαβεν εὔθυρσον,
 ταῦρον προηγητῆρα συμφορᾶς ἔχων.

THE BACCHANALS

And Ino laboured on the other side,
Rending his flesh : Autonoë pressed on—all 1130
The Bacchanal throng. One awful blended cry
Rose—the king's screams while life was yet in him;
And triumph-yells from them. One bare an arm,
One a foot sandal-shod. His ribs were stripped
In mangled shreds : with blood-bedabbled hands
Each to and fro was tossing Pentheus' flesh.

Wide-sundered lies his corse: part 'neath rough rocks.

Part mid the tangled depths of forest-shades :—
Hard were the search. His miserable head,
Which in her hands his mother chanced to seize,
Impaled upon her thyrsus-point she bears,
Like mountain-lion's, through Cithaeron's midst,
Leaving her sisters in their Maenad dance ;
And, in her ghastly quarry glorying, comes
Within these walls, to Bacchus crying aloud,
Her fellow-hunter, helper in the chase
Triumphant—all its triumph-prize is tears !
But from this sight of misery will I
Depart, or ever Agave reach the halls.
Ay, self-restraint, and reverence for the Gods
Are best, I ween ; 'tis wisest far for men
To get these in possession, and cleave thereto. [Exit.]

CHORUS

Raise we to Bacchus the choral acclaim,
Shout we aloud for the fall
Of the king, of the blood of the Serpent who came,
Who arrayed him in woman's pall ;
And the thyrsus-ferule he grasped—but the same
Sealed him to Hades' hall :
And a bull was his guide to a doom of shame !

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1160

Βάκχαι Καδμεῖαι,
τὸν καλλίνικον κλεινὸν ἐξεπράξατε
εἰς γόσον, εἰς δάκρυα.
καλὸς ἀγών, ἐν αἷματι στάζουσαν
χέρα περιβαλεῖν τέκνου.

ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ εἰς δόμους ὄρμωμένην
Πενθέως Αγαύην μητέρ' ἐν διαστρόφοις
ὅσσοις, δέχεσθε κῶμον εὐίου θεοῦ.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Ασιάδες Βάκχαι.

στρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί μ' ὁροθύνεις, ὦ ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

φέρομεν ἐξ ὄρέων
ἔλικα νεότομον ἐπὶ μέλαθρα,
μακάριον θήραν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄρῳ καὶ σε δέξομαι σύγκωμον.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἔμαρψα τόνδ' ἄνευ βρόχων
[λέοντος ἀγροτέρου] νέον ἵνιν,
ώς ὄρᾶν πάρα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πόθεν ἐρημίας ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Κιθαιρών—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί Κιθαιρών ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

κατεφόνευσέν νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἀ βαλοῦσα πρώτα ;

THE BACCHANALS

O Bacchanal-maids Cadmean,

1160

Ye have gained for you glory—a victory-pæan
To be drowned in lamenting and weeping.

O contest triumphantly won, when a mother in blood
of her son

Her fingers is steeping !

But lo, I see fast hurrying to the halls
Agave, Pentheus' mother, with wild eyes
Rolling :—hail ye the revel of our God !

Enter AGAVE, carrying the head of Pentheus.

AGAVE

Asian Bacchanals !

(Str.)

CHORUS

Why dost thou challenge me ?—say.

AGAVE

Lo, from the mountain-side I bear
A newly-severed ivy-spray
Unto our halls, a goodly prey.

1170

CHORUS

I see—to our revels I welcome thee.

AGAVE

I trapped him, I, with never a snare !
'Tis the whelp of a desert lion, plain to see.

CHORUS

Where in the wilderness, where ?

AGAVE

Cithaeron—

CHORUS

What hath Cithaeron wrought ?

AGAVE

Him hath Cithaeron to slaughter brought.

CHORUS

Who was it smote him first ?

99

H 2

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

έμδυν τὸ γέρας.

1180 μάκαιρ' Ἀγαύη κληξύμεθ' ἐν θιάσοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἄλλα;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τὰ Κάδμου—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὶ Κάδμου;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

γένεθλα

μετ' ἐμὲ μετ' ἐμὲ τοῦδ'
ἔθιγε θηρός. εὐτυχής γ' ἄδ' ἄγρα.
μέτεχέ νυν θοίνας.

ἀντ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὶ μετέχω τλάμων;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

νέος ὁ μόσχος ἄρ-
τι γένυν ὑπὸ κόρυθ' ἀπαλότριχα
κατάκομον θάλλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρέπει γ' ὕστε θὴρ ἄγραυλος φόβη.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ό Βάκχιος κυναγέτας
σοφὸς σοφῶς ἀνέπηλεν ἐπὶ θήρᾳ
τοῦδε Μαινάδας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ο γὰρ ἄναξ ἀγρεύς.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἐπαινεῖς;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὶ δ'; ἐπαινῶ.

1190

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Mine, mine is the guerdon,
Their revel-rout singeth me—"Happy Agave!" their
burden.

1180

CHORUS

Who then?

AGAVE

Of Cadmus—

CHORUS

Of Cadmus what wilt thou tell?

AGAVE

His daughters after me smote the monster fell—
After me! O fortunate hunting! Is it not well?
Now share in the banquet!—

(Ant.)

CHORUS

Alas! wherein shall I share?

AGAVE

This whelp is yet but a tender thing,
And over its jaws yet sprouteth fair
The down 'neath the crest of its waving hair.

CHORUS

Yea, a beast of the wold, by the hair, might it be.

AGAVE

Uproused was the Maenad gathering
To the chase by a cunning hunter full cunningly.

1190

CHORUS

Yea, a hunter is Bacchus our King,

AGAVE

Dost thou praise me?

CHORUS

How can I choose but praise?

101

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τάχα δὲ Καδμεῖοι—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ παῖς γε Πενθεὺς—

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ματέρ' ἐπαινέσεται,
λαβοῦσαν ἄγραν τάνδε λεοντοφυῆ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

περισσάν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

περισσῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄγαλλει;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

γέγηθα

μεγάλα μεγάλα καὶ
φανερὰ τὰδ' ἄγρα κατειργασμένα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεῦξόν νυν, ὡς τάλαινα, σὴν νικηφόρουν
ἀστοῖσιν ἄγραν ἦν φέρουσ' ἐλήλυθας.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὦ καλλίπυργον ἀστυ Θηβαίας χθονὸς
ναίοντες, ἔλθεθ' ὡς ἵδητε τήνδ' ἄγραν,
Κάδμου θυγατέρες θηρὸς ἦν ἡγρεύσαμεν
οὐκ ἀγκυλητοῖς Θεσσαλῶν στοχάσμασιν,
οὐδὲ δικτύοισιν, ἀλλὰ λευκοπήχεσι
χειρῶν ἀκμαῖσι. κατὰ κομπάζειν χρεὼν
καὶ λογχοποιῶν ὅργανα κτᾶσθαι μάτην;
ἡμεῖς δέ γ' αὐτῇ χειρὶ τόνδε θ' εἴλομεν
χωρίς τε θηρὸς ἄρθρα διεφορήσαμεν.

ποὺ μοι πατὴρ ὁ πρέσβυς; ἔλθέτω πέλας.
Πενθεύς τ' ἐμὸς παῖς ποὺ στιν; αἰρέσθω λαβῶν

1200

1210

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Ay, and full soon shall Cadmus' race—

CHORUS

And Pentheus thy son—

AGAVE

Yea, I shall have praise of my scion
For the prey that is taken, even this whelp of a lion.

CHORUS

Strange quarry!—

AGAVE

And strangely taken.

CHORUS

Art glad?

AGAVE

I am fain
For the triumph achieved, both goodly and great,
and plain [ta'en.
For the land to see, in the booty mine hands have

CHORUS

Show forth now, hapless one, to all the folk
The triumph-spoil that hither thou hast brought.

1200

AGAVE

Ye, in the fair-towered burg of Theban land
Which dwell, draw nigh to look upon this prey,
The beast we, Cadmus' daughters, hunted down—
Not with the thong-whirled darts of Thessaly,
Neither with nets, but with the fingers white
Of our own hands. What boots the vaunt of men
Who get them tools by armourers vainly wrought,
When we, with bare hands only, took the prey,
And rent asunder all the monster's limbs?
Where is mine ancient sire? Let him draw near.
And my son Pentheus where? Let him upraise

1210

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πηκτῶν πρὸς οἴκους κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις,
ώς πασσαλεύσῃ κράτα τριγλύφοις τόδε
λέοντος δὲ πάρειμι θηράσασ' ἐγώ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἔπεσθέ μοι, φέροντες ἄθλιον βάρος
Πενθέως, ἔπεσθε, πρόσπολοι, δόμων πάροι,
οὐ σῶμα μοχθῶν μυρίοις ζητήμασι
φέρω τόδ', εὐρὼν ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς
διασπαρακτόν, κούδεν ἐν ταῦτῷ πέδω
λαβών, ἐν ὅλῃ κεύμενον δυσευρέτῳ.
ἡκουσα γάρ του θυγατέρων τολμῆματα,
ηδη κατ' ἀστυ τειχέων ἔσω βεβώς
σὺν τῷ γέροντι Τειρεσίᾳ Βακχῶν πάρα·
πάλιν δὲ κάμψας εἰς ὅρος κομζόμαι
τὸν κατθανούντα παῖδα Μαινάδων ὑπο·
καὶ τὴν μὲν Ἀκταίων' Ἀρισταίῳ ποτὲ
τεκοῦσαν εἶδον Αὔτονόην Ἰνώ θ' ἄμα·
ἔτ' ἀμφὶ δρυμοῖς οἰστροπλῆγας ἄθλιας,
τὴν δὲ εἰπέ τίς μοι δεῦρο βακχείφ ποδὶ¹²²⁰
στείχειν Ἀγαύην, οὐδὲ ἄκραντ' ἡκούσαμεν·
λεύσσω γὰρ αὐτήν, δψιν οὐκ εὐδαιμονα.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

πάτερ, μέγιστον κομπάσαι πάρεστι σοι,
πάντων ἀρίστας θυγατέρας σπεῖραι μακρῷ
θυητῶν ἀπάστας εἰπον, ἐξόχως δὲ ἐμέ,
ἡ τὰς παρ' ἴστοις ἐκλιποῦσα κερκίδας
εἰς μεῖζον ἥκω, θῆρας ἀγρεύειν χεροῖν·
φέρω δὲ ἐν ὠλέναισιν, ώς ὄρφης, τάδε
λαβούσα τάριστεῖα, σοὶσι πρὸς δόμοις
ώς ἀγκρεμασθῇ· σὺ δέ, πάτερ, δέξαι χεροῖν·
1240 γαυρούμενος δὲ τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀγρεύμασι

THE BACCHANALS

A ladder's stair against the palace-wall,
That to the triglyphs he may nail this head,
This lion's head that I from hunting bring.

Enter CADMUS, with attendants carrying a bier.

CADMUS

Come with me, henchmen, to the palace come,
Bearing this ghastly load that once was Pentheus,
Whose limbs by toilsome searchings manifold,
About Cithaeron's glens all rent apart
I found, and bring—no twain in one place found, 1220
But lying all about the trackless wood.
For of my daughters' desperate deeds I heard,
Even as I passed within the city-walls
With old Teiresias from the Bacchant revel.
Back to the mountain turned I ; and I bring
My son thence, who by Maenads hath been slain.
There her who bore Actaeon to Aristaeus
I saw, Autonoë, saw Ino there
Still midst the oak-groves, wretches frenzy-stung ;
But hitherward, said one, with Bacchant feet 1230
Had passed Agave, and the truth I heard ;
For I behold her—sight of misery !

AGAVE

My father, proudest boast is thine to make,
To have begotten daughters best by far
Of mortals—all thy daughters, chiefly me,
Me who left loom and shuttle, and pressed on
To high emprise, to hunt beasts with mine hands.
And in mine arms I bring, thou seëst, this
The prize I took, against thy palace-wall
To hang : receive it, father, in thine hands. 1240
And now, triumphant in mine hunting's spoil,

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

κάλει φίλους εἰς δᾶτα· μακάριος γὰρ εἰ,
μακάριος, ήμῶν τοιάδ' ἔξειργασμένων.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ώ πένθος οὐ μετρητὸν οὐδὲ οἶόν τ' ἵδεῖν,
φόνον ταλαιίναις χερσὶν ἔξειργασμένων.
καλὸν τὸ θῦμα καταβαλούσα δαίμοσιν
ἐπὶ δᾶτα Θήβας τάσδε κάμε παρακαλεῖς.
οἵμοι κακῶν μὲν πρῶτα σῶν, ἐπειτ' ἐμῶν·
ώς ὁ θεὸς ήμᾶς ἐνδίκως μέν, ἀλλ' ἄγαν
Βρόμιος ἄναξ ἀπώλεσ' οἰκεῖος γεγών.

1250

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ώς δύσκολον τὸ γῆρας ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ
ἐν τ' ὅμμασι σκυθρωπόν. εἴθε παῖς ἐμὸς
εὐθηρος εἴη, μητρὸς εἰκασθεὶς τρόποις,
ὅτ' ἐν νεανίαισι Θηβαίοις ἄμα
θηρῶν ὀριγνῷτ'. ἀλλὰ θεομαχεῖν μόνον
οἶος τ' ἐκεῖνος. νουθετητέος, πάτερ,
σούστιν. τίς αὐτὸν δεῦρ' ἀν δψιν εἰς ἐμὴν
καλέσειεν, ώς ἵδη με τὴν εὐδαιμονα;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

1260

φεῦ φεῦ· φρονήσασαι μὲν οἱ' ἐδράσατε,
ἀλλγῆσετ' ἄλγος δεινόν· εἰ δὲ διὰ τέλους
ἐν τῷδ' ἀεὶ μενεῖτ' ἐν ὧ καθέστατε,
οὐκ εὐτυχοῦσαι δόξετ' οὐχὶ δυστυχεῖν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τί δ' οὐ καλῶς τῶνδ', ἡ τί λυπηρῶς ἔχει;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

πρῶτον μὲν εἰς τόνδ' αἰθέρ' ὅμμα σὸν μέθεις.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἰδού· τί μοι τόνδ' ἔξυπεῖπας εἰσορᾶν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἢθ' αὐτὸς ἡ σοι μεταβολὰς ἔχειν δοκεῖ;

196

THE BACCHANALS

Bid to a feast thy friends ; for blest art thou,
Blest verily, since we have achieved such deeds.

CADMUS

O anguish measureless that blasts the sight !
O murder compassed by those wretched hands !
Fair victim this to cast before the Gods,
And bid to such a banquet Thebes and me !
Woe for our sorrows !—first for thine, then mine !
How hath the God, King Bromius, ruined us !—
Just stroke—yet ruthless—is he not our kin ?

1250

AGAVE

How sour of mood is greybeard eld in men,
How sullen-eyed ! Framed in his mother's mould
A mighty hunter may my son become,
When with the Theban youths he speedeth forth
Questing the quarry ! But he can do naught
Save war with Gods ! Father, thy part it is
To warn him. Who will call him hitherward
To see me, and behold mine happiness ?

CADMUS

Alas ! when ye are ware what ye have done,
With sore grief shall ye grieve ! If to life's end 1260
Ye should in this delusion still abide,
Ye should not, though unblest, seem all accurst.

AGAVE

What is not well here ?—what that calls for grief ?

CADMUS

First cast thou up thine eye to yonder heaven.

AGAVE

Lo, so I do. Why bid me look thereon ?

CADMUS

Seems it the same ? Or hath it changed to thee ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λαμπρότερος ἢ πρὸν καὶ διπετέστερος.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τὸ δὲ πτοηθὲν τόδ' ἔτι σῇ ψυχῇ πάρα;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

οὐκ οἶδα τοῦπος τούτο, γίγνομαι δέ πως
ἔννους, μετασταθεῖσα τῶν πάρος φρενῶν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

κλύοις ἀν οὖν τι κάποκρίναι' ἀν σαφῶς;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ώς ἐκλέλησμαί γ' ἀ πάρος εἴπομεν, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

εἰς ποίον ἡλθεις οἴκουν ὑμεναίων μέτα;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

σπαρτῷ μ' ἔδωκας, ώς λέγουσ', Ἐχίονι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις πᾶντας ἐγένετο σῷ πόσει;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Πενθεύς, ἐμῇ τε καὶ πατρὸς κοινωνίᾳ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίνος πρόσωπον δῆτ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις ἔχεις;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λέοντος, ως γ' ἔφασκον αἱ θηρώμεναι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σκέψαι νυν ὁρθῶς, βραχὺς ὁ μόχθος εἰσιδεῖν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἴα, τί λεύσσω; τί φέρομαι τόδ' ἐν χεροῖν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἄθριγσον αὐτὸν καὶ σαφέστερον μάθε.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

όρῳ μέγιστον ἄλγος ἡ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

1270

1280

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Brighter—more limpid-lucent than erewhile.

CADMUS

Is this delirium tossing yet thy soul?

AGAVE

This comprehend I not: yet—yet—it passes,
My late mood—I am coming to myself.

1270

CADMUS

Canst hearken aught then? Clearly canst reply?

AGAVE

Our words late-spoken—father, I forget them.

CADMUS

To what house camest thou with bridal-hymns?

AGAVE

Echion's—of the Dragon-seed, men say.

CADMUS

Thou barest—in thine halls, to thy lord—whom?

AGAVE

Pentheus—born of my union with his sire.

CADMUS

Whose head—*whose?*—art thou bearing in thine arms?

AGAVE

A lion's—so said they which hunted it.

CADMUS

Look well thereon:—small trouble this, to look.

AGAVE

Ah-h! *what* do I see? What bear I in mine hands? 1280

CADMUS

Gaze, gaze on it, and be thou certified.

AGAVE

I see—mine uttermost anguish! Woe is me!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μῶν σοι λέοντι φαίνεται προσεικέναι;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

οὐκ ἀλλὰ Πενθέως ἡ τάλαιν' ἔχω κάρα.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ῳμωγμένου γε πρόσθεν ἡ σὲ γνωρίσαι.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τίς ἔκτανέν νιν; πῶς ἐμὰς ἥλθεν χέρας;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

δύστην' ἀλήθει', ώς ἐν οὐ καιρῷ πάρει.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λέγ', ώς τὸ μέλλον καρδία πήδημ' ἔχει.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σύ νιν κατέκτας καὶ κασίγνηται σέθεν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ποῦ δ' ὢλετ'; ἡ κατ' οἰκον; ἡ ποίοις τόποις;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐπερ πρὶν Ἀκταίωνα διέλαχον κύνες.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τί δ' εἰς Κιθαιρῶν' ἥλθε δυσδαίμων ὅδε;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐκερτόμει θεὸν σὰς τε βακχείας μολών.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἡμεῖς δ' ἐκεῖσε τίνι τρόπῳ κατήραμεν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐμάνητε, πᾶσά τ' ἐξεβακχεύθη πόλις.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ὤλεσ', ἄρτι μανθάνω.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

>NNBριν γ' ὑβρισθείσ· θεὸν γὰρ οὐχ ἡγεῖσθέ νιν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

τὸ φίλτατον δὲ σῶμα ποῦ παιδός, πάτερ;

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

Seems it to thee now like a lion's head ?

AGAVE

No!—wretched!—wretched!—Pentheus' head I hold!

CADMUS

Of me bewailed ere recognised of thee.

AGAVE

Who murdered him ? How came he to mine hands ?

CADMUS

O piteous truth that so untimely dawns !

AGAVE

Speak ! Hard my heart beats, waiting for its doom.

CADMUS

Thou !—thou, and those thy sisters murdered him.

AGAVE

Where perished he ?—at home, or in what place ? 1290

CADMUS

There, where Actaeon erst by hounds was torn.

AGAVE

How to Cithaeron went this hapless one ?

CADMUS

To mock the God and thy wild rites he went.

AGAVE

But we—for what cause thither journeyed we ?

CADMUS

Ye were distraught : all Thebes went Bacchant-wild.

AGAVE

Dionysus ruined us ! I see it now.

CADMUS

Ye flouted him, would not believe him God.

AGAVE

Where, father, is my son's belovèd corse ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

έγώ μύλις τόδ' ἐξερευνήσας φέρω.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1300 ή πᾶν ἐν ἄρθροις συγκεκλημένον καλῶς;

* * * * *

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Πενθεῖ δὲ τί μέρος ἀφροσύνης προσῆκ' ἐμῆς;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

νῦν ἐγένεθ' ὅμοιος, οὐ σέβων θεόν.

τοιγάρ συνῆψε πάντας εἰς μίαν βλάβην,
νῦμας τε τόνδε θ', ὥστε· διολέσαι δόμους
κάμ', ὅστις ἀτεκνος ἀρσένων παίδων γεγώς,
τῆς σῆς τόδ' ἔρνος, ὡς τάλαινα, νηδύος
αἰσχιστα καὶ κάκιστα κατθανόνθ' ὄρῳ,
ὡς δῶμ' ἀνέβλεφ', δις συνεῖχες, ὡς τέκνουν,
τούμδὸν μέλαθρον, παιδὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς γεγώς,
πόλει τε τάρβος ἥσθα· τὸν γέροντα δὲ
οὐδεὶς ὑβρίζειν ἥθελ' εἰσορῶν τὸ σὸν
κάρα· δίκην γὰρ ἀξίαν ἐλάμβανες.

νῦν δ' ἐκ δόμων ἄτιμος ἐκβέβλησομαι
ό Κάδμος ό μέγας, δις τὸ Θηβαίων γένος
ἔσπειρα κάξημησα κάλλιστον θέρος.
ὡς φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, καὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ὡν ὅμως
τῶν φιλτάτων ἐμοιγ' ἀριθμήσει, τέκνουν,
οὐκέτι γενείου τοῦδε θιγγάνων χερί,
τὸν μητρὸς αὐδῶν πατέρα προσπτύξει, τέκνουν,
λέγων· τίς ἀδικεῖ, τίς σ' ἀτιμάζει, γέρον;
τίς σὴν ταράσσει καρδίαν λυπτηρὸς ὡν;
λέγ', ως κολάζω τὸν ἀδικοῦντά σ', ὡς πάτερ.
νῦν δ' ἄθλιος μέν εἰμ' ἐγώ, τλήμων δὲ σύ,
οἰκτρὰ δὲ μήτηρ, τλέμουνες δὲ σύγγονοι.

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

Here do I bear it, by hard searching found.

AGAVE

Is it all meetly fitted limb to limb?

1300

CADMUS

[Yea,—now I add thereto this dear-loved head.]

AGAVE

But—in my folly what was Pentheus' part?

CADMUS

He was as ye, revering not the God,
Who therefore in one mischief whelmed you all,
You, and this prince, so ruining all our house
And me, who had no manchild of mine own,
Who see now, wretched daughter, this the fruit
Of thy womb horribly and foully slain.

To thee our house looked up, O son, the stay
Of mine old halls ; my daughter's offspring thou,
Thou wast the city's dread : was none dared mock
The old man, none that turned his eyes on thee,
O gallant head !—thou hadst well requited him.

1310

Now from mine halls shall I in shame be cast—
Cadmus the great, who sowed the seed of Thebes,
And reaped the goodliest harvest of the world.
O best-beloved !—for, though thou be no more,
Thou shalt be counted best-beloved, O child,
Thou who shalt fondle never more my head,
Nor clasp and call me “Mother's father,” child,
Crying, “Who wrongs thee, ancient ?—flouts thee
who ?

1320

Who vexeth thee to trouble thine heart's peace ?
Speak, that I may chastise the wrong, my sire.”
Now am I anguish-stricken, wretched thou,
Woeful thy mother, and her sisters wretched !

113

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

εἰ δ' ἔστιν ὅστις δαιμόνων ὑπερφρονεῖ,
εἰς τοῦδ' ἀθρήσας θάνατον ἡγείσθω θεούς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὸ μὲν σὸν ἀλγῶ, Κάδμε· σὸς δ' ἔχει δίκην
παῖς παιδὸς ἀξίαν μέν, ἀλγεινὴν δὲ σοί.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ὁρᾶς γὰρ τάμ' ὅσῳ μετεστράφη

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ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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- 1330 δράκων γενήσει μεταβαλών, δάμαρ τε σὴ
ἐκθηριωθεῖσ' ὄφεος ἀλλάξει τύπον,
ἢν "Αρεος ἔσχες 'Αρμονίαν θυητὸς γεγώς.
ὅχον δὲ μόσχων, χρησμὸς ὡς λέγει Διός,
ἔλας μετ' ἀλόχουν, βαρβάρων ἡγούμενος.
πολλὰς δὲ πέρσεις ἀναρίθμῳ στρατεύματι
πόλεις· ὅταν δὲ Λοξίου χρηστήριον
διαρπάσωσι, νόστον ἄθλιον πάλιν
στήσουσι· σὲ δ' "Αρης 'Αρμονίαν τε ῥύσεται
μακάρων τ' ἐς αἰαν σὸν καθιδρύσει βίον.
1340 ταῦτ' οὐχὶ θυητοῦ πατρὸς ἐκγεγὼς λέγω
Διόνυσος, ἀλλὰ Ζηνός· εἰ δὲ σωφρονεῖν
ἔγνωθ', ὅτ' οὐκ ἡθέλετε, τὸν Διὸς γόνον
ηὐδαιμονεῖτ' ἀν σύμμαχον κεκτημένοι.

THE BACCHANALS

If any man there be that scorns the Gods,
This man's death let him note, and so believe.

CHORUS

Cadmus, for thee I grieve. Thy daughter's son
Hath but just doom—yet cruel doom for thee.

AGAVE

Father, thou seest what change hath passed o'er
me—

[A large portion of the play has here been lost, containing (1) the lament of Agave over her son; (2) a few lines, probably by the Chorus, announcing the appearance, in his shape as a God, of Dionysus; (3) the commencement of Dionysus' speech, in which he points out how Pentheus' sin has proved his destruction, how Agave and her sisters have, by their unbelief, involved themselves in his punishment, and will be exiles till death; and how Cadmus himself must suffer with his house, how he shall wander exiled from Hellas,—the portion preserved commencing with the prophecy of his weird transformation.]¹

DIONYSUS

—Thou to a serpent shalt be changed: thy wife 1330
Harmonia, Ares' child, whom thou didst wed
When man, embruted shall to a snake be changed.
Thou with thy wife shalt drive a wain of steers
Leading barbaric hordes, Zeus' oracle saith,
And many a city with thy countless host
Shalt sack; but when they plunder Loxias' shrine,
Then shall they get them bitter home-return.
Thee and Harmonia shall Ares save,
And establish in the Blessed Land your lives.
This say I, of no mortal father born, 1340
Dionysus, but of Zeus. Had ye but learnt
Wisdom, what time ye would not, ye had been
Blest now, with Zeus' Son for your champion gained.

¹ For preserved fragments of this lost portion, see *Appendix*.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Διόνυσε, λισσόμεσθά σ', ηδικήκαμεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὅψ' ἐμάθεθ' ἡμᾶς, ὅτε δ' ἔχρην, οὐκ ἥδετε.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἐγνώκαμεν ταῦτ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεξέρχει λίαν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ πρὸς ὑμῶν θεὸς γεγὼς ὑβριζόμην.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὁργὰς πρέπει θεοὺς οὐχ ὁμοιοῦσθαι βροτοῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πάλαι τάδε Ζεὺς ούμὸς ἐπένευσεν πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1350 αἰαῖ, δέδοκται, πρέσβυ, τλήμονες φυγαῖ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δῆτα μέλλεθ' ἄπερ ἀναγκαίως ἔχει;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ώ τέκνου, ώς εἰς δεινὸν ἥλθομεν κακόν,
[πάντες], σύ θ' ἡ τάλαινα σύγγονοί τε σαι',
ἐγώ θ' ὁ τλήμων βαρβάρους ἀφίξομαι
γέρων μέτοικος· ἔτι δέ μοι τὸ θέσφατον
εἰς Ἑλλάδ' ἀγαγεῖν μιγάδα βάρβαρον στρατόν.
καὶ τὴν Ἀρεως παῖδ' Ἀρμονίαν δάμαρτ' ἐμήν,
δράκων δρακαίης φύσιν ἔχουσαν ἀγρίαν
ἄξω πὶ βωμοὺς καὶ τάφους Ἑλληνικούς,
ἡγούμενος λόγχαισιν· οὐδὲ παύσομαι
κακῶν ὁ τλήμων, οὐδὲ τὸν καταιβάτην
Ἀχέροντα πλεύσας ησυχος γεινήσομαι.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ώ πάτερ, ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ στερεῖσα φεύξομαι.

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Dionysus, we beseech thee!—we have sinned.

DIONYSUS

Too late ye know me, who knew not in your hour.

AGAVE

We know it: but thy vengeance passeth bounds.

DIONYSUS

I am a God: ye did despite to me.

AGAVE

It fits not that in wrath Gods be as men.

DIONYSUS

Long since my father Zeus ordained this so.

AGAVE

Alas! our woeful exile's doom is sealed!

1350

DIONYSUS

Why then delay the fate that needs must be? [Exit.]

CADMUS

Daughter, to what dread misery are we come,—

Yea, all, thou and thy sisters—woe is thee?

And I—ah me!—must visit alien men,

A grey-haired sojourner. I am doomed withal

On Greeks to lead a mingled alien host;

And Ares' child, Harmonia my wife,

In serpent form shall I, a serpent, lead

Against our Hellas' altars and her tombs,

Captaining spears. And I shall find no rest

1360

From woes, alas! nor that down-rushing stream

Of Acheron shall I cross and be at peace!

AGAVE

Robbed of thee, father, exiled shall I be!

117

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τί μ' ἀμφιβάλλεις χερσίν, ὁ τάλαινα παῖ,
ὅρνιν ὅπως κηφῆνα πολιόχρως κύκνος;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ποῖ γὰρ τράπωμαι πατρίδος ἐκβεβλημένη;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα, τέκνου· μικρὸς ἐπίκουρος πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

χαῖρ', ὁ μέλαθρον, χαῖρ', ὁ πατρία
πόλις· ἐκλείπω σ' ἐπὶ δυστυχίᾳ
φυγὰς ἐκ θαλάμων.

1370

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

στεῦχέ νυν, ὁ παῖ, τὸν Ἀρισταίου
* * * * *

ΑΓΑΤΗ

στένομαι σε, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

κάγῳ σέ, τέκνου,
καὶ σὰς ἐδάκρυσα κασιγνήτας.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

δεινῶς γὰρ τάνδ' αἰκίαν
Διόνυσος ἄναξ
τοὺς σοὺς εἰς οἴκους ἔφερεν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἔπασχεν δεινὰ πρὸς ὑμῶν,
ἀγέραστον ἔχων ὅνομ' ἐν Θήβαις.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

χαῖρε, πάτερ μοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

χαῖρ', ὁ μελέα
1380 θύγατερ. χαλεπῶς εἰς τόδ' ἀν ἥκοις.

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

Why cast thine arms about me, hapless child ?
Like white swan cherishing its helpless sire ?

AGAVE

Whither can I turn, outcast from my land ?

CADMUS

I know not, child. Small help thy father is.

AGAVE

Farewell, mine home ; farewell, ye city-towers
Of fatherland ! In anguish of despair
I pass an exile from my bridal bowers.

1370

CADMUS

Child, to the halls of Aristaeus fare :
Abide thou there.

AGAVE

I mourn thee, father !

CADMUS

Child, I mourn for thee ;
And for thy sisters do I weep withal.

AGAVE

For Dionysus' tyrannous majesty
Most fearfully hath caused upon thine hall
This shame to fall.

CADMUS

Yea, outrage foul to him of you was done,
In that his name in Thebes was held in scorn.

AGAVE

Farewell, my father.

CADMUS

Farewell, hapless one,
Who ne'er shalt fare well, evermore forlorn !

1380

119

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἄγετ' ὡ πομποί με, κασιγνήτας
ἴνα συμφυγάδας ληψόμεθ' οἰκτράς.
ἔλθοιμι δ' ὅπου
μήτε Κιθαιρών μαρός μ' ἐσίδοι,
μήτε Κιθαιρῶν' ὅσσοισιν ἐγώ,
μήθ' δθι θύρσου μνῆμ' ἀνάκειται.
Βάκχαις δ' ἄλλαισι μέλοιεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,
πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκήτων πόρον ηὑρε θεός.
τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

1390

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

O ye, to my sisters guide me,
My companions in banishment's misery.

O that afar I might hide me
Where accursed Cithaeron shall look not on me,
Nor I with mine eyes shall Cithaeron see,
Where memorial is none of the thyrsus-spear !
Be these unto other Bacchanals dear.

CHORUS

O the works of the Gods—in manifold wise they reveal them :

Manifold things unhoped-for the Gods to accomplishment bring.
And the things that we looked for, the Gods deign not to fulfil them ;

1390

And the paths undiscerned of our eyes, the Gods unseal them.

So fell this marvellous thing.

[*Exeunt OMNES.*

APPENDIX TO THE “BACCHANALS.”

A FEW fragments, given below, of the lost portion of the *Bacchae* have been collected, chiefly from the *Christus Patiens*, “a wretchedly stupid drama, falsely attributed to Gregory Nazianzenus, giving an account of the circumstances connected with the Passion of Christ, and consisting of a cento of verses taken chiefly from the *Bacchae*, *Rhesus*, and *Troades*” (Tyrrell, Introduction to his edition of the *Bacchae*).

The lines marked *A.* may be taken as from the speech of Agave; those marked *D.*, as from that of Dionysus.

A. To find a doom of rending midst the rocks¹

What corpse is this that in mine arms I clasp?
How shall I press him—woe’s me!—tenderly
Unto my breast?—in what wise wail o’er him?

For, had mine hands received not mine own curse . . .²

To rend to utter fragments every limb

Kissing the shreds of flesh which once I nursed

Come, ancient, this thrice-hapless sufferer’s head
Compose we reverently, and all the frame
Lay we together, far as in us lies.

O best-belovéd face, O youthful cheek
Lo, with this vesture do I veil thine head,
And these thy blood-bedabbled, furrow-scarred
Limbs

Whose is the mantle that shall shroud thy form
Ah, whose the hands that now shall tend thee, son?

¹ From Lucian. ² From the Scholiast to Aristophanes’ *Plutus*.

APPENDIX

D. He dared the chain, he dared the scoffing word . . .
They which should have been last to slay him, slew . . .
All this hath yon man suffered righteously.
Yea, and the nation's doom I will not hide—
To leave yon town, a sign to alien men,
To pass to many cities wandering,
Dragging a yoke of thraldom woefully,
War-captives, draining misery's cup to the dregs
Yea, they must leave this city, expiate
The impious pollution of his murder,
And see no more their own land—God forbid
That murderers by their victims' graves should lie !
All woes thou too must suffer will I tell.

**THE
MADNESS OF HERCULES**

ARGUMENT

Hercules was hated from his birth by Hera, and by her devices was made subject to Eurystheus, king of Argos. At his command he performed the great Twelve Labours, whereof the last was that he should bring up Cerberus, the Hound of Hades, from the Underworld. Ere he departed, he committed Amphitryon his father, with Megara his wife, and his sons, to the keeping of Creon, king of Thebes, and so went down into the Land of Darkness. Now when he was long time absent, so that men doubted whether he would ever return, a man of Euboea, named Lycus, was brought into Thebes by evil-hearted and discontented men, and with these conspired against Creon, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. Then he sought further to slay all that remained of the house of Hercules, lest any should in days to come avenge Creon's murder. So these, in their sore strait, took refuge at the altar of Zeus. And herein is told how, even as they stood under the shadow of death, Hercules returned for their deliverance, and how in the midst of that joy and triumph a yet worse calamity was brought upon them by the malice of Hera.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΤΩΝ

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ ΓΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ

ΛΤΚΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ΙΡΙΣ

ΛΤΣΣΑ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

AMPHITRYON, *husband of Alcmena, and reputed father of Hercules.*

MEGARA, *wife of Hercules.*

LYCUS, *a usurper, king of Thebes.*

HERCULES, *son of Zeus and Alcmena.*

IRIS, *a Goddess, messenger of the Gods.*

MADNESS, *a demon.*

SERVANT of Hercules.

THESEUS, *king of Athens.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Theban Elders.*

Three young Sons of Hercules; Attendants of Lycus and of Theseus.

SCENE: At Thebes, before the royal palace. The altar of Zeus stands in front.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

10

20

Τίς τὸν Διὸς σύλλεκτρον οὐκ οἰδεν βροτῶν,
Ἄργειον Ἀμφιτρύων, δὲν Ἀλκαῖός ποτε
ἔτιχθ' ὁ Περσέως, πατέρα τόνδ' Ἡρακλέους;
δις τάσδε Θήβας ἔσχεν, ἐνθ' ὁ γηγενῆς
σπαρτῶν στάχυς ἔβλαστεν, ὃν γένους "Αρης
ἔσωσ" ἀριθμὸν ὀλίγον, οἱ Κάδμου πόλιν
τεκνοῦσι παίδων παισίν. ἐνθέν ἔξέφυ
Κρέων Μενοικέως παῖς, ἄναξ τῆσδε χθονός.
Κρέων δὲ Μεγάρας τῆσδε γίγνεται πατήρ,
ἥν πάντες ὑμεναίοισι Καδμεῖοί ποτε
λωτῷ συνηλάλαξαν, ἥνικ' εἰς ἐμοὺς
δόμους ὁ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς νιν ἤγετο.
λιπών δὲ Θήβας, οὐ κατῳκίσθην ἐγώ,
Μεγάραν τε τήνδε πενθερούς τε παῖς ἐμὸς
Ἄργεια τείχη καὶ Κυκλωπίαν πόλιν
ώρεξατ' οἰκεῦν, ἥν ἐγὼ φεύγω κτανὼν
Ἡλεκτρύωνα· συμφορὰς δὲ τὰς ἐμὰς
ἐξευμαρίζων καὶ πάτραν οἰκεῦν θέλων,
καθόδου δίδωσι μισθὸν Εύρυσθεῖ μέγαν,
ἐξημερώσαι γαῖαν, εἴθ' "Ἡρας ὅπο
κέντροις δαμασθεὶς εἴτε τοῦ χρεῶν μέτα.
καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἐξεμόχθησεν πόνους,

130

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

*AMPHITRYON, MEGARA, and her three Sons by Hercules,
seated on the steps of the altar of Zeus the Deliverer.*

AMPHITRYON

Who knows not Zeus's couch-mate, who of men,
Argive Amphitryon, sprung from Perseus' son
Alcaeus, father of great Hercules ?
Here in Thebes dwelt he, whence the earth-born
crop

Of Sown Men rose, scant remnant of whose race
The War-god spared to people Cadmus' town
With children of their children. Sprang from these
Creon, Menoeceus' son, king of this land,
Creon, the father of this Megara,

Whose spousals all the sons of Cadmus once 10
Acclaimed with flutes, what time unto mine halls
Glorious Hercules brought home his bride.
But Thebes, wherein I dwelt, and Megara,
And all his marriage-kin, my son forsook,
Yearning for Argos' giant-buildest burg
Mycenae, whence I am outlawed, since I slew
Electryon : he, to lighten mine affliction,
And fain to dwell in his own fatherland,
Proffered Eurystheus for our home-return—
Or spurred by Hera's goads, or drawn by fate— 20
A great price, even to rid the earth of pests.
And, all the other labours now achieved,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ Ταινάρου διὰ στόμα
βέβηκ' ἐς "Αἰδου τὸν τρισώματον κύνα
εὶς φῶς ἀνάξων, ἔνθεν οὐχ ἥκει πάλιν.
γέρων δὲ δή τις ἔστι Καδμείων λόγος
ώς ἦν πάρος Δίρκης τις εὔνήτωρ Λύκος
τὴν ἐπτάπυργον τήνδε δεσπόζων πόλιν,
τῷ λευκοπωλῷ πρὶν τυραννῆσαι χθονὸς
30 Αμφίον' ἡδὲ Ζῆθον, ἐκγόνω Διός.
οὗ ταῦτὸν ὄνομα παῖς πατρὸς κεκλημένος,
Καδμεῖος οὐκ ὕν, ἀλλ' ἀπ' Εὐβοίας μολών,
κτείνει Κρέοντα καὶ κτανὼν ἄρχει χθονός,
στάσει νοσούσαν τήνδ' ἐπεισπεσὼν πόλιν.
ἡμῖν δὲ κῆδος εἰς Κρέοντ' ἀνημμένον
κακὸν μέγιστον, ὡς ἔοικε, γίγνεται.
τούμοῦ γάρ δύτος παιδὸς ἐν μυχοῖς χθονός
ό καινὸς οὐτος τῆσδε γῆς ἄρχων Λύκος
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας ἔξελεῖν θέλει
40 κτανὼν δάμαρτά θ', ὡς φόνῳ σβέσῃ φόνον,
κάμ'—εἴ τι δὴ χρὴ κάμ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν λέγειν
γέροντ' ἀχρεῖον—μὴ ποθ' οὖδ' ἡνδρωμένοι
μῆτρωσιν ἐκπράξωσιν αἷματος δίκην.
ἔγὼ δέ—λείπει γάρ με τοῦσδ' ἐν δώμασι
τροφὸν τέκνων οἰκουρόν, ἡμίκα χθονός
μέλαιναν ὅρφην εἰσέβαινε παῖς ἐμός—
σὺν μητρί, τέκνα μὴ θάνωσ' Ἡρακλέους,
βωμὸν καθίζω τόνδε σωτήρος Διός,
50 δὸν καλλινίκου δορὸς ἄγαλμ' ἴδρυσατο
Μινύας κρατήσας ούμδος εὐγενῆς τόκος.
πάντων δὲ χρεῖοι τάσδ' ἔδρας φυλάσσομεν,
σίτων ποτῶν ἐσθῆτος, ἀστρώτῳ πέδῳ
πλευρὰς τιθέντες· ἐκ γὰρ ἐσφραγισμένοι
δόμων καθήμεθ' ἀπορίᾳ σωτηρίας.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

For the last, down the gorge of Taenarus
He hath passed to Hades, to bring up to light
The hound three-headed, whence he hath not re-
turned.

Now an old legend lives mid Cadmus' sons
That erstwhile was one Lycus Dirce's spouse,
And of this seven-gated city king,
Ere Zethus and Amphion ruled the land,
Lords of the White Steeds, sprung from loins of Zeus. 30
And this man's son, who bears his father's name,—
No Theban, an Euboean outlander,—
Fell on the city by sedition rent,
Slew Creon, and having slain him rules the land.
And mine affinity with Creon knit
Is turned to mighty evil, well I wot.
For while my son is in the earth's dark heart,
This upstart Lycus, ruler of the land,
Would fain destroy the sons of Hercules,
And slay, with blood to smother blood, his wife 40
And me,—if I be reckoned among men,
A useless greybeard,—lest these, grown to man,
Take vengeance for their mother's father's blood.

And I—for my son left me in his halls
To ward his sons and foster them, when he
Into the earth's black nether darkness passed—
Here with their mother sit, that Hercules' sons
May die not, at the altar of Saviour Zeus,
Which, in thanksgiving for the victory won
O'er Minyan foes, mine hero-scion reared. 50
And, lacking all things, raiment, meat, and drink,
Here keep we session, on the bare hard ground
Laying our limbs ; for desperate of life
Here sit we, barred from homes whose doors are sealed.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

φίλων δὲ τοὺς μὲν οὐ σαφεῖς ὄρῳ φίλους,
οἱ δὲ ὅντες ὄρθως ἀδύνατοι προσωφελεῖν.
τοιοῦτον ἀνθρώποισιν ἡ δυσπραξία,
ἥς μήποθ' ὅστις καὶ μέσως εὔνους ἐμοὶ
τύχοι, φίλων ἔλεγχον ἀψευδέστατον.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

- 60 ὡς πρέσβυ, Ταφίων ὃς ποτ' ἔξειλες πόλιν
στρατηλατήσας κλεινὰ Καδμείων δορός,
ὡς οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποισι τῶν θείων σαφές.
ἔγῳ γάρ οὗτ' εἰς πατέρ' ἀπηλάθην τύχης,
ὅς εἴνεκ' ὅλβου μέγας ἐκομπάσθη ποτέ,
ἔχων τυραννίδ', ἥς μακραὶ λόγχαι πέρι
πηδῶσ' ἔρωτι σώματ' εἰς εὐδαιμονα,
ἔχων δὲ τέκνα· καմ' ἔδωκε παιδὶ σῷ
ἐπίσημον εὐνὴν Ἡρακλεῖ συνοικίσας·
καὶ νῦν ἐκεῖνα μὲν θανόντ' ἀνέπτατο·
70 ἔγῳ δὲ καὶ σὺ μέλλομεν θυήσκειν, γέρον,
οἵ θ' Ἡράκλειοι παῖδες, οὓς ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
σώζω νεοσσοὺς ὄρνις ὡς ὑφειμένους.
οἱ δὲ εἰς ἔλεγχον ἄλλοις ἄλλοθεν πίτνων,
ὡς μῆτερ, αὐδᾶ, ποι πατήρ ἄπεστι γῆς;
τί δρᾶ, πόθ' ἦξει; τῷ νέῳ δὲ ἐσφαλμένοι
ζητοῦσι τὸν τεκόντ· ἔγῳ δὲ διαφέρω
λόγοισι μυθεύουσα· θαυμάζω δ', ὅταν
πύλαι ψοφώσι, πᾶς τ' ἀνίστησιν πόδα,
ὡς πρὸς πατρῶν προσπεσούμενοι γόνυ.
80 νῦν οὖν τίν' ἐλπίδ' ἡ πόρον σωτηρίας
ἔξευμαρίζει, πρέσβυ; πρὸς σὲ γάρ βλέπω.
ὡς οὗτε γαίας ὄρι ἀν ἐκβαῖμεν λάθρα·
φυλακαὶ γάρ ἡμῶν κρείσσονες κατ' ἔξόδους·
οὗτ' ἐν φίλοισιν ἐλπίδες σωτηρίας
ἔτ' εἰσὶν ἡμῖν. ἥντιν' οὖν γνώμην ᔁχεις

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

And of friends some, I note, are insincere,
Some, friends in truth, are helpless for our aid :
Such evil is misfortune unto men ;
'Tis friendship's sternest test : may it never come
To friend of mine, how faint soe'er his love !

MEGARA

Ancient, who once didst smite the Taphians' burg, 60
Captaining gloriously the Theban spears,
How are God's ways with men past finding out !
Not Fortune's outcast was I through my sire :
So prospered he, all men acclaimed him great :
Kingship he had—that thing for lust whereof
Long lances leap against men fortune-throned :
Children had he ; me to thy son he gave,
In glorious spousal joined with Hercules.
Now is all dead—on vanished pinions flown !
Now, ancient, thou and I are marked for death, 70
With Hercules' children, whom, as 'neath her
wings
A bird her fledglings gathereth, so I keep.
And this one, that one falls to questioning still—
“Mother, in what land stays our father ?—tell.
What doth he? When comes?” In child-ignorance
They seek their sire : and still I put them by
With fables feigned ; yet wondering start, whene'er
A door sounds ; and all leap unto their feet,
Looking to cling about their father's knees.

What hope or path of safety, ancient, now 80
Canst thou devise ?—for unto thee I look.
We cannot quit the land's bounds unperceived,
For at all outlets guards too strong are set :
Nor linger hopes of safety any more
In friends. What counsel then thou hast soe'er,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

λέγ' εἰς τὸ κοινόν, μὴ θανεῦν ἔτοιμον γῆ,
χρόνον δὲ μηκύνωμεν ὅντες ἀσθενεῖς.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ῳ θύγατερ, οὗτοι ῥάδιον τὰ τοιάδε
φαύλως περαίνειν σπουδάσαντ' ἄνευ πόνου.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

90 λύπης τι προσδεῖς ἢ φιλεῖς οὕτω φάος;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

καὶ τῷδε χαίρω καὶ φιλῶ τὰς ἐλπίδας.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κάγω· δοκεῖν δὲ τάδόκητ' οὐ χρή, γέρον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἐν ταῖς ἀναβολαῖς τῶν κακῶν ἔνεστ' ἄκη.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

οἱ δὲ ἐν μέσῳ με λυπρὸς ὡν δάκνει χρόνος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἔτ' ἀν γένοιτ', ὡ θύγατερ, οὔριος δρόμος

ἐκ τῶν παρόντων τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ κακῶν,

ἔλθοι τ' ἔτ' ἀν παῖς οὐμός, εὐνήτωρ δὲ σός.

ἄλλ' ἡσύχαξε καὶ δακρυρρόους τέκνων

πηγὰς ἀφαίρει καὶ παρευκήλει λόγοις,

κλέπτουσα μύθοις ἀθλίους κλοπὰς δῆμως.

κάμνουσι γάρ τοι καὶ βροτῶν αἱ συμφοραί,

καὶ πνεύματ' ἀνέμων οὐκ ἀεὶ ῥώμην ἔχει,

οἵ τ' εὐτυχοῦντες διὰ τέλους οὐκ εὐτυχεῖς·

ἔξισταται γὰρ πάντ' ἀπ' ἀλλήλων δίχα.

οὗτος δὲ ἀνήρ ἄριστος ὅστις ἐλπίσι

πέποιθεν ἀεί· τὸ δὲ ἀπορεῖν ἀνδρὸς κακοῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀψόροφα μέλαθρα στρ.
καὶ γεραιὰ δέμνι', ἀμφὶ βάκτροις

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Now speak it out, lest death be at the door,
And we, who are helpless, do but peize the time.

AMPHITRYON

Daughter, not easily, without deep thought,
May one, though ne'er so earnest, counsel here.

MEGARA

Dost seek more grief? Art so in love with life? 90

AMPHITRYON

In this life I rejoice : I love its hopes.

MEGARA

And I : yet for things hopeless none may look.

AMPHITRYON

Even in delay is salve for evils found.

MEGARA

But ah the gnawing anguish of suspense !

AMPHITRYON

Daughter, a fair-wind course may yet befall
From storms of present ills for thee and me.
Yet may he come—my son, thy lord, may come.
Nay, calm thee : stop the fountains welling tears
Of these thy sons, and soothe them with thy words,
Cheating them with a fable—piteous cheat!
Sooth, men's afflictions weary of their work,
And tempest-blasts not alway keep their force ;
Nor prosperous to the end the prosperous are ;
For all things fleet and yield each other place.
He is the hero, who in steadfast hope
Trusts on : despair is but the coward's part.

100

Enter CHORUS, leaning on their staves, and climbing the ascent to the altar.

CHORUS

Unto the stately palace-roofs, whereby (Str.)
The ancient coucheth on the ground,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

110 ἔρεισμα θέμενος, ἐστάλην ῥαλέμων
γόνων ἀοιδὸς ὥστε πολιὸς ὅρνις,
ἔπεια μόνον καὶ δόκημα νυκτερωπὸν
ἐννύχῳν ὄνείρων,
τρομερὰ μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως πρόθυμα.

ώ τέκεα πατρὸς ἀπάτορ', ὡ
γεραιὲ σύ τε τάλαινα μᾶ-
τερ, ἀ τὸν Ἀΐδα δόμοις
πόσιν ἀναστενάζεις.

μὴ πόδα προκάμητε
βαρύ τε κῶλον, ὥστε πρὸς πετραῖον
τλέπας ζυγοφόρος ἄρματος βάρος φέρων
τροχηλάτοιο πῶλος.¹
λαβοῦ χερῶν καὶ πέπλων, ὅτου λέλοιπε
ποδὸς ἀμαυρὸν ἵχνος·
γέρων γέροντα παρακόμιζε,
ῳξύνοπλα δόρατα νέα νέω
τὸ πάρος ἐν ἡλίκων πόνοις
ξυνῆν ποτ', εὐκλεεστάτας
πατρίδος οὐκ ὄνείδη.

130 ἵδετε, πατρὸς ὡς ἐπωδ.
γόργωπες αἵδε προσφερεῖς
ὅμμάτων αὐγαί,
τὸ δὲ δὴ κακοτυχὲς οὐ λέλοιπεν ἐκ τέκνων,
οὐδὲ ἀποίχεται χάρις.

¹ A very corrupt passage: Nauck's reading adopted.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Bowed o'er my propping staff—a chanter I
Whose song rings sorrow round—

110

Like some hoar swan I come—a voice, no more,
Like to a night-dream's phantom-show,
Palsied with eld, yet loyal as of yore
To friends of long ago.

Hail, children fatherless! Hail, ancient, thou!
Hail, mother bowed 'neath sorrow's load,
Who mournest for thy lord long absent now
In the Unseen King's abode!

Let feet not faint, nor let the tired limbs trail (*Ant.*)
Heavy, as when uphillward strain,
Trampling the stones, a young steed's feet that hale
The massy four-wheel wain.

120

Lay hold on helping hand, on vesture's fold,
Whoso hath failing feet that grope
Blindly: thy brother, ancient, thou uphold
Up this steep temple-slope,

Thy friend, who once mid toils of battle-peers
Shoulder to shoulder, did not shame—
When thou and he were young, when clashed the
spears,—
His country's glorious name.

Mark ye how dragon-like glaring (*Epoede.*) 130
As the eyes of the sire whom we knew
Are the eyes of the sons!—and unsparing
His hard lot followeth too
His sons! and the kingly mien
Of the sire in the children is seen.

139

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

‘Ελλὰς ὡς ξυμμάχους
οἴους οἴους ὀλέσασα
τούσδ’ ἀποστερήσει.

ἀλλ’ εἰσορῶ γάρ τησδε κοίρανον χθονὸς
Λύκον περῶντα τῶνδε δωμάτων πάρος.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

- 140 τὸν ‘Ηράκλειον πατέρα καὶ ξυνάορον,
εἰς χρῆ μ’, ἐρωτῶ· χρῆ δ’, ἐπεὶ γε δεσπότης
ἡμῶν καθέστηχ’, ιστορεῦν ἂν βούλομαι·
τίν’ εἰς χρόνον ζητεῦτε μηκῦναι βίον;
τίν’ ἐλπίδ’ ἀλκήν τ’ εἰσοράτε μὴ θανεῖν;
ἢ τὸν παρ’ “Αιδη πατέρα τῶνδε κείμενον
πιστεύεθ’ ἥξειν; ὡς ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀξίαν
τὸ πένθος αἰρεσθ’, εἰς θανεῖν ὑμᾶς χρεών,
σὺ μὲν καθ’ Ἐλλάδ’ ἐκβαλὼν κόμπους κενούς
ὡς σύγγαμός σοι Ζεὺς τέκνου τε κοινέων,²
150 σὺ δ’ ὡς ἄριστου φωτὸς ἐκλήθης δάμαρ.
τί δὴ τὸ σεμνὸν σῷ κατείργασται πόσει,
ὑδραν ἔλειον εἰς διώλεσε κτανὼν
ἢ τὸν Νέμειον θῆρ’; ὃν ἐν βρόχοις ἔλῶν
βραχίονός φησ’ ἀγχόναισιν ἔξελεῖν.
τοῖσδ’ ἔξαγωνίζεσθε; τῶνδ’ ἄρ’ εἴνεκεν
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας οὐ θυήσκειν χρεών;
ὅς ἔσχε δόξαν οὐδὲν ὅν εὐψυχίας
θηρῶν ἐν αἰχμῇ, τάλλα δ’ οὐδὲν ἄλκιμος,
160 δος οὐποτ’ ἀσπίδ’ ἔσχε πρὸς λαιᾷ χερὶ¹
οὐδ’ ἡλθε λόγχης ἐγγύς, ἀλλὰ τόξ’ ἔχων,
κάκιστον ὅπλον, τῇ φυγῇ πρόχειρος ἦν.
ἀνδρὸς δ’ ἔλεγχος οὐχὶ τόξ’ εὐψυχίας,

² Heath : for MSS. τέκοι νέον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O Hellas, if thou uncaring
Beholdest them slain, what a band
Of champions is lost to our land !

But lo, the ruler of this realm I see,
Lycus, unto these mansions drawing nigh.

Enter LYCUS.

LYCUS

Thee, sire of Hercules, and thee, his wife, 140
I ask—if ask I may :—I may, I trow,
Who am your lord, make question as I will :—
How long seek ye to lengthen out your lives ?
What hope expect ye or help from imminent
death ?

Trust ye that he, the sire of these, who lies
In Hades, yet shall come ? How basely ye
Upraise a mourning that ye needs must die ! —
Thou, who through Hellas scatteredst empty vaunts
That Zeus was co-begetter of sons with thee,
And thou, that thou wast named a hero's wife ! 150
What mighty exploit by thy lord was wrought
In that he killed a hydra of the fen,
Or that Nemean lion ?—which he snared,
Yet saith he slew with grip of strangling arms !
By *these* deeds would ye triumph ?—for their sake
Must they die not, these sons of Hercules ?
That thing of naught, who won him valour's name
Battling with beasts, a craven in all else,
Who never to his left arm clasped the shield,
Nor within spear-thrust came ; but with his bow, 160
The dastard's tool, was ever at point to flee !
Bows be no test of manhood's valiancy :

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

ἀλλ' δε μένων βλέπει τε κάντιδέρκεται
δορὸς ταχεῖαν ἄλοκα τάξιν ἐμβεβώσ.
ἔχει δὲ τούμὸν οὐκ ἀναίδειαν, γέρον,
ἄλλ' εὐλάβειαν· οἶδα γὰρ κατακτανὼν
Κρέοντα πατέρα τῆσδε καὶ θρόνους ἔχων.
οὔκουν τραφέντων τῶνδε τιμωροὺς ἐμοὶ¹
χρήζω λιπέσθαι τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

- 170 τὸ τοῦ Διὸς μὲν Ζεὺς ἀμυνέτω μέρει
παιδός· τὸ δ' εἰς ἔμ', Ἡράκλεις, ἐμοὶ μέλει
λόγοισι τὴν τοῦδ' ἀμαθίαν ὑπὲρ σέθεν
δεῖξαι· κακῶς γάρ σ' οὐκ ἔατέον κλύειν.
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν τάρρητ², ἐν ἀρρήτοισι γὰρ
τὴν σὴν ιομίζω δειλίαν, Ἡράκλεες,
σὺν μάρτυσιν θεοῖς δεῖ μ' ἀπαλλάξαι σέθεν.
Διὸς κεραυνὸν δ' ἡρόμην τέθριππά τε,
ἐν οἷς Βεβηκὼς τοῖσι γῆς βλαστήμασι
Γίγασι, πλευροῖς πτήνυ³ ἐναρμόσας βέλη,
τὸν καλλίνικον μετὰ θεῶν ἐκώμασε·
τετρασκελέσ θ' ὕβρισμα Κενταύρων γένος,
Φολόην ἐπελθών, ὃ κάκιστε βασιλέων,
έροῦ τίν' ἄνδρ' ἄριστον ἐγκρίνειαν ἄν,
ἢ οὐ παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν, δὲν σὺ φῆς εἶναι δοκεῖν.
Δίρφυν δ' ἐρωτῶν ἢ σ' ἔθρεψ⁴ Αβαντίδα,
οὐκ ἄν σ' ἐπαινέσειεν οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπου
ἐσθλόν τι δράσας μάρτυρ⁵ ἀν λάβοις πάτραν.
τὸ πάνσοφον δὲ εὕρημα, τοξήρη σάγην,
μέμφει· κλύων νῦν τάπ' ἐμοῦ σοφὸς γενοῦ.
ἀνὴρ ὄπλιτης δοῦλός ἐστι τῶν ὅπλων,
κάν τοῖσι συνταχθεῖσιν οὖσι μὴ ἀγαθοῖς
αὐτὸς τέθιηκε δειλίᾳ τῇ τῶν πέλας,
θραύσας τε λόγχην οὐκ ἔχει τῷ σώματε
- 190

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Who bideth steadfast in the ranks, calm-eyed.
Facing the spear's swift furrow—a man is he !
Greybeard, no ruthlessness hath this my part,
But heedfulness : well know I that I slew
Creon, this woman's sire, and hold his throne.
Therefore I would not these should grow to man,
Left to avenge them on me for my deeds.

AMPHITRYON

For Zeus's part—his own son's birth let Zeus 170
Defend : but, Hercules, to me it falls
Pleading thy cause to show this fellow's folly :
I may not suffer thee to be defamed.
First; of that slander—for a slanderous lie,
Hercules, count I cowardice charged on thee,—
By the Gods' witness thee I clear of this :
To Zeus's thunder I appeal, to the ear
That bare the Hero against the earth-born brood,
The Giants, planting winged shafts in their ribs,
When with the Gods he sang the victory-chant. 180
Or thou to Pholoë go, most base of kings,
The four-foot monsters ask, the Centaur tribe,
Ask them whom they would count the bravest man.
Whom but my son ?—by thee named “hollow
show” !
Ask Dirphys, Abas' land, which fostered thee ;
It should not praise thee :—place is none wherein
Thy land could witness to brave deed of thine !

And at the bow, the crown of wise inventions,
Thou sneerest !—now learn wisdom from my mouth :
The man-at-arms is bondsman to his arms, 190
And through his fellows, if their hearts wax faint,
Even through his neighbours' cowardice, he dies.
And, if he break his spear, he hath naught to ward

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

θάνατον ἀμῦναι, μίαν ἔχων ἀλκὴν μόνον·
ὅσοι δὲ τόξοις χεῖρ' ἔχουσιν εὔστοχον,
ἐν μὲν τὸ λῶστον, μυρίους οἰστοὺς ἀφεὶς
ἄλλοις τὸ σῶμα ρύεται μὴ κατθανεῖν,
έκας δ' ἀφεστώς πολεμίους ἀμύνεται
τυφλοῖς ὄρῶντας οὐτάσας τοξεύμασι,
200 τὸ σῶμά τ' οὐ δίδωσι τοῖς ἐναντίοις,
ἐν εὐφυλάκτῳ δ' ἐστί· τοῦτο δ' ἐν μάχῃ
σοφὸν μάλιστα, δρῶντα πολεμίους κακῶς
σώζειν τὸ σῶμα, μὴ ἐκ τύχης ὠρμισμένους.
λόγοι μὲν οἵδε τοῖσι σοῦς ἐναντίαν
γνώμην ἔχουσι τῶν καθεστώτων πέρι.
παῖδας δὲ δὴ τί τούσδ' ἀποκτεῖναι θέλεις;
τί σ' οἴδ' ἔδρασαν; ἐν τί σ' ἡγοῦμαι σοφόν,
εἰ τῶν ἀρίστων τάκγον' αὐτὸς ὁν κακὸς
δέδοικας. ἀλλὰ τοῦθ' ὅμως ἡμῖν βαρύ,
210 εἰ δειλίας σῆς κατθανούμεθ' εἴνεκα,
δο χρῆν σ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν τῶν ἀμεινόνων παθεῖν,
εἰ Ζεὺς δικαίας είχεν εἰς ἡμᾶς φρένας.
εἰ δ' οὖν ἔχειν γῆς σκῆπτρα τῆσδ' αὐτὸς θέλεις,
ἔασον ἡμᾶς φυγάδας ἔξελθεῖν χθονός.
βίᾳ δὲ δράσης μηδέν, ἢ πείσει βίαν,
δταν θεός σοι πνεῦμα μεταβαλὼν τύχη.
φεῦ.
ῷ γαῖα Κάδμου, καὶ γὰρ εἰς σ' ἀφίξομαι
λόγους ὀνειδιστῆρας ἐνδατούμενος,
τοιαῦτ' ἀμύνεθ' Ἡρακλεῖ τέκνοισί τε;
220 δο εἰς Μινύαισι πάσι διὰ μάχης μολὼν
Θήβαις ἔθηκεν ὅμμ' ἐλεύθερον βλέπειν.
οὐδ' Ἐλλάδ' ἥνεσ', οὐδὲ ἀνέξομαι ποτε
συγῶν, κακίστην λαμβάνων εἰς παῖδ' ἐμόν,
ἢν χρῆν νεοσσοῖς τοῦτο πῦρ λόγχας ὅπλα

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Death from himself, who hath but one defence.
But he whose hand is cunning with the bow,—
This first, and best,—lets fly unnumbered shafts,
Yet still hath store wherewith to avert the death.
Afar he stands, yet beats the foeman back,
And wounds with shafts unseen, watch as they will ; 200
Yet never bares his body to the foe,
But is safe-warded ; and in battle this
Is wisest policy, still to harm all foes
That beyond range shrink not, oneself unhurt.
These words have sense opposed full-face to thine
Touching the matter set at issue here.

But wherefore art thou fain to slay these boys ?
What have they done ? Herein I count thee wise,
That thou, thyself a dastard, fear'st the seed
Of heroes : yet hard fate is this for us,
If we shall for thy cowardice' sake be slain, 210
As thou by us thy betters shouldst have been,
If Zeus to us were righteously inclined.
Yet, if thy will be still to keep Thebes' crown,
Suffer us exiled to go forth the land ;
But do no violence, lest thou suffer it,
When God shall haply cause the wind to change.

Out on it !
O land of Cadmus,—for to thee I turn,
Over thee hurling mine upbraiding words,—
Hercules and his sons *thus* succourest thou,
Him who alone faced all the Minyan host, 220
And made the eyes of Thebes see freedom's dawn ?
Oh, shame on Hellas !—I will hold my peace
Never, who prove her ingrate to my son,—
Her, whom behoved with fire, with spear, with shield

145

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENΟΣ

φέρουσαν ἐλθεῖν, ποντίων καθαρμάτων
χέρσου τ' ἀμοιβάς, ὃν ἐμόχθησεν χάριν.
τὰ δ', ὡς τέκν', ὑμῖν οὕτε Θηβαίων πόλις
οὗθ' Ἑλλὰς ἀρκεῖ· πρὸς δ' ἔμ' ἀσθενή φίλον
δεδόρκατ', οὐδὲν δῆτα πλὴν γλώσσης ψόφου.
230 ρώμη γὰρ ἐκλέλοιπεν ἦν πρὶν εἴχομεν·
γῆρας δὲ τρομερὰ γυνὰ κάμαυρὸν σθένος.
εἰ δ' ἡ νέος τε κάτι σώματος κρατῶν,
λαβὼν ἄν ἔγχος τοῦδε τοὺς ξανθοὺς πλόκους
καθημάτωσ' ἄν, ὥστ' Ἀτλαντικῶν πέραν
φεύγειν ὅρων ἄν δειλίᾳ τούμὸν δόρυ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀρ' οὐκ ἀφορμὰς τοῖς λόγοισιν ἀγαθοὶ¹
θυητῶν ἔχουσι, κάννα βραδύς τις ἡ λέγειν;

ΛΥΚΟΣ

σὺ μὲν λέγ' ἡμᾶς οἷς πεπύργωσαι λόγοις,
ἔγὼ δὲ δράσω σ' ἀντὶ τῶν λόγων κακῶς.
240 ἄγ', οἱ μὲν Ἑλικῶν', οἱ δὲ Παρνασσοῦ πτυχὰς
τέμνειν ἄνωχθ' ἐλθόντες ὑλουργοὺς δρυὸς
κορμούς· ἐπειδὰν δ' εἰσκομισθῶσιν πόλει,
βωμὸν πέριξ νήσαντες ἀμφήρη ἔνλα
ἐμπίπρατ' αὐτῶν καὶ πυροῦτε σώματα
πάντων, ἵν' εἰδῶσ' οὖνεκ' οὐχ ὁ κατθανῶν
κρατεῖ χθονὸς τῆσδ', ἀλλ' ἔγὼ τὰ μῦν τάδε.
ὑμεῖς δὲ πρέσβεις ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἐναντίοι
γνώμαισιν δῆτες, οὐ μόνον στενάξετε
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παιᾶς, ἀλλὰ καὶ δόμου
250 τύχας, ὅταν πάσχῃ τι, μεμνήσεσθε δὲ
δοῦλοι γεγώτες τῆς ἐμῆς τυραννίδος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ γῆς λοχεύμαθ', οὓς Ἀρης σπείρει ποτὲ²
λάβρον δράκοντος ἔξερημώσας γένυν,

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To have helped these babes, thank-offering for his
toils,

Repayment for his purging seas and lands.

Ah boys, such aid to you the Thebans' town

Nor Hellas brings ! To me, a strengthless friend,

Ye look, who am nothing but a voice's sound :

For vanished is the might I had of old,

230

Palsied with eld my limbs are, gone my strength.

Were I but young yet, master of my thews,

I had grasped a lance, this fellow's yellow hair

I had dashed with blood, and so before my spear

Far beyond Atlas' bounds the craven had fled !

CHORUS

Lo, cannot brave men find occasion still

For speech, how slow soe'er one be of tongue ?

LYCUS

Rail on at me with words up-piled as towers :

I will for words requite on thee ill deeds.

(To attendant) Ho ! bid my woodmen go—to Helicon
these,

240

Those to Parnassus' folds, and hew them logs

Of oak ; and, when these into Thebes are brought,

On either side the altar billets pile,

And kindle ; so the bodies of all these

Roast ye, that they may know that not the dead

Ruleth the land, but now am I king here.

And ye old men which set yourselves against

My purpose, not for Hercules' sons alone

Shall ye make moan, but for your homes' affliction,

Fast as blows fall, and so shall not forget

250

That ye are bondslaves of my princely power.

CHORUS

O brood of Earth, whom Ares sowed of yore,

What time he stripped the dragon's ravening jaws,

147

L 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

οὐ σκῆπτρα, χειρὸς δεξιᾶς ἐρείσματα,
ἀρεῖτε καὶ τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἀνόσιον κάρα
καθαιματώσεθ', δστις οὐ Καδμεῖος ὃν
ἄρχει κάκιστος τῶν νέων ἔπηλυς ὃν ;
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐμοῦ γε δεσπόσεις χαίρων ποτε,
οὐδὲ ἀπόνησα πόλλ' ἐγὼ καμῶν χερὶ²⁶⁰
ἔξεις· ἀπέρρων δ' ἔνθειν ἡλθεις ἐνθάδε,
νῦβριξ· ἐμοῦ γὰρ ζῶντος οὐ κτενεῖς ποτε
τους Ἡρακλείους παῖδας· οὐ τοσόνδε γῆς
ἔνερθ' ἐκεῖνος κρύπτεται λιπῶν τέκνα.
ἐπεὶ σὺ μὲν γῆν τήνδε διολέστας ἔχεις,
οἱ δ' ὠφελήστας ἀξίων οὐ τυγχάνει·
κάπειτα πράσσω πόλλ' ἐγώ, φίλους ἐμοὺς
θανόντας εὖ δρῶν οὐ φίλων μάλιστα δεῖ ;
ῳ δεξιὰ χείρ, ὡς ποθεῖς λαβεῖν δόρυ,
ἐν δ' ἀσθενείᾳ τὸν πόθον διώλεστας.
²⁷⁰
ἐπεὶ σ' ἔπανσ' ἀν δοῦλον ἐνιέποντά με
καὶ τάσδε Θήβας εὐκλεῶς φύκήσαμεν,
ἐν αἷς σὺ χαίρεις. οὐ γὰρ εὖ φρονεῖ πόλις
στάσει νοσοῦσα καὶ κακοῖς βουλεύμασιν·
οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἀν σὲ δεσπότην ἐκτήσατο.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

γέροντες, αἰνῶ· τῶν φίλων γὰρ εἶνεκα
ὅργας δικαίας τοὺς φίλους ἔχειν χρεών· .
ἡμῶν δ' ἔκατι δεσπόταις θυμούμενοι
πάθητε μηδέν. τῆς δ' ἐμῆς, Ἀμφιτρύων,
γνώμης ἄκουσον, ἦν τί σοι δοκῶ λέγειν.
²⁸⁰
ἐγὼ φιλῶ μὲν τέκνα· πῶς γὰρ οὐ φιλῶ
ἄπικτον, ἀμόχθησα; καὶ τὸ κατθανεῖν
δεινὸν νομίζω· τῷ δ' ἀναγκαίῳ τρόπῳ

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Will ye not lift the props of your right hands,
Your staves, and dash with blood the impious head
Of yon man, who, though no Cadmeian he,
Base outland upstart, captains the Young Men?¹
Thou shalt not scatheless lord it over me !
Not that which I have gotten by toil of hand
Shalt thou have ! Hence with curses whence thou
cam'st !

260

There outrage ! Whilst I live thou ne'er shalt slay
Hercules' sons ! Not hidden in earth too deep
For help is he, though he hath left his babes.
Thou, ruin of this land, possessest her ;
And he, her saviour, faileth of his due !
Am I a busy meddler then, who aid
Dead friends in plight where friends are needed
most ?

Ah right hand, how thou yearn'st to grip the spear,
But in thy weakness know'st thy yearning vain !
Else had I smitten thy taunt of *bondslave* dumb, 270
And we had ruled with honour this our Thebes
Wherein thou joyest ! A city plagued with strife
And evil counsels thinketh not aright ;
Else never had she gotten thee for lord.

MEGARA

Fathers, I thank you. Needs must friends be filled
With righteous indignation for friends' wrongs.
Yet for our sake through wrath against your lords
Suffer not scathe. Amphitryon, hearken thou
My counsel, if my words seem good to thee :
I love my sons,—how should I not love whom 280
I bare and toiled for ?—and to die I count
Fearful : yet—yet—against the inevitable

¹ The revolutionary party, who styled themselves "Young Thebes."

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

δις ἀντιτείνει, σκαιὸν ἡγοῦμαι βροτόν.
ἡμᾶς δ' ἐπειδὴ δεῖ θανεῖν, θνήσκειν χρεὼν
μὴ πυρὶ καταξανθέντας, ἔχθροῖσιν γέλων
διδόντας, ούμοὶ τοῦ θανεῖν μεῖζον κακόν.
ὁφεῖλομεν γάρ πολλὰ δώμασιν καλά.
σὲ μὲν δόκησις ἔλαβεν εὐκλεῆς δορός,
ῶστ' οὐκ ἀνεκτὸν δειλίας θανεῖν σ' ὑπο·
ούμὸς δ' ἀμαρτύρητος εὐκλεῆς πόσις,
ώσ τούσδε παῖδας οὐκ ἀν ἐκσῶσαι θέλοι
δόξαν κακὴν λαβόντας· οἱ γὰρ εὐγενεῖς
κάμνουσι τοὺς αἰσχροῖσι τῶν τέκνων ὕπερ,
ἐμοὶ τε μίμημ' ἀνδρὸς οὐκ ἀπωστέον.
σκέψαι δὲ τὴν σὴν ἐλπίδ', ή λογίζομαι·
ἥξειν νομίζεις παῖδα σὸν γαίας ὑπο·
καὶ τίς θανόντων ἥλθεν ἐξ "Αἰδου πάλιν;
ἀλλ' ὡς λόγοισι τόνδε μαλθάξαιμεν ἄν;
ἥκιστα· φεύγειν σκαιὸν ἄνδρ' ἔχθρὸν χρεὼν,
σοφοῖσι δ' εἴκειν καὶ τεθραμμένοις καλῶς·
ῥάον γάρ αἰδοῦς ὑποβαλλὼν φίλ' ἀν τύχοις.
ἥδη δ' ἐσῆλθέ μ' εἰ παραιτησαίμεθα
φυγὰς τέκνων τῶνδ'. ἀλλὰ καὶ τόδ' ἄθλιον,
πενίᾳ σὺν οἰκτρῷ περιβαλεῖν σωτηρίαν·
ώσ τὰ ξένων πρόσωπα φεύγουσιν φίλοις
ἐν ἡμαρ ἥδὺ βλέμμ' ἔχειν φασὶν μόνον.
τόλμα μεθ' ἡμῶν θάνατον, δις μένει σ' ὅμως.
προκαλούμεθ' εὐγένειαν, ὡ γέρον, σέθεν·
τὰς τῶν θεῶν γὰρ ὅστις ἐκμοχθεῖ τύχας,
πρόθυμός ἐστιν, ἡ προθυμία δ' ἄφρων·
ὅ χρὴ γὰρ οὐδεὶς μὴ χρεὼν θήσει ποτέ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰ μὲν σθενόντων τῶν ἐμῶν βραχιόνων
ἥν τίς σ' ὑβρίζων, ῥᾳδίως ἐπαύσατ' ἄν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Who strives, I hold him but a foolish man.
Since we must needs die, better 'tis to die
Not with fire roasted, yielding laughter-scoff
To foes, an evil worse than death to me.
Great is our debt of honour to our house :—
Thou hast been crowned with glorious battle-fame ;
Thou canst not, must not, die a coward's death :
Nor any witness needs my glorious spouse 290
That he would not consent to save these sons
Stained with ill-fame : for fathers gently born
Are crushed beneath the load of children's shame.
My lord's example I cannot thrust from me.
Thine own hope—mark how lightly I esteem it :
Dost think, from the underworld thy son shall
come ?
Ah, of the dead, who hath returned from Hades ?
Dost dream we might with words appease this
wretch ?
Never !—of all foes, still beware the churl !
Yield, if thou must, to wise and high-bred foes ; 300
So thy submission may find chivalrous grace.
Even now methought, “ What if we asked for these
The boon of exile ? ”—nay, 'twere misery
To give them life with wretched penury linked.
For upon exile-friends the eyes of hosts
Look kindly, say they, one day and no more.
Face death with us : it waits thee in any wise.
Thy noble blood I challenge, ancient friend.
Whoso with eager struggling would writhe out
From fate's net, folly is his eagerness. 310
For doom's decree shall no man disannul.

CHORUS

Had any outraged thee while yet mine arms
Were strong, right quickly had he ceased therefrom ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

νῦν δ' οὐδέν εἶσμεν. σὸν δὲ τούντεῦθεν σκοπεῖν
ὅπως διώσει τὰς τύχας, Ἀμφιτρύων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὗτοι τὸ δειλὸν οὐδὲ τοῦ βίου πόθος
θανεῖν ἐρύκει μ', ἀλλὰ παιδὶ βούλομαι
σῶσαι τέκν' ἄλλως δ' ἀδυνάτων ἔοικ' ἐρᾶν.
ἰδοὺ πάρεστιν ἥδε φασγάνῳ δέρη
κεντεῖν φονεύειν, ιέναι πέτρας ἄπο.
μίαν δὲ νῷν δὸς χάριν, ἄναξ, ἵκνούμεθα·
κτεῖνόν με καὶ τὴνδ' ἀθλίαν παίδων πάρος,
ώς μὴ τέκν' εἰσίδωμεν, ἀνόσιον θέαν,
ψυχορραγοῦντα καὶ καλοῦντα μητέρα
πατρός τε πατέρα. τāλλα δ' ἥ πρόθυμος εἰ
πρᾶσσον· οὐ γὰρ ἀλκὴν ἔχομεν ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κάγω σ' ἵκνοῦμαι χάριτι προσθεῖναι χάριν,
ἡμῖν ἵν' ἀμφοῖν εἰς ἵ πουργήσης διπλᾶ·
κόσμουν πάρες μοι παισὶ προσθεῖναι νεκρῶν,
δόμους ἀνοίξας—νῦν γὰρ ἔκκεκλήμεθα·—
ώς ἀλλὰ ταῦτά γ' ἀπολάβωσ' οἴκων πατρός.

ΛΤΚΟΣ

ἔσται τάδ· οὕγειν κλῆθρα προσπόλοις λέγω.
κοσμεῖσθ' ἔσω μολόντες· οὐ φθονῶ πέπλων.
δταν δὲ κόσμουν περιβάλησθε σώμασιν,
ἥξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς νερτέρᾳ δώσων χθονί.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὦ τέκν', ὁμαρτεῖτ' ἀθλίφ μητρὸς ποδὶ¹
πατρῶν εἰς μέλαθρον, οὐ τῆς οὐσίας
ἄλλοι κρατοῦσι, τὸ δ' ὅνομ' ἔσθ' ἡμῶν ἔτι.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

But now I am naught. 'Tis thine, Amphitryon, now
To search how thou shalt pierce misfortune's snares.

AMPHITRYON

Nor cowardice nor life-craving holds me back
From death : but for my son I fain would save
His sons—I covet things past hope, meseems.
Lo, here my throat is ready for thy sword,
For stabbing, murdering, hurling from the rock. 320
Yet grant us twain one grace, I pray thee, king :
Slay me and this poor mother ere the lads,
That—sight unhallowed—we see not the boys
Gasping out life, and calling on their mother
And grandsire : in all else thine eager will
Work out ; for we have no defence from death.

MEGARA

And, I beseech, to this grace add a grace,
To be twice benefactor to us twain :—
Open yon doors ; let me array my sons
In death's attire,—for now are we shut out,— 330
Their one inheritance from their father's halls.

LYCUS

So be it : I bid my men throw wide the doors.
Pass in ; adorn you : I begrudge no robes.
But, when ye have cast the arraying round your
limbs,
I come, to give you to the nether world. [Exit.

MEGARA

Children, attend your hapless mother's steps
To your sire's halls, where others' mastery holds
His substance, but his name yet lingereth ours.

[Exit with children.]

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

340

ω Ζεῦ, μάτην ἄρ' ὁμόγαμόν σ' ἐκτησάμην,
μάτην δὲ παιδὸς κοινεῶν¹ σ' ἐκλήζομεν·
σὺ δ' ἡσθ' ἄρ' ἡσσον ἡ δόκεις εἶναι φίλος.
ἀρετῇ σε νικῶ θυητὸς ὧν θεὸν μέγαν·
παιδας γὰρ οὐ προῦδωκα τοὺς Ἡρακλέους.
σὺ δ' εἰς μὲν εὐνὰς κρύφιος ἡπίστω μολεῖν,
τάλλοτρια λέκτρα δόντος οὐδενὸς λαβών,
σφέζειν δὲ τοὺς σοὺς οὐκ ἐπίστασαι φίλους.
ἀμαθής τις εἴ θεός, ἡ δίκαιος οὐκ ἔφυς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

350

αἴλινον μὲν ἐπ' εύτυχεῖν στρ. α'
μολπῷ Φοῖβος ἴαχεῖν,
τὰν καλλίφθογγον κιθάραν
ἔλαύνων πλήκτρῳ χρυσέῳ·
ἔγὼ δὲ τὸν γᾶς ἐνέρων τ' ἐς ὅρφναν
μολόντα, παῖδ' εἴτε Διός νιν εἴπω
εἴτ' Ἀμφιτρύωνος ἵνιν,
νύμνῆσαι στεφάνωμα μό-
χθων δι' εὐλογίας θέλω.
γενναίων δ' ἀρεταὶ πόνων
τοῖς θανοῦσιν ἄγαλμα.

360

πρῶτον μὲν Διὸς ἄλσος
ἡρήμωσε λέοντος,
πυρσῷ δ' ἀμφεκαλύφθη
ξανθὸν κράτ' ἐπινωτίσας
δεινῷ χάσματι θηρός·

¹ Scaliger : for MSS. τοι νεῶν and τὸν νεῶν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Zeus, for my couch-mate gained I thee in vain,
Named thee in vain co-father of my son. 340
Less than thou seemedst art thou friend to us !
Mortal, in worth thy godhead I outdo :
Hercules' sons have I abandoned not.
Cunning wast thou to steal unto my couch,—
To filch another's right none tendered thee,—
Yet know'st not how to save thy dear ones now !
Thine is unwisdom, or injustice thine. [Exit.]

CHORUS

The Lay of the Labours of Hercules ¹

Hard on the pæan triumphant-ringing (Str. 1)
Oft Phoebus outpealeth a mourning-song,
O'er the strings of his harp of the voice
sweet-singing 350
Sweeping the plectrum of gold along.
I also of him who hath passed to the places
Of underworld gloom—whether Zeus' Son's
story, [praises—
Or Amphitryon's scion be theme of my
Sing : I am fain to uplift him before ye
Wreathed with the Twelve Toils' garland of
glory :
For the dead have a heritage, yea, have a crown,
Even deathless memorial of deeds of renown.

I. *The Nemean Lion*

In Zeus' glen first, in the Lion's lair,
He fought, and the terror was no more there ; 360
But the tawny beast's grim jaws were veiling
His golden head, and behind swept, trailing
Over his shoulders, its fell of hair.

¹ For II, V, VII, VIII, later writers substitute the Erymanthian Boar, the Augean Stables, the Stymphalian Birds, and the Cretan Bull.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τάν τ' ὁρεινόμον ἀγρίων
Κενταύρων ποτὲ γένναν
ἔστρωσεν τόξοις φονίοις,
ἐναίρων πτανοῖς βέλεσιν.
Ξύνοιδε Πηνειὸς ὁ καλλιδίνας
μακραί τ' ἄρουραι πεδίων ἄκαρποι
καὶ Πηλιάδες θεράπναι
σύγχορτοί θ' Ὁμόλας ἔναυ-
λοι, πεύκαισιν ὅθεν χέρας
πληροῦντες χθόνα Θεσσαλῶν
ἰππείαις ἐδάμαζον.

370

τάν τε χρυσοκάρανον
δόρκαν ποικιλόνωτον
συλήτειραν ἀγρωστᾶν
κτείνας, θηροφόνον θεὰν
Οίνωάτιν ἀγάλλει·

380

τεθριππων τ' ἐπέβα στρ. β
καὶ ψαλίοις ἐδάμασσε πώλους
Διομήδεος, αἱ φογίαισι φάτναις
ἀχάλιν' ἐθόαζον
κάθαιμα σῆτα γένυσι, χαρμοναῖσιν
ἀνδροβρῶσι δυστράπεζοι· περῶν δ'

156

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

II. *The Centaurs*

Then on the mountain-haunters raining (*Ant.* 1)
Far-flying arrows, his hand laid low
The tameless tribes of the Centaurs, straining
Against them of old that deadly bow.
Peneius is witness, the lovely-gliding,
And the fields unsown over plains wide-spreading,
And the hamlets in glens of Pelion hiding, 370
And on Homole's borders many a steading,
Whence poured they with ruining hoofs down-treading
Thessaly's harvests, for battle-brands
Tossing the mountain pines in their hands.

III. *The Golden-horned Hind*

And the Hind of the golden-antlered head,
And the dappled hide, which wont to spread
O'er the lands of the husbandmen stark desolation,
He slew it, and brought, for propitiation,
Unto Oenoë's Goddess, the Huntress dread.

IV. *The Horses of Diomede*

(*Str.* 2)

And on Diomede's chariot he rode, for he reined them,
By his bits overmastered, the stallions four
That had ravined at mangers of murder, and stained them
With revel of banquets of horror, when gore
From men's limbs dripped that their fierce teeth tore.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἀργυρορρύταν Εβρον
ἔξεπρασσε μόχθον,¹
Μυκηναίω πονῶν τυράννω.

390 τάν τε Μηλιάδ' ἀκτὰν
'Αναύρου παρὰ πηγάς.
Κύκνον δὲ ξενοδαίκταν
τόξοις ὥλεσεν, 'Αμφαναί-
ας οἰκήτορ' ἄμικτον·

ὑμνωδούς τε κόρας ἀντ. β
ἥλυθεν, Ἐσπερίαν ἐς αὐλάν,
χρύσεον πετάλων ἀπὸ μηλοφόρων
χερὶ καρπὸν ἀμέρξων,
δράκοντα πυρσόνωτον, ὃς σφ' ἄπλατον
ἀμφελικτὸς ἔλικ' ἐφρούρει, κτανών.

400 ποντίας θ' ἀλὸς μυχοὺς
εἰσέβαινε, θνατοῖς
γαλανείας τιθεὶς ἐρετμοῖς·

οὐρανοῦ θ' ὑπὸ μέσσαν
ἔλαύνει χέρας ἔδραν,
"Ατλαντος δόμου ἐλθών·
ἀστρωπούς τε κατέσχεν οἴ-
κους εὐανορία θεῶν·

¹ Dindorf: for MSS. πέραν . . . διεπέραστος δύθον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

V. *Cycnus the Robber*

Over eddies of Hebrus silvery-coiling
He passed to the great work yet to be done,
In the tasks of the lord of Mycenae toiling ;
By the surf mid the Maliac reefs ever boiling,
And by founts of Anaurus, he journeyed on, 390
Till the shaft from his string did the death-
challenge sing
Unto Cycnus the guest-slayer, Amphanae's king,
Who gave welcome to none.

VI. *The Golden Apples*

(Ant. 2)

To the Song-maids he came, to the Garden
enfolden
In glory of sunset, to pluck, where they grew
Mid the fruit-laden frondage the apples golden ;
And the flame-hued dragon, the warden that
drew
All round it his terrible spires, he slew.

VII. *Extirpation of Pirates*

Through the rovers' gorges seaward-gazing 400
He sought ; and thereafter in peace might roam
All mariners plying the oars swift-racing.

VIII. *The Pillars of Heaven*

To the mansion of Atlas he came, and placing
His arms outstretched 'neath the sky's mid-dome,
By his might he upbore the firmament's floor,
And the palace with splendour of stars fretted o'er,
The Immortals' home.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τὸν ἵππευτάν τ' Ἀμαξόνων στρατὸν στρ. γ'
Μαιῶτιν ἀμφὶ πολυπόταμου
410 ἔβα δὶς Ἐῦξεινον οἰδμα λίμνας,
τίν' οὐκ ἀφ' Ἑλλανίας
ἄγορον ἀλίσας φίλων,
τκόρας Ἀρείας πλέων¹
χρυσέου στόλον φάρους,†
ζωστῆρος ὄλεθρίους ἄγρας ;
τὰ κλεινὰ δὲ Ἐλλὰς ἔλαβε βαρβύρου κύρας
λίφυρα, καὶ σώζεται Μυκήναις.

420 τάν τε μυριόκρανον
πολύφονον κύνα Λέρνας
ὑδραν ἐξεπύρωσεν,

βέλεσί τ' ἀμφέβαλ' ιόν,²
τὸν τρισώματον οἰσιν ἔ-
κτα βοτῆρ' Ἐρυθείας.

δρόμων τ' ἄλλων ἀγάλματ' εὔτυχῆ ἀντ. γ'
διηλθε· τόν τε πολυδάκρυον
ἔπλευσ' ἐς Ἀιδαν, πόνων τελευτάν,
ἴν' ἐκπεραίνει τάλας

¹ Murray's conjecture, for MSS. πέπλων χρυσεόστολον φάρος.

² Wecklein : for MSS. ἀμφέβαλε τὸν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

IX. *The Amazon's Girdle*

(Str. 3)

On the Amazon hosts upon war-steeds riding
By the shores of Maeotis, the river-meads
green,
He fell ; for the surges of Euxine he cleft. 410
What brother in arms was in Hellas left,
That came not to follow his banner's guiding,
When to win the Belt of the Warrior Queen,
The golden clasp of the mantle-vest,
He sailed far forth on a death-fraught quest ?
And the wild maid's spoils for a glory abiding
Greece won : in Mycenae they yet shall be
seen.

X. *The Hydra*

And the myriad heads he seared
Of the Hydra-fiend with flame, 420
Of the murderous hound Lernaean.

XI. *The Three-bodied Giant Geryon*

With its venom the arrows he smeared
That stung through the triple frame
Of the herdman-king Erythaean.

XII. *Cerberus*

(Ant. 3)

Many courses beside hath he run, ever earning
Triumph ; but now to the dolorous land,
Unto Hades, hath sailed for his last toil-
strife ;
And there hath he quenched his light of life

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

βίοτον οὐδέ ἔβα πάλιν.
στέγαι δὲ ἔρημοι φίλων,
τὰν δὲ ἀνόστιμον τέκνων
Χάρωνος ἐπιμένει πλάτα

βίου κέλευθον ἄθεον ἄδικον· εἰς δὲ σὰς
χέρας βλέπει δώματ' οὐ παρόντος.
εἰ δὲ ἐγὼ σθένος ἥβων
δόρυ τὸ ἔπαλλον ἐν αὐχμᾷ,
Καδμείων τε σύνηθοι,
τέκεσιν ἀν παρέσταν
ἀλκᾶ· νῦν δὲ ἀπολείπομαι
τᾶς εὐδαίμονος ἥβας.

ἀλλ’ ἐσορῶ γὰρ τούσδε φθιμένων
ἔνδυτ’ ἔχοντας, τοὺς τοῦ μεγάλου
δήποτε παῖδας τὸ πρὸν Ἡρακλέους,
ἄλοχον τε φίλην ὑποσειραίους
ποσὶν ἔλκουσαν τέκνα, καὶ γεραιὸν
πατέρον Ἡρακλέους. δύστηνος ἐγώ,
δακρύων ὡς οὐ δύναμαι κατέχειν
γραίας ὅσσων ἔτι πηγάς.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

εἰεν· τίς ἱερεύς, τίς σφαγεὺς τῶν δυσπότμων
ἢ τῆς ταλαινῆς τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς φονεύς;
ἔτοιμ’ ἄγειν τὰ θύματ’ εἰς "Αἰδου τάδε.
ὦ τέκν’, ἀγόμεθα ζεῦγος οὐ καλὸν νεκρῶν,
ὅμοιν γέροντες καὶ νέοι καὶ μητέρες.
ὦ μοῖρα δυστάλαιν’ ἐμή τε καὶ τέκνων
τῶνδ’, οὓς πανύστατ’ ὅμμασιν προσδέρκομαι.
ἔτεκον μὲν ὑμᾶς, πολεμίοις δὲ ἐθρεψάμην

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Utterly—woe for the unreturning !
And of friends forlorn doth thy dwelling stand ; 430
And waits for thy children Charon's oar
By the river that none may repass any more,
Whither godless wrong would speed them : and
yearning
We strain our eyes for a vanished hand.
But if mine were the youth and the might
Of old—were mine old friends here,
Might my spear but in battle be shaken,
I had championed thy children in fight :—
But mid desolate days and drear 440
I am left, of my youth forsaken !

Lo where they come !—the shrouds of burial
cover
Each one,—the children of that Hercules
Named the most mighty in the days past over,
She whom he loved, whose hands draw on-
ward these
Like to a chariot's trace-led steeds,—the father
Stricken in years of Hercules !—woe's me !
Fountains of tears within mine old eyes gather ;
How should I stay them, such a sight who see ? 450

Enter MEGARA, AMPHITRYON, and children.

MEGARA

Who is the priest, the butcher, of the ill-starred ?
Or who the murderer of my woeful life ?
Ready the victims are to lead to death.
O sons, a shameful chariot-team death-driven
Together, old men, mothers, babes, are we.
O hapless doom of me and these my sons
Whom for the last time now mine eyes behold !
I bare you, nursed you—all to be for foes

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

ῦβρισμα κάπίχαρμα καὶ διαφθοράν.
φεῦ·

- 460 ἡ πολύ με δόξης ἔξέπαισαν ἐλπίδες,
 ἥν πατρὸς ὑμῶν ἐκ λόγων ποτ' ἥλπισα.
 σοὶ μὲν γὰρ Ἀργος ἔνεμ' ὁ κατθανὼν πατήρ,
 Εὔρυσθέως δ' ἔμελλεις οἰκήσειν δόμους
 τῆς καλλικάρπου κράτος ἔχων Πελασγίας,
 στολὴν τε θηρὸς ἀμφέβαλλε σῷ κάρᾳ
 λέοντος, ἥπερ αὐτὸς ἔξωπλίζετο·
 σὺ δ' ἡσθα Θηβῶν τῶν φιλαρμάτων ἄναξ,
 ἔγκληρα πεδία τὸμὰ γῆς κεκτημένος,
 ώς ἔξεπειθες τὸν κατασπείραντά σε·
470 εἰς δεξιὰν δὲ σὴν ἀλεξητήριον
 ξύλον καθίει δαίδαλον, ψευδῇ δόσιν.
 σοὶ δ' ἦν ἔπερσε τοῖς ἐκηβόλοις ποτὲ
 τόξοισι δώσειν Οἰχαλίαν ὑπέσχετο.
 τρεῖς δ' ὅντας ὑμᾶς τριπτύχοις τυραννίσι
 πατὴρ ἐπύργου, μέγα φρονῶν εὐανδρίᾳ·
 ἐγὼ δὲ νύμφας ἡκροθινιαζόμην,
 κήδη συνάψουσ', ἐκ τ' Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς
 Σπάρτης τε Θηβῶν θ', ώς ἀνημμένοι κάλφως
 πρυμνησίοισι βίον ἔχοιτ' εὐδαίμονα.
480 καὶ ταῦτα φροῦδα· μεταβαλοῦσα δ' ἡ τύχη
 νύμφας μὲν ὑμῖν Κῆρας ἀντέδωκ' ἔχειν,
 ἐμοὶ δὲ δάκρυα λουτρά· δύστηνος φρενῶν.
 πατὴρ δὲ πατρὸς ἐστιὰ γάμους ὅδε,
 “Αἰδην νομίζων πενθερόν, κῆδος πικρόν.
 ῶμοι, τίν' ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἡ τίν' ὕστατον
 πρὸς στέρνα θῶμαι; τῷ προσαρμόσω στόμα;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

A scoff, a glee, a thing to be destroyed.

Woe and alas !

Ah for my shattered dreams, my broken hopes,
Hopes that I once built on your father's words !

460

Argos to thee¹ thy dead sire would allot :
Thou in Eurystheus' palace wast to dwell
In fair and rich Pelasgia's sceptred sway :
That beast's fell o'er thine head he wont to throw,
The lion's skin wherein himself went clad.

Thou² shouldst be king of chariot-loving Thebes,
And hold the champagnes of mine heritage ;
Thy prayer won this of him that gave thee life ;
And to thy right hand would he yield the club,
A feignèd gift, his carven battle-stay.

To thee³ the land, by his far-smiting bow
Once wasted, promised he, Oechalia.

So with three princedoms would your sire exalt
His three sons, in the pride of his great heart.
And I chose out the choice of Hellas' brides,
Linking to ours by marriage Athens' land,
And Thebes, and Sparta, that ye might, as ships
Moored by sheet-anchors, ride the storms of life.

470

All that is past : the wind of fate hath veered,
And given to you the Maids of Doom for brides,
Tears for my bride-baths. Woe for those my dreams !
And now your grandsire makes the spousal-feast
With Hades for brides' sire, grim marriage-kin.
Ah me ! whom first of you, or whom the last,
To mine heart shall I press ?—whom to my lips ?

480

¹ The eldest son, Therimachus.

² The second son, Creontidas.

³ The third son, Deïcoön.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOS

τίνος λάβωμαι; πῶς ἀν ως ξουθόπτερος
μέλισσα συνενέγκαιμ' ἀν ἐκ πάντων γόους,
εἰς ἐν δ' ἐνεγκοῦσ' ἀθρόον ἀποδοίην δάκρυ.
490 ὡ φίλτατ', εἴ τις φθόγγος εἰσακούεται
θυητῶν παρ' "Αἰδη, σοὶ τάδ', 'Ηράκλεις, λέγω·
θυήσκει πατὴρ σὸς καὶ τέκν', δῆλυμαι δ' ἐγώ;
ἡ πρὶν μακαρία διὰ σ' ἐκληζόμην βροτοῖς.
ἀρηξον, ἐλθε· καὶ σκιὰ φάνηθί μοι·
ἄλις γάρ ἐλθὼν κὰν δηναρ¹ γένοιο σύ·
κακὸν γάρ εἰσιν οὐ τέκνα κτείνουσι σά.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

500 σὺ μὲν τὰ νέρθεν εὐτρεπῆ ποιοῦ, γύναι·
ἐγὼ δὲ σ', ὡ Ζεῦ, χεῖρ' ἐσ οὐρανὸν δικῶν
αὐδῶ, τέκνοισιν εἴ τι τοισίδ' ὠφελεῖν
μέλλεις, ἀμύνειν, ως τάχ' οὐδὲν ἀρκέσεις.
καίτοι κέκλησαι πολλάκις· μάτην πονῶ·
θανεῖν γάρ, ως ἔοικ', ἀναγκαίως ἔχει.
ἀλλ', ὡ γέρουτες, μικρὰ μὲν τὰ τοῦ βίου·
τοῦτον δ' ὅπως ἥδιστα διαπεράσετε,
ἔξ ήμέρας εἰς νύκτα μὴ λυπούμενοι.
ώς ἐλπίδας μὲν ὁ χρόνος οὐκ ἐπίσταται
σώζειν, τὸ δ' αὐτοῦ σπουδάσας διέπτατο.
ὅρατέ μ' ὅσπερ ἡ περίβλεπτος βροτοῖς
ὄνομαστὰ πράσσων, καὶ μ' ἀφείλεθ' ἡ τύχη
ώσπερ πτερὸν πρὸς αἰθέρ' ήμέρᾳ μιᾶ.
510 ο δ' δλβος ὁ μέγας ἡ τε δόξ' οὐκ οἰδ' ὅτῳ
βέβαιος ἐστι. χαίρετ· ἄνδρα γάρ φίλον
πανύστατον νῦν, ἥλικες, δεδόρκατε.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἔα·
ώ πρέσβυ, λεύσσω τάμα φίλτατ'; ἡ τί φῶ;

¹ Wilamowitz: for MSS. ίκανὸν δν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Whom shall I clasp ? Oh but to gather store
Of moan, like brown-winged bee, from grief's wide
field,
And blend together in tribute of one tear !
Dear love,—if any in Hades of the dead 490
Can hear,—I cry this to thee, Hercules :
Thy sire, thy sons, are dying ; doomed am I,
I, once through thee called blest in all men's eyes.
Help !—come !—though as a shadow, yet appear !
Thy coming as a dream-shape should suffice
To daunt the cravens who would slay thy sons !

AMPHITRYON

Lady, the death-rites duly order thou.
But I, O Zeus, with hand to heaven upcast,
Cry—if for these babes thou hast any help,
Save them ; for soon thou nothing shalt avail. 500
Yet oft hast thou been prayed : in vain I toil ;
For now, meseems, we cannot choose but die.
Ah friends, old friends, short is the span of life :
See ye pass through it blithely as ye may,
Wasting no time in grief 'twixt morn and eve.
For nothing careth Time to spare our hopes :
Swiftly he works his work, and fleets away.
See me, the observed of all observers once,
Doer of deeds of name—in one day all
Fortune hath snatched, as a feather skyward blown. 510
None know I whose great wealth or high repute
Is sure. Farewell : for him that was your friend
Now for the last time, age-mates, have ye seen.

HERCULES *appears in the distance.*

MEGARA

Ha !
Ancient, my dear lord—else what ?—do I see ?

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐκ οἰδα, θύγατερ ἀφασία δὲ καῦμ' ἔχει.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

οὅδ' ἐστὶν δν γῆς νέρθεν εἰσηκούμεν,
εἰ μή γ' ὄνειρον ἐν φάει τι λεύσσομεν.
τί φημί; ποῖ ὄνειρα κηραίνουσ' ὄρῶ;

- οὐκ ἔσθ' οὅδ' ἄλλος ἀντὶ σοῦ παιδός, γέρον.
520 δεῦρ', ὡ τέκν', ἐκκρήμνασθε πατρώων πέπλων,
ἴτ' ἐγκονεῦτε, μὴ μεθῆτ', ἐπεὶ Διὸς
σωτῆρος ὑμῖν οὐδέν ἔσθ' οὅδ' ὕστερος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ῳ χαῖρε, μέλαθρον πρόπυλά θ' ἐστίας ἐμῆς,
ώς ἄσμενός σ'. ἐσεῦδον ἐς φάος μολών.
ἔα· τί χρῆμα; τέκν' ὄρῶ πρὸ δωμάτων
στολμοῖσι νεκρῶν κράτας ἔξεστεμμένα,
ὅχλῳ τ' ἐν ἀνδρῶν τὴν ἐμὴν ξυνάορον
πατέρα τε δακρύοντα συμφορὰς τίνας;
φέρ' ἐκπύθωμαι τῶνδε πλησίον σταθείς,

- 530 τί καινὸν ἥλθε, γύναι, δώμασιν χρέος;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ῳ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ῳ φάος μολὼν πατρί—

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἥκεις, ἐσώθης εἰς ἀκμὴν ἐλθὼν φίλοις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φής; τίν' εἰς ταραγμὸν ἥκομεν, πάτερ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

διολλύμεσθα· σὺ δέ, γέρον, σύγγνωθί μοι,
εἰ πρόσθεν ἥρπασ' ἀ σὲ λέγειν πρὸς τόνδ' ἐχρῆν·
τὸ θῆλυ· γάρ πως μᾶλλον οἰκτρὸν ἀρσένων,
καὶ τাম' ἔθυησκε τέκν', ἀπωλλύμην δ' ἐγώ.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

I know not, daughter,—speechless am I struck.

MEGARA

'Tis he who lay, we heard, beneath the earth,
Except in broad day we behold a dream !

What say I?—see they dreams, these yearning eyes?

This is none other, ancient, than thy son.

Boys, hither!—hang upon your father's cloak.

520

Speed ye, unhand him not; for this is he,

Your helper he, no worse than Saviour Zeus.

Enter HERCULES.

HERCULES

All hail, mine house, hail, portals of mine hearth!

How blithe, returned to life, I look on you!

Ha! what is this?—my sons before the halls

In death's attire and with heads chapleted!—

And, mid a throng of men, my very wife!—

My father weeping over some mischance!

Come, let me draw nigh these and question them.

Wife, what strange stroke hath fallen on mine house? 530

MEGARA

O best-beloved!—

AMPHITRYON

To thy sire light of life!—

MEGARA

Art come?—art saved for friends' most desperate
need?

HERCULES

How?—father, what confusion find I here?

MEGARA

We are at point to die!—thy pardon, ancient,
That I before thee snatch thy right of speech,
For woman is more swift than man to mourn,
And my sons were to die, and I was doomed.

169

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Ἄπολλον, οἵοις φροιμόις ἄρχει λόγου.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

τεθνᾶσ' ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατὴρ ούμὸς γέρων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πῶς φήσ ; τί δράσας ἡ δορὸς ποίου τυχών ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

Λύκος σφ' ὁ καινὸς γῆς ἄναξ διώλεσέν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὅπλοις ἀπαντῶν ἡ νοσησάσης χθονός ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

στάσει· τὸ Κάδμον δ' ἐπτάπυλον ἔχει κράτος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα πρὸς σὲ καὶ γέροντ' ἥλθεν φόβος ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κτείνειν ἔμελλε πατέρα κάμε καὶ τέκνα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φήσ ; τί ταρβῶν ὄρφάνευμ' ἐμῶν τέκνων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

μή ποτε Κρέοντος θάνατον ἐκτισαίατο.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κόσμος δὲ παιδῶν τίς ὅδε νερτέροις πρέπων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

θανάτου τάδ' ἥδη περιβόλαι' ἐνήμμεθα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ πρὸς βίαν ἐθνήσκετ ; ὡ τλήμων ἐγώ.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

φίλων ἔρημοι, σὲ δὲ θανόντ' ἥκούομεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πόθεν δ' ἐς ὑμᾶς ἥδ' ἐσῆλθ' ἀθυμία ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

Ἐύρυσθέως κήρυκες ἥγγελλον τάδε.

550

• THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Apollo!—what strange prelude to thy speech!

MEGARA

Dead are my brethren and my grey-haired sire.

HERCULES

How?—by what deed, or stricken by what spear? 540

MEGARA

'Twas Lykus slew them, this land's upstart king.

HERCULES

Met in fair fight?—or plague-struck was the land?

MEGARA

By faction stricken. He rules seven-gated Thebes.

HERCULES

Why fell on thee and on the old man dread?

MEGARA

He sought to slay thy sire, thy sons, and me.

HERCULES

How?—of my fatherless children what feared he?

MEGARA

Lest Creon's death one day they might avenge.

HERCULES

This vesture meet for dead folk, what means it?

MEGARA

In this attire we shrouded us for death.

HERCULES

And were to die by violence?—woe is me! 550

MEGARA

Forlorn of friends, we heard that thou hadst died.

HERCULES

Wherefore came on you this despair of me?

MEGARA

The heralds of Eurystheus published this.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἔξελείπετ' οἰκον ἐστίαν τ' ἐμήν;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

βίᾳ, πατὴρ μὲν ἐκπεσὼν στρωτοῦ λέχους.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κούκ ἔσχεν αἰδῶ τὸν γέροντ' ἀτιμάσαι;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

αἰδῶ γ'; ἀποικεῖ τῆσδε τῆς θεοῦ πρόσω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὗτῳ δ' ἀπόντες ἐσπανίζομεν φίλων;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

φίλοι γάρ εἰσιν ἀνδρὶ δυστυχεῖ τίνες;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μάχας δὲ Μινυῶν ἀς ἔτλην, ἀπέπτυσαν;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἄφιλον, ἵν' αὐθίς σοι λέγω, τὸ δυστυχές.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ ρίψεθ' "Αιδου τάσδε περιβολὰς κόμης
καὶ φῶς ἀναβλέψεσθε τοῦ κάτω σκότου
φίλας ἀμοιβὰς δύμασιν δεδορκότες;

ἐγὼ δέ, νῦν γάρ τῆς ἐμῆς ἔργον χερος,
πρῶτον μὲν εἴμι καὶ κατασκάψω δόμους
καινῶν τυράννων, κράτα δ' ἀνόσιον τεμῶν

ρίψω κυνῶν ἔλκημα· Καδμείων δ' δσους
κακοὺς ἐφηνύρον εὐ παθόντας ἔξ ἐμοῦ,
τῷ καλλινίκῳ τῷδ' ὅπλῳ χειρωσομαι·

τοὺς δὲ πτερωτοῖς διαφορῶν τοξεύμασι
νεκρῶν ἄπαντ' Ἰσμηνὸν ἐμπλήσω φόνου,
Δίρκης τε νᾶμα λευκὸν αἵμαχθήσεται.

τῷ γάρ μ' ἀμύνειν μᾶλλον ἡ δάμαρτι χρὴ
καὶ παισὶ καὶ γέροντι; χαιρόντων πόνοι·
μάτην γάρ αὐτοὺς τῶνδε μᾶλλον ἥνυσα.

560

570

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

But why did ye forsake mine home and hearth?

MEGARA

By force : thy father from his bed was flung.

HERCULES

Had he no shame to outrage these grey hairs?

MEGARA

Shame?—from that Goddess far his dwelling is!

HERCULES

So poor of friends was I when far away!

MEGARA

Friends!—what friends hath a man unfortunate?

HERCULES

Scorned they the fights with Minyans I endured? 560

MEGARA

Friendless, I tell thee again, misfortune is.

HERCULES

Fling from your hair these cerements of the grave:

Look up to the light, beholding with your eyes

Exchange right welcome from the nether-gloom.

And I—for now work lieth to mine hand—

Will first go, and will raze to earth the house

Of this new king, his impious head smite off

And cast to dogs to rend. Of Thebans, all

Found traitors after my good deeds to them,

Some will I slay with this victorious mace,

570

And the rest scatter with my feathered shafts,

With slaughter of corpses all Ismenus fill,

And Dirce's pure stream red with blood shall run.

For whom should I defend above my wife

And sons and aged sire? Great toils, farewell!

Vainly I wrought them, leaving these unhelped!

173

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

καὶ δεῖ μ' ὑπὲρ τῶνδ', εἴπερ οἶδ' ὑπὲρ πατρός,
θυήσκειν ἀμύνοντ· ἡ τί φησομεν καλὸν
ῦδρα μὲν ἐλθεῖν εἰς μάχην λέοντί τε
580 Εὔρυσθέως πομπαῖσι, τῶν δ' ἐμῶν τέκνων
οὐκ ἐκπονήσω θάνατον; οὐκ ἄρ' Ἡρακλῆς
οὐκ αλλίνικος ὡς πάροιθε λέξομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δίκαια τοὺς τεκόντας ὠφελεῖν τέκνα
πατέρα τε πρέσβυν τήν τε κοινωνὸν γάμων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

πρὸς σοῦ μέν, ὁ παῖ, τοῖς φίλοις εἶναι φίλουν
τά τ' ἔχθρα μισεῖν· ἀλλὰ μὴ πείγου λιαν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἐστὶ τῶνδε θᾶσσον ἢ χρεών, πάτερ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

πολλοὺς πένητας, ὀλβίους δὲ τῷ λόγῳ
δοκοῦντας εἶναι συμμάχους ἄναξ ἔχει,
οἱ στάσιν ἔθηκαν καὶ διώλεσαν πόλιν
ἐφ' ἀρπαγαῖσι τῶν πέλας, τὰ δ' ἐν δόμοις
δαπάναισι φροῦδα διαφυγόνθ' ὑπ' ἀργίας.
ῶφθης ἐσελθὼν πόλιν ἐπεὶ δ' ὕφθης, ὅρα
ἔχθροὺς ἀθροίσας μὴ παρὰ γυνώμην πέσης.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μέλει μὲν οὐδὲν εἴ με πᾶσ' εἶδεν πόλις·
ὅριν δ' ἵδων τιν' οὐκ ἐν αἰσίοις ἔδραις,
ἔγνων πόνον τιν' εἰς δόμους πεπτωκότα·
ῶστ' ἐκ προνοίας κρύφιος εἰσῆλθον χθόνα.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

καλῶς· προσελθὼν νῦν πρόσειπέ θ' ἐστίαν
600 καὶ δὸς πατρῷοις δώμασιν σὸν δόμοντος
ἥξει γὰρ αὐτὸς σὴν δάμαρτα καὶ τέκνα
ἔλξων φονεύσων κάμ' ἐπισφάξων ἄναξ·

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

I ought defending these to die, if these
Die for their father :—else, what honour comes
Of hydra and of lion faced in fight
At King Eurystheus' hests, and from my sons 580
Death not averted? How shall I be called
Hercules the Victorious, as of old?

CHORUS

'Tis just the father should defend the sons,
The grey sire, and the yokemate of his life.

AMPHITRYON

Son, worthy of thee it is to love thy friends,
To hate thy foes : yet be not over-rash.

HERCULES

Father, what haste unmeet is found in this?

AMPHITRYON

The king hath many an ally, lackland knaves,
Fellows that have a name that they are rich,
Who sowed sedition, ruining the land, 590
To plunder neighbours, since their own estates,
Squandered by wasteful idleness, were gone.
Thou wast seen entering Thebes : since thou wast seen,
Let not foes gather, and thou fall unwares.

HERCULES

Though all the city saw me, naught reck I.
Yet, since I marked a bird in ominous place,
I knew that trouble on mine house had fallen,
And of set purpose entered secretly.

AMPHITRYON

Good : go thou now, and thine hearth-gods salute,
And show thy face to thine ancestral halls. 600
Himself, yon king, shall come to hale thy wife
And sons for murder, and to slaughter me.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

μένοντι δ' αὐτοῦ πάντα σοι γενήσεται
τῇ τ' ἀσφαλείᾳ κερδανεῖς· πόλιν δὲ σὴν
μὴ πρὶν ταράξῃς πρὶν τόδ' εὖ θέσθαι, τέκνον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

δράσω τάδ· εὖ γὰρ εἴπας· εἰμ' εἴσω δόμων.
χρόνῳ δ' ἀνελθὼν ἔξι ἀνηλίων μυχῶν
"Αἰδουν Κόρης τ' ἔνερθεν, οὐκ ἀτιμάσω
θεοὺς προσειπεῖν πρῶτα τοὺς κατὰ στέγας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

610 ήλθες γὰρ ὄντως δώματ' εἰς "Αἰδουν, τέκνον;

 ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
καὶ θῆρά γ' εἰς φῶς τὸν τρίκρανον ἥγαγον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μάχῃ κρατήσας ἡ θεᾶς δωρήμασιν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μάχῃ τὰ μυστῶν δ' ὅργι' ηὐτύχησ' ἵδων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἡ καὶ κατ' οἴκους ἐστὶν Εὔρυσθέως ὁ θήρ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Χθονίας νιν ἄλσος Ἐρμιών τ' ἔχει πόλις.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐδ' οἰδεν Εύρυσθεύς σε γῆς ἥκοντ' ἄνω;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ οἰδεν· ἥλθον τάνθάδ' εἰδέναι πάρος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

χρόνον δὲ πῶς τοσοῦτον ἥσθ' ὑπὸ χθονί;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησέα κομίζων ἐχρόνισ' ἔξι "Αἰδουν, πάτερ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

620 καὶ ποῦ στιν; ἡ γῆς πατρίδος οἰχεται πέδον;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

If here thou bide, all shall go well with thee,
And thou shalt gain in surely. Stir not up
Thy city, ere thou hast ordered all things well.

HERCULES

I will : well said. I pass mine halls within.
Returned at last from sunless nether crypts
Of Hades and The Maid,¹ I will not slight
The Gods, but hail them first beneath my roof.

AMPHITRYON

Son, didst thou verily go to Hades' halls? 610

HERCULES

Yea ; the three-headed hound I brought to light.

AMPHITRYON

Vanquished in fight, or by the Goddess given?

HERCULES

In fight. I had seen the Mysteries—well for me .

AMPHITRYON

How ? is the monster in Eurystheus' halls?

HERCULES

Nay, in Demeter's Grove, in Hermione's town.

AMPHITRYON

Nor knows Eurystheus thou art risen to day?

HERCULES

Nay ; hither first, to know your state, I came.

AMPHITRYON

How wast thou so long time beneath the earth?

HERCULES

From Hades rescuing Theseus, tarried I.

AMPHITRYON

Where is he ? Hath he passed to his fatherland? 620

¹ Persephone, whose name it was perilous to utter.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

βέβηκ' Ἀθήνας, νέρθεν ἄσμενος φυγών.
ἀλλ' εἰ', ὁμαρτεῖτ', ὡς τέκν', εἰς δόμους πατρί·
καλλίονές τάρ' εἰσοδοι τῶν ἔξόδων
πάρεισιν ὑμῖν. ἀλλὰ θάρσος ἵσχετε
καὶ νάματ' ὅσσων μηκέτ' ἔξανίετε,
σύ τ', ὡς γύναι μοι, σύλλογον ψυχῆς λαβὲ
τρόμου τε παῦσαι, καὶ μέθεσθ' ἐμῶν πέπλων·
οὐ γὰρ πτερωτὸς οὐδὲ φευξείω φίλους.

ἄ,
οἵδ' οὐκ ἀφιᾶσ', ἀλλ' ἀνάπτονται πέπλων

630 τοσφδε μᾶλλον ὡδὸς ἔβητ' ἐπὶ ξυροῦ;
ἄξω λαβών γε τούσδ' ἐφολκίδας χεροῖν,
ναῦς δ' ὡς ἐφέλξω· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀναίνομαι
θεράπευμα τέκνων. πάντα τάνθρωπων ἵσα.
φιλοῦσι παῖδας οἵ τ' ἀμείνονες βροτῶν
οἵ τ' οὐδὲν ὅντες· χρήμασιν δὲ διάφοροι·
ἔχουσιν, οἱ δ' οὐ· πᾶν δὲ φιλότεκνον γένος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀ νεότας μοι φίλον· ἄχθος δὲ τὸ γῆρας αἰεὶ στρ. α'
βαρύτερον Αἴτνας σκοπέλων

640 ἐπὶ κρατὶ κεῖται,
βλεφάρων σκοτεινὸν
φάρος ἐπικαλύψαν.
μή μοι μήτ' Ἀσιήτιδος
τυραννίδος δλβος εἴη,
μὴ χρυσοῦ δώματα πλήρη
τᾶς ἥβας ἀντιλαβεῖν,
ἀ καλλίστα μὲν ἐν δλβῳ,
καλλίστα δ' ἐν πενίᾳ.
τὸ δὲ λυγρὸν φόνιόν τε γῆ-

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

To Athens, glad to have 'scaped the underworld.
Come, children, follow to the house your sire ;
For fairer to you is your entering-in
Than your outgoing. Nay then, pluck up heart,
And shed the tear-floods from your eyes no more ;
And rally thou, my wife, thy fainting spirit ;
From trembling cease ; and ye, let go my cloak :
I am no winged thing, nor would I fly my friends.
Ha !

These let not go, but hang upon my cloak
Only the more ! Was doom so imminent then ? 630
E'en must I lead them clinging to mine hands,
As ship that tows her boats. Not I reject
Care of my sons. Men's hearts be all like-framed :
They love their babes, as well the nobler sort,
As they that are but naught. In wealth they differ ;
These have, those lack : their children all men love.
[*Exeunt HERCULES, AMPHITRYON, MEGARA, and children.*

CHORUS

Ah, sweet is youth !—but always eld, (*Str. 1*)
On mine head weighing, downward drags,
A heavier load than lay the crags
Of Etna on the Titan quelled, 640

Muffling mine eyes in mantle-fold
Of gloom. Not mine be wealth that lies
In Asian tyrants' treasures ;
Not mine be halls of hoarded gold,

If forfeit youth for these must fleet—
Youth, fairest gem of high estate,
In lowliness most fair ! I hate
Age, dark with death's on-coming feet :

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENΟΣ

650 ρας μισῶ· κατὰ κυμάτων δ'
ἔρροι, μηδέ ποτ' ὥφελεν
θνατῶν δώματα καὶ πόλεις
ἐλθεῖν, ἀλλὰ κατ' αἰθέρ' ἀ-
εὶ πτεροῖσι φορείσθω.

εἰ δὲ θεοῖς ἦν ξύνεσις καὶ σοφία κατ' ἄνδρας, ἀντ. α
δίδυμον ἀν ἥβαν ἔφερον
φανερὸν χαρακτῆρ'
ἀρετᾶς ὅσιοισιν

660 μέτα, κατθανόντες τ'
εἰς αὐγὰς πάλιν ἀλίου
δισσοὺς ἀν ἔβαν διαύλους,
ἀ δυσγένεια δ' ἀπλᾶν ἀν
εἶχε ζωᾶς βιοτάν,
καὶ τῷδ' ἦν τούς τε κακοὺς ἀν
γνῶναι καὶ τοὺς ἀγαθούς,
ἴσον ἄτ' ἐν νεφέλαισιν ἄ-
στρων ναύταις ἀριθμὸς πέλει.
νῦν δ' οὐδεὶς ὅρος ἐκ θεῶν
670 χρηστοῖς οὐδὲ κακοῖς σαφής,
ἀλλ' εἰλισσόμενός τις αἱ-
ῶν πλούτον μόνον αὔξει.

οὐ παύσομαι τὰς Χάριτας
Μούσαις συγκαταμιγνύς,
ἀδίσταν συζυγίαν.
μὴ ζώην μετ' ἀμουσίας,
αἱεὶ δ' ἐν στεφάνοισιν εἴην.
ἔτι τοι γέρων ἀοιδὸς
κελαδεῖ Μναμοσύναν.

στρ. β'

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Deep be it drowned 'neath storm-waves' stress ! 650
Ah, would that ne'er such visitant
Had come, men's homes and towns to haunt,
That yet its wings flew shelterless !

If wisdom, as of sons of earth, (Ant. 1)
And understanding, dwelt in heaven,
Twice o'er the boon of youth were given,
Seal manifest of manhood's worth

On all true hearts : these from the grave
To the sun's light again should climb, 660
To run their course a second time :
One life alone the vile should have.

Then, who are evil, who are good,
By such a sigh might all men learn,
As shipmen 'twixt the clouds discern
The star-host's marshalled multitude.

But now, no line clear-severing
'Twixt good and bad the Gods have drawn : 670
Wealth, as the rolling years sweep on,
Is all the blessing that they bring.

(Str. 2)

The Muses shall for me be twined for ever with the
Graces :
For evermore my song shall pour that sweetest
union's praises.
No life be mine of songless clown,
But, where for singers shines the crown,
Mine old lips still shall hymn renown of Memory's
fair creation.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

680 ἔτι τὰν Ἡρακλέους
καλλίνικον ἀείδω
παρά τε Βρόμιον οἰνοδόταν
παρά τε χέλυος ἐπτατόνου
μολπὰν καὶ Λίβυν αὐλόν·
οὕπω καταπαύσομεν
Μούσας, αἴ μ' ἔχόρευσαν.

παιᾶνα μὲν Δηλιάδες ἀντ. β'
ūμνοῦσ' ἀμφὶ πύλας τὸν
Λατοῦς εὔπαιδα γόνον
εἰλίσσονται καλλίχορον.
690 παιᾶνας δ' ἐπὶ σοῖς μελάθροις
κύκνος ὡς γέρων ἀοιδὸς
πολιάν ἐκ γενύων
κελαδήσω· τὸ γὰρ εὖ
τοὺς ὑμνοισιν ὑπάρχει,
Διὸς ὁ παῖς· τὸ δ' εὐγενίας
κλέος ὑπερβάλλων [ἀρεταῖς]
μοχθήσας τὸν ἄκυμον
θῆκεν βίοτον βροτοῖς
700 πέρσας δείματα θηρῶν.

ΑΤΚΟΣ

εἰς καιρὸν οἴκων, Ἀμφιτρύων, ἔξω περᾶς·
χρόνος γὰρ ἡδη δαρὸς ἔξ ὅτου πέπλοις
κοσμεῖσθε σῶμα καὶ νεκρῶν ἀγάλμασιν.
ἀλλ' εἴα, παῦδας καὶ δάμαρθ' Ἡρακλέους
ἔξω κέλευε τῶνδε φαίνεσθαι δόμων,
ἐφ' οἷς ὑπέστητ' αὐτεπάγγελτοι θανεῖν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἄναξ, διώκεις μ' αθλίως πεπραγότα
ūβριν θ' ὑβρίζεις ἐπὶ θανοῦσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς·

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Great Hercules the triumph-crowned my song 680
extolleth ever, [wine-giver,
In feasts my theme, where beakers gleam of Bromius
And where the lyre of sevenfold string
Sounds, and where Libyan flutes outring :
Ceaseless I'll hear the Muses sing, queens of my
inspiration.

(Ant. 2)

As maids of Delos chant the pæan's holy strain im-
mortal, [Leto's scion's portal,
Whose white feet glance as sweeps the dance round 690
So will I raise the pæan-lay,
Swan-song of singer hoary-grey :
The portals of thine halls to-day shall hear the old
lips chanting.

Proud theme hath minstrelsy, to sing mine hero's
high achieving : [mounts, far-leaving
He is Zeus' son, but deeds hath done whose glory
The praise of birth divine behind,
Whose toils gave peace to humankind,
Slaying dread shapes that filled man's mind with
terrors ceaseless-haunting. 700

Enter LYCUS, attended. Re-enter AMPHITRYON.

LYCUS

So!—in good time, Amphitryon, com'st thou forth.
Ye have tarried all too long as ye arrayed
Your limbs in robes and trappings of the grave.
Haste, bid the sons and wife of Hercules
To show themselves forth-coming from these halls,
By your self-tendered covenant to die.

AMPHITRYON

King, thou dost trample on my misery :
Thou heapest insult on the heart bereaved.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

710 ἀ χρῆν σε μετρίως, κεὶ κρατεῖς, σπουδὴν ἔχειν.
ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀνάγκην προστίθησ ήμὲν θανεῖν,
στέργειν ἀνάγκη, δραστέον θ' ἀ σοὶ δοκεῖ.

ΛΤΚΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτα Μεγάρα; ποῦ τέκν' Ἀλκμήνης γόνου;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

δοκῶ μὲν αὐτήν, ὡς θύραθεν εἰκάσαι,

ΛΤΚΟΣ

τί χρῆμα δόξης; τοῦ δὲ¹ ἔχεις τεκμήριον;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ικέτιν πρὸς ἀγνοῖς Ἐστίας θάσσειν βάθροις,

ΛΤΚΟΣ

ἀνόνητά γ' ικετεύουσαν ἐκσῶσαι βίον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

καὶ τὸν θανόντα γ' ἀνακαλεῖν μάτην πόσιν.

ΛΤΚΟΣ

οὐδὲ οὐ πάρεστιν οὐδὲ μὴ μόλη ποτέ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὔκ, εἴ γε μή τις θεῶν ἀναστήσειέ νιν.

ΛΤΚΟΣ

720 χώρει πρὸς αὐτὴν κάκκομιζ' ἐκ δωμάτων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

μέτοχος ἀν εἴην τοῦ φόνου δράσας τόδε.

ΛΤΚΟΣ

ἡμεῖς, ἐπειδὴ σοὶ τόδ' ἔστ' ἐνθύμιον,
οἱ δειμάτων ἔξωθεν ἐκπορεύσομεν
σὺν μητρὶ παῖδας. δεῦρ' ἐπεσθε, πρόσπολοι,
ὡς ἀν σχολὴν λύσωμεν ἄσμενοι πόνων.

¹ Murray: for MSS. δόξης τῆσδ'.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

So strong and so impatient fits not thee.
But, since of force thou doomest me to die,
Of force must I content me and do thy will.

710

LYCUS

And Megara, and Alcmena's son's brood—where?

AMPHITRYON

I think that she—if one without may guess—

LYCUS

What of thy *thinking*? What dost know by proof?

AMPHITRYON

At the Hearth-goddess' altar suppliant sits,—

LYCUS

With bootless prayer to heaven to save her life!

AMPHITRYON

And vainly calleth on a husband dead.

LYCUS

Not here is he; nor shall he ever come.

AMPHITRYON

Never,—except by a God raised from the dead.

LYCUS

Go thou to her, and bring her forth the halls.

720

AMPHITRYON

So doing were I partaker in her blood!

LYCUS

I then,—since this lies heavy on thy soul,—
Who am past all fear, will bring forth with her sons
This mother. Henchmen, hither, follow me,
With joy to sweep this hindrance from our path.

[Exit]

185

ΗΡΑΗΚΛΣ MAINOMENΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

σὺ δ' οὖν ἶθ', ἔρχει δ' οἱ χρεών· τὰ δ' ἄλλα' ἵσως
ἄλλω μελήσει. προσδόκα δὲ δρῶν κακῶς
κακὸν τι πράξειν. ὃ γέρουντες, εἰς καλὸν
στείχει, βρόχοισι δ' ἀρκύων γενήσεται
ξιφηφόροισι, τοὺς πέλας δοκῶν κτενεῖν
ὁ παγκάκιστος. εἴμι δ' ὡς ἵδω νεκρὸν
πίπτοντ'. ἔχει γάρ ἡδονὰς θυησκων ἀνὴρ
ἔχθρὸς τίνων τε τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

730

ΧΟΡΟΣ

α. μεταβολὰ κακῶν· μέγας ὁ πρόσθ' ἄναξ στρ. α
πάλιν ὑποστρέφει βίοτον εἰς "Αιδαν.

β. ἵω δίκα καὶ θεῶν παλίρρους πότμος.

740 γ'. ἥλθεις χρόνῳ μὲν οὐ δίκην δώσεις θανών,

δ. ὕβρεις ὑβρίζων εἰς ἀμείνονας σέθεν.

ε'. χαρμονὰ δακρύων ἔδοσαν ἐκβολάς.

στ'. πάλιν ἔμολεν ἢ πάρος οὕποτε διὰ φρενὸς
ἥλπισεν παθεῖν γᾶς ἄναξ.

ζ'. ἄλλα, ὃ γεραιοί, καὶ τὰ δωμάτων ἔσω
σκοπῶμεν, εἰ πράσσει τις ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Go thou where doom leads. For the rest, perchance,
Another shall take thought. Look thou for ill
To suffer ill! Old friends, in happy hour
He paceth on: in toils of snaring swords
Shall he be trapped who thought to slay his neighbours, 730
The utter-vile! I go to see him fall
Dead. Joy it is to see an enemy
Die, suffering vengeance for his ill-deeds done. [*Exit.*]

The members of the Chorus chant successively.

CHORUS 1

(Str. 1)

Ho for requital of wrong! the king who was great
heretofore [door!
Backward is turning the path of his life unto Hades'

CHORUS 2

Hail, justice and river of fate back-turning with re-fluent roar!

CHORUS 3

Thou com'st at last to pay death's penalty— 740

CHORUS 4

For outrage done to better men than thee.

CHORUS 5

Gladness constraineth the fountain of tears from mine
eyelids to start.

CHORUS 6

Come is the hour which the land's king never ere
this in his heart

Foresaw,—retribution's vengeance-smart!

CHORUS 7

Old friends, look we within the halls, to see
Our soul's desire upon our enemy.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΔΥΚΟΣ

iώ μοί μοι.

ХОРОХ

- 750 η'. τόδε κατάρχεται μέλος ἐμοὶ κλύειν ἀντ. α'
φίλιον ἐν δόμοις· θάνατος οὐ πόρσω.

Θ. βοᾶ φόνου φροίμιον στενάξων ἄναξ.

АТКОИ

ω πᾶσα Κάδμου γαῖ', ἀπόλλυμαι δόλω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- i'. καὶ γὰρ διώλλυς ἀντίποινα δ' ἐκτίνων τόλμα, διδούς γε τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ια'. τίς δὲ θεοὺς ἀνομίᾳ χραίνων, θυητὸς ὁν,
ἄφρονα λόγον οὐρανίων μακάρων κατέβαλ',
ώς ἂρ' οὐ σθένουσιν θεοί;

- 760 ιβ. γέροντες, οὐκέτ' ἔστι δυσσεβὴς ἀνήρ.
σιγὰ μέλαθρα· πρὸς χοροὺς τραπώμεθα.
φίλοι γὰρ εὔτυχοῦσιν οὓς ἐγὼ θέλω.

χοροὶ χοροὶ καὶ θαλίαι στρ. β'
μέλουσι Θήβας ἱερὸν κατ' ἄστυ.
μεταλλαγαὶ γὰρ δακρύων,
μεταλλαγαὶ συντυχίας
[νέας] ἔτεκον ἀσιδάς.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

LYCUS (*within*)

Ah me! Woe's me!

CHORUS 8

(*Ant.* 1)

Hark to the outburst!—as music it is for mine ears 750
to hear [is exceeding near.
That strain ringing sweet through the halls: lo, death

CHORUS 9

This king shrieketh prelude of slaughter: he
shrieketh in anguish of fear.

LYCUS (*within*)

Oh Cadmus' land, by treachery am I slain!

CHORUS 10

As thou wouldest slay. Flinch not from vengeance-
pain:

Thine own deeds' retribution dost thou gain.

CHORUS 11

Who was it, in lawlessness flouting the Gods, that
mortal wight

Who in folly blasphemed the Blessed that reign in
the heaven's height,

Saying that Gods be void of might?

CHORUS 12

Our foe is not:—such doom the impious earn.

760

Hushed are the halls. Now unto dances turn:

Blest are the dear ones over whom I yearn.

CHORUS

(*Str.* 2)

The dances, the dances are reeling, the shout of the
banqueters pealing

Through Thebes, through the city divine.

Now from affliction of tears cometh severance;

Now from the thraldom of woe is deliverance,

And song is their heir.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

βέβακ' ἄναξ ὁ καινός,
ό δὲ παλαιτερος
κρατεῖ, λιμένα λιπών γε τὸν Ἀχερόντιον.
δοκημάτων ἐκτὸς ἥλθεν ἐλπίς.

770

θεοὶ θεοὶ τῶν ἀδίκων
μέλουσι καὶ τῶν ὄσιων ἐπάγειν.
οἱ χρυσὸς ἃ τ' εὐτυχία
φρενῶν βροτοὺς ἔξαγεται,
δύνασιν ἄδικον ἐφέλκων.
χρόνου γὰρ οὕτις ἔτλα
τὸ πάλιν εἰσορᾶν·
νόμον παρέμενος, ἀνομίᾳ χάριν διδούς,
ἔθραυσεν ὅλβου κελαινὸν ἄρμα.

780

'Ισμήν' ὡς στεφαναφόρει,
ξεσταί θ' ἐπταπύλου πόλεως
ἀναχορεύσατ' ἀγυιαί,
Δίρκα θ' ἀ καλλιρρέεθρος,
σὺν τῷ Ἀσωπιάδες κόραι,
πατρὸς ὕδωρ βάτε λιποῦ-
σαι συναοιδοί,
Νύμφαι, τὸν Ἡρακλέους
καλλίνικον ἀγῶν'. ὡς
Πυθίου δεινδρῶτι πέτρα
Μουσῶν θ' Ἐλικωνιάδων δώματα,
ἥξετ' εὐγαθεῖ κελάδῳ
ἐμὰν πόλιν ἐμά τε τείχη,

790

190

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Gone is the tyrant, the upstart craven,
And enthroned is the ancient line
Re-arisen from Hades' drear ghost-haven : 770
Hope springs from despair.

(*Ant. 2*)

The Gods, O the Gods now are sealing unrighteousness' doom, and revealing

The right, their eternal design. [victorious
But Gold and Fair-fortune, with Power the
Harnessed beside them, in folly vainglorious
Hurry man to his doom :—

Law he outpaceth, and Lawlessness lasheth
To speed ; nor his heart doth incline
To take heed to the end—lo, his car suddenly
crasheth

Shattered in gloom !¹ 780

Deck thee with garlands, Ismenus, and ye (*Str. 3*)
Break forth into dancing,
Streets stately with Thebes' fair masonry,
And Dirce bright-glancing :

Come, Maids of Asopus, to us, from the spring
Come ye of your father ;
Of Hercules' glorious triumph to sing,
Nymph-chorus, O gather

Pythian forest-peak, Helicon's steep 790
Of the Song-queens haunted,
To my town, to my walls, let the song-echoes leap
Of the strains loud-chanted—

¹ The presumptuous wrong-doer is compared to a reckless charioteer in a race, in which he tries to outstrip the rival chariot of Law. His four horses are Gold and Prosperity as yoke-horses, with Power and Lawlessness for trace-horses.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Σπαρτῶν ἦνα γένος ἐφάνη,
χαλκασπίδων λόχος, δις γάν
τέκνων τέκνοις μεταμείβει,
Θήβαις ιερὸν φῶς.

ω λέκτρων δύο συγγενεῖς
 εύναι, θνατογενοῦς τε καὶ
 Διός, ὃς ἥλθεν ἐς εὐνὰς
 Νύμφας τᾶς Περσηίδος· ώς
 πιστόν μοι τὸ παλαιὸν ἦ-
 δη λέχος, ὡς Ζεῦ, τὸ σὸν οὐκ
 ἐπ' ἐλπίδι φάνθη,
 λαμπρὰν δ' ἔδειξ' ὁ χρόνος
 τὰν Ἡρακλέος ἀλκάν·
 ὃς γᾶς ἐξέβα θαλάμων,
 Πλούτωνος δῶμα λιπὼν νέρτερον.
 κρείσσων μοι τύραννος ἔφυς
 ἡ δυσγένει ἀνάκτων·
 ἀ νῦν ἐσορᾶν φαίνει
 ξιφηφόρων ἐς ἀγώνων
 ἄμιλλαν, εἰ τὸ δίκαιον
 θεοῖς ἔτ' ἀρέσκει.

 ἔα ἔα·
 ἀρ' εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν πίτυλον ἥκομεν φόβου,
 γέροντες, οἶον φάσμ' ὑπὲρ δόμων ὄρῳ;
 φυγῆ φυγῆ
 νωθὲς πέδαιρε κῶλον, ἐκποδὼν ἔλα.
 ὠναξ Παιάν,
 ἀπότροπος γένοιό μοι πημάτων.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To my town, whence the Dragon-seed rose to the day,

The warrior nation,
Whose sons guard the fathers' inheritance aye,
Thebes' light of salvation.

Hail to the couch where the spousals divine (*Ant. 3*)

With the mortal were blended,
Where for love of the Lady of Perseus' line 800
Zeus' glory descended !

For thy bridal of old is my faith, Zeus, won,

Though I held it a story
Past credence : by time is the might of thy son
Revealed in its glory :

He hath burst from earth's dungeons, hath rifted
the chain

Of Pluto's deep prison !
Thou art worthier to rule than the churl-king
slain,

O my King re-arisen ! 810

For now the usurper hath proved, when in fight
The sword-wielders have striven,
Whether yet, as in old time, the cause of the right
Is well-pleasing to heaven.

The forms of IRIS and MADNESS appear above the palace.

Ha see ! ha see !
On you, on me, doth this same panic fall ?
Old friends, what phantom hovereth o'er the hall ?

Ah flee ! ah flee
With haste of laggard feet !—speed thou away !
Healer, to thee, 820
O King, to avert from me yon bane I pray !

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΙΠΠΙΣ

θαρσεῖτε Νυκτὸς τήνδ' ὄρῶντες ἔκγονον
 Λύσσαν, γέρουτες, κάμε τὴν θεῶν λάτριν
 'Ιριν πόλει γὰρ οὐδὲν ἥκομεν βλάβος,
 ἐνὸς δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὸς δώματα στρατεύομεν,
 ὃν φασιν εἶναι Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τ' ἄπο.
 πρὶν μὲν γὰρ ἄθλους ἐκτελευτῆσαι πικρούς,
 τὸ χρή νιν ἔξεσφζεν, οὐδ' εἴα πατήρ
 Ζεὺς νιν κακῶς δρᾶν οὗτ' ἔμ' οὕθ' "Ηραν ποτέ.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθους διεπέρασ' Εὔρυσθέως,
 "Ηρα προσάψαι κοινὸν αἷμ' αὐτῷ θέλει
 παιδας κατακτείναντι, συνθέλω δ' ἐγώ.
 ἀλλ' εἰ", ἀτεγκτον συλλαβοῦσα καρδίαν,
 Νυκτὸς κελαινῆς ἀνυμέναιε παρθένε,
 μανίας τ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδε καὶ παιδοκτόνους
 φρενῶν ταραγμοὺς καὶ ποδῶν σκιρτήματα
 ἔλαυνε, κίνει, φόμιον ἔξει κάλων;
 ώς ἀν πορεύσας δι' Ἀχερούσιου πόρου
 τὸν καλλίπαιαδα στέφανον αὐθέντῃ φόνῳ
 γνῷ μὲν τὸν "Ηρας οὐδός ἐστ' αὐτῷ χόλος,
 μάθῃ δὲ τὸν ἐμόν· ἡ θεοὶ μὲν οὐδαμοῦ,
 τὰ θυητὰ δ' ἐσται μεγάλα, μὴ δόντος δίκην.

ΛΤΣΣΑ

ἐξ εὐγενοῦς μὲν πατρὸς ἔκ τε μητέρος
 πέφυκα, Νυκτὸς Οὐρανοῦ τ' ἀφ' αἷματος.
 τιμὰς δ' ἔχω τάσδ', οὐκ ἀγασθῆναι φίλοις,
 οὐδὲ ἥδομαι φοιτῶσ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων φόνους.¹
 παραινέσαι δέ, πρὶν σφαλεῖσαν εἰσιδεῖν,
 "Ηρᾳ θέλω σοί τ', ἡν πίθησθ' ἐμοῖς λόγοις.
 ἀνὴρ ὅδ' οὐκ ἀσημος οὗτ' ἐπὶ χθονὶ

¹ Dobree: for MSS. φίλους. Adopted by Dindorf, Paley, and Gray and Hutchinson.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

IRIS

Fear not : this is the child of Night ye see,
Madness, grey sires : I, handmaid of the Gods,
Iris. We come not for your city's hurt ;
Only on one man's house do we make war—
His, whom Zeus' and Alcmena's son they call.
For, till he had ended all his bitter toils,
Fate shielded him, and Father Zeus would not
That I, or Hera, wrought him ever harm.
But, now he hath toiled Eurystheus' labours through, 830
Hera will stain him with the blood of kin,
That he shall slay his sons : her will is mine.

On then, close up thine heart from touch of ruth,
O thou unwedded child of murky Night :
With madness thrill this man, with soul-turmoil :
Child-murdering, with wild boundings of the feet :
Goad him ; the sheets of murder's sails let ont,
That, when o'er Acheron's ferry his own hand
In blood hath sped his crown of goodly sons,
Then may he learn how dread is Hera's wrath, 840
And mine, against him : else the Gods must wane
And mortals wax, if he taste not her vengeance.

MADNESS

Of noble sire and mother was I born,
Even of the blood of Uranus and Night.
But not to do despite to friends I hold
My powers, nor love to haunt for murder's sake.
Fain would I plead with Hera and with thee,
Ere she have erred; if ye will heed my words.
This man, against whose house ye thrust me on,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

850 οὐτ' ἐν θεοῖσιν, οὐ γέ μ' εἰσπέμπεις δόμους·
ἀβατον δὲ χώραν καὶ θάλασσαν ἀγρίαν
ἐξημερώσας, θεῶν ἀνέστησεν μόνος
τιμᾶς πιτυούσας ἀνοσίων ἀνδρῶν ὅπο·
ώστ'¹ οὐ παραινῶ μεγάλα βούλεσθαι κακά.

ΙΡΙΣ

μὴ σὺ νοιθέτει τά θ' "Ηρας κάμα μηχανήματα.

ΑΤΣΣΑ

εἰς τὸ λῷστον ἐμβιβάζω σ' ἵχνος ἀντὶ τοῦ
κακοῦ.

ΙΡΙΣ

οὐχὶ σωφρονεῖν γ' ἔπειμψε δεῦρό σ' ή Διὸς δάμαρ.

ΑΤΣΣΑ

"Ηλιον μαρτυρόμεσθα δρῶσ' ἀ δρᾶν οὐ βούλομαι.
εὶ δὲ δή μ' "Ηρα θ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τ' ἀναγκαίως
ἔχει

860 τάχος ἐπιρροίβδην θ' ὁμαρτεῖν ώς κυνηγέτη κύνας,
εἰμί γ'. οὔτε πόντος οὕτω κύμασι στένων λάβρος
οὔτε γῆς σεισμὸς κεραυνοῦ τ' οἰστρος ὠδῆνας
πνέων,
οἵ ἐγὼ στάδια δραμοῦμαι στέρνον εἰς Ἡρα-
κλέους·
καὶ καταρρήξω μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἔπειβαλῶ,
τέκν' ἀποκτείνασα πρώτον· οὐ δὲ κανὼν οὐκ
εἴσεται
παιᾶς οὓς ἔτικτ' ἐναίρων, πρὶν ἀν ἐμὰς λύσσας
ἀφῆ.
ἥν ἰδού· καὶ δὴ τινάσσει κράτα βαλβίδων ἄπο,
καὶ διαστρόφους ἐλίσσει σῦγα γοργωποὺς κόρας.
ἀμπνοὰς δ' οὐ σωφρονίζει, ταῦρος ὃς ἐς ἐμβολήν.

¹ Musgrave: for MSS. σοί τ'.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Nor on the earth is fameless, nor in heaven.
The pathless land, the wild sea, hath he tamed,
And the God's honours hath alone restored,
When these by impious men were overthrown.
Therefore I plead, devise no monstrous wrong.

850

IRIS

Dare not with thine admonitions trammel Hera's
schemes and mine !

MADNESS

Nay, I do but point a pathway meeter far to tread
than thine.

IRIS

Not to flaunt thy temperance hath she sent thee,
Zeus's bride divine.

MADNESS

Witness, Sun, that I am doing that which I would
fain refuse : [not choose,
Yet, if I must work thy will and Hera's—if I may
But with skirr of rushing footfalls follow you like 860
huntsman's pack, [ruin-wrack,
On will I ; nor sea nor moaning surges hurl such
No, nor earthquake, no, nor madding thunder's gasping
agonies,
As the fury of mine onrush to the breast of Hercules.
I will rive his roofs, will swoop adown his halls :—his
children first [his murder-thirst
I will slay ; nor shall the murderer know he slakes
On the children of his body, till my madness' course
is run. [begun !
See him—lo, his head he tosses in the fearful race
See his gorgon-glaring eyeballs all in silence wildly
rolled ! [controlled
Like a bull in act to charge, with fiery pantings un-

197

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

870 δεινὰ μυκάται δὲ Κῆρας ἀνακαλῶν τὰς Ταρ-
τάρου. [φόβῳ.

τύχα σ' ἐγὼ μᾶλλον χορεύσω καὶ καταυλήσω
στεῖχ' ἐς Οὐλυμπὸν πεδαίρουσ', Ἰρι, γειναῖον
πόδα. [κλέους.
εἰς δόμους δ' ἡμεῖς ἄφαντοι δυσόμεσθ' Ἡρα-

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅτοτοι, στέναξον· ἀποκείρεται
σὸν ἄνθος πόλεος, ὁ Διὸς ἔκγονος.
μέλεος Ἑλλάς, ἀ τὸν εὐεργέταν
ἀποβαλεῖς, ὀλεῖς μανιάσιν λύσσαις
χορευθέντ' ἀναύλοις.

880 βέβακεν ἐν δίφροισιν ἀ πολύστονας,
ἄρμασι δ' ἐνδίδωσι
κέντρον ὡς ἐπὶ λώβᾳ
Νυκτὸς Γοργῶν ἑκατογκεφάλοις
ὄφεων ἰαχήμασι, Λύσσα μαρμαρωπός.

ταχὺ τὸν εὐτυχῆ μετέβαλεν δαίμων,
ταχὺ δὲ πρὸς πατρὸς τέκν' ἐκπνεύσεται.
ἴώ μοι μέλεος,
ἴώ Ζεῦ, τὸ σὸν γένος ἄγονον αὐτίκα
λυσσάδες ὡμοβρῶτες ἀποινόδικοι δίκαι

890 κακῷσιν ἐκπετάσουσιν. ίώ στέγαι,
κατάρχεται χόρευμα τυμπάνων ἄτερ,
οὐ βρομίω κεχαρισμένα θύρσῳ,

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Awfully he bellows, howling to the fateful fiends of hell ! [appalling knell ! 870

Wilder yet shall be thy dance, as peals my pipe's —Ay, unto Olympus soaring, Iris, tread thy path serene ! [unseen.

Mine the task into the halls of Hercules to plunge
[IRIS ascends, and MADNESS enters the palace.

CHORUS

Alas and alas ! cry out, O town,

For thy goodliest flower, Zeus' son, mown down !

Thy champion shall slip from thine hands, to thy bitter cost,

Hellas ; in frenzied dances of madness tossed

Where the flute sounds not, he is lost to thee, lost !

She hath mounted her car, groans throng in her train ;

880

She is goading her horses on mission of bane ; Night's daughter, a Gorgon with hundred-headed hiss Of her serpents, Madness the glittering-eyed is this.

Swiftly hath fortune o'erthrown him who sat on high : Swiftly the sons by the father's hand shall die.

Ah misery ! Zeus, mad vengeance ravenous-wild Straightway, athirst for requital, with evils on evils piled, [not thy child. Shall trample thy son unto dust, as though he were

Woe for the palace-dome !

Her dance is beginning, but not with the cymbals clashing,

890

Not with the pine-wand uptossed amid loud acclamation,—

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἰὼ δόμοι,
πρὸς αἴματ', οὐχὶ τᾶς Διονυσιάδος
βοτρύων ἐπὶ χεύμασι λοιβᾶς.

φυγῆ, τέκν', ἔξορμάτε· δάιον τόδε
δάιον μέλος ἐπαυλεῖται.
κυναγετεῦ τέκνων διωγμόν·
οὕποτ' ἄκραντα δόμοισι Λύσσα βακχεύσει.

900 αἰαῖ κακῶν
αἰαῖ δῆτα τὸν γεραιὸν ὡς στένω
πατέρα, τάν τε παιδοτρόφου, ἢ μάταν
τέκεα γεννᾶται.

ἰδοὺ ἰδού,
θύελλα σείει δῶμα, συμπίπτει στέγη·
ἢ ἢ, τί δρᾶς, ὡς Διὸς παῖ; μελάθρων
τάραγμα ταρτάρειον, ὡς
ἐπ' Ἐγκελάδῳ ποτὲ Παλλάς, εἰς δόμους πέμπεις.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ὦ λευκὰ γήρᾳ σώματ',

ΧΟΡΟΣ

910 ἀνακαλεῖς τίνα με τίνα βοάν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἄλαστα τὰν δόμοισι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μάντιν οὐχ ἔτερον ἄξομαι.

200

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Woe for a hero's home!—
But for shedding of blood, not the blood of the grape
glad-plashing [oblation.
As the banqueters pour it forth for the Wine-god's

Away, O ye children, in flight, for death,
Death shrieks through her pipe by the blast of
her breath!

[*Cries and sound of rushing within.*]

Like a hound is he holding the children in chase!—
Never shall Madness keep revel for naught through
his dwelling-place.

Woe, anguish and pain!
Woe and alas for the silver hair 900
Of his father!—woe for the mother who bare
His babes in vain!

[*Sound of battering and rending within.*]

Lo you, lo you!
A whirlwind is shaking the house—its roofs fall
crashing—
Ah what, ah what, Zeus' Son, wouldest thou do?
Down on thy palace the turmoil of hell art thou
dashing, [Enceladus flashing.
As the levin from Pallas's hand to the heart of
Enter SERVANT from within.

SERVANT

O reverend presences hoary-white—

CHORUS

What meaneth thy cry unto me—thy cry of fear? 910

SERVANT

Within yon halls is a fearful sight!

CHORUS

No need, to attest thy tale, that we seek to a seer.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΓΤΕΛΟΣ

τεθνᾶσι παιδες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ.

ΑΓΤΕΛΟΣ

στενάξεθ', ώς στενακτά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δάιοι φόνοι,
δάιοι δὲ τοκέων χεῖρες.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν τις εἴποι μᾶλλον ἢ πεπόνθαμεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς παισὶ στενακτὰν ἄταν ἄταν
πατέρος ἀμφαίνεις;
λέγε τίνα τρόπον ἔσυτο θεόθεν ἐπὶ¹
μέλαθρα κακὰ τάδε
τλήμονάς τε παίδων τύχας.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ιερὰ μὲν ἦν πάροιθεν ἐσχάρας Διὸς
καθάρσι' οἴκων, γῆς ἄνακτ' ἐπεὶ κτανὼν
ἔξέβαλε τῶνδε δωμάτων Ἡρακλέης.
χορὸς δὲ καλλίμορφος εἰστήκει τέκνων
πατήρ τε Μεγάρα τ'. ἐν κύκλῳ δ' ἥδη κανοῦν
εἶλικτο βωμοῦ, φθέγμα δ' ὅσιον εἴχομεν.
μέλλων δὲ δαλὸν χειρὶ δεξιᾷ φέρειν,
εἰς χέρνιβ' ώς βάψειν, Ἀλκμήνης τόκος
ἔστη σιωπῇ. καὶ χρονίζοντος πατρὸς

920

930

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

SERVANT

Dead are the children !

CHORUS

Woe is me !

SERVANT

Wail ! well may ye wail !

CHORUS

Slain ruthlessly !

Oh that the hands of a father their murder should
wreak !

SERVANT

Things have we suffered more awful than tongue may
speak.

CHORUS

How ? of the woeful doom by a father wrought

On his sons, canst thou tell ?

Say, say in what fashion the malice of Gods hath
brought [fraught

These ills on the house, and the fate with misery 920
On the children that fell.

SERVANT

Victims were set before the hearth of Zeus
To cleanse the house, since, having slain the king,
Forth of these halls had Hercules flung the corpse.
And there his children stood in fair array,
His sire, and Megara. Round the altar now [hush.
The maund¹ had passed ; and we kept hallowed
Then, even in act to bear the torch in hand²
And plunge in lustral water, silent stood
Alcmena's son : and, as their sire delayed,

930

¹ A basket containing the sacrificial knife and barley was carried round the altar before the slaying of the victim.

² A brand from the altar was quenched in water, with which the bystanders were then sprinkled.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENΟΣ

παῖδες προσέσχον δημού· ὁ δ' οὐκέθ' αὐτὸς ἦν,
 ἀλλ' ἐν στροφαῖσιν δημάτων ἐφθαρμένος
 ρίζας τ' ἐν ὅσσοις αἴματῶπας ἐκβαλών,
 ἀφρὸν κατέσταξ' εὐτρίχου γενειάδος.
 ἔλεξε δ' ἄμα γέλωτι παραπεπληγμένῳ·
 πάτερ, τί θύω πρὶν κτανεῖν Εὔρυσθέα
 καθάρσιον πῦρ, καὶ πόνους διπλοῦς ἔχω
 ἔξδον μιᾶς μ' ἐκ χειρὸς εὐθέσθαι τάδε;
 ὅταν δ' ἐνέγκω δεῦρο κράτ' Εύρυσθέως,
 ἐπὶ τοῖσι νῦν θανοῦσιν ἀγνιῷ χέρας.
 ἐκχείτε πηγάς, ρίπτετ' ἐκ χειρῶν κανά.
 τίς μοι δίδωσι τόξα; τίς δ' ὅπλον χερός;
 πρὸς τὰς Μυκήνας εἰμι· λάζυσθαι χρεὼν
 μοχλοὺς δικέλλας θ', ὡς τὰ Κυκλώπων βάθρα
 φοίνικι κανόνι καὶ τύκοις ἡρμοσμένα
 στρεπτῷ σιδήρῳ συντριαυνώσω πάλιν.
 ἐκ τοῦδε βαίνων ἄρματ' οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν
 ἔφασκε, δίφρου δ' εἰσέβαινεν ἄντυγα
 κάθεινε, κέντρον δῆθεν ὡς ἔχων χερί.
 διπλοῦς δ' ὀπαδοῖς ἥν γέλως φόβος θ' ὁμοῦ·
 καὶ τις τόδ' εἶπεν, ἄλλος εἰς ἄλλον δρακών
 παίζει πρὸς ἡμᾶς δεσπότης ἡ μαίνεται;
 ὁ δ' εἰρπ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω κατὰ στέγας,
 μέσον δ' ἐς ἀνδρῶν' εἰσπεσὼν Νίσου πόλιν
 ἥκειν ἔφασκε, δωμάτων εἰσω βεβώς.
 κλιθεὶς δ' ἐς οὐδας ὡς ἔχει σκευάζεται
 θοίνην. διελθὼν δ' ὡς βραχὺν χρόνον μονῆς,
 Ἰσθμοῦ ναπαίας ἔλεγε προσβαίνειν πλάκας.
 κάνταῦθα γυμνὸν σῶμα θεὶς πορπαμάτων,
 πρὸς οὐδέν' ἡμιλλάτο κάκηρύσσετο

940

950

960

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

His sons looked—lo, he seemed no more the same,
But wholly marred, with rolling eyes distraught,
With bloodshot eye-roots starting from his head,
While dripped the slaver down his bearded cheek.

Suddenly with a maniac laugh he spake :
“ Why, ere I slay Eurystheus, sacrifice,
Father—have cleansing fire and toil twice o'er,
When all in one act I may compass well ?
When hither I have brought Eurystheus' head,
For him, with these now slain, I'll purge my hands. 940
Spill ye the water, cast the maunds away !
Ho there—my bow !—the mace of my right hand !
I march against Mycenae :—I must take
Crowbars and mattocks, that yon Cyclop town,
Yon walls with red line and with gavil squared,
May by my bended lever be upheaved.”
Then set forth, speaking of his car the while,
Who car had none, sprang to the chariot-rail,
And thrust, as who held in his hand a goad.

His henchmen, half in mirth and half in fear, 950
Were glancing each at other, and one spake :
“ Doth our lord make us sport, or is he mad ? ”
Still was he pacing up and down the house ;
Then, to the men's hall rushing, cried, “ I have
come
To Nisus' town ! ”¹—who stood in his own halls.
He casts him on the bare floor, and prepares
To feast : yet, tarrying there but little space,
He cried, “ I go to Isthmus' woodland plains ! ”
Then from his body cast his mantle's folds,
And wrestled with—*no man !*—proclaimed himself 960

¹ Megara, half way on his imaginary journey, on the Isthmus of Corinth ; this suggested the Isthmian games.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

αύτὸς πρὸς αὐτοῦ καλλίσκοις, σὺνδενὸς
ἀκοὴν ὑπειπών. δεινὰ δ' Εύρυσθεῖ βρέμων
ἥν ἐν Μυκήναις τῷ λόγῳ. πατὴρ δέ νιν
Θιγὼν κραταιᾶς χειρὸς ἐνυέπει τάδε·
ὡ παῖ, τί πάσχεις; τίς ὁ τρόπος ξενώσεως
τῆσδ'; οὐ τί που φόνος σ' ἐβάκχευσεν μεκρῶν,
οὐδὲ ἄρτι καίνεις; ὁ δέ νιν Εύρυσθέως δοκῶν
πατέρα προταρβοῦνθ' ἵκέσιον ψαύειν χερός,
ώθει, φαρέτραν δ' εὐτρεπῆ σκευάζεται
καὶ τόξ' ἔαυτοῦ παισὶ, τοὺς Εύρυσθέως
δοκῶν φονεύειν. οἱ δὲ ταρβοῦντες φόβῳ
ῶρουν ἄλλος ἄλλοσ', εἰς πέπλους ὁ μὲν
μητρὸς ταλαίνης, ὁ δ' ὑπὸ κίονος σκιάν,
ἄλλος δὲ βωμὸν ὅρνις ὡς ἔπτηξ ὑπο.
βοᾷ δὲ μήτηρ· ὡ τεκών, τί δρᾶς; τέκνα
κτείνεις; βοᾷ δὲ πρέσβυς οἰκετῶν τ' ὅχλος.
ὁ δ' ἔξελίσσων παιᾶνα κίονος κύκλῳ
τόρευμα δεινὸν ποδός, ἐναντίον σταθεὶς.
βάλλει πρὸς ἡπαρ· ὑπτιος δὲ λαΐνους
ὄρθοστάτας ἔδευσεν ἔκπνέων βίον:
οἱ δ' ἡλάλαξε κάπεκόμπασεν τάδε·
εἰς μὲν νεοσσὸς ὅδε θανὼν Εύρυσθέως
ἔχθραν πατρῷαν ἐκτίνων πέπτωκέ μοι.
ἄλλῳ δ' ἐπεῖχε τόξ', δις ἀμφὶ βωμίαν
ἔπτηξε κρηπῖδ' ὡς λεληθέναι δοκῶν.
φθάνει δ' ὁ τλήμων γόνασι προσπεσὼν πατρὸς
καὶ πρὸς γένειον χείρα καὶ δέρην βαλῶν.
ὡ φίλτατ', αὐδᾶ, μηδὲ ἀποκτείνῃς, πάτερ·
σός εἴμι, σὸς παῖς· οὐ τὸν Εύρυσθέως ὀλεῖς.
οἱ δ' ἀγριωπὸν ὅμμα Γοργόνος στρέφων,
ώς ἐντὸς ἔστη παῖς λυγροῦ τοξεύματος,
μυδροκτύπον μίμημ' ὑπὲρ· κάρα βαλῶν

970

980

990

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To himself the victor, cried, " Ye people, hear!" —
To none! In fancy at Mycenae then
He stormed against Eurystheus. But his sire
Clung to his brawny hand, and cried to him,
" What ails thee? What mad change of mood is this?
Surely thou art not driven distraught by blood
Of these late slain!" He deemed Eurystheus' sire,
A trembling suppliant, hung upon his hand,
And spurned him back; prepared his quiver and bow
Against his own sons then, thinking to slay 970
Eurystheus' sons. They, quaking with affright,
Rushed hither, thither: his hapless mother's skirts
This sought, that to a pillar's shadow fled;
A third cowered 'neath the altar like a bird

Then shrieked the mother, " Father, what dost thou?
Wouldst slay thy sons?" The thralls, the ancient,
cried.

He, winding round the pillar as wound his son
In fearful circlings, met him face to face
And shot him to the heart. Back as he fell,
His death-gasps dashed the column with red spray. 980
Then shouted Hercules, and vaunted thus.
" One of Eurystheus' fledglings here is slain,
Dead at my feet, hath paid for his sire's hate!"
Against the next then aimed his bow, who crouched
At the altar's base, in hope to be unseen.
But, ere he shot, the poor child clasped his knees,
And stretching to his beard and neck a hand,
" Ah, dearest father," cried he, " slay not me!
I am thy boy—thine!—'Tis not Eurystheus' son!"
He rolling savage gorgon-glaring eyes, 990
Since the boy stood too near for that fell bow,
Swung back overhead his club, like forging-sledge,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ξύλον καθῆκε παιδὸς εἰς ξανθὸν κάρα,
 ἔρρηξε δ' ὁστᾶ. δεύτερον δὲ παιδ' ἐλών,
 χωρεῖ τρίτου θῦμ' ὡς ἐπισφάξων δυοῖν.
 ἀλλὰ φθάνει νιν ἡ τάλαιν' εἴσω δόμων
 μήτηρ ὑπεκλαβούσσα, καὶ κλήει πύλας.
 οὐδὲ ὡς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δὴ Κυκλωπίοισιν ὧν
 σκάπτει μοχλεύει θύρετρα, κάκβαλὼν σταθμὰ
 δάμαρτα καὶ παιδ' ἐνὶ κατέστρωσεν βέλει.
 1000 κάνθένδε πρὸς γέροντος ἵππεύει φόνον·
 ἀλλ' ἥλθεν εἰκών, ὡς ὄρāν ἐφαίνετο
 Παλλὰς κραδαίνουσ' ἔγχος ἐπιλόφῳ κάρᾳ¹
 κᾶρριψε πέτρον στέρνου εἰς Ἡρακλέους,
 ὃς νιν φόνου μαργῶντος ἔσχε, κεὶς ὑπνου
 καθῆκε πίτνει δ' εἰς πέδουν, πρὸς κίονα
 νῶτον πατάξας, ὃς πεσήμασι στέγης
 διχορραγὴς ἔκειτο κρηπίδων ἐπι·
 ἡμεῖς δ' ἐλευθεροῦντες ἐκ δρασμῶν πόδα
 1010 σὺν τῷ γέροντι δεσμὰ σειραίων βρόχων
 ἀνήπτομεν πρὸς κίον', ὡς λήξας ὑπνου
 μηδὲν προσεργάσαιτο τοῖς δεδραμένοις.
 εῦδει δ' ὁ τλήμων ὑπνου οὐκ εὐδαίμονα,
 παῖδας φονεύσας καὶ δάμαρτ· ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν
 οὐκ οἶδα θητῶν ὅστις ἀθλιώτερος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ο φόνος ἦν δν 'Αργολὶς ἔχει πέτρα
 τότε μὲν περισαμότατος καὶ ἄπιστος
 'Ελλάδι τῶν Δαναοῦ παίδων·
 1020 τὰ δ' ὑπερέβαλε, παρέδραμε τὰ τότε κακά.
 τάλαιν διογενεῖ κόρῳ.²

¹ Wakefield : for MSS. ἐπὶ λόφῳ κέαρ.

² Tyrwhitt's punctuation : no stop in MS.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Down dashed it on his own son's golden head,
And shattered all the bones. This second slain,
He speeds to add to victims twain a third.
But first the wretched mother snatched the child,
And bare within, and barred the chamber-door.
But he, as though at siege of Cyclop walls,¹
Mines, heaves up doors, and hurls the door-posts down,
And with one arrow laid low wife and child : 1000
Then charges down to spill his own sire's blood.
But a Shape came,—as seemed unto our eyes,
Pallas with plumed helm, brandishing a spear ;—
And against Hercules' breast she hurled a rock
Which stayed him from his murder-frenzy, and cast
Into deep sleep. To earth he fell, and dashed
His back against a pillar, cleft in twain
By the roof's ruin, on the pavement thrown.
Then we, from flight of panic breathing free,
Wrought with the old man, binding him with cords 1010
Unto the pillar, that, awaked from sleep,
He might not add ill deeds to ill deeds done.
There sleeps he, wretched man, a sleep unblest,
Who hath slaughtered sons and wife. For me, I know
not
Of mortals any man more fortune-crost.

CHORUS

That murder which Argos remembereth
Was aforetime through Hellas most famous, the
strange tale told
 Of Danaus' daughters, the workers of death :—
But this hath surpassed, hath outrun, that horror of 1020
 old— [the sacrifice done
This horror that blasts Zeus' Son ! I might tell of

¹ i.e. Eurystheus' city, Mycenae.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

μονοτέκνου Πρόκυνης
φόνον ἔχω λέξαι θυόμενον Μούσαις·
σὺ δὲ τέκνα τρύγονα τεκόμενος, ὡ δάιε,
λυσσάδι συγκατειργάσω μοίρᾳ.
τίνα στεναγμὸν
ἢ γόσον ἢ φθιτῶν
ῳδάν, ἢ τίν' "Αἰδα χορὸν ἀχήσω ;
φεῦ φεῦ·
ἴδεσθε, διάνδιχα κλῆθρα
κλίνεται ὑψηπύλων δόμων.

1030

ἰώ μοι·
ἴδεσθε τάδε τέκνα πρὸ πατρὸς
ἄθλια κείμενα δυστάνου,
εῦδοντος ὑπνον δεινὸν ἐκ παίδων φόνου.
περὶ δὲ δεσμὰ καὶ πολύβροχ' ἀμμάτων
ἐρείσμαθ' Ἡράκλειον
ἀμφὶ δέμας τάδε λαῖνοις
ἀνημμένα κίοσιν οἴκων.
οἱ δ' ὡς τις δρυς ἄπτερον καταστένων
ῳδῖνα τέκνων, πρέσβυς ὑστέρῳ ποδὶ¹
πικρὰν διώκων ἥλυσιν πάρεσθ' ὅδε.

1040

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
Καδμεῖοι γέρουτες, οὐ σῆγα σῆ-
γα τὸν ὑπνῷ παρειμένον ἐάσετ' ἐκ-
λαθέσθαι κακῶν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
κατὰ σὲ δακρύοις στένω, πρέσβυ, καὶ
τέκεα καὶ τὸ καλλίνικον κάρα.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To the Muses,¹ of Procne who slaughtered the only child of her womb :—

But thou, who art father of children three, O unhappiest one, [madness's doom ! Together hast murdered them all, driven on by thy With what cry shall I wail thee, what sighing, What chant as for dead that are lying in Hades, what dirge of the tomb ?

Alas ! O see
How the bolts slide back, and asunder fall
The stately doors of the palace-hall. 1030

The palace is thrown open, and the scene within disclosed.

Ah me ! ah me !
Lo there the children—ah misery !
At the feet of their wretched father they lie :
And from murder of sons he is resting in awful sleep ;
And around him the bonds with manifold fastenings keep

The body of Hercules in ward,
And lashed to the palace's pillars of stone are the coils of the cord.
And that old sire, as bird that maketh moan
O'er fledgling brood, with footsteps eld-fordone
Treading a bitter pathway, cometh on. 1040

AMPHITRYON

Ah peace, Cadmean fathers, peace !
Let his woes in oblivion a moment cease
By slumber's release.

CHORUS

With tears I bemoan thee, and these babes dead,
O ancient, and that victorious head.

¹ The legend of Procne's murder of Itys has, in becoming a theme of song, been consecrated to the Muses.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

έκαστέρω πρόβατε, μὴ
κτυπεῖτε, μὴ βοῶτε, μὴ
τὸν εὖ τ' ἵαύονθ'
1050 ὑπνώδεα τ' εὐνᾶς ἐγείρετε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμοι.
φόνος ὅσος ὅδ'—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ἀ ἄ,

διά μ' ὀλεῖτε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
κεχυμένος ἐπαντέλλει.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐκ ἀτρεμαῖα θρῆνον αἰώνετ', ὡ γέροντες;
ἢ δέσμ' ἀνεγειρόμενος χαλάσας ἀπολεῖ πόλιν,
ἀπὸ δὲ πατέρα, μέλαθρά τε καταρρήξει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀδύνατ' ἀδύνατά μοι.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

σῦγα, πνοὰς μάθω· φέρε πρὸς οὓς βάλω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εῦδει;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

1060 ναι', εῦδει
ὕπνον ὕπνον ὀλόμενον,
ὅς ἔκαν' ἄλοχον, ἔκανε δὲ τέκεα, τοξήρει
ψαλμῷ τοξεύσας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στέναζέ νυν

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

στενάζω.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Withdraw you farther, beat not the breast,
Neither cry, neither break ye his slumbrous rest
Of calm-drawn breath.

CHORUS

1050

Woe's me for the river of blood he hath spilt!—

AMPHITRYON

Ah, your words be my death!

CHORUS

It is rising against him, a witness of guilt!

AMPHITRYON

Let the wail of your dirge, ye ancients, softlier fall,
Else will he wake, will rend his bonds, and in ruin lay
Thebes, will slay his father, and shatter his palace-hall.

CHORUS

I cannot—my crying I cannot forbear!

AMPHITRYON

Hush! let me hearken his breathing—bend low mine
ear—

CHORUS

Sleepeth he?

AMPHITRYON

Yea—in a slumber of bane,
Who hath slain his wife, hath his children slain
With the string that sang them the bow's death-strain! 1060

CHORUS

Wail therefore—

AMPHITRYON

I wail with thee.

213

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOS

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τέκνων ὅλεθρον—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ώμοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σέθεν τε παιδός.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
αἰαῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

σύγα σύγα·

1070

παλίντροπος ἔξεγειρόμενος στρέφεται· φέρ'
ἀπόκρυφον δέμας ὑπὸ μέλαθρον κρύψω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Θάρσει· νὺξ ἔχει βλέφαρα παιδὶ σῷ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

όρâθ' ὄρâτε.

τὸ φάος ἐκλιπεῖν ἐπὶ κακοῖσιν οὐ
φευγω τάλας, ἀλλ' εἴ με κανεῖν πατέρ' ὅντα,
πρὸς δὲ κακοῖς κακὰ μήσεται
πρὸς Ἐρινύσι θ' αἷμα σύγγονον ἔξει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1080

τότε θαυεῖν σ' ἔχρην, ὅτε δάμαρτι σᾶ
φόνον ὁμοσπόρων
ἔμολες ἐκπράξειν
Ταφίων περίκλυστον ἄστυ πέρσας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

φυγὴ φυγὴ, γέροντες, ἀποπρὸ δωμάτων
διώκετε· φεύγετε μάργον
ἄνδρ' ἐπεγειρόμενον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

CHORUS

His babes' death,—

AMPHITRYON

Woe is me !

CHORUS

And thy son's doom !

AMPHITRYON

Well-a-day !

CHORUS

Ah ancient—

AMPHITRYON

O hush ye ! stay !

He is writhing—is turning—is waking ! Away !

Under yon roof let me hide me out of his sight !

1070

CHORUS

Fear not : on the eyes of thy son yet broodeth the night.

AMPHITRYON

Beware—O beware !

Not death do I shun, for a crown of the ills that I bear—
Wretch that I am !—but if me, if his father, he kill,

To his load of ill shall he add fresh ill,

And to heap up his debt to the Furies the blood of a kinsman shall spill.

CHORUS

Then shouldst thou have died, when thou wentest forth to requite [smite

The blood of the kin of thy wife on the Taphians, to Their city enringed with the surf-crests white.

1080

AMPHITRYON

Flee, ancients ! Afar from the dwelling flee !
From his frenzy of fury O hasten ye,
For he waketh from sleep !

215

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOS

τάχα φόνον ἔτερον ἐπὶ φόνῳ βαλὰν
ἀν' αὐτὸν βακχεύσει Καδμείων πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί παῦδ' ἥχθηρας ὡδ' ὑπερκότως
τὸν σόν, κακῶν δὲ πέλαγος εἰς τόδ' ἥγαγες;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἦσα.

1090

ἔμπινους μέν είμι καὶ δέδορχ' ἄπερ με δεῖ,
αἰθέρα τε καὶ γῆν τόξα θ' Ἡλίου τάδε·
ώς δ' ἐν κλύδωνι καὶ φρενῶν ταράγματι
πέπτωκα δεινῷ καὶ πνοὰς θερμὰς πνέω
μετάρσι', οὐ βέβαια, πνευμόνων ἄπο.
ἰδού, τί δεσμοῖς ναύς δπως ώρμισμένος
νεανίαν θώρακα καὶ βραχίονα,

1100

πρὸς ἡμιθραύστῳ λαΐνῳ τυκίσματι
ἡμαι νεκροῖσι γείτονας θάκους ἔχων;
πτερωτά τ' ἔγχη τόξα τ' ἔσπαρται πέδῳ,
ἄ πρὸν παρασπίζοντ' ἐμοῖς βραχίοσιν
ἔσφεζε πλευρὰς ἔξ έμοῦ τ' ἔσώζετο.
οὐ που κατῆλθον αὐθις εἰς "Ἄιδου πάλιν,
Εύρυσθέως δίαυλον ἔξ "Αιδου μολών;
ἄλλ' οὕτι Σισύφειον εἰσορὼ πέτρον
Πλούτωνά τ', οὐδὲ σκῆπτρα Δήμητρος κόρης.
ἐκ τοι πέπληγμαι ποὺ ποτ' ὧν ἀμνημονῶ;
ώή, τίς ἐγγὺς ἡ πρόσω φίλων ἐμῶν,
δύσγνοιαν ὅστις τὴν ἐμὴν ἴάσεται;
σαφῶς γὰρ οὐδὲν οἰδα τῶν εἰωθότων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

γέρουντες, ἔλθω τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν πέλας;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1110

κάγωγε σὺν σοί, μὴ προδοὺς τὰς συμφοράς.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Full soon on the deaths he hath wrought fresh deaths
 shall he heap,
Through the city of Cadmus storming in awful revelry.

CHORUS

Ah Zeus, why this stern hate against thy son ?
Why hast thou brought him to this sea of ills ?

HERCULES (*waking and stirring*)

Ha !

Breathing I am—all I should see I see,
The sky, the earth, the shafts of yonder sun : 1090
Yet as in surge and storm of turmoiled soul
Am whelmed, and fiery-fervent breath I breathe
Hard-panted from my lungs, not tempered calm.
Ha !—wherefore like a ship by hawsers moored,
Ropes compassing my strong chest and mine arms,
Bound to half-shattered masonry of stone
Sit I ?—lo, corpses neighbours to my seat !
Winged shafts and bow are strawn about the floor,
Which once, like armour-bearers to mine arms,
Warded my side, were kept of me in ward : 1100
Sure, not to Hades have I again gone down,
Who have passed, repassed, Eurystheus' Hades-course ?
Nay, I see not the stone of Sisyphus,
Pluto, nor sceptre of Demeter's Child.
I am distraught. Know I not where I am ?
Ho there ! who of my friends is near or far
To be physician to my 'wilderment ?
For strange to me seem all familiar things.

AMPHITRYON

Old friends, shall I draw near unto my grief ?

CHORUS

I too with thee, forsaking not thy woe. 1110

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πάτερ, τί κλαίεις καὶ συναμπίσχει κόρας,
τοῦ φιλτάτου σοι τηλόθεν παιδὸς βεβώς;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ὦ τέκνον· εἰ γὰρ καὶ κακῶς πράσσων ἐμός.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πράσσω δ' ἐγὼ τί λυπρόν, οὐδὲ δακρυρροεῖς;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἀ κανθεῶν τις, εἰ πάθοι, καταστένοι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μέγας γ' ὁ κόμπος, τὴν τύχην δ' οὕπω λέγεις.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ὅρᾶς γὰρ αὐτός, εἰ φρονῶν ἥδη κυρεῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἴπ' εἴ τι καινὸν ὑπογράφει τῷ μῷ βίῳ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

εἰ μηκέθ' "Αἰδου βάκχος εἰ, φράσαιμεν ἄν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

παπᾶι, τόδ' ως ὑποπτον ἡνίξω πάλιν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

καὶ σ' εἰ βεβαίως εὐ φρονεῖς ἥδη σκοπῶ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ γάρ τι βακχεύσας γε μέμνημαι φρένας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

λύσω, γέροντες, δεσμὰ παιδὸς ἢ τί δρῶ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ τόν γε δήσαντ' εἴπ· ἀναινόμεσθα γάρ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

τοσοῦτον ἵσθι τῶν κακῶν· τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔστι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀρκεῖ σιωπὴ γάρ μαθεῖν δὲ βούλομαι;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Father, why dost thou weep and veil thine eyes,
Shrinking afar from thy beloved son?

AMPHITRYON

Oh my son!—mine, though ne'er so ill thy plight!

HERCULES

Am I in grievous plight, that thou shouldst weep?

AMPHITRYON

Plight whereat Gods might groan, were God so
stricken!

HERCULES

Great words!—but what hath chanced thou say'st
not yet.

AMPHITRYON

Thyself mayst see, if now thy wit be sound.

HERCULES

Speak, if thou shadowest forth strange ills for me.

AMPHITRYON

I will say—so thy frenzy of hell be past.

HERCULES

Again that word!—ha, what dark riddle this? 1120

AMPHITRYON

Yea, if thy mind be sober yet I doubt—

HERCULES

Naught I remember of a frenzied mind.

AMPHITRYON

Fathers, shall I unbind my son, or no?

HERCULES

Who bound me? Him I account no friend of mine!

AMPHITRYON

Know thou so far thine ills:—the rest let be.

HERCULES

Is silence all? With *that* must I content me?

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ώ Ζεῦ, παρ' "Ηρας ἄρ' ὁρᾶς θρόνων τάδε ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἡ τι κεῖθεν πολέμου πεπόνθαμεν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

τὴν θεὸν ἐάσας τὰ σὰ περιστέλλου κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1130 ἀπωλόμεσθα· συμφορὰν λέξεις τίνα ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἰδοὺ θέασαι τάδε τέκνων πεσήματα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἵμοι· τίν' ὅψιν τήνδε δέρκομαι τάλας ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἀπόλεμον, ω παῖ, πόλεμον ἔσπευσας τέκνοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί πόλεμον εἰπας ; τούσδε τίς διώλεσεν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

σὺ καὶ σὰ τόξα καὶ θεῶν δῆς αἴτιος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φής ; τί δράσας ; ω κάκ' ἀγγέλλων πάτερ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

μανείς· ἐρωτᾶς δ' ἄθλι' ἐρμηνεύματα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἢ καὶ δάμαρτός εἰμ' ἐγὼ φονεὺς ἐμῆς ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

μιᾶς ἄπαντα χειρὸς ἔργα σῆς τάδε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1140 αἰαῖ· στεναγμῶν γάρ με περιβάλλει νέφος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

τούτων ἔκατι σὰς καταστένω τύχας.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON (*unbinding him*)

Zeus, seëst thou this bolt from Hera's throne ?

HERCULES

Ha ! have I suffered mischief of her hate ?

AMPHITRYON

Let be the Goddess : thine own miseries heed.

HERCULES

I am undone ! What ruin wilt thou tell ?

1130

AMPHITRYON

Lo, mark these fallen wrecks,—wrecks of thy sons !

HERCULES

Woe's me ! ah wretch, what sight do I behold ?

AMPHITRYON

Unnatural war, son, waged against thy babes.

HERCULES

What war mean'st thou ? Who hath done these to death ?

AMPHITRYON

Thou, and thy bœw—and whatso God was cause.

HERCULES

How ?—what did I ?—O ill-reporting sire !

AMPHITRYON

In madness. Heavy enlightening cravest thou !

HERCULES

Ha ! am I murderer of my wife withal ?

AMPHITRYON

Yea : all these deeds are work of one hand—thine.

HERCULES

Alas ! a cloud of groaning shrouds me round !

1140

AMPHITRYON

For this cause heavily mourn I thy mischance.

221

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἢ γὰρ συνήραξ' οἰκον, ἢ 'βάκχευσ', ἐμόν;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἐν πάντα δυστυχῆ τὰ σά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ποῦ δ' οἰστρος ἡμᾶς ἔλαβε; ποῦ διώλεσεν;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

δτ' ἀμφὶ βωμὸν χεῖρας ἥγνίζου πυρί.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἵμοι· τί δῆτα φείδομαι ψυχῆς ἐμῆς

τῶν φιλτάτων μοι γενόμενος παῖδων φοιεύς,

κούκ εἴμι πέτρας λισσάδος πρὸς ἄλματα

ἢ φάσγανον πρὸς ἡπαρ ἔξακοντίσας

1150 τέκνοις δικαστής αἷματος γενήσομαι;
ἢ σάρκα τήνδε τὴν ἐμὴν πρήσας πυρί,
δύσκλειαν ἢ μένει μ' ἀπώσομαι βίου;
ἄλλ' ἐμποδών μοι θανασίμων βουλευμάτων
Θησεὺς ὅδ' ἔρπει συγγενῆς φίλος τ' ἐμός.
ὁφθησόμεσθα, καὶ τεκνοκτόνον μύσος
εἰς ὅμμαθ' ἦξει φιλτάτῳ ξένων ἐμῶν.

οἵμοι, τί δράσω; ποῖ κακῶν ἐρημίαν
εῦρω, πτερωτός, ἢ κατὰ χθονὸς μολών;
φέρ' [ῷ μέλαν] τι¹ κρατὶ περιβάλω σκότος,
αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ τοῖς δεδραμένοις κακοῖς,
καὶ τῷδε προστρόπαιον αἷμα προσβαλὼν
οὐδὲν κακῶσαι τοὺς ἀναιτίους θέλω.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἢκω σὺν ἄλλοις οἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ροὰς
μένουσιν, ἐνοπλοι γῆς Ἀθηναίων κόροι,
σῷ παιδί, πρέσβυ, σύμμαχον φέρων δόρυ.
κληδὼν γὰρ ἥλθεν εἰς Ἐρεχθειδῶν πόλιν

¹ Translator's suggestion : for MSS. φερ' ἄν τι. Cf. l. 1216.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I wrecked mine house, or loosed wild rioters there ?

AMPHITRYON

One thing I know—thy state is ruin all.

HERCULES

Where did my frenzy seize me?—where destroy?

AMPHITRYON

As thine hand touched the altar's cleansing fire.

HERCULES

*Woe's me ! Ah wherefore spare I mine own life,
Who am found the murderer of my dear, dear sons,
And rush not to plunge headlong from a cliff,
Or dash a dagger down into mine heart,*

1150

And make me avenger of my children's blood,

Or with consuming fire burn this my flesh,

To avert the imminent life-long infamy?

But lo, to thwart my purposes of death,

Theseus draws nigh, my kinsman and my friend.

I shall be seen!—this curse of children's blood

Shall meet a friend's eyes, dearest of my friends!

Woe ! What shall I do?—where find solitude

In ills?—take wings, or plunge beneath the ground?

Oh let me in black darkness pall mine head;

For I take shame for evils wrought of me,

1160

Nor would I taint him with bloodguiltiness—¹

Nay, nowise would I harm the innocent.

Enter THESEUS, with attendants.

THESEUS

I come, with them that by Asopus' stream

In arms are tarrying, Athens' warrior sons,

Ancient, to bring thy son my battle-aid.

For rumour came to the Erechtheids' town

¹ The mere sight of a murderer conveyed contamination.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ώς σκῆπτρα χώρας τῆσδ' ἀναρπάσας Λύκος
εἰς πόλεμον ὑμῖν καὶ μάχην καθίσταται.
τίνων δ' ἀμοιβὰς ὡν ὑπῆρξεν Ἡρακλῆς
σώσας με νέρθεν, ἥλθον, εἴ τι δεῖ, γέρον,
ἢ χειρὸς ὑμᾶς τῆς ἐμῆς ἢ συμμάχων.
ἔα· τι νεκρῶν τῶνδε πληθύει πέδον;
οὐ που λέλειμμαι καὶ νεωτέρων κακῶν
ὕστερος ἀφῆγμαι; τίς τάδ' ἔκτεινε τέκνα;
τίνος γεγώσαν τήνδ' ὄρῳ συνάορον;
οὐ γάρ δορός γε παῖδες ἵστανται πέλας,
ἄλλο ἄλλο τοί που καινὸν εὑρίσκω κακόν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ὦ τὸν ἐλαιοφόρον ὅχθον ἔχων ἄναξ—

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί χρῆμά μ' οἰκτροῖς ἐκάλεσας προοιμίοις;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἐπάθομεν πάθεα μέλεα πρὸς θεῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οἱ παῖδες οἵδε τίνεις, ἐφ' οἰς δακρυρροεῖς;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἔτεκε μέν νιν ούμὸς Ἰνις τάλας·
τεκόμενος δ' ἔκτανε, φόνιον αἷμα τλάς.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

εὔφημα φόνει.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

βουλομένοισιν ἐπαγγέλλει.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ὦ δεινὰ λέξας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οἰχόμεθ' οἰχομεθα πτανοί.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί φής; τι δράσας;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

That Lycus, this land's sceptered sway usurped,
For war had risen against you, and for fight.
And to requite the service done of him
Who out of Hades saved me, come I, ancient,
If aught ye need mine hand or mine allies.

1170

—Ha ! wherefore bears the earth this load of dead ?
Have I been laggard ?—have I come too late
To stay fell mischief ? Who could slay these boys ?
Whose wife is she, this woman that I see ?
Not boys, good sooth, are ranged to face the spear !
Sure, some unheard-of outrage here I find !

AMPHITRYON

King, lord of the mount with the olives crowned—

THESEUS

Why in thy first words wails a voice of woe ?

AMPHITRYON

Sore ills at the hands of the Gods have we found. 1180

THESEUS

What lads be these, o'er whom thou weepest so ?

AMPHITRYON

My son was their father—alas and alas for him—
Their father—and slew them !—who dared that
murder grim !

THESEUS

Hush ! Speak not horrors thou !

AMPHITRYON

Ah, would that I could but obey thy word !

THESEUS

Dread things thou sayest now !

AMPHITRYON

Fled is our bliss, as on wings of a bird.

THESEUS

What sayest thou ?—how wrought he deed so dread ?

225

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOS

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

1190 μαινομένω πιτύλῳ πλαγχθεὶς
έκατογκεφάλου βαφαῖς ὕδρας.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

"Ηρας ὅδ' ἀγών· τίς δ' ὅδ' οὖν νεκροῖς, γέρον;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἐμὸς ἐμὸς ὅδε γόνος ὁ πολύπονος, δις ἐπὶ¹
δόρυ γιγαντοφόνον ἡλθεν σὺν θεοῖ-
σι Φλεγυραῖον εἰς πεδίον ἀσπιστάς.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τίς ἀνδρῶν ὁδε δυσδαιμων ἔφυ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐκ ἀν εἰδείης ἔτερον
πολυμοχθότερον πολυπλαγκτότερόν τε θνατῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί γὰρ πέπλοισιν ἄθλιον κρύπτει κάρα;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

αἰδόμενος τὸ σὸν ὅμμα
καὶ φιλίαν ὁμόφυλον
αἷμα τε παιδοφόνον.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἀλλ' ώς συναλγῶν γ' ἡλθον· ἐκκάλυπτέ μιν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ὦ τέκνον,
πάρες ἀπ' ὅμμάτων
πέπλον, ἀπόδικε, ρέθος ἀελίῳ δεῖξον·
βάρος ἀντίπαλον δακρύοισιν ἀμιλλᾶται.
ἰκετεύομεν ἀμφὶ σὰν
γενειάδα καὶ γόνυ καὶ χέρα προσπίτνων
πολιόν τε δάκρυον ἐκβαλών.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Upon madness's surge was his soul tossed wide,
And his shafts in the blood of the hydra of hundred
heads were dyed.

1190

THESEUS

Lo, Hera's work ! Who croucheth midst yon dead ?

AMPHITRYON

My son is it—mine—of the thousand toils, who stood
In the ranks of the Gods, stood slaying the giant-brood
On the Plain of Phlegra, a warrior good.

THESEUS

Woe ! when was man by fate so ill-bestead !

AMPHITRYON

None other of mortal men shalt thou see
Who hath burden of heavier griefs, was more dreadfully
misguided than he.

THESEUS

Why doth he overpall his hapless head ?

AMPHITRYON

For shame that thine eyes such sight should win,
Shame for the pitying love of kin,
For his sons' blood shame—for the madness, the sin !

1200

THESEUS

Unveil him—me hath sympathy hither led.

AMPHITRYON

Son, cast from thine eyes thy mantle's veil ;
Fling it hence ; thy face to the sun forth show.
Lo, a weight that outweigheth thy tears bears down
grief's scale !¹

I bow me in suppliance low [hear :
At thy beard, at thy knee, at thine hand, till thou
And mine old eyes drop the tear.

¹ The claims of friendship outweigh those of grief.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

1210

ἰὼ παῖ, κατά-
σχεθε λέοντος ἀγρίου θυμόν, ὡς
δρόμον¹ ἐπὶ φόνιον ἀνόσιον ἔξαγει,
κακὰ θέλων κακοῖς συνάψαι, τέκνουν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

1220

εἶεν σὲ τὸν θάσσοντα δυστήνους ἔδρας
αὐδῶ, φίλοισιν δύμα δεικνύναι τὸ σόν.
οὐδεὶς σκότος γάρ ὡδ' ἔχει μέλαν νέφος,
ὅστις κακῶν σῶν συμφορὰν κρύψειεν ἄν.
τί μοι προσέιών χεῖρα σημαίνεις φόνου;
ώς μὴ μύσος με σῶν βάλῃ προσφθεγμάτων;
οὐδὲν μέλει μοι σύν γε σοὶ πράσσειν κακῶς·
καὶ γάρ ποτ' ηὐτύχησ· ἐκεῖσ' ἀνοιστέον,
ὅτ' ἔξεσωσάς μ' εἰς φάος οὐεκρῶν πάρα.
χάριν δὲ γηράσκουσαν ἔχθαιρω φίλων,
καὶ τῶν καλῶν μὲν ὅστις ἀπολαύειν θέλει,
συμπλεῦν δὲ τοῖς φίλοισι δυστυχοῦσιν οὕ.
ἀνίστασ', ἐκκάλυψον ἄθλιον κάρα.
βλέψον πρὸς ήμᾶς. ὅστις εὐγενῆς βροτῶν,
φέρει τὰ θεῶν γε πτώματ' οὐδ' ἀναίνεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησεῦ, δέδορκας τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ἐμῶν τέκνων;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

1230

ἥκουσα, καὶ βλέποντι σημαίνεις κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτά μου κράτ' ἀνεκάλυψας ἡλίῳ;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί δ'; οὐ μιαίνεις θηνητὸς ὧν τὰ τῶν θεῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦγ', ὡ ταλαίπωρ', ἀνόσιον μίασμ' ἐμόν.

¹ Reiske: for MSS. θρόμον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O son, refrain thou the furious lion's mood ! 1210
Thou wouldest speed on a race unhallowed, a path of blood,
Who art bent on self-slaughter, on swelling with evil
evil's flood.

THESEUS

Ho ! thee in spirit-broken session crouched
I hail—reveal unto thy friends thy face.
There is no darkness hath a pall so black
That it should hide the misery of thy woes.
Why wave me back with hand that warns of blood ?
Lest some pollution of thy speech taint me ?
Naught reck I of misfortune, shared with thee. 1220
Fair lot hath found me—I date it from that hour
When safe to day thou brought'st me from the dead.
Friends' gratitude that waxeth old I hate,
Hate him who would enjoy friends' sunshine-tide,
But will not in misfortune sail with them.
Stand up, unmuffle thou thine hapless head :
Look on me : who of men is royal-souled
Beareth the blows of heaven, and flincheth not.

[*Unveils* HERCULES.]

HERCULES

Theseus, hast seen mine onslaught on mine babes ?

THESEUS

I have heard : the ills thou namest I behold. 1230

HERCULES

Why then unveil mine head unto the sun ?

THESEUS

Why ?—mortal, thou canst not pollute the heavens.

HERCULES

Flee, hapless, my pollution god-accurst !

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ MAINOMENOΣ

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὐδεὶς ἀλάστωρ τοῖς φίλοις ἐκ τῶν φίλων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐπήνεστ· εὖ δράσας δέ σ' οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ πάσχων εὖ τότ' οἰκτείρω σε νῦν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἰκτρὸς γάρ εἴμι τάμ' ἀποκτείνας τέκνα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

κλαίω χάριν σὴν ἐφ' ἔτέραισι συμφοραῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ηὑρεις δ' ἔτ' ἄλλους ἐν κακοῖσι μείζοσιν;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἄπτει κάτωθεν οὐρανοῦ δυσπραξίᾳ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τοιγὰρ παρεσκευάσμεθ' ὥστε κατθαυεῖν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

δοκεῖς ἀπειλῶν σῶν μέλειν τι δαίμοσιν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αὕθαδες ὁ θεός, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς ἐγώ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἴσχε στόμ', ὡς μὴ μέγα λέγων μεῖζον πάθης.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γέμω κακῶν δή, κούκέτ' ἔσθ' ὅπη τεθῆ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

δράσεις δὲ δὴ τί; ποῖ φέρει θυμούμενος;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θανών, ὅθενπερ ἥλθον, εἴμι γῆς ὕπο.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

εἵρηκας ἐπιτυχόντος ἀνθρώπου λόγους.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

THESEUS

No haunting curse can pass from friend to friend.

HERCULES

Now nay!—yet thanks. I helped thee, nor repent.

THESEUS

I for that kindness now compassionate thee.

HERCULES

Compassion-worthy am I, who slew my sons!

THESEUS

I weep for thy sake, for thy fortune changed.

HERCULES

Hast thou known any whelmed in deeper woes?

THESEUS

From earth to heaven reach thy calamities.

1240

HERCULES

Therefore have I prepared my soul to die.

THESEUS

Deem'st thou that Heaven reck's aught of threats of thine?

HERCULES

For me God cares not, nor care I for God!

THESEUS

Refrain lips, lest high words bring deeper woes!

HERCULES

Full-fraught am I with woes—no space for more.

THESEUS

What wilt thou do?—whither art passion-hurled?

HERCULES

To death. I pass to Hades, whence I came.

THESEUS

No hero's words be these that thou hast said.

231

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ δ' ἐκτὸς ὡν γε συμφορᾶς με νουθετεῖς.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

1250 ο πολλὰ δὴ τλὰς Ἡρακλῆς λέγει τάδε;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οῦκον τοσαῦτά γ· ἐν μέτρῳ¹ μοχθητέον.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

εὐεργέτης βροτοῖσι καὶ μέγας φίλος;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἴδ' οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦσί μ', ἀλλ' "Ἡρα κρατεῖ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὐκ ἄν σ' ἀνάσχοιθ' Ἐλλὰς ἀμαθίᾳ θανεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄκουε δή υνν, ὡς ἀμιλληθῶ λόγοις
πρὸς νουθετήσεις σάς· ἀναπτύξω δέ σοι
ἀβίωτον ἥμὖν υῦν τε καὶ πάροιθεν ὅν.
πρῶτον μὲν ἐκ τοῦδ' ἐγενόμην ὅστις κτανὼν
μητρὸς γεραιὸν πατέρα προστρόπαιος ὡν
ἔγημε τὴν τεκοῦσαν Ἀλκμήνην ἐμέ.

1260

ὅταν δὲ κρηπὶς μὴ καταβληθῆ γένους
ὅρθῶς, ἀνάγκη δυστυχεῖν τοὺς ἐκγόνους.
Ζεὺς δ'—ὅστις ὁ Ζεὺς—πολέμιόν μ' ἐγείνατο
“Ἡρα· σὺ μέντοι μηδὲν ἀχθεσθῆς, γέρον·
πατέρα γάρ ἀντὶ Ζηνὸς ἥγοῦμαί σ' ἔγώ.
ἔτ' ἐν γάλακτί τ' ὅντι γοργωποὺς ὅφεις
ἐπεισέφρησε σπαργάνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς
ἡ τοῦ Διὸς σύλλεκτρος, ὡς ὄλοιμεθα.
ἐπεὶ δὲ σαρκὸς περιβόλαι' ἐκτησάμην
ἥβωντα, μόχθους οὓς ἔτλην τί δεῖ λέγειν;
ποίους ποτ' ἡ λέοντας ἡ τρισωμάτους

1270

¹ Hermann : for MSS. γ·, εἰ μέτρῳ.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Thou dost rebuke me—clear of misery thou !

THESEUS

Speaks Hercules, who hath endured so much,— 1250

HERCULES

Never so much!—its bounds endurance hath.

THESEUS

Men's benefactor and their mighty friend ?

HERCULES

They cannot help, for Hera's might prevails.

THESEUS

Hellas will brook not this fool's death for thee.

HERCULES

Hearken, that I may wrestle in argument
With thine admonishings. I will unfold
Why now, as heretofore, boots not to live.
First, I am his son, who, with blood-guilt stained
From murder of my mother's agèd sire,
Wedded Alcmena who gave birth to me. 1260
When the foundation of the race is laid
In sin, needs must the issue be ill-starred.

And Zeus—whoe'er Zeus be—begat me foe
To Hera,—nay but, ancient, be not chafed,
For truer father thee I count than Zeus.
When I was yet a suckling, Zeus's bride
Sent gorgon-glaring serpents secretly
Against my cradle, that I might be slain.
Soon as I gathered vesture of brawny flesh,
What boots to tell what labours I endured ? 1270
What lions, what three-bodied Geryon-fiends,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Γηρυόνας¹ ἡ Γίγαντας ἡ τετρασκελῆ
 κενταυροπληθῆ πόλεμον οὐκ ἔξήνυσσα;
 τήν τ' ἀμφίκρανον καὶ παλιμβλαστῆ κύνα
 ὕδραι φονεύσας, μυρίων τ' ἄλλων πόνων
 διῆλθον ἀγέλας κεῖς νεκροὺς ἀφικόμην,
 Αἰδους πυλωρὸν κύνα τρίκρανον εἰς φάος
 ὅπως πορεύσαιμ' ἐντολαῖς Εὔρυσθέως.
 τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ τόνδ' ἔτλην τάλας φόνου,
 1280 παιδοκτονήσας δῶμα θριγκῶσαι κακοῖς.
 ἥκω δ' ἀνάγκης εἰς τόδ' οὔτ' ἐμαῖς φίλαις
 Θήβαις ἐνοικεῦν ὅσιον· ἦν δὲ καὶ μένω,
 εἰς ποῖον ἱερὸν ἡ πανήγυριν φίλων
 εἰμ'; οὐ γὰρ ἄτας εὐπροσηγόρους ἔχω.
 ἀλλ' Ἀργος ἔλθω; πῶς, ἐπεὶ φεύγω πάτραν;
 φέρ' ἀλλ' ἐσ ἄλλην δὴ τιν' ὁρμήσω πόλιν.
 κατειθ' ὑποβλεπώμεθ' ὡς ἐγνωσμένοι,
 γλώσσης πικροῖς κέντροισι κληδονυχούμενοι.
 οὐχ οὖτος ὁ Διός, δις τέκν' ἔκτεινέν ποτε
 1290 δάμαρτά τ'; οὐ γῆς τῆςδ' ἀποθαρήσεται;
 κεκλημένῳ δὲ φωτὶ μακαρίῳ ποτὲ
 αἱ μεταβολὰ λυπηρόν· φ δ' ἀεὶ κακῶς
 ἔστ', οὐδὲν ἀλγεῖ συγγενῶς δύστηνος ὄν.
 εἰς τοῦτο δ' ἥξειν συμφορᾶς οίμαι ποτε
 φωνὴν γὰρ ἥσει χθὼν ἀπεννέπουσά με
 μὴ θιγγάνειν γῆς καὶ θάλασσα μὴ περᾶν
 πηγαὶ τε ποταμῶν, καὶ τὸν ἀρματήλατον
 Ἰξίον' ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἐκμιμήσομαι.
 πρὸς ταῦτ' ἄριστα μηδέν' Ἑλλήνων μ' ὄρāν,
 1300 οἶσιν εὐτυχοῦντες ἥμεν δῆλβιοι.
 τί δῆτά με ζῆν δεῖ; τί κέρδος ἔξομεν
 βίοτον ἀχρεῖον ἀνόσιον κεκτημένοι;

¹ Elmsley: for MSS. Τυφᾶνας.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Or giants, slew I not?—or with what host
Of fourfoot Centaurs fought not out the war?
The hound o'erswarmed with heads that severed grew,
The Hydra, killed I : throngs of toils beside
Untold I wrought : I passed unto the dead
To bring forth at Eurystheus' hest to light
The hound three-headed, warder of Hell-gate.
And this—woe's me!—my latest desperate deed,
Murder of sons—mine home's topstone of ills !

1280

I am come to this strait—in my dear-loved Thebes
I cannot dwell uncursed. Though I should stay,
To what fane can I go?—what gathering
Of friends?—the Accurst, to whom no man may
• speak!

Shall I to Argos?—I, an outlawed man!
Nay then, to another city let me go—
And there be eyed askance, a branded man,
My jailers there the scorpions of the tongue—
“Lo there Zeus' son, who murdered babes and wife!
Shall he not hence?—perdition go with him!”

1290

Now to the man called happy in time past
Reverse is torture: he whose days were dark
Always, grieves not, being cradled in distress.

To this curse shall I come at last, I ween,
That earth shall find a voice forbidding me
To touch her, and the sea, that I cross not,
And river-springs: so, like Ixion whirled
In chains upon his wheel shall I become.
Best so—that none set eyes on me in Greece,
The land where once I prospered and was blest.
Why need I live? What profit shall I have
Owning a useless life, a life accurst?

1300

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

χορευέτω δὴ Ζηνὸς ἡ κλεινὴ δάμαρ
κρούοντος' Ὀλύμπου δῖον ἀρβύλῃ πέδον·
ἔπραξε γὰρ βούλησιν ἦν ἐβούλετο,
ἄνδρ' Ἑλλάδος τὸν πρῶτον αὐτοῖσιν βάθροις
ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα. τοιαύτῃ θεῷ
τίς ἀν προσεύχοιτο; ἢ γυναικὸς εἶνεκα
λέκτρων φθονοῦσα Ζηνὸς τοὺς εὐεργέτας
Ἑλλάδος ἀπώλεσ' οὐδὲν διτας αἰτίους.

1310

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου δαιμόνων ἀγῶν ὅδε
ἢ τῆς Διὸς δάμαρτος· [οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν]¹
παραινέσαιμ' ἀν μᾶλλον ἢ πάσχειν κακῶς.
οὐδεὶς δὲ θυητῶν ταῖς τύχαις ἀκήρατος,
οὐ θεῶν, ἀοιδῶν εἴπερ οὐ ψευδεῖς λόγοι.
οὐ λέκτρα τ' ἄλλήλοισιν, ὃν οὐδεὶς νόμος,
συνῆψαν; οὐδὲ σμοῖσι διὰ τυραννίδας
πατέρας ἐκηλίδωσαν; ἀλλ' οἰκοῦσ' ὅμως
Ὀλυμπον ἡνέσχοντό θ' ἡμαρτηκότες.

1320

καίτοι τί φήσεις, εἰ σὺ μὲν θυητὸς γεγώς
φέρεις ὑπέρφευ τὰς τύχας, θεοὶ δὲ μή;
Θήβας μὲν οὖν ἔκλειπε τοῦ νόμου χάριν,
Ἴπου δ' ἄμ' ἡμῖν πρὸς πόλισμα Παλλάδος.
ἐκεῖ χέρας σὰς ἀγνίσας μιάσματος,
δόμους τε δώσω χρημάτων τ' ἐμῶν μέρος.
ἄ δ' ἐκ πολιτῶν δῶρ' ἔχω σώσας κόρους
δὶς ἑπτά, ταῦρον Κινώσιον κατακτανών,
σοὶ ταῦτα δώσω. πανταχοῦ δέ μοι χθονὸς
τεμένη δέδασται· ταῦτ' ἐπωνομασμένα
σέθεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκλήσεται

1330

¹ Following MSS. in assigning 1311-2 to Theseus, and reading (translator's conjecture) οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν for εὐ τόδ· αισθάνει.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Now let her dance, that glorious bride of Zeus,
Beating with sandalled foot Olympus' floor !
She hath compassed her desire that she desired,
Down with his pedestal hurling in utter wreck
The foremost man of Greece ! To such a Goddess
Who shall pray now ?—who, for a woman's sake
Jealous of Zeus, from Hellas hath cut off
Her benefactors, guiltless though they were !

1310

THESEUS

This is the assault of none of deities
Save Zeus's Queen ; yet thee I counsel not
Rather to die than suffer and be strong.
No mortal hath escaped misfortune's taint,
Nor God—if minstrel-legends be not false.
Have they not linked them in unlawful bonds
Of wedlock, and with chains, to win them thrones,
Outraged their fathers ? In Olympus still
They dwell, by their transgressions unabashed.
What wilt thou plead, if, mortal as thou art,
Thou chafe against thy fate, and Gods do not ?

1320

Nay then, leave Thebes, submissive to the law,
And unto Pallas' fortress come with me.
There will I cleanse thine hands from taint of blood,
Give thee a home, and of my substance half.
The gifts my people gave for children saved
Twice seven, when I slew the Cnossian bull,
These will I give thee. All throughout the land
Have I demesnes assigned me : these shall bear
Thy name henceforth with men while thou shalt live.

1330

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ξῶντος θανόντα δ', εὐτ' ἀν εἰς "Αιδου μόλης.
θυσίαισι λαῖνοισι τ' ἐξογκώμασιν
τίμιον ἀνάξει πᾶσ' Ἀθηναίων πόλις.
καλὸς γὰρ ἀστοῖς στέφανος Ἐλλήνων ὑπο
ἄνδρ' ἐσθλὸν ὡφελοῦντας εὐκλείας τυχεῖν.
κάγῳ χάριν σοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας
τήνδ' ἀντιδώσω· νῦν γὰρ εἰ χρεῖος φίλων.
θεοὶ δ' ὅταν τιμῶσιν, οὐδὲν δεῖ φίλων.
ἄλις γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ὡφελῶν, ὅταν θέλῃ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1340

οἵμοι· πάρεργά τοι τάδ' ἔστ' ἐμῶν κακῶν.
ἐγὼ δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς οὔτε λέκτρ' ἀ μὴ θέμις
στέργειν νομίζω, δεσμά τ' ἐξάπτειν χεροῖν
οὔτ' ἡξίωσα πώποτ' οὔτε πείσομαι,
οὐδ' ἄλλον ἄλλον δεσπότην πεφυκέναι.
δεῖται γὰρ ὁ θεός, εἴπερ ἔστ' ὀρθῶς θεός,
οὐδενός· ἀοιδῶν οἵδε δύστηνοι λόγοι.
ἐσκεψάμην δὲ καίπερ ἐν κακοῖσιν ὥν,
μὴ δειλίαν δφλω τιν' ἐκλιπάν φάος.
ταῖς συμφοραῖς γὰρ δστις οὐχ ὑφίσταται,
οὐδ' ἀνδρὸς ἀν δύναιθ' ὑποστῆναι βέλος.
ἐγκαρτερήσω θάνατον· είμι δ' εἰς πόλιν
τὴν σὴν χάριν τε μυρίαν δώρων ἔχω.
ἀτὰρ πόνων δὴ μυρίων ἐγευσάμην·
ῶν οὔτ' ἀπεῖπον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἀπ' ὄμμάτων
ἔσταξα πηγάς, οὐδὲ ἀν ωόμην ποτὲ
εἰς τοῦθ' ἵκέσθαι, δάκρυ ἀπ' ὄμμάτων βαλεῖν.
νῦν δ', ώς ἔοικε, τῇ τύχῃ δουλευτέον,
εἰεν· γεραιέ, τὰς ἐμὰς φυγὰς ὄρᾳς,
ὄρᾳς δὲ παίδων δητα μ αὐθέντην ἐμῶν.
1350
δὸς τούσδε τύμβῳ καὶ περίστειλον νεκροὺς
δακρύοισι τιμῶν—ἐμὲ γὰρ οὐκ ἐἷ νόμος—

1360

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

And, when in death thou goest to Hades' halls,
With sacrifice and monuments of stone
Shall all the Athenians' Town exalt thy name :
For a fair crown to win from Greeks is this
For us, the glory of a hero helped.
Yea, this requital will I render thee
For saving me ; for now thou lackest friends.
When the Gods honour us, we need not friends :
God's help sufficeth, when he wills it so.

HERCULES

Ah, all this hath no pertinence to mine ills !
I deem not that the Gods for spousals crave
Unhallowed : tales of Gods' hands manacled
Ever I scorned, nor ever will believe,
Nor that one God is born another's lord.
For God hath need, if God indeed he be,
Of naught : these be the minstrels' sorry tales.

1340

Yet thus I have mused—how deep soe'er in ills—
“ *Shall I quit life, and haply prove me craven ?* ”
For he who flincheth from misfortune's blows,
He even from a mere man's spear would flinch.
I will be strong to await death. To thy town
I go. For thy gifts thanks a thousandfold.
Ah, I have tasted travail measureless,
Nor ever shrank from any, never shed
Tear from mine eyes, no, nor had ever thought
That I should come to this, to weep the tear !
But now, meseems, I must be thrall to fate.

1350

Ay so !—thou seëst, O ancient, mine exile ;
Thou seëst me a murderer of my sons.
Give these a tomb, and shroud the dead, with tears 1360
For honour,—me the law withholds therefrom,—

239

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

πρὸς στέρν' ἐρείσας μητρὶ δούς τ' ἐς ἀγκάλας,
 κοινωνίαν δύστηνον, θην ἐγὼ τάλας
 διώλεσ' ἄκων. γῇ δ' ἐπὴν κρύψης νεκρούς,
 οἴκει πόλιν τήνδ', ἀθλίως μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως
 ψυχὴν βιάζουν τάμα συμφέρειν κακά.
 ὡς τέκν', ὁ φύσας χὼ τεκῶν ὑμᾶς πατὴρ
 ἀπώλεσ', οὐδὲ ὄνασθε τῶν ἐμῶν καλῶν,
 ἀγὼ παρεσκεύαζον ἐκμοχθῶν βίᾳ
 1370 εὔκλειαν ὑμῖν, πατρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν καλήν.
 σέ τ' οὐχ ὁμοίως, ὡς τάλαιν', ἀπώλεσα
 ὥσπερ σὺ τάμα λέκτρ' ἔσφεσ άσφαλῶς,
 μακρὰς διαντλοῦσ' ἐν δόμοις οἰκουρίας.
 οἵμοι δάμαρτος καὶ τέκνων, οἵμοι δ' ἐμοῦ·
 ὡς ἀθλίως πέπραγα κάποιζεύγνυμαι
 τέκνων γυναικός τ'. ὡς λυγραὶ φιλημάτων
 τέρψεις, λυγραὶ δὲ τῶνδ' ὄπλων κοινωνίαι.
 ἀμηχανῶ γάρ πότερ' ἔχω τάδ' ή μεθῶ,
 ἀ πλευρὰ τάμα προσπίτνοντ' ἐρεῖ τάδε·
 1380 ήμῖν τέκν' εἰλεις καὶ δάμαρθ· ήμᾶς ἔχεις
 παιδοκτόνους σούς. εἰτ' ἐγὼ τάδ' ὠλέναις
 οἴσω; τί φάσκων; ἀλλὰ γυμνωθεὶς ὄπλων,
 ξὺν οἷς τὰ κάλλιστ' ἔξέπραξ' ἐν Ἑλλάδι,
 ἔχθροῖς ἐμαυτὸν ὑποβαλῶν αἰσχρῶς θάνω;
 οὐ λειπτέον τάδ', ἀθλίως δὲ σωστέον.
 ἐν μοί τι, Θησεῦ, σύγκαμ' ἀθλίῳ κυνὸς
 κόμιστρ' ἐς Ἀργος συγκατάστησον μολών,
 λύπη τι παιδῶν μὴ πάθω μονούμενος.
 ὡς γαῖα Κάδμου πᾶς τε Θηβαῖος λεώς,
 1390 κείρασθε, συμπειθήσατ', ἔλθετ' εἰς τάφον

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Laid on the mother's breast, clasped in her arms,
Sad fellowship, which I—O wretch!—destroyed
Unknowing. When thou hast hid them in the
tomb,

Live on in Thebes,—in misery, yet still
Constrain thy soul to share my load of woe.

Ah chidden, your begetter and your sire
Slew you!—ye had no profit of my glory,
Of all my travail and strenuous toil to win
Renown for you—a sire's best legacy.

1370

And thee, lost love, not in such wise I slew
As thou didst save, didst keep mine honour safe
Through all that weary warding of mine house!
Woe for my wife and children! woe for me!
How mournful is my plight, who am disyoked
From babes, from bride! Ah bitter joy of kisses!
Ah bitter fellowship of these mine arms!

Keep—cast them from me—I know not which to do.
Hanging athwart my side thus will they say:

*“With us thou slewest babes and wife—yet keep’st
Thy children’s slayers!”* Shall mine hand bear
these?

1380

What can I plead? Yet, naked of mine arms¹
Wherewith I wrought most glorious deeds in Greece,
'Neath foes' feet shall I cast me?—fouly die?
Leave them I may not, to my grief must keep.
In one thing help me, Theseus: come to Argos
To back my claim of hire for Cerberus brought,
Lest grief for children slay me faring lone.
O Land of Cadmus, all ye Theban folk,
With shorn hair grieve with me: to my sons' tomb

1390

¹ He could not replace them by others as good; for they were gifts of Gods—the bow of Apollo, and the club of Hephaestus.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

παιδων, ἅπαντας δ' ἐνὶ λόγῳ πενθήσατε
νεκρούς τε κάμε· πάντες ἔξολώλαμεν
"Ηρας μιᾶς πληρέντες ἄθλιοι τύχῃ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἀνίστασ', ω δύστηνε δακρύων δ' ἄλις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐκ ἀν δυναίμην ἄρθρα γὰρ πέπηγέ μου.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
καὶ τοὺς σθένουντας γὰρ καθαιροῦσιν τύχαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦ·
αὐτοῦ γενοίμην πέτρος ἀμυήμων κακῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
παῦσαι· δίδου δὲ χεῖρ' ὑπηρέτη φίλῳ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἀλλ' αἴμα μὴ σοῦς ἔξομόρξωμαι πέπλοις.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
1400 ἔκμασσε, φείδου μηδέν· οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
παιδων στερηθεὶς παῖδ' ὅπως ἔχω σ' ἐμόν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
δίδου· δέρη σὴν χεῖρ', ὁδηγήσω δ' ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ζεῦγός γε φίλιον· ἄτερος δὲ δυστυχής.
ω πρέσβυ, τοιόνδ' ἄνδρα χρὴ κτᾶσθαι φίλον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ
ἡ γὰρ τεκοῦσα τόνδε πατρὶς εὔτεκνος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
Θησεῦ, πάλιν με στρέψον, ώς ἵδω τέκνα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ώς δὴ τί; φίλτρον τοῦτ' ἔχων ράων ἔσει;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Pass, and in one wail make ye moan for all—
The dead and me : we have wholly perished all,
Smitten by one sore doom from Hera's hand.

THESEUS

Rise, sorrow-stricken : let these tears suffice.

HERCULES

I cannot : lo, my limbs are palsy-chained.

THESEUS

O yea, misfortune breaketh down the strong.

HERCULES

Woe worth the day !

Ah to be turned to stone, my woes forgot !

THESEUS

No more ! To a friend, a helper, reach thine hand.

HERCULES

With this blood let me not besmirch thy robes !

THESEUS

On me wipe all off ! Spare not : I refuse not !

1400

HERCULES

Of sons bereaved, thee have I, like a son.

THESEUS

Cast o'er my neck thine arm ; I lead thee on.

HERCULES

A yoke of love !—but one, a stricken man.
Father, well may one gain such friend as this.

AMPHITRYON

The land that bare him breedeth noble sons !

HERCULES

Theseus, let me turn back, to see my babes.

THESEUS

What spell to ease thy pain hath this for thee ?

243

R 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ποθῶ, πατρός τε στέρνα προσθέσθαι θέλω.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἰδοὺ τάδ', ὡς παῖ· τάμα γὰρ σπεύδεις φίλα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

1410 οὗτω πόνων σῶν οὐκέτι μυήμην ἔχεις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄπαντ' ἐλάσσω κεῖνα τῶνδ' ἔτλην κακά.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

εἴς σ' ὅψεται τις θῆλυν ὅντ', οὐκ αὖνέσει.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ζῶ σοὶ ταπεινός; ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν οὐ δοκῶ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἄγαν γάρ οὐ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς ποῦ κεῖνος ὁν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ ποῖος ἥσθα νέρθεν ἐν κακοῖσιν ὁν;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ώς εἰς τὸ λῆμα παντὸς ἥν ἥσσων ἀνήρ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἀν εἴποις ὅτι συνέσταλμαι κακοῖς;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

πρόβαινε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χαῖρ', ὡς πρέσβυ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

καὶ σύ μοι, τέκνου.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θάφθ' ὕσπερ εἰπον παῖδας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἐμὲ δὲ τίς, τέκνου;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I yearn—and on my father's breast would fall:

AMPHITRYON

Lo here, my son : mine heart as thine is fain.

THESEUS

Art thou so all-forgetful of thy toils ?¹

1410

HERCULES

All toils endured of old were light by these.

THESEUS

Who sees thee play the woman thus shall scorn.

HERCULES

Live I, thy scorn ? Once was I not, I trow !

THESEUS

Alas, yes ! Where is glorious Hercules ?

HERCULES

What manner of man wast thou mid Hades' woes ?

THESEUS

My strength of soul was utter weakness then.

HERCULES

Shouldst thou, then, name me a man by suffering
cowed ?

THESEUS

On then !

HERCULES

Farewell, old sire.

AMPHITRYON

Farewell thou, son.

HERCULES

Bury the lads.

AMPHITRYON

Who burieth me, my child ?

¹ The Twelve Labours, of which this weakness is unworthy.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

έγώ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

πότ' ἐλθών;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ήνικ' ἀν θάψης τέκνα.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

πῶς;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰς Ἀθήνας πέμψομαι Θηβῶν ἄπο.
ἀλλ' εἰσκόμιζε τέκνα δυσκόμιστα γῆ.
ήμεις δ' ἀναλώσαντες αἰσχύναις δόμου,
Θησεῖ πανώλεις ἐψόμεσθ' ἐφολκίδες.
ὅστις δὲ πλοῦτον ἡ σθένος μᾶλλον φίλων
ἀγαθῶν πεπάσθαι βούλεται, κακῶς φρονεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχομεν οἰκτροὶ καὶ πολύκλαυτοι,
τὰ μέγιστα φίλων ὀλέσαντες.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I.

AMPHITRYON

When com'st thou?

HERCULES

When thou hast buried them.

1420

AMPHITRYON

o

How?

HERCULES

I from Thebes to Athens will bring thee.
Bear in my babes—earth groans to bear such burden !
I, who have wasted by my shame mine house,
Like wreck in tow will trail in Theseus' wake.
Whoso would fain possess or wealth or strength
Rather than loyal friends, is sense-bereft.

CHORUS

With mourning and weeping sore do we pass away,
Who have lost the chiefest of all our friends this day.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE
CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ARGUMENT

Eurystheus, king of Argos, hated Hercules all his life through, and sought to destroy him by thrusting on him many and desperate labours. And when Hercules had been caught up to Olympus from the pyre whereon he was consumed on Mount Oeta, Eurystheus persecuted the hero's children, and sought to slay them. Wherefore Iolaus, their father's friend and helper, fled with them. But in whatsoever city they sought refuge, thence were they driven; for Eurystheus ever made search for them, and demanded them with threats of war. So fleeing from land to land, they came at last to Marathon which belongeth to Athens, and there took sanctuary at the temple of Zeus. Thither came the folk of the land compassionating them, and Eurystheus' herald requiring their surrender, and the king of Athens, Theseus' son, to hear their cause. And herein is told the tale of the war that came of his refusal to yield them up, of the sacrifice of a noble maiden which the Gods required as the price of victory, of an old warrior by miracle made young, and of the vengeance of Alcmena.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

**ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ
ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
ΑΙΓΕΛΟΣ
ΕΤΡΤΣΘΕΤΣ**

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

IOLAUS, *an old man, formerly friend of Hercules.*

COPREUS, *herald of Eurystheus.*

DEMOPHON, *king of Athens, son of Theseus.*

MACARIA, *daughter of Hercules.*

HENCHMAN of Hyllus, *Hercules' eldest son.*

ALCMENA, *mother of Hercules.*

SERVANT of Alcmena.

MESSENGER, *a captain from the army.*

EURYSTHEUS, *king of Argos.*

CHORUS of old men of Marathon.

Young sons of Hercules, guards, and attendants.

SCENE: At Marathon, in the forecourt of the temple of Zeus. The great altar stands in the midst.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

- Πάλαι ποτ' ἔστι τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ δεδογμένου·
οὐ μὲν δίκαιος τοῖς πέλας πέφυκ' ἀνήρ,
οὐ δ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος λῆμ' ἔχων ἀνειμένον
πόλει τ' ἄχρηστος· καὶ συναλλάσσειν βαρύς,
αὐτῷ δ' ἄριστος· οἶδα δ' οὐ λόγῳ μαθών.
ἔγὼ γὰρ αἴδοι καὶ τὸ συγγενὲς σέβων,
ἔξον κατ' Ἀργος ἡσύχως ναίεν, πόνων
πλείστων μετέσχον εἰς ἀνήρ Ἡρακλέει,
ὅτ' ἦν μεθ' ἡμῶν· νῦν δ', ἐπεὶ κατ' οὐρανὸν
10 ναίει, τὰ κείνου τέκν' ἔχων ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
σφέζω τάδ' αὐτὸς δεόμενος σωτηρίας.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ αὐτῶν γῆς ἀπηλλάχθη πατήρ,
πρῶτον μὲν ἡμᾶς ἥθελ' Εὔρυσθεὺς κτανεῖν·
ἄλλ' ἔξεδραμεν· καὶ πόλις μὲν οὖχεται,
ψυχὴ δ' ἐσώθη. φεύγομεν δ' ἀλώμενοι
ἄλλην ἀπ' ἄλλης ἔξορίζοντες πόλιν.
πρὸς τοῖς γὰρ ἄλλοις καὶ τόδ' Εύρυσθεὺς κακοῖς
νῦθρισμ' ἔστιν ἡμᾶς ἥξισταιν
πέμπων ὅπου γῆς πυνθάνοιθ' ίδρυμένους
20 κήρυκας ἔξαιτεῖ τε κάξειργει χθονός,
πόλιν προτείνων Ἀργος οὐ σμικρὰν φίλην
ἔχθράν τε θέσθαι, χαύτὸν εὐτυχοῦνθ' ἄμα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS *with HERCULES' CHILDREN, discovered sitting on the altar-steps.*

IOLAUS

I HOLD it truth, and long have held :—the just
Lives for his brother men ; but he whose soul
Uncurbed hunts gain alone, unto the state
Useless, in dealings hard, is but to himself
A friend—nor know this by report alone ;
Since I, who might in Argos peacefully
Have dwelt, for honour's sake and kinship's bond
Bore chief share in the toils of Hercules
When he was with us : now, when in the heaven
He dwells, his babes I shelter 'neath my wings 10
Defending, who myself sore need defence.

For, soon as from the earth their sire had passed,
Us would Eurystheus at the first have slain,
But we fled. Now our city, our home is lost,
Life only saved. We are exiled wanderers
From city unto city moving on.
For on our other wrongs this coping-stone
Of outrage hath Eurystheus dared to set,—
Heralds to each land where we bide he sends,
Demandeth us, and biddeth drive us forth, 20
Warning them that no weakling friend or foe
Is Argos, and himself a mighty king.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

οι δ' ἀσθενῆ μὲν τάπ' ἐμοῦ δεδορκύτες,
σμικροὺς δὲ τούσδε καὶ πατρὸς τητωμένους,
τοὺς κρείσσονας σέβοντες ἔξειργουσι γῆς.
ἔγὼ δὲ σὺν φεύγουσι συμφεύγω τέκνοις
καὶ σὺν κακῷ πράσσουσι συμπράσσω κακῶς,
ὅκνῶν προδοῦναι, μή τις ὡδὸς εἴπῃ βροτῶν·
ἴδεσθ', ἐπειδὴ παισὶν οὐκ ἔστιν πατήρ,
30 'Ιόλαος οὐκ ἥμυνε συγγενῆς γεγώς.
πάσης δὲ χώρας Ἐλλάδος τητώμενοι,
Μαραθῶνα καὶ σύγκλητον ἐλθόντες χθόνα
ἰκέται καθεξόμεσθα βώμιοι θεῶν,
προσωφελῆσαι· πεδία γὰρ τῆσδε χθονὸς
δισσοὺς κατοικεῖν Θησέως παῖδας λόγος
κλήρῳ λαχόντας, ἐκ γένους Πανδίονος,
τοῖσδ' ἐγγυς ὅντας· ὃν ἔκατι τέρμονας
κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν τήνδ' ἀφικόμεσθ' ὁδόν.
δυοῖν γερόντοιν δὲ στρατηγεῖται φυγή·
40 ἔγὼ μὲν ἀμφὶ τοῖσδε καλχαίνων τέκνοις,
ἡ δ' αὖ τὸ θῆλυ παιδὸς Ἀλκμήνη γένος
ἔσωθε ναοῦ τοῦδ' ὑπηγκαλισμένη
σώζει· νέας γὰρ παρθένους αἰδούμεθα
ὅχλῳ πελάζειν κάπιβωμιοστατεῖν.
"Τλλος δ' ἀδελφοί θ' οἱσι πρεσβεύει γένος
ζητοῦσ' ὅπου γῆς πύργου οἰκιούμεθα,
ἥν τῆσδ' ἀπωθώμεσθα πρὸς βίαν χθονός.
ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦρο, λαμβάνεσθ' ἐμῶν
πέπλων· ὁρῶ κήρυκα τόνδ' Εὔρυσθέως
50 στείχοντ' ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, οὐ διωκόμεσθ' ὑπὸ^{τοῦ}
πάσης ἀλῆται γῆς ἀπεστερημένοι.
ὦ μῖσος, εἴθ' ὅλοιο χῶ πέμψας σ' ἀνήρ·
ὅς πολλὰ δὴ καὶ τῶνδε γενναίφ πατρὶ^{τοῦ}
ἐκ τοῦδε ταύτον στόματος ἥγγειλας κακά.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And they, discerning that my cause is weak,
These but young children orphaned of their sire,
Bow to the strong, and drive us from their land.
I with his banished babes share banishment,
And with their ill plight am in evil plight.
Forsake them I dare not, lest men should say :
“ See, now the children’s father is no more,
Iolaus wards them not,—their kinsman he ! ” 30
And so, from all the soil of Hellas banned,
To Marathon and the federate land we come,
At the Gods’ altars sitting suppliant,
That they may help ; for Theseus’ scions twain,
Saith rumour, in the plains of this land dwell,
By lot their heritage, Pandion’s seed,
And kin to these ; for which cause have we come
This journey unto glorious Athens’ bounds,
Old captains we that lead this exile-march,—
I, for these lads heart-full of troubled thought ; 40
And she, Alcmena, in yon temple folds
Her arms about the daughters of her son,
And guards : for we think shame to let young girls
Stand, a crowd’s gazing-stock, on altar-steps.
Now Hyllus and his brethren elder-born
Seek some land for our refuge and our home,
If from this soil we be with violence thrust.
O children, children, hither !—seize my robes !
Yonder I see Eurystheus’ herald come
Against us, him of whom we are pursued, 50
The homeless wanderers barred from every land.
Enter COPREUS.
Loathed wretch ! Now ruin seize thee and him that
sent,
Who oftentimes to the noble sire of these
From that same mouth hast published evil hests.

257

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἢ που καθῆσθαι τήνδ' ἔδραν καλὴν δοκεῖς
πόλιν τ' ἀφίχθαι σύμμαχον; κακῶς φρονῶν·
οὐ γάρ τις ἔστιν δις πάροιθ' αἰρήσεται
τὴν σὴν ἀχρείον δύναμιν ἀντ' Εὔρυσθέως·
χώρει τί μοχθεῖς ταῦτ'; ἀνίστασθαι σε χρὴ
εὶς Ἀργος, οὐ σε λεύσιμος μένει δίκη.

60

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεί μοι βωμὸς ἀρκέσει θεοῦ
ἔλευθέρα τε γαῖ' ἐν ἦ βεβήκαμεν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

βούλει πόνον μοι τῆδε προσθεῖναι χερί;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὗτοι βίᾳ γέ μ' οὐδὲ τούσδ' ἄξεις λαβών.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

γνώσει σύ· μάντις δ' ἡσθ' ἄρ' οὐ καλὸς τάδε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἀν γένοιτο τοῦτ' ἐμοῦ ζῶντός ποτε..

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἄπαιρ· ἐγὼ δὲ τούσδε, κὰν σὺ μὴ θέλῃς,
ἄξω κομίζων, οὐπέρ εἰσ', Εὔρυσθέως.

70

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τὰς Ἀθήνας δαρὸν οἰκοῦντες χρόνον,
ἀμύνεθ· ἵκέται δ' ὅντες ἀγοραίου Διὸς
βιαζόμεσθα καὶ στέφη μιαίνεται,
πόλει τ' ὄνειδος καὶ θεῶν ἀτιμία.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἢ ἔα· τίς ἡ βοὴ βωμοῦ πέλας
ἔστηκε; ποίαν συμφορὰν δείξει τάχα;

258

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS

Ha, deem'st thou this thy session bravely chosen,
This state thou hast reached thine ally ? O thou fool !
There is no man shall choose that impotence
Of thy poor strength before Eurystheus' power.
Away ! Why make this coil ? Thou must depart
To Argos, where the doom of stoning waits thee. 60

IOLAUS

Never : for the God's altar shall avail,
And the free land whereunto we have come.

COPREUS

Ha ! wouldst thou find some work for this mine hand ?

IOLAUS

Nor me nor these by force shalt thou hale hence.

COPREUS

That shalt thou prove : ill seer thou art in this.

[Seizes CHILDREN.]

IOLAUS (*resisting*)

This shall not be ! no, never while I live !

COPREUS

Hands off ! these will I hale, though thou say nay,
Accounting them Eurystheus' : his they are.

[*Hurls Iolaus to the ground.*]

IOLAUS

O ye, in Athens dwellers from of old,
Help ! Suplicants we of Zeus of the Market-stead 70
Are evil-entreated, holy wreaths defiled,
To Athens' shame and to your God's dishonour !

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS

What ho ! what outcry by the altar wakes ?
Now what calamity shall this reveal ?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἴδετε τὸν γέροντ' ἀμαλὸν ἐπὶ πέδῳ
χύμεινον· ω τάλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς τοῦ ποτ' ἐν γῇ πτῶμα δύστηνον πίτνεις;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οδ', ω ξένοι, με σους ἀτιμάζων θεοὺς
ἔλκει βιαίως Ζηνὸς ἐκ προβωμάων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

80 σὺ δ' ἐκ τίνος γῆς, ω γέρον, τετράπτολιν
ξύνοικον ἥλθες λαόν; ή πέρα-
θεν ἀλίῳ πλάτᾳ
κατέχετ' ἐκλιπόντες Εὐβοϊδ' ἀκτάν;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ νησιώτην, ω ξένοι, τρίβω βίον,
ἀλλ' ἐκ Μυκηνῶν σὴν ἀφίγμεθα χθόνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄνομα τί σε, γέρον,
Μυκηναῖος ὡνόμαζεν λεώς;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τὸν Ἡράκλειον ἵστε που παραστάτην
Ίόλαιον οὐ γὰρ ὄνομ' ἀκήρυκτον τόδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

90 οἰδ' εἰσακούσας καὶ πρὶν ἀλλὰ τοῦ
ποτ' ἐν χειρὶ σῷ κομίζεις κόρους
νεοτρεφεῖς; φράσον.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

Ἡρακλέους οἶδ' εἰσὶν παῖδες, ω ξένοι,
ἰκέται σέθεν τε καὶ πόλεως ἀφιγμένοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί χρέος; ή λόγων πόλεος, ἔνεπέ μοι,
μελόμενοι τυχεῖν;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

Behold ye!—the eld-stricken see
In his feebleness hurled to the ground, woe's me!

CHORUS

Of whom thus pitifully wast thou dashed down?

IOLAUS

This man, O strangers, sets thy Gods at naught,
And drags me from the altar-floor of Zeus.

CHORUS

But from what land, O ancient, hast thou come
To the folk of the Four Burgs' federal home?
Were ye sped overseas by the brine-dipt oar
To our land from Euboea's craggy shore?

80

IOLAUS

Strangers, no island-dweller's life is mine;
From proud Mycenae come we to thy land.

CHORUS

And by what name, ancient of days, did they call
Thee, they which be fenced with Mycenae's wall?

IOLAUS

Hercules' helper haply do ye know,
Iolaus, for not fameless was my name.

CHORUS

I know; long since I heard: but whose are they,
The fosterling lads that thine hand leadeth hitherward?—say.

90

IOLAUS

Strangers, the sons they are of Hercules,
Which have to thee and Athens suppliant come.

CHORUS

Say, what is your need that here ye are?
Would ye plead your cause at the nation's bar?

261

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μήτ' ἐκδοθῆναι μήτε πρὸς βίαν θεῶν
τῶν σῶν ἀποσπασθέντες εἰς Ἀργος μολεῖν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἀλλ' οὕτι τοὺς σοὶς δεσπόταις τάδ' ἀρκέσει,
οἱ σοῦ κρατοῦντες ἐνθάδ' εὐρίσκουσί σε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰκὸς θεῶν ἵκτηρας αἰδεῖσθαι, ξένε,
καὶ μὴ βιαίῳ χειρὶ δαιμόνων
ἀπολιπεῖν ἔδη·
πότινα γὰρ Δίκα τάδ' οὐ πείσεται.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἔκπεμπέ νυν γῆς τούσδε τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως,
κούδὲν βιαίῳ τῇδε χρήσομαι χερί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄθεον ἱκεσίαν
μεθεῖναι πόλει ξένων προστροπάν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

καλὸν δέ γ' ἔξω πραγμάτων ἔχειν πόδα,
εὐβουλίας τυχόντα τῆς ἀμείνονος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὔκουν τυράννῳ τῆσδε γῆς φράσαντά σε
χρῆν ταῦτα τολμᾶν, ἀλλὰ μὴ βίᾳ ξένους
θεῶν ἀφέλκειν, γῆν σέβοντ' ἐλευθέραν;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

τίς δ' ἔστι χώρας τῆσδε καὶ πόλεως ἄναξ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖς Δημοφῶν ὁ Θησέως.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

πρὸς τοῦτον ἀγὸν ἀρα τοῦδε τοῦ λόγου
μάλιστ' ἀν εἴη· τἄλλα δ' εἰρηται μάτην.

100

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

Given up we would not be, nor torn away
Hence, in thy Gods' despite, and sent to Argos.

COPREUS

Ay, but this shall not satisfy thy masters
Whose lordship o'er thee holds, who find thee here. 100

CHORUS

God's suppliants, stranger, must we reverence,
And not with hands of violence tear them hence
From this place where the Holy Presence is :
The majesty of Justice shall not suffer this.

COPREUS

Then from your land send these, Eurystheus' thralls,
And this mine hand shall do no violence.

CHORUS

Now nay, 'twere an impious thing
To cast off suppliant hands to the knees of our city
that cling !

COPREUS

'Tis well to keep thy foot from trouble's snare,
And in good counsel find the better part. 110

CHORUS

Thou shouldst have shown respect to this free land,
And told her King, ere thy presumption tore
Therefrom the strangers in her Gods' despite.

COPREUS

And who is of this land and city king ?

CHORUS

Demophon, Theseus' child, a brave sire's son.

COPREUS

With him then must all strife of this dispute
Be held alone : all else is idle talk.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὅδ' αὐτὸς ἔρχεται σπουδὴν ἔχων
'Ακάμας τ' ἀδελφός, τῶνδ' ἐπήκοοι λόγων.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

120 ἐπείπερ ἔφθης πρέσβυς ὧν νεωτέρους
βοηδρομήσας τήνδ' ἐπ' ἐσχάραν Διός,
λέξον, τίς δχλον τόνδ' ἀθροίζεται τύχη;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰκέται κάθηνται παῖδες οἵδ' Ἡρακλέους
βωμὸν καταστέψαντες ὡς ὄρᾶς, ἄναξ,
πατρός τε πιστός Ἰόλεως παραστάτης.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

τί δῆτ' ἵνγμῶν ἥδ' ἐδεῖτο συμφορά;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βίᾳ νιν οὔτος τῆσδ' ἀπ' ἐσχάρας ἄγειν
ξητῶν βοὴν ἔστησε κάσφηλεν γόνυ
γέροντος, ὥστε μ' ἐκβαλεῖν οἴκτῳ δάκρυ.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

130 καὶ μὴν στολήν γ' "Ἐλληνα καὶ ρυθμὸν πέπλων
ἔχει, τὰ δ' ἔργα βαρβάρου χερὸς τάδε.
σὸν δὴ τὸ φράξειν ἔστι, μὴ μέλλειν τ', ἐμοί
ποίας ἀφίξαι δεῦρο γῆς ὄρους λιπών;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

'Αργεῖος εἰμι, τοῦτο γὰρ θέλεις μαθεῖν.
ἐφ' οἷσι δ' ἦκω καὶ παρ' οὐ λέγειν θέλω.
πέμπει Μυκηνῶν δεῦρό μ' Εύρυσθεὺς ἄναξ
ἀξοντα τούσδε· πολλὰ δ' ἥλθον, ὡς ξένε,
δίκαιοι ὄμαρτῆ δρᾶν τε καὶ λέγειν ἔχων.

140 'Αργεῖος ὧν γὰρ αὐτὸς 'Αργείους ἄγω
ἐκ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ τούσδε δραπέτας ἐλών,
νόμοισι τοῖς ἐκεῖθεν ἐψηφισμένους
θανεῖν· δίκαιοι δ' ἐσμὲν οἰκοῦντες πόλιν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

Lo, hitherward himself in haste draws nigh,
And Acamas his brother, to hear thy claim.

Enter DEMOPHON, ACAMAS, and attendants.

DEMOPHON

Since thou, the old, preventedst younger men 120
In rescue-rush to Zeus's altar-hearth,
Tell thou what chance hath gathered all this throng.

CHORUS

Here suppliant sit the sons of Hercules,
Who have wreathed the altar, as thou seest, O. king,
And Iolaus, leal helper of their sire.

DEMOPHON

What need herein for lamentable cries ?

CHORUS

Yon man essayed to drag them from the hearth
By force ; raised outcry so, and earthward hurled
The ancient, that for ruth burst forth my tears.

DEMOPHON

Yet is the fashion of his vesture Greek ; 130
But deeds of a barbarian hand are these.
Man, thine it is to tell me, tarrying not,
From what land's marches hither thou hast come.

COPREUS

An Argive I, since this thou wouldest know.
Wherefore I come, and from whom, will I tell :
Mycenae's king Eurystheus sends me hither
To lead these hence. Stranger, I bring with me
Just pleas in plenty, both for act and speech.
Myself an Argive would lead Argives hence,
Who find them runaways from mine own land, 140
By statutes of that land condemned to die;
For, dwellers in a state subject to none,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

αύτοὶ καθ' αὐτῶν κυρίους κραίνειν δίκας.
 πολλῶν δὲ κᾶλλων ἐστίας ἀφιγμένων,
 ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖς τοισίδ' ἔσταμεν λόγοις,
 κούδεις ἐτόλμησ' ἵδια προσθέσθαι κακά.
 ἀλλ' ἡ τιν' εἰς σὲ μωρίαν ἐσκεμμένοι
 δεῦρ' ἥλθον ἡ κίνδυνον ἐξ ἀμηχάνων
 ῥίπτοντες, εἴτ' οὖν εἴτε μὴ γενήσεται·
 150 οὐ γὰρ φρενήρη γ' ὅντα σ' ἐλπίζουσί που
 μόνον τοσαύτης ἦν ἐπῆλθον Ἑλλάδος
 τὰς τῶνδ' ἀβούλους συμφορὰς κατοικτιεῖν·
 φέρ' ἀντίθεις γάρ, τούσδε τ' εἰς γαῖαν παρεὶς
 ἡμᾶς τ' ἔύσας ἐξάγειν, τί κερδανεῖς ;
 τὰ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν τοιάδ' ἔστι σοι λαβεῖν,
 "Αργους τοσήνδε χείρα τὴν τ' Εὐρυσθέως
 ἴσχὺν ἄπασαν τῇδε προσθέσθαι πόλει.
 ἦν δ' εἰς λόγους τε καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' οἰκτίσματα
 βλέψας πεπανθῆς, εἰς πάλην καθίσταται
 160 δορὸς τὸ πράγμα· μὴ γὰρ ὡς μεθήσομεν
 δόξης ἀγώνα τόνδ' ἄτερ χαλυβδικοῦ.
 τί δῆτα φήσεις, ποῖα πεδί' ἀφαιρεθείσι,
 Τιρυνθίοις θεὶς πόλεμον Ἀργείοις ἔχειν ;
 ποίοις δ' ἀμύνων συμμάχοις ; τίνος δ' ὑπερ
 θάψεις νεκροὺς πεσόντας ; ἡ κακὸν λόγον
 κτήσει πρὸς ἀστῶν, εἰ γέροντος εἶνεκα,
 τύμβου, τὸ μηδὲν ὄντος, ὡς εἰπεῖν ἔπος,
 παίδων τε τῶνδ', εἰς ἄντλον ἐμβήσει πόδα.
 ἔρεις τὸ λῷστον ἐλπίδ' εὐρήσειν μόνον.
 170 καὶ τοῦτο πολλῷ τοῦ παρόντος ἐνδεές·
 κακῶς γὰρ Ἀργείοισιν οἴδ' ὠπλισμένοι
 μάχοιντ' ἀν ἥβήσαντες, εἴ τι τοῦτό σε
 ψυχὴν ἐπαίρει, χούν μέσῳ πολὺς χρόνος,
 ἐν φῷ διεργασθεῖτ' ἄν. ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πιθοῦ·

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

The right is ours to ratify her decrees.
And, though they have come to hearths of many folk,
Still on the same plea did we take our stand,
And ruin on his own head none dared bring.
But these came hither, haply spying folly
In thee, or staking on one desperate throw
Their venture, or to win or lose it all :—
For sure they deem not thou, if sound of wit, 150
Alone in all this Hellas they have traversed,
Wilt have compassion on their hopeless plight.

Weigh this and that :—if thou grant these a home,
Or if thou let us hale them hence—what gain
Were thine? From us these boons thou mayest win :
Argos' strong hand and all Eurystheus' might
Thou mayest range upon this city's side.

If thou regard their pleadings, by their whinings
Be softened, to the grapple of the spear
The matter cometh. Never think that we 160
Will yield this strife but by the sword's award.
What canst thou plead? Of what lands art thou
robbed,

That with Tirynthian Argives thou wouldest war?
What allies art defending? In whose cause
Shall those thou buriest fall? Ill fame were thine
With thine Athenians, if for yon old man,
That sepulchre,—mere naught, as men might say,—
And these boys, in deep waters thou wilt sink.

Thy plea at best is hope for days to come.
Scant satisfaction for the present this! 170
For against Argos these, armed, grown to man,
Should make but feeble stand,—if haply this
Uplift thine heart :—and long years lie between,
Wherein ye may be ruined. Nay heed me:

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

δοὺς μηδέν, ἀλλὰ τάμ' ἔῶν ἄγειν ἐμὲ
κτῆσαι Μυκήνας, μηδ' ὅπερ φιλεῖτε δρᾶν
πάθης σὺ τοῦτο, τοὺς ἀμείνονας παρὸν
φίλους ἐλέσθαι, τοὺς κακίονας λάβῃς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἀν δίκην κρίνειεν ἢ γυνοίη λόγον,
πρὶν ἀν παρ' ἀμφοῖν μῦθον ἐκμάθη σαφῶς ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἄναξ, ὑπάρχει μὲν τόδ' ἐν τῇ σῇ χθονί,
εἰπεῖν ἀκοῦσαι τ' ἐν μέρει πάρεστι μοι,
κούδεις μ' ἀπώσει πρόσθεν, ὥσπερ ἄλλοθεν.
ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τῷδ' οὐδέν ἔστιν ἐν μέσῳ.¹
ἔπει γὰρ "Αργους οὐ μέτεσθ' ἡμῖν ἔτι,
ψήφῳ δοκῆσαν, ἀλλὰ φεύγομεν πάτραν,
πῶς ἀν δικαίως ὡς Μυκηναίους ἄγοι
ῳδ' ὄντας ἡμᾶς, οὓς ἀπήλασαν χθονός ;
ξένοι γάρ ἔσμεν. ἢ τὸν Ἑλλήνων ὄρον
φεύγειν δικαιοῦθ' ὅστις ἀν τάργος φύγη ;
οὐκονν 'Αθήνας γ· οὐ γὰρ 'Αργείων φόβῳ
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας ἔξελῶσι γῆς.
οὐ γάρ τι Τραχίς ἔστιν οὐδ' 'Αχαιικὸν
πόλισμ', ὅθεν σὺ τούσδε τῇ δίκῃ μὲν οὐ,
τὸ δ' "Αργος ὁγκῶν, οἰάπερ καὶ νῦν λέγεις,
ἥλαινες ἱκέτας βωμίους καθημένους.
εἰ γὰρ τόδ' ἔσται καὶ λόγους κρανοῦσι² σούς,
οὐ φήμ' 'Αθήνας τάσδ' ἐλευθέρας ἔτι.
ἀλλ' οἰδ' ἐγὼ τὸ τῶνδε λῆμα καὶ φύσιν.
θυήσκειν θελήσουσ'. ἡ γὰρ αἰσχύνη πάρος
τοῦ ζῆν παρ' ἐσθλοῖς ἀνδράσιν νομίζεται.
πόλιν μὲν ἀρκεῖ· καὶ γὰρ οὖν ἐπίφθονον

¹ Valckenaer : for MSS. ἐν μέρει.

² Elmsley : for MSS. κρινοῦσι.

180

190

200

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Give naught, but suffer me to take mine own ;
So gain Mycenae's friendship. Do not err,
As oft ye do, taking the weaker side
When ye might choose for friend the stronger cause.

CHORUS

Who can give judgment, who grasp arguments,
Ere from both sides he clearly learn their pleas ?

180

IOLAUS

King, this advantage have I in your land,
I am free to speak and in my turn to hear ;
None, as from other lands, will first expel me.
We and this man have naught in common now ;
We have naught to do with Argos any more
Since that decree : we are exiled from her soil.
What right hath he to hale us, whom they banished,
As we were burghers of Mycenae yet ?
Aliens we are :—or from all Hellas banned
Are men whom Argos exiles ?—claim ye this ?
Sooth, not from Athens : she shall drive not forth,
For fear of Argives, sons of Hercules.
She is no Trachis, no Achaean burg,
As that whence thou didst drive these—not of
right,
But, even as now, by vaunting Argos' power,—
These, suppliant at the altar as they sat !
If this shall be, if she but ratify
Thine hests, free Athens then no more I know.
Nay, her sons' nature know I, know their mood :
They will die sooner ; for in brave men's eyes
The honour that fears shame is more than life.
Suffice for Athens this ; for over-praise

190

200

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

λίαν ἐπαινεῖν ἔστι, πολλάκις δὲ δὴ
καύτὸς βαρυθεὶς οἴδ' ἄγαν αἰνούμενος·
σοὶ δ' ὡς ἀνάγκη τούσδε βούλομαι φράσαι
σώζειν, ἐπείπερ τῆσδε προστατεῖς χθονός.
Πιτθεὺς μέν ἔστι Πέλοπος, ἐκ δὲ Πιτθέως
Αἴθρα, πατὴρ δ' ἐκ τῆσδε γεννᾶται σέθειν
Θησεύς. πάλιν δὲ τῶνδ' ἄνειμί σοι γένος.

- 210 'Ηρακλέης ήν Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τε παῖς,
κείνη δὲ Πέλοπος θυγατρός· αὐτανεψίων
πατὴρ ἀν εἴη σός τε χὼ τούτων γεγώς.
γένους μὲν ἥκεις ὁδε τούσδε, Δημοφῶν·
ἀ δ' ἐκτὸς ἥδη τοῦ προσήκοντός σε δεῖ
τίσαι λέγω σοι παισί· φημὶ γάρ ποτε
σύμπλους γενέσθαι τῶνδ' ὑπασπίζων πατρὶ¹
ξωστῆρα Θησεῖ τὸν πολυκτόνον μέτα,
"Αἰδου τ' ἐρεμνῶν ἔξανήγαγεν μυχῶν
πατέρα σόν· 'Ελλὰς πᾶσα τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ.
- 220 [ῶν ἀντιδοῦναί σ' οἴδ' ἀπαιτοῦσιν χάριν,
μήτ' ἐκδοθῆναι μήτε πρὸς βίαν θεῶν
τῶν σῶν ἀποσπασθέντες ἐκπεσεῖν χθονός.
σοὶ γάρ τόδ' αἰσχρόν † χωρίς, ἐν τε πόλει κακόν, †
ἰκέτας ἀλήτας συγγενεῖς, οἴμοι κακῶν,
βλέψον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέψον, ἔλκεσθαι βίᾳ.]
ἀλλ' ἄντομαί σε καὶ καταστέφω χεροῖν,
μὴ πρὸς γενείου, μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσῃς
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας εἰς χέρας λαβών.
γενοῦ δὲ τούσδε συγγενής, γενοῦ φίλος
230 πατὴρ ἀδελφὸς δεσπότης· ἅπαντα γὰρ
ταῦτ' ἔστι κρείσσω πλὴν ὑπ' Ἀργείοις πεσεῖν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Is odious : yea, myself have oftentimes,
Praised above measure, been but galled thereby.
But that thou canst not choose but save these boys
I would show thee, who rulest o'er this land.
Pitheus was Pelops' son : of Pitheus sprang
Aethra ; of her was thy sire Theseus born.
Again, the lineage of these lads I trace :
Zeus' and Alcmena's son was Hercules : 210
She, child of Pelops' daughter : cousins' sons
Shall be thy father and the sire of these.
So their near kinsman art thou, Demophon ;
But what requital—ties of blood apart—
Thou owest to these lads, I tell thee :—once
Shield-bearer to their sire, I sailed with him
To win for Theseus that Belt slaughter-fraught ;¹
And from black gulfs of Hades he brought up
Thy sire : all Hellas witnesseth to this.

This to requite, one boon they crave of thee,— 220
Not to be given up, nor torn by force
From thy Gods' fanes, and banished from thy land :
This were thine own shame, Athens' bane withal,
That homeless suppliants, kinsmen,—ah, their woes !
Look on them, look !—be dragged away by force.
I pray thee—these clasped hands are suppliant-
boughs,—
By thy beard I implore, set not at naught
Hercules' sons, who hast them in thine hands.
Prove thee to these true kinsman, prove thee
friend,
Their father, brother, master—better that 230
Than into hands of Argive men to fall !

¹ The belt of Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, the winning of which cost many lives.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώκτειρ' ἀκούσας τούσδε συμφορᾶς, ἄναξ.
τὴν δὲ εὐγένειαν τῆς τύχης νικωμένην
νῦν δὴ μάλιστ' εἰσεῖδον· οἶδε γὰρ πατρὸς
ἔσθλον γεγώτες δυστυχοῦσ' ἄναξίως.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

τρισσαὶ μ' ἀναγκάζουσι συμφορᾶς ὁδοί,
Ίόλαε, τοὺς σοὺς μὴ παρώσασθαι λόγους·
τὸ μὲν μέγιστον Ζεὺς ἐφ' οὐ σὺ βώμιος
θακεῖς νεοσσῶν τήνδ' ἔχων ὄμηγυριν,
240 τὸ συγγενές τε καὶ τὸ προύφειλειν καλῶς
πράσσειν παρ' ἡμῶν τούσδε πατρῷαν χάριν·
τό τ' αἰσχρόν, οὐπερ δεῖ μάλιστα φροντίσαι·
εἴ γὰρ παρήστω τόνδε συλλάσθαι βίᾳ
ξένου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς βωμόν, οὐκ ἐλευθέραν
οἰκεῖν δοκήσω γαῖαν, Ἀργείοις δ' ὅκυφ
ἰκέτας προδοῦναι· καὶ τάδ' ἀγχόνης πέλας.
ἀλλ' ὥφελες μὲν εὔτυχέστερος μολεῖν·
δῆμως δὲ καὶ νῦν μὴ τρέσης ὅπως σέ τις
σὺν παισὶ βωμοῦ τοῦδ' ἀποσπάσει βίᾳ.
250 σὺ δ' Ἀργος ἐλθὼν ταῦτά τ' Εύρυσθεῖ φράσον,
πρὸς τοῖσδέ τ', εἴ τι τοισίδ' ἐγκαλεῖ ξένοις,
δίκης κυρήσειν· τούσδε δ' οὐκ ἄξεις ποτέ.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐδ' ἦν δίκαιον ἢ τι καὶ νικῶ λόγῳ;

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

καὶ πῶς δίκαιον τὸν ικέτην ἄγειν βίᾳ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐκοῦν ἐμοὶ τόδ' αἰσχρόν, ἀλλ' οὐ σοὶ βλάβος.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ἐμοὶ γ', ἔάν σοι τούσδε ἐφέλκεσθαι μεθῶ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

I pity these in their affliction, king.
High birth by fortune crushed I now behold
As ne'er before : born of a noble sire
Are these, yet suffer woes unmerited.

DEMOPHON

Three influences, that meet in one, constrain me,
Iolaus, not to thrust hence these my guests :
The chiefest, Zeus, upon whose altar thou
Art sitting with these nestlings compassed round ;
Then, kinship, and the debt of old, that these 240
Should for their sire's sake fare well at mine hands ;
Third, dread of shame,—this most I must regard :
For if I let this altar be despoiled
By alien force, I shall be held to dwell
In no free land, but cowed by fear of Argos
To yield up suppliants :—hanging were not worse !
I would that thou hadst come in happier plight ;
Yet, even so, fear not that any man
Shall from this altar tear thee with these boys.
Thou (*to the HERALD*), go to Argos ; tell Eurystheus
this ; 250
And, if he implead these strangers in our courts,
He shall have right. These shalt thou hale hence
never.

COPREUS

Not if my cause be just, my plea prevail ?

DEMOPHON

Just ?—to hale hence by force the suppliant ?

COPREUS

Then mine the shame : no harm befalleth thee.

DEMOPHON

My shame too, if I let thee drag these hence.

273

VOL. III.

T

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

σὺ δ' ἔξοριζε, κατ' ἐκεῖθεν ἄξομεν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σκαιὸς πέφυκας τοῦ θεοῦ πλείω φρονῶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

δεῦρ', ως ἔοικε, τοῖς κακοῖσι φευκτέον.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ἄπασι κοινὸν ῥῦμα δαιμόνων ἔδρα.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ταῦτ' οὐ δοκήσει τοῖς Μυκηναίοις ἵσως.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

οὔκουν ἐγὼ τῶν ἐνθάδ' εἰμὶ κύριος;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

βλάπτων γ' ἐκείνους μηδέν, ἢν σὺ σωφρονῆς.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

βλάπτεσθ', ἐμοῦ γε μὴ μιαίνοντος θεούς.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐ βούλομαι σε πόλεμον Ἀργείοις ἔχειν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

κάγῳ τοιοῦτος τῶνδε δ' οὐ μεθήσομαι.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἄξω γε μέντοι τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐγὼ λαθών.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

οὐκ ἀρ' ἐς Ἀργος ῥᾳδίως ἄπει πάλιν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

πειρώμενος δὴ τοῦτό γ' αὐτίκ' εἴσομαι.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

κλαίων ἄρ' ἄψει τῶνδε κούκ ἐς ἀμβολάς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν κήρυκα τολμήσῃς θενεῖν.

270

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS

Banish them thou : then I will lead them thence.

DEMOPHON

O born a fool, who wouldest outwit the God !

COPREUS

So hither felons must for refuge flee !

DEMOPHON

The God's house gives to all men sanctuary. 260

COPREUS

Haply not so shall think Mycenae's folk.

DEMOPHON

Am I not master then in mine own land ?

COPREUS

Not unto Argos' hurt,—so thou be wise.

DEMOPHON

The hurt be yours, so I flout not the Gods.

COPREUS

I would not thou with Argos shouldst have war.

DEMOPHON

I too : yet will I not abandon these.

COPREUS

Yet will I take mine own and hale them hence.

DEMOPHON

Not lightly shalt thou win to Argos back.

COPREUS

That will I now try, and be certified.

[Attempts to seize them.

DEMOPHON (*raising his staff*)

Touch these, and thou shalt rue, and that right soon. 270

CHORUS

Dare not to strike a herald, for heaven's sake !

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

εὶ μή γ' ὁ κῆρυξ σωφρονεῦν μαθήσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄπειλθε· καὶ σὺ τοῦδε μὴ θίγης, ἄναξ.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

στείχω· μιᾶς γὰρ χειρὸς ἀσθενῆς μάχη.
ἥξω δὲ πολλὴν Ἀρεος Ἀργείου λαβῶν
πάγχαλκον αἰχμὴν δεῦρο. μυρίοι δέ με
μένουσιν ἀσπιστῆρες Εύρυσθεύς τ' ἄναξ
αὐτὸς στρατηγῶν· Ἀλκάθου δ' ἐπ' ἐσχάροις
καραδοκῶν τάνθένδε τέρμασιν μένει.

280

λαμπρὸς δ' ἀκούσας σὴν ὕβριν φανήσεται
σοὶ καὶ πολίταις γῆ τε τῇδε καὶ φυτοῖς·
μάτην γὰρ ἥβην ὅδέ γ' ἀν κεκτῷμεθα
πολλὴν ἐν Ἀργει, μὴ σε τιμωρούμενοι.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

φθείρου· τὸ σὸν γὰρ Ἀργος οὐ δέδοικ' ἐγώ.
ἐνθένδε δ' οὐκ ἔμελλες αἰσχύνας ἐμὲ
ἀξειν βίᾳ τούσδ· οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων πόλει
ὑπήκοον τήνδ', ἀλλ' ἐλευθέραν ἔχω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ῶρα προνοεῖν, πρὶν ὅροις πελάσαι
στρατον Ἀργείων.

290

μᾶλα δ' ὀξὺς Ἀρης ὁ Μυκηναίων,
ἐπὶ τοῖσι δὲ δὴ μᾶλλον ἔτ' ἡ πρίν.
πᾶσι γὰρ οὗτος κῆρυξι νόμος,
δὶς τόσα πυργοῦν τῶν γιγνομένων.
πόσα νιν λέξειν βασιλεῦσι δοκεῖς,
ώς δείν' ἔπαθεν καὶ παρὰ μικρὸν
ψυχὴν ἤλθεν διακναῖσαι;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

DEMOPHON

That will I, if the herald learn not wisdom.

CHORUS

[To HERALD] Depart thou :—touch thou not this man,
O king.

COPREUS

I go ; for feeble fight one hand may make.
But I will hither come with brazen mail
And spears of Argos' war : warriors untold
Await me ; and Eurystheus' self, our king,
Their chief, expecting what shall come from hence,
Waits on the marches of Alcathous.¹
He shall flash forth, being told thine insolence,
On thee, thy folk, this land, and all her fruits.
For all this warrior youth were ours for naught
In Argos, if we avenge us not on thee.

280

DEMOPHON

Begone ! I fear not that thine Argos, I !
'Twas not for thee to shame me and to drag
These hence by force. This city which I hold
Is not to Argives subject : she is free.

[Exit COPREUS.

CHORUS

It is time to prepare, ere the Argive array
Over our marches on-sweepeth ;
For Mycenae's war-spirit is keen for the fray,
And more hot for these tidings upleapeth.
Yea, and after his kind will yon herald be swelling
His wrongs—such aye double a tale in the telling :—
In the ears of his lords, think ye, how will he cry
On the foulness of outrage “that brought him this day
Unto death well nigh !”

290

¹ i.e. in Megara, of which Alcathous had shortly before been king.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τοῦδε παισὶ κάλλιον γέρας
 ἡ πατρὸς ἐσθλοῦ κάγαθοῦ πεφυκέναι
 [γαμεῖν τ' ἀπ' ἐσθλῶν· δις δὲ νικηθεὶς πόθῳ
 κακοῖς ἐκοινώνησεν, οὐκ ἐπαινέσω,
 300 τέκνοις ὄνειδος εἴνεχ' ἥδονῆς λιπεῖν.]¹
 τὸ δυστυχὲς γὰρ ηγένει ἀμύνεται
 τῆς δυσγενείας μᾶλλον· ἡμεῖς γὰρ κακῶν
 εἰς τούσχατον πεσόντες ηὔρομεν φίλους
 καὶ ξυγγενεῦς τούσδ', οὐ τοσήσδ' οἰκουμένης
 'Ελληνίδος γῆς τῶνδε προστησαν μόνοι.
 δότ', ὡ τέκν', αὐτοῖς χείρα δεξιάν, δότε·
 ὑμεῖς τε παισί, καὶ πέλας προσέλθετε.
 ω παῖδες, εἰς μὲν πεῖραν ἥλθομεν φίλων
 310 ήν δ' οὖν ποθ' ὑμῖν νόστος εἰς πάτραν φανῆ,
 καὶ δώματ' οἰκήσητε καὶ τιμὰς πατρός,
 σωτῆρας ἀεὶ καὶ φίλους νομίζετε,
 καὶ μήποτ' εἰς γῆν ἐχθρὸν αἱρεσθαι δόρυ,
 μεμνημένοι τῶνδ', ἀλλὰ φιλτάτην πόλιν
 πασῶν νομίζετ'. ἄξιοι δ' ὑμῖν σέβειν
 οὐ γῆν τοσήνδε καὶ Πελασγικὸν λεών
 . ήμῶν ἀπηλλάξαντο πολεμίους ἔχειν,
 πτωχοὺς ἀλήτας εἰσορώντες· ἀλλ' ὅμως
 οὐκ ἔξεδωκαν οὐδ' ἀπήλασαν χθονός.
 320 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ζῶν καὶ θανών, δταν θάνω,
 πολλῷ σ' ἐπαίνῳ Θησέως, ω τᾶν, πέλας
 ὑψηλὸν ἀρώ καὶ λέγων τάδ' εὐφρανώ,
 ώς εὐ τ' ἔδεξω καὶ τέκνοισιν ἥρκεσας
 τοῖς 'Ηρακλείοις, εὐγενὴς δ' ἀν' 'Ελλάδα
 σώζεις πατρώαν δόξαν, ἔξ ἐσθλῶν δὲ φὺς
 οὐδὲν κακίων τυγχάνεις γεγώς πατρός,

¹ 299–301 are of doubtful genuineness.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

No fairer honour-guerdon may sons win
Than this, to spring from noble sires and good,
[And so wed noble wives. Who, passion's thrall,
Links him with base folk, ne'er shall have my
praise,

300

Who, for his lust's sake, stamps his seed with shame.]
For noble birth stands in the evil day
Better than base blood. We, to deepest depths
Of evil fallen, yet have found us friends
And kin in these : in all the peopled breadth
Of Hellas these alone have championed us.
Give, children, unto these the right hand give,
And to the children ye ; draw near to them.

Boys, we have put our friends unto the test :—

310

If home-return shall ever dawn for you,
And your sires' halls and honours ye inherit,
Saviours and friends account them evermore,
And never against their land lift hostile spear,
Remembering this, but hold them of all states
Most dear. They are worthy of your reverence,
Who have ta'en our burden on them, enmity
Of that great land, that folk Pelasgian.

Beggars they saw us, homeless : for all this
They gave not up nor chased us from their land.
And I, in life,—in death, when death shall come,
With high laud will extol thee, good my lord,
At Theseus' side ; and this shall make him glad,
My tale how thou didst welcome, didst defend
Hercules' sons, how nobly Hellas through
Thou guard'st thy sire's renown : thy father's son
Shames not the noble line wherefrom he sprang.

320

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

παύρων μετ' ἄλλων· ἔνα γὰρ ἐν πολλοῖς· ἵσως
εῦροις ἀν δόστις ἐστὶ μὴ χείρων πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀεὶ ποθ' ἥδε γαῖα τοῖς ἀμηχάνοις
330 σὺν τῷ δικαίῳ βούλεται προσωφελεῖν.
τοιγὰρ πόνους δὴ μυρίους ὑπὲρ φίλων
ἥνεγκε, καὶ νῦν τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ὅρῳ πέλας.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σοί τ' εὐ λέλεκται, καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' αὐχῶ, γέρον,
τοιαῦτ' ἔσεσθαι· μνημονεύσεται χάρις.
κάγὼ μὲν ἀστῶν σύλλογον ποιήσομαι,
τάξω δ', ὅπως ἀν τὸν Μυκηναίων στρατὸν
πολλῇ δέχωμαι χειρί· πρῶτα μὲν σκοποὺς
πέμψω πρὸς αὐτὸν, μὴ λάθῃ με προσπεσών·
ταχὺς γὰρ Ἀργει πᾶς ἀνήρ βοηδρόμος·
340 μάντεις δ' ἀθροίσας θύσομαι· σὺ δ' εἰς δόμους
σὺν παισὶ χώρει, Ζηνὸς ἐσχάραν λιπών.
εἰσὶν γὰρ οἱ σου, καν ἐγὼ θυραιῶς ὡ,
μέριμναν ἔξουσ'. ἀλλ' ἦθ' εἰς δόμους, γέρον.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἀν λίποιμι βωμόν, ἔζώμεσθα δὲ
ἰκέται μένοντες ἐνθάδ' εὐ πρᾶξαι πόλιν·
ὅταν δ' ἀγῶνος τοῦδ' ἀπαλλαχθῆς καλῶς,
ἴμεν πρὸς οἴκους. Θεοῖσι δ' οὐ κακίοσι
χρώμεσθα συμμάχοισιν Ἀργείων, ἄναξ·
τῶν μὲν γὰρ Ἡρα προστατεῖ, Διὸς δάμαρ,
350 ἡμῶν δ' Ἀθάνα. φημὶ δ' εἰς εὐπρᾶξίαν
καὶ τούθ' ὑπάρχειν, θεῶν ἀμεινόνων τυχεῖν·
νικωμένη γὰρ Παλλὰς οὐκ ἀνέξεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἴ σὺ μέγ' αὐχεῖς, ἔτεροι
σοῦ πλέον οὐ μέλονται,

στρ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Few such there be : amid a thousand, one
Thou shouldst find undegenerate from his sire.

CHORUS

**Ever of old she chooseth, this our land,
To help the helpless ones in justice' cause.
So hath she borne for friends unnumbered toils.
Now see I this new struggle looming nigh.**

330

DEMOPHON

Well said of thee ; and sure am I that these
Shall so prove ; unforget shall be our boon.
Now will I muster for the war my folk,
And marshal, that a goodly band may greet
Mycenae's host. Scouts first will I send forth
To meet it, lest unwares it fall on me ;
For swift the Argives throng to the gathering-cry.
Seers will I bring, and sacrifice. Thou, leave
Zeus' hearth, and enter with the boys mine halls :
Therein be they which, though I be afar,
Shall care for thee. Pass, ancient, to mine halls.

340

IOLAUS

I will not leave the altar. Let us sit,
Abiding Athens' triumph, suppliant here.
And, when thou hast brought this strife to glorious end,
Then will we enter. Champion-gods have we
Not weaker than the Argive Gods, O king.
Though Hera, bride of Zeus, before them go,
Ours is Athena; and this tells, say I,
For triumph, to have gotten mightier Gods;
For Pallas never shall brook overthrow.

350

CHORUS

Ay, vaunt as thou wilt, yet uncaring (Str.)
Will we swerve none the more from the right,

281

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ω̄ ξεῖν' Ἀργόθεν ἐλθών·
μεγαληγορίαισι δ' ἐμᾶς
φρένας οὐ φοβήσεις.
μήπω ταῖς μεγάλαισιν οῦτω
καὶ καλλιχόροις Ἀθάναις
εἴη. σὺ δ' ἄφρων ὁ τ' Ἀργει
Σθενέλου τύραννος·

360

ὅς πόλιν ἐλθὼν ἔτέραν
οὐδὲν ἐλάσσον' Ἀργους,
θεῶν ἱκτῆρας ἀλάτας
καὶ ἐμᾶς χθονὸς ἀντομένους
ξένος ἀν βιαιώς
ἔλκεις, οὐ βασιλεῦσιν εἴξας,
οὐκ ἀλλο δίκαιον εἰπών·
ποῦ ταῦτα καλῶς ἀν εἴη
παρά γ' εὐ φρονοῦσιν;

ἀντ.

370

εἰρήνα μὲν ἔμοιγ' ἀρέσκει·
σοὶ δ', ω̄ κακόφρων ἄναξ,
λέγω· εἰ πόλιν ἥξεις,
οὐχ οὗτως ἀ δοκεῖς κυρήσεις.
οὐ σοὶ μόνῳ ἔγχος οὐδ'
ἰτέα κατάχαλκος ἐστιν.
ἀλλ' οὐ, πολέμων ἐραστά,
μή μοι δορὶ συνταράξῃς
τὰν εὐ χαρίτων ἔχουσαν
πόλιν, ἀλλ' ἀνάσχου.

ἐπωδ.

380

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
ω̄ παῖ, τί μοι σύννοιαν ὅμμασιν φέρων
ἥκεις; νέον τι πολεμίων λέγεις πέρι;
μέλλουσιν ἡ πάρεισιν ἡ τί πυνθάνει;

282

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

O thou stranger from Argolis faring
To Athens, thou shalt not affright
Our souls by thy bluster high-swelling.
Not yet such dishonour be done
To the land great and fair beyond telling !
Fools—thou and thy despot-lord dwelling 360
In Argos, this Sthenelus' son !

Thou who com'st to a city no lesser (*Ant.*)

Than Argos, essaying to seize--
And thou alien, O violent oppressor !—
The suppliants that cling to her knees,
The homeless that cry from her altars !
Thou hast not respect to our king,
And with justice thy false tongue palters :—
Who, except from truth's pathway he falters,
But shall count it an infamous thing ? 370

Peace love I well, but I warn thee, (*Epode*)

O tyrant, O treacherous-souled,
Though thou march to the gates of our hold,
Not the crown of thy hopes shall adorn thee.
Not for thine hand the war-spear alone
Nor the brass on the buckler hath shone !
O thou that in battle delightest,
Trouble not, trouble not with thy spear
The burg that the Graces make brightest
Of cities :—dread thou and forbear. 380

Re-enter DEMOPHON.

IOLAUS

My son, why com'st thou with care-clouded eyes ?
Tellest thou evil tidings of the foe ?
Tarry they ?—are they on us ?—what hast heard ?

283

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

οὐ γάρ τι μὴ ψεύσῃ γε κήρυκος λόγος·
οὐ γάρ στρατηγὸς εὔτυχὴς τὰ πρόσθεν ὡν¹
εἰσιν, σάφ' οἶδα, καὶ μάλ' οὐ σμικρὸν φρονῶν
εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας. ἀλλὰ τῶν φρονημάτων
οὐ Ζεὺς κολαστὴς τῶν ἄγαν ὑπερφρόνων.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

- 390 ἥκει στράτευμ' Ἀργείον Εύρυσθεύς τ' ἄναξ·
 έγώ νιν αὐτὸς εἶδον. ἄνδρα γὰρ χρεών,
 ὅστις στρατηγεῖν φησ' ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς,
 οὐκ ἀγγέλοισι τοὺς ἐναντίους ὄρâν.
 πεδία μὲν οὖν γῆς εἰς τάδ' οὐκ ἔφῆκέ πω
 στρατόν, λεπαίαν δ' ὁφρύην καθήμενος
 σκοπεῖ, δόκησιν δὴ τόδ' ἀν λέγοιμί σοι,
 ποίᾳ προσάξει στρατόπεδόν τ' ἄνευ δορὸς
 ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ τε τῇσδ' ἰδρύσεται χθονός.
 καὶ τάμα μέντοι πάντ' ἄραρ' ἥδη καλῶς·
 πόλις τ' ἐν ὅπλοις, σφάγια θ' ἥτοι μασμένα
 400 ἔστηκεν οἷς χρὴ ταῦτα τέμνεσθαι θεῶν,
 θυηπολεῖται δ' ἄστυ μάντεων ὑπο·
 τροπαία τ' ἔχθρῶν καὶ πόλει σωτήρια.
 χρησμῶν δ' ἀοιδοὺς πάντας εἰς ἐν ἀλίσας
 ἥλεγξα καὶ βέβηλα καὶ κεκρυμμένα
 λόγια παλαιά, τῆδε γῆ σωτήρια.
 καὶ τῶν μὲν ἀλλων διάφορ' ἔστι θεσφάτων
 πόλλ'. ἐν δὲ πᾶσι γνῶμα ταῦτὸν ἐμπρέπει·
 σφάξαι κελεύουσιν με παρθένον κόρη
 Δῆμητρος, ἥτις ἔστι πατρὸς εὐγενοῦς.
 410 έγὼ δ' ἔχω μέν, ως ὄρâς, προθυμίαν
 τοσήνδ' ἐς ὑμᾶς· παῦδα δ' οὕτ' ἐμὴν κτενῶ
 οὕτ' ἀλλον ἀστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ἀναγκάσω

¹ Tyrwhitt : for MSS. πρὸς θεῶν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

No empty promise was yon herald's threat.
Their captain, aye triumphant heretofore,
Shall march, I know, with heart uplifted high,
Against our Athens. Notwithstanding Zeus
Chastiseth overweening arrogance.

DEMOPHON

They are come, the Argive host and king Eurystheus.
Myself beheld them ; for behoves the man, 390
Whoso makes claim to know good generalship,
To see—nor that with eyes of scouts—his foes.
But to the plains not yet hath he marched down
His bands, but, couched upon the rocky brow,
Watcheth—I but make guess of that I tell thee—
Where without conflict to push on his host,
And in the land's heart camp him safety-girt.

Yet all my preparations well are laid :
Athens is all in arms, the victims ready
Stand for the Gods to whom they must be slain : 400
By seers the city is filled with sacrifice
For the foes' rout and saving of the state.
All prophecy-chanters have I caused to meet,
Into old public oracles have searched,
And secret, for salvation of this land.
And, mid their manifold diversities,
In one thing glares the sense of all the same :—
They bid me to Demeter's Daughter slay
A maiden of a high-born father sprung.

Full am I, as thou seest, of good will
To you; yet neither will I slay my child,
Nor force thereto another of my folk ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

άκονθος· ἐκῶν δὲ τίς κακῶς οὕτω φρονεῖ,
ὅστις τὰ φίλτατα' ἐκ χερῶν δώσει τέκνα;
καὶ νῦν πικρὰς ἀν συστάσεις ἀν εἰσίδοις,
τῶν μὲν λεγόντων ώς δίκαιου ήν ξένοις
ἰκέταις ἀρήγειν, τῶν δὲ μωρίαν ἔμου
κατηγορούντων· εἰ δὲ δὴ δράσω τόδε,
οἰκεῖος ηδη πόλεμος ἔξαρτύεται.

420 ταῦτ' οὖν ὅρα σὺ καὶ συνεξεύρισχ' ὅπως
αὐτοί τε σωθήσεσθε καὶ πέδον τόδε,
κάγω πολίταις μὴ διαβληθήσομαι.
οὐ γάρ τυραννιδ' ὥστε βαρβάρων ἔχω
ἄλλ' ήν δίκαια δρῶ, δίκαια πείσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἡ πρόθυμον οὐσταν οὐκ ἐφθεὸς
ξένοις ἀρήγειν τήνδε χρήζουσαν πόλιν;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ω τέκν', ἔοιγμεν ναυτίλοισιν, οἵτινες
χειμῶνος ἐκφυγόντες ἄγριον μένος
εἴς χείρα γῆ συνῆψαν, εἴτα χερσόθεν
πνοαῖσιν ἡλάθησαν εἴς πόντον πάλιν.
οὕτω δὲ χῆμεῖς τῆσδ' ἀπωθούμεσθα γῆς
ηδη πρὸς ἀκταῖς ὅντες ώς σεσωσμένοι.
οἷμοι· τί δῆτ' ἔτερψας ὡς τάλαινά με
ἐλπὶς τότ', οὐ μέλλουσα διατελεῖν χάριν;
συγγνωστὰ γάρ τοι καὶ τὰ τοῦδ', εἰ μὴ θέλει
κτείνειν πολιτῶν παῖδας, αἰνέσαι δ' ἔχω
καὶ τάνθάδ'. εἰ θεοῖσι δὴ δοκεῖ τάδε
πράσσειν ἔμ', οὕτοι σοί γ' ἀπόλλυται χάρις.
ω παῖδες, ὑμῖν δ' οὐκ ἔχω τί χρήσομαι.
ποῖ τρεψόμεσθα; τίς γαρ ἀστεπτος θεῶν;
ποῖον δὲ γαίας ἔρκος οὐκ ἀφίγμεθα;
δλούμεθ', ω τέκν', ἐκδοθησόμεσθα δῆ.

430

440

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And of his own will who hath heart so hard
As from his hands to yield a most dear child ?
Now gatherings mayst thou see of angry mood,
Where some say, right it is to render help
To suppliant strangers, some cry out upon
My folly :—yea, and if I do this thing,
Even this day is civil war afoot.

See thou to this then : help me find a way
Whereby yourselves and Athens shall be saved,
And I shall not be of my folk reproached.
For mine is no barbarian despot's sway,
But by just dealing my just dues I win.

420

CHORUS

How ? do the Gods forbid that Athens help
The stranger, though she yearn with eager will ?

IOLAUS

O children, we are like to shipmen, who,
Escaped the madding fury of the storm,
And now in act to grasp the land, have yet
By blasts been driven from shore to sea again.
Even so are we from this land thrust away,
When, as men saved, even now we touched the
strand.

430

Ah, me why didst thou cheer me, cruel hope,
Erst, when thy mind was not to crown thy boon ?
The king I cannot blame, who will not slay
His people's daughters : yea, I am content
With Athens' dealings with us : if my plight
Please Heaven, my gratitude to thee dies not.
Ah boys, for you I know not what to do !
Whitherward flee ?—what Gods rest unimplored ?
What refuge upon earth have we not sought ?
Die shall we, children, yielded up to foes.

440

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

κάμοῦ μὲν οὐδὲν εἴ με χρὴ θανεῖν μέλει,
 πλὴν εἴ τι τέρψω τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἔχθροὺς θανών.
 ὑμᾶς δὲ κλαίω καὶ κατοικτείρω, τέκνα,
 καὶ τὴν γεραιὰν μητέρ' Ἀλκμήνην πατρός.
 ὡς δυστάλαινα τοῦ μακροῦ βίου σέθεν,
 τλήμων δὲ κάγὼ πολλὰ μοχθήσας μάτην.
 χρῆν χρῆν ἄρ' ἡμᾶς ἀνδρὸς εἰς ἔχθροῦ χέρας
 πεσόντας αἰσχρῶς καὶ κακῶς λιπεῖν βίον.
 450 ἀλλ' οἰσθ' ὁ μοι σύμπραξον; οὐχ ἅπασα γὰρ
 πέφευγεν ἐλπὶς τῶνδε μοι σωτηρίας.
 ἔμ' ἔκδος Ἀργείοισιν ἀντὶ τῶνδ', ἄναξ,
 καὶ μήτε κινδύνευε, σωθήτω τέ μοι
 τέκν'. οὐ φιλεῖν δεῖ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχήν· ἵτω.
 μάλιστα δ' Εύρυσθεύς με βούλοιτ' ἀν λαβὼν
 τὸν Ἡράκλειον σύμμαχον καθυβρίσαι·
 σκαιὸς γὰρ ἀνήρ· τοῖς σοφοῖς δ' εὐκτὸν σοφῷ
 ἔχθραν συνάπτειν, μὴ ἀμαθεῖ φρονήματι.
 460 πολλῆς γὰρ αἰδοῦς καὶ δίκης τις ἀν τύχοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ω πρέσβυν, μή νυν τήνδ' ἐπαιτιῶ πόλιν·
 τάχ' ἀν γὰρ ἡμῖν ψευδὲς ἀλλ' ὅμως κακὸν
 γένοιτ' ὄνειδος ως ξένους προύδώκαμεν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

γενναῖα μὲν τάδ' εἰπας, ἀλλ' ἀμήχανα.
 οὐ σοῦ χατίζων δεῦρ' ἄναξ στρατηλατεῖ.
 τί γὰρ γέροντος ἀνδρὸς Εύρυσθεῖ πλέον
 θανόντος; ἀλλὰ τούσδε βούλεται κτανεῖν.
 δεινὸν γὰρ ἔχθροῖς βλαστάνοντες εὐγενεῖς,
 νεανίαι τε καὶ πατρὸς μεμνημένοι
 470 λύμης· ἀ κείνον πάντα προσκοπεῖν χρεών.
 ἀλλ' εἴ τιν' ἄλλην οἰσθα καιριωτέραν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCLES

I reck not of myself, if I must die,—
Except that o'er my death yon foes shall gloat ;
But for you, babes, I weep in utter ruth,
And for your sire's grey mother, even Alcmena.
O lady, hapless in thy length of days !
And hapless I, who have greatly toiled in vain !
Doomed were we, doomed into a foeman's hands
To fall, and die in shame and agony ! 450
King, help me !—wouldst know how ?—not every
hope
Of their deliverance hath fled my soul :—
Me to the Argives yield up in their stead.
So be unperilled thou, the lads be saved.
No right have I to love life : let it go !
Me would Eurystheus most rejoice to seize,—
Hercules' ally, me,—and evil-entreat ;
For churl he is. Let wise men pray to strive
With wise men, not with graceless arrogance.
So, if one fall, he stoops to chivalrous foe. 460

CHORUS

O ancient, upon Athens cast not blame !
Haply 'twere false, yet foul reproach were this
That we abandoned stranger-suppliants.

DEMOPHON

Noble thine offer ; yet it cannot be.
Not craving thee doth this king hither march ;
For of what profit to Eurystheus were
An old man's death ? Nay, these he lusts to slay.
For dangerous to foes are high-born youths
Growing to man, and brooding on sires' wrongs ;
And all this he foresees, he needs must so. 470
If any rede thou knowest more than this

289

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

βουλίγν, ἔτοιμαξ', ώς ἔγωγ' ἀμήχανος
χρησμῶν ἀκούσας εἰμὶ καὶ φόβου πλέως.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

Ἐένοι, θράσος μοι μηδὲν ἐξόδοις ἐμαῖς
προσθῆτε· πρῶτον γὰρ τόδ' ἐξαιτήσομαι·
γυναικὶ γὰρ σιγή τε καὶ τὸ σωφρονεῖν
κάλλιστον, εἴσω θ' ἡσυχον μένειν δόμων.
τῶν σῶν δ' ἀκούσας', Ἰόλεως, στεναγμάτων
ἐξῆλθον, οὐ ταχθεῖσα πρεσβεύειν γένους.
ἀλλ' εἰμὶ γάρ πως πρόσφορος, μέλει δέ μοι
μάλιστ' ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε, κάμαυτῆς πέρι
θέλω πυθέσθαι, μὴ πὶ τοῖς πάλαι κακοῖς
προσκείμενόν τι πῆμα σὴν δάκνει φρένα.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, μάλιστα σ' οὐ νεωστὶ δὴ τέκνων
τῶν Ἡρακλείων ἐνδίκως αἰνεῖν ἔχω.
ἡμῖν δὲ δόξας εὐ προχωρῆσαι δόμος
πάλιν μεθέστηκ' αὐθὶς εἰς τάμήχανον·
χρησμῶν γὰρ ὡδούς φησι σημαίνειν ὅδε,
οὐ ταῦρον οὐδὲ μόσχον, ἀλλὰ παρθένον
σφάξαι κόρη Δήμητρος ἥτις εὐγενής,
εἰς χρὴ μὲν ἡμᾶς, χρὴ δὲ τήνδ' εἶναι πόλιν.
ταῦτ' οὖν ἀμηχανοῦμεν· οὔτε γὰρ τέκνα
σφάξειν ὅδι αὐτοῦ φησιν οὔτ' ἄλλου τινός,
κάμοι λέγει μὲν οὐ σαφῶς, λέγει δέ πως,
εἰ μὴ τι τούτων ἐξαμηχανήσομεν,
ἡμᾶς μὲν ἄλλην γαῖαν εὑρίσκειν τινά,
αὐτὸς δὲ σώσαι τήνδε βούλεται χθόνα.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ἐν τῷδε κάχόμεσθα σωθῆναι λόγῳ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἐν τῷδε, τἄλλα γ' εὐτυχῶς πεπραγότες.

480

490

290

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

In season, set it forth : I am desperate,
Hearing these oracles, and full of fear.

Enter MACARIA from the temple.

MACARIA

Strangers, impute not for my coming forth
Boldness to me : this is my first request ;
Since for a woman silence and discretion
Be fairest, and still tarrying in the home.
But, Iolaus, I heard thy moans, and came,—
Though I be not ordained mine house's head :
Yet in some sort it fits me, for I love 480
These brethren more than all : yea, mine own fate
Fain would I learn,—lest to the former ills
Some new pang added now torments thy soul.

IOLAUS

Daughter, long since have I had righteous cause
To praise thee chiefliest of Hercules' seed.
Our house, that seemed but now to prosper well,
Once more hath fallen into desperate case.
For oracle-chanters, saith this king, proclaim
That he must bid to slay nor bull nor calf,
But a maid, daughter of a high-born sire, 490
If we, if Athens, must not cease to be.
This then is our despair : the king refuseth
To slay his own or any other's child,
And saith to me,—albeit not in words,—
Except we find for this some remedy,
We must needs forth and seek another land ;
But his own land he cannot chose but save.

MACARIA

On these terms hangeth our deliverance ?

IOLAUS

On these,—if in all else our fortune speed.

291

v 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

- 500 μή νυν τρέσης ἔτ' ἔχθρὸν Ἀργείον δόρυ·
 ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτὴ πρὶν κελευσθῆναι, γέρον,
 θυήσκειν ἑτοίμη καὶ παρίστασθαι σφαγῇ.
 τί φήσομεν γάρ, εἰ πόλις μὲν ἄξιοι
 κίνδυνον ἡμῶν εἴνεκ' αἱρεσθαι μέγαν;
 αὐτοὶ δὲ προστιθέντες ἄλλοισιν πόνους,
 παρόν σφε σώσαι, φευξόμεσθα μὴ θανεῖν;
 οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια,
 στένειν μὲν ἵκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους,
 πατρὸς δ' ἐκείνου φύντας οὐ πεφύκαμεν,
 κακοὺς ὁρᾶσθαι· ποῦ τάδ' ἐν χρηστοῖς πρέπει;
 κάλλιον, οἷμαι, τῆσδ', ἀ μὴ τύχοι ποτέ,
 πόλεως ἀλούσης, χεῖρας εἰς ἔχθρῶν πεσεῖν,
 κάπειτα δεινά, πατρὸς οὖσαν εὐγενοῦς,
 παθοῦσαν "Αἰδην μηδὲν ἡσσον εἰσιδεῖν.
 ἀλλ' ἐκπεσοῦσα τῇσδ' ἀλητεύσω χθονός,
 κούκαισχυννοῦμαι δῆτ', ἐὰν δή τις λέγῃ·
 τί δεῦρ' ἀφίκεσθ' ἱκεσίοισι σὺν κλάδοις
 αὐτοὶ φιλοψυχοῦντες; ἔξιτε χθονός·
 κακοὺς γὰρ ἡμεῖς οὐ προσωφελήσομεν.
 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μέντοι, τῶνδε μὲν τεθνηκότων,
 αὐτὴ δὲ σωθεῖσ', ἐλπίδ' εὐ πράξειν ἔχω·
 πολλοὶ γὰρ ἡδη τῇδε προῦδοσαν φίλους·
 τίς γὰρ κόρην ἔρημον ἢ δάμαρτ' ἔχειν
 ἢ παιδοποιεῖν ἔξι ἐμοῦ βουλήσεται;
 οῦκον θανεῖν ἅμεινον ἢ τούτων τυχεῖν
 ἀναξίαν; ἀλλῃ δὲ καὶ πρέπει τινὶ
 μᾶλλον τάδ', ἥτις μὴ πίσημος ὡς ἐγώ.
 ἥγεῖσθ' ὅπου δεῖ σῶμα κατθανεῖν τόδε,
 καὶ στεμματοῦτε καὶ κατάρχεσθ', εἰ δοκεῖ·
 νικάτε δ' ἔχθρούς· ἥδε γὰρ ψυχὴ πάρα

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

MACARIA

- Then dread no more the Argive foeman's spear. 500
Myself—I wait no bidding, ancient—am
Ready to die, and yield me to be slain.
What can we say, if Athens count it meet
To brave a mighty peril for our sake,
And we to others pass the struggle on,
And flee death, when that way deliverance lies ?
Never !—a scoffing to us this should be,
To sit and moan on, suppliant to their Gods,
And—born of that sire of whose loins we sprang—
To show us craven ! Is this like the brave ? 510
Better, forsooth, this town—which God forbid !—
Were ta'en, that into hands of foes I fell,
And suffered—I, from hero-father sprung—
Horrors, and looked on Hades none the less !
Or, banished, shall I wander from this land,
And not be utterly shamed, if one should say,
“ Wherefore come hither with your suppliant boughs,
O ye that so love life ?—hence from our land !
For we to cravens will not render help ? ”
- Nay, and not even if all these were slain 520
And I saved, have I hope of happy days ;—
Many, so tempted, have betrayed their friends ;—
For who would stoop to take a friendless girl
To wife, or care to raise up seed of me ?
Better to die than light on such a doom
Unworthy ! Haply this might well beseem
Another maid who hath not my renown.
- Lead on to where this body needs must die :
Wreathe me, begin the rite, if this seem good.
Vanquish your foes ; for ready is this life, 530

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

έκοῦσα κούκ ἄκουσα· κάξαγγέλλομαι
θυήσκειν ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε κάμαυτῆς ὑπερ.
εύρημα γάρ τοι μὴ φιλοψυχοῦσ' ἐγώ
κάλλιστον ηὔρηκ', εὐκλεῶς λιπεῖν βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, τί λέξω παρθένου μέγαν λόγον
κλύων, ἀδελφῶν ἢ πάρος θέλει θανεῖν;
τούτων τίς ἀν λέξειε γενναίους λόγους
μᾶλλον, τίς ἀν δράσειεν ἀνθρώπων ἔτι;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

540 ω τέκνον, οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλλοθεν τὸ σὸν κάρα,
ἀλλ' ἐξ ἐκείνου σπέρμα τῆς θείας φρενὸς
πέφυκας Ἡράκλειος· οὐδ' αἰσχύνομαι
τοὺς σοὶς λόγοισι, τῇ τύχῃ δ' ἀλγυνομαι.
ἀλλ' ἡ γένοιτ' ἀν ἐνδικωτέρως φράσω·
πάσας ἀδελφὰς τῆσδε δεῦρο χρὴ καλεῖν,
καθ' ἡ λαχοῦσα θυησκέτω γένους ὑπερ·
σὲ δ' οὐ δίκαιον κατθανεῖν ἄνευ πάλου.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

οὐκ ἀν θάνοιμι τῇ τύχῃ λαχοῦσ' ἐγώ·
χάρις γὰρ οὐ πρόσεστι· μὴ λέξης, γέρον.
ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἐνδέχεσθε καὶ βούλεσθέ μοι
550 χρῆσθαι προθύμῳ, τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἐγώ
δίδωμ' ἔκοῦσα τοῖσδ', ἀναγκασθεῖσα δ' οὐ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ.

οδ' αὖ λόγος σοι τοῦ πρὸν εὐγενέστερος·
κάκεῖνος ἦν ἄριστος, ἀλλ' ὑπερφέρεις
τόλμη τε τόλμαν καὶ λόγῳ χρηστῷ λόγον.
οὐ μὴν κελεύω γ' οὐδ' ἀπεινέπω, τέκνον,
θυήσκειν σ'. ἀδελφοὺς δ' ὠφελεῖς θανοῦσα σούς.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Willing, ungrudging. Yea, I pledge me now
For these my brothers' sake, and mine, to die.
For treasure-trove most fair, by loving not
Life, have I found,—with glory to quit life.

CHORUS

What shall I say, who hear this maid's high words
Consenting for her brethren's sake to die?
What man could utter nobler words than these,
Or who do nobler deed henceforth for ever?

IOLAUS

O child, thine heart is of none other sire—
Thou art his own seed, of that godlike soul,
Hercules, sprung! Exceeding proud am I 540
For these thy words, but grieve for this hard fate.
Yet how 'twere done more justly will I tell:
Hither be all this maiden's sisters called;
Then for her house let whom the lot dooms die;
But that thou die without lot is not just.

MACARIA

I will not perish by the lot's doom, I;
For then is no free grace: thou, name it not.
But if ye will accept me, and consent
To take an eager victim, willingly 550
I give my life for these, nowise constrained.

IOLAUS

Ah, marvellous one!
Nobler thy latter speech is than thy first.
Perfect was that, but thou o'erpassest now
Courage with courage, word with noble word!
Yet, daughter, thee I bid not, nor forbid
To die:—thy brethren dost thou, dying, help.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

σοφῶς κελεύεις· μὴ τρέσης μάσματος
τούμοῦ μετασχεῖν, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρως θάνω.
560 ἔπου δέ, πρέσβυ· σῇ γὰρ ἐνθανεῖν χερὶ¹
θέλω· πέπλοις δὲ σῶμ' ἐμὸν κρύψον παρών·
ἐπεὶ σφαγῆς γε πρὸς τὸ δεινὸν εἰμ' ἐγώ,
εἴπερ πέφυκα πατρὸς οὐπερ εὔχομαι.

ΙΟЛАΟΣ

οὐκ ἀν δυναίμην σῷ παρεστάναι μόρῳ.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ τοῦδε χρῆζε, μή μ' ἐν ἀρσένων,
ἀλλ' ἐν γυναικῶν χερσὶν ἐκπνεῦσαι βίον.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

570 ἔσται τάδ', ὡ τάλαινα παρθένων· ἐπεὶ
κάμοι τόδ' αἰσχρόν, μή σε κοσμεῖσθαι καλῶς,
πολλῶν ἔκατι, τῆς τε σῆς εὐψυχίας
καὶ τοῦ δικαίου· τλημονεστάτην δὲ σὲ
πασῶν γυναικῶν εἰδον ὄφθαλμοῖς ἐγώ.
ἀλλ' εἴ τι βούλει τούσδε τὸν γέροντά τε,
χώρει προσειπούσ' ὑστάτοις προσφθέγμασιν.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ω̄ χαῖρε, πρέσβυ. χαῖρε καὶ δίδασκέ μοι
τοιούσδε τούσδε παῖδας εἰς τὸ πᾶν σοφοὺς
ῶσπερ σύ, μηδὲν μᾶλλον· ἀρκέσουσι γάρ.
πειρῶ δὲ σῶσαι μὴ θανεῖν, πρόθυμος ὡν·
σοὶ παῖδές ἐσμεν· σαῦν χεροῖν τεθράμμεθα.
όρâς δὲ κάμε τὴν ἐμὴν ὥραν γάμου
διδούσαν ἀντὶ τῶνδε κατθανούμενην.
580 ὑμεῖς δ' ἀδελφῶν ἡ παροῦσ' ὄμιλία,
εὐδαιμονοῦτε, καὶ γένοιθ' ὑμῖν ὅσων
ἡμὴ πάροιθε καρδία σφαγήσεται.
καὶ τὸν γέροντα τὴν τ' ἔσω γραῖαν δόμων

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

MACARIA

Thou dost bid—wisely. Fear not thou to take
Guilt-stain of me ; but let me die—die free.
Come with me, ancient : in thine arms to die 560
I ask. Be near me ; veil my corse with robes,
Since to the horror of the knife I pass—
If I be of the sire that I boast mine.

IOLAUS

I cannot stand and look upon thy doom.

MACARIA

At least ask thou the king that I may breathe
My last breath not in men's but women's hands.

DEMOPHON

This shall be, hapless among maidens : shame
Were mine to grace thee not with honour meet,
For causes manifold ; for thy great heart,
For justice' sake, and for that thou art brave 570
Above all women that mine eyes have seen.
Wouldst thou say aught to these, or this grey sire,
Speak thy last word, or ever thou depart. [Exit.

MACARIA

Farewell, old sire, farewell, and teach, O teach
These boys to be like thee, in all things wise
As thou art—no whit more : that shall suffice.
And strive from death to save them, loyal soul :
Thy children are we, fostered by thine hands.
Thou seest how my bloom of spousal-tide
I yield up in the stead of these to die. 580
And ye, O band of brethren at my side,
Blessings on you ! May all be yours, for which
The cleaving of mine heart shall pay the price.
This old man, and the grey queen therewithin,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τιμάτε πατρὸς μητέρ' Ἀλκμήνην ἐμοῦ
ξένους τε τούσδε. καὶν ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων
καὶ νόστος ὑμῖν εὐρεθῆ ποτ' ἐκ θεῶν,
μέμνησθε τὴν σώτειραν ὡς θάψαι χρεών.
κάλλιστά τοι δίκαιον· οὐ γὰρ ἐνδεῆς
590 ὑμῖν παρέστην, ἀλλὰ προῦθανον γένους.
τάδ' ἀντὶ παίδων ἐστί μοι κειμήλια
καὶ παρθενείας, εἴ τι δὴ κάτω χθονός·
εἴη γε μέντοι μηδέν· εἰ γὰρ ἔξομεν
κάκει μερίμνας οἱ θανούμενοι βροτῶν,
οὐκ οīδ' ὅποι τις τρέψεται· τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν
κακῶν μέγιστον φάρμακον νομίζεται.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλ', ὡς μέγιστον ἐκπρέπουσ' εὐψυχίᾳ
πασῶν γυναικῶν, ἵσθι, τιμιωτάτη
καὶ ζῶσ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν καὶ θανοῦσ' ἔσει πολύ·
600 καὶ χαῖρε· δυσφημεῖν γὰρ ἄξομαι θεάν,
ἡ σὸν κατήρκται σῶμα, Δήμητρος κόρην.
ὡς παῖδες, οἰχόμεσθα· λύεται μέλη
λύπη· λάβεσθε κεὶς ἔδραν μ' ἐρείσατε
αὐτοῦ πέπλοισι τοῖσδε κρύψαντες, τέκνα.
ώς οὕτε τούτοις ἥδομαι πεπραγμένοις,
χρησμοῦ τε μὴ κραυθέντος οὐ βιώσιμον·
μείζων γὰρ ἄτη, συμφορὰ δὲ καὶ τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

οὔτινά φημι θεῶν ἄτερ ὅλβιον, οὐ βαρύποτμον,
ἄνδρα γενέσθαι,
610 οὐδὲ τὸν αὐτὸν ἀεὶ βεβάναι δόμον
εὐτυχίᾳ· παρὰ δ' ἀλλαν ἄλλα
μοῖρα διώκει.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Alcmena, my sire's mother, honour ye,
And these our hosts. If there be found of heaven
For you release from toils, and home-return,
Remember then your saviour's burial due,—
Fair burial, as is just. I have failed you naught,
Have stood your champion, for mine house have died. 590
My treasure this shall be, for babes unborn,
Spousals forgone ;—if in the grave aught be :
But ah that naught might be !—for if there too
We mortals who must die shall yet have cares,
I know not whither one shall turn ; since death
For sorrows is accounted chiefest balm.

IOLAUS

O thou who for high courage hast no peer,
Above all women, know, in life, in death,
Most chiefest honour shalt thou have of us.
Farewell ; for awe I dare not curse the Goddess, 600
Demeter's child, to whom thy life is sealed.

[*Exit MACARIA. IOLAUS sinks to the ground.*

O boys, we are undone !—faint fail my limbs
For anguish ! Take, upbear me to a seat
Hereby, and muffle with these robes, my sons.
For neither can I joy in these deeds done,
Nor might we live, the oracle unfulfilled.
This is calamity; that were deeper ruin.

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

Never man hath been blessed save by God's dispensation, nor bowed under sorrow :—

Lo, this do I cry :— [ways ;
Nor the same house treads evermore in prosperity's 610
But the fate of to-day is dogged by the feet of the
fate of to-morrow
Ever treading anigh ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τὸν μὲν ἀφ' ὑψηλῶν βραχὺν φκισε,
τὸν δ' ἀτίταν¹ εὐδαίμονα τεύχει.
μόρσιμα δ' οὕτι φυγεῖν θέμις,
οὐ σοφία τις ἀπώσεται·
ἀλλὰ μάταν ὁ πρόθυμος ἀεὶ πόνον ἔξει.

ἀντ.

ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ προπίτνων τὰ θεῶν φέρε μηδ' ὑπερ-
άλγει

620 φροντίδα λύπᾳ·

εὐδόκιμον γὰρ ἔχει θανάτου μέρος
ἀ μελέα πρό τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γᾶς·
οὐδ' ἀκλεής νιν
δόξα πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ὑποδέξεται·
ἀ δ' ἀρετὰ βαίνει διὰ μόχθων.
ἄξια μὲν πατρός, ἄξια δ'
εὐγενίας τάδε γίγνεται·
εἰ δὲ σέβεις θανάτους ἀγαθῶν, μετέχω σοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

630 ὡ τέκνα, χαίρετ· Ἰόλεως δὲ ποῦ γέρων
μήτηρ τε πατρὸς τῆσδ' ἔδρας ἀποστατεῖ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πάρεσμεν, οἴα δή γ' ἐμοῦ παρουσία.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί χρῆμα κεῖσαι καὶ κατηχέεις ὅμμ' ἔχεις;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φροντίς τις ἥλθ' οἰκεῖος, ἦ συνειχόμην.

¹ Lobeck : for MSS. ἀλήταν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCLES

And him that was highly exalted it comes to abase,
And him that was nothing accounted it setteth on
high.

Ye may flee not your doom, nor repel, though the
buckler of wisdom ye borrow,
And whoso essayeth hath vain toil endlessly.

(*Ant.*)
Ah, cast thee not down, but endure heaven's stroke,
nor thy spirit surrender

Unto anguished despair.

620

She hath won her a portion in death that the world
shall praise, [Athens' defender ;
Who hath out of her agony risen, her brethren's, our
And a crown shall she wear

Of renown that the worship of men on her brows
shall place ; [ing fare.

For through tangle of trouble doth virtue unfalter-
Of her sire is it worthily done, of her line's heroic
splendour. [share.

In thine homage to noble death mine heart hath

Enter HENCHMAN OF HYLLUS.

HENCHMAN

Hail, children ! Where stay ancient Iolaus
And your sire's mother from their session here ?

IOLAUS

Here am I—such as my poor presence is.

HENCHMAN

Why dost thou lie thus ? Why these down-drooped
eyes ?

IOLAUS

A sorrow of this house is come to oppress me.

301

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἔπαιρέ νυν σεαυτόν, ὅρθωσον κάρα.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

γέροντές ἐσμεν κούδαμῶς ἔρρωμεθα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ῆκω γε μέντοι χάρμα σοι φέρων μέγα.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τίς δ' εἴλι σύ; ποῦ σοι συντυχὸν ἀμνημονῶ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

"Τλλου πενέστης· οὐ με γιγνώσκεις ὄρων;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ῳ φίλταθ', ἥκεις ἄρα νῷν σωτὴρ βλάβης;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μάλιστα· καὶ πρός γ' εὔτυχεῖς τὰ νῦν τάδε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ῳ μῆτερ ἐσθλοῦ παιδός, Ἀλκμήνην λέγω,
ἔξελθ', ἀκουσον τούσδε φιλτάτους λόγους.
πάλαι γὰρ ὡδίνουσα τῶν ἀφιγμένων
ψυχὴν ἐτήκου νόστος εἰ γενήσεται.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί χρῆμ' ἀϊτῆς πᾶν τόδ' ἐπλήσθη στέγος;

650 Ιόλαε, μῶν τίς σ' αὖ βιάζεται παρὼν
κῆρυξ ἀπ' Ἀργους; ἀσθενής μὲν ἦ γ' ἐμὴ
ρώμη, τοσόνδε δ' εἰδέναι σε χρή, ξένε,
οὐκ ἔστ' ἄγειν σε τούσδ' ἐμοῦ ζώσης ποτέ.
ἦ τάρ' ἐκείνου μὴ νομίζοιμην ἐγὼ
μήτηρ ἔτ' εἰ δὲ τῶνδε προσθίξει χερί,
δυοῖν γερόντοιν οὐ καλῶς ἀγωνιεῖ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

θάρσει, γεραιά, μὴ τρέσης· οὐκ Ἀργόθεν
κῆρυξ ἀφίκται πολεμίους λόγους ἔχων.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Yet now upraise thyself : uplift thine head.

IOLAUS

Old am I, and my strength is utter naught.

HENCHMAN

But bringing tidings of great joy I come.

IOLAUS

Who art thou?—where have I met thee unremembered?

HENCHMAN

I am Hyllus' vassal. Look, dost know me not?

IOLAUS

Friend, com'st thou our deliverer from bane?

640

HENCHMAN

Yea : therewithal thou art fortunate this day.

IOLAUS

Alcmena, mother of a hero-son,
Come forth, give ear to these most welcome words ;
For travailing long in spirit hast thou fainted
Lest those which now are come should ne'er return.

Enter ALCMENA from the temple.

ALCMENA

What means this outcry filling all the house ?
How, hath a herald from their Argos come
Again to outrage thee ? My strength is weakness ;
Yet of this thing, O stranger, be assured,
Never, while I live, shalt thou hale these hence ;
Else be I counted mother of Hercules
No more ; for thou, if thou lay hand on these,
With two old foes shalt have inglorious strife.

IOLAUS

Fear not, grey queen, nor quake : no herald he
From Argos cometh bearing hests of foes.

303

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί γὰρ βοὴν ἔστησας ἄγγελον φόβου;

ΙΟЛАΟΣ

σὺ πρόσθε ναοῦ τοῦδ' ὅπως βαίης πέλας.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

οὐκ ἥσμεν ἡμεῖς ταῦτα· τίς γάρ ἐσθ' ὅδε;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἥκοντα παῖδα παιδὸς ἀγγέλλει σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

660 ὁ χαῖρε καὶ σὺ τοῖσδε τοῖς ἀγγέλμασιν.
ἀτὰρ τί χώρᾳ τῇδε προσβαλὼν πόδα
ποῦ νῦν ἄπεστι; τίς νιν εἰργε συμφορὰ
σὺν σοὶ φανέντα δεῦρ' ἐμὴν τέρψαι φρένα;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

στρατὸν καθίζει τάσσεται θ' ὃν ἥλθ' ἔχων.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τοῦδ' οὐκέθ' ἡμῖν τοῦ λόγου μέτεστι δή.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μέτεστιν· ἡμῶν δ' ἔργον ἴστορεῖν τάδε.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δῆτα βούλει τῶν πεπραγμένων μαθεῖν;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πόσον τι πλῆθος συμμάχων πάρεστ' ἔχων;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πολλούς· ἀριθμὸν δ' ἄλλον οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἴσασιν, οἷμαι, ταῦτ' Ἀθηναίων πρόμοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἴσασιν· καὶ δὴ λαιὸν ἔστηκεν κέρας.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἡδη γὰρ ὡς εἰς ἔργον ὕπλισται στρατός;

670

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

Why then didst raise a cry in-ushering fear ?

IOLAUS

That thou before this temple might'st draw nigh.

ALCMENA

This was not in my thought :—now who is this ?

IOLAUS

He bringeth tidings. Thy son's son is here.

ALCMENA

Hail also thou for this thine heralding !

660

But wherefore absent, if he hath set foot

In this land ?—where ?—what hap hath hindered him
From coming with thee to make glad mine heart ?

HENCHMAN

The host he hath brought he camps, and marshals it.

ALCMENA

Such matter appertaineth not to me.

IOLAUS

It doth—though my part be to inquire thereof.

HENCHMAN

What wouldst thou know concerning things achieved ?

IOLAUS

How great a host of allies hath he brought ?

HENCHMAN

Many : their tale I cannot tell save thus.

IOLAUS

All this, I trow, the chiefs Athenian know ?

670

HENCHMAN

They know : yea, on their left he stands arrayed.

IOLAUS

Ha, is the host already armed for fight ?

305

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

καὶ δὴ παρῆκται σφάγια τάξεων ἐκάσ.

ΙΟЛАΟΣ

πόσον τι δ' ἔστ' ἄπωθεν Ἀργεῖον δόρυ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ῶστ' ἔξορâσθαι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἐμφανῶς.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τί δρῶντα; μῶν τάσσοντα πολεμίων στίχας;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἡκάζομεν ταῦτ· οὐ γὰρ ἔξηκούομεν.

ἀλλ' εἰμ· ἐρήμους δεσπότας τούμὸν μέρος
οὐκ ἀν θέλοιμι πολεμίοισι συμβαλεῖν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

680 κάγωγε σὺν σοὶ ταῦτὰ γὰρ φροντίζομεν,
φίλοις παρόντες, ώς ἔσιγμεν, ὡφελεῖν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ῆκιστα πρὸς σοῦ μῶρον ἦν εἰπεῖν ἔπος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καὶ μὴ μετασχεῖν γ' ἀλκίμου μάχης φίλοις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἐν ὅψει τραῦμα μὴ δρώσης χερός.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τί δ'; οὐ θένοιμι κἄν ἐγὼ δι' ἀσπίδος;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

θένοις ἄν, ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν αὐτὸς ἀν πέσοις.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐδεὶς ἔμ' ἐχθρῶν προσβλέπων ἀνέξεται.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστιν, ω τāν, ἢ ποτ' ἦν ρώμη σέθεν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὖν μαχοῦμαί γ' ἀριθμὸν οὐκ ἐλάσσοσι.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Yea, and the victims brought without the ranks.

IOLAUS

And distant how far is the Argive spear?

HENCHMAN

So that thou plainly mayst discern their chief.

IOLAUS

What doth he?—marshals he the foemen's lines?

HENCHMAN

So made we guess: not plainly could we hear.
But I must go: I would not that without me,
Through fault of mine, my lords should clash with
foes.

IOLAUS

And I with thee: my purpose is as thine,—
As meet is,—to be there and help my friends.

680

HENCHMAN

Nay, nowise worthy thee were idle talk!

IOLAUS

Nor worthy of me to help not friends in fight!

HENCHMAN

The glance can deal no wound, if hand strike not.

IOLAUS

How? Cannot I withal smite through a shield?

HENCHMAN

Smite?—yea, but thou thyself ere then mightst fall.

IOLAUS

There is no foe shall dare to meet mine eyes.

HENCHMAN

Thou hast not, good my lord, thine olden strength.

IOLAUS

Yet foes by tale not fewer will I fight.

307

x 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

690 σμικρὸν τὸ σὸν σήκωμα προστίθης φίλοις.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μή τοί μ' ἔρυκε δρᾶν παρεσκευασμένον.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

δρᾶν μὲν σύ γ' οὐχ οἰός τε, βουλεσθαι δ' ἵσως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ώς μὴ μενοῦντα τάλλα σοι λέγειν πάρα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πῶς οὖν ὄπλιτης τευχέων ἄτερ φανεῖ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

700 ἔστ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἔνδον αἰχμάλωθ' ὅπλα
τοῖσδ', οἰσι χρησόμεσθα κάποδώσομεν
ζῶντες· θανόντας δ' οὐκ ἀπαιτήσει θεός.
ἀλλ' εἴσιθ' εἴσω κάπο πασσάλων ἐλῶν
ἔνεγχ' ὄπλιτην κόσμον ώς τάχιστά μοι.
αἰσχρὸν γὰρ οἰκούρημα γίγνεται τόδε,
τοὺς μὲν μάχεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ δειλίᾳ μένειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

λῆμα μὲν οὕπω στόρνυσι χρόνος
τὸ σόν, ἀλλ' ἡβᾶ· σῶμα δὲ φροῦδον.
τί πονεῖς ἄλλως ἢ σὲ μὲν βλάψει,
σμικρὰ δ' ὀνήσει πόλιν ἡμετέραν;
χρῆν γνωσιμαχεῖν σὴν ἥλικίαν,
τα δ' ἀμήχαν' εἴαν· οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως
ἡβην κτήσει πάλιν αὐθις.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

710 τί χρῆμα μέλλεις σῶν φρενῶν οὐκ ἔνδον ὁν
λιπεῖν μ' ἔρημον σὺν τεκνοισι τοῖς ἔμοῖς;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀνδρῶν γὰρ ἀλκή· σοὶ δὲ χρή τούτων μέλειν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Scant weight into thy friends' scale wilt thou cast. 690

IOLAUS

Hinder me not. I am wrought up for the deed.

HENCHMAN

For deeds no power thou hast ;—hast will, perchance.

IOLAUS

Talk as thou wilt, so I bide not behind.

HENCHMAN

With mailed men how shalt thou unarmed appear ?

IOLAUS

There hang within yon fane arms battle-won.

These will I use, and, if I live, restore ;—

The God will not require them of the slain.

Pass thou within, and from the nails take down,
And bring with speed to me, that warrior-gear.

[*Exit HENCHMAN.*

Shameful it is—this loitering at home,

700

That some should fight, some, craven souls, hang back !

CHORUS

Not yet may the years quell thy spirit,

Young in heart, though thy strength be no more !

Why toil to thine hurt but in vain ?

Small help of thee Athens should gain.

Let thine eld yet be wise, and refrain

From things hopeless : thou canst not inherit

Yet again the lost prowess of yore.

ALCMENA

Art thou beside thyself?—what, meanest thou

To leave me and my children thus forlorn ?

710

IOLAUS

Yea, men must fight. For these must thou take
thought.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ'; ἡν θάνης σύ, πῶς ἐγὼ σωθήσομαι;

ΙΟЛАΟΣ

παιδὸς μελήσει παισὶ τοῖς λελειμμένοις.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἡν δ' οὖν, δὲ μὴ γένοιτο, χρήσωνται τύχῃ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οἶδ' οὐ προδώσουσίν σε, μὴ τρέσης, ξένοι.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τοσόνδε γάρ τοι θάρσος, οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἔχω.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καὶ Ζηνὶ τῶν σῶν, οἶδ' ἐγώ, μέλει πόνων.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

φεῦ.

Ζεὺς ἐξ ἐμοῦ μὲν οὐκ ἀκούσεται κακῶς·
εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ὅσιος αὐτὸς οἴδεν εἰς ἐμέ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

720 πλων μὲν ἥδη τήνδ' ὄρᾶς παντευχίαν.
φθάνοις δ' ἀν οὐκ ἀν τοῖσδε συγκρύπτων δέμας·
ώς ἐγγὺς ἄγων, καὶ μάλιστ' Ἀρης στυγεῖ
μέλλοντας· εἰ δὲ τευχέων φοβεῖ βάρος,
νῦν μὲν πορεύουν γυμνός, ἐν δὲ τάξεσιν
κόσμῳ πυκάζουν τῷδ· ἐγὼ δ' οἴσω τέως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πρόχειρ' ἔχων
τεύχη κόμιζε, χειρὶ δ' ἔνθες οξύην,
λαιον τ' ἔπαιρε πῆχυν, εὐθύνων πόδα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἢ παιδαγωγεῖν γὰρ τὸν ὄπλιτην χρεών;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

730 ὅρνιθος εἶνεκ' ἀσφαλῶς πορευτέον.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

But, if thou perish, how shall I be saved ?

IOLAUS

Thy son's sons which are left shall care for thee.

ALCMENA

But if—which God forbid—aught hap to them ?

IOLAUS

Our hosts shall not forsake thee. Fear not thou.

ALCMENA

Mine heart's last stay are these : none else have I.

IOLAUS

Nay, Zeus, I know, remembereth thy griefs:

ALCMENA

Ah ! (*sighs heavily.*)

Never of me shall ill be said of Zeus ;

But is he just to me-ward ? Himself knows !

[*Retires within temple.*

Re-enter HENCHMAN.

HENCHMAN

Lo, here thou seest a warrior's gear complete :

720

Make all speed to encase in these thy frame.

The fight is nigh, and most the War-god loathes

Loiterers. If thou fear the armour's weight,

Go mailless now, and lap thee mid the ranks

In this array : till then will I bear all.

IOLAUS

Well hast thou said : yet ready to mine hand

Bring on the arms : set in mine hand a spear :

Bear up my left arm, ordering my steps.

HENCHMAN

How, lead as a little child the man-at-arms !

IOLAUS

For the omen's sake unstumbling must I go.

780

311

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἴθ' ἡσθα δυνατὸς δρᾶν ὅσον πρόθυμος εἰ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἔπειγε· λειφθεὶς δεινὰ πείσομαι μάχης.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

σύ τοι βραδύνεις, οὐκέτι ἔγω, δοκῶν τι δρᾶν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὔκουν ὁρᾶς μου κῶλον ώς ἐπείγεται;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

όρω δοκοῦντα μᾶλλον ἢ σπεύδοντά σε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ ταῦτα λέξεις, ἡνίκ’ ἀν λεύσσης μ’ ἔκει.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δρῶντα; βουλοίμην δ’ ἀν εὐτυχοῦντά γε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

δι’ ἀσπιδος θείνοντα πολεμίων τινά.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εὶ δή ποθ’ ἥξομέν γε τοῦτο γὰρ φόβος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ·

εἴθ’, ὡ βραχίων, οἶνον ἡβήσαντά σε
μεμνήμεθ’ ἡμεῖς, ἡνίκα ξὺν Ἡρακλεῖ
Σπάρτην ἐπόρθεις, σύμμαχος γένοιό μοι
τοιοῦτος· οilos ἀν τροπὴν Εὔρυσθέως
θείμην ἐπεί τοι καὶ κακὸς μένειν δόρυ.
ἔστιν δὲ ἐν δλβῳ καὶ τόδ’ οὐκ ὄρθως ἔχον,
εὐψυχίας δόκησις· οἰόμεσθα γὰρ
τὸν εὐτυχοῦντα πάντ’ ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γὰ καὶ παννύχιος σελάνα
καὶ λαμπρόταται θεοῦ
φαεσίμβροτοι αὐγαί,
ἀγγελίαν μοι ἐνέγκαιτ’.

στρ. α'

740

750

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Would thou wert strong to do, as thou art fain !

IOLAUS

On !—woe, if I be laggard for the fray !

HENCHMAN

Not I, but thou art slow, who dream'st performance.

IOLAUS

Seëst thou not how onward speed my limbs ?

HENCHMAN

More thine imagining see I than thy speed.

IOLAUS

Thou shalt not say so when thou seest me there—

HENCHMAN

Achieving what ?—I fain would see thy triumph !

IOLAUS

Smiting some foeman, yea, clear through the shield.

HENCHMAN

If we win ever thither,—this I doubt.

IOLAUS

Would, O mine arm, that, as I call to mind

740

Thy young strength, when thou didst with Hercules
Smite Sparta, such a helper unto me

Thou wouldest become ! How mightily would I rout
Eurystheus—craven he to abide the spear !

With high estate is this delusion linked,

Repute for courage high : for still we deem

That he who prospereth knoweth all things well.

[*Ereunt.*

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

Earth!—Moon, which reign'st the livelong night!—

O glorious radiancy

Of Him who giveth mortals light,

750

Flash tidings unto me !

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ιαχήσατε δ' οὐρανῷ
καὶ παρὰ θρόνον ἀρχέταν,
γλαυκᾶς τ' ἐν Ἀθάνασ.
μέλλω τᾶς πατριώτιδος γᾶς,
μέλλω καὶ ὑπὲρ δόμων,
ἰκέτας ὑποδεχθείς,
κίνδυνον πολιῷ τεμεῖν σιδάρῳ.

- 760 δεινὸν μὲν πόλιν ώς Μυκήνας ἀντ. α'
εὐδαιμονα καὶ δορὸς
πολυναίνετον ἀλκᾶ
μῆνιν ἐμᾶ χθονὶ κεύθειν.
κακὸν δ', ὡ πόλις, εἰ ξένους
ἰκτήρας παραδώσομεν
κελεύσμασιν Ἀργούς.
Ζεύς μοι σύμμαχος, οὐ φοβοῦμαι,
Ζεύς μοι χάριν ἐνδίκως
ἔχει οὕποτε θνατῶν
ῆσσονες παρ' ἐμοὶ θεοὶ¹ φανοῦνται.

- 770 ἀλλ', ὡ πότνια, σὸν γὰρ οὐδας στρ. β
γᾶς, σὸν καὶ πόλις, ἀς σὺ μάτηρ
δέσποινά τε καὶ φύλαξ,
πόρευσον ἀλλὰ τὸν οὐ δικαίως
τὰδ' ἐπάγοντα δορυσσοῦν
στρατὸν Ἀργόθεν· οὐ γὰρ ἐμᾶ γ' ἀρετᾶ
δίκαιος εἰμ' ἐκπεσεῖν μελάθρων.
ἐπεί σοι πολύθυστος αἰεὶ ἀντ. β
τιμὰ κραίνεται, οὐδὲ λάθει
μηνῶν φθινὰς ἀμέρα,
νέων τ' ἀοιδαὶ χορῶν τε μολπαί.

¹ Dindorf: for MSS. ποτ' άν εἴτ' ἐμοῦ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Shout triumph up through heaven's expansion,
Up to the throne of all men's Lord,
Up to grey-eyed Athena's mansion !
I for my land am battle-dight,
Arrayed for hearth and home to fight,
To shear through danger with the sword,
For right of sanctuary.

Dread peril, that Mycenae-town— (Ant. 1)
The mighty burg, whose hand
The wide world through hath spear-renown,—
Nurse wrath against my land !
Yet shame, O shame, were thine, my city,
If we must yield to Argos' hest
Suppliants,—if fear must cast out pity !
Zeus champions me ; I tread fear down :
Zeus' favour is my right, my crown :
In mine esteem above the Blest
Never shall mortals stand.

(Str. 2) 770

But, O Queen,—for our soil, for our city is thine,
And to thee be we given—
O our Mother, our Mistress, O Warder Divine,
Yon despiser of heaven,
Who from Argos brings storm-rush of spearmen
upon me, [won me
Chase afar!—no such guerdon hath righteousness
As from home to be driven!

(Ant. 2)
For the sacrifice-homage is rendered thee aye
When the month waneth, bringing
The day when young voices to thee chant the lay,
When the dancers are singing, 780

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἀνεμόεντι δ' ἐπ' ὅχθῳ
δλολύγματα παννυχίοις ὑπὸ παρ-
θένων ἰαχεῖ ποδῶν κρότοισιν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

δέσποινα, μύθους σοί τε συντομωτάτους
κλύειν ἐμοί τε τῷδε καλλίστους φέρω.
νικῶμεν ἔχθροὺς καὶ τροπαῖ ἴδρυεται
παντευχίαν ἔχοντα πολεμίων σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ώ φίλταθ', ἥδε σ' ἡμέρα διήλασεν
ἡλευθερώσθαι τοῖσδε τοῖς ἀγγέλμασιν.
μιᾶς δέ μ' οὕπω συμφορᾶς ἐλευθεροῖς·
φόβος γὰρ εἴ μοι ζῶσιν οὖς ἐγὼ θέλω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ζῶσιν μέγιστόν γ' εὐκλεεῖς κατὰ στρατόν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

οἱ μὲν γέρων οὖν ἔστιν Ἰόλεως ἔτι;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μάλιστα· πράξας δ' ἐκ θεῶν κάλλιστα δῆ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ' ἔστι; μῶν τι κεδνὸν ἡγωνίζετο;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

νέος μεθέστηκ' ἐκ γέρουντος αὐθις αὖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

θαυμάστ' ἔλεξας· ἀλλά σ' εὔτυχῃ φίλων
μάχης ἀγῶνα πρῶτον ἀγγεῖλαι θέλω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἰς μου λόγος σοι πάντα σημανεῖ τάδε.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἀλλήλοισιν ὄπλίτην στρατὸν
κατὰ στόμ' ἐκτείνοντες ἀντετάξαμεν,
ἐκβὰς τεθρίππων "Τλλος ἀρμάτων πόδα

790

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

When the wind-haunted hill with the beat of the
glancing [dancing
White feet of fair girls through the night-season
And with glad cries, is ringing.

ALCMENA comes again out of the temple. Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT

Mistress, I bring thee tidings passing brief-
To hear, and passing fair for me to tell.
Our foes are smitten : trophies now are reared
Hung with war-harness of thine enemies.

ALCMENA

Dear friend, this day hath wrought thy severance
From bondage, for the tidings thou hast brought.
Yet from one ill not yet thou freest me—
Fear touching those I love, if yet they live.

790

SERVANT

They live, in all the host most high-renowned.

ALCMENA

The old man Iolaus—lives he yet?

SERVANT

Yea, and by Heaven's help hath done gloriously.

ALCMENA

What is it?—hath he wrought some knightly deed?

SERVANT

He from an old man hath become a youth.

ALCMENA

Marvels thou speakest: yet I pray thee tell
First how the fight was victory for our friends.

SERVANT

One speech of mine shall set forth all to thee.
When host against host we had ranged the array
Of men-at-arms far-stretching face to face,
Then from his chariot Hyllus lighted down,

800

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἔστη μέσοισιν ἐν μεταιχμίοις δορός.
 καπειτ' ἔλεξεν· ὡ στρατήγ' δς Ἀργόθεν
 ἥκεις, τί τήνδε γαῖαν οὐκ εἰάσαμεν;
 καὶ τὰς Μυκήνας οὐδὲν ἐργάσει κακὸν
 ἀνδρὸς στερήσας· ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ μόνος μόνῳ
 μάχην συνάψας, ἢ κτανὼν ἄγου λαβὼν
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας, ἢ θανὼν ἐμοὶ
 τιμᾶς πατρώους καὶ δόμους ἔχειν ἄφεις.
 810 στρατὸς δ' ἐπήνεσ', εἰς τ' ἀπαλλαγὰς πόνων
 καλῶς λελέχθαι μῦθον εἴς τ' εὐψυχίαν.
 ὁ δ' οὗτε τοὺς κλύοντας αἰδεσθεὶς λόγων
 οὗτ' αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ δειλίαν στρατηγὸς ὡν,
 ἐλθεῖν ἐτόλμησ' ἐγγὺς ἀλκίμου δορός,
 ἀλλ' ἦν κάκιστος· εἴτα τοιούτος γεγὼς
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους ἥλθε δουλώσων γόνους.
 "Τλλος μὲν οὖν ἀπώχετ' εἰς ταξιν πάλιν·
 820 μάντεις δ', ἐπειδὴ μονομάχου δι' ἀσπίδος
 διαλλαγὰς ἔγνωσαν οὐ τελουμένας,
 ἔσφαζον, οὐκ ἔμελλον, ἀλλ' ἀφίεσαν
 λαιμῶν † βροτείων¹ εὐθὺς οὔριον φόνον·
 οἱ δ' ἄρματ' εἰσέβαινον, οἱ δ' ὑπ' ἀσπίδων
 πλευροῖς ἔκρυπτον πλεύρ· Ἀθηναίων δ' ἄναξ
 στρατῷ παρήγγειλ' οίλα χρὴ τὸν εὐγενῆ·
 ὡξυμπολῖται, τῇ τε βοσκούσῃ χθονὶ
 καὶ τῇ τεκούσῃ νῦν τιν' ἀρκέσαι χρέων.
 ὁ δ' αὖ τό τ' Ἀργος μὴ καταισχῦναι θέλειν
 830 καὶ τὰς Μυκήνας συμμάχους ἐλίσσετο.
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐσήμην' δρθιον Τυρσηνικῆ
 σάλπιγγι καὶ συνῆψαν ἀλλήλοις μάχην,
 πόσον τιν' αὐχεῖς πάταγον ἀσπίδων βρέμειν,

¹ An unlikely word here. Paley suggests βοτείων.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And midway stood between the spearmen-lines,
And cried, "O captain of the host, who hast come
From Argos, wherefore spare we not this land ?
Lo, if thou rob Mycenae of one man,
Naught shalt thou hurt her :—come now, man to man
Fight thou with me : so, slaying, lead away
Hercules' sons ; or, falling, leave to me
My father's honour and halls to have and hold." 810

" Yea ! " the host shouted, counting this well said
For valour and for rest from battle-toil :
Yet he, unshamed for them that heard the challenge,
And his own cowardice, war-chief though he were,
Dared not draw nigh the essay of valour's spear,
But was sheer craven. And this dastard wretch
Came to enslave the sons of Hercules !
So to the ranks again went Hyllus back :
And the priests, knowing now that end of strife
Should not by clash of champion shields be attained, 820
Did sacrifice, nor tarried, but straightway
Spilled from the victims' throats the auspicious blood.

Then mounted these their cars : their shield-rims
those

Before their bodies cast. But Athens' king
Cried to his host, as high-born chieftain should :
" Countrymen, now must each one play the man
For this land that hath borne and nurtured him ! "
The while that other prayed his battle-aid
To brook not shame to Argos and Mycenae.
But when the Tuscan trumpet gave the sign 830
High-shrilling, and the war-hosts clashed in fight,
How mighty a crash of bucklers thundered then—

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

πόσον τινὰ στέναγμὸν οἰμωγήν θ' ὁμοῦ ;
 τὰ πρῶτα μέν νυν πίτυλος Ἀργείου δορὸς
 ἐρρήξαθ' ἡμᾶς· εἰτ' ἔχώρησαν πάλιν.
 τὸ δεύτερον δὲ ποὺς ἐπαλλαχθεὶς ποδί,
 ἀνὴρ δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ στὰς ἐκαρτέρει μάχῃ·
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιπτον, ἦν δὲ δύο κελεύσματα.¹
 ω τὰς Ἀθήνας—ω τὸν Ἀργείων γύην
 σπείρουντες—οὐκ ἀρήξετ’ αἰσχύνην πόλει ;
 μόλις δὲ πάντα δρῶντες οὐκ ἄτερ πόνων
 ἐτρεψάμεσθ’ Ἀργείου εἰς φυγὴν δόρυ.
 κάντανθ’ ὁ πρέσβυς “Τλλον ἔξορμωμενον
 ἴδων, ὀρέξας ἵκέτευσε δεξιὰν
 Ἰόλαος ἐμβῆσαί νυν ἵππειον δίφρον.
 λαβὼν δὲ χερσὶν ἡνίας Εὔρυσθέως
 πώλοις ἐπεῖχε. τάπο τοῦδ’ ἥδη κλύων
 λέγοιμι ἀν ἄλλων, δεῦρο δ’ αὐτὸς εἰσιδών.
 Παλληνίδος γὰρ σεμνὸν ἐκπερῶν πάγον
 δίας Ἀθάνας, ἄρμ’ ἴδων Εύρυσθέως,
 ἡρύσαθ’ Ἡβῃ Ζηνὶ θ’, ἡμέραν μίαν
 νέοις γενέσθαι κάποτίσασθαι δίκην
 ἐχθρούς· κλύειν δὴ θαύματος πάρεστί σοι.
 δισσῷ γὰρ ἀστέρ’ ἵππικοῖς ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς
 σταθέντ’ ἔκρυψαν ἄρμα λυγαίω νέφει·
 σὸν δὴ λέγουσι παῖδά γ’ οἱ σοφώτεροι
 “Ἡβην θ”. ὃ δ’ ὅρφινης ἐκ δυσαιθρίου νέων
 βραχιόνων ἔδειξεν ἡβητὴν τύπον.
 αἴρει δ’ ὁ κλεινὸς Ἰόλεως Εύρυσθέως
 τέτρωρον ἄρμα πρὸς πέτραις Σκειρωνίσι.
 δεσμοῖς τε δῆσας χεῖρας ἀκροθίνιον
 κάλλιστον ἥκει τὸν στρατηλάτην ἄγων

¹ Dindorf : for MSS. τοῦ κελεύσματος.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Think'st thou ?—what multitudinous groan and
shriek !
At first the onset of the Argive spear
Burst through our ranks : then gave they back again.
Anon foot stood in grapple locked with foot,
Man fronting man, hard-wrestling in the fray :
Fast, fast they fell. Cheers ever answered cheers—
“ Dwellers in Athens ! ”—“ Tillers of the land
Of Argos ! ”—“ from dishonour save your town ! ” 840
With uttermost endeavour and strong strain
Scarce turned we unto flight the Argive spear.

Thereat old Iolaus, marking where
Hyllus charged on, with outstretched hand besought
That he would set him on a courser-car.
Then the reins grasped he, then the steeds he sped
After Eurystheus. All the rest I tell
From others' lips : the former things I saw.
For, as he passed beyond Pallene's Hill
Sacred to Pallas, spying Eurystheus' car 850
He prayed to Zeus and Hebe, for one day
To be made young, and wreak the vengeance due
On foes :—now shalt thou hear a miracle.
For two stars rested on the chariot-yoke,
And into gloom of shadow threw the car ;
And these, diviners say, were thy great son
And Hebe. Then from out that murky gloom
He flashed—a youth, with mighty-moulded arms !

And glorious Iolaus overtook
By the Scironian Rocks Eurystheus' car. 860
He hath bound his hands with gyves, and hath returned
Bringing the crown of victory, that chief

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τὸν δῆλβιον πάροιθε· τῇ δὲ νῦν τύχῃ
βροτοῖς ἄπασι λαμπρὰ κηρύσσει μαθεῖν,
τὸν εὔτυχεῖν δοκοῦντα μὴ ζηλοῦν, πρὶν ἀν
θανόντ' ἵδη τις· ως ἐφήμεροι τύχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ τροπαῖε, νῦν ἐμοὶ δεινοῦ φόβου
ἔλευθερον πάρεστιν ἡμαρ εἰσιδεῖν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

870 ω Ζεῦ, χρόνῳ μὲν τῷ μέντοι ἐπεσκέψω κακά,
χάριν δ' ὅμως σοι τῶν πεπραγμένων ἔχω·
καὶ παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν πρόσθεν οὐ δοκοῦσθ' ἔγω
θεοῖς ὄμιλεῖν νῦν ἐπίσταμαι σαφῶς.
ω τέκνα, νῦν δὴ νῦν ἐλεύθεροι πόνων,
ἔλευθεροι δὲ τοῦ κακῶς ὀλουμένου
Εὔρυσθέως ἔσεσθε καὶ πόλιν πατρὸς
ὅψεσθε, κλήρους δ' ἐμβατεύσετε χθονός,
καὶ θεοῖς πατρώοις θύσεθ', ὃν ἀπειργμένοι
ξένοι πλανήτην εἴχετ' ἄθλιον βίον.
ἀτὰρ τί κεύθων Ἰόλεως σοφὸν ποτε
880 Εὔρυσθέως ἐφείσαθ' ὥστε μὴ κτανεῖν;
λέξον· παρ' ἡμῖν μὲν γὰρ οὐ σοφὸν τόδε,
ἔχθροὺς λαβόντα μὴ ἀποτίσασθαι δίκην.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τὸ σὸν προτιμῶν, ὡς νιν ὁφθαλμοῖς ἴδοις
ἀλόντα¹ καὶ σῇ δεσποτούμενον χερί.
οὐ μὴν ἐκόντα γ' αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς βίαν
ἔζενξ² ἀνάγκη· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐβούλετο
ζῶν εἰς σὸν ἐλθεῖν ὅμμα καὶ δοῦναι δίκην.
ἀλλ', ω γεραιά, χαῖρε καὶ μέμνησό μοι
δὲ πρῶτον εἰπας, ἡνὶκ' ἡρχόμην λόγου,

¹ Heimsoeth: for MSS. κρατοῦντα. Reiske, κρατεῦσα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

So prosperous once ; but by his fate this day
Clear warning to all men he publisheth
To envy not the seeming-fortunate, ere
He die, since fortune dureth but a day.

CHORUS

O Victory-wafter Zeus, now is it mine
To see a day from dark fear disenthralled !

ALCMENA

Zeus, late on mine affliction hast thou looked ;
Yet thank I thee for all that thou hast wrought. 870
Now know I of a surety that my son
Dwelleteth with Gods :—ere this I thought not so.
O children, now, yea now from trouble free,
And from Eurystheus, doomed to a dastard's death,
Free shall ye be, shall see your father's city,
And tread the lot of your inheritance,
And sacrifice to your fathers' Gods, from whom
Banned ye have known a wretched homeless life.
But for what veiled wise purpose Iolaus
Hath spared Eurystheus, that he slew him not, 880
Tell ; for in our sight nothing wise is this
To capture foes and not requite their wrong.

SERVANT

Of thought for thee, that him thine eyes might see
Held in thy power, and subject to thine hand.
He bowed him 'neath the yoke of strong constraint
Sore loth to come, for nowise he desired
Living to meet thine eye and taste thy vengeance.
Farewell, grey queen : forget not that which erst
Thou saidst to me when I began my tale.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

890 ἐλευθερώσειν μ'. ἐν δὲ τοῖς τοιοῦσδε χρὴ
ἀψευδές εἶναι τοῖσι γενναίοις στόμα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

έμοὶ χορὸς μὲν ἡδύς, εἰ λίγεια
λωτοῦ χάρις ἐνὶ δαιτί,
εἴη δ' εὐχαρις Ἀφροδίτα·
τερπνὸν δέ τι καὶ φίλων ἄρ'
εὔτυχίαν ἴδεσθαι
τῶν πάρος οὐ δοκούντων.
πολλὰ γὰρ τίκτει
Μοῖρα τελεστιδώτειρ,
Αἰών τε Κρόνου παῖς.

στρ. α'

900

ἔχεις ὁδόν τιν', ὡς πόλις, δίκαιον·
οὐ χρή ποτε τοῦδ' ἀφέσθαι,
τιμᾶν θεούς· ὁ δὲ μή σε φάσκων
ἐγγὺς μανιῶν ἐλαύνει,
δεικνυμένων ἐλέγχων
τῶνδ'. ἐπίσημα γάρ τοι
θεὸς παραγγέλλει,
τῶν ἀδίκων παραιρῶν
φρονήματος ἀεί.

ἀντ. α'

910

ἔστιν ἐν οὐρανῷ βεβακὼς
τεὸς γόνος, ὡς γεραιά·
φεύγω λόγον ὡς τὸν "Αἰδα
δόμον κατέβα, πυρὸς
δεινῷ φλογὶ σῶμα δαισθείς.
"Ηβας τ' ἔρατὸν χροῖζει
λέχος χρυσέαν κατ' αὐλάν.
ὡς Τμέναιε, δισσοὺς
παιδας Διὸς ἡξίωσας.

στρ. β

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Make me free man ; for, touching suchlike boons, 890
The lips that lie not best beseem the noble. [Exit.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

Sweet to me is the dance, when clear-pealing
Ring the flutes o'er the wine,
And when Love cometh sweetly in-stealing.
Yea, and gladness is mine
To look on my dear ones well-faring
Which aforetime were whelmed in despairing.
Many blessings fate cometh on-bearing,
With whom Time paceth on, bringing healing,
Cronos' offspring divine. 900

In justice, my land, thy path lieth : (Ant. 1)

This thy crown yield to none,
That thou fearest the Gods : who denieth,
Into madness hath run.

Lo, what sign is revealed for a token,
How the pride of wrong-doers is broken
Evermore; how to-day hath God spoken,
How the voice of Omnipotence crieth
In the deeds he hath done !

He hath died not !—to heaven hath risen (Str. 2) 910

Thy scion, grey queen.
Tell me never that Hades' dim prison
His long home hath been !

Nay, he soared through the flames leaping round
him ;
And with honour the Spousal-god crowned him,
And to Hebe with love-links he bound him,—
Zeus' son to Zeus' daughter,—where glisten
Heaven's halls with gold-sheen.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

άντ. β'

συμφέρεται τὰ πολλὰ πολλοῖς.
 καὶ γὰρ πατρὶ τῶνδ' Ἀθάναν
 λέγουσ' ἐπίκουρον εἶναι,
 καὶ τούσδε θεᾶς πόλις
 καὶ λαὸς ἔσωσε κείνας,
 ἔσχεν δὲ ὕβριν ἀνδρός, φῶ θυ-
 μὸς ἦν πρὸ δίκας βίαιος.
 μῆποτ' ἐμοὶ φρόνημα
 ψυχά τ' ἀκόρεστος εἴη.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

δέσποιν', ὁρᾶς μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰρήσεται,
 Εὔρυσθέα σοι τόνδ' ἄγοντες ἥκομεν,
 ἀελπτον ὄψιν, τῷδέ τ' οὐχ ἡσσον τύχην·
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' ηὐχει χείρας ἵξεσθαι σέθεν,
 ὅτ' ἐκ Μυκηνῶν πολυπόνῳ σὺν ἀσπίδι
 ἔστειχε μεῖζον τῆς δίκης φρονῶν, πόλιν
 πέρσων Ἀθάνας. ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐναντίαν
 δαίμων ἔθηκε καὶ μετέστησεν τύχην.
 "Τλλος μὲν οὖν δέ τ' ἐσθλὸς Ἰόλεως βρέτας
 Διὸς τροπαίου καλλίνικον ἴστασαν
 ἐμοὶ δὲ πρὸς σὲ τόνδ' ἐπιστέλλουσ' ἄγειν,
 τέρψαι θέλοντες σὴν φρέν· ἐκ γὰρ εὐτυχοῦς
 ἥδιστον ἔχθρὸν ἄνδρα δυστυχοῦνθ' ὁρᾶν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὦ μῖσος, ἥκεις; εἰλέ σ' ἡ Δίκη χρόνῳ;
 πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι δεῦρ' ἐπίστρεψον κάρα
 καὶ τλῆθι τοὺς σοὺς προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον
 ἔχθρούς· κρατεῖ γὰρ νῦν γε κού κρατεῖς ἔτι.
 ἐκεῖνος εἰ σύ, βούλομαι γὰρ εἰδέναι,
 δις πολλὰ μὲν τὸν ὄνθ' ὅπου στὶ νῦν ἐμὸν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

How oft be life's strands interwisted ! (Ant. 2)
Of Athena, men say, 920
Was their sire in hard emprise assisted ;
And the city this day,
And the folk of that Goddess hath saved them,
And hath curbed him whose blood-lust had craved
them,
Whose tyranny fain had enslaved them.
In my cause never pride be enlisted
Insatiate for prey.

Enter MESSENGER with guards leading EURYSTHEUS in chains.

MESSENGER

O queen, thou seëst,—yet shall it be told,—
Leading Eurystheus unto thee we come,
A sight unhoped, which ne'er he looked should hap, 930
Who ne'er had thought to fall into thine hands,
When from Mycenæ with vast shield-essay
He marched, his pride o'er justice soaring high,
To smite our Athens. But our destinies
Fortune reversed, and changed them, his for ours.
Hyllus I left and valiant Iolaus
Raising the victory-trophy unto Zeus ;
But me they charge to bring this man to thee,
Being fain to glad thine heart ; for 'tis most sweet
To see a foe triumphant once brought low.

ALCMENA

Loathed wretch, art come? Justice at last hath
trapped thee!
Nay then, first turn thou hitherward thine head,
And dare to look thine enemies in the face.
No more art thou the master, but the thrall!
Art thou he—for I would be certified—
Who didst presume to load thine outrages,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

παῖδ ἡξίωσας, ὥ πανοῦργ', ἐφυβρίσαι;
τὶ γὰρ σὺ κεῖνον οὐκ ἔτλης καθυβρίσαι;
δὸς καὶ παρ' "Αιδην ζῶντά νιν κατήγαγες,
ὑδρας λέοντάς τ' ἔξαπολλύναι λέγων
ἔπεμπες. ἄλλα δ' οἵ ἐμηχανῶ κακὰ
σιγῶ· μακρὸς γὰρ μῆθας ἀν γένοιτό μοι.
κούκ ηρκεσέν σοι ταῦτα τολμῆσαι μόνου,
ἀλλ' ἔξ ἀπάσης κάμε καὶ τέκν' Ἐλλάδος
ηλαυνες ἵκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους,
τοὺς μὲν γέροντας, τοὺς δὲ νηπίους ἔτι.
ἀλλ' ηῦρες ἄνδρας καὶ πόλισμ' ἐλεύθερον,
οἵ σ' οὐκ ἔδεισαν. δεῖ σε κατθαυεῖν κακῶς,
καὶ κερδανεῖς ἅπαντα· χρῆν γὰρ οὐχ ἅπαξ
θυήσκειν σὲ πολλὰ πήματ' ἔξειργασμένον.

ХОРОΣ
οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνυστὸν τόνδε σοι κατακτανεῖν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἄλλως ἄρ' αὐτὸν αἰχμάλωτον εἶλομεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
εἴργει δὲ δὴ τίς τόνδε μὴ θανεῖν νόμος;
ΧΟΡΟΣ
τοῖς τῆσδε χώρας προστάταισιν οὐ δοκεῖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
τί δὴ τόδ; ἔχθροὺς τοιστόδ' οὐ καλὸν κτανεῖν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐχ ὅντιν' ἂν γε ζῶνθ' ἔλωσιν ἐν μάχῃ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
καὶ ταῦτα δόξανθ' "Τλλος ἐξηνέσγετο;

ХОРОС

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Caitiff, on my son—whereso now he be ?
For wherein didst thou fear to outrage him,
Who didst to Hades speed him living down,
Didst send him, bidding him destroy thee Hydras 950
And lions ? All the ills thou didst devise
I name not, for the tale were all too long.
Nor yet sufficed thee this alone to dare ;
But from all Hellas me and mine didst thou
Still hunt, though suppliant to the Gods we sat,
These stricken in years, those little children yet.
But men, and a free city, hast thou found,
Which feared thee not. Now die the dastard's death.
Yet is thy death all gain : thou ought'st to die
Not one death, who hast wrought ills manifold. 960

CHORUS

It may not be that thou shouldst slay this man !

MESSENGER

Captive in vain then have we taken him !

ALCMENA

Prithee what law withholdeth him from death ?

CHORUS

It pleaseth not the rulers of this land.

ALCMENA

How ?—do these count it shame to slay their foes ?

CHORUS

Yea, such as they have ta'en in fight unslain.

ALCMENA

Ay so ?—and this their doom hath Hyllus brooked ?

CHORUS

Should he, forsooth, defy this nation's will ?

ALCMENA

He should no more have lived, nor seen the light.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

970

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τότ' ἡδικήθη πρώτον οὐθανὰν ὅδε.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

οὔκουν ἔτ' ἐστὶν ἐν καλῷ δοῦναι δίκην;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τοῦτον ὅστις ἀν κατακτάνοι.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἔγωγε· καίτοι φημὶ κάμ’ εἶναι τινα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλὴν ἄρ’ ἔξεις μέμψιν, εἰ δράσεις τόδε.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

φιλῶ πόλιν τήνδ’ οὐδὲν ἀντιλεκτέον.
τοῦτον δ’, ἐπείπερ χεῖρας ἥλθεν εἰς ἐμάς,
οὐκ ἔστι θυητῶν ὅστις ἔξαιρήσεται.
πρὸς ταῦτα τὴν θρασεῖαν ὅστις ἀν θέλῃ
καὶ τὴν φρονούσαν μεῖζον ἡ γυναῖκα χρὴ
λέξει· τὸ δ’ ἔργον τοῦτ’ ἐμοὶ πεπράξεται.

980

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεινόν τι καὶ συγγνωστόν, ὃ γύναι, σ’ ἔχει
μῆσος πρὸς ἄνδρα τόνδε, γιγνώσκω καλῶς.

ΕΤΡΤΣΘΕΤΣ

γύναι, σάφ’ ἵσθι μή με θωπεύσοντά σε,
μηδ’ ἄλλο μηδὲν τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πέρι
λέξονθ’ ὅθεν χρὴ δειλίαν ὄφλεῖν τινα.
ἐγὼ δὲ νεῖκος οὐχ ἐκὼν τόδ’ ἡράμην
ἢδη γε σοὶ μὲν αὐτανέψιος γεγώς,
τῷ σῷ δὲ παιδὶ συγγενῆς Ἡρακλέει.
ἄλλ’ εἴτ’ ἔχρηζον εἴτε μή, θεὸς γὰρ ἦν,
“Ἡρα με κάμνειν τήνδ’ ἔθηκε τὴν νόσον.
ἐπεὶ δ’ ἐκείνῳ δυσμένειαν ἡράμην
κᾶγνων ἀγῶνα τόνδ’ ἀγωνιούμενος,
πολλῶν σοφιστῆς πημάτων ἐγιγνόμην

990

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

Then was he wronged—to die not at the first.

970

ALCMENA

So then 'twere just he suffered vengeance yet.

CHORUS

None is there, none, would put him now to death.

ALCMENA

That will I—some one I account myself.

CHORUS

Thou shalt have bitter blame, if this thou do.

ALCMENA

I love this city; let no man gainsay :—

But, since this wretch hath come into mine hands,

There is of mortals none shall pluck him thence.

Wherefore who will shall rail on the overbold,

On her that nursed for woman thoughts too high;

Yet shall this deed by me be brought to pass.

980

CHORUS

A fearful hatred, yet a righteous, queen,

Thou hast against this man, I know full well.

EURYSTHEUS

Woman, be sure I will not cringe to thee,

Nor utter any word beside, to save

My life, whence cowardice might stain my name.

Yet of my will this feud I took not up.

I knew myself born cousin unto thee,

And kinsman unto Hercules thy son.

But, would I or no, 'twas Heaven that thrust me on :

Hera with this affliction burdened me.

990

But when I had made him once mine enemy,

And knew that I must wrestle out this strife,

Deviser I became of many pains,

331

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

καὶ πόλλ’ ἔτικτον, νυκτὶ συνθακῶν ἀεί,
 ὅπως διώσας καὶ κατακτείνας ἐμοὺς
 ἔχθροὺς τὸ λοιπὸν μὴ συνοικοίην φόβῳ,
 εἰδὼς μὲν οὐκ ἀριθμὸν ἀλλ’ ἐτητύμως
 ἄνδρ’ ὄντα τὸν σὸν παῖδα· καὶ γὰρ ἔχθρὸς ὁν
 ἀκούσεται τά γ’ ἐσθλὰ χρηστὸς ὁν ἀνήρ.
 1000 κείνου δ’ ἀπαλλαχθέντος οὐκ ἔχρην μ’ ἄρα
 μισούμενον πρὸς τῶνδε καὶ ξυνειδότα
 ἔχθραν πατρῷαν, πάντα κινῆσαι πέτρουν,
 κτείνοντα κάκβάλλοντα καὶ τεχνώμενον;
 τοιαῦτα δρῶντι τάμ’ ἐγίγνετ’ ἀσφαλῆ.
 οὐκούν σύ γ’ ἀν λαχοῦσα¹ τὰς ἐμὰς τύχας
 ἔχθροῦ λέοντος δυσμενῆ βλαστήματα
 ἥλαυνες ἀν κακοῖσιν, ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως
 εἴασας οἰκεῖν "Ἄργος; οὔτιν' ἀν πίθοις.
 νῦν οὖν ἐπειδή μ’ οὐ διώλεσαν τότε
 1010 πρόθυμον ὄντα, τοῖσιν 'Ελλήνων νόμοις
 οὐχ ἀγνός είμι τῷ κτανόντι κατθαυών·
 πόλις δ’ ἀφῆκε σωφρονοῦσα, τὸν θεὸν
 μεῖζον τίουσα τῆς ἐμῆς ἔχθρας πολύ.
 ἂ γ’ εἶπας ἀντήκουσας· ἐντεῦθεν δὲ χρὴ
 τὸν προστρόπαιον τόν τε γενναῖον καλεῖν.
 οὕτω γε μέντοι τάμ’ ἔχει· θανεῖν μὲν οὐ
 χρήξω, λιπὼν δ’ ἀν οὐδὲν ἀχθοίμην βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παραινέσαι σοι σμικρόν, 'Αλκμήνη, θέλω,
 τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἀφεῖναι τόνδ’, ἐπεὶ πόλει δοκεῖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

1020 τί δ’, ἦν θάνη τε καὶ πόλει πιθώμεθα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ λῦστ’ ἀν εἴη· πῶς τάδ’ οὖν γενήσεται;

¹ Wecklein : for MSS. ἀναλαβοῦσα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Aye scheming—Night sat by, and counselled me—
How I might scatter and destroy my foes,
And have thenceforth for housemate fear no more,
Knowing thy son no cipher, but a man
In very deed ; for, though he be my foe,
Praise shall he have, a very hero he.

But, rid of him, was I not even constrained—
Abhorred of these, ware of that heritage
Of hate—to move each scorpion-hiding stone,
By slaying, banishing, and plotting still ?
While this I did, my safety was assured.
But thou, forsooth, had but my lot been thine,
Hadst spared to persecute the infuriate whelps
Left of thy foe the lion,—wisely rather
Hadst let them dwell in Argos ? I trow not

1000

Now therefore since, when I was fain to die,
They slew me not, by all the Hellene laws
My death pollution brings on whoso slays.
Wisely did Athens spare me, honouring more
God, far above all enmity of me.
Thou art answered. I must be hereafter named
The Haunting Vengeance, and the Heroic Dead.
Thus is it with me—I long not for death,
Yet to forsake life nowise shall I grieve.

1010

CHORUS

Suffer one word of exhortation, queen.
Let this man go ; for so the city wills.

ALCMENA

But—if he die, and I obey her still ?

1020

CHORUS

This should be best ; yet how can this thing be ?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

έγὼ διδάξω ράδίως· κτανοῦσα γὰρ
τόνδ' εἴτα νεκρὸν τοῖς μετελθοῦσιν φίλων
δώσω· τὸ γὰρ σῶμ' οὐκ ἀπιστήσω χθονί,
οὗτος δὲ δώσει τὴν δίκην θανῶν ἐμοὶ.

ΕΤΡΓΣΘΕΤΣ

κτεῖν', οὐ παραιτοῦμαι σε· τήνδε δὲ πτόλιν,
ἐπεί μ' ἀφῆκε καὶ κατηδέσθη κτανεῖν,
χρησμῷ παλαιῷ Λοξίου δωρήσομαι,
ὅς ὡφελήσει μείζον' ἢ δοκεῖν χρόνῳ.
1030 θανόντα γάρ με θάψεθ' οὐ τὸ μόρσιμον,
δίας πάροιθε παρθένου Παλληνίδος·
καὶ σοὶ μὲν εὔνους καὶ πόλει σωτήριος
μέτοικος αἱεὶ κείσομαι κατὰ χθονός,
τοῖς τῶνδε δ' ἐκγόνοισι πολεμιώτατος,
ὅταν μόλωσι δεῦρο σὺν πολλῇ χερὶ¹
χάριν προδόντες τήνδε· τοιούτων ξένων
προῦστητε. πῶς οὖν ταῦτ' ἔγὼ πεπυσμένος
δεῦρ' ἥλθον, ἀλλ' οὐ χρησμὸν ἥδούμην¹ θεοῦ;
"Ηραν νομίζων θεσφάτων κρείσσω πολύ,
1040 κούκ ἀν προδοῦναί μ'. ἀλλὰ μήτε μοι χοὰς
μήθ' αἰμ' ἔάσῃς εἰς ἐμὸν στάξαι τάφον.
κακὸν γὰρ αὐτοῖς νόστον ἀντὶ τῶνδ' ἔγὼ
δώσω· διπλοῦν δὲ κέρδος ἔξετ' ἔξ ἐμοῦ,
νῦμᾶς τ' ὄνήσω τούσδε τε βλάψω θανών.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δῆτα μέλλετ', εἰ πόλει σωτηρίαν
κατεργάσασθαι τοῖσι τ' ἔξ νῦμῶν χρεών,
κτείνειν τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδ', ἀκούοντες τάδε;
δείκνυσι γὰρ κέλευθον ἀσφαλεστάτην.
ἔχθρὸς μὲν ἀνήρ, ὡφελεῖ δὲ κατθανών.

¹ Musgrave: for MSS. ἥρβμην.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

This will I lightly teach thee :—I will slay,
Then yield him dead to friends that come for him.
Touching his corpse I will not cheat the state ;
But die he shall, and do me right for wrong.

EURYSTHEUS

Slay : I ask not thy grace. But I bestow
On Athens, who hath spared, who shamed to
slay me,

An ancient oracle of Loxias,
Which in far days shall bless her more than seems.

Me shall ye bury where 'tis fate-ordained, 1030

Before the Virgin's shrine Pallenian ;

So I, thy friend and Athens' saviour aye,

A sojourner shall lie beneath your soil,

But to these and their children sternest foe

What time they march with war-hosts hitherward,

Traitors to this your kindness :—such the guests

Ye championed ! Wherefore then, if this I knew,

Came I, and feared not the God's oracles ?

Hera, methought, was mightier far than these,

And would not so forsake me. Shed not thou 1040

Drink-offerings nor blood upon my tomb !

Ill home-return will I give thy sons' sons

For this ! Of me shall ye have double gain,—

My death shall be your blessing and their curse.

ALCMENA

Why linger then—if so ye must achieve
Your city's safety and your children's weal—
To slay this man, who hear this prophecy ?
Himself the path of perfect safety points.
Your foe he is, yet is his death your gain.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

1050 κομίζετ' αὐτόν, δμῶες, εἴτα χρὴ κυσὶ¹
δοῦναι κτανόντας· μὴ γάρ ἐλπίσῃς ὅπως
αὐθις πατρώας ζῶν ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖς χθονός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταύτὰ δοκεῖ μοι. στείχετ', ὀπαδοί.
τὰ γάρ ἐξ ἡμῶν
καθαρῶς ἔσται βασιλεῦσιν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Hence with him, thralls. When ye have slain him,
then

1050

To dogs 'twere good to cast him. Hope not thou
To live, and drive me again from fatherland.

[*Exeunt GUARDS with EURYSTHEUS.*

CHORUS

I also consent. On, henchman-train,
March on with the doomed. No blood-guilt
stain,
Proceeding of us, on our kings shall remain.

[*Exeunt OMNES.*

337

VOL. III.

Z

THE
PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ARGUMENT

WHEN *Oedipus, king of Thebes, was ware that he had fulfilled the oracle uttered ere he was born, in that he had slain his father, king Laius, and wedded his mother Jocasta, he plucked out his own eyes in his shame and misery.* So he ceased to be king ; but, inasmuch as his two sons rendered to him neither love nor worship, he cursed them with this curse, “that they should divide their inheritance with the sword.” But they essayed to escape this doom by covenanting to rule in turn, year by year. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polyneices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year’s space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes.

And herein is told how the brothers met in useless parley ; by what strange sacrifice Thebes was saved ; of the Argives’ vain assault ; and how the brothers slew each other in single combat.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

**ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
ΚΡΕΩΝ
ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ**

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JOCASTA, *wife of Oedipus.*

OLD SERVANT, *attendant on Antigone.*

ANTIGONE, *daughter of Oedipus.*

POLYNEICES, *exiled son of Oedipus.*

ETEOCLES, *son of Oedipus, and king of Thebes.*

CREON, *brother of Jocasta.*

TEIRESIAS, *a blind prophet.*

MENOCEUS, *son of Creon.*

MESSENGER, *armour-bearer of Eteocles.*

OEDIPUS, *father of Eteocles and Polyneices.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Phoenician Maidens, dedicated by the Tyrians to the service of Apollo at Delphi, who, resting at Thebes on their journey, have been detained there by the siege.*

Daughter of Teiresias, guards of Eteocles, attendants of Jocasta and of Creon.

SCENE : In front of the Royal Palace at Thebes.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

Ω τὴν ἐν ἀστροῖς οὐρανοῦ τέμνων ὄδὸν
καὶ χρυσοκολλήτοισιν ἐμβεβὼς δίφροις
“Ηλιε, θοᾶις ἵπποισιν εἰλίσσων φλόγα,
ώς δυστυχῆ Θήβαισι τῇ τόθ’ ἡμέρᾳ
ἀκτῖν’ ἐφῆκας, Κάδμος ἦνίκ’ ἤλθε γῆν
τήνδ’, ἐκλιπὼν Φοίνισσαν ἐναλίαν χθόνα-
δις παῖδα γήμας Κύπριδος Ἀρμονίαν ποτὲ
Πολύδωρον ἔξεφυσε, τοῦ δὲ Λάβδακον
φῦναι λέγουσιν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦδε Λάιον,
ἐγὼ δὲ παῖς μὲν κλήζομαι Μενοικέως,
Κρέων τ’ ἀδελφὸς μητρὸς ἐκ μιᾶς ἔφυ·
καλοῦσι δ’ Ἰοκάστην με, τούτο γάρ πατὴρ
ἔθετο, γαμεῖ δὲ Λάιός μ· ἐπεὶ δ’ ἅπαις
ἥν χρόνια λέκτρα τᾶμ’ ἔχων ἐν δώμασιν,
ἐλθῶν ἐρωτᾷ Φοῖβον ἔξαιτεῖ θ’ ἄμα
παίδων ἐς οἴκους ἀρσένων κοινωνίαν.
οἱ δὲ εἰπεν· ὡ Θήβαισιν εὐίπποις ἄναξ,
μὴ σπείρε τέκινων ἄλοκα δαιμόνων βίᾳ·
εἰ γάρ τεκινώσεις παῖδ’, ἀποκτενεῖ σ’ ὁ φύς,
καὶ πᾶς σὸς οἴκος βήσεται δι’ αἷματος.
οἱ δὲ ἥδονῆς δοὺς εἰς τε βακχείον πεσὼν
ἐσπειρεν ἡμῖν παῖδα, καὶ σπείρας βρέφοις,¹

¹ Probably corrupt: scholars propose φρενός, ἄφηω, ἄφα.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Enter JOCASTA.

JOCASTA

O THOU who cleav'st thy path mid heaven's stars,
Who ridest on thy chariot golden-clamped,
Sun, whirling on with flying steeds thy fire,
What beams accurst on that day sheddest thou
O'er Thebes, when Cadmus came to this our land,
Leaving Phoenicia's sea-fringed realm afar !
He took to wife Harmonia, Cypris' child,
And begat Polydore, of whom, men say,
Sprang Labdacus, and Laïus of him.

I, daughter of Menoeceus am I named ;
My brother Creon the selfsame mother bare.
Jocasta men call me : this name my sire
Gave ; Laïus wedded me. But when long years
Of wedlock brought no child our halls within,
He went and questioned Phoebus, craved withal
For me, for him, male heirs unto his house.
The God spake : " King of chariot-glorious Thebes,
Beget not seed of sons in Heaven's despite.
If so thou do, thee shall thine issue slay,
And all thine house shall wade through seas of
blood." Yet he, to passion yielding, flushed with wine,
Begat a son ; and when our babe was born,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

γνοὺς τάμπλάκημα τοῦ θεοῦ τε τὴν φάτιν,
λειμῶν' ἐς "Ηρας καὶ Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας
δίδωσι βουκόλοισιν ἐκθεῖναι βρέφος,
σφυρῶν σιδηρᾶ κέντρα διαπείρας μέσον·
ὅθεν νιν Ἐλλὰς ὠνόμαζεν Οἰδίπουν.
Πολύβου δέ νιν λαβόντες ἵπποβουκόλοι
φέρουσ' ἐς οἴκους εἴς τε δεσποίνης χέρας
ἔθηκαν. ἡ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν ὡδίνων πόνον
μαστοῖς ὑφεῖτο καὶ πόσιν πείθει τεκεῖν.
ἡδη δὲ πυρσαῖς γένυσιν ἔξανδρούμενος
παῖς οὐμός, ἡ γνοὺς ἡ τινος μαθὼν πάρα,
ἔστειχε τοὺς φύσαντας ἐκμαθεῖν θέλων
πρὸς δῶμα Φοίβου, Λάιός θ', οὐμὸς πόσις,
τὸν ἐκτεθέντα παῖδα μαστεύων μαθεῖν,
εἰ μηκέτ' εἴη. καὶ ξυνάπτετον πόδα
εἰς ταύτὸν ἄμφω Φωκίδος σχιστῆς ὄδοῦ.
καί νιν κελεύει Λαΐου τροχηλάτης·
ώ ξένε, τυράννοις ἐκποδῶν μεθίστασο.
ο δ' εἵρπ' ἄναυδος, μέγα φρονῶν πῶλοι δέ νιν
χηλαῖς τένοντας ἔξεφοίνιστον ποδῶν.
ὅθεν—τί τάκτος τῶν κακῶν με δεῖ λέγειν;—
παῖς πατέρα καίνει καὶ λαβὼν ὄχήματα
Πολύβῳ τροφεῖ δίδωσιν. ὡς δ' ἐπεξάρει
Σφίγξ ἀρπαγαῖσι πόλιν, ἐμός τ' οὐκ ἦν πόσις,
Κρέων ἀδελφὸς τάμα κηρύσσει λέχη,
ὅστις σοφῆς αἰνιγμα παρθένου μάθοι,
τούτῳ ξυνάψειν λέκτρα. τυγχάνει δέ πως
μούσας ἐμὸς παῖς Οἰδίπους Σφιγγὸς μαθών,
ὅθεν τύραννος τῆσδε γῆς καθίσταται
καὶ σκῆπτρ' ἔπαθλα τῆσδε λαμβάνει χθονύς,
γαμεῖ δὲ τὴν τεκοῦσαν οὐκ εἰδὼς τάλας
οὐδ' ἡ τεκοῦσα παιδὶ συγκοιμωμένη.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Ware of his sin, remembering the God's word,
He gave the babe to herdmen to cast forth.
In Hera's Mead upon Cithaeron's ridge,
His ankles pierced clear through with iron spikes,
Whence Hellas named him *Swell-foot*—Oedipus.

But Polybus' horse-tenders found him there,
And bare him home, and in their mistress' hands
Laid. To my travail's fruit she gave her breast,
Telling her lord herself had borne the babe. 30
Now, grown to man with golden-bearded cheeks,
My son, divining, or of some one told,
Journeyed, resolved to find his parents forth,
To Phoebus' fane. Now Laïus my lord,
Seeking assurance of the babe exposed,
If dead he were, fared thither. And they met,
These twain, where parts the highway Phocis-ward.
Then Laïus' charioteer commanded him—
“Stand clear, man, from the pathway of a prince !” 40
Proudly he strode on, answering not. The steeds
Spurned with their hoofs his ankles, drawing blood.

Then—why tell aught beyond the sad event?—
Son slayeth father, takes the car, and gives
To Polybus, his fosterer. While the Sphinx
Was ravaging Thebes, when now my lord was not,
Creon my brother published that the man,
Whoso should read the riddle of that witch-maid,
Even he should wed me. Strangely it befell—
Oedipus, my son, read the Sphinx's song, 50
Whence he became the ruler of this land :
Yea, for his guerdon wins the throne of Thebes,
And weds his mother,—wretch!—unwitting he,
Unwitting she that she was her son's bride.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

τίκτω δὲ παιδας παιδὶ δύο μὲν ἄρσενας,
 Ἐτεοκλέα κλεινήν τε Πολυνείκους βίαν,
 κόρας δὲ δισσάς· τὴν μὲν Ἰσμήνην πατὴρ
 ὡνόμασε, τὴν δὲ πρόσθεν Ἀντιγόνην ἐγώ.
 μαθὼν δὲ τὰμὰ λέκτρα μητρώων γάμων
 ὁ πάντ' ἀνατλὰς Οἰδίπους παθήματα
 εἰς ὅμμαθ' αὐτοῦ δεινὸν ἐμβάλλει φόνον,
 χρυσηλάτοις πόρπαισιν αἰμάξας κόρας.

60

ἐπεὶ δὲ τέκνων γένυς ἐμῶν σκιάζεται,
 κλήθροις ἔκρυψαν πατέρ', ἵν' ἀμυνήμων τύχη
 γένοιτο πολλῶν δεομένη σοφισμάτων.
 ζῶν δ' ἔστ' ἐν οἴκοις. πρὸς δὲ τῆς τύχης νοσῶν
 ἀρὰς ἀράται παισὶν ἀνοσιωτάτας,
 θηκτῷ σιδήρῳ δῶμα διαλαχεῖν τόδε.

70

τὼ δ' εἰς φόβον πεσόντε, μὴ τελεσφόρους
 εὐχάρι θεοὶ κραίνωσιν οἰκούντων ὄμοῦ,
 ξυμβάντ' ἔταξαν τὸν νεώτερον πάρος
 φεύγειν ἑκόντα τήνδε Πολυνείκην χθόνα,
 Ἐτεοκλέα δὲ σκῆπτρ' ἔχειν μένοντα γῆς
 ἐνιαυτὸν ἀλλάσσοντ'. ἐπεὶ δ' ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς
 καθέζετ' ἀρχῆς, οὐ μεθίσταται θρόνων,
 φυγάδα δ' ἀπωθεῖ τῇσδε Πολυνείκη χθονός.

80

ό δ' Ἄργος ἐλθών, κῆδος Ἀδράστου λαβών,
 πολλὴν ἀθροίσας ἀσπίδ' Ἄργείων ἄγει·
 ἐπ' αὐτὰ δ' ἐλθών ἐπτάπυλα τείχη τάδε,
 πατρῷ ἀπαιτεῖ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη χθονός.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔριν λύουσ' ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν
 ἔπεισα παιδὶ παιδὰ πρὶν ψαῦσαι δορός.
 ἥξειν δ' ὁ πεμφθείς φησιν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος.
 ἀλλ' ὡ φαεννὰς ούρυνοῦ ναίων πτυχὰς
 Ζεῦ, σῶσον ἡμᾶς, δὸς δὲ σύμβασιν τέκνοις.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And children to my son I bare, two sons,
Eteocles and famed Polyneices' might,
And daughters twain : the one the father named
Ismene, the elder I, Antigone.
But, when he knew me mother both and wife,
Oedipus, crushed 'neath utterest sufferings, 60
On his own eyes wrought ruin horrible,
Yea, with gold brooch-pin drenched their orbs with
blood.

Now, being to bearded manhood grown, my sons
Close-warded kept their sire, that his dark fate,
By manifold shifts scarce veiled, might be forgot.
Within he lives ; but, by his fate distraught,
A curse most impious hurled he at his sons,
That they may share their heritage with the sword.
They, terror-stricken lest, if they should dwell
Together, Gods might bring the curse to pass, 70
Made covenant that Polyneices first,
The younger, self-exiled, should leave the land,
That Eteocles tarrying wear the crown
One year—then change. But, once in sovrainty
Firm-seated, he would step not from the throne,
And thrust Polyneices banished forth the land.

To Argos fares he, weds Adrastus' child,
And bringeth huge war-muster of Argive shields.
To our very walls seven-gated hath he come,
Claiming his father's sceptre and his right. 80
And I, to allay their strife, persuaded son
In truce to meet son, ere they touch the spear :
And, saith the messenger I sent, he comes.
O dweller Zeus in heaven's veiling light,
Save us, grant reconciling to my sons !

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

χρὴ δ', εἰ σοφὸς πέφυκας, οὐκ ἔân βροτὸν
τὸν αὐτὸν αἱεὶ δυστυχῆ καθεστάναι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ώ κλεινὸν οἴκους Ἀντιγόνη θάλος πατρί,
ἐπεὶ σε μήτηρ παρθενῶνας ἐκλιπεῖν
μεθῆκε μελάθρων ἐς διῆρες ἕσχατον
στράτευμ' ἵδεῖν Ἀργεῖον ἵκεσθαισι ταῖς,
ἐπίσχεις, ώς ἀν προύξερευνήσω στίβον,
μή τις πολιτῶν ἐν τρίβῳ φαντάζεται,
κάμοι μὲν ἔλθῃ φαῦλος ὡς δούλῳ ψόγος,
σοὶ δ' ὡς ἀνάσσῃ πάντα δ' ἔξειδὼς φράσω
ἄ τ' εἶδον εἰσήκουσά τ' Ἀργείων πάρα,
σπονδὰς ὅτ' ἥλθον σῷ κασιγνήτῳ φέρων
ἐνθένδ' ἐκεῖσε δεῦρό τ' αὖ κείνου πάρα.
ἀλλ' οὕτις ἀστῶν τοῖσδε χρίμπτεται δόμοις,
κέδρου παλαιὰν κλίμακ' ἐκπέρα ποδί·
σκόπει δὲ πεδία καὶ παρ' Ἰσμηνοῦ ρόας
Δίρκης τε νᾶμα, πολεμίων στράτευμ' ὅσον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὅρεγέ νυν ὅρεγε γεραιὰν νέᾳ
χεῖρ', ἀπὸ κλιμάκων ποδὸς
ἴχνος ἐπαντέλλων.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἰδοὺ ξύναψον, παρθέν'. εἰς καιρὸν δ' ἔβης·
κινούμενον γὰρ τυγχάνει Πελασγικὸν
στράτευμα, χωρίζουσι δ' ἀλλήλων λόχους.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

110 ἵω πότνια παῖ Λατοῦς
 Ἐκάτα, κατάχαλκον ἄπαν
 πεδίον ἀστράπτει.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Thou oughtest not, so thou be wise, to leave
The same man evermore to be unblest.

[*Exit.*]

Enter, above, OLD SERVANT and ANTIGONE.

OLD SERVANT

Fair flower of thy sire's house, Antigone,
Albeit thy mother suffered thee to leave
Thy maiden-bower at thine entreaty, and mount 90
The palace-roof to view the Argive host,
Yet stay, that I may scan the highway first,
Lest on the path some citizen appear,
And scandal light—for me, the thrall, 'twere naught,—
On thee, the princess. This known, will I tell
All that I saw, and heard from Argive men,
When, to thy brother on truce-mission sent,
I passed hence thither, and then back from him
Nay, not a citizen draws nigh the halls.
Climb with thy feet the ancient cedar-stair ; 100
Gaze o'er the plain, along Ismenus' stream
And Dirce's flow, on yon great host of foes.

ANTIGONE

Stretch it forth, stretch it forth, the old man's hand,
unto me
The child, from the stair, and my feet upbear,
As upward I strain.

OLD SERVANT

Lo, maiden, grasp it : in good time thou com'st,
For yon Pelasgian host is moving now,
Battalion from battalion sundering.

ANTIGONE

O Queen, O Child of Latona, Hecate !
Lo, how the glare of the brass flashes there 110
Over all the plain !

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐ γάρ τι φαύλως ἥλθε Πολυνείκης χθύνα,
πολλοῖς μὲν ἵπποις, μυρίοις δ' ὅπλοις βρέμων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀρα πύλαι κλήθροις χαλκόδετ' ἀρ' ἔμβολα
λαῖνέοισιν Ἀμφίονος ὁργάνοις
τείχεος ἥρμοσται;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θάρσει· τά γ' ἔνδον ἀσφαλῶς ἔχει πόλις.
ἄλλ' εἰσόρα τὸν πρῶτον, εἰ βούλει μαθεῖν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς οὗτος ὁ λευκολόφας,
πρόπαρ δις ἀγείται στρατοῦ
πάγχαλκον ἀσπίδ' ἀμφὶ βρα-
χίονι κουφίζων;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

λοχαγός, ὡ δέσποινα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς πόθεν γεγώς;
αὔδασον, ὡ γεραιέ, τίς ὄνομάζεται;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὗτος Μυκηναῖος μὲν αὐδάται γένος,
Λερναῖα δ' οἰκεῖ νάμαθ', Ἰππομέδων ἄναξ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἢ ἐώς γαῦρος, ὡς φοβερὸς εἰσιδεῖν,
γίγαντι γηγενέτᾳ προσόμοιος
ἀστερωπὸς ἐν γραφαῖσιν, οὐχὶ πρόσφορος
ἀμερίφ γέννα.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τὸν δ' ἔξαμείβοντ' οὐχ ὄρᾶς Δίρκης ὕδωρ;

120

130

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OLD SERVANT

Ay, for not feebly Polyneices comes
With thunder of many a steed, with countless shields.

ANTIGONE

Ah, be the gates secure, be the brass-clamped bolts
made sure

In the walls that Amphion in days bygone
Fashioned of stone ?

OLD SERVANT

Fear not ; the city wards all safe within. [him.
Mark yonder foremost chief, if thou wouldest know.

ANTIGONE

Who is he with the white helm-crest
Who marcheth in front of their war-array,
And a brazen buckler fencing his breast
Lightly his arm doth sway ?

120

OLD SERVANT

A captain, princess.

ANTIGONE

What his land, his birth ?
Make answer, ancient. What name beareth he ?

OLD SERVANT

Yon chief proclaims him Mycenean-born :
By streams of Lerna King Hippomedon dwells.

ANTIGONE

Ah me, how haughty, how fearful he is to see,
Like to a Giant, a child of Earth !
Star-blazonry gleams on his shield : not like is he
Unto one of mortal birth.

130

OLD SERVANT

See'st thou not him who crosseth Dirce's flood ?

353

VOL. III.

AA

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄλλος ἄλλος ὅδε τευχέων τρόπος.
τίς δ' ἔστιν οὐτος;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

παῖς μὲν Οἰνέως ἔφυ

Τυδεύς, Ἀρη δ' Αἴτωλὸν ἐν στέρνοις ἔχει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐτος ὁ τᾶς Πολυνείκεος, ὁ γέρον,
αὐτοκαστιγνήτας νύμφας
όμόγαμος κυρεῖ;
ώς ἀλλόχρως ὅπλοισι μιξοβάρβαρος.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σακεσφόροι γὰρ πάντες Αἴτωλοί, τέκνον,
λόγχαις τ' ἀκοντιστῆρες εὐστοχώτατοι.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

σὺ δ', ὁ γέρον, πῶς αἰσθάνει σαφῶς τάδε;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σημεῖον ἵδων τότ' ἀσπίδων ἐγνώρισα,
σπουδὰς ὅτ' ἡλθον σῷ καστιγνήτῳ φέρων·
ἀ προσδεδορκῶς οἶδα τοὺς ὠπλισμένους.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς δ' οὐτος ἀμφὶ μνῆμα τὸ Ζήθου περᾶ
καταβόστρυχος, ὅμμασι γοργὸς εἰσ-
ιδεῖν νεανίας,
λοχαγός, ὡς ὅχλος νιν ὑστέρῳ ποδὶ¹⁴⁰
πάνοπλος ἀμφέπει;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οδ' ἔστι Παρθενοπαῖος, Ἄταλάντης γόνος.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄλλα νιν ἀ κατ' ὅρη μετὰ ματέρος
Ἀρτεμις ἴεμένα τόξοις δαμάσασ' ὀλέσειεν,
ὅς ἐπ' ἐμὰν πόλιν ἔβα πέρσων.

150

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Of other, of stranger fashion his armour shows !
Who is he ?

OLD SERVANT

Tydeus he, of Oeneus' blood.
Aetolia's battle-fire in the breast of him glows.

ANTIGONE

Is this he, ancient, by spousal-ties
Unto mine own Polyneices allied,
Whose wife's fair sister he won for his bride ?
How half-barbaric his harness, of no Greek guise ?

OLD SERVANT

Nay, child, shield-bearers all Aetolians are,
And most unerring hurlers of the lance.

140)

ANTIGONE

And thou, how know'st thou, ancient, all so well ?

OLD SERVANT

Even then I noted their shield-blazonry,
When to thy brother with truce-pact I fared :
I marked them, and I know their bearers well.

ANTIGONE

Who is this by Zethus' sepulchre going, [flowing ?
With the keen, stern eyes and the curls long-
A warrior young,
Yet a chief—for in armour brazen-glowing
See his followers throng !

OLD SERVANT

Parthenopaeus, Atalanta's son.

150

ANTIGONE

Now may Artemis, over the mountains hastening
With his mother, smite with her bow, and in death
lay yon man low,
Who is hitherward come for my city's wasting !

355

A A 2

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

εἴη τάδ', ὡς παῖς σὺν δίκῃ δ' ἥκουσι γῆν,
ὅ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ σκοπῶσ' ὀρθῶς θεοί.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῦ δ' ὃς ἐμοὶ μᾶς ἐγένετ' ἐκ ματρὸς
πολυπόνῳ μοίρᾳ;
ὦ φίλτατ', εἰπέ, ποῦ στι Πολυνείκης, γέρον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

160 ἐκεῦνος ἐπτὰ παρθένων τάφου πέλας
Νιόβης Ἀδράστῳ πλησίον παραστατεῖ.
ὅρᾶς;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὅρῶ δῆτ' οὐ σαφῶς, ὅρῶ δέ πως
μορφῆς τύπωμα στέρνα τ' ἔξηκασμένα.
ἀνεμώκεος εἴθε δρόμον νεφέλας
ποσὶν ἔξανύσαιμι δι' αἰθέρος
πρὸς ἐμὸν ὁμογενέτορα, περὶ δ' ὡλένας
δέρᾳ φιλτάτᾳ βάλοιμι χρόνῳ
φυγάδα μέλεον. ὡς
ὅπλοισι χρυσέοισιν ἐκπρεπής, γέρον,
ἔψοις ὅμοια φλεγέθων βολαῖς ἀλίουν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

170 ἥξει δόμους τούσδ', ὥστε σ' ἐμπλῆσαι χαρᾶς,
ἐνσπουδος.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὗτος δ', ὡς γεραιέ, τίς κυρεῖ,
ὅς ἄρμα λευκὸν ἡνιοστροφεῖ βεβώς;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οἱ μάντις Ἀμφιάραος, ὡς δέσποιν', ὅδε·
σφάγια δ' ἄμ' αὐτῷ, γῆς φιλαίματοι ῥοαί.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OLD SERVANT

So be it, child : yet for the right they come ;
Wherefore I dreadlest God defend the right.

ANTIGONE

And where is he whom the selfsame mother bore
With me, to a doom of travail sore ?
Dear ancient, where is Polyneices, tell.

OLD SERVANT

He standeth near Adrastus, near the tomb
Of Niobe's unwedded daughters seven.
See'st thou ?

160

ANTIGONE

I see—not clearly—yet, half-guessed,
Discern the outline of his frame and chest.
O that as wind-driven clouds swift-racing
I might speed with my feet through the air,
and light [embracing
By my brother, mine own, and with arms
Might hold but his dear neck close-enfolden—
So long an exile in dolorous plight !
Lo, how he flasheth in armour golden,
Like the morning shafts of the sun bright-
blazing !

OLD SERVANT

Hither with joy to fill thee shall he come
By truce.

170

ANTIGONE

But yon chief, ancient, who is he,
Car-borne, who sways the reins of horses white ?

OLD SERVANT

The prophet Amphiaraus, Lady, is this.
With him are victims, Earth's blood-offerings.

357

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ώ λιπαροζώνου θύγατερ' Ἀελίου
Σελαναία, χρυσεόκυκλον φέγγος,
ώς ἀτρεμαῖα κέντρα καὶ σώφρονα
πώλους μεταφέρων ιθύνει.

180 ποῦ δ' ὃς τὰ δεινὰ τῇδ' ἐφυθρίζει πόλει
Καπανεύς;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἐκεῦνος προσβάσεις τεκμαίρεται
πύργων ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω τείχη μετρῶν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰώ,
Νέμεσι καὶ Διὸς βαρύβρομοι βρονταί,
κεραυνῶν τε φῶς αἰθαλόεν, σύ τοι
μεγαλαγορίαν ὑπεράνορα κοιμήσεις.
οὅς ἐστίν, αἰχμαλωτίδας
ὃς δορὶ Θηβαίας Μυκηνῆσιν
Λερναίᾳ τε δώσειν τριάντα,
Ποσειδανίοις Ἀμυμωνίοις
ündασι, δουλείαν περιβαλών, [λέγει];
μήποτε μήποτε τάνδ', ω πότνια,
χρυσεοβόστρυχον ω Διὸς ἔρνος
Ἄρτεμι, δουλοσύναν τλαίην.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ώ τέκνουν, εἴσβα δῶμα καὶ κατὰ στέγας
ἐν παρθενῶσι μίμνε σοῖς, ἐπεὶ πόθου
εἰς τέρψιν ἦλθες ὡν ἔχρηζες εἰσιδεῖν.
οχλος γάρ, ώς ταραγμός εἰσῆλθεν πόλιν,
χωρεῖ γυναικῶν πρὸς δόμους τυραννικούς.
φιλόψιγον δὲ χρῆμα θηλειῶν ἔφυ,
σμικράς τ' ἀφορμὰς ἦν λάβωσι τῶν λόγων,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

O Child of the Sun-god, the Lord of the radiant zone,

O Moon, thou golden-rounded gleam,

How calmly, how soberly ever he driveth on,

One after other goading his team !

And where is Capaneus—he who hurls at Thebes 180
Insult of threats ?

OLD SERVANT

There :—he counts up and down
The wall-stones, gauging our towers' scaling-height.

ANTIGONE

O Nemesis, O ye thunders rolling deep

Of Zeus, thou flaming light of his levin,

Overweening vaunts dost thou hush into endless
sleep !

And is this the hero by whom shall be given
Into bondage to dames of Mycenae the spear-won
daughters [waters

Of Thebes,—to the Trident of Lerna, the fountain-
Amymonian, at stroke of Poseidon that leapt,—
When his net of thraldom around them is swept ?

Never, ah never, O Artemis Queen,

Zeus' child, with the tresses of golden sheen,

Bowed under bondage may I be seen !

190

OLD SERVANT

Daughter, pass in, and 'neath the roofs abide

Thy maiden bowers within ; for thy desire

Hast thou attained, even all thou fain wouldest see.

Lo, to the royal halls a woman-throng

Comes, now confusion through the town hath passed.

And scandal-loving still is womankind ;

For, so they find slight cause for idle talk,

359

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

200

πλείους ἐπεισφέρουσιν· ἡδονὴ δέ τις
γυναιξὶ μηδὲν ὑγιὲς ἀλλήλας λέγειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Τύριον οἰδμα λιποῦσ' ἔβαν
ἀκροθίνια Λοξίᾳ
Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου
Φοίβῳ δούλα μελάθρων,
ἴν' ὑπὸ δειράσι νιφοβόλοις
Παρνασσοῦ κατενάσθη,
Ίόνιον κατὰ πόντον ἐλά-
τα πλεύσασα περιρρύτων
ὑπὲρ ἀκαρπίστων πεδίων
Σικελίας Ζεφύρου πνοαῖς
ἰππεύσαντος ἐν οὐρανῷ
κάλλιστον κελάδημα.

210

πόλεος ἐκπροκριθεῖσ' ἐμᾶς
καλλιστεύματα Λοξίᾳ
Καδμείων ἔμολον γάν,
κλεινῶν Ἀγηνοριδᾶν
όμογενεῖς ἐπὶ Λαΐου
πεμφθεῖσ' ἐνθάδε πύργους.
ἴσα δ' ἀγάλμασι χρυσοτεύ-
κτοις Φοίβῳ γενόμαν λάτρις.
ἔτι δὲ Κασταλίας ὕδωρ
περιμένει με κόμας ἐμᾶς
δεῦσαι παρθένιον χλιδᾶν
Φοιβείαισι λατρείαις.

220

ώ λάμπουσα πέτρα πυρὸς
δικόρυφον σέλας ὑπὲρ ἄκρων
Βακχείων Διονύσου,

στρ. α'

ἀντ. α

μεσφδ.

360

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

More they invent. Strange pleasure women take 200
To speak of sister-women nothing good.

[*Exeunt OLD SERVANT and ANTIGONE.*

Enter CHORUS

(Str. 1)

Afar from the tides against Tyre's walls swelling,
For Loxias chosen an offering,
From the Isle of Phoenicia I came, to be thrall
Unto Phoebus, to serve in his palace-hall,
Where 'neath crags of Parnassus, with arrowy fall
Of the snow overspent, he hath made him a dwelling.
O'er Ionian seas did it waft me, the wing
Of the oar, while the West-wind's chariot sped
Over the furrows unharvested 210
That from Sicily roughened ;—before him fled
Music, till all the heavens were telling
The glory of beauty his breathings bring.

The choice of my city's virgin-flowers, (Ant. 1)
A gift of beauty to Loxias made,
To the land of the children of Cadmus we came,
To the sons of Agenor of ancient fame,
Hither brought to a people by lineage the same
With my fathers, even to Laïus' towers.
But as gold-wrought statues to stand arrayed 220
For the service of Phoebus appointed we were ;
And Castaly's fount yet waiteth us there,
That my maiden glory of shining hair
May be oversprayed by its hallowing showers,
Ere for Phoebus's service its tresses I braid.

Hail, rock that flashest a splendour of light (*Mesode*)
From the cloven tongue of thy flame o'er the height
Of the Bacchic peak Dionysus haunteth !

361

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

οῖνα θ', ἀ καθαμέριον
στάζεις τὸν πολύκαρπον
οἰνάνθας ιεῖσα βότρυν,
ζάθεά τ' ἄντρα δράκοντος οὐ-
ρειαί τε σκοπιὰὶ θεῶν
νιφόβολόν τ' ὅρος ιερόν, ει-
λίσσων ἀθανάτας θεοῦ
χορὸς γενοίμαν ἄφοβος
παρὰ μεσόμφαλα γύαλα Φοί-
βου Δίρκαν προλιποῦντα.

νῦν δέ μοι πρὸ τειχέων στρ. β'
θούριος μολὼν Ἀρης
αἷμα δάιον φλέγει
τἍδ', οὐ μὴ τύχοι, πόλει·
κοινὰ γὰρ φίλων ἄχη·
κοινὰ δ', εἴ τι πείσεται
καλλίπυργος ἄδε γᾶ
Φοινίσσα χώρᾳ. φεῦ φεῦ.
κοινὸν αἷμα, κοινὰ τέκεα
τᾶς κερασφόρου πέφυκεν Ἰοῦς·
ῶν μέτεστί μοι πόνων.

250 ἀμφὶ δὲ πτόλιν νέφος ἀντ. β'
ἀσπίδων πυκνὸν φλέγει
σῆμα φοινίου μάχης,
ἄν "Αρης τάχ' εἰσεται
παισὶν Οἰδίπου φέρων
πημονὰν Ἐρινύων.
"Αργος ω Πελασγικόν,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Hail, vine that with each morn offerest up
Thy giant cluster to brim the cup 230
That never the mystic ritual wanteth !¹
Hail, cavern revered where the Dragon abode !
Hail, watchtower scaur of the Archer-god !
Hail, snow-smitten ridges by mortal untrod !
O that the wreaths of the dance I were weaving,
With soul unafraid, to the Goddess undying,
These fear-stricken waters of Dirce leaving
For Apollo's dells by the world's heart lying !

But this day before the wall (Str. 2)
Furious Ares comes ; his hand 240
Lights for Thebes the slaughter-brand—
God forfend his will befall !
Friend with friend is one in pain ;
And Phoenicia with all bane
Of the stately-towered land
Shall condole, a mourning nation.
One our lineage, one our blood ;
All be hornèd Io's brood :
Mine is all your tribulation.

Round the town a shield-array • (Ant. 2) 250
Cloudlike flashes levin-light—
Grim presentment of red fight !
Yet shall Ares rue the day
If the Avengers' curse he bring
On the sons of that blind king.
Argos, thy Pelasgian might

¹ In the temple of Dionysus on Parnassus was a vine yielding one ripe cluster daily, to furnish the libation for the God.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

δειμαίνω τὰν σὰν ἀλκὰν
καὶ τὸ θεόθεν· οὐ γὰρ ἄδικον
εἰς ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἔνοπλος ὄρμᾶ
παὶς μετέρχεται δόμους.

260

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τὰ μὲν πυλωρῶν κλῆθρά μ' εἰσεδέξατο
δι' εὐπετείας τειχέων εἴσω μολεῖν.
ὅ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ με δικτύων ἔσω
λαβόντες οὐκ ἐκφρῶσ' ἀναίμακτον χρόα.
ών εὗνεκ' ὅμμα πανταχῇ διιστέον
κάκεῖσε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο, μὴ δόλος τις ἦ.
ώσπλισμένος δὲ χείρα τῷδε φασγάνῳ
τὰ πίστ' ἔμαυτῷ τοῦ θράσους παρέξομαι.
ώὴ τίς οὐτος; ἢ κτύπον φοβούμεθα;
ἄπαντα γὰρ τολμῶσι δεινὰ φαίνεται,
ὅταν δι' ἔχθρᾶς ποὺς ἀμείβηται χθονός.
πέποιθα μέντοι μητρί, κοὺ πέποιθ' ἄμα,
ητις μ' ἔπειστε δεῦρ' ὑπόσπουδον μολεῖν.
ἀλλ' ἐγγὺς ἀλκή· βώμιοι γὰρ ἐσχάραι
πέλας πάρεισι, κούκ τέρημα δώματα.
φέρ' ἐσ σκοτεινὰς περιβολὰς μεθῶ ξίφος
καὶ τάσδ' ἔρωμαι, τίνες ἐφεστάσιν δομοις.
ξέναι γυναικες, εἴπατ', ἐκ ποίας πάτρας
'Ελληνικοῖσι δώμασιν πελάζετε;

270

ΧΟΡΟΣ

280

Φοίνισσα μὲν γῆ πατρὶς ἡ θρέψασά με,
'Αγήνορος δὲ παῖδες ἐκ παίδων δορὸς
Φοίβῳ μ' ἔπειμψαν ἐνθάδ' ἀκροθίνιον.
μέλλων δὲ πέμπειν μ' Οἰδίπου κλεινὸς γόνος
μαντεῖα σεμνὰ Λοξίου τ' ἐπ' ἐσχάρας,
ἐν τῷδ' ἔπειστράτευσαν 'Αργεῖοι πόλιν,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Dread I, and the hand of Heaven !
For the strife of him who comes
Mail-clad to the ancient homes
Will with Justice' help be striven.

260

Enter POLYNEICES.

POLYNEICES

Lightly, too lightly, have the warders' bolts
Made way for me to pass within the walls.
Wherefore I fear lest, once within their net,
They shall not let me 'scape but with my blood.
Needs must I then turn every way mine eye
Hither and thither, lest some treachery lurk.
Mine hand with this blade armed shall give to me
The assurance of a desperate courage born.
Ha ! who goes there ?—or fear I but a sound ?
All perilous seems to them that venture all,
Soon as their feet are set on hostile soil. 270
Yet do I trust my mother—and mistrust,—
Who drew me to come hither under truce.
But help is nigh ; for lo, the altar-hearth
At hand ; nor void the palace is of folk.
Into its dark sheath let me plunge my sword,
And ask these by the palace who they be.
Ye alien women, say, from what far land
Unto the homes of Hellas are ye come ?

CHORUS

Phoenician was the land that fostered me.
Agenor's sons' sons sent me hitherward
To Phoebus, firstfruits of their battle-spoil.
When Oedipus' famed son would speed me on
To Loxias' awful oracle and hearths,
Even then the Argives marched against the town.

280

365

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

σὺ δ' ἀντάμειψαί μ', ὅστις ὁν ἐλήλυθας
ἐπτάστομον πύργωμα Θηβαίας πόλεως.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πατὴρ μὲν ἡμῖν Οἰδίπους ὁ Λαῖον,
ἔτικτε δ' Ἰοκάστη με, παῖς Μενοικέως·
καλεῖ δὲ Πολυνείκη με Θηβαῖος λεώς.

290

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ῳ συγγένεια τῶν Ἀγήνορος τέκνων,
ἐμῶν τυράννων, ὡν ἀπεστάλην ὑπο—
γονυπετεῖς ἔδρας προσπίτνω σ', ἄναξ,
τὸν οἴκοθεν νόμον σέβουσα—
ἔβας ὡ χρόνῳ γάν πατρώαν.
ἰὼ ἵω πότνια, μόλε πρόδομος,
ἀμπέτασον πύλας.
κλύεις, ὡ τεκοῦσα τόνδε μᾶτερ;
τί μέλλεις ὑπώροφα μέλαθρα περᾶν,
θιγεῖν τ' ὡλέναις τέκνου;

300

ΙΩΚΑΣΤΗ

Φοίνισσαν βοὰν
κλύουσ', ὡ νεάνιδες, γηραιὸν
πόδ' ἔλκω, τρομερὰν βάσιν.¹

ἰὼ τέκνου,
χρόνῳ σὸν δῆμα μυρίαις ἐν ἀμέραις
προσεῖδον· ἀμφίβαλλε μα—
στὸν ὡλέναισι ματέρος,

¹ Murray: for MSS. γεραιῷ ποδὶ τρομερὰν ἔλκω (παιδὶ) ποδὸς βάσιν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But thou, make answer, who art thou that com'st
Into this fortress of seven-gated Thebes?

POLYNEICES

Oedipus, son of Laëus, was my sire ;
Menoeceus' child Jocasta gave me birth ;
And me the Theban folk Polyneices name.

290

CHORUS

O kinsmen thou of old Agenor's race,
My rulers, who forth sent me to this place !—
Low on my knees in obeisance I fall,
After the wont of my people, O king !—
Thou art come at the last, to the land of thy fathers
comest thou !
What ho, Queen, ho ! fare forth of the hall !
Wide let the palace-portals swing.
Mother that barest him, hear'st thou my call ?
Why dost thou linger to pass from thine high-roofed
bowers now,
And around thy son with thine arms to cling ? 300
Enter JOCASTA.

JOCASTA

Your Tyrian accents ringing clear
Smote, O ye maidens, on mine ear, [near.
And lo, my tottering feet, for *eld* slow-tailed, draw
Catches sight of POLYNEICES.

O my son, I behold
Thy face at the last,
After days untold,
O my son !—now cast
Thine arms round thy mother, and bosom to bosom
enfold me fast.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

παρηίδων τ' ὅρεγμα βο-
στρύχων τε κυανόχρωτα χαι-
τας πλόκαμον, σκιάζων δέραν ἀμάν.

- 310 Ἰὼ Ἰώ, μόλις φανεὶς
 ἄελπτα κάδοκητα ματρὸς ὡλέναις.
 τί φῶ σε; πῶς ἄπαντα
 καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λόγοισι
 πολυέλικτον ἀδονὰν
 ἐκεῖσε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο
 περιχορεύουσα τέρψιν παλαιᾶν λάβω
 χαρμονᾶν; Ἰὼ τέκος,
 ἔρημον πατρῷον ἔλιπες δόμον
 φυγὰς ἀποσταλεὶς ὁμαίμουν λώβᾳ,
320 ἡ ποθεινὸς φίλοις,
 ἡ ποθεινὸς Θήβαις.

ὅθεν ἐμάν τε λευκόχροα κείρομαι
δακρυόσεσ' ἀνεῖστα πένθει κόμαν,
ἀπεπλος φαρέων λευκῶν, τέκνουν,
δυσόρφναια δ' ἀμφὶ τρύχῃ τάδε
σκότι ἀμείβομαι.

- 330 ὁ δ' ἐν δόμοισι πρέσβυς ὁματοστερῆς
 ἀπήνας ὁμοπτέρου τᾶς ἀπο-
 ζυγείσας δόμων
 πόθον ἀμφιδάκρυτον ἀεὶ κατέχων

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Stoop to me, stoop,
Dear face, from above !
Let the dark head droop
The tresses thereof,

Overshadowing my neck with its clustering curls,
with the banner of love.

Hopes, dreams, they were past 310
As a tale that is told ;
Yet thou comest at last
For mine arms to enfold !

What shall I say to thee ?—how shall I grasp it, the
rapture of old ?

By assurance of word,
Or by hands that embrace,
Or by feet that are stirred,
Or by body that sways,

Hitherward, thitherward, tossed as the dance inter-
twineth its maze ?

Ah son, thy father's desolate home forsaking,
Wast thou by thine own brother's tyrannous wrong
Exiled !—for thee thy lovers' hearts were aching, 320
Thebes' heart for thee ached long.

Therefore my white hair have I shorn for mourning,
With weeping let it fall for thee, my son :
Of white robes disarrayed, for all adorning
These night-hued rags I don ;

While in our halls the sightless ancient, ever
Yearning and weeping o'er that noble twain
Whom from home's yoke of love did hatred sever,
Rushed, eager to be slain 330

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀνήξε μὲν ξίφους
ἐπ' αὐτόχειρί τε σφαγάν,
ὑπὲρ τέραμνά τ' ἀγχόνας,
στενάζων ἀρὰς τέκνοις·
σὺν ἀλαλαῖσι δ' αἰὲν αἰαγμάτων
σκότια κρύπτεται.

340

σὲ δ', ω τέκνου, καὶ γάμοισι δὴ
κλύω ζυγέντα παιδοποιὸν ἄδονὰν
ξένοισιν ἐν δόμοις ἔχεων
ξένον τε κῆδος ἀμφέπειν,
ἄλαστα ματρὶ τῷδε Λα-
ἴῳ τε τῷ παλαιγνεῦν,
γάμων ἐπακτὸν ἄταν.
ἔγὼ δ' οὔτε σοι πυρὸς ἀνῆψα φῶς
νόμιμον ἐν γάμοις
[ώς πρέπει] ματέρι μακαρίᾳ·
ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἰσμηνὸς ἐκηδεύθη
λουτροφόρου χλιδᾶς· ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίαν
πόλιν ἐσιγάθη σᾶς ἔσοδοι νύμφας.

350

ὅλοιτο τάδ', εἴτε σίδαρος
εἴτ' ἔρις εἴτε πατὴρ ὁ σὸς αἴτιος,
εἴτε τὸ δαιμόνιον κατεκώμασε
δώμασιν Οἰδιπόδα·
πρὸς ἐμὲ γὰρ κακῶν ἔμολε τῶνδ' ἄχη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεινὸν γυναιξὶν αἱ δι' ὡδίνων γοναί,
καὶ φιλότεκνόν πως πᾶν γυναικείον γένος.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

By his own hand, with sword, with noose down-trailing
From rafters dim,—now groaning o'er the doom
His malison brought on you, and ever wailing
With anguish, hides in gloom.

But thou, my son, men say, hast made affiance
With strangers : children gotten in thine halls
Gladden thee, yea, thou soughtest strange alliance ! 340
Son, on thy mother falls

Thine alien bridal curse to haunt her ever.
Thee shall a voice from Laïus' grave accuse.
The spousal torch for thee I kindled never,
As happy mothers use ;

Nor for thy bridal did Ismenus bring thee
Joy of the bath ; nor at the entering-in
Of this thy bride did Theban maidens sing thee.
A curse be on that sin,

Whether from spell of steel born,¹ from thy father, 350
Or lust of strife, or whether revel rose
Of demons in yon halls !—on mine head gather
All tortures of these woes.

CHORUS

Mighty with women is their travail's fruit ;
Yea, dear the child is to all womankind.

¹ “The spell of the steel itself draws men on to fight.”—
Od. xix. 13.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μῆτερ, φρονῶν εὐ κού φρονῶν ἀφικόμην
ἐχθροὺς ἐσ ἄνδρας· ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει
πατρίδος ἐρᾶν ἅπαντας· δις δ' ἄλλως λέγει,
λόγοισι χαίρει, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἐκεῖσ' ἔχει.
οὕτω δὲ τάρβους εἰς φόβον τ' ἀφικόμην,
μή τις δόλος με πρὸς καστυνήτου κτάνῃ,
ῶστε ξιφήρη χεῖρ' ἔχων δι' ἀστεως
κυκλῶν πρόσωπον ἥλθον. ἐν δέ μ' ὡφελεῖ,
σπουδαί τε καὶ σὴ πίστις, ἢ μ' ἐσήγαγε
τείχη πατρῷα· πολύδακρυς δ' ἀφικόμην,
χρόνιος ἴδων μέλαθρα καὶ βωμοὺς θεῶν
γυμνάσιά θ' οἰσιν ἐνετράφην, Δίρκης θ' ὕδωρ·
ῶν οὐ δικαίως ἀπελαθεὶς ξένην πόλιν
ναίω, δι' ὅσσων δῆμον ἔχων δακρυρροοῦν.

370

ἀλλ' ἐκ γὰρ ἄλγους ἄλγος αὖ σὲ δέρκομαι
[κάρα ξυρῆκες καὶ πέπλους μελαγχίμους]
ἔχουσαν, οἵμοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐγὼ κακῶν.
ώς δεινὸν ἔχθρα, μῆτερ, οἰκείων φίλων
καὶ δυσλύτους ἔχουσα τὰς διαλλαγάς.
τί γὰρ πατήρ μοι πρέσβυς ἐν δόμοισι δρᾶ,
σκότον δεδορκώς; τί δὲ καστύνηται δύο;
ἢ που στένουσι τλήμονας φυγὰς ἐμάς;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

380

κακῶς θεῶν τις Οἰδίπου φθείρει γένος·
οὕτω γὰρ ἥρξατ', ἄνομα μὲν τεκεῖν ἐμέ,
κακῶς δὲ γῆμαι πατέρα σὸν φῦναί τε σέ.
ἀτὰρ τί ταῦτα; δεῖ φέρειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν.
ὅπως δ' ἔρωμαι, μή τι σὴν δάκω φρένα,
δέδοιχ', ἢ χρήζω· διὰ πόθου δ' ἐλήλυθα.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Wisely, and yet not wisely, have I come,
Mother, mid foes : yet all men are constrained
To love their fatherland ; who saith not so,
Sporteth with words, his heart is otherwhere. 360

In such misgiving came I, in such dread
Lest treachery slay me, of my brother framed,
That through the city sword in hand I passed,
Aye keenly glancing round. One stay I had :—
The truce and thy fair faith drew me within
These walls ancestral. Full of tears I came,
So late to see home, altars of the Gods,
The athlete-stead that trained me, Dirce's spring,
Whence banished wrongfully, in a strange town
dwell, mine eyes a fountain ever of tears. 370

Thee too, for sorrow's crown of sorrow, I see
With shaven head, and in dark mourning robes
Clad—woe is me for my calamities !
Mother, how dire is strife betwixt near kin,
How hopeless reconciliation is !
What doth mine ancient father in his halls,
Whose light is darkness ? And my sisters twain—
Do these bemoan mine exile's misery ?

JOCASTA

Fouly doth some God ruin Oedipus' line.
Thus it began—I bare forfended issue ; 380
Wed under curse thy sire,—and thou wast born !
Yet wherefore this ? The Gods' will must we bear.
But how to ask the thing I would I fear,
Lest I should gall thy soul, yet long for this.

373.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἔξερώτα, μηδὲν ἐνδεές λίπησ·
ἀ γὰρ σὺ βούλει, ταῦτ' ἐμοὶ, μῆτερ, φίλα.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ δὴ σ' ἐρωτῶ πρῶτον ὡν χρήζω τυχεῖν,
τί τὸ στέρεσθαι πατρίδος; ή κακὸν μέγα;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μέγιστον· ἔργῳ δ' ἐστὶ μεῖζον η λόγῳ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

390 τίς ὁ τρόπος αὐτοῦ; τί φυγάσιν τὸ δυσχερές;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἐν μὲν μέγιστον, οὐκ ἔχει παρρησίαν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

δούλου τόδ' εἰπας, μὴ λέγειν ἃ τις φρονεῖ.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τὰς τῶν κρατούντων ἀμαθίας φέρειν χρεών.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τοῦτο λυπρόν, συνασφεῖν τοῖς μὴ σοφοῖς.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος παρὰ φύσιν δουλευτέον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καλοῖς βλέπουσαί γ' ὅμμασιν, μέλλουσι δέ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐδ' ὁ χρόνος αὐτὰς διεσάφησ' οὕσας κενάς;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔχουσιν ἀφροδίτην τιν' ἥδεῖαν κακῶν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

400 πόθεν δ' ἐβόσκου πρὶν γάμοις εύρεῖν βίον;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Nay, ask ; leave no desire unsatisfied ;
For, mother, that thou wouldest is dear to me.

JOCASTA

First, then, I ask thee that I fain would learn.
What meaneth exile ? Is it a sore ill ?

POLYNEICES

The sorest. In deed sorer than in word.

JOCASTA

In what wise ? Where for exiles lies its sting ? 390

POLYNEICES

This most of all—a curb is on the tongue.

JOCASTA

That is the slave's lot, not to speak one's thought !

POLYNEICES

The unwisdom of his rulers must one bear.

JOCASTA

Hard this, that one partake in folly of fools !

POLYNEICES

Yokes nature loathes must be for profit borne.

JOCASTA

Yet hopes be exiles' meat, so runs the saw.

POLYNEICES

Hopes look with kind eyes, yet they long delay.

JOCASTA

But doth not time lay bare their emptiness ?

POLYNEICES

Ah, but sweet witchery mid ills have they !

JOCASTA

Whence wast thou fed, ere marriage brought thee
substance ?

400

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποτὲ μὲν ἐπ' ἡμαρ εἶχον, εἰτ' οὐκ εἶχον ἄν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

φίλοι δὲ πατρὸς καὶ ξένοι σ' οὐκ ὀφέλουν;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εὖ πρᾶσσε· τὰ φίλων δ' οὐδέν, ἦν τι δυστυχῆς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐδ' ηγένειά σ' ἥρεν εἰς ὑψος μέγα;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κακὸν τὸ μὴ ἔχειν· τὸ γένος οὐκ ἔβοσκέ με.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἡ πατρίς, ὡς ἕοικε, φίλτατον βροτοῖς.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐδ' ὄνομάσαι δύναι' ἀν ὡς ἐστὶν φίλον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πῶς δ' ἥλθες "Αργος; τίν' ἐπίνοιαν ἔσχεθες;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐκ οἴδ· ὁ δαίμων μ' ἐκάλεσεν πρὸς τὴν τύχην.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

σοφὸς γὰρ ὁ θεός· τίνι τρόπῳ δ' ἔσχεις λέχος;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔχρησ' Ἀδράστῳ Λοξίας χρησμόν τινα.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ποῖον; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; οὐκ ἔχω μαθεῖν.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κάπρῳ λέοντί θ' ἀρμόσαι παίδων γάμους.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ σοὶ τί θηρῶν ὄνόματος μετῆν, τέκνου;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

νὺξ ἦν, Ἀδράστου δ' ἥλθον εἰς παραστάδας.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Whiles had I daily bread, and whiles had not.

JOCASTA

Helped they not thee, thy father's friends and
guests?

POLYNEICES

Prosper :—friends vanish if thou prosper not.

JOCASTA

Did high birth bring thee not to high estate?

POLYNEICES

A curse is penury. Birth fed me not.

JOCASTA

Most dear, meseems, to men is fatherland.

POLYNEICES

How dear, thou couldst not even utter it.

JOCASTA

To Argos how cam'st thou? With what intent?

POLYNEICES

I know not. Heaven to my fate summoned me.

JOCASTA

Wise is the God. How didst thou win thy bride?

POLYNEICES

To Adrastus Loxias spake an oracle.

JOCASTA

What was it? How mean'st thou? I cannot guess. 410

POLYNEICES

“*Thy daughters wed to a lion and a boar.*”

JOCASTA

Son, with a brute's name what hadst thou to do?

POLYNEICES

“Twas night: to Adrastus' palace-porch I came.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κοίτας ματεύων ἥ φυγὰς πλανώμενος ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἥν ταῦτα· κἀτά γ' ἥλθεν ἄλλος αὖ φυγάς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τίς οὗτος ; ως ἅρ' ἄθλιος κάκεῖνος ἦν.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

Τυδεύς, δν Οἰνέως φασὶν ἐκφῦναι πατρός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τί θηρσὶν ύμᾶς δῆτ' Ἀδραστος ἥκασεν ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

στρωμνῆς ἐς ἀλκὴν οὕνεκ' ἥλθομεν πέρι.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐνταῦθα Ταλαοῦ παῖς συνήκε θέσφατα ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κᾶδωκεν ἡμῖν δύο δυοῖν νεάνιδας.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἄρ' εὐτυχεῖς οὖν τοῖς γάμοις ἥ δυστυχεῖς ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐ μεμπτὸς ἡμῖν ὁ γάμος εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πῶς δ' ἔξεπεισας δεῦρό σοι σπέσθαι στρατόν ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

δισσοῖς "Αδραστος ὕμοσεν γαμβροῖς τόδε,

[Τυδεῖ τε κάμοι· σύγγαμος γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός,]

ἄμφω κατάξειν εἰς πάτραν, πρόσθεν δ' ἐμέ.

430

πολλοὶ δὲ Δαναῶν καὶ Μυκηναίων ἄκροι

πάρεισι, λυπρὰν χάριν, ἀναγκαίαν δ' ἐμοὶ

διδόντες· ἐπὶ γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν στρατεύομαι

πόλιν. θεοὺς δ' ἐπώμοσ' ως ἀκουσίως

τοῖς φιλτάτοις τοκεύσιν ἡράμην δόρυ.

ἄλλ' εἰς σὲ τείνει τῶνδε διάλυσις κακῶν,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

JOCASTA

Seeking a couch, as homeless exiles roam ?

POLYNEICES

Even that. Another exile thither came.

JOCASTA

Who ? In what hapless plight was he withal !

POLYNEICES

Tydeus, who sprang, men say, of Oeneus' loins.

JOCASTA

Why to Adrastus seemed ye as wild beasts ? 420

POLYNEICES

For that we fell to fighting for our couch.

JOCASTA

Then Talaus' son read right the oracle ?

POLYNEICES

Yea—to us twain gave his young daughters twain.

JOCASTA

Blest or unblest, then, art thou in thy bride ?

POLYNEICES

Unto this day I find no fault in her.

JOCASTA

How didst thou win yon host to follow thee ?

POLYNEICES

To his two daughters' husbands swore Adrastus,
Tydeus and me,—my marriage-kinsman he,—
To bring both home from exile, me the first.

Danaan and Mycenean chiefs be here

430

Many—a needful, yet a mournful grace

To me, for I against my country march.

And, by the Gods I swear, unwillingly

I lift the spear against my father's house.

But with thee rests the assuaging of these ills,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

μῆτερ, διαλλάξασαν ὁμογενεῖς φίλους
παῦσαι πόνων με καὶ σὲ καὶ πᾶσαν πόλιν.
πάλαι μὲν οὖν ὑμνηθέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἐρῶ·
τὰ χρήματ' ἀνθρώποισι τιμιώτατα
δύναμίν τε πλειστην τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἔχει.
ἀγὼ μεθήκω δεῦρο μυρίαν ἄγων
λόγγην· πένης γὰρ οὐδὲν εὐγενῆς ἀνήρ.

440

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν Ἐτεοκλῆς εἰς διαλλαγὰς ὅδε
χωρεῖ· σὸν ἔργον, μῆτερ Ἰοκάστη, λέγειν
τοιούσδε μύθους οἰς διαλλάξεις τέκνα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μῆτερ, πάρειμι· τήνδε σοὶ χάριν διδοὺς
ἡλθον. τί χρὴ δρᾶν; ἀρχέτω δέ τις λόγου.
ώς ἀμφὶ τειχη καὶ ξυνωρίδας λόχων
τάσσων ἐπεσχον πόλιν, ὅπως κλύοιμί σου
κοινὰς βραβείας, αἷς ὑπόσπουδον μολεῖν
τόνδ' εἰσεδέξω τειχέων πείσασά με.

450

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐπίσχεις· οὗτοι τὸ ταχὺ τὴν δίκην ἔχει·
βραδεῖς δὲ μῦθοι πλεῖστον ἀνύουσιν σοφόν.
σχάσον δὲ δεινὸν ὅμμα καὶ θυμοῦ πνοάς·
οὐ γὰρ τὸ λαιμότμητον εἰσορᾶς κάρα
Γοργονός, ἀδελφὸν δὲ εἰσορᾶς ἥκοντα σόν.
σύ τ' αὖ πρόσωπον πρὸς καστύγητον στρέφε,
Πολύνεικες· εἰς γὰρ ταῦτὸν ὅμμασι βλέπων
λέξεις τ' ἄμεινον τοῦδέ τ' ἐνδέξει λόγους.
παραινέσαι δὲ σφῶν τι βούλομαι σοφόν·
ὅταν φίλος τις ἀνδρὶ θυμωθεὶς φίλῳ
εἰς ἐν συνελθὼν ὅμματ' ὅμμασιν διδῷ,
ἔφ' οἰσιν ἥκει, ταῦτα χρὴ μόνον σκοπεῖν,
κακῶν δὲ τῶν πρὶν μηδενὸς μνείαν ἔχειν.

460

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Mother, to set at one those one in blood,
And end mine, thine, and all the city's toils.

Old is the saw,—yet will I utter it :—

*Wealth in men's eyes is honoured most of all,
And of all things on earth hath chiefest power.*

440

Captaining countless spears for this I come ;
For the high-born in poverty is naught.

CHORUS

Lo, unto parley Eteocles comes.

Mother Jocasta, thine the task to speak
Words whereby thou shalt set thy sons at one.

Enter ETEOCLES.

ETEOCLES

Here am I, mother—all for grace to thee
I come. What needs to do ? Be speech begun.
For I have stayed from marshalling round the walls
The close-linked cordon of defence, to hear
Thy mediation for the which thou hast wrought
On me to admit this man within our walls.

450

JOCASTA

Forbear : haste brings not justice in its train :
But slow speech winneth oftenest wisdom's end.
Refrain fierce look and passion's stormy breath :
The Gorgon's severed head thou seëst not ;
Thou seëst thine own brother hither come.
And thou, unto thy brother turn thy face,
Polyneices ; for, if thou but meet his eye,
Thou shalt the better speak, and hear his words.
Fain would I wisely counsel thee, and thee.
When he whose wrath is hot against his friend
Cometh to meet him, standeth eye to eye,
Let him look only at that for which he came,
And cherish no remembrance of old wrongs.

460

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

λόγος μὲν οὖν σὸς πρόσθε, Πολύνεικες τέκνον·
σὺ γὰρ στράτευμα Δαναΐδῶν ἥκεις ἄγων,
ἄδικα πεπονθώς, ώς σὺ φής· κριτής δέ τις
θεῶν γένοιτο καὶ διαλλακτής κακῶν.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

- 470 ἀπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφυ,
κοὺ ποικίλων δεῖ τάνδιχ' ἔρμηνευμάτων.
ἔχει γὰρ αὐτὰ καιρόν· ὁ δ' ἄδικος λόγος
νοσῶν ἐν· αὐτῷ φαρμάκων δεῖται σοφῶν.
ἐγὼ δὲ πατρὸς δωμάτων προύσκεψάμην
τούμόν τε καὶ τοῦδ', ἐκφυγεῖν χρήζων ἀρὰς
ἅς Οἰδίπους ἐφθέγξατ' εἰς ἡμᾶς ποτε,
ἔξηλθον ἔξω τῆσδ' ἔκών αὐτὸς χθονός,
δοὺς τῷδ' ἀνάσσειν πατρίδος ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον,
ῶστ' αὐτὸς ἀρχειν αὐθις ἀνὰ μέρος λαβὼν
καὶ μὴ δι' ἔχθρας τῷδε καὶ φόνου μολών
κακόν τι δρᾶσαι καὶ παθεῖν, ἀ γίγνεται.
ὁ δ' αἰνέσας ταῦθ' ὄρκίους τε δοὺς θεούς,
ἔδρασεν οὐδὲν ὃν ὑπέσχετ', ἀλλ' ἔχει
τυραννίδ' αὐτὸς καὶ δόμων ἐμὸν μέρος.
καὶ νῦν ἔτοιμός είμι τάμαυτοῦ λαβὼν
στρατὸν μὲν ἔξω τῆσδ' ἀποστεῖλαι χθονός,
οἴκειν δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν οἶκον ἀνὰ μέρος λαβὼν
καὶ τῷδ' ἀφεῖναι τὸν ἵσον αὐθις αὖ χρόνον,
καὶ μήτε πορθεῖν πατρίδα μήτε προσφέρειν
πύργοισι πηκτῶν κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις,
ἀ μὴ κυρήσας τῆς δίκης πειράσομαι
δρᾶν. μάρτυρας δὲ τῶνδε δαίμονας καλῶ,
ώς πάντα πράσσων σὺν δίκῃ, δίκης ἄτερ
ἀποστεροῦμαι πατρίδος ἀνοσιώτατα.
ταῦτ' αὐθ' ἔκαστα, μῆτερ, οὐχὶ περιπλοκὰς

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Son Polyneices, be the first word thine,
For thou hast brought yon host of Danaus' sons,
Wronged, as thou pleadest. Now be some God judge
Hereof, and reconciler of these ills.

POLYNEICES

Plain and unvarnished is the tale of truth,
And justice needs no subtle sophistries : 470
Itself hath fitness ; but the unrighteous plea,
Having no soundness, needeth cunning salves.

I had regard unto my father's house,
My weal, and this man's : fain to 'scape the curse
Uttered of Oedipus against us once,
Of mine own will I went from this realm forth,
Left him for one year's round to rule our land,
Myself in turn to take the sovereignty,
And not in hate and bloodshed clash with him,
And do and suffer ill—as now befalls. 480
And he consented, in the Gods' sight swore,
Yet no whit keepeth troth, but holdeth still
The kingship and mine half the heritage.

Now ready am I, so I receive mine own,
Forth from this land to send my war-array,
To take mine house, in turn therein to dwell,
And for like space to yield it him again,
And not to waste my fatherland, nor bring
Assault of scaling-ladders to her towers,
Which, save I win my right, will I essay 490
To do. I call the Gods to witness this—
That, wholly dealing justly, robbed am I
Of fatherland, unjustly, impiously.
These things have I said, mother, point by point,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

λόγων ἀθραιστας εἰπον, ἀλλὰ καὶ σοφοῖς
καὶ τοῖσι φαύλοις ἔνδιχ', ώς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

έμοὶ μέν, εἰ καὶ μὴ καθ' Ἑλλήνων χθόνα
τεθράμμεθ', ἀλλ' οὖν ξυνετά μοι δοκεῖς λέγειν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

εἰ πᾶσι ταῦτὸ καλὸν ἔφυ σοφόν θ' ἄμα,
500 οὐκ ἦν ἀν ἀμφίλεκτος ἀνθρώποις ἔρις·
νῦν δ' οὕθ' ὅμοιον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἵσον βροτοῖς,
πλὴν ὀνόμασιν, τὸ δ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε.
ἔγω γάρ οὐδέν, μῆτερ, ἀποκρύψας ἐρῶ·
ἀστρων ἀν ἔλθοιμ' ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολὰς
καὶ γῆς ἔνερθε δυνατὸς ὁν δρᾶσαι τάδε,
τὴν θεῶν μεγίστην ὥστ' ἔχειν Τυραννίδα.
τοῦτ' οὖν τὸ χρηστόν, μῆτερ, οὐχὶ βούλομαι
510 ἄλλῳ παρεῖναι μᾶλλον ἢ σῷζειν ἐμοί·
ἀνανδρία γάρ, τὸ πλέον ὅστις ἀπολέσας
τοῦλασσον ἔλαβε. πρὸς δὲ τοῦσδ' αἰσχύνομαι,
ἐλθόντα σὺν ὅπλοις τόνδε καὶ πορθοῦντα γῆν
τυχεῦν ἀ χρήζει· καὶ γάρ ἀν Θήβαις τόδε
γένοιτο· διειδος, εἰ Μυκηναίου δορὸς
φόβῳ παρείην σκῆπτρα τάμα τῷδ' ἔχειν.
χρῆν δ' αὐτὸν οὐχ ὅπλοισι τὰς διαλλαγάς,
520 μῆτερ, ποιεῖσθαι· πᾶν γάρ ἔξαιρεῖ λόγος
δ καὶ σίδηρος πολεμίων δράσειν ἀν.
ἄλλ' εἰ μὲν ἄλλως τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν θέλει,
ἔξεστ· ἐκεῖνο δ' οὐχ ἔκὼν μεθήσομαι,
ἀρχειν παρόν μοι, τῷδε δουλεῦσαί ποτε.
πρὸς ταῦτ' ἵτω μὲν πῦρ, ἵτω δὲ φάσγανα,
ζεύγνυσθε δ' ἵππους, πεδία πίμπλαθ' ἄρμάτων,
ώς οὐ παρήσω τῷδ' ἐμὴν τυραννίδα.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Not wrapped in webs of words, but, in the eyes
Of wise or simple, naked right, meseems.

CHORUS

To me—albeit Hellas nursed me not,
Yet to me soundly seemest thou to plead.

ETEOCLES

Were wisdom gauged alike of all, and honour,
No strife of warring words were known to men. 500
But “fairness,” “equal rights”—men know them not.
They name their names : no being they have as things.

Now, mother, nothing feigning will I speak :—
I would mount to the risings of the stars
Or sun, would plunge 'neath earth, if this I could,
So to win Power, diviner than all gods.
This precious thing, my mother, will I not
Yield to another, when myself might keep.
No man's part this, to let the better slip
And grasp the worse ! Nay more—I think foul shame 510
That *he* should come with arms, lay waste the land,
And win his heart's desire. This were reproach
To Thebes, if I, by spears of Argos cowed,
Should yield my sceptre up for him to hold.
With arms should he not come in quest of peace,
Mother ; for parley can accomplish all
That even steel of foes can bring to pass.
If he on other terms will dwell in Thebes,
That may he. *This* consent I not to yield.
I, who may rule, shall I be thrall to him ? 520

Wherefore let fire and sword have free course now !
Yoke ye the steeds, with chariots fill the plains :—
I will not render him my sovereignty.

385

VOL. III.

C C

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

εἴπερ γὰρ ἀδικεῖν χρή, τυραννίδος πέρι
κάλλιστον ἀδικεῖν, τἄλλα δ' εὐσεβεῖν χρεών.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εὖ λέγειν χρὴ μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς ἔργοις καλοῖς,
οὐ γὰρ καλὸν τοῦτ', ἀλλὰ τῇ δίκῃ πικρόν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ω τέκνου, οὐχ ἄπαντα τῷ γῆρᾳ κακά,
Ἐτεόκλεες, πρόσεστιν ἄλλ' ἡμπειρία
ἔχει τι λέξαι τῶν νέων σοφώτερον.
τί τὴς κακίστης δαιμόνων ἐφίεσαι
Φιλοτιμίας, πᾶ; μὴ σύ γ'. ἀδικος δὲ θεός·
πολλοὺς δ' ἐς οἴκους καὶ πόλεις εὐδαίμονας
εἰσῆλθε καὶ ἤλθ' ἐπ' ὀλέθρῳ τῶν χρωμένων·
ἐφ' οὐ σὺ μαίνει. κεῖνο κάλλιον, τέκνου,
Ίσοτητα τιμᾶν, η φίλους ἀεὶ φίλοις

πόλεις τε πόλεσι συμμάχους τε συμμάχοις
συνδεῖν· τὸ γὰρ ἵσον νόμιμον ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ,
τῷ πλέονι δ' ἀεὶ πολέμιον καθίσταται

τοῦλασσον ἐχθρᾶς θ' ἡμέρας κατάρχεται.
καὶ γὰρ μέτρ' ἀνθρώποισι καὶ μέρη σταθμῶν
Ίσοτης ἔταξε κάριθμὸν διώρισε,
νυκτός τ' ἀφεγγὲς βλέφαρον ἥλιου τε φῶς
ἵσον βαδίζει τὸν ἐνιαύσιον κύκλον,
κοῦδέτερον αὐτῶν φθόνον ἔχει νικώμενον.

εἰθ' ἥλιος μὲν νῦξ τε δουλεύει βροτοῖς,
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέξει δωμάτων ἔχων ἵσον
καὶ τῷδ' ἀπονέμειν; κάτα ποῦ στιν η δίκη;
τί τὴν τυραννίδ', ἀδικίαν εὐδαίμονα,

τιμᾶς ὑπέρφευ, καὶ μέγ' ἥγησαι τόδε;
περιβλέπεσθαι τίμιον; κενὸν μὲν οὖν.
η πολλὰ μοχθεῖν πόλλ' ἔχων εὐδαίμονα
βούλει; τί δ' ἔστι τὸ πλέον; δικούς ἔχει μόνον

530

540

550

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

If wrong may e'er be right, for a throne's sake
Were wrong most right :—be God in all else feared !

CHORUS

Befits not fair speech glozing deeds unfair :
Not fair it is, but an offence to justice.

JOCASTA

My son Eteocles, evil unalloyed
Cleaves not to old age : nay, experience
Can plead more wisely than the lips of youth. 530
Why at Ambition, worst of deities,
Son, grasppest thou ? Do not : she is Queen of
Wrong.

Homes many and happy cities enters she,
Nor leaves till ruined are her votaries.
Thou art mad for her !—better to honour, son,
Equality, which knitteth friends to friends,
Cities to cities, allies unto allies.
Nature gave men the law of equal rights,
And the less, ever marshalled foe against
The greater, ushers in the dawn of hate. 540
Measures for men Equality ordained,
Meting of weights and number she assigned.
The sightless face of night, and the sun's beam
Equally pace along their yearly round,
Nor either envieth that it must give place.
Sun, then, and night are servants unto men :
Shalt thou not brook to halve your heritage
And share with him ? . . . Ah, where is justice then
Why overmuch dost thou prize Sovrancy—
Injustice throned !—and count it some great thing ? 550
Is worship precious ? Nay, 'tis vanity.
Wouldst have, with great wealth in thine halls, great
travail ?
What is thy profit ?—profit but in name ;

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

έπει τά γ' ἀρκοῦνθ' ίκανὰ τοῖς γε σώφροσιν.
οὗτοι τὰ χρήματ' ἵδια κέκτηνται βροτοί,
τὰ τῶν θεῶν δ' ἔχοντες ἐπιμελούμεθα·
ὅταν δὲ χρῆζωσ', αὐτ' ἀφαιροῦνται πάλιν.
[ό δ' ὅλβος οὐ βέβαιος, ἀλλ' ἐφήμερος.]
ἄγ', ἦν σ' ἔρωμαι δύο λόγω προθεῖσ' ἄμα,
πότερα τυραννεῖν ἢ πόλιν σῶσαι θέλεις,
ἐρεῖς τυραννεῖν; ἦν δὲ νικήσῃ σ' ὅδε
'Αργειά τ' ἔγχη δόρυ τὸ Καδμείων ἔλῃ,
ὅψει δαμασθὲν ἄστυ Θηβαῖον τόδε,
ὅψει δὲ πολλὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας κόρας
βίᾳ πρὸς ἀνδρῶν πολεμίων πορθουμένας.
δὸνηνηρὸς ἄρ' οὐ πλούτος, δὸν ζητεῖς ἔχειν,
γενήσεται Θήβαισι, φιλότυμος δὲ σύ.
σοὶ μὲν τάδ' αὐδῶ. σοὶ δὲ Πολύνεικες λέγω·
ἀμαθεῖς "Αδραστος χάριτας εἰς σ' ἀνήψατο,
ἀσύνετα δ' ἡλθεις καὶ σὺ πορθήσων πόλιν.
φέρ', ἦν ἔλῃς γῆν τὴνδ', δο μὴ τύχοι ποτέ,
πρὸς θεῶν, τρόπαια πῶς ἀναστήσεις Διί;
πῶς δ' αὖ κατάρξει θυμάτων, ἐλῶν πάτραν,
καὶ σκῦλα γράψεις πῶς ἐπ' Ἰνάχου ροαῖς;
Θήβας πυρώσας τάσδε Πολυνείκης θεοῖς
ἀσπίδας ἔθηκε; μήποτ', ω τέκνουν, κλέος
τοιόνδε σοι γένοιθ' ὑφ' Ἐλλήνων λαβεῖν.
ἦν δ' αὖ κρατηθῆς καὶ τὰ τοῦδ' ὑπερδράμη,
πῶς "Αργος ἥξεις μυρίους λιπῶν νεκρούς;
ἔρει δὲ δή τις ω κακὰ μνηστεύματα
"Αδραστε προσθείς, διὰ μιᾶς νύμφης γάμου
ἀπωλόμεσθα. δύο κακῶ σπεύδεις, τέκνουν,
κείνων στέρεσθαι, τῶνδέ τ' ἐν μέσῳ πεσεῖν.
μέθετον τὸ λίαν, μέθετον· ἀμαθίαι δυοῖν,
εἰς ταῦθ' ὅταν μόλητον, ἔχθιστον κακόν.

580

570

580

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Seeing enough sufficeth for the wise.
Mortals hold their possessions not in fee :
We are but stewards of the gifts of God :
Whene'er he will, he claims his own again.
And wealth abides not, 'tis but for a day.

Come, if I set two things before thee, and ask,
"Wouldst thou be lord or saviour of thy Thebes?" 560
Wilt thou say, "Lord?" But if this man prevail,
And Argos' spears bear down Cadmean might,
Then conquered shalt thou see this city of Thebes,
And many captive maidens shalt thou see
Dishonoured with foul outrage by the foe.
Yea, all this wealth thou covetest shall become
Thebes' curse, and thou shalt be ambition's fool.

This to thee ; and to thee, Polyneices, this :—
A foolish grace Adrastus did to thee ;
Madly thou too hast marched to ravage Thebes. 570
Come, if thou smite this land,—which God forbid,—
'Fore heaven, how wilt thou set Zeus' trophies up ?
How sacrifice for fatherland o'ercome ?
And how at Inachus' streams inscribe the spoils ?—
"Polyneices hath burnt Thebes, and to the Gods
Offers these shields"—thus? Never, son, be it thine
To win from lips of Hellenes such renown !
But, he triumphant, vanquished thou, to Argos
How canst thou come, here leaving myriads dead ?
And one shall say, "O cursed betrothal made 580
By thee, Adrastus! For one bridal's sake
We are ruined!" Evils twain thou draw'st on
thee,—
There, to lose all, here, fail mid thine emprise.
Forbear, forbear your vehemence ! When meet
Two headstrong fools, the issue is foulest ill.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ω θεοί, γένοισθε τῶνδ' ἀπότροποι κακῶν
καὶ ξύμβασίν τιν' Οἰδίπου τέκνοις δότε.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μῆτερ, οὐ λόγων ἔθ' ἀγών, ἀλλ' ἀνήλωται χρόνος
οὗν μέσῳ μάτην, περαίνει δ' οὐδὲν ἡ προθυμία·
590 οὐ γάρ ἀν ξυμβαῖμεν ἄλλως ἢ πὶ τοῖς εἰρη-
μένοις,
ῶστ' ἐμὲ σκήπτρων κρατοῦντα τῆσδ' ἄνακτ' εἶναι
χθονός.
τῶν μακρῶν δ' ἀπαλλαγεῖσα νουθετημάτων μ' ἔα.
καὶ σὺ τῶνδ' ἔξω κομίζου τειχέων, ἢ κατθανεῖ.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πρὸς τίνος; τίς ὁδ' ἄτρωτος, ὅστις εἰς ἡμᾶς ξίφος
φόνιον ἐμβαλὼν τὸν αὐτὸν οὐκ ἀποίσεται μόρον;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγγύς, οὐ πρόσω βέβηκεν εἰς χέρας λεύσσεις
ἐμάς;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἰσορῶ δειλὸν δ' ο πλοῦτος καὶ φιλόψυχον
κακόν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κἀτα σὺν πολλοῖσιν ἥλθεις πρὸς τὸν οὐδὲν ἐς
μάχην;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀσφαλὴς γάρ ἐστ' ἀμείνων ἢ θρασὺς στρατη-
λάτης.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

600 κομπὸς εἰ σπουδαῖς πεποιθώς, αἴ σε σφέζουσιν
θανεῖν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS

Ah Gods, be ye averters of these ills,
And set at one the sons of Oedipus !

ETEOCLES

Mother, 'tis too late for parley ; nay, the time in
dallying spent [good intent.
Doth but run to waste, nor aught availeth this thy
Never shall we be at one, except as I have laid it 590
down, [wear the crown.
That in lordship over Thebes I sway the sceptre,
Have thou done with tedious admonitions then, and
let me be ; [death shall light on thee.
And, for thee, thou get thee forth these walls, ere

POLYNEICES

Death ?—of whom ?—what man so woundless, as to
plunge his murderous sword [reward ?
Into this my body, and not win himself the like

ETEOCLES

Nigh he is : not far he standeth : lo, these hands—
hast eyes to see ?

POLYNEICES

Yea—and know how shrinks from death that craven
curse, prosperity !

ETEOCLES

Yet against a battle-blancher thou must lead yon
huge array !

POLYNEICES

Yea, for better than the reckless is the prudent
captain aye.

ETEOCLES

Safe behind the truce, from death that screens thee,
vaunting dost thou stand !

600

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σέ· δεύτερον δ' ἀπαιτῶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη
χθονός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἀπαιτούμεσθ· ἐγὼ γὰρ τὸν ἐμὸν οἰκήσω
δόμον.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τοῦ μέρους ἔχων τὸ πλεῖον;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

φήμ· ἀπαλλάσσον δὲ γῆς.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ θεῶν βωμοὶ πατρῷων—

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὗσ σὺ πορθισῶν πάρει.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κλύετέ μου—

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τίς δ' ἀν κλύοι σου πατρίδ' ἐπεστρατευμένου;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ θεῶν τῶν λευκοπώλων δώμαθ',

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐ στυγοῦσί σε.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔξελαυνόμεσθα πατρίδος,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἥλθεις ἔξελῶν.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀδικίᾳ γ', ω θεοί.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

Μυκήναις, μὴ νθάδ' ἀνακάλει θεούς.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Ay, and screens thee!—once again my crown, mine heritage I claim.

ETEOCLES

Naught to me are claims; for I will dwell in this mine house—mine own.

POLYNEICES

Grasping more than thine is?

ETEOCLES

Ay!—now get thee forth the land—begone!

POLYNEICES

Altars of our Gods ancestral,—

ETEOCLES

Whom to ravage thou art come!

POLYNEICES

Hear ye me!—

ETEOCLES

And who shall hear thee, bringer of war against thine home?

POLYNEICES

And ye temples of the Gods of Stainless Steeds!—

ETEOCLES

Who loathe thy name!

POLYNEICES

I am banished from my country!—

ETEOCLES

He that to destroy it came.

POLYNEICES

Wrongfully, ye Gods! •

ETEOCLES

To Gods not here, but at Mycenae, cry.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀνόσιος πέφυκας,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ πατρίδος, ὡς σύ, πολέμιος.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὅς μ' ἄμοιρον ἔξελαύνεις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

610 *καὶ κατακτενῶ γε πρός.*

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ πάτερ, κλύεις ἢ πάσχω;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γάρ οἴα δρᾶς κλύνει.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σύ, μῆτερ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀθέμιτόν σοι μητρὸς ὄνομάζειν κάρα.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ πόλις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μολὼν ἐς "Αργος ἀνακάλει Λέρνης ὕδωρ.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἰμι, μὴ πόνει· σὲ δ' αἰνῶ, μῆτερ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔξιθι χθονός.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔξιμεν· πατέρα δέ μοι δὸς εἰσιδεῖν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἀν τύχοις.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλὰ παρθένους ἀδελφάς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐδὲ τάσδ' ὅψει ποτέ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Impious art thou—

ETEOCLES

Yea?—but not my country's foe, as thou, am I.

POLYNEICES

Who dost drive me forth defrauded!

ETEOCLES

Death withal I'll deal to thee. 610

POLYNEICES

Father, hear'st thou what I suffer?

ETEOCLES

Nay, thy *doings* heareth he.

POLYNEICES

And thou, mother?

ETEOCLES

That thou name our mother, sacrilege it were.

POLYNEICES

O my city!

ETEOCLES

Hence to Argos: call on Lerna's water there.

POLYNEICES

Fret thee not—I go. I thank thee, mother.

ETEOCLES

Forth the city! Go!

POLYNEICES

Forth I go: yet on my father let me look!

ETEOCLES

Thou see him! No!

POLYNEICES

Nay then, but my maiden sisters.

ETEOCLES

These thou never more shalt see.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ῳ κασίγνηται.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί ταύτας ἀνακαλεῖς ἔχθιστος ὡν;

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μῆτερ, ἀλλά μοι σὺ χαῖρε.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

χαρτὰ γοῦν πάσχω, τέκνον.

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐκέτ' εἰμὶ παῖς σός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

εἰς πόλλα' ἀθλία πέφυκ' ἐγώ.

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οδε γὰρ εἰς ήμᾶς ὑβρίζει.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἀνθυβρίζομαι.

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποῦ ποτε στήσει πρὸ πύργων;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ώς τί μ' ἴστορεῖς τόδε;

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀντιτάξομαι κτενῶν σε.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κάμε τοῦδ' ἔρως ἔχει.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ῳ τάλαιν' ἐγώ. τί δράσετ', ὥ τέκν';

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

αὐτὸ σημανεῖ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πατρὸς οὐ φεύξεσθ' Ἐρινῦς;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔρρετω πρόπας δόμος.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

O my sisters !

ETEOCLES

Why dost call on these, their bitterest enemy ?

POLYNEICES

Farewell, O my mother ?

JOCASTA

Sooth, my son, I *fare well*, thus forlorn !

POLYNEICES

Son of thine no more !—

JOCASTA

To many a sorrow was thy mother born !

POLYNEICES

Since he doth me foul despite !

ETEOCLES

For foul despite received, I wis ! 620

POLYNEICES

Where before the towers wilt plant thee ?

ETEOCLES

Wherefore dost thou question this ?

POLYNEICES

I will face thee there to slay thee.

ETEOCLES

Ha ! I long to have it so !

JOCASTA

Woe is me ! what will ye do, my sons ?

POLYNEICES

The issue's self shall show.

JOCASTA

Flee, O flee your father's curses !

ETEOCLES

All our house let ruin seize !

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ώς τάχ' οὐκέθ' αἰματηρὸν τούμδον ἀργήσει· ξίφος.
τὴν δὲ θρέψασάν με γαῖαν καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρομαι
ώς ἄτιμος οἰκτρὰ πάσχων ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός,
δοῦλος ὦς, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ταῦτον πατρὸς Οἰδίπου
γεγών·

κἄν τί σοι, πόλις, γένηται; μὴ 'μέ, τόνδε δ' αἴτιω.
630 οὐχ ἐκῶν γάρ ήλθον, ἄκων δ' ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.
καὶ σύ, Φοῖβ' ἄναξ Ἀγυιεῦ, καὶ μέλαθρα χαίρετε,
ηλικές θ' ούμοι, θεῶν τε δεξίμηλ' ἀγάλματα.
οὐ γάρ οἶδ' εἴ μοι προσειπεῖν αὐθις ἔσθ' ὑμᾶς
ποτε·

ἐλπίδες δ' οὕπω καθεύδουσ', αἰς πέποιθα σὺν
θεοῖς
τόνδ' ἀποκτείνας κρατήσειν τῆσδε Θηβαίας
χθονός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔξιθ' ἐκ χώρας· ἀληθῶς δ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκη
πατήρ
ἔθετό σοι θείᾳ προνοίᾳ νεικέων ἐπώνυμον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Κάδμος ἔμολε τάνδε γάν
Τύριος, ως τετρασκελῆς
640 μόσχος ἀδάματος πέσημα
δίκε τελεσφόρον διδοῦσα
χρησμόν, οὐ κατοικίσαι
πεδία, νιν τὸ θέσφατον
πυροφόρ' Ἀόνων¹ ἔχρη,
καλλιπόταμος ὕδατος ἵνα τε
νοτὶς ἐπέρχεται ρυτᾶς
Δίρκας χλοηφόρους

στρ.

¹ Valckenaer: for MSS. δόμων.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Soon my sword, blood-reddened, shall abide no more
in deedless ease. [Gods in heaven,
But I call to witness earth that nursed me, witness
How with shame and piteous usage from the home-
land I am driven, [Oedipus, came.
Like a bondman, not a son that of one father,
City, whatsoe'er befall thee, blame not me: yon
tyrant blame. [willingly.
Willingly I came not, from the land am cast un- 630
Farewell, Phoebus, Highway-king, O palace-bowers,
farewell ye! [where sheep are slain!
Friends of youth, farewell, and statues of the Gods
For I know not if to me 'tis given to speak to you
again. [with Gods to aid,
But my hope not yet doth sleep, wherein I trust,
Him to slay, and hold the land of Thebes beneath
my sceptre swayed.

ETEOCLES

Get thee forth! Ha, truly Polyneices, "Man of
many a feud," [thy feuds endued!
Named thy father thee, with heavenly prescience of
[Exit POLYNEICES.

CHORUS

To this land from Phoenicia Cadmus speeding (Str.)
Came, till the heifer unbroken, leading
The wanderer, cast her to earthward, telling 640
That so was accomplished the oracle spoken
When the God for the place of his rest gave token,
Bidding take the Aonian plains for his dwelling,
Where the golden spears of the wheat-ranks quiver,
Where the outgushing flood of the lovely river
Forth flashes from fountains of Dirce welling

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

καὶ βαθυσπόρους γύας,
Βρόμιον ἔνθα τέκετο μά-
τηρ Διὸς γάμοισι,
κισσὸς δν περιστεφῆς
ἔλικτὸς εὐθὺς ἔτι Βρέφος
χλοηφύροισιν ἔρνεσιν
κατασκίοισιν δλβίσας ἐνώτισεν,
Βάκχιον χόρευμα παρθένοισι Θηβαίαισι
καὶ γυναιξὶν εὐίοις.

ἔνθα φόνιος ἦν δράκων ἀντ.

"Αρεος, ωμόφρων φύλαξ
νάματ' ἔνυδρα καὶ ρέεθρα
χλοερὰ δεργυμάτων κόραισι
πολυπλάνοις ἐπισκοπῶν·
δν ἐπὶ χέρνιβας μολὼν
Κάδμος ὀλεσε μαρμάρῳ,
κράτα φόνιον ὀλεσίθηρος
ώλένας δικῶν βολαῖς,
δίας ἀμάτορος δ'

669 εἰς βαθυσπόρους γύας

668 γαπετεῖς δικῶν ὁδόν-

667 τας Παλλάδος φραδαῖσιν.¹

670 ἐνθεν ἐξανήκε γά

πάνοπλον δψιν ὑπὲρ ἄκρων

ὅρων χθονός· σιδαρόφρων

δέ νιν φόνος πάλιν ξυνῆψε γὰρ φίλα.

αῖματος δ' ἔδευσε γαῖαν, ἡ νῦν εὐηλίοισι

δεῖξεν αἰθέρος πνοαῖς.

καὶ σὲ τὸν προμάτορος

Ιοῦς ποτ' ἔκγονον

Ἐπωδ.

¹ Murray's arrangement, securing metrical correspondence.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Over meadows and tilth-lands harvest-teeming,
Where sprang, from the spousals levin-gleaming
 Of Zeus, the God of the shout wild-ring^{ing} ; 650
And the ivy arching its bowers around him,
With the fairy chains of its greenness bound him,
 To the babe with its sudden tendrils clinging,
Overmantling with shadow the Blessing-laden,
For a theme of the Bacchanal dance unto maiden
 Of Thebes, and to matron evoë-singing.

There on the hallowed fountain's border (*Ant.*)
Was the dragon of Ares, a ruthless warder ;
 And the glare of his eyeballs fearful-flashing
Wandered in restless-roving keenness
O'er the brimming runnels, the mirrored greenness : 660
 Then came to the spring for the lustral washing
Cadmus, and hurled at the monster, and slew it ;
For he snatched a boulder, his strong arm threw it
 Down on the head of the slaughterer crashing.
Then, of Pallas, the motherless Goddess, bidden,
O'er the deep-furrowed earth, in her breast to be
 hidden,
He scattered the teeth from the grim jaws parted.
And the travailing glebe flung up bright blossom 670
Of mail-clad warriors over the bosom
 Of the earth ; but slaughter the iron-hearted
Again with the earth their mother blent them,
And drenched with their blood the breast which had
 sent them
Forth, when to sun-quicken'd air they upstarted.

Unto thee too, Epaphus, scion (*Epode.*)
 Of our first mother Io, I moan,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

680

"Επαφον, ὡ Διὸς γένεθλον,
ἐκάλεσ' ἐκάλεσα βαρβάρω βοῦ,
ἰώ, βαρβάροις λιταῖς,
βâθι βâθι τάνδε γân·
σοί νιν ἔκγονοι κτίσαν,
ἀν διώνυμοι θεαί,
Περσέφασσα καὶ φίλα
Δαμάτηρ θεά,
πάντων ἄνασσα, πάντων δὲ Γᾶ τροφός,
ἐκτήσαντο· πέμπε πυρφόρους
θεάς, ἄμυνε τâδε γâ·
πάντα δ' εὐπετῆ θεοῖς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

690 χώρει σὺ καὶ κόμιζε τὸν Μενοικέως
Κρέοντ', ἀδελφὸν μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης ἐμῆς,
λέγων τâδ', ὡς οἰκεῖα καὶ κοινὰ χθονὸς
θέλω πρὸς αὐτὸν συμβαλεῖν βουλεύματα,
πρὶν εἰς μάχην τε καὶ δορὸς τάξιν μολεῖν.
καίτοι ποδῶν σῶν μόχθον ἐκλύει παρών·
ὅρῳ γâρ αὐτὸν πρὸς δόμους στείχοντ' ἐμούς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἡ πόλλ' ἐπῆλθον εἰσιδεῖν χρῆζων σ', ἄναξ
'Ετεόκλεες, πέριξ δὲ Καδμείων πύλας
φύλακάς τ' ἐπῆλθον σὸν δέμας θηρώμενος.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

700 καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σ' ἔχρηζον εἰσιδεῖν, Κρέον·
πολλῷ γâρ ηὔρον ἐνδεεῖς διαλλαγάς,
ώς εἰς λόγους συνῆψα Πολυνείκει μολών.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἥκουσα μεῖζον αὐτὸν ἡ Θήβας φρονεῖν,
κήδει τ' Ἀδράστου καὶ στρατῷ πεποιθότα.

402

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Unto thee, of our lord Zeus sprung,
With my alien chant upflung
And with prayers of an alien tongue ! 680
Thy sons, who reared Thebes to thee, cry on
Their father—O come to thine own !
For Demeter, Persephone, wearing
Twin names, have our land in ward—
Even gracious Demeter All-queen,
Who is Earth, nurse of all that hath been,—
O send them, thy people to screen
From the evil, the Queens Torch-bearing !—
Is there aught for the Gods too hard ?

ETEOCLES (*to attendant*)

Go thou, and Creon bring, Menoeceus' son, 690
Who is my mother's, even Jocasta's brother.
This tell him, that I would commune with him
Touching our own advantage and the land's,
Ere we go battleward and range the spears.
But lo, he cometh, sparing thy foot's toil.
Myself behold him drawing nigh mine halls.

Enter CREON.

CREON

Seeking to see thee, far I have wended, King
Eteocles ; round to all Cadmean gates
And guards, still searching for thy face, I passed.

ETEOCLES

Sooth, Creon, fain was I to look on thee : 700
For little worth I found his terms of peace,
When I for parley Polyneices met.

CREON

Beyond Thebes his ambition soars, I hear,
By Adrastus' kinship, and his host, puffed up.

493

D D 2

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀλλ' εἰς θεοὺς χρὴ ταῦτ' ἀναρτήσαντ' ἔχειν·
ἄ δ' ἐμποδὼν μάλιστα, ταῦθ' ἥκω φράσων.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα; τὸν λόγον γὰρ ἀγνοῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἥκει τις αἰχμάλωτος Ἀργείων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λέγει δὲ δὴ τί τῶν ἐκεὶ νεώτερον;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μέλλειν [πέριξ πύργοισι Καδμείων πόλιν
ὅπλοις] ἐλίξειν αὐτίκ' Ἀργείων στρατόν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐξοιστέον τῷ ὅπλα Καδμείων πόλει.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποῖ; μῶν νεάζων οὐχ ὄρᾶς ἄ χρῆν σ' ὄρᾶν;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐκτὸς τάφρων τῶνδ', ως μαχουμένους τάχα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σμικρὸν τὸ πλῆθος τῆσδε γῆς, οἱ δ' ἄφθονοι.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγῳδα κείνους τοῖς λόγοις ὅντας θρασεῖς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔχει τιν' ὅγκον Ἀργος Ἐλλήνων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει τάχ' αὐτῶν πεδίον ἐμπλήσω φόνου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

θέλοιμ' ἄν· ἀλλὰ τοῦθ' ὄρῶ πολλοῦ πόνου.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ώς οὐ καθέξω τειχέων εἴσω στρατόν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ μὴν τὸ νικᾶν ἔστι πᾶν εὐβουλία.

710

720

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But these things in the Gods' hands must we leave.
Of our main stumblingblock I came to tell.

ETEOCLES

What shall this be? Thy drift is dark to me.

CREON

A captive from the Argive host is come.

ETEOCLES

What tidings bringeth he of dealings there?

CREON

That Argos' host will straightway wind the net
Of arms round Cadmus' burg and all her towers.

710

ETEOCLES

Then Cadmus' burg must lead forth her array,—

CREON

Whither? Sees not thy rash youth what it should?

ETEOCLES

Across yon trenches, as to fight forthwith.

CREON

Small is the host of this land, countless theirs.

ETEOCLES

I know them for tongue-valiant warriors.

CREON

Argos hath high repute mid Hellas' sons.

ETEOCLES

Fear not: their slaughter soon shall load the plain.

CREON

That would I: yet herein I see grim toil.

ETEOCLES

Not I will pen mine host within the walls!

720

CREON

Yet wholly in good counsel victory lies.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

βούλει τράπωμαι δῆθ' ὁδοὺς ἄλλας τινάς;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πάσας γε, πρὸν κίνδυνον εἰς ἅπαξ μολεῖν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

εὶς νυκτὸς αὐτοῖς προσβάλοιμεν ἐκ λόχου;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἴπερ σφαλείς γε δεῦρο σωθήσει πάλιν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἴσον φέρει νύξ, τοῖς δὲ τολμῶσιν πλέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐνδυστυχῆσαι δεινὸν εὐφρόνης κνέφας.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἄλλ' ἀμφὶ δεῖπνον οὖσι προσβάλω δόρυ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔκπληξις ἀν γένοιτο· νικῆσαι δὲ δεῖ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

βαθύς γέ τοι Διρκαῖος ἀναχωρεῖν πόρος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἄπαν κάκιον τοῦ φυλάσσεσθαι καλῶς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί δ', εὶς καθιππεύσαμεν Ἀργείων στρατόν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

κάκεῖ πέφρακται λαὸς ἄρμασιν πέριξ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα δράσω; πολεμίοισι δῶ πόλιν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μὴ δῆτα· βουλεύον δ', ἐπείπερ εἰ σοφός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τίς οὖν πρόνοια γίγνεται σοφωτέρα;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔπτ' ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς φασιν, ὡς ἥκουσ' ἔγώ,—

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ETEOCLES

Wouldst thou I turned me unto other paths ?

CREON

Any path, ere on one cast all be staked.

ETEOCLES

How if by night we fall on them from ambush ?

CREON

Yea,—if, miscarrying, safe thou mayst return.

ETEOCLES

Night equals all, yet helps the venturous most.

CREON

Yet, for ill-speed, night's gloom is terrible.

ETEOCLES

Shall I make onset even as they sup ?

CREON

A brief alarm :—'tis victory we need.

ETEOCLES

Dirce's deep ford should hamper their retreat.

730

CREON

Naught were so good as ward us warily.

ETEOCLES

How, if our horse charge down on Argos' host ?

CREON

There too their lines be fenced with chariots round.

ETEOCLES

What shall I do then ?—yield our town to foes ?

CREON

Never. Take thought, if prudent chief thou art.

ETEOCLES

What counsel is more prudent, then, than mine ?

CREON

Seven champions are there with them, have I heard,—

407

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί προστετάχθαι δρᾶν; τὸ γὰρ σθένος βραχύ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόχων ἀνάσσειν ἐπτὰ προσκεῖσθαι πύλαις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

740 τί δῆτα δρῶμεν; ἀπορίαν γὰρ οὐ μενῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔπτ' ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ πρὸς πύλαις ἐλοῦ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λόχων ἀνάσσειν ἡ μονοστόλου δορός;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόχων, προκρίνας οὕπερ ἀλκιμώτατοι,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ξυνῆκ· ἀμύνειν τειχέων προσαμβάσεις.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ ξυστρατήγους· εἰς δ' ἄνηρ οὐ πάνθ' ὁρᾶ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει προκρίνας ἡ φρενῶν εὐθουλίᾳ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἀμφότερον· ἀπολειφθὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν θάτερον.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

750 ἔσται τάδ· ἐλθὼν δ' ἐπτάπυργον ἐς πόλιν
τάξω λοχαγοὺς πρὸς πύλαισιν, ώς λέγεις,
ἴσους ἴσοισι πολεμίοισιν ἀντιθείσ.

ὄνομα δ' ἑκάστου διατριβὴ πολλὴ λέγειν,
ἐχθρῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῖς τείχεσιν καθημένων.

ἄλλ' εἷμ', ὅπως ἀν μὴ καταργῶμεν χέρα.

καί μοι γένοιτ' ἀδελφὸν ἀντήρη λαβεῖν

καὶ ξυσταθέντα διὰ μάχης ἐλεῖν δορί,

κτανεῖν θ' ὃς ἥλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν.

γάμους δ' ἀδελφῆς Ἀντιγόνης παιδός τε σοῦ
Αἴμονος, έάν τι τῆς τύχης ἐγὼ σφαλῶ,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ETEOCLES

Whereto appointed? Seven men's might were small!

CREON

To lead their bands to assail our seven gates.

ETEOCLES

What then? I wait not counsels of despair.

740

CREON

Seven choose thou too to front them at the gates.

ETEOCLES

To lead our bands, or fight with single spear?

CREON

To lead our bands: choose thou our mightiest;—

ETEOCLES

Ay so—to avert the scaling of the walls.

CREON

And under-captains: one man sees not all.

ETEOCLES

For valour chosen, or for prudent wit?

CREON

Nay, both: without its fellow, each is naught.

ETEOCLES

This shall be. Now to the seven towers will I,
And plant chiefs, as thou biddest, at the gates,
Champion for champion, ranged against the foe.

750

To tell each o'er, were costly waste of time,

When foes be camped beneath our very walls.

But I will go, that mine hands loiter not.

God grant I meet my brother face to face,

Clash in the grapple, and slay him with the spear—

Slay him, who came to lay my country waste!

But, for Antigone's marriage with thy son

Haemon,—if aught untoward hap to me,—

409

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

σοὶ χρὴ μέλεσθαι· τὴν δόσιν δ' ἐχέγγυουν
 760 τὴν πρόσθε ποιῶ νῦν ἐπ' ἔξόδοις ἐμαῖς.
 μητέρος ἀδελφὸς εἰ· τί δεῖ μακρηγορεῖν;
 τρέφ' ἀξίως νιν σοῦ τε τὴν τ' ἐμὴν χάριν.
 πατὴρ δ' ἐς αὐτὸν ἀμαθίαν ὄφλισκάνει,
 δψιν τυφλώσας· οὐκ ἄγαν σφ' ἐπήνεσα·
 ἡμᾶς τ' ἀραισιν, ἦν τύχη, κατακτενεῖ.
 ἐν δ' ἐστὶν ἡμῖν ἀργόν, εἴ τι θέσφατον
 οἰωνόμαντις Τειρεσίας ἔχει φράσαι,
 τοῦδ' ἐκπιθέσθαι ταῦτ'· ἐγὼ δὲ παῖδα σὸν
 Μενοικέα, σοῦ πατρὸς αὐτεπώνυμον,
 770 ἄξοντα πέμψω δεῦρο Τειρεσίαν, Κρέον·
 σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἥδὺς εὶς λόγους ἀφίξεται·
 ἐγὼ δὲ τέχνην μαντικὴν ἐμεμψάμην
 ἥδη πρὸς αὐτόν, ὥστε μοι μομφὰς ἔχειν.
 πόλει δὲ καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ' ἐπισκῆπτω, Κρέον·
 ἥνπερ κρατήσῃ τάμα, Πολυνείκους νέκυν
 μήποτε ταφῆναι τῇδε Θηβαίᾳ χθονί·
 θνήσκειν δὲ τὸν θάψαντα, κἄν φίλων τις ἡ·
 σοὶ μὲν τάδ' αὐδῶ· προσπόλοις δ' ἐμοῖς λέγω.
 ἐκφέρετε τεύχη πάνοπλά τ' ἀμφιβλήματα,
 780 ὡς εὶς ἀγῶνα τὸν προκείμενον δορὸς
 ὁρμώμεθ' ἥδη ξὺν δίκη νικηφόρῳ.
 τῇ δ' Εὐλαβείᾳ χρησιμωτάτη θεῶν
 προσευχόμεσθα τήνδε διασφόζειν πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πολύμοχθος "Αρης, τί ποθ' αἴματι στρ.
 καὶ θανάτῳ κατέχει Βρομίου παράμουσος ἑορταῖς;
 οὐκ ἐπὶ καλλιχόροις στεφάνοισι νεάνιδος ὥρας
 βόστρυχον ἀμπετάσας, λωτοῦ κατὰ πνεύματα
 μέλπει

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

See thou to this. Their late betrothal-plight

New, as I go forth, do I ratify.

760

Thou art my mother's brother : why waste words ?

Give her fair nurture, for thy sake and mine.

My father hath wrought folly against himself,

Blinding his eyes ;—scant praise of mine he hath ;—

And us his curse shall slay, if so it hap.

One thing abides undone, to ask the seer

Teiresias touching this, if aught he hath

Of oracles to tell ; and I will send

Thy son Menoeceus, of thy father named,

Creon, to bring Teiresias hitherward.

770

With a good will shall he commune with thee :

But the seer's art in time past have I mocked

Unto his face ; so he may bear me grudge.

This, Creon, is mine hest to Thebes and thee :—

If my cause conquer, never bury ye

Polyneices' corpse upon this Theban soil.

Who buries him—though near and dear—must die.

This to thee :—to mine henchmen now I speak.

Bring forth my arms, mine harness-panoply,

That to the imminent conflict of the spear

780

I may set forth, with Right to crown mine arms.

To Heedfulness, of all Gods helpfullest,

That she will save this city, now we pray. [Exit.

CHORUS

Ares the troublous, O whence is thy passion (Str.)

For blood and for death, unattuned to the feasts of

the Revelry-king ? [ginal fashion

Not for the dances, the circlings of beauty, in vir-

Tossed are thy tresses abroad, nor to breathings of

flutes dost thou sing

411

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

μοῦσαν, ἐν ᾧ χάριτες χοροποιοί,
ἀλλὰ σὺν ὄπλοφόροις στρατὸν Ἀργείων ἐπι-
πνεύσας

- 790 αῖματι Θήβαις
κῶμον ἀναυλότατον προχορεύεις.
οὐδέ' ὑπὸ θυρσομανεῖ νεθρίδων μέτα δίνῃ,
ἄρμασι καὶ ψαλίοις τετραβάμοσι μώνυχα πῶλον,
ἰππείας ἐπὶ χεύμασι βαίνων
'Ισμηνοῖο θοάζεις, 'Αργείοις ἐπιπνεύσας
Σπαρτῶν γένναν,
ἀσπιδοφέρμονα θίασον ἔνοπλον,
ἀντίπαλον κατὰ λάινα τείχεα
χαλκῷ κοσμήσας.
ἡ δεινά τις "Ερις θεός, ἀ τάδε
μήσατο πήματα γᾶς βασιλεῦσιν,
800 Λαβδακίδαις πολυμόχθοις.

ώ ζαθέων πετάλων πολυθηρότα- ἀντ.
τον νάπος, Ἀρτέμιδος χιονοτρόφου ὅμμα Κιθαι-
ρών,
μήποτε τὸν θανάτῳ προτεθέντα, λόχευμ' Ἰοκά-
στας,
ἄφελες Οἰδιπόδαν θρέψαι βρέφοις ἔκβολον οἴκων,
χρυσοδέτοις περόναις ἐπίσαμον·
μηδὲ τὸ παρθένιον πτερόν, οὔρειον τέρας, ἐλθεῖν
πένθεα γαίας,
Σφίγγ', ἀπομουσοτάταισι σὺν φόδαις,
ἄ ποτε Καδμογενῆ τετραβάμοσι χαλαῖς

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

A strain to whose witchery dances are wreathing :
But with clangour of harness of fight through the
 Argive array art thou breathing
 War-lust for the blood of our Thebes athirst, 790
 As thou leadest the dance of a revel accurst
 Where no flutes ring.
Thou art found not where fawn-skin and thyrsus in
 mad reel mingle and sunder,
But with chariots and clashing of bits and with war-
 horses' footfall of thunder
 By Ismenus' brimming marge
 With the rushing of steeds dost thou charge,
 Into Argives breathing the battle-hate
 Against the sons of the Dragon-state ;
 And with harness of brass and with targe,
 Fronting our ramparts of stone, dost array
 A host for the fray.
A fearful Goddess in sooth is Strife,
 By whose devising the troublous life
Of the Labdacid kings of the land is anguish-rife. 800

Gorges mysterious of frondage, Cithaeron (*Ant.*)
Beast-haunted, O birth-bed of snows, O thou apple
 of Artemis' eye, [Jocasta, to rear on
Ah that thou ne'er hadst received him, the babe of
Thy lap such a fosterling, Oedipus, thrust from his
 home as to die,
 Life-marked with the brooch-pin golden-looping !
And O that the portent, the wings of the Sphinx
 from the mountain swooping,
 Down on the land for its woe had not come,
 The maiden that sang us a chant of doom,
 An untuneable cry,
When with talons of feet and of hands on the ram-
 parts of Cadmus she darted,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

τείχεσι χριμπτομένα φέρεν αἰθέρος εἰς ἄβατον
φῶς

- 810 γένναν, ἀν ό κατὰ χθονὸς "Αιδας
Καδμείοις ἐπιπέμπει· δυσδαιμων δ' ἔρις ἄλλα
θάλλει παίδων
Οἰδιπόδα κατὰ δώματα καὶ πόλιν.
οὐ γάρ δ μὴ καλὸν οὕποτ' ἔφυ καλόν,
οὐδ' οἱ μὴ νόμιμοι† παῖδες
ματρὶ λόχευμα, μίασμα πατρὸς δὲ συν-
αίμονος εἰς λέχος ἥλθεν.†

ἔτεκες, ὡ γὰ, ἔτεκέσ ποτε, ἐπωδ.

βύρβαρον ὡς ἀκοὰν ἐδάην ἐδάην ποτ' ἐν οἴκοις,

- 820 τὰν ἀπὸ θηροτρόφου φοινικολόφοιο δράκοντος
γένναν ὁδοντοφυῆ, Θήβαις κάλλιστον ὄνειδος·
‘Αρμονίας δέ ποτ’ εἰς ὑμεναίους
ἥλυθον οὐρανίδαι, φόρμιγγί τε τείχεα Θήβας
τᾶς Ἀμφιονίας τε λύρας ὑπὸ πύργος ἀνέστα
διδύμων ποταμῶν πόρον ἀμφὶ μέσον
Δίρκας, χλοεροτρόφον ἀ πεδίον
πρόπαρ ’Ισμηνοῦ καταδεύει·
‘Ιώ θ’ ἀ κερόεσσα προμάτωρ
Καδμείων βασιλῆας ἐγείνατο,
830 μυριάδας δ’ ἀγαθῶν ἔτεροις ἔτέ-
ρας μεταμειβομένα πόλις ἄδ’ ἐπ’ ἄ-
κροις ἔστακεν ’Αρή-
οις στεφάνοισιν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And bearing his offspring to sun-litten cloudland un-trodden departed,

She whom Hades from dens of the dead 810

Against Cadmus' children sped !

But a new curse lights upon Thebes and her halls ;

For 'twixt Oedipus' sons the hell-seed falls

Of strife, and it blossometh red.

O, never may aught that is utter shame

Bear honour's name ;

Nay, nor the unblest spousal's fruit

Are sons true-born, but with stain they pollute

Their begetter, the stock that sprang from the self-same root.

(Epode)

Thou didst bear, O land, thou didst bear of old—
For I heard, yea, I heard in mine home, in an alien tongue, the story—

From the dragon of crimson crest that battened on 820
beasts of the wold [and her glory.

A race of the seed of his teeth, to be Thebes' reproach
To Harmonia's bridal descended of yore¹

The Children of Heaven; and Thebes' walls rose to the
harp's voice singing, [her brows' enringing,

When the spell of Amphion's lyre fashioned towers for
In the space 'twixt the rivers twain that pour

Out of Dirce, whose dews drift greenness, shedding
Life o'er the plain by Ismenus spreading.

And our ancestress Io of hornèd brows

Was mother of kings unto Cadmus' house.

Lo, how hath this city, through line on line 830

Of blessings unnumbered, attained to the height

Where the War-god's crowns of victory-might

Shine !

¹ Cadmus wedded Harmonia, Ares' daughter.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ήγον πάροιθε, θύγατερ· ώς τυφλῷ ποδὶ¹
όφθαλμὸς εἰ σύ, ναυβάταισιν ἄστρον ὡς·
δεῦρ' εἰς τὸ λευρὸν πέδον ἵχνος τιθεῖσ' ἐμόν,
πρόβαινε, μὴ σφαλῶμεν· ἀσθενῆς πατήρ·
κλήρους τέ μοι φύλασσε παρθένῳ χερί,
οὓς ἔλαβον οἰωνίσματ' ὀρνίθων μαθὼν
θάκουσιν ἐν ἱεροῖσιν, οὐ μαντεύομαι.
840 τέκνον Μενοικεῦ, παῖ Κρέοντος, εἰπέ μοι
πόση τις ἡ πίλοιπος ἄστεως ὁδὸς
πρὸς πατέρα τὸν σόν· ώς ἐμὸν κάμνει γόνυ,
πυκνὴν δὲ βαίνων ἥλυσιν μόλις περῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

θύρσει. πέλας γάρ, Τειρεσία, φίλοισι σοῖς
ἐξωρμίσαι σὸν ποδὰ λαβοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ, τέκνον·
ώς πᾶσ' ἀπήνη πούς τε πρεσβύτου φιλεῖ
χειρὸς θυραίας ἀναμένειν κουφίσματα.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

εἰεν, πάρεσμεν· τί με καλεῖς σπουδῇ, Κρέον;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὕπω λελήσμεθ· ἀλλὰ σύλλεξαι σθένος
καὶ πνεῦμ' ἄθροισον, αἴπος ἐκβαλὼν ὁδοῦ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

κόπω παρεῖμαι γοῦν Ἐρεχθειδῶν ἄπο
δεῦρ' ἐκκομισθεὶς τῆς πάροιθεν ἡμέρας·
κάκεῖ γὰρ ἦν τις πόλεμος Εύμόλπου δορύς,
οὐ καλλινίκους Κεκροπίδας ἔθηκ' ἐγώ·
καὶ τόνδε χρυσοῦν στέφανον, ώς ὄρῦς, ἔχω
λαβὼν ἀπαρχὰς πολεμίων σκυλευμάτων.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἰωνὸν ἐθέμην καλλίνικα σὰ στέφη·
ἐν γὰρ κλύδωνι κείμεθ', ὥσπερ οἰσθα σύ,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Enter TEIRESIAS led by his DAUGHTER, with MENOCEUS.

TEIRESIAS

Lead on, my daughter : to my sightless feet
As eyes art thou, as star to mariners.
Hither, on even ground, plant thou my steps.
Guide, lest I stumble : strengthless is thy sire.
Guard in thy maiden hand the augury-lots
Which, when I marked the bodings of the birds,
In the holy seat I took, where I divine.
Thou child Menoeceus, son of Creon, tell
How much remaineth of the townward way
To where thy father waits. Faint wax my knees :
Journeying so long, scarce have I strength to go.

CREON

Take heart, Teiresias, thou art nigh thy friends,
And thy foot's anchorage. Grasp his hand, my child.
Mule-car and aged foot alike are wont
To await the upbearing of another's hand.

TEIRESIAS

Here am I. Why this instant summons, Creon?

CREON

We have not forgotten. Gather strength, regain
Thy breath, cast off thy journey's toil and strain. 850

TEIRESIAS

Sooth am I spent with toil, brought hitherward
But yesterday from King Erechtheus' folk.
There too was war, against Eumolpus' spear,
Where I to Cecrops' sons gave victory.
This crown of gold, as thou mayst see, have I
As firstfruits of the foemen's spoils received.

CREON

I take thy triumph-crown for omen fair;
For we are, as thou knowest, in mid-surge

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

860 δορὸς Δαναϊδῶν, καὶ μέγας Θῆβαις ἄγών.
 βασιλεὺς μὲν οὖν βέθηκε κοσμηθεὶς ὅπλοις
 ἥδη πρὸς ἀλκὴν Ἐτεοκλῆς Μυκηνίδα·
 ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπέσταλκ' ἐκμαθεῖν σέθεν πάρα,
 τί δρῶντες ἀν μάλιστα σώσαιμεν πόλιν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

870 'Ἐτεοκλέους μὲν εἶνεκ' ἀν κλήσας στόμα
 χρησμοὺς ἐπέσχον· σοὶ δ', ἐπεὶ χρήζεις μαθεῖν,
 λέξω. νοσεῖ γὰρ ἥδε γῆ πάλαι, Κρέον,
 ἔξ οὐ τεκνώθη Λάιος βίᾳ θεῶν
 πόσιν τ' ἔφυσε μητρὶ μέλεον Οἰδίπουν·
 αἴ τ' αἵματωποὶ δεργυμάτων διαφθορὰ
 θεῶν σόφισμα κάπιδειξις Ἐλλάδι.
 ἀ συγκαλύψαι παιδες Οἰδίπου χρόνῳ
 χρήζοντες, ὡς δὴ θεοὺς ὑπεκδραμούμενοι,
 ἥμαρτον ἀμαθῶς· οὕτε γὰρ γέρα πατρὶ
 οὗτ' ἔξοδον διδόντες ἄνδρα δυστυχῆ
 ἔξηγριωσαν· ἐκ δ' ἐπνευσ' αὐτοῖς ἀρὰς
 δεινάς, νοσῶν τε καὶ πρὸς ἡτιμασμένος.
 ἄγω τί οὐ δρῶν, ποῖα δ' οὐ λέγων ἔπη,
 εἰς ἔχθος ἥλθον παισὶ τοῖσι Οἰδίπου.
 880 ἐγγὺς δὲ θάνατος αὐτόχειρ αὐτοῖς, Κρέον·
 πολλοὶ δὲ νεκροὶ περὶ νεκροῖς πεπτωκότες
 'Αργεῖα καὶ Καδμεῖα μίξαντες βέλη
 πικροὺς γόους δώσουσι Θῆβαιά χθονί.
 σύ τ' ὁ τάλαινα συγκατασκάπτει πόλι,
 εἰ μὴ λόγοις τις τοῖς ἐμοῖσι πείσεται.
 ἐκεῖνο μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον ἦν, τῶν Οἰδίπου
 μηδένα πολέτην μηδ' ἄνακτ' εἶναι χθονός,
 ὡς δαιμονῶντας κάνατρέψοντας πόλιν.
 890 ἐπεὶ δὲ κρείσσον τὸ κακόν ἐστι τάγαθοῦ,
 μῆ ἔστιν ἄλλη μηχανὴ σωτηρίας.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Of Danaid war, and Thebes must wrestle hard. 860
King Eteocles, clad in war-array,
Even now is gone to face Mycenae's might ;
But to me gave in charge to inquire of thee
What deeds of ours shall best deliver Thebes.

TEIRESIAS

For Eteocles sealed my lips had been,
The oracles withheld :—since *thou* wouldst know,
I tell thee. Creon, long this land hath ailed
Since Laius in heaven's despite begat
Oedipus, his own mother's wretched spouse.
Yea, and the gory ruin of his eyes 870
Was heaven's device, for warning unto Greece.

And Oedipus' sons, who fain had cloaked it o'er
With time, as though they could outrun the Gods,
In folly erred : vouchsafing to their sire
Nor honour nor free air, they stung to fury
His misery : dread malison he breathed
Against them, suffering and shamed withal.
What did I not ? What warnings spake I not ?—
And had for guerdon hate of Oedipus' sons.
But nigh them, Creon, mutual slaughter looms ; 880
And corpses many upon corpses piled,
Transfixed with Argive and Cadmean shafts,
With bitter wails shall dower the Theban land.

Thou, hapless town, art made a ruin-heap—
Except unto my bodings one give heed !
This had been best, that none of Oedipus' line
Remained in Thebes, nor citizen nor king :
They are fiend-possessed and doomed to wreck the
state.
But, seeing the evil hath o'erborne the good,
One other way of safety yet remains ; 890

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀλλ'—οὐ γὰρ εἰπεῖν οὔτ' ἐμὸὶ τόδ' ἀσφαλὲς
πικρόν τε τοῖσι τὴν τύχην κεκτημένοις
πόλει παρασχεῖν φάρμακον σωτηρίας—
ἄπειμι, χαίρεθ'. εἰς γὰρ ὅν πολλῶν μέτα
τὸ μέλλον, εἰ χρή, πείσομαι· τί γὰρ πάθω;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
ἐπίσχεις αὐτοῦ, πρέσβυ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
μὴ πιλαμβάνου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
μεῖνον, τί φεύγεις;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἡ τύχη σ', ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
φράσον πολίταις καὶ πόλει σωτηρίαν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
βούλει σὺ μέντοι κούχὶ βουλήσει τάχα.

900 καὶ πῶς πατρώαν γαῖαν οὐ σῶσαι θέλω;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
θέλεις ἀκοῦσαι δῆτα καὶ σπουδὴν ἔχεις;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
εἰς γὰρ τί μᾶλλον δεῖ προθυμίαν ἔχειν;
ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
κλύοις ἀν ἥδη τῶν ἐμῶν θεσπισμάτων.
πρῶτον δὲ ἐκεῖνο βούλομαι σαφῶς μαθεῖν,
ποῦ στιν Μενοικεύς, δις με δεῦρ' ἐπίγαγεν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
οδὲ οὐ μακρὰν ἄπεστι, πλησίον δέ σου.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ἀπελθέτω νυν θεσφάτων ἐμῶν ἑκάς.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But this to tell, for me were all unsafe,
And bitter unto those whom fate endows
With power to give their city safety's balm.
I go. Farewell ! What must befall will I—
One midst a multitude—endure. What help ?

[*Turns to go.*

CREON

Abide here, ancient !

TEIRESIAS

Lay not hold on me.

CREON

Tarry : why flee ?

TEIRESIAS

Thy fortune flees, not I.

CREON

Tell citizens and city safety's path.

TEIRESIAS

Ay, fain art thou !—but loth thou soon shalt be.

CREON

How ?—not desire to save my fatherland ?

900

TEIRESIAS

Wouldst thou indeed hear ? Art thou set thereon ?

CREON

Yea : whereunto more earnest should I be ?

TEIRESIAS

Then straightway shalt thou hear mine oracles.

But of this first would I be certified—

Where is Menoeceus, who hath led me hither ?

CREON

He stands not far, but even at thy side.

TEIRESIAS

Let him withdraw then from my bodings far.

421

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

έμὸς πεφυκὼς πᾶν ἀ δεῖ σιγήσεται.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

βούλει παρόντος δῆτά σοι τούτου φράσω ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

κλύων γὰρ ἀν τέρποιτο τῆς σωτηρίας.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄκουε δή υνν θεσφάτων ἐμῶν ὄδόν·

[ἀ δρῶντες ἀν σώσαιτε Καδμείων πόλιν.]

σφάξαι Μενοικῇ τόνδε δεῖ σ' ὑπὲρ πάτρας
σὸν παῖδ', ἐπειδὴ τὴν τύχην αὐτὸς καλεῖς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί φής ; τίν' εἰπας τόνδε μῦθον, ὡ γέρον ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄπερ πέφυκε, ταῦτα κάναγκη σε δρᾶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ πολλὰ λέξας ἐν βραχεῖ χρόνῳ κακά.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

σοὶ γ', ἀλλὰ πατρίδι μεγάλα καὶ σωτήρια.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐκ ἔκλυον, οὐκ ἥκουσα· χαιρέτω πόλις.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀνὴρ ὅδ' οὐκέθ' αὐτός, ἐκνεύει πάλιν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

χαίρων ἵθ· οὐ γὰρ σῶν με δεῖ μαντευμάτων.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀπόλωλεν ἀλήθει', ἐπεὶ σὺ δυστυχεῖς ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ πρός σε γονάτων καὶ γερασμίου τριχός,

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

τί προσπίτνεις με; δυσφύλακτ' αἴτει κακά.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

He is my son, will keep what must be secret.

TEIRESIAS

Wilt thou indeed I speak before his face ?

CREON

Yea ; of this safety gladly shall he hear.

910

TEIRESIAS

Hear then the tenor of mine oracle,
What deed of yours shall save the Thebans' town.
Menoeceus must thou slay for fatherland,
Thy son—since thou thyself demandest fate.

CREON

How say'st thou ? Ancient, what was this thy word ?

TEIRESIAS

As hath been doomed; even this thou needs must do.

CREON

Oh countless ills in one short moment told !

TEIRESIAS

Thine ills—but great salvation for thy land.

CREON

I heard not !—hearkened not !—away, thou Thebes !

TEIRESIAS

Not the same man is this : he flincheth now.

920

CREON

Depart in peace : thy bodings need I not.

TEIRESIAS

Is truth dead, for that thou art fortune-crost ?

CREON

Oh, by thy knees, and by thy reverend hair !—

TEIRESIAS

Why kneel ? Thou prayest for ruin inevitable.

423

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σίγα· πόλει δὲ τούσδε μὴ λέξης λόγους.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀδικεῖν κελεύεις μ'. οὐ σιωπήσαιμεν ἄν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δή με δράσεις; παῦδα μου κατακτενεῖς;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄλλοις μελήσει ταῦτ', ἐμοὶ δ' εἰρήσεται.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐμοὶ τόδ' ἡλθε καὶ τέκνῳ κακόν;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

- 930 ὥρθῶς μ' ἐρωτᾶς κείς ἀγῶν' ἔρχει λόγων.
δεῖ τόνδε θαλάμαις, οὐδὲ δράκων ὁ γηγενῆς
ἐγένετο Δίρκης ναμάτων ἐπίσκοπος,
σφαγέντα φόνιον αἷμα γῇ δοῦναι χοάς,
Κάδμου παλαιῶν "Αρεος ἐκ μηνιμάτων,
ὅς γηγενεῖ δράκοντι τιμωρεῖ φόνον.
καὶ ταῦτα δρῶντες σύμμαχον κτήσεσθ' "Αρη.
χθὼν δ' ἀντὶ καρποῦ καρπὸν ἀντὶ θ' αἴματός
αἷμ' ἦν λάβῃ βρότειον, ἔξετ' εὐμενῆ
γῆν, ἦ ποθ' ἡμῖν χρυσοπήληκα στάχυν
σπαρτῶν ἀνήκεν· ἐκ γένους δὲ δεῖ θανεῖν
τοῦδ', ὃς δράκοντος γένυσος ἐκπέφυκε παῖς.
σὺ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἡμῖν λοιπὸς εἰ σπαρτῶν γένους
ἀκέραιος, ἐκ τε μητρὸς ἀρσένων τ' ἀπο,
οἱ σοὶ τε παῖδες. Αἴμονός μὲν οὖν γάμοι
σφαγὰς ἀπείργουστ'. οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἥθεος·
κεὶ μὴ γὰρ εὐνῆς ἥψατ', ἀλλ' ἔχει λέχος·
οὗτος δὲ πῶλος τῆδ' ἀνειμένος πόλει
θανὼν πατρών γαῖαν ἐκσώσειεν ἄν.
πικρὸν δ' Ἀδράστῳ νόστον 'Αργείοισί τε
θήσει, μέλαιναν κῆρ' ἐπ' ὅμμασιν βαλών,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Keep silence : to the city tell not this.

TEiresias

Thou bidd'st me sin : I will not hold my peace.

CREON

What wilt thou do to me ?—wilt slay my son ?

TEiresias

Others shall see to that. 'Tis mine to speak.

CREON

Whence came on me this curse, and on my son ?

TEiresias

Fair question and demand that I show cause.
In that den where the earth-born dragon lay
Watching the streams of Dirce, must he yield,
Slaughtered, a blood-oblation to the earth ;
For Ares, nursing wrath 'gainst Cadmus long,
Now would avenge his earth-born dragon's death.
Do this, and Ares for your champion win.

930

If earth for seed gain seed, and human blood
For blood, then kindly shall ye prove the earth
Which once sent up a harvest golden-helmed
Of Sown-men. And it needeth that one die
Born of the lineage of the Dragon's Teeth ;
And sole survivor art thou of the Sown
Of pure blood both on sire's and mother's side,
Thou and thy two sons. Haemon's spousals bar
His slaughter, for he is not virgin man.
Though sealed the rite be not, betrothed is he.

940

But this lad, to his city consecrate,
Dying, should yet redeem his fatherland,
And for Adrastus and the Argives make
Bitter return, their eyes with black death palled,

950

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

κλεινάς τε Θήβας. τοῦνδ' ἐλοῦ δυοῦν πότμουν
τὸν ἔτερον· ἡ γὰρ παιδα σῶσον ἡ πόλιν.
τὰ μὲν πάρ' ἡμῶν πάντ' ἔχεις· ἥγουν, τέκνουν,
πρὸς οἰκουν. ὅστις δ' ἐμπύρῳ χρῆται τέχνη,
μάταιος· ἦν μὲν ἔχθρᾳ σημῆνας τύχη,
πικρὸς καθέστηχ· οἷς ἀν οἰωνοσκοπῆ·
ψευδῆ δ' ὑπ' οἴκτου τοῖσι χρωμένοις λέγων
ἀδικεῖ τὰ τῶν θεῶν. Φοίβουν ἀνθρώποις μόνον
χρῆν θεσπιφδεῖν, δις δέδοικεν οὐδένα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

960 Κρέον, τί σιγᾶς γῆρυν ἄφθονγον σχάσας;
κάμοι γὰρ οὐδὲν ἡσσον ἔκπληξις πάρα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' ἂν τις εἴποι; δῆλον· οἶ γ' ἐμοὶ λόγοι.
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐποτ' εἰς τόδ' εἰμι συμφορᾶς,
ώστε σφαγέντα παιδα προσθεῖναι πόλει.
πᾶσιν γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι φιλότεκνος βίος,
οὐδ' ἀν τὸν αὐτοῦ παιδά τις δοίη κτανεῖν.
μή μ' εὐλογείτω τάμα τις κτείνων τέκνα.
αὐτὸς δ', ἐν ὠραίφ γὰρ ἔσταμεν βίου,
θυήσκειν ἔτοιμος πατρίδος ἐκλυτήριον.
ἀλλ' εἴα, τέκνουν, πρὶν μαθεῖν πᾶσαν πόλιν,
ἀκόλαστ' ἔάσας μάντεων θεσπίσματα,
φεῦγ' ως τάχιστα τῆσδ' ἀπαλλαχθεὶς χθονός.
λέξει γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ στρατηλάταις τάδε,
πύλας ἐφ' ἐπτὰ καὶ λοχαγέτας μολών.
κὰν μὲν φθάσωμεν, ἔστι σοι σωτηρία.
ἢν δ' ὑστερήσης, οὐχόμεσθα, κατθανεῖ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

ποῖ δῆτα φεύγω; τίνα πόλιν; τίνα ξένων;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὅπου χθονὸς τῆσδ' ἐκποδῶν μάλιστ' ἔσει,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And make Thebes glorious. One of these two fates
Choose : either save the city, or thy son.
Now hast thou all my tale. Lead on, my child,
Homeward. Who useth the diviner's art
Is foolish. If he heraldeth ill things,
He is loathed of those to whom he prophesies.
If, pitying them that seek to him, he lie,
He wrongs the Gods. Sole prophet unto men
Ought Phoebus to have been, who feareth none.

[*Exit.*]

CHORUS

Why silent, Creon, with lips held from speech ? 960
On me, too, consternation weighs no less.

CREON

What should one say ? But clear mine answer is :
Never such depth of misery will I seek,
As offer for my city a slaughtered son !
For love of children filleth all men's life,
And none to death would yield up his own child.
Let no man praise me while he slays my sons !
Myself—who have reached the ripeness of my
years—

For death stand ready, to redeem my land.
But up, my child, ere all the city hear : 970
Heed not the reckless words of soothsayers,
But fly—with all speed get thee from the land !
To the seven gates, the captains, will he go,
And tell the rulers and the chieftains this.
Yet, may we but forestall him, thou art saved ;
But if thou lag, undone we are—thou diest.

MENOECCEUS

But whither flee ?—what city seek ?—what friend ?

CREON

Where thou from this land's reach shalt farthest be.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

οῦκουν σὲ φράζειν εἰκός, ἐκπονεῖν δ' ἐμέ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Δελφοὺς περάσας—

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

980 *ποῖ με χρή, πάτερ, μολεῖν;*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Αἴτωλίδ' εἰς γῆν.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

ἐκ δὲ τῆσδε ποῖ περῶ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Θεσπρωτὸν οὐδας.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

σεμνὰ Δωδώνης βάθρα;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔγνωσ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

τί δὴ τόδ' ἔρυμά μοι γενήσεται;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πόμπιμος ὁ δαίμων.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

χρημάτων δὲ τίς πόρος;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔγώ πορεύσω χρυσόν.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

εὖ λέγεις, πάτερ.

*χώρει νυν· ώς σὴν πρὸς κασιγνήτην μολών,
ἥς πρώτα μαστὸν εἶλκυσ', Ιοκάστην λέγω,
μητρὸς στερηθεὶς ὄρφανός τ' ἀποζυγίεις,
προστηγορήσων εἰμι καὶ σώσων βίον.
ἀλλ' εἴλα, χώρει: μὴ τὸ σὸν κωλυνέτω;*

990

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

MENOECUS

It best beseems that thou tell, I perform.

CREON

Pass Delphi—

MENOECUS

Whither, father, must I go?

980

CREON

Unto Aetolia.

MENOECUS

Whither journey thence?

CREON

Thesprotia's soil.

MENOECUS

Dodona's hallowed floor?

CREON

'Thou say'st.

MENOECUS

What shall be my protection there?

CREON

The God shall speed thee.

MENOECUS

How supply my need?

CREON

I will find gold.

MENOECUS

Father, thou sayest well:

Haste then. Unto thy sister will I go,—

Jocasta, on whose bosom first I lay,

Reft of my mother, left an orphan lone,—

To bid her farewell, ere I flee for life.

On then: pass in, be hindrance not in thee.

990

[*Exit* CREON.]

429

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

γυναικεις, ως εν πατρὸς ἔξειλον φόβον
 κλέψας λόγοισιν, ὥσθ' ἂ βούλομαι τυχεῖν.
 ὅς μ' ἐκκομίζει, πόλιν ἀποστερῶν τύχης,
 καὶ δειλίᾳ δίδωσι. καὶ συγγνωστὰ μὲν
 γέροντι· τούμὸν δ' οὐχὶ συγγνώμην ἔχει,
 προδότην γενέσθαι πατρίδος ἢ μ' ἐγείνατο.
 ώς οὖν ἀν εἰδῆτ', εἴμι καὶ σώσω πόλιν
 ψυχήν τε δώσω τῆσδ' ὑπερθανεῖν χθονός.
 αἰσχρὸν γάρ, οἱ μὲν θεσφάτων ἐλευθεροι
 κούκεις ἀνάγκην δαιμόνων ἀφιγμένοι
 στάντες παρ' ἀσπίδ' οὐκ ὀκνήσουσιν θανεῖν,
 πύργων πάροιθε μαχόμενοι πάτρας ὑπερ·
 ἐγὼ δέ, πατέρα καὶ κασίγνητον προδοὺς
 πόλιν τ' ἐμαυτοῦ, δειλὸς ὡς ἔξω χθονὸς
 ἄπειμ· ὅπου δ' ἀν ζῶ, κακὸς φανήσομαι.
 μὰ τὸν μετ' ἄστρων Ζῆν· Ἄρη τε φοίνιον,
 ὃς τοὺς ὑπερτείλαντας ἐκ γαίας ποτὲ
 Σπαρτοὺς ἀνακτας τῆσδε γῆς ἰδρύσατο.
 ἀλλ' εἴμι καὶ στὰς ἔξ ἐπάλξεων ἄκρων
 σφάξας ἐμαυτὸν σηκὸν ἐις μελαμβαθῆ
 δράκοντος, ἐνθ' ὁ μάντις ἔξηγήσατο,
 ἐλευθερώσω γαῖαν· εἴρηται λόγος.
 στείχω δέ, θανάτου δῶρον οὐκ αἰσχρὸν πόλει
 δώσων, νόσου δὲ τήνδ' ἀπαλλάξω χθόνα.
 εἰ γὰρ λαβὼν ἔκαστος ὅ τι δύναιτό τις
 χρηστὸν διέλθοι τούτο κεὶς κοινὸν φέροι
 πατρίδι, κακῶν ἀν αἱ πόλεις ἐλασσόνων
 πειρώμεναι τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχοῖεν ἄν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

1020 ἔβας ἔβας,
 ὡ πτεροῦσσα, γᾶς λόχευμα

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Maidens, how well I have stilled my father's fear
By guileful words, to attain the end I would !
Me would he steal hence, robbing Thebes of hope,
Branding me coward ! This might one forgive
In age ; but no forgiveness should be mine
If I betray the city of my birth.

Doubt not but I will go and save the town,
And give my soul to death for this land's sake.

'Twere shame that men no oracles constrain,

Who have not fall'n into the net of fate,

1000

Shoulder to shoulder stand, bленч not from death,

Fighting before the towers for fatherland,

And I, betraying father, brother, yea,

My city, craven-like flee forth the land—

A dastard manifest, where'er I dwell !

By Zeus star-throned, by Ares, slaughter's lord,
Who set on high in kingship over Thebes
The Dragon-brood that cleft the womb of earth,
Go will I, on the ramparts' height will stand,
And o'er the Dragon's gloomy chasm-cave, 1010
Whereof the seer spake, will I slay myself,
And make my country free. The word is said.

I go, to give my country no mean gift,
My life, from ruin so to save the land :
For, if each man would take his all of good,
Lavish it, lay it at his country's feet,
Then fewer evils should the nations prove,
And should through days to come be prosperous.

[Exit.]

CHORUS

Thou camest, camest, O thou wingèd doom, (Str.)
Fruit of Earth's travailing,

1020

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

νερτέρου τ' Ἐχίδνας,
Καδμείων ἀρπαγά,
πολύφθορος πολύστονος,
μιξοπάρθενος,
δάιον τέρας,
φοιτάσι πτεροῖς
χαλαισί τ' ὡμοσίτοις.
Διρκαίων ἂ ποτ' ἐκ
τόπων νέους πεδαίρουσ·
ἄλυρον ἀμφὶ μοῦσαν
όλομέναν τ' Ἐρινύν
ἔφερες ᔁφερες ἄχεα πατρίδι
φόνια· φόνιος ἐκ θεῶν
δις τάδ' ἦν ὁ πράξας.
ἰάλεμοι δὲ ματέρων,
ἰάλεμοι δὲ παρθένων
ἐστέναζον οἴκοις·
ἰήιον βοὰν βοάν,
ἰήιον μέλος μέλος
ἄλλος ἄλλ' ἐπωτότυζε
διαδοχαῖς ἀνὰ πτόλιν.
Βροντᾶ δὲ στεναγμὸς
ἀχά τ' ἦν ὅμοιος,
ὅποτε πόλεος ἀφανίσειεν
ά πτεροῦσσα παρθένος τιν' ἀνδρῶν.

χρόνῳ δ' ἔβα
Πυθίαις ἀποστολαῖσιν
Οἰδίπους ὁ τλάμων
Θηβαίαν τάνδε γάν
τότ' ἀσμένοις πάλιν δ' ἄχη·
ματρὶ γὰρ γάμους

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Begotten of the Worm of Nether-gloom,
On Cadmus' sons to spring
Death-fraught, and fraught with moanings for the
dead,

Half maiden, half brute-beast,
Monster of roving pinions, talons red
From that raw-ravening feast,
Snatching from Dirce's meads her young men,
shrieking

O'er them thy dissonant knell,
Anguish of slaughter on our country wreaking,
Wreaking a curse-doom fell !

1030

Ah, murderous God, these ills for us who fashioned !

Moanings of mothers filled
The shuddering homes, and maidens' moanings pas-
sioned :

And wail to wail aye thrilled,
And dirge to death-dirge, each to each replying
The stricken city through—
A nation's pang—as thunder pealed their crying,
When the winged maid with each new victim flying
From earth, was lost to view.

1040

(Ant.)

At last was Oedipus, woe-fated, bound
From Pytho, hither led,—
Our joy, but soon our grief,—who, triumphi-crowned
From that dark riddle read,
Wretch, in foul bridal made his mother wife,

433

VOL. III.

F F

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

δυσγάμους τάλας
 καλλίνικος ὁν
 αἰνυμάτων συνάπτει,
 1050 μιαίνει δὲ πτόλιν·
 δὶ' αἰμάτων δ' ἀμείβει
 μυσαρὸν εἰς ἀγῶνα
 καταβαλὼν ἀραισι
 τέκεα μέλεος. ἀγάμεθ' ἀγάμεθ',
 δος ἐπὶ θάνατον οἴχεται
 γᾶς ὑπὲρ πατρῷας,
 Κρέοντι μὲν λιπὼν γόους,
 τὰ δ' ἐπτάπυργα κλῆθρα γᾶς
 καλλίνικα θήσων.

1060 γενοίμεθ' ὅδε ματέρες
 γενοίμεθ' εὔτεκνοι, φῖλα
 Παλλάς, ἢ δράκοντος αἷμα
 λιθόβολον κατειργάσω,
 Καδμείαν μέριμναν
 ὄρμήσασ' ἐπ' ἔργον,
 ὅθεν ἐπέσυτο τάνδε γαιαν
 ἀρπαγαῖσι δαιμόνων τις ἄτα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ώή, τίς ἐν πύλαισι δωμάτων κυρεῖ;
 ἀνοίγετ', ἐκπορεύετ' Ἰοκάστην δόμων.
 ωὴ μάλ' αὐθις· διὰ μακροῦ μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως
 1070 ἔξελθ', ἄκουσον, Οἰδίπους κλεινὴ δάμαρ,
 λήξασ' ὁδυρμῶν πενθίμων τε δακρύων.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ω φῖλτατ', η που ξυμφορὰν ἥκεις φέρων
 'Ετεοκλέούς θανόντος, οὖν παρ' ἀσπίδα
 βέβηκας ἀεὶ πολεμίων εἵργων βέλη;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Polluted Thebes, and banned 1050

His sons to stain in this accursed strife
With brother-blood the hand.

Praise to him, praise, who unto death is faring,
Yea, for his land to die.

**Leaving to Creon moans of love's despairing,
But setting victory**

For crown upon the city seven-gated !

Ah, may such noble son

To bless mine happy motherhood be fated,

O Pallas, gracious one!—

1060

Pallas, of whom the sudden stone leapt, spilling
The dragon-warder's blood :

**Thou gav'st the thought the heart of Cadmus thrilling
To dare the deed whence rushed, with ravin filling
The land, a God's curse-flood.**

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Ho there ! Who standeth at the palace-gate ?

Open ye, bring Jocasta forth her bowers.

Ho there, again ! Though late, yet come thou forth :

Hearken, renowned wife of Oedipus; 1070

Cease from thy wailings and thy tears of grief.

Enter JOCASTA.

JOCASTA

Friend—friend!—thou com'st not sure with ill news
fraught

Of Eteocles' death, by whose shield aye

Thou marchedst, warding him from foemen's darts?

435

EE 2

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

[τί μοὶ ποθ' ἥκεις καινὸν ἀγγελῶν ἔπος;]
τέθυνηκεν ἡ ζῆται παῖς ἐμός; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ζῆται, μὴ τρέσῃς τόδ', ὡς σ' ἀπαλλάξω φόβου.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τί δ', ἐπτάπυργοι πῶς ἔχουσι περιβολαί;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐστᾶσ' ἄθραυστοι, κούκη ἀνήρπασται πόλις.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1080 ήλθον δὲ πρὸς κίνδυνον Ἀργείου δορός;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀκμήν γ' ἐπ' αὐτήν· ἀλλ' ὁ Καδμείων "Ἀρης
κρείσσων κατέστη τοῦ Μυκηναίου δορός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐν εἰπὲ πρὸς θεῶν, εἴ τι Πολυνείκους πέρι
οἰσθ', ὡς μέλει μοι καὶ τόδ', εἴ λεύσσει φάος.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ζῆται ξυνωρὶς εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας τέκνων.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

εὐδαιμονοίης. πῶς γὰρ Ἀργείων δόρυ
πυλῶν ἀπεστήσασθε πυργηρούμενοι;
λέξον, γέροντα τυφλὸν ὡς κατὰ στέγας
ἐλθοῦσα τέρψω, τῆσδε γῆς σεσωσμένης.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1090 ἐπεὶ Κρέοντος παῖς ὁ γῆς ὑπερθανὼν
πύργων ἐπ' ἄκρων στὰς μελάνδετον ξίφος
λαιμῶν διῆκε τῇδε γῆ σωτήριον,
λόχους ἔνειμεν ἐπτὰ καὶ λοχαγέτας
πύλας ἐφ' ἐπτά, φύλακας Ἀργείου δορός,
σὸς παῖς, ἐφέδρους δ' ἵππότας μὲν ἵππότας
ἔταξ', ὀπλίτας δ' ἀσπιδηφόροις ἔπι,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

What word of tidings bringest thou to me?
Dead is my son, or liveth he?—declare.

MESSENGER

He lives. Fear not! I rid thee so of dread.

JOCASTA

And the seven towers, how fares the fence thereof?

MESSENGER

They stand unshattered : Thebes not yet is spoiled.

JOCASTA

Were they sore perilled of the Argive spear?

1080

MESSENGER

At ruin's brink : but stronger proved the might
Of Cadmus' people than Mycenaë's spear.

JOCASTA

One thing, by heaven!—of Polyneices aught
Canst tell? I yearn for this? Doth he see light?

MESSENGER

Liveth thus far thy chariot-yoke of sons.

JOCASTA

Blessings on thee! How did ye thrust the spear
Of Argos back from your beleaguered gates?
Tell, that I may rejoice the blind old man
The halls within, with news of this land saved.

MESSENGER

When Creon's son, who for his country died,
Climbing a tower's height, had thrust the sword
Black-hafted through his throat to save the land,
Seven bands with captains to the seven gates,
For watch and ward against the Argive spear,
Thy son set, horsemen covering horsemen ranged,
And men-at-arms behind the shield-bearers,

1090

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ώς τῷ νοσοῦντι τειχέων εἴη δορὸς
 ἀλκὴ δὶ' ὀλίγουν. περγάμων δ' ἀπ' ὁρθίων
 λεύκασπιν εἰσορῶμεν Ἀργείων στρατὸν
 Τευμησὸν ἐκλιπόντα· καὶ τάφρου πέλας
 δρόμῳ συνῆψεν ἄστυ Καδμείας χθονός.
 παιὰν δὲ καὶ σάλπιγγες ἐκελάδουν ὁμοῦ
 ἐκεῖθεν ἔκ τε τειχέων ἡμῶν πάρα.
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν προσῆγε Νηίσταις πύλαις
 λόχου πυκναῖσιν ἀσπίσιν πεφρικότα
 ὁ τῆς κυναγοῦ Παρθενοπαῖος ἔκγονος,
 ἐπίσημ' ἔχων οἰκείουν ἐν μέσῳ σάκει,
 ἐκηβόλοις τόξοισιν Ἀταλάντην κάπρον
 χειρουρμένην Αἰτωλόν. εἰς δὲ Προιτίδας
 πύλας ἔχώρει σφάγι' ἔχων ἐφ' ἄρματι
 ὁ μάντις Αμφιάραος, οὐ σημεῖ' ἔχων
 ὑβρισμέν', ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως ἀσημ' ὅπλα.
 'Ωγύγια δ' εἰς πυλώμαθ' Ἰππομέδων ἄναξ
 ἔστειχ' ἔχων σημείουν ἐν μέσῳ σάκει
 στικτοῖς Πανόπτην ὅμμασιν δεδορκότα,
 τὰ μὲν σὺν ἄστρων ἐπιτολαῖσιν ὅμματα
 βλέποντα, τὰ δὲ κρύπτοντα δύνοντων μέτα,
 ώς ὕστερον θανόντος εἰσορᾶν παρῆν.
 'Ομολωίσιν δὲ τάξιν εἶχε πρὸς πύλαις
 Τυδεύς, λέοντος δέρος ἔχων ἐπ' ἀσπίδι
 χαίτη πεφρικός· δεξιὰ δὲ λαμπάδα
 Τιτάνι Προμηθεὺς ἔφερεν ὡς πρήσων πόλιν.
 ὁ σὸς δὲ Κρηναίαισι Πολυνείκης πύλαις
 'Αρη προσῆγε· Ποτινάδες δ' ἐπ' ἀσπίδι
 ἐπίσημα πῶλοι δρομάδες ἐσκίρτων φόβῳ,
 εὖ πως στρόφιγξιν ἔνδοθεν κυκλούμεναι
 πόρπαχ' ὑπ' αὐτόν, ὥστε μαίνεσθαι δοκεῖν.
 ὁ δ' οὐκ ἔλασσον "Αρεος εἰς μάχην φρονῶν

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

That, where the wall's defence failed, succour of
spears

Might be hard by. Then from the soaring towers
We marked the white shields of the Argive host
Leaving Teumessus. Having neared the foss, 1100
Suddenly charging closed they on Cadmus' burg.
Then paean swelled, and shattering trumpet shrilled,
All blended, from the foe and from the walls.

Parthenopaeus, that famed huntress' son,
First led against the Gate Neistian
A squadron horrent all with serried shields,
On his mid-targe the blazon of his house,
Atalanta slaying the Aetolian boar
With shafts far-smiting. Against Proetus' Gate,
Slain victims on his chariot, marched the seer 1110
Amphiaraus, with no proud device,
But sober weapons void of blazonry.
The gates Ogygian King Hippomedon
Assailed, in mid-targe bearing for device
Argus, with gemmy eyes for aye at gaze,
Some with the rising of the stars aglare,
While, as the stars set, some were slumber-veiled,
As might be seen thereafter, he being slain.
Against the Gate of Homole Tydeus took
His stand, his shield draped with a lion's hide 1120
All shaggy-haired : Titan Prometheus bore
A torch in hand there, as to burn the town.

Thy son Polyneices at the Fountain Gate
Led on the war. Upon his shield the steeds
Of Potniae racing in fear-frenzy sprang,
Wheeled round within by pivots cunningly
Hard by the hand-grip; that they seemed distraught.
High-stomached for the fight as Ares' self,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- Καπανεὺς προσῆγε λόχου ἐπ' Ἡλέκτραις πύλαις·
 1130 σιδηρουώτοις δ' ἀσπίδος τύποις ἐπήν
 γίγας ἐπ' ὄμοις γηγενὴς δλην πόλιν
 φέρων μοχλοῖσιν ἔξανασπάσας βάθρων,
 ὑπόνοιαν ἡμῖν οἴα πείσεται πόλις.
 ταῖς δ' ἔβδόμαις "Ἀδραστος ἐν πύλαισιν ἦν,
 ἐκατὸν ἐχίδναις ἀσπίδ' ἐκπληρῶν γραφῇ
 ὕδρας ἔχων λαιοῖσιν ἐν βραχίοσιν
 'Αργεῖον αὔχημ· ἐκ δὲ τειχέων μέσων
 δράκοντες ἔφερον τέκνα Καδμείων γνάθοις.
 παρῇ δ' ἐκάστου τῶνδέ μοι θεάματα
 1140 ξύνθημα παραφέροντι ποιμέσιν λόχων.
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν τόξοισι καὶ μεσαγκύλοις
 ἐμαρνάμεσθα σφενδόναις θ' ἐκηβόλοις
 πετρῶν τ' ἀραγμοῖς· ώς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ,
 ἔκλαγξε Τυδεὺς χὼ σὸς ἔξαιφνης γόνος·
 ω τέκνα Δαναῶν, πρὶν κατεξάνθαι βολαῖς,
 τί μέλλετ' ἄρδην πάντες ἐμπίπτειν πύλαις,
 γυμνῆτες ἵππης ἀρμάτων τ' ἐπιστάται;
 ἡχῆς δ' ὅπως ἥκουσαν, οὕτις ἀργὸς ἦν·
 πολλοὶ δ' ἔπιπτον κράτας αἰματούμενοι,
 1150 ἡμῶν τ' ἐς οὐδας εἰδες ἀν πρὸ τειχέων
 πυκνοὺς κυβιστητῆρας ἐκπεπνευκότας,
 ἔηράν δ' ἔδευον γαίαν αἴματος ροαῖς.
 ο δ' 'Αρκάς, οὐκ 'Αργεῖος, 'Αταλάντης γόνος
 τυφώς πύλαισιν ως τις ἐμπεσὼν βοᾷ
 πῦρ καὶ δικέλλας, ώς κατασκάψων πόλιν·
 ἀλλ' ἔσχε μαργώντ' αὐτὸν ἐναλίου θεού
 Περικλύμενος παῖς λᾶαν ἐμβαλὼν κάρα
 ἀμαξοπληθῆ, γεῖσ' ἐπάλξεων ἄπο·
 ξανθὸν δὲ κράτα διεπάλυνε καὶ ραφὰς
 1160 ἔρρηξεν ὀστέων, ἄρτι δ' οἰνωπὸν γένυν

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Led Capaneus his troop to Electra's Gate ;
And, for his iron-faced buckler's blazonry,
An earth-born giant on his shoulders bore
A whole town from its basement lever-wrenched,
As token for us of our city's fate.

1130

And at the seventh gate Adrastus was,
His graven shield with five-score vipers thronged
Swung on his left arm, even the Argive vaunt,
The Hydra ; and its serpents from our walls
Were snatching Cadmus' children in their jaws.
Each chief's device I well might mark, who bare
The watchword to the leaders of our bands.

1140

Then first with bows and thong-spod javelins
We battled, and with slings that smote from far,
And crashing stones. But when we 'gan prevail,
Suddenly shouted Tydeus and thy son :
“ Sons of the Danaans, ere their bolts quell you,
Why do ye tarry, onward-hurling all,
To assault their gates—light-armed, horse, chariot-lords ? ”

Soon as they heard that cry, was none hung back.
Many, with heads blood-dashed, were falling fast ;
And of us many earthward flung thou hadst seen
Before the walls, like divers plunging, dead,
Drenching the thirsty soil with streams of gore.

1150

But Atalanta's son—no Argive he—
Hurls like a whirlwind at the gates, and shouts
For fire and mattocks, as to raze the town.
But his mid-fury Periclymenus stayed,
The Sea-god's son, who hurled a wain-load crag,
A battlement-coping, down upon his shield,
Spattered abroad the golden head, and rent
The knittings of its bones : the cheeks dark-flushed

1160

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

καθημάτωσεν οὐδ' ἀποίσεται βίον
 τῇ καλλιτόξῳ μητρὶ Μαινάλου κόρῃ.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ τάσδ' εἰσεῖδεν εύτυχεῖς πύλας,
 ἄλλας ἐπήει πᾶς σός, εἰπόμην δ' ἔγώ.
 ὅρῳ δὲ Τυδῆ καὶ παρασπιστὰς πυκνοὺς
 Αἰτωλίσιν λόγχαισιν εἰς ἄκρον στόμα
 πύργων ἀκοντίζοντας, ὥστ' ἐπάλξεων
 λιπεῖν ἐρίπνας φυγάδας· ἄλλα γιν πάλιν,
 κυναγὸς ώσεί, πᾶς σὸς ἐξαθροίζεται,
 πύργοις δ' ἐπέστησ' αὐθίς. εἰς δ' ἄλλας πύλας
 ἡπειγόμεσθα, τοῦτο παύσαντες νοσοῦν.

1170 Καπανεὺς δὲ πῶς εἴποιμ' ἀν ώς ἐμαίνετο;
 μακραύχενος γὰρ κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις
 ἔχων ἔχώρει, καὶ τοσόνδ' ἐκόμπασε,
 μηδ' ἀν τὸ σεμνὸν πῦρ νιν εἰργαθεῖν Διὸς
 τὸ μὴ οὐ κατ' ἄκρων περγάμων ἐλεῖν πόλιν.
 καὶ ταῦθ' ἄμ' ἥγόρευε καὶ πετρούμενος
 ἀνειρφ' ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἀσπίδ' εἰλίξας δέμας,
 κλίμακος ἀμείβων ξέστ' ἐνηλάτων βάθρα.

1180 ἥδη δ' ὑπερβαίνοντα γεῖσα τειχέων
 βάλλει κεραυνῷ Ζεύς νιν. ἐκτύπησε δὲ
 χθών, ὥστε δεῖσαι πάντας· ἐκ δὲ κλιμάκων
 ἐσφενδονάτο χωρὶς ἀλλήλων μέλη,
 κόμαι μὲν εἰς Ὀλυμπον, αἷμα δ' εἰς χθόνα,
 χεῖρες δὲ καὶ κῶλ' ώς κύκλωμ' Ἰξίονος
 εἰλίσσετ'. εἰς γῆν δ' ἔμπυρος πίπτει νεκρός.
 ώς δ' εἰδ' Ἀδραστος Ζῆνα πολέμου στρατῷ,
 ἔξω τάφρου καθίσειν Ἀργείων στρατόν.
 οἱ δ' αὖ παρ' ἡμῶν δεξιὸν Διὸς τέρας
 ἴδοντες ἔξήλαυνον ἀρμάτων ὅχους
 ἵππης· ὀπλῖται τ' εἰς μέσ' Ἀργείων ὅπλα
 συνῆψαν ἔγχη, πάντα δ' ἦν ὄμοῦ κακά.

1190

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Dashed he with blood. No life shall he bear back
To his archer-mother, Maid of Maenalus.
Then, marking how at this gate all went well,
Passed to the next thy son, I following still.
There saw I Tydeus with his serried shields,
With spears Aetolian javelining the height
Of the roofless towers, that from the rampart's crest
Ours fled in panic. But thy son again
Rallies them, as the hunter cheers his hounds ;
So manned the walls anew. To other gates 1170
On pressed we, having stayed the mischief there.

But how the madness tell of Capaneus ?
For, grasping the long ladder's scaling rounds,
On came he, and thus haughtily vaunted he,
That not Zeus' awful fire should hold him back
From razing from her topmost towers the town.
Thus crying, ever as hailed the stones on him,
He climbed, with body gathered 'neath his targe,
Aye stepping from smooth ladder-rung to rung.
But, even as o'er the ramparts rose his head, 1180
Zeus smiteth him with lightning : rang again
The earth, that all quailed. From the ladder flew
His limbs abroad wide-whirling slingstone-like :
Heavenward his hair streamed, earthward rained his
blood :

Hands, feet—Ixion on his wheel seemed he—
Whirled round. To earth he fell, a corpse flame-
blasted.

Adrastus, seeing Zeus his army's foe,
Without the trench drew off the Argive host.
Then, marking Zeus's portent fair for us,
Forth of the gates our horse their chariots drove : 1190
Our footmen crashed through Argos' mid-array
With levelled spears ;—'twas turmoiled ruin all—

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἔθνησκον ἔξεπιπτον ἀντύγων ἄπο,
τροχοί τ' ἐπήδων ἄξονές τ' ἐπ' ἄξοσι,
νεκροὶ δὲ νεκροῖς ἔξεσωρεύονθ' ὁμοῦ.
πύργων μὲν οὖν γῆς ἔσχομεν κατασκαφὰς
εἰς τὴν παροῦσαν ἡμέραν· εἰ δ' εὔτυχὴς
ἔσται τὸ λοιπὸν ἥδε γῆ, θεοῖς μέλει·
καὶ νῦν γὰρ αὐτὴν δαιμόνων ἔσωσέ τις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1200 καλὸν τὸ νικᾶν· εἰ δ' ἀμείνον' οἱ θεοὶ¹
γνώμην ἔχουσιν—εὔτυχὴς εἴην ἐγώ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καλῶς τὰ τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὰ τῆς τύχης ἔχει·
παῖδές τε γάρ μοι ζώσι κἀκπέφευγε γῆ.
Κρέων δ' ἔοικε τῶν ἐμῶν υμφευμάτων
τῶν τ' Οἰδίπου δύστηνος ἀπολαῦσαι κακῶν,
παιδὸς στερηθείς, τῇ πόλει μὲν εὔτυχῶς,
ἰδίᾳ δὲ λυπρῶς. ἀλλ' ἀνελθέ μοι πάλιν,
τί τάπι τούτοις παῖδ' ἐμῶ δρασείετον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἔα τὰ λοιπά· δεῦρ' ἀεὶ γὰρ εὔτυχεῖς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1210 τοῦτ' εἰς ὑποπτον εἴπας· οὐκ ἔατέον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μεῖζόν τι χρῆζεις παῖδας ἢ σεσωσμένους;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τάπιλοιπά γ' εἰ καλῶς πράσσω κλύειν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μέθεις μ'. ἔρημος παῖς ὑπασπιστοῦ σέθεν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κακόν τι κεύθεις καὶ στέγεις ὑπὸ σκότῳ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἄν γε λέξαιμ' ἐπ' ἀγαθοῖσί σοι κακά.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Men dying—falling o'er the chariot-rails—
Wheels leaping—axles upon axles dashed,
And corpses heaped on corpses all confused.

So then for this day have we barred the fall
Of our land's towers ; but if good fortune waits
On Thebes henceforth, this resteth with the Gods :
Only a God's hand rescued her to-day.

CHORUS

Glorious is victory : if more favours yet
The Gods intend—ah, may I so be blest !

1200

JOCASTA

Fair are the dealings of the Gods and Fate :
For lo, my sons live, and the land hath 'scaped.
But Creon hath, meseems, reaped evil fruit
Of mine and Oedipus' marriage—hapless sire,
Reft of his son, for blessing unto Thebes,
But grief to him ! Take up the tale again,
And tell what now my sons are bent to do.

MESSENGER

Forbear the rest. Thus far 'tis well with thee.

JOCASTA

Thou stirr'st surmisings ! I can not forbear !

1210

MESSENGER

How, wouldst thou more than know thy sons are safe ?

JOCASTA

Yea, know if things to come be well for me.

MESSENGER

Now let me go : thy son his henchman lacks.

JOCASTA

Some ill thou hid'st—in darkness veilest it !

MESSENGER

I would not tell thee evil blent with good.

445

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἢν μή γε φεύγων ἐκφύγης πρὸς αἰθέρα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

αἰαῖ· τί μ' οὐκ εἴασας ἐξ εὐαγγέλου
φήμης ἀπελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ μηνῦσαι κακά;
τὼ παῖδε τῷ σῷ μέλλετον, τολμήματα

1220 αἰσχιστα, χωρὶς μονομαχεῖν παντὸς στρατοῦ,
λέξαντες, Ἀργείοισι Καδμείαισί τε
εἰς κοινὸν οίλον μήποτ' ὥφελον λόγον.
Ἐτεοκλέης δ' ὑπῆρξ' ἀπ' ὄρθιου σταθεὶς
πύργου, κελεύσας σῦγα κηρῦξαι στρατῷ.
[ἔλεξε δ· ὡ γῆς Ἐλλάδος στρατηλάται]
Δαναῶν ἀριστῆς, οἴπερ ἥλθετ' ἐνθάδε,
Κάδμου τε λαὸς, μήτε Πολυνείκους χάριν
ψυχὰς ἀπεμπολάτε μήθ' ἡμῶν ὅπερ.

1230 ἔγὼ γάρ αὐτὸς τόνδε κίνδυνον μεθεὶς
μόνος συνάψω συγγόνῳ τῷμῷ μάχην.
κἀν μὲν κτανω τόνδ', οἶκον οἰκήσω μόνος,
ἥσσώμενος δὲ τῷδε παραδώσω μόνῳ.
ὑμεῖς δ' ἀγῶν' ἀφέντες, Ἀργεῖοι, χθόνα
νίσσεσθε, βίοτον μὴ λιπόντες ἐνθάδε,
Σπαρτῶν τε λαὸς ἄλις ὅσος κεῖται νεκρός.
τοσαῦτ' ἔλεξε· σὸς δὲ Πολυνείκης γόνος
ἐκ τάξεων ὥρουσε κάπήνει λόγους.

1240 πάντες δ' ἐπερρόθησαν Ἀργεῖοι τάδε
Κάδμου τε λαὸς ὡς δίκαιοις ἡγούμενοι.
ἐπὶ τοῖσδε δ' ἐσπείσαντο, κἀν μεταιχμίοις
ὅρκους συνῆψαν ἐμμενεῦν στρατηλάται.
ἥδη δ' ἔκρυπτον σῶμα παγχάλκοις ὅπλοις
δισσοὶ γέροντος Οἰδίπου νεανίαι·
φίλοι δ' ἐκόσμουν, τῆσδε μὲν πρόμον χθονὸς
Σπαρτῶν ἀριστῆς, τὸν δὲ Δαναϊδῶν ἄκροι.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

JOCASTA

That shalt thou—except to heaven thou wing thy flight.

MESSENGER

Alas ! why couldst thou let me not go hence
After good tidings, but wouldst have the ill ?
Thy two sons purpose single fight, apart
From all the host—a desperate deed of shame ! 1220
To Argives and Cadmeans one and all
They spake that which would God they had left unsaid !

Eteocles from a lofty tower began—
Having bid publish silence to the host—
And said : “ O battle-chiefs of Hellas-land,
Lords of the Danaans who have hither come,
And Cadmus’ folk—for Polyneices’ sake
Sell not your lives, nor sell them in my cause.
For I myself will free you of this risk,
And with my brother grapple alone in fight. 1230
If I slay him, mine halls I hold alone :
O’erthrown, I yield them up to him alone.
Argives, forbear the struggle, and return
Unto your land, not leaving here your lives ;
And of the Sown suffice the already dead.”
Thus spake he ; Polyneices then, thy son,
Leapt from the ranks, and hailed the challenge-word ;
And all the Argives shouted yea to this,
And Cadmus’ folk, as righteous in their eyes.
On these terms made they truce, and in mid-space 1240
The chiefs took oaths whereby they should abide.
Then ancient Oedipus’ two sons straightway
'Gan case their bodies in all-brazen mail,
Holpen of friends ; by Theban lords the king
Of this land, and by Danaan chiefs his brother.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΛΙ

ἔσταν δὲ λαμπρώ, χρῶμά τ' οὐκ ἡλλαξάτην
μαργῶντ' ἐπ' ἀλλῆλοισιν ἴέναι δόρυ.

παρεξιόντες δ' ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν φίλων
λόγοισι θαρσύνοντες ἔξηγδων τάδε.

- 1250 Πολύνεικες, ἐν σοὶ Ζηνὸς ὄρθῶσαι βρέτας
τρόπαιον "Αργει τ' εὐκλεᾶ δοῦναι λόγον·
Ἐτεοκλέα δ' αὖ· νῦν πόλεως ὑπερμαχεῖς,
σὺ καλλίνικος γενόμενος σκήπτρων κρατεῖς.
τάδ' ἡγόρευνον παρακαλοῦντες εἰς μάχην.
μάντεις δὲ μῆλ' ἔσφαξον, ἐμπύρους τὸ ἀκμὰς
ῥήξεις τὸ ἐνώμων, ὑγρότητ' ἐναντίαν,
ἄκραν τε λαμπάδ', ἢ δυοῖν ὅρους ἔχει,
νίκης τε σῆμα καὶ τὸ τῶν ἡσσωμένων.
ἄλλ' εἴ τιν' ἀλκὴν ἡ σοφοὺς ἔχεις λόγους
ἡ φύλτρ' ἐπωδῶν, στεῖχ', ἐρήτυσον τέκνα
δεινῆς ἀμίλλης, ὡς ὁ κίνδυνος μέγας.
κάπαθλα δεινὰ δάκρυνά σοι γενήσεται
δισσοῖν στερείσῃ τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τέκνουιν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τέκνον, ἔξελθ', Ἀντιγόνη, δόμων πάρος
οὐκ ἐν χορείαις οὐδὲ παρθενεύμασι
νῦν σοι προχωρεῖ δαιμόνων κατάστασις,
ἀλλ' ἄνδρ' ἀρίστω καὶ κασιγνήτω σέθεν
εἰς θάνατον ἐκνεύοντε κωλῦσαι σε δεῖ
ξὺν μητρὶ τῇ σῇ μὴ πρὸς ἀλλήλοιν θανεῖν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- 1270 τίν', ὦ τεκοῦσα μῆτερ, ἔκπληξιν νέαν
φίλοις ἀντεῖς τῶνδε δωμάτων πάρος;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ θύγατερ, ἔρρει σῶν κασιγνήτων βίος.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

There stood they gleaming,—never paled their cheeks,—

Each panting at his foe to dart the spear.

On this side and on that their friends drew nigh,
With heartening words thus speaking unto them;

"Thine, Polyneices, is it to set up 1250

Zeus' trophy-statue, and give Argos fame";

To Eteocles—"Thou for Thebes dost fight:

Now triumph, and thou hold'st her sceptre fast."

So did they hail them, cheering them to fight.

And the priests slew the sheep: flame-tongue they marked,

And flame-cleft, steamy reek that bodeth ill,

The pointed flame, which hath decisions twain,
Betokening victory or overthrow.

If any power thou hast or cunning words,

Or spell of charms, go, pluck thou back thy sons

From that dread strife ; for grim the peril is ;

And, for dread guerdon, tears shall be thy portion,

If thou of two sons be this day bereaved. [Exit.

JOCASTA

Daughter Antigone, come forth the house!

No dances, neither toils of maiden hands,

Beseem thee in this hour of heaven's doom;

But heroes twain, yea, brethren unto thee,

Now deathward reeling, with thy mother t.
Methold for a late, though longed-for date.

Must hold from dying, each by other slain.

Mother that bare me, what strange terror-cry
Before these hells to thy friends utterest thou? 1270

卷之三

JOCASTA

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

πῶς εἰπας;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

αὐχμὴν ἐσ μίαν καθέστατον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οἱ γώ, τι λέξεις, μῆτερ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐ φίλ', ἀλλ' ἔπου.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποὶ, παρθενῶνας ἐκλιποῦσ';

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἀνὰ στρατόν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

αἰδούμεθ' ὄχλον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐκ ἐν αὐσχύνῃ τὰ σά.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δράσω δὲ δὴ τί;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

συγγόνων λύσεις ἔριν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τι δρῶσα, μῆτερ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

προσπίτνουσ' ἐμοῦ μέτα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἡγοῦ σὺ πρὸς μεταίχμι', οὐ μελλητέον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἔπειγ' ἔπειγε, θύγατερ· ως ἦν μὲν φθάσω
παιδας πρὸ λόγχης, ούμὸς ἐν φάει βίος.
Θανοῦσι δ' αὐτοῖς συνθανοῦσα κείσομαι.

1280

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

How say'st thou ?

JOCASTA

Met they are for single fight.

ANTIGONE

Woe ! what wilt say ?

JOCASTA

Naught welcome. Follow me.

ANTIGONE

Whither, from maiden-bowers ?

JOCASTA

Through the host.

ANTIGONE

I shrink from throngs !

JOCASTA

No time for modesty this !

ANTIGONE

I—what can I do ?

JOCASTA

Part thy brethren's strife.

ANTIGONE

Mother, whereby ?

JOCASTA

Fall at their feet with me.

ANTIGONE

Lead to the mid-space ! We may tarry not.

JOCASTA

Haste, daughter, haste : for, may I but forestall 1280
My sons ere fighting, light of life is mine :
If they be dead, dead with them will I lie. [Exeunt.]

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- αἰαῖ αἰαῖ,στρ.
 τρομερὰν φρίκᾳ τρομερὰν φρέν' ἔχω·
 διὰ σάρκα δ' ἐμὰν
 ἔλεος ἔλεος ἔμολε ματέρος δειλαῖας.
 δίδυμα τέκεα πότερος ἄρα πότερον αἰμάξει—
 ίώ μοι πόνων,
 1290 ίὼ Ζεῦ, ίὼ γᾶ—
 ὁμογενῆ δέραν, ὁμογενῆ ψυχὰν
 δὶ' ἀσπίδων, δὶ' αἰμάτων;
 τάλαιν' ἐγὼ τάλαινα,
 πότερον ἄρα νέκυν ὀλόμενον ἀχήσω;
 φεῦ δᾶ φεῦ δᾶ,ἀντ.
 δίδυμοι θῆρες, φόνιαι ψυχαὶ
 δορὶ παλλόμεναι
 πέσεα πέσεα δάι' αὐτίχ' αἰμάξετον.
 1300 τάλανες, ὅ τι ποτὲ μονομάχον ἐπὶ φρέν' ἡλθέτην,
 βοῷ βαρβάρῳ
 ἴαχὰν στενακτὰν
 μελομέναι νεκροῖς δάκρυσι θρηνήσω.
 σχεδὸν τύχα πέλας φόνου·
 κρινεῖ ξίφος¹ τὸ μέλλον.
 ἀποτμος ἀποτμος ὁ φόνος ἔνεκ' Ἐρινύῶν.
- ἀλλὰ γὰρ Κρέοντα λεύσσω τόνδε δεῦρο συνιεφῆ
 πρὸς δόμους στείχοντα, παύσω τοὺς παρεστῶτας
 γόους.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

- 1310 οἵμοι, τί δράσω; πότερ' ἐμαυτὸν ἢ πόλιν
 στένω δακρύσας, ἦν πέριξ ἔχει νέφος

¹ Hermann : for φάος of MSS.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS

Alas and alas ! (Str.)

Shuddering, shuddering horror of soul have I :

Through the very flesh of me pass

Compassion-thrills for a mother in misery. [lie—

Two sons—who, slain of the other, in blood shall

Woe, anguish, and dismay !

Zeus !—Earth !—to you I pray !—

1290

With his throat pierced, his life by a brother sped,

His shield cleft, and his blood by a brother shed ?

Woe's me and well-a-day !

For whom shall I uplift my voice to wail him dead ?

O land, O land ! (Ant.)

Two ravening beasts, two spirits of murderous mood,

With the battle-lust quivering they stand ;

But brother shall soon lay brother low in his blood !

Wretches, that ever on duel bent they stood ! 1300

With wail of alien tongue

Shall my wild dirge be sung,

Tears for the dead, and lamentation's cry.

Fate presseth nearer, murder is hard by,

In the sword's balance hung :—

Curst slaughter, curst, the work of Vengeance-destiny !

Ha, 'tis Creon I behold, that hitherward with clouded
brow [but now.

Hasteth to the palace. I will hush the wail begun

*Enter CREON, with ATTENDANTS bearing the body of
MENOCEUS*

CREON

What shall I do? Weeping shall I bemoan 1310
Myself, or Thebes whom such a cloud o'erpalls

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

τοιοῦτον ὥστε δι' Ἀχέροντος ίέναι ;
έμος τε γὰρ παῖς γῆς δλωλ' ὑπερθανών,
τούνομα λαβὼν γενναῖον, ἀνιαρον δ' ἐμοί·
δν ἄρτι κρημνῶν ἐκ δρακοντείων ἐλὼν
αὐτοσφαγῇ δύστηνος ἐκόμισ' ἐν χεροῖν,
βοῷ δὲ δῶμα πᾶν ἐγὼ δ' ἡκω μετὰ
γέρων ἀδελφὴν γραῖαν Ἰοκάστην, ὅπως
λούσῃ προθῆται τ' οὐκέτ' ὅντα παῖδ' ἐμόν.
τοῖς γὰρ θανοῦσι χρή τὸν οὐ τεθνηκότα
τιμὰς διδόντα χθόνιον εὔσεβεῖν θεόν.

1320

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βέβηκ' ἀδελφὴ σή, Κρέων, ἔξω δόμων
κόρη τε μητρὸς Ἀντιγόνη κοινῷ ποδί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποὶ κάπι ποίαν συμφοράν; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡκουσε τέκνα μονομάχῳ μέλλειν δορὶ¹
εἰς ἀσπίδ' ἡξειν βασιλικῶν δόμων ὑπερ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶς φήσ; νέκυν τοι παιδὸς ἀγαπάζων ἐμοῦ
οὐκ εἰς τόδ' ἡλθον ὥστε καὶ τάδ' εἰδέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' οἴχεται μὲν σὴ κασιγνήτη πάλαι·
δοκῶ δ' ἀγῶνα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς, Κρέον,
ἥδη πεπράχθαι παισὶ τοῖσιν Οἰδίπου.

1330

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἵμοι, τὸ μὲν σημεῖον εἰσορῶ τόδε,
σκυθρωπὸν ὅμμα καὶ πρόσωπον ἀγγέλου
στείχοντος, δς πᾶν ἀγγελεῖ τὸ δρώμενον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, τίν' εἴπω μῦθον ἢ τίνας γόους;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

As through the gloom of Acheron drifts her now ?
Dead is my son ! He died for fatherland,
Winning a glorious name, but woe for me.
Him from the Dragon's crags but now I caught
Self-slain, and woefully bare him in mine arms.
My whole house wails. I for my sister come,
Jocasta,—come, the old to seek the old,—
To bathe and lay out this no more my son.
For he who hath not died must reverence
The Nether-gods by honouring the dead.

1320

CHORUS

Gone is thy sister, Creon, forth the house ;
And with her went her child Antigone.

CREON

Whither ?—for what mischance ? Declare to me.

CHORUS

The purpose of her sons she heard, to fight
In single combat for the royal halls.

CREON

How sayest thou ? Lo, tending my son's corse,
I came not to the knowledge of this deed.

CHORUS

Yea, hence thy sister parted long agone :
And that death-struggle, Creon, now, meseems,
Is ended 'twixt the sons of Oedipus.

CREON

Ah me ! a token yonder do I see,
The joyless eye and face of one who comes
A messenger, to tell all horrors done.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Woe is me ! what story can I tell, or utter forth what
wail ?

455

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ
οἰχόμεσθ· οὐκ εὐπροσώποις φροιμίοις ἄρχει λόγου.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ὦ τάλας, δισσῶς ἀντῷ μεγάλα γὰρ φέρω κακά.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
πρὸς πεπραγμένοισιν ἄλλοις πήμασιν; λέγεις δὲ τί;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
οὐκέτ' εἰσὶ σῆς ἀδελφῆς παιδες ἐν φάει, Κρέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1340 αἰαῖ.

μεγάλα μοι θροεῖς πάθεα καὶ πόλει.
ὦ δώματ' εἰσηκούσατ' Οἰδίπου τάδε παιδῶν ὁμοίαις συμφοραῖς ὀλωλότων;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὦστ' ἀν δακρῦσαι γ', εἰ φρονοῦντ' ἐτύγχανεν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἵμοι ξυμφορᾶς βαρυποτμωτάτας,
οἵμοι κακῶν δύστηνος· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
εἰ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοισί γ' εἰδείης κακά.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
καὶ πῶς γένοιτ' ἀν τῶνδε δυσποτμώτερα;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
τέθηκ' ἀδελφὴ σὴ δυοῖν παίδοιν μέτα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1350 ἀνάγετ' ἀνάγετε κωκυτόν,
ἐπὶ κάρα τε λευκοπήχεις κτύπους χεροῖν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Ah, undone ! With no fair-seeming prelude thou beginn'st thy tale.

MESSENGER

Woe ! Again I cry it, for I bring a burden of dismay—

CREON

Heaped upon calamities already wrought ? What wouldest thou say ?

MESSENGER

Creon, those thy sister's sons behold no more the light of day.

CREON

Alas !

1340

Terrible ills for me and for Thebes dost thou tell—
O halls of Oedipus, have ye heard this ?—
Dost tell of sons that by one doom have died !

CHORUS

Their very walls might weep, could they but know.

CREON

Woe's me, the disaster, when fate's stroke heavily fell !
Woe for my sorrows ! Ah unhappy I !

MESSENGER

Ah, didst thou know the evils more than these !

CREON

What can be more calamitous than these ?

MESSENGER

Dead is thy sister—dead with her two sons.

CHORUS

Upraise, upraise the lamentation-strain,
Down on the head let blows of white hands rain !

1350

457

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ώ τλῆμον, οίον τέρμον', Ἰοκάστη, βίου
γάμων τε τῶν σῶν Σφιγγὸς αἰνιγμοῖς ἔτλης.
πῶς καὶ πέπρακται διπτύχων παίδων φόνος
ἀρᾶς τ' ἀγώνισμ' Οἰδίπου; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

- τὰ μὲν πρὸ πύργων εὐτυχήματα χθονὸς
οἰσθ'. οὐ μακρὰν γὰρ τειχέων περιπτυχαί.
[ῶστ' οὐχ ἄπαντα σ' εἰδέναι τὰ δρώμενα.]
ἔπει δὲ χαλκέοις σῶμ' ἐκοσμήσανθ' ὅπλοις
οἱ τοῦ γέροντος Οἰδίπου νεανίαι,
ἔστησαν ἐλθόντ' εἰς μέσον μεταίχμιον
[διστὸς στρατηγῷ καὶ διπλῷ στρατηλάτᾳ]
ώς εἰς ἀγῶνα μονομάχουν τ' ἀλκὴν δορός.
βλέψας δ' ἐς "Ἄργος ἦκε Πολυνείκης ἀράς·
ῳ πότνι" Ἡρα, σὸς γάρ εἰμ', ἐπεὶ γάμοις
ἔζευξ' Ἀδράστου παιδα καὶ ναίω χθόνα,
δός μοι κτανεῖν ἀδελφόν, ἀντήρη δ' ἐμὴν
καθαιματώσαι δεξιὰν νικηφόρον·
[αἰσχιστοι] αἰτῶν στέφανον, ὁμογενῆ κτανεῖν.
1370 πολλοῖς δ' ἐπήει δάκρυα τῆς τύχης ὅση,
κᾶβλεψαν ἀλλήλοισι διαδόντες κόρας.]
Ἐτεοκλέης δὲ Παλλάδος χρυσάσπιδος
βλέψας πρὸς οἴκον ηὔξετ'. ὡς Διὸς κόρη,
δὸς ἔγχος ἡμῖν καλλίνικον ἐκ χερὸς
εἰς στέρν' ἀδελφοῦ τῆσδ' ἀπ' ὠλένης βαλεῖν,
κτανεῖν θ' δς ηλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἀφείθη πυρσὸς ὡς Τυρσηνικῆς
σάλπιγγος ἡχή, σῆμα φοινίου μάχης,
ηὔξαν δρόμημα δεινὸν ἀλλήλοις ἔπι·
1380 κάπροι δ' ὅπως θήγοντες ἀγρίαν γένουν
ξυνῆψαν, ὑφρῷ διάθροχοι γενειάδας.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Hapless Jocasta, what an end of life
And marriage hast thou proved the Sphinx's riddle !
How came to pass the death of her two sons,
The strife, of Oedipus' curse that came ?—declare.

MESSENGER

The land's fair fortune in her towers' defence
Thou know'st : the girdling walls be not so far
But that thou mayest know whate'er is done.
Now when in brazen mail they had clad their limbs,
Those princes, sons of ancient Oedipus, 1360
Into the mid-space went they forth and stood,
Those chieftains two, those battle-leaders twain,
As for the grapple and strife of single fight.

Then, gazing Argos-ward, Polyneices prayed :
“ Queen Hera,—for thine am I since I wed
Adrastus' child, and dwell within thy land,—
Grant me to slay my brother, and to stain
My warring hand with blood of victory !”—
Asking a crown of shame, to slay a brother.

Tears sprang from many an eye at that dread fate, 1370
And each on other did men look askance.
But unto golden-shielded Pallas' fane.

Eteocles looked, and prayed : “ Daughter of Zeus,
Grant that the conquering spear, of mine hand sped,
Yea; from this arm, may smite my brother's breast,
And slay him who hath come to waste my land !”

Then, when the Tuscan trump, like signal-torch,
Rang forth the token of the bloody fray,
Forth darted each at other in terrible rush ;
And, like wild boars that whet the tameless tusk, 1380
Clashed they, foam-flakes beslivering their beards.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἥσσον δὲ λόγχαις· ἀλλ' ὑφίξανον κύκλοις,
ὅπως σίδηρος ἔξολισθάνοι μάτην.

εἰ δ' ὅμμ' ὑπερσχὸν ἵνος ἄτερος μάθοι,
λόγχην ἐνώμα, στόματι προφθῆναι θέλων.
ἀλλ' εὐ προσῆγον ἀσπίδων κεγχρώμασιν
όφθαλμόν, ἀργὸν ὥστε γίγνεσθαι δόρυ.
πᾶσιν δὲ τοῖς ὄρῶσιν ἐστάλασσ' ἴδρως
ἡ τοῦσι δρῶσι, διὰ φίλων ὁρρωδίαν.

1390 'Ετεοκλέης δὲ ποδὶ μεταψαίρων πέτρον
ἴχνους ὑπόδρομον, κῶλον ἐκτὸς ἀσπίδος
τιθησι· Πολυνείκης δ' ἀπήντησεν δορί,
πληγὴν σιδήρῳ παραδοθεῖσαν εἰσιδών,
κυνήμης τε διεπέρασεν Ἀργείον δόρυ.
στρατὸς δ' ἀνηλάλαξε Δαναΐδῶν ἄπας.
κάν τῷδε μόχθῳ γυμνὸν ὡμον εἰσιδὼν
ὁ πρόσθε τρωθεὶς στέρνα Πολυνείκους βίᾳ
διῆκε λόγχην, κάπεδωκεν ἥδονάς

1400 Κάδμου πολίταις, ἀπὸ δ' ἔθραυσ' ἄκρον δόρυ.
εὶς δ' ἄπορον ἥκων δορὸς ἐπὶ σκέλος πάλιν
χωρεῖ, λαβὼν δ' ἀφῆκε μάρμαρον πέτρον,
μέσον δ' ἄκοντ' ἔθραυσεν· ἐξ ἵσου δ' Ἀρης
ἥν, κάμακος ἀμφοῖν χεῖρ' ἀπεστερημένοιν.
ἐνθεν δὲ κώπας ἀρπάσαντε φασγάνων
ἐς ταῦτὸν ἥκουν, συμβαλόντε δ' ἀσπίδας
πολὺν ταραγμὸν ἀμφιβάντ' εἶχον μάχης.
καὶ πως νοήσας Ἐτεοκλῆς τὸ Θεσσαλὸν
εἰσήγαγεν σόφισμ' ὀμιλίᾳ χθονός.
ἐξαλλαγεὶς γάρ τοῦ παρεστῶτος πόνου,
λαιὸν μὲν εὶς τοῦπισθεν ἀμφέρει πόδα,
πρόσω τὰ κοῖλα γαστρὸς εὐλαβούμενος.
προβάς δὲ κῶλον δεξιὸν δι' ὀμφαλοῦ
καθῆκεν ἔγχος σφονδύλοις τ' ἐνήρμοσεν.

1410

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

With spears they lunged : yet crouched behind their shields,

That so the steel might bootless glance aside.

And, if one saw foe's eye peer o'er the targe,

Aye thrust he, fain to overreach his fence.

Yet cunningly through eyelets of their shields

They glanced, that naught awhile the spear achieved,

While more from all beholders trickled sweat,

Of fear for friends, than from the champions' selves.

But Eteocles, spurning aside a stone

1390

That rolled beneath his tread, without his shield

Showed glimpse of fenceless limb. Polyneices lunged,

Marking the stroke so offered to the steel ;

And through the shank clear passed the Argive lance.

Loud cheered the whole array of Danaus' sons.

But his foe's shoulder by that effort bared

The stricken marked, and Polyneices' breast

Pierced with a strong spear-thrust, and gave back joy
To Cadmus' folk ; yet brake his spear-head short.

So, his lance lost, back fell he step by step,

1400

Caught up a rugged rock, and sped its flight,

Snapping his foe's spear thwart. Now was the fray
Equal, since either's hand was spear-bereft.

Thereupon snatched they at their falchion-hilts,

Closed, clashing shields, and, traversing to and fro,

Made rage the stormy clangour of the fight.

But, having learnt it visiting Thessaly,

Eteocles used the northern warriors' feint :

For, from the instant grapple springing clear,

Back on his left foot, backward still, he sinks,

1410

Watching the while his foe's waist : leaping then,

The right foot foremost, through the navel plunged

His sword, and 'twixt the spine-bones wedged the point.

461

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

όμοιον δὲ κάμψας πλευρὰ καὶ ηδὺν τάλας
σὺν αἱματηραῖς σταγόσι Πολυνείκης πίτνει.
ό δ', ὡς κρατῶν δὴ καὶ νεικηκώς μάχῃ,
ξίφος δικῶν εἰς γαῖαν ἐσκύλευε νιν,
τὸν νοῦν πρὸς αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔχων, ἐκεῖσε δέ·
δὲ καὶ νιν ἔσφηλ· ἔτι γὰρ ἐμπνέων βραχύ,
σώζων σίδηρον ἐν λυγρῷ πεσήματι,
μόλις μέν, ἔξετεινε δὲ εἰς ἥπαρ ξίφος
Ἐτεοκλέους ὁ πρόσθε Πολυνείκης πεσών.
γαῖαν δ' ὀδὰξ ἐλόντες ἀλλήλων πέλας
πίπτουσιν ἄμφω κού διώρισαν κράτος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, κακῶν σῶν, Οἰδίπου, σ' ὅσων στένω·
τὰς σὰς δ' ἀφὰς ἔοικεν ἐκπλῆσαι θεός.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄκουε δή νυν καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοις κακά.
ώς γὰρ τέκνω πεσόντ' ἐλειπέτην βίον,
ἐν τῷδε μήτηρ ἡ τάλαινα προσπίτνει
σὺν παρθένῳ τε καὶ προθυμίᾳ ποδός.
τετρωμένους δ' ἴδοῦσα καιρίους σφαγὰς
ῷμωξεν· ὡς τέκν', ύστέρα βοηδρόμος
πάρειμι. προσπίτνουσα δὲ ἐν μέρει τέκνα
ἔκλαι', ἐθρήνει τὸν πολὺν μάτην πόνον
στένουσ', ἀδελφή θ' ἡ παρασπίζουσ' ὄμοιον·
ὡς γηροβοσκὼ μητρός, ὡς γάμους ἐμοὺς
προδόντ' ἀδελφῷ φιλτάτῳ. στέρνων δ' ἀπο
φύσημ' ἀνεὶς δύσθυντον Ἐτεοκλῆς ἄναξ
ῆκουσε μητρός, κἀπιθεὶς ὑγρὰν χέρα
φωνὴν μὲν οὐκ ἀφῆκεν, ὀμμάτων δὲ ἀπο
προσείπε δακρύοις, ὥστε σημῆναι φέλα.
οὐδὲ δὲ ἦν ἔτ' ἐμπνουσι, πρὸς καστηνήτην δὲ ἴδων
γραιῶν τε μητέρ' εἶπε Πολυνείκης τάδε·

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Then, ribs and belly inarched in anguish-throe,
Down-raining blood-gouts, Polyneices falls.
Our king, as victor, winner of the fight,
Casting his sword down, fell to spoiling him,
Heeding but that, nor recking his own risk ;
Which thing undid him. Faintly breathing yet,
Still grasping in his grievous fall his sword, 20
First-fallen Polyneices with hard strain
Plunged into Eteocles' heart the blade.
Gnashing in dust their teeth, there side by side
They lie, those twain, the victory doubtful still.

CHORUS

Alas ! I wail thy sore griefs, Oedipus !
Thy malisons, I wot, hath God fulfilled.

MESSENGER

Ah, but hear now what woes remain to tell.
Even as her fallen sons were leaving life,
Their wretched mother rusheth on the scene,—
She and the maid, with haste of eager feet ; 1430
And, seeing them stricken with their mortal wounds,
She wailed, “ Ah sons, too late for help I come ! ”

Then, falling on her sons, on each in turn,
She wept, she wailed, her long vain nursing-toil
Bemoaning : and their sister at her side—
“ Props of your mother's age, dear brethren, who
Leave me a bride unwed ! ” One dying gasp
Hard-heaving from his breast, King Eteocles
His mother heard, touched her with clammy hand,
Uttered no word, but from his eyes he spake 1440
With tears, as giving token of his love.
But Polyneices breathing yet, and gazing
On sister and on aged mother, spake :

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀπωλόμεσθα, μῆτερ· οἰκτείρω δὲ σὲ
καὶ τήνδ' ἀδελφὴν καὶ κασίγυητον νεκρόν.
φίλος γὰρ ἔχθρὸς ἐγένετ', ἀλλ' ὅμως φίλος.
θάψου δέ μ', ω̄ τεκοῦσα, καὶ σύ, σύγγονε,
ἐν γῇ πατρώᾳ, καὶ πόλιν θυμουμένην
παρηγορεῖτον, ω̄ς τοσόνδε γοῦν τύχω
χθονὸς πατρώας, κεὶ δόμους ἀπώλεστα.
1450 ξυνάρμοσον δὲ βλέφαρά μου τῇ σῇ χερί,
μῆτερ — τίθησι δ' αὐτὸς ὄμμάτων ἐπι —
καὶ χαίρετ'. ἥδη γάρ με περιβάλλει σκότος.
ἄμφω δ' ἡμ' ἔξεπνευσταν ἄθλιον βίον.
μήτηρ δ', ὅπως ἐσεῦδε τήνδε συμφοράν,
ὑπερπαθήσασ' ἥρπασ' ἐκ νεκρῶν ξίφος
κάπραξε δεινά· διὰ μέσου γὰρ αὐχένος
ῳθεὶ σίδηρον, ἐν δὲ τοῖσι φιλτάτοις
θυνοῦσα κεῖται περιβαλοῦσ' ἀμφοῖν χέρας.
1460 ἀνῆξε δ' ὄρθὸς λαὸς εἰς ἔριν λόγων,
ἡμεῖς μὲν ώς νικῶντα δεσπότην ἐμόν,
οἱ δ' ώς ἐκεῖνον. ἦν δ' ἔρις στρατηλάταις,
οἱ μὲν πατάξαι πρόσθε Πολυνείκην δορί,
οἱ δ' ώς θανόντων οὐδαμοῦ νίκην πέλοι.
κάν τῳδ' ὑπεξῆλθ' Ἀντιγόνη στρατού δίχα.
οἱ δ' εἰς ὅπλ' ἥσσον· εὐ δέ πως προμηθίᾳ
καθῆστο Κάδμου λαὸς ἀσπίδων ἐπι·
κάφθημεν οὕπω τεύχεσιν πεφραγμένον
Ἀργείον εἰσπεσόντες ἔξαιφνης στρατόν.
1470 κούδεις ὑπέστη, πεδά δ' ἔξεπίμπλασταν
φεύγοντες, ἔρρει δ' αἷμα μυρίων νεκρῶν
λόγχαις πιτνόντων. ώς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ,
οἱ μὲν Διὸς τροπᾶῖον ἵστασαν βρέτας,
οἱ δ' ἀσπίδας συλῶντες Ἀργείων νεκρῶν
σκυλεύματ' εἴσω τειχέων ἐπέμπομεν.

THE PHÖENICIAN MAIDENS

“ Mother, our death is this. I pity thee,
And thee, my sister, and my brother dead.
Loved, he became my foe : but loved—yet loved !
Bury me, mother, and thou, sister mine,
In native soil, and our chafed city’s wrath
Appease ye, that I win thus much at least
Of fatherland, though I have lost mine home. 1450

And close thou up mine eyelids with thine hand,
Mother ;”—himself on his eyes layeth it—
“ And fare ye well : the darkness wraps me round.”
So both together breathed their sad life forth.

And when the mother saw this woeful chance,
Grief-frenzied, from the dead she snatched a sword,
And wrought a horror : for through her mid-neck
She drives the steel, and with her best-beloved
Lies dead, embracing with her arms the twain.
Leapt to their feet the hosts with wrangling cries,— 1460
We shouting that our lord was conqueror,
They, theirs. And strife there was between the
chiefs,

These crying, “ First smote Polyneices’ spear ! ”
Those, “ Both be dead : with none the victory rests ! ”
Antigone from the field had stol’n the while.

Then rushed the foe to arms : but Cadmus’ folk
By happy forethought under shield had halted ;
So we forestalled the Argive host, and fell
Suddenly on them yet unfenced for fight.
Was none withstood us : huddled o’er the plain 1470
Fled they, and streamed the blood from slain untold
By spears laid low. So, victors in the fight,
Our triumph-trophy some ’gan rear to Zeus ;
And, some from Argive corpses stripping shields,
Within our battlements the spoils we sent.

465

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἄλλοι δὲ τοὺς θανόντας Ἀντιγόνης μέτα
νεκροὺς φέρουσιν ἐνθάδ' οἰκτίσαι φίλοις.
πόλει δ' ἀγῶνες οἱ μὲν εύτυχέστατοι
τῇδ' ἔξεβησαν, οἱ δὲ δυστυχέστατοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1480 οὐκ εὶς ἀκοὰς ἔτι δυστυχία
δώματος ἥκει πάρα γὰρ λεύσσειν
πτώματά νεκρῶν τρισσῶν ἥδη
τάδε πρὸς μελάθροις κοινῷ θανάτῳ
σκοτίαν αἰῶνα λαχόντων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ προκαλυπτομένα βοτρυχώδεος
ἀβρὰ παρηίδος οὐδὲ ὑπὸ¹
παρθενίας τὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάροις
φοίνικ', ἐρύθημα προσώπου,
αἰδομένα φέρομαι βάκχα νεκύων,
κράδεμνα δικοῦσα κόμας ἀπ' ἐμᾶς,
στολίδος κροκόεσσαν ἀνεῖσα τρυφάν,
ἀγεμόνευμα νεκροῖσι πολύστονον. αἰᾶι, ἵώ μοι.
ὦ Πολύνεικες, ἔφυς ἄρ' ἐπώνυμος, ὡμοι, Θῆβαι·
σὰ δ' ἔρις οὐκ ἔρις, ἀλλὰ φόνῳ φόνος
Οἰδιπόδα δόμον ὠλεσε κραυθεὶς
αἴματι δεινῷ, αἴματι λυγρῷ.
τίνα προσφόδδν
ἢ τίνα μουσοπόλον στοναχὰν ἐπὶ
δάκρυσι δάκρυσιν, ωδόμος ωδόμος,
ἀγκαλέσωμαι,
τρισσὰ φέρουσα τάδε σώματα σύγγονα,
ματέρα καὶ τέκνα, χάρματ' Ἔρινύος;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And others with Antigone bear on
The dead twain hither for their friends to mourn.
So hath the strife had end for Thebes in part
Most happily, in part most haplessly.

CHORUS

Not a grief for the hearing alone
Is the bale of the house: ye may see
Here, now, yon corpses three
By the palace, in death as one
To the life that is darkness gone.

1480

Enter procession bearing corpses, with CREON and ANTIGONE.

ANTIGONE

Never a veil o'er the tresses I threw
O'er my soft cheek sweeping,
Nor for maidenhood's shrinking I hid from view
The hot blood leaping
'Neath mine eyes, when I rushed in the bacchanal
dance for the dead, [head,
When I cast on the earth the tiring that bound mine 1490
Loose flinging my bright robe saffron of hue—
I, by whom corpses with wailing are graveward led.
Polyneices, "the man of much strife"—well named!
Woe's me!—
No strife was thy strife: it was murder by murder
brought [fraught
To accomplishment, ruin to Oedipus' house, and
With bloodshed of horror, with bloodshed of misery.
On what bard shall I call?
What harper of dirges shall I bid come
To wail the lament,—O home, mine home!— 1500
While the tears, the tears fall,
As I bear three bodies of kindred slain,
Mother and sons, while the Fiend gloats over our woe

1500

467

HH 2

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ἀ δόμον Οἰδιπόδα πρόπαν ὥλεσε,
τᾶς ἀγρίας ὅτε
δυσξύνετον ξυνετὸς μέλος ἔγνω
Σφιγγὸς ἀοιδοῦ σῶμα φονεύσας.
ἰω μοι, πάτερ,
τίς Ἑλλὰς ἢ βάρβαρος ἢ
1510 τῶν προπάροιθ' εὐγενετᾶν ἔτερος
ἔτλα κακῶν τοσῶνδ'
αἴματος ἀμερίου
τοιάδ' ἄχεα φανερά ;

τάλαιω', ώς ἐλελίζει.
τίς ἄρ' ὅρνις ἢ δρυὸς ἢ ἐλάτας
ἀκροκόμοις ἀμφὶ κλάδοις
έξομένα μονομάτορος ὁδυρμοῖς
ἐμοῖς ἄχεσι συνῳδός ;
αἴλινον αἰάγμασιν ἂν
1520 τοῖσδε προκλαίω μονάδ' αἰώνα
διάξουσα τὸν ἀεὶ χρόνον ἐν
λειβομένοισιν δακρύοισιν.

τίν' ἴαχήσω ;
τίν' ἐπὶ πρῶτον ἀπὸ χαίτας
σπαραγμοῖς ἀπαρχὰς βάλω ;
ματρὸς ἐμᾶς διδυ-
μοισι γάλακτος παρὰ μαστοῖς,
ἢ πρὸς ἀδελφῶν
οὐλόμεν' αἰκίσματα νεκρῶν ;

1530 ὀτοτοτοῖ· λείπε σοὺς δόμους,
ἀλαὸν ὅμμα φέρων,
πάτερ γεραιέ, δεῖξον,
Οἰδιπόδα, σὸν αἰώνα μέλεον, δος ἐπὶ

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Who brought in ruin the house of Oedipus low,
In the day when the Songstress Sphinx's strain,
So hard to read, by his wisdom was read,
And the fierce shape down unto death was sped ?

Woe for me, father mine !

Who hath borne griefs like unto thine ?

What Hellene, or alien, or who that sprang
Of the ancient blood of a high-born line,
Whose race in a day is run, hath endured in the sight
of the sun

1510

Such bitter pang ?

Woe's me for my dirge wild-ringing !

What song-bird that rocketh on high,
Mid the boughs of the oak-tree swinging,

Or the pine-tree, will echo my cry,
The moans of the motherless maiden,

Who wail for the life without friend
I must know, who shall weep sorrow-laden

Tears without end ?

1520

Over whom shall I make lamentation ?

Unto whom with rendings of hair
Shall I first give sorrow's oblation ?

Shall I cast them, mine offerings, thérē
Where the twin breasts are of my mother,

Where a sucking babe I have lain,
Or on ghastliest wounds of a brother
Cruelly slain ?

Come forth of thy chambers, blind father ;
Ancient, thy sorrows lay bare,
Who didst cause mist-darkness to gather
On thine own eyes, thou who dost wear

1530

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

δώμασιν ἀέριον σκότον δύμασι
σοὶσι βαλὼν ἔλκεις μακρόπνουν ζωάν.
κλύεις, ὡς κατ' αὐλὰν ἀλαίνων γεραιὸν
πόδα δεμνίοις
δύστανος ἴανων ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

τί μ', ὡς παρθένε, βακτρεύμασι τυ-
1540 φλοῦ ποδὸς ἔξαγαγες εἰς φῶς
λεχήρη σκοτίων ἐκ θαλάμων
οἰκτροτάτοισιν δακρύοισιν,
πολιὸν αἴθέρος ἀφανὲς εἴδωλον ἦ
νέκυν ἔνερθεν ἦ
πτανὸν ὄνειρον ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δυστυχὴς ἀγγελίας ἔπος οἴσει·
πάτερ, οὐκέτι σοι τέκνα λεύσσει
φάος οὐδ' ἄλοχος, παραβάκτροις
ἀ πόδα σὸν τυφλόπονυ θεραπεύμασιν αἰὲν ἐμόχθει,
1550 ὡς πάτερ, ὥμοι.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ώμοι ἐμῶν παθέων πάρα γὰρ στενάχειν τάδ',
ἀντεῦν.
τρισσαὶ ψυχαὶ ποίᾳ μοίρᾳ
πῶς ἔλιπον φάος ; ὡς τέκνου, αὔδα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ ἐπ' ὄνείδεσιν οὐδ' ἐπιχάρμασιν,
ἀλλ' ὁδύναισι λέγω· σὸς ἀλάστωρ
ξίφεσιν βρίθων
καὶ πυρὶ καὶ σχετλίαισι μάχαις ἐπὶ παιᾶς ἔβα
σούς,
ὡς πάτερ, ὥμοι.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Weariful days out. O hearken,
Whose old feet grope through the hall,
Who in gloom that no night-tide can darken
On thy pallet dost fall.

Enter OEDIPUS.

OEDIPUS

Why hast thou drawn me, my child, to the light,
Whose sightless hand to thine hand's prop clings, 1540
Who was bowed on my bed amid chambers of night,—
Hast drawn by a wail through tears that rings,—
A white-haired shape, like a phantom that fades
On the sight, or a ghost from the underworld shades,
Or a dream that hath wings?

ANTIGONE

Woe is the word of my tidings to thee !
Father, thy sons behold no more
The light, nor thy wife, who aye upbore
Thy blind limbs tirelessly, tenderly,
O father, ah me !

1550

OEDIPUS

Ah me for my woes ! Full well may I shriek, full
well may I moan !
By what doom have the spirits of these three
flown
From the light of life ? O child, make known.

ANTIGONE

Not as reproaching, nor mocking, I tell,
But in anguish. Thy curse, with its vengeance of
hell,
With swords laden, and fire,
And ruthless contention, on thy sons fell :
Woe's me, my sire !

471

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

αἰαῖ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1560 τί τάδε καταστένεις ;
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ
τέκνα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δι' ὁδύνας ἔβας·
εἴ δὲ τὰ τέθριππά γ' ἐσ ἄρματα λεύσσων
ἀελίου τάδε σώματα νεκρῶν
ὅμματος αὐγαῖς σαῖς ἐπενώμας.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

τῶν μὲν ἐμῶν τεκέων φανερὸν κακόν·
ά δὲ τάλαιν' ἄλοχος τίνι μοι, τέκνου, ὥλετο
μοίρᾳ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δάκρυα γοερὰ φανερὰ πᾶσι τιθεμένα,
τέκεσι μαστὸν
ἔφερεν ἔφερεν ίκέτις ίκέτιν ὀρομένα.

1570 ηῦρε δ' ἐν Ἡλέκτραισι πύλαις τέκνα
λωτοτρόφον κατὰ λείμακα
λόγχαις κοινὸν ἐνυάλιον
μάτηρ, ὥστε λέοντας ἐναύλους,
μαρναμένους ἐπὶ τραύμασιν, αἷματος
ῆδη ψυχρὰν λοιβὴν φονίαν,
ἀν ἔλαχ "Αἰδας, ὥπασε δ' "Αρης·
χαλκόκροτον δὲ λαβοῦσα νεκρῶν πάρα φάσγανον
εἴσω

σαρκὸς ἔβαψεν, ἄχει δὲ τέκνων ἔπεσ' ἀμφὶ²
τέκνοισιν.

πάντα δ' ἐν ἄματι τῷδε συνάγαγεν,
ὡ πάτερ, ἀμετέροισι δόμοισιν ἄχη θεὸς
ὅς τάδε τελευτᾶ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Alas for me !

ANTIGONE

Wherefore thy deep-drawn sigh ?

1560

OEDIPUS

For my children !

ANTIGONE

Thine hath been agony :—

But oh, to the Sun-god's car couldst thou raise
Thine eyes, couldst thou on these bodies gaze,
Dead where they lie !

OEDIPUS

For the evil fate of my sons, it is all too plain !

But ah, mine unhappiest wife !—by what doom, O
my child, was she slain ?

ANTIGONE

Weeping and wailing, that all of her coming were ware,
Hasted she. Unto her children she bare, O she bare
Sacredest breasts of a mother with suppliant prayer.

And she found her sons at Electra's portal,

1570

In the mead with the clover fair,

Closing with spears in the combat mortal :

As lions that strive in their lair

They grappled, with falchions ruthless-gashing :

Yea, now the oblation of death fell plashing

Which Ares giveth when Hades the spoil will share.

And she snatched from the dead, and the bronze-
hammered blade through her bosom she thrust ;

And in grief for her children, enclasping her child-
ren, she fell in the dust.

Lo, all the griefs of our line, one marshalled array,

Have been gathered, O father, against our house 1580

this day [ment lay.

Of the God in whose hands their accomplish-

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλῶν κακῶν κατῆρξεν Οἰδίπου δόμοις
τόδ' ἡμαρ· εἴη δ' εὐτυχέστερος βίος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴκτων μὲν ἥδη λήγεθ', ώς ὥρα τάφου
μνήμην τίθεσθαι· τῶνδε δ', Οἰδίπου, λόγων
ἄκουσσον· ἀρχὰς τῆσδε γῆς ἔδωκέ μοι
Ἐτεοκλέης παῖς σός, γάμων φερνὰς διδοὺς
Ἀίμονι κόρης τε λέκτρον· Αντιγόνης σέθεν.
οὐκ οὖν σ' ἔάσω τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν ἔτι·

1590 σαφῶς γὰρ εἶπε Τειρεσίας οὐ μή ποτε
σοῦ τήνδε γῆν οἰκούντος εὑ πράξειν πόλιν.
ἀλλ' ἐκκομίζουν· καὶ τάδ' οὐχ ὕβρει λέγω
οὐδ' ἔχθρος ὃν σός, διὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀλάστορας
τοὺς σοὺς δεδοικώς μή τι γῆ πάθη κακόν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦ μοῦρ', ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὡς μ' ἔφυσας ἄθλιον
καὶ τλήμον', εἰ τις ἄλλος ἀνθρώπων ἔφυ·
δν καὶ πρὶν εἰς φῶς μητρὸς ἐκ γονῆς μολεῖν,
ἄγονον· Απόλλων Λαΐφ μ' ἐθέσπιε
φονέα γενέσθαι πατρός· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.

1600 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγενόμην, αὐτὸς ὁ σπείρας πατήρ
κτείνει με νομίσας πολέμιον πεφυκέναι·
χρῆν γὰρ θανεῖν νιν ἐξ ἐμοῦ· πέμπει δέ με
μαστὸν ποθούντα θηρσὸν ἄθλιον βοράν·
οὐ σφέζομεσθα. Ταρτάρου γὰρ ὥφελεν
ἐλθεῖν Κιθαιρῶν εἰς ἄβυσσα χάσματα,
ὅς μ' οὐ διώλεσ', ἀλλὰ δουλεῦσαι γέ μοι
δαίμων ἔδωκε Πόλυνβον ἀμφὶ δεσπότην.
κτανῶν δ' ἐμαυτοῦ πατέρ' ὁ δυσδαιμῶν ἐγὼ
εἰς μητρὸς ἥλθον τῆς ταλαιπώρου λέχος,
παιδάς τ' ἀδελφοὺς ἔτεκον, οὓς ἀπώλεσα,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS

Many an ill to Oedipus' house this day
Brings forth. May happier life be yet in store !

CREON

Refrain laments : time is it we gave heed
To burial. Unto these words, Oedipus,
Hearken : thy son Eteocles gave me rule
O'er this land, making it a marriage-dower
To Haemon with thy child Antigone.
Therefore thou mayest dwell therein no more ;
For plainly spake Teiresias—never Thebes
Shall prosper while thou dwellest in the land.
Then get thee forth : this not despiteously
I speak, nor as thy foe, but fearing hurt
To Thebes by reason of thy vengeance-fiends.

1590

OEDIPUS

Fate, from the first to grief thou barest me,
And pain, beyond all men that ever were.
Ere from my mother's womb I came to light,
Phoebus to Laius spake me, yet unborn,
My father's murderer—ah, woe is me !
When I was born, my father, my begetter,—
Doomed by mine hand to die,—accounting me
From birth his foe, would slay me, sent me forth,
A suckling yet, a wretched prey to beasts.

1600

Yet was I saved. Oh had Cithaeron sunk
Down to the bottomless chasms of Tartarus,
For that it slew me not!—but Fate gave me
To be a bondman, Polybus my lord.
So mine own father did I slay, and came,—
Ah wretch!—unto mine hapless mother's couch.
Sons I begat, my brethren, and destroyed,

1610

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀρὰς παραλαβὼν Λαίτου καὶ παισὶ δούς.
οὐ γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἀσύνετος πέφυκ' ἐγώ
ῶστ' εἰς ἔμ' ὅμματ' εἴς τ' ἐμῶν παίδων βίον
ἄνευ θεῶν του ταῦτ' ἐμηχανησάμην.
εἰεν· τί δράσω δῆθ' ὁ δυσδαιμων ἐγώ;
τίς ἡγεμών μοι ποδὸς ὄμαρτήσει τυφλοῦ;
ηδ' ἡ θανοῦσα; ζῶσά γ' ἀν σάφ' οἰδ' ὅτι.
ἄλλ' εὔτεκνος ξυνωρίς; άλλ' οὐκ ἔστι μοι.
ἄλλ' ἔτι νεάζων αὐτὸς εὔροιμ' ἀν βίον;
πόθεν; τί μ' ἄρδην ὁδὸς ἀποκτείνεις, Κρέον;
ἀποκτενεῖς γάρ, εἴ με γῆς ἔξω βαλεῖς.
οὐ μὴν ἐλίξεις γ' ἀμφὶ σὸν χείρας γόνυ
κακὸς φανοῦμαι· τὸ γὰρ ἐμόν ποτ' εὐγενὲς
οὐκ ἀν προδοίην, οὐδέ περ πράσσων κακῶς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σοί τ' εὖ λέλεκται γόνατα μὴ χρῷζειν ἐμά,
ἐγώ τε ναίειν σ' οὐκ ἔάσαιμ' ἀν χθόνα.
νεκρῶν δὲ τῶνδε τὸν μὲν εἰς δόμους χρεῶν
ηδη κομίζειν, τόνδε δ', δις πέρσων πόλιν
πατρίδα σὺν ἄλλοις ἥλθε, Πολυνείκους νέκυν
ἐκβάλετ' ἄθαπτον τῆσδε ὅρων ἔξω χθονός.
κηρύξεται δὲ πᾶσι Καδμείοις τάδε,
δις ἀν νεκρὸν τόνδε ἡ καταστέφων ἀλῷ
ἡ γῆ καλύπτων, θάνατον ἀνταλλάξεται.
ἔαν δ' ἄκλανστον, ἄταφον, οἰωνοῖς βοράν.
σὺ δ' ἐκλιποῦσα τριπτύχων θρήνους νεκρῶν
κόμιζε σαυτήν, Ἀντιγόνη, δόμων ἔσω,
καὶ παρθενεύον τὴν ἴονσαν ἡμέραν
μένουσ' ἐν ἡ σε λέκτρον Αἴμονος μένει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ἐν οἷοις κείμεθ' ἄθλοι κακοῖς.
ὦσ σε στενάζω τῶν τεθνηκότων πλέον·

1620

1630

476

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Passing to them the curse of Laïus.
For not so witless am I from the birth,
As to devise these things against mine eyes
And my sons' life, but by the finger of God.
Let be :—what shall I do, the fortune-crost?
Who shall companion me, my blind steps guide?
She who is dead? O yea, were she alive!
My sons, a goodly pair? Nay, I have none.
Am I yet young, to win me livelihood?
Whence? Wherefore, Creon, slay me utterly?
For thou wilt slay, if forth the land thou cast.
Yet never twining round thy knee mine hands
A coward will I show me, to betray
My noble birth, how ill soe'er I fare.

1620

CREON

Well hast thou said thou wilt not clasp my knees:
I cannot let thee dwell within the land.
Of these dead twain, be this within the halls
Borne straightway: that—the corpse of him who
came
With aliens to smite his father's city—
Forth of the land's bounds tombless shall be cast. 1630
To all Cadmeans shall this be proclaimed:
“ Whoso on this corpse laying wreaths is found,
Or with earth hiding, death shall be his meed.
Unwept, unburied, leave him meat for birds.”
But thou thy mourning for the corpses three,
Antigone, leave, and get thee within doors.
Thy maiden state until the morrow keep,
Whereon the couch of Haemon waiteth thee.

ANTIGONE

Father, in what ills is our misery whelmed!
For thee I make moan more than for the dead.

1640

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

οὐ γὰρ τὸ μέν σοι βαρὺ κακῶν, τὸ δ' οὐ βαρύ,
ἀλλ' εἰς ἄπαντα δυστυχῆς ἔφυς, πάτερ.
ἀτὰρ σ' ἐρωτῶ τὸν νεωστὶ κοίρανον·
[τί τόνδ' ὑβρίζεις πατέρ' ἀποστέλλων χθονύς;]
τί θεσμοποιεῖς ἐπὶ ταλαιπώρῳ νεκρῷ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Ἐτεοκλέους βουλεύματ', οὐχ ἡμῶν τάδε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄφρονά γε, καὶ σὺ μᾶρος δις ἐπίθου τάδε.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶς ; τάντεταλμέν' οὐ δίκαιον ἐκπονεῦν;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ, ἦν πονηρά γ' οὐ κακῶς τ' εἰρημένα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1650 τί δ'; οὐ δικαίως ὅδε κυσὶν δοθήσεται ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ ἔννομον γὰρ τὴν δίκην πράσσεσθέ νιν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἴπερ γε πόλεως ἔχθρὸς ἦν, οὐκ ἔχθρὸς ᾧν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὔκουν ἔδωκε τῇ τύχῃ τὸν δαίμονα ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ τῷ τάφῳ νυν τὴν δίκην παρασχέτω.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί πλημμελήσας, τὸ μέρος εἴ μετήλθε γῆς ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἄταφος ὅδ' ἀνήρ, ὡς μάθης, γενήσεται.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἐγώ σφε θάψω, κανὸν ἀπεννέπῃ πόλις.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σαντὴν ἄρ' ἐγγὺς τῷδε συνθάψεις νεκρῷ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Thine ills are not part heavy and part light,
But in all things art thou in woeful case.
But thee I question, new-created king,
[Why outrage thus my sire with banishment?] .
Wherefore make laws touching a hapless corse?

CREON

Eteocles' ordinance, not mine, is this.

ANTIGONE

'Tis senseless—witless thou who giv'st it force.

CREON

How, were't not just to carry out his hests?

ANTIGONE

If they be wrong, in malice spoken—no!

CREON

How, were't not just to cast yon man to dogs?

1650

ANTIGONE

Nay: so ye wreak on him no lawful vengeance.

CREON

Yea, if to Thebes a foe, no foe by birth.

ANTIGONE

Hath he not unto fate paid forfeit life?

CREON

Forfeit of burial now too let him pay.

ANTIGONE

Wherein sinned he, who came to claim his own?

CREON

This man shall have no burial, be thou sure.

ANTIGONE

I, though the state forbid, will bury him.

CREON

Thyself then shalt thou bury with thy dead.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ᾽ εὐκλεές τοι δύο φίλω κεῖσθαι πέλας.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1660 λάξυσθε τήνδε κεὶς δόμους κομίζετε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ τοῦδ' οὐ μεθήσομαι νεκροῦ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔκριν' ὁ δαίμων, παρθέν', οὐχ ἀ σοὶ δοκεῖ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

κάκεῦνο κέκριται, μὴ ἐφυβρίζεσθαι νεκρούς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ώς οὕτις ἀμφὶ τῷδ' ὑγρὰν θήσει κόνιν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ναὶ πρός σε τῆσδε μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης, Κρέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μάταια μοχθεῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἀν τύχοις τάδε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ νεκρῷ λουτρὰ περιβαλεῖν μ' ἔα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐν τοῦτ' ἀν εἴη τῶν ἀπορρήτων πόλει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ τραύματ' ἄγρια τελαμῶνας βαλεῖν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1670 οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως σὺ τόνδε τιμήσεις νέκυν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ φίλτατ', ἀλλὰ στόμα γε σὸν προσπτύξομαι.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐ μὴ ἐς γάμους σὸνσι συμφορὰν κτήσῃ γόοις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἢ γὰρ γαμοῦμαι ζῶσα παιδὶ σῷ ποτε;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πολλή γ' ἀνάγκη ποῖ γὰρ ἐκφεύξει λέχος;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

'Tis glorious that two friends lie side by side.

CREON

Seize ye this girl, and hale her within doors ! 1660

ANTIGONE

Never ! for I will not unclasp this corpse.

CREON

God hath decreed, girl, not as seems thee good.

ANTIGONE

Yea—hath decreed this, *Outrage not the dead !*

CREON

Know, none shall spread the damp dust over him.

ANTIGONE

Nay !—for Jocasta's, for his mother's sake !

CREON

Vain is thy labour : this thou shalt not win.

ANTIGONE

Suffer at least that I may bathe the corpse.

CREON

This shall be of the things the state forbids.

ANTIGONE

Let me at least bind up his cruel wounds.

CREON

Thou shalt in no wise honour this dead man. 1670

ANTIGONE

Belovèd ! on thy lips this kiss at least—

CREON

Mar not thy bridal's fortune by laments.

ANTIGONE

How ! living shall I e'er wed son of thine ?

CREON

Needs must thou. Whither from the couch wilt flee ?

481

II

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

νὺξ ἀρ' ἐκείνη Δαναΐδων μ' ἔξει μίαν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἰδεις τὸ τόλμημ' οίου ἐξωνείδισεν ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἴστω σίδηρος ὅρκιόν τέ μοι ξίφος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' ἐκπροθυμεῖ τῶνδ' ἀπηλλάχθαι γάμων ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

συμφεύξομαι τῷδ' ἀθλιωτάτῳ πατρί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

γενναῖοτης σοι, μωρία δ' ἔνεστί τις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ ξυνθανοῦμαι γ', ὡς μάθης περαιτέρω.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἴθ, οὐ φονεύσεις παῖδ' ἐμόν, λίπε χθόνα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, αἰνῶ μέν σε τῆς προθυμίας.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' εὶ γαμοίμην, σὺ δὲ μόνος φεύγοις, πάτερ ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

μέν' εὐτυχοῦσα, τᾶμ' ἐγὼ στέρξω κακά.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ τίς σε τυφλὸν ὄντα θεραπεύσει, πάτερ ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

πεσὼν ὅπου μοι μοῦρα κείσομαι πέδω.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ό δ' Οἰδίπους ποῦ καὶ τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματα ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὅλωλ· ἐν ἥμάρ μ' ὠλβισ', ἐν δ' ἀπώλεσεν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

That night shall prove me one of Danaus' Daughters¹ !

CREON (*to OEDIPUS*)

Dost mark how rails she in her recklessness ?

ANTIGONE (*raising POLYNEICES' sword*)

Witness the steel—this sword whereby I swear.

CREON

Wherefore so eager to avoid this bridal ?

ANTIGONE

I will share exile with mine hapless sire.

CREON

Noble thy spirit, yet lurks folly there.

1680

ANTIGONE

Yea, and with him will die. Know this withal.

CREON

Thou shalt not slay my son. Hence, leave the land !

[*Exit.*]

OEDIPUS

Daughter, for thy devotion thank I thee.

ANTIGONE

I marry, father,—thou in exile lone !

OEDIPUS

Ah stay : be happy. I will bear mine ills.

ANTIGONE

Who then will minister to thy blindness, father ?

OEDIPUS

Where my weird is, there shall I fall, there lie.

ANTIGONE

Ah, where is Oedipus ?—where that riddle famed ?

OEDIPUS

Lost. One day blessed me, one hath ruined me

¹ Who slew the husbands whom they wedded perforce.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1690 οῦκον μετασχεῦν κάμè δεῖ τῶν σῶν κακῶν ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

αἰσχρὰ φυγὴ θυγατρὶ σὺν τυφλῷ πατρί.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ, σωφρονούσῃ γ, ἀλλὰ γενναία, πάτερ.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

προσάγαγέ νύν με, μητρὸς ὡς ψαύσω σέθεν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰδού, γεραιᾶς φιλτάτης ψαῦσον χερί.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦ μῆτερ, ὦ ξυνάορ' ἀθλιωτάτη.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οἰκτρὰ πρόκειται, πάντ' ἔχουσ' ὁμοῦ κακά.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

Ἐτεοκλέους δὲ πτῶμα Πολυνείκους τε ποῦ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τώδ' ἐκτάδην σοι κεῖσθον ἀλλήλοιν πέλας.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

πρόσθεις τυφλὴν χεῖρ' ἐπὶ πρόσωπα δυστυχῆ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰδού, θανόντων σῶν τέκνων ἄπτου χερί.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦ φίλα πεσήματ' ἀθλὶ' ἀθλίου πατρός.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ φίλτατον δῆτ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκους ἐμοί.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

νῦν χρησμός, ὦ παῖ, Λοξίου περαίνεται.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ ποῖος ; ἀλλ' ἡ πρὸς κακοῖς ἐρεῖς κακά ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις κατθανεῖν μ' ἀλώμενον.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Is it not then my due to share thine ills ?

1690

OEDIPUS

'Twere a maid's shame,—exile with her blind sire !

ANTIGONE

Nay, but—so she be wise—her glory, father.

OEDIPUS

That I may touch thy mother, guide me now.

ANTIGONE

Lo, touch her with thine hand—so old, so dear !

OEDIPUS

Ah mother ! Ah, most hapless helpmeet mine !

ANTIGONE

Piteous she lies, with all ills crowned at once.

OEDIPUS

Eteocles' corse, and Polyneices'—where ?

ANTIGONE

Here lie they, each by other's side outstretched.

OEDIPUS

Lay my blind hand upon their ill-starred brows.

ANTIGONE

Lo there : touch with thine hand thy children slain. 1700

OEDIPUS

Dear hapless dead sons of a hapless sire !

ANTIGONE

Ah Polyneices, name most dear to me !

OEDIPUS

Now, child, doth Loxias' oracle come to pass,—

ANTIGONE

What ? Wilt thou tell new ills beside the old ?

OEDIPUS

That I, a wanderer, should in Athens die.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῦ ; τίς σε πύργος Ἀτθίδος προσδέξεται ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ιερὸς Κολωνός, δώμαθ' ἵππίου θεοῦ.

ἀλλ' εἴα, τυφλῷ τῷδ' ὑπηρέτει πατρί,

ἐπεὶ προθυμεῖ τῆσδε κοινοῦσθαι φυγῆς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1710 Ἰθ' εἰς φυγὰν τάλαιναν ὅρεγε χέρα φίλαν,
πάτερ γεραιέ, πομπίμαν
ἔχων ἔμ' ὥστε ναυσίπομπον αὔραν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ἰδοὺ πορεύομαι, τέκνον·
σύ μοι ποδαγὸς ἀθλία γενοῦ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

γενόμεθα γενόμεθ' ἄθλιαί
γε δῆτα Θηβαΐαν μάλιστα παρθένων.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

πόθι γεραιὸν ἵχνος τίθημι ;
βάκτρα πρόσφερ', ὡ τέκνον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1720 τἁδε τἁδε βâθί μοι,
τἁδε τἁδε πόδα τίθει
ῶστ' ὄνειρον ἴσχύν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ἰὼ ἰώ, δυστυχεστάτας φυγὰς
ἔλανων τὸν γέροντά μ' ἐκ πάτρας.
ἰὼ ἰώ, δεινὰ δειν' ἐγὼ τλάσ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί τλάσ ; τί τλάσ ; οὐχ ὄρâ Δίκα κακούς,
οὐδ' ἀμείβεται βροτῶν ἀσυνεσίας.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Where? What Athenian burg shall harbour thee?

OEDIPUS

Hallowed Colonus, Chariot-father's¹ home.

On then: to this thy blind sire minister,
Since thou art fixed to share my banishment.

ANTIGONE

To woeful exile pass away.

1710

Stretch forth, O father hoary-grey,
Thy dear hand: grasp me. Thee I lead,
As breeze wafts on the galley's speed.

OEDIPUS

Lo, daughter, I pass on:
Thou guide me, hapless one.

ANTIGONE

Hapless I am—thou sayest well—
Above all maids in Thebes that dwell.

OEDIPUS

Where shall I plant mine old feet now?
Reach me my staff, O daughter, thou.

ANTIGONE

Hitherward, hitherward, tread:
Let thy feet follow hither mine hand,
O strengthless as dream of the night!

1720

OEDIPUS

Ah thou who on wretchedest exile hast sped
The old man forth of his fatherland!
Ah woes I have borne! Ah horror's height!

ANTIGONE

Thou hast borne?—thou hast borne?—doth Justice
regard not then
The sinner? Requitheth she not the follies of men?

¹ Poseidon, the Sea-god, who created the first war-horse.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

οδ' εἰμὶ μοῦσαν δς ἐπὶ καλ-
λίνικον οὐράνιον ἔβαν
παρθένου κόρας αἴ-
νυγμ' ἀσύνετον εὔρών.

1730

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

Σφιγγὸς ἀναφέρεις δῆνειδος.
ἄπαγε τὰ πάρος εὐτυχήματ' αὐδῶν.
τάδε σ' ἐπέμενε μέλεα πάθεα
φυγάδα πατρίδος ἄπο γενόμενον,
ῷ πάτερ, θανεῖν που.
ποθεινὰ δάκρυα παρὰ φίλαισι παρθένοις
λιποῦσ' ἄπειμι πατρίδος ἀποπρὸ γαίας
ἀπαρθένευτ' ἀλωμένα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

1740

φεῦ τὸ χρήσιμον φρενῶν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

εὶς πατρός γε συμφορὰς
εὐκλεᾶ με θήσει·
τάλαιψ' ἔγῳ [σῶν] συγγόνου θ' ὑβρισμάτων,
δς ἐκ δόμων νέκυς ἀθαπτος οἴχεται
μέλεος, δν, εἴ με καὶ θανεῖν, πάτερ, χρεών,
σκότια γὰρ καλύψω.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

πρὸς ἥλικας φάνηθι σάς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄλις ὁδυρμάτων ἐμῶν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

σὺ δ' ἀμφὶ βωμίους λιτάς—

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1750

κόρον ἔχουσ' ἐμῶν κακῶν,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Lo, I am he on breath
Of song upraised to heaven,
When that dark riddle of the Maid of Death 1730
To me to read was given.

ANTIGONE

Why raise the ghost of shame, the Sphinx's story ?
Forbear to vaunt too late that faded glory.
For thee this anguish lay the while in wait,
Far from thy land to know the exile's fate,
And, father, in some place unknown to die.
To maids who love me leaving tears of yearning,
From fatherland an exile unreturning
I wander far in plight unmaidenly.

OEDIPUS

Woe for the heart where duty's fire is burning ! 1740

ANTIGONE

Twined with my father's sad renown
This shall be mine unfading crown.
Woe for thy wrongs ! Brother, alas for thine,
Who from thine home a tombless corse art thrust,
Hapless ! Though death, my sire, for this be mine,
Yet will I veil him secretly with dust.

OEDIPUS

Show thee again to thy companions' eyes.

ANTIGONE

Why should they weep ? Mine own laments suffice.

OEDIPUS

At the Gods' altars then with suppliant cry—

ANTIGONE

They weary of my tale of misery.

1750

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ἴθ' ἀλλὰ Βρόμιος ἵνα τε ση-
κὸς ἄβατος ὅρεσι μαινάδων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

Καδμείαν φ
νεβρίδα στολιδωσαμένα ποτ' ἐγώ
Σεμέλας θίασον
ἰερὸν ὅρεσιν ἀνεχόρευσα,
χάριν ἀχάριτον εἰς θεοὺς διδοῦσα ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦ πάτρας κλεινῆς πολίται, λεύσσετ', Οἰδίπους
οὅδε,
ὅς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἔγνω καὶ μέγιστος ἦν
ἀνήρ,

1760 ὃς μόνος Σφιγγὸς κατέσχον τῆς μαιφόνου κράτη,
νῦν ἄτιμος αὐτὸς οἰκτρὸς ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.
ἀλλὰ γὰρ τί ταῦτα θρηνῶ καὶ μάτην ὁδύρομαι;
τὰς γὰρ ἐκ θεῶν ἀνάγκας θυητὸν ὄντα δεῖ φέρειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ μέγα σεμνὴ Νίκη, τὸν ἐμὸν
βίοτον κατέχοις,
καὶ μὴ λήγοις στεφανοῦσα.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Seek at the least the haunt of the Clamour-god
Mid hills of the Maenads by foot profane untrod.

ANTIGONE

How!—render homage without heart
To Him, for whom erstwhile arrayed
In Theban fawnskins, I had part
In Semele's holy dance that swayed
By hill, by glade?

OEDIPUS

People of a glorious nation, mark me—Oedipus am I,
He who read the riddle world-renowned, the man
once set on high,
He whose single prowess quelled the Sphinx's blood- 1760
polluted might.

Now dishonoured am I banished from the land in
piteous plight.
Yet what boots it thus to wail? What profits vainly
to lament?

Whoso is but mortal needs must bear the fate of
heaven sent. [Exeunt OEDIPUS and ANTIGONE.

CHORUS

Hail, reverèd Victory!
Rest upon my life; and me
Crown, and crown eternally!

[Exeunt OMNES,

SUPPLIANTS

ARGUMENT

In the days when Theseus ruled in Athens, there was war between Argos and Thebes. For the two sons of Oedipus, being mindful of their father's curse, that they should divide their inheritance with the sword, covenanted to rule in turn, year by year, over Thebes. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polyneices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year's space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes. But, forasmuch as in going he set at naught oracles and seers, his array was utterly broken in battle, and of those seven captains none returned, but Adrastus only. Thereafter, according to the sacred custom of Hellas, and the law of war, the Argives sent to require the Thebans to suffer them to bear away their slain that they might bury them. For, among the Greeks, if a man being dead obtained not burial, this was accounted a calamity worse than death, forasmuch as he was thereby made homeless and accurst in Hades. Yet did the Thebans impiously and despitefully reject that claim, being minded to wreak vengeance on their enemies after death. Then king Adrastus, with the mothers of the slain chiefs, came to Eleusis in Attica, and made supplication at the altar of Demeter to Aethra the mother of Theseus, and to the king's self. So Theseus consented to their prayer, and led the array of Athens against Thebes, and there fought and prevailed, and so brought back the bodies of those chiefs, and rendered to them the death-rites at Eleusis.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ.

ΑΙΘΡΑ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ΚΗΡΤΕ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΕΤΑΔΝΗ
ΙΦΙΣ
ΠΑΙΔΕΣ
ΑΘΗΝΑ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

AETHRA, mother of Theseus.

THESEUS, son of Aegeus, king of Athens.

ADRASTUS, king of Argos.

HERALD, from Creon king of Thebes.

MESSENGER from the army of Theseus before Thebes.

EVADNE, wife of Capaneus one of the seven chiefs.

IPHIS, father of Evadne.

SONS of the slain chiefs.

ATHENA, Patron-goddess of Athens.

CHORUS, consisting of the mothers of the slain chiefs, with their Handmaids

Athenian heralds, guards, attendants, Athenian soldiers

SCENE: In the forecourt of the temple of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis. The great altar stands in the midst.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΙΘΡΑ

Δήμητερ ἔστιοῦχ' Ἐλευσῖνος χθονὸς
τῆσδ', οἵ τε ναοὺς ἔχετε πρόσπολοι θεᾶς,
εὐδαιμονεῖν με Θησέα τε παῖδ' ἐμὸν
πόλιν τ' Ἀθηνῶν τίν τε Πιτθέως χθόνα,
ἐν ᾧ με θρέψας ὀλβίοις ἐν δώμασιν
• Αἴθραν πατὴρ δίδωσι τῷ Πανδίονος
Αἰγεῖ δάμαρτα, Λοξίου μαντεύμασιν.
εὶς τάσδε γὰρ βλέψασ' ἐπηυξάμην τάδε
γραῦς, αἱ λιποῦσαι δώματ' Ἀργείας χθονὸς
ικτῆρι θαλλῷ προσπίτνουσ' ἐμὸν γόνυ
πάθος παθούσαι δεινόν· ἀμφὶ γὰρ πύλας
Κάδμου θανόντων ἐπτὰ γενναίων τέκνων
ἄπαιδές εἰσιν, οὓς ποτ' Ἀργείων ἄναξ
Ἄδραστος ἤγαγ', Οἰδίπου παγκληρίας
μέρος κατασχεῖν φυγάδι Πολυνείκει θέλων
γαμβρῷ. νεκροὺς δὲ τοὺς ὀλωλότας δορὶ¹⁰
θάψαι θέλουσι τῶνδε μητέρες χθονί·
εἴργουσι δ' οἱ κρατοῦντες οὐδ' ἀναίρεσιν
δοῦναι θέλουσι, νόμιμ' ἀτίζοντες θεῶν.

SUPPLIANTS

On the steps of the altar AETHRA is seated ; and around her sit the members of the CHORUS. The olive-boughs of suppliance lie upon the altar, and from these are stretched woollen fillets, attaching them to AETHRA and the CHORUS. ADRASTUS lies prostrate on the earth, apart from these.

AETHRA

DEMETER, warden of Eleusis-land,
And ye which keep and serve the Goddess' fanes,
Grant me and my son Theseus prosperous days,
Grant them to Athens and to Pittheus' land,
Where in a happy home my sire nursed me,
Aethra, and gave me to Pandion's son
Aegeus, to wife, by Loxias' oracles.

Thus pray I as on these grey dames I look,
These which have left their homes in Argos-land,
And fall with suppliant bough before my knee, 10
Stricken with grievous stroke : for round the gates
Of Cadmus lying are their seven sons dead,
Sons of the childless, they whom Argos' king
Adrastus led, in Oedipus' heritage
To win his share for exiled Polyneices,
His daughter's lord. The mothers now of these,
The spear-slain, fain would lay them in the grave,
Wherfrom the victors let them, and refuse
The corpses, setting the Gods' laws at naught.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

20

κοινὸν δὲ φόρτον ταῖσδ' ἔχων χρείας ἐμῆς
“Αδραστος δῆμα δάκρυσιν τέγγων ὅδε
κεῖται, τό τ' ἔγχος τίν τε δυστυχεστάτην
στένων στρατείαν ἦν ἐπεμψεν ἐκ δόμων·
ὅς μ' ἔξοτρύνει παῖδ' ἐμὸν πεῖσαι λιταῖς
νεκρῶν κομιστὴν ἢ λόγοισιν ἢ δορὸς
ρώμη γενέσθαι καὶ τάφου μεταίτιου,
μόνον τόδ' ἔργον προστιθεὶς ἐμῷ τέκνῳ
πόλει τ' Ἀθηνῶν. τύγχανω δ' ὑπὲρ χθονὸς
ἀρότου προθύουσ’ ἐκ δομῶν ἐλθοῦσ’ ἐμῶν
πρὸς τόνδε σηκόν, ἔνθα πρώτα φαίνεται
φρίξας ὑπὲρ γῆς τῆσδε κάρπιμος στάχυς.
δεσμὸν δ' ἀδεσμὸν τόνδ' ἔχουσα φυλλάδος
μένω πρὸς ἄγναῖς ἐσχάραις δυοῖν θεαῖν
Κόρης τε καὶ Δήμητρος, οἰκτείρουσα μὲν
πολιὰς ἄπαιδας τάσδε μητέρας τέκνων,
σέβουσα δ' ἵερὰ στέμματ'. οἴχεται δέ μοι
κῆρυξ πρὸς ἄστυ δεῦρο Θησέα καλῶν,
ώς ἡ τὸ τούτων λυπρὸν ἔξέλῃ χθονός,
ἢ τάσδ' ἀνάγκας ἰκεσίους λύσῃ, θεοὺς
δσιόν τι δράσας· πάντα γὰρ δι' ἀρσένων
γυναιξὶ πράσσειν εἰκός, αἴτινες σοφαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

40

ἰκετεύω σε, γεραιά,
γεραιῶν ἐκ στομάτων,
πρὸς γόνυ πίπτουσα τὸ σόν·
ἄνα μοι τέκνα λύσαι φθιμένων

στρ. α'

SUPPLIANTS

Sharing the burden of their need of me, 20
Adrastus lieth here, his eyes with tears
Drowned, mourning for the battle-shivered spear
And that ill-starred array led forth of him.
Sore pleadeth he with me to bend by prayers
My son to be redeemer of the dead
By speech or spear, and helper to the grave,
Laying this charge alone upon my son
And Athens. Now it chanceth that I come
For the land's harvest's sake from forth mine halls
To this god's-acre, where first rose to light
Above the earth's face bristling ears of corn. 30

And, bound in this strong gossamer-chain of leaves,¹
At the two Goddesses' holy hearths I stay,
Demeter's and her Daughter's, both for ruth
Of these unchilded mothers silver-haired,
And awe of the holy bands. To Athens sped
Mine herald is, to summon Theseus hither,
That he may banish from the land these mourners,²
Or loose this strong constraint of suppliance
By rendering heaven its due. Seemly it is 40
That women, which be wise, still act through men.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

Reverend Queen, with aged lips do I implore thee ;
In my suppliance at thy knee I fall before thee.
O redeem thou unto me from that assemblage of the
dead

¹ The woollen fillets and boughs could not be removed without sacrilege.

² The presence of such, especially at the temple of Demeter, was ominous of evil, which the king only could avert, either by granting their request, or by refusing it and ordering them to depart.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

*νεκύων, οὐ καταλείπουσι μέλη
θανάτῳ λυσιμελεῖ θηρσὶν ὄρείοισι βοράν·*

ἐσιδοῦσ' οἰκτρὰ μὲν ὅσσων
δάκρυ' ἀμφ' βλεφάροις,
50 ῥυστὰ δὲ σαρκῶν πολιάν
καταδρύμματα χειρῶν· τί γάρ; ἀ
· φθιμένους παιᾶς ἐμοὺς οὐτε δόμοις
προθέμαν, οὐτε τάφων χώματα γαίας ἐσορῶ.

ἔτεκες καὶ σύ ποτ', ὡ πότνια, κοῦρον στρ. β'
φίλα ποιησαμένα
λέκτρα πόσει σῷ· μέτα νυν
δὸς ἐμοὶ σᾶς διανοίας,
μετάδος δ', ὅσσον ἐπαλγῷ μελέα
τῶν φθιμένων οὖς ἔτεκον.
60 παράπεισον δὲ τὸ σόν, λιστόμεθ', ἐλθεῖν
τέκνον Ἰσμηνὸν ἐμάν τ' εἰς χέρα θεῖναι
νεκύων θαλερῶν σώματ' ἀλαίνοντ' ἄταφα.¹

ὅσίως οὐχ, ὑπ' ἀνάγκας δὲ προπίπτου- ἀντ. β
σα προσαιτοῦσ' ἔμολον
δεξιπύρους θεῶν θυμέλας·
ἔχομεν δ' ἔνδικα· καὶ σοί
τι πάρεστι σθένος ὥστ' εὔτεκνίᾳ
δυστυχίαν τὰν παρ' ἔμοὶ
καθελεῖν· οἰκτρὰ δὲ πάσχουσ' ίκετεύω

¹ Murray: for λάινον τάφον.

SUPPLIANTS

My beloved, from the harvest that the hand of death
hath spread [my womb !
For the mountain-beasts to ravin on the children of

(*Ant.* 1)

Look upon me :—from mine eyes in my despairing
Tears are streaming, and my frenzied hands are 50
tearing [should I do but mourn,
Crimson furrows on my wrinkled cheeks. What
Who have laid not out my dead unto their burial to
be borne, [for their tomb ?
And who see not any heaping of the earth-mound

(*Str.* 2)

Thou hast borne a little one, thou hast given a
princely son [joy in thee :
To thy lord, that marriage-treasure made his heart to
Let the full soul deal its bread to the sad ones
famished :
Give according to the measure of my childless agony.
Bend the spirit of thy son, that he may go, whose 60
help we crave, [our dead—
To Ismenus, that our hands may lay the bodies of
Who are outcasts now in Hades, being tombless—
in the grave.

(*Ant.* 2)

Not according unto rite,¹ but as overmastering might
Of Necessity constraineth, at the altars do I bend
Whence to heaven leaps the flame ; and the right
is that I claim.
Thou art strong, thy son remaineth ;—thou canst
make my sorrows end. [wild
Out of depths of sorest anguish rings my supplication

¹ There was no place in the temple-ritual for mourning.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

τὸν ἐμὸν παιᾶν τάλαιν' ἐν χερὶ θεῖναι
νέκυν, ἀμφιβαλεῖν λυγρὰ μέλη παιδὸς ἐμοῦ.

70

ἀγῶν ὅδ' ἄλλος ἔρχεται γόων γόοις στρ. γ'
διάδοχος· ἀχοῦσιν προπόλων χέρες.
ἴτ' ὡς ξυνῳδοὶ κακοῖς,
ἴτ' ὡς ξυναλγηδόνες,
χορὸν τὸν "Αἰδας σέβει,
διὰ παρῆδος ὄνυχα λευκὸν
αίματούτε χρῶτα τε φόνιον.
τὰ γὰρ φθιτῶν τοῖς ὄρῶσι κόσμος.

80

ἄπληστος ἄδε μ' ἔξαγει χάρις γόων ἀντ. γ'
πολύπονος, ὡς ἔξ αλιβάτου πέτρας
ύγρᾳ ρέουσα σταγών,
ἄπαυστος ἀεὶ γόων·
τὸ γὰρ θανόντων τέκνων
ἐπίπονόν τι κατὰ γυναικας
εἰς γόους πέφυκε πάθος. ἐ ἔ.
θανοῦσα τῶνδ' ἀλγέων λαθοίμαν.

90

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
τίνων γόων ἥκουσα καὶ στέρνων κτύπον
νεκρῶν τε θρήνους, τῶνδ' ἀνακτόρων ἄπο
ἥχοντος ιούσης; ὡς φόβος μ' ἀναπτεροῖ
μὴ μοί τι μήτηρ, ἦν μεταστείχω ποδὶ¹
χρονίαν ἀπούσαν ἐκ δόμων, ἔχη νέον.
ἔα·
τί χρῆμα; καινὰς εἰσβολὰς ὄρω λόγων·
μητέρα γεραιὰν βωμίαν ἐφημένην
ξένας θ' ὄμοῦ γυναικας, οὐχ ἔνα ρύθμὸν

504

SUPPLIANTS

That thou give me but a corpse, in mine embrace
to hold the same, [my child.

And to fling mine arms around the piteous body of 70

*The attendant HANDMAIDS, beating their breasts and
marring their faces, wail in unison with the MOTHERS.*

O hearken yon wails to our wailing replying, (Str. 3)
To the hands of our handmaidens smiting hard
On their bosoms ! Come, ye that re-echo our crying
With a burden of mourning, who sigh with our
sighing—

Come ye to the one dance Death doth regard ;
Rend, rend ye the cheek, till the red stains streak
White fingers :—the dues that our dear dead seek
Shall be all our reward.

Unsatisfied mourning my soul is entralling (Ant. 3)

Sorrow-burdened, as forth from a precipice flows 80
A spring with its rain ever flashing and falling.
Unrestingly wailing to wailing is calling ;

For the heart's love of woman but one path knows,
Nor can choose but to moan for the dear dead son :—
And oh that the days of my life were done,
And forgotten my woes !

Enter THESEUS.

THESEUS

What wailings heard I, smitings upon breasts,
And dirges for the dead, as rang the sound [fear
From the holy place ? How throbs mine heart with
Lest to my mother, who hath drawn me hither 90
By her long absence, some mischance betide.

Ha !

What see I here ? What strange tale is to tell ?
At the altar sitting my grey mother is,
And alien dames with her in diverse guise

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κακῶν ἔχούστας· ἕκ τε γὰρ γερασμάτων
δσσων ἐλαύνουσ' οἰκτρὸν εἰς γαῖαν δάκρυ,
κουραλ δὲ καὶ πεπλώματ' οὐθεωρικά.
τί ταῦτα, μῆτερ; σὸν τὸ μηνύειν ἐμοί,
ἡμῶν δ' ἀκούειν· προσδοκῶ τι γὰρ νέον.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

100 ω παῖ, γυναικες αἵδε μητέρες τέκνων
τῶν κατθανόντων ἀμφὶ Καδμείας πύλας
έπτὰ στρατηγῶν· ἵκεσίοις δὲ σὺν κλάδοις
φρουροῦσί μ', ώς δέδορκας, ἐν κύκλῳ, τέκνουν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τίς δ' ὁ στενάξων οἰκτρὸν ἐν πύλαις ὅδε;

ΑΙΘΡΑ

Ἄδραστος, ως λέγουσιν, Ἀργείων ἄναξ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οἱ δ' ἀμφὶ τόνδε παῖδες η τούτου τέκνα;

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οὐκ, ἀλλὰ νεκρῶν τῶν ὀλωλότων κόροι.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί γὰρ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἥλθον ἵκεσίᾳ χερί;

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οἰδ'. ἀλλὰ τῶνδε μῦθος ούντεῦθεν, τέκνουν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

σὲ τὸν κατήρη χλανιδίοις ἀνιστορῶ.
λέγ' ἐκκαλύψας κράτα καὶ πάρες γόον.
πέρας γὰρ οὐδὲν μὴ διὰ γλώσσης ἴον.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ω καλλίνικε γῆς Ἀθηναίων ἄναξ,
Θησεῦ, σὸς ἱκέτης καὶ πόλεως ἥκω σέθεν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί χρῆμα θηρῶν καὶ τίνος χρείαν ἔχων;

SUPPLIANTS

Of sore affliction ; for the piteous tear
Unto the ground from ag'd eyes they drop.
Shorn hair and garb unmeet for worshippers !
What means it, mother ? 'Tis thy part to tell,
And mine to hear. I look for some strange thing.

AETHRA

My son, these dames the mothers are of those, 100
The chieftains seven, that in battle fell
By gates Cadmean. And with suppliant boughs
Compassed they hold me, captive, as thou seest.

THESEUS

Who yonder at the gates makes piteous moan ?

AETHRA

Adrastus, as they tell, the Argive king.

THESEUS

And yon lads at his side, his boys are they ?

AETHRA

Nay, but the sons of those dead which have died.

THESEUS

Wherefore to us came they with suppliant hand ?

AETHRA

I know :—but these must tell the rest, my son.

THESEUS

Thee, in thy mantle muffled close, I ask— 110
Unshroud thine head, speak, let thy mourning be ;
Naught shalt thou profit, if naught pass thy tongue.

ADRASTUS

O triumph-glorious king of Athens' land,
Theseus, I come thy suppliant and thy city's.

THESEUS

What seekest thou, and whereof hast thou need ?

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἰσθ' ἡν στρατείαν ἐστράτευσ' ὀλεθρίαν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὐ γάρ τι σιγῇ διεπέρασας Ἑλλάδα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐνταῦθ' ἀπώλεσ' ἄνδρας Ἀργείων ἄκρους.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τοιαῦθ' οἱ τλήμων πόλεμος ἔξεργάζεται.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τούτους θανόντας ἥλθον ἔξαιτῶν πόλιν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

κήρυξιν Ἐρμοῦ πίσυνος, ώς θάψης νεκρούς;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

κάπειτά γ' οἱ κτανόντες οὐκ ἔωσί με.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί γὰρ λέγουσιν, δόσια χρήζοντος σέθεν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τί δ'; εὔτυχοῦντες οὐκ ἐπίστανται φέρειν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ξύμβουλον οὖν μ' ἐπῆλθες; ἢ τίνος χάριν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

κομίσαι σε, Θησεῦ, παῖδας Ἀργείων θέλων.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τὸ δ' Ἀργος ὑμῖν ποῦ στιν; ἢ κόμποι μάτην;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

σφαλέντες οὐχόμεσθα. πρὸς σὲ δ' ἥκομεν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἰδίᾳ δοκῆσάν σοι τόδ' ἢ πάσῃ πόλει;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

πάντες σ' ἵκνοῦνται Δαναΐδαι θάψαι νεκρούς.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐλαύνεις ἐπτὰ πρὸς Θήβας λόχους;

120

508

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Thou know'st what host I to destruction led.

THESEUS

Yea, not in silence passedst thou through Greece.

ADRASTUS

The chiefest men of Argos lost I there.

THESEUS

Such desolation worketh woeful war.

ADRASTUS

And these my dead I went to ask of Thebes.

120

THESEUS

Did heralds sanctify thy burial-claim ?

ADRASTUS

Yea : even so the slayers grant them not.

THESEUS

What say they to thy plea of holy right ?

ADRASTUS

Ay, what?—prosperity hath puffed them up.

THESEUS

For counsel com'st thou then, or what wouldest thou ?

ADRASTUS

That thou shouldst rescue, Theseus, Argos' sons.

THESEUS

Where is your Argos ? Is her vaunting vain ?

ADRASTUS

We are fallen and undone. To thee we come.

THESEUS

Dost thou alone will this, or all thy state ?

ADRASTUS

All Danaus' sons beseech thee entomb their dead. 130

THESEUS

Why didst thou march those seven hosts to Thebes ?

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δισσοῖσι γαμβροῖς τήνδε πορσύνων χάριν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τῷ δ' ἐξέδωκας παῖδας Ἀργείων σέθεν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἐγγενῆ συνῆγψα κηδείαν δόμοις.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἀλλὰ ξένοις ἔδωκας Ἀργείας κόρας;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεῖ γε Πολυνείκει τε τῷ Θηβαγενεῖ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τίν' εἰς ἔρωτα τῆσδε κηδείας μολών;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Φοίβου μ' ὑπῆλθε δυστόπαστ' αἰνίγματα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τί δ' εἰπ' Ἀπόλλων παρθένοις κραίνων γάμουν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

κάπρῳ με δοῦναι καὶ λέοντι παῖδ' ἐμώ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

σὺ δ' ἐξελίσσεις πῶς θεοῦ θεσπίσματα;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐλθόντε φυγάδε νυκτὸς εἰς ἐμὰς πύλας,

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τίς καὶ τίς; εἰπέ· δύο γάρ ἐξαυδᾶς ἄμα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεὺς μάχην ξυνῆγψε Πολυνείκης θ' ἄμα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἢ τοῦσδ' ἔδωκας θηροὶν ὡς κόρας σέθεν;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

μάχην γε δισσοῦν κνωδάλοιν ἀπεικάσας.

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

To my two daughters' lords this grace I showed.

THESEUS

Thy daughters? To what Argives gav'st thou them?

ADRASTUS

With no man native-born I linked mine house.

THESEUS

Ha! gavest thou to aliens Argive maids?

ADRASTUS

To Tydeus, and to Thebes' son Polyneices.

THESEUS

Whence thy strong love for such affinity?

ADRASTUS

Phoebus' dark saying wrought upon my mind.

THESEUS

What spake Apollo to control their marriage?

ADRASTUS

"*Thy daughters give to a lion and a boar.*"

140

THESEUS

And the God's precept how unfoldest thou?

ADRASTUS

There came by night two exiles to my gates.

THESEUS

Who this, who that?—for thou dost speak of twain

ADRASTUS

Tydeus and Polyneices: there they fought.

THESEUS

To these, as those wild beasts, gav'st thou thy daughters?

ADRASTUS

Yea: like those monsters twain, methought, they strove.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἢ λθον δὲ δὴ πῶς πατρίδος ἐκλιπόνθ' ὅρους ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεὺς μὲν αἷμα συγγενὲς φεύγων χθονός.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὐδὲ Οἰδίπου παῖς τίνι τρόπῳ Θήβας λιπών ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

150 ἀραῖς πατρῷαις, μὴ κασίγνητον κτάνοι.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

σοφῆν γ' ἔλεξας τήνδ' ἐκούσιον φυγήν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' οἱ μένοντες τοὺς ἀπόντας ἡδίκουν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἢ πού σφ' ἀδελφὸς χρημάτων νοσφίζεται ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ταῦτ' ἐκδικάζων ἢλθον· εἰτ' ἀπωλόμην.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

μάντεις δ' ἐπῆλθες ἐμπύρων τ' εἰδεις φλόγα ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἴμοι· διώκεις μ' ἢ μάλιστ' ἐγὼ 'σφάλην.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὐκ ἢλθεις, ὡς ἔοικεν, εὔνοίᾳ θεῶν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τὸ δὲ πλέον, ἢλθον Ἀμφιάρεώ γε πρὸς βίαν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὗτω τὸ θεῖον ῥᾳδίως ἀπεστράφης ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

160 νέων γὰρ ἀνδρῶν θόρυβος ἔξεπλησσέ με.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

εὐψυχίαν ἔσπευσας ἀντ' εὐθουλίας.

SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

How left they home-land's bounds, and came to thee ?

ADRASTUS

Tydeus, for shedding blood of kin exiled.

THESEUS

And Oedipus' son, for what cause left he Thebes ?

ADRASTUS

His father's curse, lest he should slay his brother. 150

THESEUS

Wise was that self-sought exile, named of thee.

ADRASTUS

But they that tarried wrought the absent wrong.

THESEUS

Ha ! did his brother take his heritage ?

ADRASTUS

To claim his right I came—and found my ruin.

THESEUS

Didst seek to seers, and gaze on altar-flames ?

ADRASTUS

Ah me ! thou presest me where most I erred !

THESEUS

Not with heaven's blessing didst thou go, methinks.

ADRASTUS

Nay, worse ; in Amphiaraus' despite I went.

THESEUS

Didst thou thus lightly flout the will divine ?

ADRASTUS

The clamour of the young men daunted me. 160

THESEUS

Valour instead of wisdom favouredst thou.

513

VOL. III.

L L

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὅ δή γε πολλοὺς ὥλεσε στρατηλάτας.
ἀλλ' ὡς καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἀλκιμώτατον κάρα,
ἄναξ Ἀθηνῶν, ἐν μὲν αἰσχύναις ἔχω
πίτνων πρὸς οὐδας γόνυ σὸν ἀμπίσχειν χερί,
πολιὸς ἀνὴρ τύραννος εὐδαίμων πάρος·
οἵμως δ' ἀνάγκη συμφοραῖς εἴκειν ἐμαῖς.

170

σῶσον νεκρούς μοι τάμα τ' οἰκτείρας κακὰ
καὶ τῶν θανόντων τάσδε μητέρας τέκνων,
αἷς γῆρας ἥκει πολιὸν εἰς ἀπαιδίαν,
ἐλθεῖν δ' ἔτλησαν δεῦρο καὶ ξένον πόδα
θεῖναι μόλις γεραιὰ κινοῦσαι μέλη,
πρεσβεύματ' οὐ Δήμητρος εἰς μυστήρια,
ἀλλ' ὡς νεκροὺς θάψωσιν, ἀς αὐτὰς ἔχρην
κείνων ταφείσας χερσὶν ὥραιών τυχεῖν.
σοφὸν δὲ πενίαν τ' εἰσορᾶν τὸν ὅλβιον,
πένητά τ' εἰς τοὺς πλουσίους ἀποβλέπειν
ζηλοῦνθ', ἵν' αὐτὸν χρημάτων ἔρως ἔχῃ,
τά τ' οἰκτρὰ τοὺς μὴ δυστυχεῖς δεδορκέναι.
[τόν θ' ὑμνοποιὸν αὐτὸς ἀν τίκτη μέλη
χαίροντα τίκτειν· ἦν δὲ μὴ πάσχῃ τόδε,
οὗτοι δύναιτ' ἀν οἰκοθέν γ' ἀτώμενος
τέρπειν ἀν ἄλλους· οὐδὲ γὰρ δίκην ἔχει.] ¹

180

τάχ' οὖν ἀν εἴποις, Πελοπίαν παρεὶς χθόνα
πῶς ταῖς Ἀθήναις τόνδε προστάσσεις πόνον;
ἐγὼ δίκαιος εἰμ' ἀφηγεῖσθαι τάδε.
Σπάρτη μὲν ὡμὴ καὶ πεποίκιλται τρόπους,
τὰ δ' ἄλλα μικρὰ κάσθεντ· πόλις δὲ σὴ
μόνη δύναιτ' ἀν τόνδ' ὑποστῆναι πόνον.
τά τ' οἰκτρὰ γὰρ δέδορκε καὶ νεανίαν

190

¹ By most editors regarded as an irrelevant interpolation.

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Even that hath ruined many a battle-chief.
O thou in prowess first all Hellas through,
O king of Athens, sore ashamed am I
To fall to earth, and to embrace thy knee,
A grey-haired king in time past prosperous.
Yet to mine evil plight I needs must bow.

Save thou my dead, compassionate my woes,
And these the mothers of the slaughtered sons
Whom hoary age hath found in childlessness, 170
Who have endured to come, on alien soil
To set their feet, who scarce for eld may creep ;
No mission to Demeter's mysteries,
But seeking burial for their dead, a boon
Themselves should have obtained of young strong
hands.

Wisely doth wealth consider poverty :
Wisely to wealth the poor uplifts his eyes
Aspiring, that desire of good may spur him : .
So ought the prosperous to look on woe.
[The poet's self in gladness should bring forth 180
His offspring, song ; if he attain not this,
He cannot from a heart distraught with pain
Gladden his fellows : reason sayeth nay.]

Perchance thou askest, " Why pass by the land
Of Pelops, and on Athens lay this charge ? "
Sooth, right it is that I should answer this :—
Sparta is heartless, never at one stay ;
The rest be small and weak : but this thy burg
Alone can stand beneath the mighty strain.
'Twas ever pitiful, and hath in thee 190

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ἔχει σὲ ποιμέν' ἐσθλόν· οὐ χρείᾳ πόλεις
πολλαὶ διώλοντ' ἐνδεεῖς στρατηλάτου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κἀγὼ τὸν αὐτὸν τῷδε σοι λόγον λέγω,
Θησεῦ, δι' οἴκτου τὰς ἐμὰς λαβεῖν τύχας.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἄλλοισι δὴ 'πόνησ' ἀμιλληθεὶς λόγω
τοιῷδ'. ἔλεξε γάρ τις ὡς τὰ χείρονα
πλείω βροτοῖσίν ἐστι τῶν ἀμεινόνων.
ἔγὼ δὲ τούτοις ἀντίαν γνώμην ἔχω
πλείω τὰ χρηστὰ τῶν κακῶν εἶναι βροτοῖς.

- 200 εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἦν τόδ', οὐκ ἀν ἥμεν ἐν φάει.
αἰνῶ δ' ὃς ἡμῖν βίοτον ἐκ πεφυρμένου
καὶ θηριώδους θεῶν διεσταθμήσατο,
πρῶτον μὲν ἐνθεὶς σύνεσιν, είτα δ' ἄγγελον
γλῶσσαν λόγων δούς, ὡς γεγωνίσκειν ὅπα,
τροφήν τε καρπού τῇ τροφῇ τ' ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ
σταγόνας ὑδρηλάς, ὡς τά γ' ἐκ γαίας τρέφῃ
ἄρδη τε ηδὺν· πρὸς δὲ τοῖσι χείματος
προβλήματ', αἱθρον ἔξαμύνασθαι θεοῦ,
πόντου τε ναυστολήμαθ', ὡς διαλλαγὰς
210 ἔχοιμεν ἀλλήλοισιν ὃν πένοιτο γῆ.
ἄ δ' ἔστ' ἄσημα κού σαφῶς γυγνώσκομεν,
εἰς πῦρ βλέποντες καὶ κατὰ σπλάγχνων πτυχὰς
μάντεις προσημαίνουσιν οἰωνῶν τ' ἄπο.
ἄρ' οὐ τρυφῶμεν θεοῦ κατασκευὴν βίω
δύντος τοιαύτην, οἰσιν οὐκ ἀρκεῖ τάδε;
ἀλλ' ἡ φρόνησις τοῦ θεοῦ μεῖζον σθένειν
ζητεῖ, τὸ γαῦρον δὲ ἐν φρεσὶν κεκτημένοι
δοκοῦμεν εἶναι δαιμόνων σοφώτεροι.
ἥς καὶ σὺ φαίνει δεκάδος οὐ σοφὸς γεγώς,
220 ὅστις κόρας μὲν θεσφάτοις Φοίβου ζυγεὶς

SUPPLIANTS

A young and valorous chief, for lack of whom
To lead their hosts, have many cities fallen.

CHORUS

I too put up to thee the selfsame prayer,
Theseus, to have compassion on my lot.

THESEUS

With others oft in wrestle of argument
I have grappled touching this :—there be that say
That evil more abounds with men than good.
Opinion adverse unto these I hold,
That more than evil good abounds with men :
Were this not so, we were not of the light.

200

Praise to the God who shaped in order's mould
Our lives redeemed from chaos and the brute,
First, by implanting reason, giving then
The tongue, word-herald, to interpret speech ;
Earth's fruit for food, for nurturing thereof
Raindrops from heaven, to feed earth's fosterlings;
And water her green bosom ; therewithal
Shelter from storm, and shadow from the heat,
Sea-tracking ships, that traffic might be ours
With fellow-men of that which each land lacks ;
And, for invisible things or dimly seen,
Soothsayers watch the flame, the liver's folds,
Or from the birds divine the things to be.

210

Are we not arrogant then, when all life's needs
God giveth, therewith not to be content ?
But our presumption stronger fain would be
Than God : we have gotten overweening hearts,
And dream that we be wiser than the Gods.
And thou art of this fellowship of folly,
Who didst by Phoebus'hest thy daughters wed,

220

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ξένοισιν ὡδὸν ἔδωκας ὡς ζώντων θεῶν,
λαμπρὸν δὲ θολερῷ δῶμα συμμίξας τὸ σὸν
ῆλκωσας οἴκους· χρῆν γὰρ οὐδὲ σώματα
ἄδικα δικαίοις τὸν σοφὸν συμμιγνύναι,
εὐδαιμονοῦντας δὲ εἰς δόμους κτᾶσθαι φίλους.
κοινὰς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰς τύχας ἡγούμενος
τοῖς τοῦ νοσοῦντος πήμασιν διώλεσε
τὸν συννοσοῦντα κούδεν ἡδικηκότα.

230

εἰς δὲ στρατείαν πάντας Ἀργείους ἄγων,
μάντεων λεγόντων θέσφατ', εἰτ' ἀτιμάσας
βίᾳ παρελθὼν θεοὺς ἀπώλεσας πόλιν,
νέοις παραχθείς, οἵτινες τιμώμενοι
χαίρουσι πολέμους τ' αὐξάνουσ' ἄνευ δίκης,
φθείροντες ἀστούς, ὃ μὲν ὅπως στρατηλατῇ,
ὅ δὲ ὡς ὑβρίζῃ δύναμιν εἰς χεῖρας λαβών,
ἄλλος δὲ κέρδους εἴνεκ', οὐκ ἀποσκοπῶν
τὸ πλήθος εἴ τι βλάπτεται πάσχον τάδε.
τρεῖς γὰρ πολιτῶν μερίδες· οἱ μὲν δλβιοι
ἀνωφελεῖς τε πλειόνων τ' ἐρῶσ' ἀεί·

240

οἱ δὲ οὐκ ἔχοντες καὶ σπανίζοντες βίου,
δεινοὶ, νέμοντες τῷ φθόνῳ πλέον μέρος,
εἰς τοὺς ἔχοντας κέντρ' ἀφιᾶσιν κακά,
γλώσσαις πονηρῶν προστατῶν φηλούμενοι·
τριῶν δὲ μοιρῶν ἡ 'ν μέσῳ σφέζει πόλεις,
κόσμου φυλάσσουσ' ὄντιν' ἀν τάξῃ πόλις.
κάπειτ' ἐγώ σοι σύμμαχος γενήσομαι;
τί πρὸς πολέτας τοὺς ἐμοὺς λέγων καλόν;
χαίρων ἵθ'. εἰ γὰρ μὴ βεβούλευσαι καλῶς,
αὐτὸς πιέζειν τὴν τύχην, ἡμᾶς δ' ἐάν.

250

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡμαρτεν· ἐν νέοισι δὲ ἀνθρώπων τόδε
ἔνεστι· συγγυνώμην δὲ τῷδ' ἔχειν χρεών.

SUPPLIANTS

To aliens—thus far recognising Gods ;—
Yet mingling thy clear blood with turbid, so
Didst mar thine house : thou oughtest ne'er to have
blent,
So thou wert wise, just lives with lives unjust,
But for thine house to have gotten heaven-blest
friends :
For God, adjudging fates joined hand in hand,
Destroyeth by the sinner's stroke whoe'er
Partaketh with him, though he have not sinned.
Thou leddest forth the Argives all to war, [naught
Though seers spake heaven's warning, setting at 230
These, flouting Gods, didst ruin so thy state,
By young men led astray, which love the praise
Of men, and multiply wars wrongfully,
Corrupting others, one, to lead the host,
One, to win power, and use it for his lust,
And one for lucre's sake, who recketh naught
Of mischief to a people thus misused.
For in a nation there be orders three :—
The highest, useless rich, aye craving more ;
The lowest, poor, aye on starvation's brink, 240
A dangerous folk, of envy overfull,
Which shoot out baleful stings at prosperous folk,
Beguiled by tongues of evil men, their "champions" :
But of the three the midmost saveth states,
Who keep the order which the state ordains.
Shall I then make me ally unto thee ?
How to my nation should I make defence ?
Depart in peace : if thou hast ill devised,
Face fortune's blows thyself ; drag us not down.

CHORUS

He erred ; yet on the young men rests the blame : 250
But meet it is that he find grace with thee.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὗτοι δικαστήν σ' είλόμην ἐμῶν κακῶν,
ἀλλ' ὡς ἵατρὸν τῶνδ', ἄναξ, ἀφύγμεθα,¹
οὐδ', εἴ τι πράξας μὴ καλῶς εὐρίσκομαι,
τούτων κολαστὴν κάπιτιμητήν, ἄναξ,
ἀλλ' ὡς ὀναίμην. εἰ δὲ μὴ βούλει τάδε,
στέργειν ἀνάγκη τοῖσι σοῦς· τί γὰρ πάθω;
ἄγ', ὃ γεραιαί, στείχετε, γλαυκὴν χλόην
αὐτοῦ λιπούσαι φυλλάδος καταστεφῆ,
260 θεούς τε καὶ γῆν τήν τε πυρφόρου θεάν
Δήμητρα θέμεναι μάρτυρ' ἡλίου τε φῶς,
ὡς οὐδὲν ἡμῖν ἥρκεσαν λιταὶ θεῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

* * * * * * * * * * *
ὅς Πέλοπος ἦν παῖς, Πελοπίας δ' ἡμεῖς χθονὸς
ταύτὸν πατρῷον αἷμα σοὶ κεκτήμεθα.

ΑΙΘΡΑ²

τί δρᾶς; προδώσεις ταῦτα κάκθαλεῖς χθονὸς
γραῦς οὐ τυχούσας οὐδὲν ὧν αὐτὰς ἔχρην;
μὴ δῆτ'. ἔχει γὰρ καταφυγὴν θήρ μὲν πέτραν,
δοῦλος δὲ βωμοὺς θεῶν, πόλις δὲ πρὸς πόλιν
ἔπτηξε χειμασθεῖσα· τῶν γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖς
270 οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν διὰ τέλους εὐδαιμονοῦν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

βᾶθι, τάλαιν', ιερῶν δαπέδων ἄπο Περσεφονείας,
βᾶθι καὶ ἀντίασον γονάτων ἔπι χεῖρα βαλοῦσα,
τέκνων τεθνεώτων κομίσαι δέμας, ὡ μελέα γώ,
οὖς ὑπὸ τείχεσι Καδμείοισιν ἀπώλεσα κούρους.

¹ Placed by Barnes here, instead of after 251, as in MSS.

² So assigned by Paley, by other editors to Chorus,

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Not for a judge I chose thee of mine ills,
But as to a healer of them, king, we come ;
Nor, if I have calamitously sped,
Need I thy chastisement and chiding, king,
No, but thine aid. And if thou wilt not this,
I must content me with thy choice :—what help ?
Come, aged dames, depart :—yet leave ye here
The grey-green boughs to roof the altar o'er,¹
Calling to witness heaven and earth, Demeter,
Fire-bearing Goddess, and the Sun-god's light,
That naught our prayers unto the Gods availed.

260

CHORUS

[On thine head be it, grandson thou of Pittheus]
Old Pelops' son ! Lo, we of Pelops' land
The selfsame blood ancestral share with thee.

AETHRA

How ?—wilt thou flout these prayers, cast forth the
land
Grey mothers, which have gained of their dues naught?
Nay, nay !—the beast finds refuge in the rock,
The slave at the Gods' altars ; and a state
Storm-tossed must cower beneath another's lee ;
For in man's lot naught prospereth to the end.

270

CHORUS

(Str.)

O thou afflicted, arise from Persephone's hallowèd
floor ; [thine hands, and implore
Rise thou, and bow at his knees, flinging round them
That he rescue the clay of my dead, my beloved—ah,
woe is me, woe !— [in dust lying low.
Of the sons I have lost, under ramparts of Cadmus

¹ If the petitioner's prayer was granted, he carried away with him his suppliant-bough ; if not, he left it on the altar.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ιώ μοι· λάβετε φέρετε πέμπετε ἀείρετε¹ μεσφδ.
ταλαίνας χέρας γεραιάς.

πρός σε γενειάδος, ὡς φίλος, ὡς δοκιμώτας
Ἐλλάδι,
ἄντομαι ἀμφιπίτνουσα τὸ σὸν γόνυ καὶ χέρα
δειλαία·

280 οἴκτισαι ἀμφὶ τέκνων μ' ἵκέταν τιν' ἀλάταν
οἰκτρὸν ἴάλεμον οἰκτρὸν ἰεῖσαν,

ἀντ.

μηδ' ἀτάφους, τέκνον, ἐν χθονὶ Κάδμου χάρματα
θηρῶν

παῖδας ἐν ἀλικίᾳ τῷ σῷ κατίδης, ἵκετεύω.

βλέψον ἐμῶν βλεφάρων ἐπὶ δάκρυνον, ἢ περὶ
σοῖσι

γούνασιν ὡδε πίτνω, τέκνοις τάφον ἔξανύσασθαι.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

μῆτερ, τί κλαίεις λέπτ' ἐπ' ὄμματων φάρη
βαλοῦσα τῶν σῶν; ἀρά δυστήνους γόους
κλύουσα τῶνδε; κάμε γὰρ διῆλθέ τι.

ἐπαιρε λευκὸν κράτα, μὴ δακρυρρόει

290 σεμναῖσι Δηοῦς ἐσχάραις παρημένη.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

αἰαῖ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τὰ τούτων οὐχὶ σοὶ στενακτέον.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ὡς τλήμονες γυναικες.

¹ Hermann; for MSS. κρίνετε.

SUPPLIANTS

(*Mesode*)

Woe for me!—clasp me, uplift me, help onward,
upholding

The palsied hand of the woe-forspent!

By thy beard, O thou chiefest of champions of
Hellas, O friend, I beseech thee,

In the clasp of the wretched thy knees and thy
fingers enfolding!

Pity me; for my children in suppliance bent 280
Like a beggar I bow: let my pitiful, pitiful out-
cryings reach thee!

(*Ant.*)

Ah, not unburied on Cadmus's soil, for a ravin and glee
Unto beasts of the wold do thou leave them, the
young men like unto thee!

O look on the tears from mine eyes that are streaming!—and all that I crave

Falling low at thy knees, is a grave—that thou win
for my sons but a grave!

THESEUS

Mother, why weepest thou, before thine eyes
Casting thy fine-spun veil? Dost weep to hear
Their mournful wails? Sooth, mine own heart was
thrilled.

Raise thy white head; be not a fount of tears,
There sitting at Demeter's holy hearth. 290

AETHRA

Ah me!

THESEUS

'Tis not for thee to wail their woes.

AETHRA

Oh hapless dames!

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὐ σὺ τῶνδ' ἔφυς.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

εἴπω τι, τέκνον, σοί τε καὶ πόλει καλόν;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ώς πολλά γ' ἔστι κάποθηλειῶν σοφά.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ἀλλ' εἰς ὅκνον μοι μῦθος δν κεύθω φέρει.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

αἰσχρόν γ' ἔλεξας, χρήστ' ἐπη κρύπτειν φίλους.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οὗτοι σιωπῶσ' εἴτα μέμψομαι ποτε

τὴν νῦν σιωπὴν ώς ἐσιγήθη κακῶς,

οὐδ' ώς ἀχρείον τὰς γυναικας εὖ λέγειν.

300 δείσασ' ἀφήσω τῷ φόβῳ τούμὸν καλόν.

ἔγὼ δέ π', ω παῖ, πρῶτα μὲν τὰ τῶν θεῶν
σκοπεῖν κελεύω μὴ σφαλῆσ ατιμάσας·

τἄλλ' εὖ φρονῶν γάρ, ἐν μόνῳ τόντῳ σφάλης.
πρὸς τοῖσδε δ', εἰ μὲν μὴ ἀδικουμένοις ἔχρην

τολμηρὸν εἶναι, κάρτ' ἀν εἰχον ἡσύχως·

νυιὶ δὲ σοί τε τοῦτο τὴν τιμὴν φέρει

κάμοι παραινεῖν οὐ φόβον φέρει, τέκνον,
ἄνδρας βιαίους καὶ κατείργοιτας νεκροὺς

τάφου τε μοίρας καὶ κτερισμάτων λαχεῖν

310 εἰς τήνδ' ἀνάγκην σῇ καταστῆναι χερί,

νόμιμά τε πάσης συγχέοντας Ἐλλάδος

παῦσαι· τὸ γάρ τοι συνέχον ἀνθρώπων πόλεις
τοῦτ' ἔσθ', ὅταν τις τοὺς νόμους σώζῃ καλῶς.

ἔρει δὲ δή τις ώς ἀνανδρίᾳ χερῶν,

πόλει παρόν σοι στέφανον εὐκλείας λαβεῖν,

δείσας ἀπέστης, καὶ συὸς μὲν ἀγρίου

SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

Thou art not of their blood.

AETHRA

Son, may I speak for thine and Athens' honour?

THESEUS

Yea, even from women's lips much wisdom flows.

AETHRA

Yet—yet, it gives me pause, the word I hide.

THESEUS

Nay, this were shame, to hide good rede from friends.

AETHRA

I will not hold my peace, to blame hereafter
Myself for coward silence of this day ;
Nor, cowed by that taunt, "Woman's best advice
Is worthless," will refrain my lips from good.
My son, I bid thee look to this first, lest
Thou err, despising their appeal to heaven.
In this alone thou err'st, in all else wise.

300

Nay more—I had endured, and murmured not,
Wert thou not *bound* to champion the oppressed.
Lo, this is the foundation of thy fame ;
Therefore I fear not to exhort thee, son,
That thou wouldst lay thy strong constraining hand
On men of violence which refuse the dead
The dues of burial and of funeral-rites,
And quell the folk that would confound all wont
Of Hellas : for the bond of all men's states
Is this, when they with honour hold by law.

310

Ay, some will say faint heart made feeble hand ;
That to win Athens glory's crown was thine,
Yet didst thou flinch for fear ; that thou didst close

525

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ἀγῶνος ἥψω φαῦλον ἀθλήσας πόνον,
οὐδὲ εἰς κράνος βλέψαντα καὶ λόγχης ἀκμὴν
χρῆν ἐκπονῆσαι, δειλὸς ὡν ἐφηυρέθης.

- 320 μὴ δῆτ' ἐμός γ' ᾧν, ὡ τέκνου, δράσῃς τάδε.
όρᾶς, ἄβουλος ὡς κεκερτομημένη
τοῖς κερτομοῦσι γοργὸν ὅμμ' ἀναβλέπει
σὴ πατρίς; ἐν γάρ τοῖς πόνοισιν αὔξεται·
αἱ δὲ ἥσυχοι σκοτεινὰ πράσσουσαι πόλεις
σκοτεινὰ καὶ βλέπουσιν εὐλαβούμεναι.
οὐκ εἴ νεκροῦσι καὶ γυναιξὶν ἀθλίαις
προσωφελήσων, ὡ τέκνου, κεχρημέναις;
ώς οὗτε ταρβῶ σὺν δίκῃ σ' ὄρμώμενον,
Κάδμου θ' ὄρῶσα λαὸν εὐ πεπραγότα,
ἔτ' αὐτὸν ἄλλα βλήματ' ἐν κύβοις βαλεῖν
πέποιθ· ὁ γὰρ θεὸς πάντ' ἀναστρέφει πάλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώ φιλτάτη μοι, τῷδέ τ' εἴρηκας καλῶς
κάμοι· διπλοῦν δὲ χάρμα γίγνεται τόδε.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

- 340 ἔμοὶ λόγοι μέν, μῆτερ, οἱ λελεγμένοι
ὄρθως ἔχουσ' εἰς τόνδε, κάπεφηνάμην
γνώμην ὑφ' οἶων ἐσφάλη βουλευμάτων·
όρω δὲ κάγω ταῦθ' ἀπερ με νουθετεῖς,
ώς τοῖς ἔμοῖσιν οὐχὶ πρόσφορον τρόποις
φεύγειν τὰ δεινά. πολλὰ γὰρ δράσας καλά,
ἔθος τόδ' εἰς "Ἐλληνας ἔξεδειξάμην,
ἀεὶ κολαστὴς τῶν κακῶν καθεστάναι.
οὔκουν ἀπαυδᾶν δυνατόν ἔστι μοι πόνους.
τί γάρ μ' ἐροῦσιν οἵ γε δυσμενεῖς βροτῶν,
ὅθ' ἡ τεκοῦσα χύπερορρωδοῦσ' ἐμοῦ

SUPPLIANTS

In strife of little toil with that wild swine,¹
But when behoved to face the helm, bear brunt
Of the spear's point, a craven wert thou found.
Ah, do not so, my son, as thou art mine !
Hast marked—bemocked for reckless policy,
How on the mockers glares with fierce bright eyes
Thy country ?—in her energy is her life.

But states which work in darkness, cautious,
Grope in the darkness, for their caution's need.
What, to the dead, and women misery-worn
Wilt thou not bring help, son, in this their strait ?
I fear naught : justice is with thine essay ;
And, though the folk of Cadmus prosper now,
Far otherwise yet for them the dice of doom
Shall fall, I trust :—God bringeth low the proud.

CHORUS

O best-beloved, well hast thou said, for him
And me alike ; herein is twofold joy.

THESEUS

Mother, the words I spake were words of truth
Unto this man, wherein I showed my mind
Touching the counsels by the which he fell.
Yet these thy warnings—yea, I see their force,
That with my life's use it accordeth not
To flinch from peril. Many a glorious deed
Hath shown to sons of Hellas this my wont,
Ever to be a punisher of wrong.

Toil's challenge therefore cannot I refuse :
For what will they which hate me say of me,
When she that bare me—who, beyond all, fears

¹ Phaea, the wild sow of Kromniyon, slain by Theseus.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

πρώτη κελεύεις τόνδ' ὑποστῆναι πόνον ;
 δράσω τάδ· εἰμι καὶ νεκροὺς ἐκλύσομαι
 λόγοισι πείθων· εἰ δὲ μή, βίᾳ δορὸς
 ἥδη τόδ' ἔσται κούχῃ σὺν φθόνῳ θεῶν.
 δόξαι δὲ χρήξω καὶ πόλει πάσῃ τόδε.
 350 δόξει δὲ ἐμοῦ θέλοντος ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου
 προσδοὺς ἔχοιμ' ἀν δῆμον εὐμενέστερον.
 καὶ γὰρ κατέστησ' αὐτὸν εἰς μοναρχίαν
 ἐλευθερώσας τήνδ' ἴσοψηφον πόλιν.
 λαβὼν δὲ "Αδραστον δεῖγμα τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων,
 εἰς πλῆθος ἀστῶν εἴμι· καὶ πείσας τάδε,
 λεκτοὺς ἀθροίσας δεῦρ' Ἀθηναίων κόρους
 ἥξω· παρ' ὅπλοις θ' ἡμενος πέμψω λόγους
 Κρέοντι νεκρῶν σώματ' ἔξαιτούμενος.
 ἀλλ' ὡς γεραιαί, σέμνυ ἀφαιρεῖτε στέφη
 360 μητρός, πρὸς οἴκους ὡς νιν Αἰγέως ἄγω,
 φίλην προσάφας χείρα· τοῖς τεκοῦσι γὰρ
 δύστηνος ὅστις μὴ ἀντιδουλεύει τέκνων.
 κάλλιστον ἔρανον δοὺς γὰρ ἀντιλάζυται
 παίδων παρ' αὐτοῦ τοιάδ' ἀν τοκεῦσι δῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

ἱππόβοτον "Αργος, ὡς πάτριον ἐμὸν πέδον,
 ἐκλύετε τάδ' ἐκλύετ' ἄνακτος
 ὅσια περὶ θεοὺς καὶ μεγάλᾳ Πελασγίᾳ
 καὶ κατ' "Αργος.

ἀντ. α

370 εἰ γὰρ ἐπὶ τέρμα καὶ τὸ πλέον ἐμῶν κακῶν
 ἰκόμενος ἔτι ματέρος ἄγαλμα
 φόνιον ἔξέλοι, γάν δὲ φίλιον 'Ινάχου
 θεῖτ' ὄνήσας.

SUPPLIANTS

For me,—first bids me undertake this toil?
I will unto the deed, redeem their dead
By fair words, if I may; if not, the might
Of spears shall do it, nor the Gods shall grudge.
Yet I require all Athens' sanction here.

My wish should win their sanction ; yet, if I
Show cause withal, the loyaller shall they be.
For I have made the land one single realm,
A free state, with an equal vote for all.
Adrastus for my witness will I take,
And meet their concourse ; their consenting won,
With muster of chosen youths Athenian
Will I return ; and tarrying under arms,
Will send to Creon, asking back the dead.
But ye, grey women, from my mother take
The holy wreaths, that I may clasp her hand,
And lead to Aegeus' halls. A sorry son
Is he that pays not service-debt to parents.
Who giveth of love's best, by his own sons
For all he hath given his parents is repaid.

Exeunt THESEUS and AETHRA.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

O Argos, mead of the battle-steed, O land where my
fathers abode of yore, [the hero-king,
Ye have heard it, heard in Heaven was the word of
His sacred plight in Pelasgia's sight, the pledge to be
published all Argos o'er.

(Ant. 1)

O may he gain—yea, more than attain to the goal
that seeth my miseries end ! [mother to bring
Forth let him go, let him wrest from the foe, to the 370
Her darling's clay blood-stained, and for aye have
our own dear Inachus' land to friend.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

καλὸν δ' ἄγαλμα πόλεσιν εὐσεβὴς πόνος στρ. β'
χάριν τ' ἔχει τὰν ἐς ἀεί.

τί μοι πόλις κρανεῖ ποτ'; ἀρα φίλιά μοι
τεμεῖ, καὶ τέκνοις ταφὰς ληψόμεσθα;

ἄμυνε ματρί, πόλις, ἄμυνε, Παλλάδος, ἀντ. β'
νόμους βροτῶν μὴ μιαίνειν.

σύ τοι σέβεις δίκαν, τὸ δ' ἡσσον ἀδικίᾳ
380 νέμεις, δυστυχῆ τ' ἀεὶ πάντα ρύει.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τέχνην μὲν ἀεὶ τήνδ' ἔχων ὑπηρετεῖς
πόλει τε κάμοι, διαφέρων κηρύγματα·
ἐλθῶν δ' ὑπέρ τ' Ἀσωπὸν Ἰσμηνοῦ θ' ὕδωρ
σεμιῷ τυράννῳ φράζε Καδμείων τάδε·
Θησεύς σ' ἀπαιτεῖ πρὸς χάριν θάψαι νεκρούς,
συγγείτον' οἰκῶν γαῖαν, ἀξιῶν τυχεῖν,
φίλον τε θέσθαι πάντ' Ἐρεχθειδῶν λεών.

κάν μὲν θέλωσιν αἰνέσαι, παλίσσαντος
στεῖχ· ἦν δ' ἀπιστῶσ', οἵδε δεύτεροι λόγοι·
390 κῶμον δέχεσθαι τὸν ἐμὸν ἀσπιδηφόρον.

στρατὸς δὲ θάσσει κάξετάζεται παρὼν
Καλλίχορον ἀμφὶ σεμνὸν εὐτρεπὴς ὅδε.
καὶ μὴν ἐκοῦσά γ' ἀσμένη τ' ἐδέξατο
πόλις πόνον τόνδ', ώς θέλοντά μ' ἥσθετο.
ἔα· λόγων τίς ἐμποδὼν ὅδ' ἔρχεται;
Καδμεῖος, ώς ἔοικεν οὐ σάφ' εἰδότι.

SUPPLIANTS

(Str. 2)

Memorial fair shall the cities share of the sacred labour
of love : evermore [lingering.

The grace thereof shall abide, and the love aye
Ah, what shall come of their rede?—what doom?—
shall Athens bestow the grace I implore?

Shall she league her might with me, and the right of
the tomb to my slaughtered sons restore?

(Ant. 2)

O Pallas' Town, for my help step down ; the holy
cause of the mother defend ; [thing.

So the laws of men shall be made not then a polluted
Thou reverencest great Justice' hest : injustice be-
neath thy yoke shall bend :

And through all the lands thy champion hands to the
helpless oppressed deliverance send.

380

Enter THESEUS with ATHENIAN HERALD.

THESEUS

O thou that uses still thine art to serve
Athens and me, wide publishing mine hests,
Pass thou Asopus and Ismenus' stream,
And to the proud Cadmean despot say :
“ Theseus of grace asks corpses for the tomb :
He dwells thy neighbour, and he claims but right :
So make thou the Erechtheid folk thy friend.”

If they consent to grant it, turn thou back.
If they refuse, my second message speak,
“ Look for my shielded revel-rout of war ! ”

Mine host is camped and marshalled hard at hand
By sacred Callichorus for fight prepared.
Yea, Athens of good will, and glad withal,
Took up this task, made ware of my desire.
Ha!—breaking in upon my speech who comes?
Theban, I deem, yet know not certainly:—

390

531

M M 2

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κῆρυξ. ἐπίσχες, ἢν σ' ἀπαλλάξῃ πόνου
μολὼν ὑπαντα τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλεύμασιν.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

400

τίς γῆς τύραννος; πρὸς τίν' ἀγγεῖλαι με χρὴ
λόγους Κρέοντος, δος κρατεῖ Κάδμου χθονός,
Ἐτεοκλέους θανόντος ἀμφ' ἐπταστόμους
πύλας ἀδελφοῦ χειρὶ Πολυνείκους ὑπο;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ἥρξω τοῦ λόγου ψευδῶς, ξένε,
ξητῶν τύραννον ἐνθάδ· οὐ γὰρ ἄρχεται
ἐνὸς πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρα πόλις.
δῆμος δ' ἀνάσσει διαδοχαῖσιν ἐν μέρει
ἐνιαυσίαισιν, οὐχὶ τῷ πλούτῳ διδοὺς
τὸ πλεῖστον, ἀλλὰ χώ πένης ἔχων ἵσον.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

410

ἐν μὲν τόδ' ἡμῖν ὕσπερ ἐν πεσσοῖς δίδως
κρείσσον· πόλις γὰρ ἡς ἐγὼ πάρειμ' ἄπο
ἐνὸς πρὸς ἀνδρός, οὐκ ὅχλῳ κρατύνεται·
οὐδ' ἔστιν αὐτὴν ὅστις ἐκχαυνῶν λόγοις
πρὸς κέρδος ἴδιον ἄλλοτ' ἄλλοσε στρέφει·
ό δ' αὐτίχ' ἡδὺς καὶ διδοὺς πολλὴν χάριν,
εἰσαῦθις ἔβλαψ', εἴτα διαβολαῖς νέαις
κλέψας τὰ πρόσθε σφάλματ' ἔξεδυ δίκης.

420

ἄλλως τε πῶς ἀν μὴ διορθεύων λόγους
ὁρθῶς δύναιτ' ἀν δῆμος εὐθύνειν πόλιν;
οὐ γὰρ χρόνος μάθησιν ἀντὶ τοῦ τάχους
κρείσσω δίδωσι. γαπόνος δ' ἀνὴρ πένης
εὶ καὶ γένοιτο μὴ ἀμαθής, ἔργων ὑπο
οὐκ ἀν δύναιτο πρὸς τὰ κοίν' ἀποβλέπειν.
ἢ δὴ νοσῶδες τοῦτο τοῖς ἀμείνοσιν,
ὅταν ποιηρὸς ἀξίωμ' ἀνὴρ ἔχῃ
γλώσση κατασχὼν δῆμον, οὐδὲν ὧν τὸ πρίν.

SUPPLIANTS

A herald !—stay : thy toil perchance is spared.
His coming meets my purpose in mid way.

Enter THEBAN HERALD.

HERALD

Your despot, who ?—to whom must I proclaim
The words of Creon, lord of Cadmus' land
Since Eteocles by the hand was slain
Of Polyneices by the sevenfold gates ?

400

THESEUS

First, stranger, with false note thy speech began,
Seeking a despot here. Our state is ruled
Not of one only man : Athens is free.
Her people in the order of their course
Rule year by year, bestowing on the rich
Advantage none ; the poor hath equal right.

HERALD

One vantage hast thou given me, as to one
That playeth draughts :—the city whence I come 410
By one man, not by any mob, is swayed.
There is none there who, slavering them with talk,
This way and that way twists them for his gain,
Is popular now, and humours all their bent ;
Now, laying on others blame for mischief done,
He cloaks his faults, and slips through justice' net.

How should the mob which reason all awry
Have power to pilot straight a nation's course ?
For time bestoweth better lessoning
Than haste. But yon poor delver of the ground, 420
How shrewd soe'er, by reason of his toil
Can nowise oversee the general weal.
Realm-ruining in the wise man's sight is this,
When the vile tonguester getteth himself a name
By wooing mobs, who heretofore was naught.

533

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

κομψός γ' ὁ κῆρυξ καὶ παρεργάτης λόγων.
ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀγῶνα καὶ σὺ τόνδ' ἥγωνίσω,

ἄκου· ἄμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προύθηκας λόγων.
οὐδὲν τυράννου δυσμενέστερον πόλει,

430 ὅπου τὸ μὲν πρώτιστον οὐκ εἰσὶν νόμοι
κοινοί, κρατεῖ δὲ εἰς τὸν νόμον κεκτημένος
αὐτὸς παρ' αὐτῷ, καὶ τόδ' οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἵσον.
γεγραμμένων δὲ τῶν νόμων ὃ τ' ἀσθενής
ὅ πλούσιός τε τὴν δίκην ἵσην ἔχει,
ἔστιν δὲ ἐνισπεῖν τοῖσιν ἀσθενεστέροις
τὸν εύτυχοῦντα ταῦθ', ὅταν κλύῃ κακῶς.

νικᾷ δὲ ὁ μείων τὸν μέγαν δίκαιον ἔχων.

τούλεύθερον δὲ ἔκεινο· Τίς θέλει πόλει
χρηστόν τι βούλευμ' εἰς μέσον φέρειν ἔχων;
καὶ ταῦθ' ὁ χρῆζων λαμπρός ἐσθ', ὁ μὴ θέλων
συγῇ. τί τουτων ἔστ' ἵσαίτερον πόλει;

καὶ μὴν ὅπου γε δῆμος εὐθυντὴς χθονός,
ὑπούσιν ἀστοῖς ἥδεται νεανίαις.

ἀνὴρ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἔχθρὸν ἥγεῖται τόδε,
καὶ τοὺς ἀρίστους, οὓς ἀν ἥγῆται φρονεῖν
κτείνει, δεδοικὼς τῆς τυραννίδος πέρι.

πῶς οὖν ἔτ' ἀν γένοιτο ἀν ἵσχυρὰ πόλις,
ὅταν τις ὡς λειμῶνος ἡρινοῦ στάχυν

τόλμας ἀφαιρῇ κάπολωτίζῃ νέους;

450 κτᾶσθαι δὲ πλούτον καὶ βίον τί δεῖ τέκνοις,
ὡς τῷ τυράννῳ πλείον' ἐκμοχθῆ βίον;
ἢ παρθενεύειν παιδας ἐν δόμοις καλῶς
τερπνὰς τυράννοις ἡδονάς, ὅταν θέλῃ,
δάκρυα δὲ ἐτοιμάζουσι; μὴ ζῷην ἔτι,

SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

An eloquent herald this, a speech-crammed babbler !
But, since thou hast plunged into this strife, hear
me :— [parley :—

'Twas thou flung'st down this challenge unto
No worse foe than the despot hath a state,
Under whom, first, can be no common laws,
But one rules, keeping in his private hands
The law : so is equality no more.

But when the laws are written, then the weak
And wealthy have alike but equal right.

Yea, even the weaker may fling back the scoff
Against the prosperous, if he be reviled ;
And, armed with right, the less o'ercomes the great.
Thus Freedom speaks¹ :—"What man desires to bring
Good counsel for his country to the people ?"

Who chooseth this, is famous : who will not,
Keeps silence. Can equality further go ?
More—when the people piloteth the land,
She joyeth in young champions native-born :
But in a king's eyes this is hatefullest ;
Yea, the land's best, whose wisdom he discerns,
He slayeth, fearing lest they shake his throne.
How can a state be stablished then in strength,
When, even as sweeps the scythe o'er springtide
mead,

One lops the brave young hearts like flower-blooms ?
What boots it to win wealth and store for sons,
When all one's toil but swells a despot's hoard ?
Or to rear maiden daughters virtuously
To be a king's sweet morsels at his will,
And tears to them that dressed this dish for him ?

¹ He quotes the formula with which the herald opened the proceedings of the popular assembly at Athens.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

εὶ τὰμὰ τέκνα πρὸς βίαν νυμφεύσεται.
καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ πρὸς τὰ σὰ ἔξηκόντισα.
ἢκεις δὲ δὴ τί τῆσδε γῆς κεχρημένος;
κλαίων γ' ἀν ἥλθεις, εἴ σε μὴ "πεμψεν πόλις,
περισσά φωνῶν· τὸν γὰρ ἄγγελον χρεὼν
λέξανθ' ὅσ' ἀν τάξῃ τις ὡς τάχος πάλιν
χωρεῖν. τὸ λοιπὸν δ' εἰς ἐμὴν πόλιν Κρέων
ἥσσον λάλον σου πεμπέτω τιν' ἄγγελον.

460

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· κακοῖσιν ὡς ὅταν δαίμων διδῷ
καλῶς, ὑβρίζουσ' ὡς ἀεὶ πράξοντες εὖ.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

λέγοιμ' ἀν ἥδη. τῶν μὲν ἡγωνισμένων
σοὶ μὲν δοκείτω ταῦτ', ἐμοὶ δὲ τάντια.
ἔγῳ δ' ἀπαυδῶ πᾶς τε Καδμεῖος λεώς
"Αδραστον εἰς γῆν τήνδε μὴ παριέναι·
εἰ δ' ἔστιν ἐν γῇ, πρὶν θεοῦ δῦναι σέλας,
λύσαντα σεμνὰ στεμμάτων μυστήρια
τῆσδ' ἔξελαύνειν, μηδ' ἀναιρεῖσθαι νεκροὺς
βίᾳ, προσήκοντ' οὐδὲν Αργείων πόλει.
καν μὲν πίθη μοι, κυμάτων ἄτερ πόλιν
σὴν ναυστολήσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, πολὺς κλύδων
ἡμῖν τε καὶ σοὶ συμμάχοις τ' ἔσται δορός.
σκέψαι δὲ, καὶ μὴ τοῖς ἐμοῖς θυμούμενος
λόγοισιν, ὡς δὴ πόλιν ἐλευθέραν ἔχων,
σφρυγῶντ' ἀμειψῃ μῦθον ἐκ βραχιόνων.
ἐλπὶς γάρ ἔστ' ἀπιστον, ἢ πολλὰς πόλεις
συνῆψ', ἄγουσα θυμὸν εἰς ὑπερβολάς.
ὅταν γὰρ ἔλθῃ πόλεμος εἰς ψῆφου λεώ,
οὐδεὶς ἔθ' αὐτοῦ θάνατον ἐκλογίζεται,
τὸ δυστυχὲς δὲ τοῦτ' ἐς ἄλλον ἐκτρέπει·
εἰ δ' ἦν παρ' ὅμμα θάνατος ἐν ψῆφου φορᾶ,

470

536

SUPPLIANTS

May I die ere I see my daughters ravished !
Such answering shaft to thine do I hurl back.
But thou, what wouldest thou have of this our land ?
Except thy state had sent thee, thou shouldst rue
Thine insolent prating ! 'Tis the herald's part
To speak his message, and to get him back 460
With speed. Henceforth let Creon to my town
Send a less wordy messenger than thee.

CHORUS

Out on it ! When God prospereth evil men,
Wanton they wax, as who should prosper aye.

HERALD

Now will I speak my charge. For our dispute,
Be this thy mind, contrariwise be mine.
But I and all the folk Cadmean warn thee—
Receive Adrastus not into this land.
If in the land he is, ere set of sun
Free from yon wreaths your sacred Mysteries, 470
And drive him forth, nor go about by force
To take those dead : ye have naught to do with
Argos.

If thou obey me, thou by storm unscathed
Shalt helm thy city ; if not, our great surge
Of war on thee and thine allies shall fall.

Look to it, nor, being chafed at these my words,—
Because forsooth a city free thou hast,—
Make arrogant answer from a weaker cause.
Hope is delusive : many a state hath this
Embroiled, by kindling it to mad emprise. 480
For, when for war a nation casteth votes,
'Then of his own death no man taketh count,
But passeth on to his neighbour this mischance.
But, were death full in view when votes were cast,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

οὐκ ἀν ποθ' Ἐλλὰς δοριμανής ἀπώλλυτο.
καίτοι δυοῦν γε πάντες ἄνθρωποι λόγουν
τὸν κρείσσον' ἵσμεν καὶ τὰ χρηστὰ καὶ κακά,
ὅσῳ τε πολέμου κρείσσον εἰρήνη βροτοῖς.
ἡ πρῶτα μὲν Μούσαις προσφιλεστάτη,
Ποιωνῖσι δ' ἔχθρά, τέρπεται δ' εὔπαιδίᾳ,
χαίρει δὲ πλούτῳ. ταῦτ' ἀφέντες οἱ κακοὶ⁴⁹⁰
πολέμους ἀναιρούμεσθα καὶ τὸν ἥσσονα
δουλούμεθ', ἄνδρες ἄνδρα καὶ πόλις πόλιν.
σὺ δ' ἄνδρας ἔχθρονς καὶ θανόντας ὀφελεῖς,
θάπτων κομίζων θ' ὑβρις οὖς ἀπώλεσεν.
οὐ τᾶρ' ἔτ' ὁρθῶς Καπανέως κεραύνιον
δέμας καπνοῦται, κλιμάκων ὁρθοστάτας
ὅς προσβαλὼν πύλαισιν ὕμισεν πόλιν
πέρσειν θεοῦ θέλοντος ἦν τε μὴ θέλῃ,
⁵⁰⁰ οὐδὲ ἡρπασεν χάρυβδις οἰωνοσκόπον,
τέθριππον ἄρμα περιβαλοῦσα χάσματι,
ἄλλοι τε κεῦνται πρὸς πύλαις λοχαγέται
πέτροις καταξανθέντες ὀστέων ῥαφάς.
ἡ νυν φρονεῦν ἄμεινον ἔξαύχει Διός,
ἡ θεοὺς δικαίως τοὺς κακοὺς ἀπολλύναι.
φιλεῖν μὲν οὖν χρὴ τοὺς σοφοὺς πρῶτον τέκνα,
ἔπειτα τοκέας πατρίδα θ', ἦν αὖξειν χρεὼν
καὶ μὴ κατάξαι. σφαλερὸν ἡγεμῶν θρασὺς
νεώς τε ναύτης· ἥσυχος καιρῷ σοφός.
⁵¹⁰ καὶ τοῦτο τοι τάνδρείον, ἡ προμηθία.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐξαρκέσας ἦν Ζεὺς ὁ τιμωρούμενος,
νυμᾶς δ' ὑβρίζειν οὐκ ἔχρην τοιάνδ' ὑβριν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ παγκάκιστε—

SUPPLIANTS

Never war-frenzied Greece would rush on ruin.
Yet, of elections twain, we know—all know—
Whether is best, the blessing or the curse,
And how much better is peace for men than war ;
Peace, she which is the Muses' chiefest friend,
But Retribution's foe, joys in fair children, 490
In wealth delights. Fools let these blessings slip,
And rush on war : man bringeth weaker man
To bondage ; city is made city's thrall.
Thou helpest men our foes, and dead men they,
Wouldst win for graves them whom their insolence
slew !
Good sooth, then, wrongfully did levin blast
Capaneus' frame upon yon ladder's height,
Which he had reared against our gates, and swore
To sack the town, whether God willed or no :
Wrongly earth's chasm snatched from sight the seer, 500
Shrouding with yawning gulf his four-horse car,
While other captains lie before our gates,
The knittings of whose bones great stones have
shattered !
Or boast thee to surpass in wisdom Zeus,
Or grant that rightly Gods destroy the wicked.
Behoves the wise to love his children first,
Parents and country next,—to make her great,
Not break her down. Rash leaders, pilots heady,
Mean ruin : the wise in season sitteth still.
This too is manful valour, even discretion. 510

CHORUS

The punishment of Zeus might well suffice !
Shall ye insult with wanton arrogance ?

ADRASTUS

Villain of villains !—

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

- σύγ', "Αδραστ'", ᔁχε στόμα
 καὶ μὴ πίπροσθεν τῶν ἐμῶν τοὺς σοὺς λόγους
 θῆς· οὐ γὰρ ἥκει πρὸς σὲ κηρύσσων ὅδε,
 ἀλλ' ὡς ἔμ'· ἡμᾶς κάποκρίνασθαι χρεών.
 καὶ πρῶτα μέν σε πρὸς τὰ πρῶτα ἀμείψομαι.
 οὐκ οἰδ' ἐγὼ Κρέοντα δεσπόζοντ' ἐμοῦ
 οὐδὲ σθένοντα μεῖζον, ὥστ' ἀναγκάσαι
 520 δρᾶν τὰς Ἀθήνας ταῦτ· ἄνω γὰρ ἀν ρέοι
 τὰ πρώγματα οὕτως, εἰ 'πιταξόμεσθα δῆ.
 πόλεμον δὲ τοῦτον οὐκ ἐγὼ καθίσταμαι,
 δις οὐδὲ σὺν τοῖσδ' ἥλθον εἰς Κάδμου χθόνα.
 νεκροὺς δὲ τοὺς θαυμόντας, οὐ βλάπτων πόλιν
 οὐδὲ ἀνδροκμῆτας προσφέρων ἀγωνίας,
 θάψαι δικαιῶ, τὸν Πανελλήνων νόμον
 σώζων. τί τούτων ἐστὶν οὐ καλῶς ᔁχον;
 εἰ γάρ τι καὶ πεπόνθατ' Αργείων ὅποι,
 τεθνάσιν, ἡμύνασθε πολεμίους καλῶς,
 530 αἰσχρῶς δὲ ἐκείνοις, χὴ δίκη διοίχεται.
 ἔασατ' ἥδη γῇ καλυφθῆναι νεκρούς,
 ὅθεν δὲ ἔκαστον εἰς τὸ φῶς ἀφίκετο,
 ἐνταῦθ' ἀπελθεῖν, πνεῦμα μὲν πρὸς αἰθέρα,
 τὸ σῶμα δὲ εἰς γῆν· οὕτι γὰρ κεκτήμεθα
 ἡμέτερον αὐτὸ πλὴν ἐνοικῆσαι βίον,
 κάπειτα τὴν θρέψασαν αὐτὸ δεῖ λαβεῖν.
 δοκεῖς κακουργεῖν "Αργος οὐ θάπτων νεκρούς;
 540 ἥκιστα· πάστης Ἐλλάδος κοινὸν τόδε,
 εἰ τοὺς θαυμόντας νοσφίσας ὡν χρῆν λαχεῖν
 ἀτάφους τις ἔξει· δειλίαν γὰρ εἰσφέρει
 τοῖς ἀλκίμοισιν, οὗτος ἦν τεθῆ νόμος.
 κάμοι μὲν ἥλθεις δεῖν' ἀπειλήσων ᔁπη,
 νεκροὺς δὲ ταρβεῖτ', εἰ κρυβήσονται χθονί;

SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

Hold, Adrastus, peace,
And thrust not in before my words thine own ;
For not to thee yon fellow doth his message,
But unto me : 'tis I must make reply.

Now, thy first utterance will I answer first :—

I know no Creon despot over me,
Nor more of might than I, that he should force
Athens to do this. Sourceward back should flow 520
The world's stream, if we brook such hest as his ;
It is not I that launch upon this war,
Seeing with these I sought not Cadmus' land.

But lifeless bodies—harming not your state,
Nor thrusting man-destroying strife on her,—
I claim to bury : lo, all Hellas' law
Do I uphold. How is not this well done ?
For if of Argives ye have suffered aught,
They are dead : with glory ye hurled back your foes,
With shame to them :—but there your right hath
end. 530

Let now the dead be hidden in the earth,
And each part, whence it came forth to the light,
Thither return, the breath unto the air,
To earth the body ; for we hold it not
In fee, but only to pass life therein ;
Then she which fostered it must take it back.

Dost think thou woundest Argos through her dead ?
Not so : the common cause of Greece is this,
If one shall rob the dead of rightful dues,
And hold them from the tomb : this shall unman 540
Even heroes, if such law shall be ordained.
And to me comest thou to bluster threats,
While ye fear corpses, if they be entombed ?

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

τί μὴ γένηται; μὴ κατασκάψωσι γῆν
ταφέντες ὑμῶν; ή τέκν' ἐν μυχοῖς χθονὸς
φύσωσιν, ἐξ ὧν εἰσὶ τις τιμωρία;
σκαιόν γε τάνάλωμα τῆς γλώσσης τόδε,
φόβους πονηροὺς καὶ κενοὺς δεδοικέναι.
ἀλλ' ὡς μάταιοι, γνώτε τάνθρωπων κακά.
550 παλαιόσμαθ' ἡμῶν ὁ βίος· εὐτυχοῦσι δὲ
οἱ μὲν τάχ', οἱ δὲ ἐσαῦθις, οἱ δὲ ἥδη βροτῶν.
τρυφᾶ δὲ ὁ δαίμων· πρός τε γάρ τοῦ δυστυχοῦς,
ώς εὐμενῆς ἦ, τίμios γεραίρεται,
ὅ τ' ὅλβιός νιν πνεῦμα δειμαίνων λιπεῖν
ὑψηλὸν αἴρει. γνόντας οὖν χρεὼν τάδε
ἀδικουμένους τε μέτρια μὴ θυμῷ φέρειν
ἀδικεῖν τε τοιαῦθ' οἷα μὴ βλάψει πόλιν.
πῶς οὖν ἀν εἴη; τοὺς ὄλωλότας νεκροὺς
θάψαι δόθ' ἡμῖν τοῖς θέλουσιν εὐσεβεῖν.
560 ή δῆλα τάνθένδ· εἰμι καὶ θάψω βίᾳ.
οὐ γάρ ποτ' εἰς "Ελληνας ἔξοισθήσεται
ώς εἰς ἔμ' ἐλθὼν καὶ πόλιν Πανδίονος
νόμος παλαιὸς δαιμόνων διεφθάρη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει· τὸ γάρ τοι τῆς Δίκης σφέζων φάος,
πολλοὺς ὑπεκφύγοις ἀν ἀνθρώπων ψόγους.

ΚΗΡΤΕ

βούλει συνάψω μῦθον ἐν βραχεῖ σέθεν;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

λέγ', εἴ τι βούλει· καὶ γὰρ οὐ σιγηλὸς εἰ.

ΚΗΡΤΕ

οὐκ ἀν ποτ' ἐκ γῆς παῖδας Ἀργείων λάβοις.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

κάμοῦ νυν ἀντάκουσον, εἰ βούλει, πάλιν.

SUPPLIANTS

What fear ye? Lest they undermine your land,
There buried?—or in earth's dark womb beget
Children, of whom shall vengeance fall on you?
'Twere idle waste of speech, good sooth, to unmask
Your caitiff terrors and your empty fears!
O fools, learn ye the real ills of men:—
Our life is conflict all: of mortals some
Succeed ere long, some late, and straightway
some;

550

While Fortune sits a queen: worship and honour
The unblest gives her, so to see good days;
The prosperous extols her, lest her breeze
Fail him one day. Remembering this, should we
Meet wrong with calmness, not with fury of rage,
Neither on one whole nation visit wrong.

How shall it be then?—grant to us, who are fain
To render heaven its due, to entomb the dead.
Else, clear is the issue: this will I by force.
Never to Greeks shall it be said, that when
It fell to me and Athens to uphold
Heaven's ancient law, that law was set at naught.

560

CHORUS

Fear not: while thou upholdest Justice' light,
Thou shalt not fear what men can say of thee.

HERALD

Wouldst thou I summed up this thy claim in brief?

THESEUS

Speak, an thou list: no tongue-tied wight art thou.

HERALD

Thou ne'er shalt win from our land Argos' sons.

THESEUS

Give ear to me in turn, then, if thou wilt.

543

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΚΗΡΤΞ

570 κλύοιμ' ἄν· οὐ γὰρ ἀλλὰ δεῖ δοῦναι μέρος.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

θάψω νεκροὺς γῆς ἔξελῶν Ἀσωπίας.

ΚΗΡΤΞ

ἐν ἀσπίσιν σοι πρώτα κινδυνευτέον.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

πολλοὺς ἔτλην δὴ χάτέρους ἄλλους πόνους.

ΚΗΡΤΞ

ἢ πᾶσιν οὖν σ' ἔφυσεν ἔξαρκεῖν πατήρ;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ὅσοι γ' ὑβρισταί· χρηστὰ δ' οὐ κολάζομεν.

ΚΗΡΤΞ

πράσσειν σὺ πόλλ' εἴωθας ἢ τε σὴ πόλις.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τοιγὰρ πονούσῃ πολλὰ πόλλ' εὐδαίμονα.

ΚΗΡΤΞ

ἔλθ', ὡς σε λόγχη σπαρτὸς ἐν πόλει λάβῃ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

τίς δ' ἐκ δράκοντος θοῦρος ἀν γένοιτ' Ἄρης;

ΚΗΡΤΞ

580 γνώσει σὺ πάσχων· νῦν δ' ἔτ' εἰ νεανίας.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὗτοι μ' ἐπαρεῖς ὥστε θυμοῦσθαι φρένας
τοῖς σοῖσι κομποῖς. ἀλλ' ἀποστέλλου χθονός,
λόγους ματαίους οὕσπερ ἡνέγκω λαβών.

περαίνομεν γὰρ οὐδέν. ὄρμάσθαι χρεὼν
πάντ' ἄνδρ' ὄπλίτην ἄρμάτων τ' ἐπεμβάτην,
μοναμπύκων τε φάλαρα κινεῖσθαι στόμα
ἀφρῷ καταστάζοντα, Καδμείαν χθόνα.
χωρήσομαι γὰρ ἐπτὰ πρὸς Κάδμου πύλας

SUPPLIANTS

HERALD

Yea—since I cannot choose but hear in turn. 570

THESEUS

From thy land will I take and bury them.

HERALD

First must thou face the hazard of the shield.

THESEUS

Full many a harder emprise have I dared.

HERALD

A champion born to match him with all men !

THESEUS

All arrogant tyrants : I scourge not the right.

HERALD

Ay, thou wilt still be meddling—thou and Athens.

THESEUS

Therefore, with much toil, much good speed is hers.

HERALD

Come !—let the Dragon-seed but find thee there !

THESEUS

What valorous host should spring from dragons' teeth ?

HERALD

This shalt thou learn, and rue. Thou art yet but young. 580

THESEUS

Tush, man, thou canst not move mine heart to wrath With all thy vauntings. Get thee forth the land : The idle words thou broughtest, bear them back. Naught comes of wrangling. [Exit HERALD.

Let each man-at-arms,
Each chariot-rider, and each battle-steed,
Whose swinging cheek-plate dashes round his jaws
The foam, charge onward into Cadmus' land.
For on to Cadmus' seven gates will I march,

545

VOL. III.

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ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

590 αὐτὸς σίδηρον ὁξὺν ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων
αὐτός τε κῆρυξ. σοὶ δὲ προστάσσω μένειν,
Ἄδραστε, κάμοὶ μὴ ἀναμίγνυσθαι τύχας
τὰς σάς· ἐγὼ γὰρ δαίμονος τούμου μέτα
στρατηλατήσω καινὸς ἐν καινῷ δορὶ.
ἐνὸς μόνου δεῖ, τοὺς θεοὺς ἔχειν, ὅσοι
δίκην σέβονται· ταῦτα γὰρ ξυνόνθ' ὄμοῦ
νίκην δίδωσιν. ἀρετὴ δ' οὐδέν φέρει
βροτοῖσιν, ἢν μὴ τὸν θεὸν χρήζουντ' ἔχῃ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

ῳ μέλεαι μελέων ματέρες λοχαγῶν, στρ. α'
ὦ μοι ὑφ' ἥπατι δεῖμα χλοερὸν ταράσσει.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

600 τίν' αὐδὰν τάνδε προσφέρεις νέαν;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

στράτευμα πᾶ Παλλάδος κριθήσεται.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

διὰ δορὸς εἰπας ἡ λόγων ξυναλλαγαῖς;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

γένοιτ' ἄν κέρδος· εἰ δ' ἀρείφατοι
φόνοι, μάχαι, στερνοτυπεῖς τ' ἄνα τόπον
πάλιν φανήσονται κτύποι,
τίν' ἄν λόγον, τάλαινα,
τίν' ἄν τῶνδ' αἴτια λάβοιμι;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

ἀλλὰ τὸν εὔτυχία λαμπρὸν ἄν τις αἴροι ἀντ. α'
μοῖρα πάλιν· τόδε μοι το θράσος ἀμφιβαίνει.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

610 δικαίους δαίμονας σύ γ' ἐννέπεις.

SUPPLIANTS

Bearing myself the whetted steel in hand,
Myself mine herald. Thee I bid remain, 590
Adrastus : mingle not with mine thy fate.
For I 'neath mine own fortune's star will lead
Mine host, a taintless chief with taintless spear.
One only thing I need, all Gods to have
Which reverence right : for where these are, they give
Victory. Naked valour naught avails
To men, except it have the Gods' good will. [Exit.]

HALF-CHORUS 1

(Str. 1)

Ye hapless mothers of hapless chieftains dead,
Ah, how is mine heart stormed-tossed with pale
dismay—

HALF-CHORUS 2

What ominous word and strange of thee is said? 600

HALF-CHORUS 1

For the dread decision on Pallas' war-array!

HALF-CHORUS 2

Through battle, or peace-fraught parley, wouldest
thou say?

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ay, this last should be well; but if warrior-quelling
Slaughters and battles again shall be seen,
With the beating of breasts in each desolate dwelling
Of the land, what reproaches bitter-keen [been!
Should I win, through whom this sorrow hath

HALF-CHORUS 2

(Ant. 1)

Yet doom may the victor bring down low in dust;
This comforteth me, and bids be dauntless-souled.

HALF-CHORUS 1

Thou speakest of Gods that fail not, ever just. 610

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

HMIXORION β'

τίνεις γὰρ ἄλλοι νέμουσι συμφοράς;

HMIXORION α'

διάφορα πολλὰ θεῶν βροτοῖσιν εἰσορῶ.

HMIXORION β'

φόβῳ γὰρ τῷ πάρος διόλλυσαι·
δίκα δίκαν δὲ ἐκάλεσε καὶ φόνος
φόνου, κακῶν δὲ ἀναψυχὰς
θεοὺς βροτοῖς νέμουσιν,
ἀπάντων τέρμ' ἔχοντες αὐτοῖ.

HMIXORION α'

τὰ καλλίπυργα πεδία πῶς ἵκούμεθ' ἀν,
Καλλίχορον θεᾶς ὕδωρ λιποῦσαι;

στρ. β'

HMIXORION β'

620 ποτανὰν εἴ μέ τις θεῶν κτίσαι,
διπόταμον ἵνα πόλιν μόλω.

HMIXORION α'

εἰδείης ἀν φίλων
εἰδείης ἀν τύχας.

HMIXORION β'

τίς ποτ' αἰσα, τίς ἄρα πότμος
ἐπιμένει τὸν ἄλκιμον
τᾶσδε γάς ἄνακτα;

HMIXORION α'

κεκλημένους μὲν ἄνακαλούμεθ' αὖ θεούς· ἀντ. β'
ἄλλὰ φόβων πίστις ἄδε πρώτα.

HMIXORION β'

ἰὼ Ζεῦ, τᾶς παλαιομάτορος
παιδογόνε πόριος Ἰνάχου.

SUPPLIANTS

HALF-CHORUS 2

Of whom but of such be all our fates controlled ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ah, many a change in God's ways I behold !

HALF-CHORUS 2

By the terrors o'erpast is the heart in thee stricken :

Yet justice aloud unto justice doth call ;

Blood calleth for blood, and the Gods shall requicken

Our souls, for to mortals all blessings befall

From the hands that encompass the goal of all.

HALF-CHORUS 1

(Str. 2)

O might I speed from the Goddess's springs,

Even Callichorus, to the fair-towered plain !

HALF-CHORUS 2

O would the Gods but vouchsafe to me wings,

620

So to win to the city of rivers twain !¹

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ah then shouldst thou clearly discern—

How thy champions speed shouldst thou learn.

HALF-CHORUS 2

Ah God, what fate, what doom doth await

The king of the mighty hand,

The hero of Cecrops' land ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

(Ant. 2)

We have cried to the Gods, and we cry once more

To the first best trust of the sore afraid.

HALF-CHORUS 2

Zeus, hear us, whose offspring was born of yore

Of Inachus' daughter, the heifer-maid !

¹ Thebes : round the old citadel flowed, on one side, the Ismenus, on the other, the Dirce.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

630 πόλει μοι ξύμμαχος
γενοῦ τᾶδ' εύμενής.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

τὸ σὸν ἄγαλμα, τὸ σὸν ἔδρυμα
πόλεος ἐκκομίζομαι
πρὸς πυρὰν ὑβρισθέν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

640 γυναικες, ἥκω πόλλ' ἔχων λέγειν φίλα,
αὐτός τε σωθείς, ἥρέθην γὰρ ἐν μαχῃ,
ἥν οἱ θανόντων ἐπτὰ δεσποτῶν λόχου
ἡγωνίσαντο ρέυμα Διρκαίον πάρα,
νίκην τε Θησέως ἀγγελῶν. λόγου δέ σε
μακροῦ ἀποπαύσω· Καπανέως γὰρ ἡ λάτρις,
δὲν Ζεὺς κεραυνῷ πυρπόλῳ καταιθαλοῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ φίλτατ', εὖ μὲν νόστον ἀγγέλλεις σέθεν
τὴν τ' ἀμφὶ Θησέως βάξιν εἰ δὲ καὶ στρατὸς
σῶς ἐστ' Αθηνῶν, πάντ' ἀν ἀγγέλλοις φίλα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

σῶς, καὶ πέπραγεν ὡς Ἀδραστος ὥφελε
πρᾶξαι ξὺν Ἀργείοισιν, οὓς ἀπ' Ἰνάχου
στείλας ἐπεστράτευσε Καδμείων πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ τροπαῖα Ζηνὸς Αἰγέως τόκος
ἐστησεν οἵ τε συμμετασχόντες δορός;
λέξον· παρὼν γὰρ τοὺς παρόντας εὐφρανεῖς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

650 λαμπρὰ μὲν ἀκτίς ἡλίου, κανὼν σαφῆς,
ἔβαλλε γαῖαν· ἀμφὶ δ' Ἡλέκτρας πύλας
ἐστην θεατὴς πύργου εὐαγή λαβών.
όρῳ δὲ φῦλα τρία τριῶν στρατευμάτων·

SUPPLIANTS

HALF-CHORUS 1

Oh be our champion thou,
To our city be gracious now !

630

HALF-CHORUS 2

Thy beloved are we, it was planted of thee,
This city whose sons we would gain
For the tomb from the outrage-stain.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Women, I come with tidings full of joy,—
Myself escaped, for I was ta'en in fight,
What time those seven bands of chieftains slain
Hard by the fount of Dirce strove their strife,—
Tidings of Theseus' triumph. I will spare thee
Question :—a vassal I of Capaneus
Whom Zeus did blast with blazing levin-bolt.

640

CHORUS

Dear friend, glad tidings this of thy return,
Glad news of Theseus : but if Athens' host
Is safe withal, thou heraldest all joy.

MESSENGER

Safe : and hath fared—I would Adrastus so
Had fared with Argos' sons, whom forth he led
From Inachus to that Cadmean burg.

CHORUS

How then did Aegeus' son uprear to Zeus
The trophy, he and those his spear-allies ?
Tell ; thou wast there : them that were not make glad.

MESSENGER

Bright the sun's beam, true-levelled shaft of light, 650
Smote on the earth. Beside Electra's gate
On a far-looking tower I stood to watch.
And three tribes I beheld of war-bands three :

551

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

τευχεσφόρον μὲν λαὸν ἐκτείνοντ' ἄνω
 'Ισμήνιον πρὸς ὅχθον, ὡς μὲν ἦν λόγος,
 αὐτὸν τ' ἄνακτα, παῖδα κλεινὸν Αἰγέως,
 καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ, δεξιὸν τεταγμένους
 κέρας, παλαιᾶς Κεκροπίας τ' οἰκήτορας,
 ἔσους ἀριθμόν· ἀρμάτων δ' ὅχήματα
 αὐτὸν τε Πάραλον ἐστολισμένον δορί·
 κρήνην παρ' αὐτὴν Ἀρεος· ἵπποτην δ' ὅχλον
 πρὸς κρασπέδοισι στρατοπέδου τεταγμένον.
 Κάδμου δὲ λαὸς ἥστο πρόσθε τειχέων,
 νεκροὺς ὅπισθεν θέμενος, ὃν ἔκειτο ἀγών.
 ἔνερθε σεμνῶν μνημάτων Ἀμφίονος.¹
 ἵππεῦσι δ' ἵππης ἥσαν ἀνθωπλισμένοι
 τετραόροισί τ' ἀντί ἄρμαθ' ἄρμασιν.
 κῆρυξ δὲ Θησέως εἶπεν εἰς πάντας τάδε·
 σιγάτε, λαοί, σῆγα, Καδμείων στίχει,
 ἀκούσαθ'. ἡμεῖς ἥκομεν νεκροὺς μέτα
 θάψαι θέλοντες, τὸν Πανελλήνων νόμον
 σῳζοντες, οὐδὲν δεόμενοι τεῖναι φόνον.
 κούδεν Κρέων τοῖσδ' ἀντεκήρυξεν λόγοις,
 ἀλλ' ἥστ' ἐφ' ὅπλοις σῆγα. ποιμένες δ' ὅχων
 τετραόρων κατῆρχον ἐντεῦθεν μάχης·
 πέραν δὲ διελάσαντες ἀλλήλων ὅχους,
 παραιβάτας ἔστησαν εἰς τάξιν δορός.
 χοὶ μὲν σιδήρῳ διεμάχονθ', οἱ δ' ἔστρεφον
 πώλους ἐς ἀλκὴν αὐθις ἐς παραιβάτας.
 ἵδων δὲ Φόρβας, δος μοναμπύκων ἄναξ
 ἦν τοὺς Ἐρεχθείδαισιν, ἀρμάτων ὅχλον,
 οἵ τ' αὖ τὸ Κάδμου διεφύλασσον ἵππικόν,
 συνῆψαν ἀλκὴν κάκρατουν ἥσσωντό τε.
 λεύσσων δὲ ταῦτα κού κλύων, ἔκει γὰρ ἦ

¹ Murray's re-arrangement adopted.

SUPPLIANTS

A mail-clad host far-stretching up the slopes
Unto the height Ismenian, as men said ;
I saw the king's self, Aegeus' glorious son,
And his own war-band, marshalled on the right
With all the folk of Cecrops' ancient land,
Equal by tale. And all the battle-cars
And Seaboard Men, arrayed with spears, were ranged
By Ares' fountain ; and the clouds of horse 660
Were drawn out on the fringes of the host.
Before their walls were marshalled Cadmus' folk—
Behind them lay those corpses, cause of strife—
On levels 'neath Amphion's hallowed tomb.
So against horsemen panoplied horsemen stood,
And four-yoked chariots were by chariots faced.
Then Theseus' herald cried in all men's ears :
“ Silence, ye people ! Hush ye, ranks of Cadmus !
Hearken—we come but for the corpses' sake, 670
To bury them, and keep all Hellas' law
Inviolate ; nor would lengthen bloodshed out.”
But Creon let his herald answer not,
But silent under shield abode. Thereat
The four-horsed chariot-lords began the fray.
On, down the battle-lanes of foes they swept,
Set down their warriors, spear opposing spear,
And, while these strove with bickering steel, those
wheeled
Their steeds about, to aid their fighting-men.
Then Phorbas, captain of the Erechtheid horse, 680
And they withal which led the Theban riders,
Marking the tumult of the battle-cars,
Down charging clashed, now triumphing, rolled back
now.
This saw I, and not heard ; for I was there,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

- ἔνθ' ἄρματ' ἡγωνίζεθ' οἵ τ' ἐπεμβάται.
 τάκει παρόντα πολλὰ πήματ', οὐκ ἔχω
 τί πρῶτον εἴπω, πότερα τὴν ἐς οὐρανὸν
 κόνιν προσαντέλλουσαν, ως πολλὴ παρῆν,
 ἢ τοὺς ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω φορουμένους
 690 ιμᾶσιν, αἷματός τε φοινίου ῥοάς,
 τῶν μὲν πιτνόντων, τῶν δέ, θραυσθέντων δίφρων,
 εἰς κράτα πρὸς γῆν ἐκκυβιστώντων βίᾳ
 πρὸς ἄρμάτων τ' ἀγαῖσι λειπόντων βίον.
 νικῶντα δ' ἵπποις ως ὑπείδετο στρατὸν
 Κρέων τὸν ἐνθένδ', ἵτεαν λαβὼν χερὶ¹
 χωρεῖ, πρὶν ἐλθεῖν ἔνυμμάχοις δυσθυμίαν.
 καὶ συμπατάξαντες μέσον πάντα στρατὸν
 700 ἔκτεινον ἔκτεινοντο, καὶ παρηγγύων
 κελευσμὸν ἀλλήλοισι σὺν πολλῇ βοῇ.
 θεῖν', ἀντέρειδε τοῖς Ἐρεχθείδαις δόρυ.
 697 καὶ μὴν τὰ Θησέως γ' οὐκ ὅκνῳ διεφθάρη,
 698 ἀλλ' ἵετ' εὐθὺς λάμπρ' ἀναρπάσας ὅπλα.¹
 703 λόχος δ' ὁδόντων ὄφεος ἐξηνδρωμένος
 δεινὸς παλαιστῆς ἦν· ἔκλινε γὰρ κέρας
 τὸ λαιὸν ἡμῶν· δεξιοῦ δ' ἡσσώμενον
 φεύγει τὸ κείνων· ἦν δ' ἀγῶν ἵσόρροπος.
 κάν τῳδε τὸν στρατηγὸν αἰνέσαι παρῆν,
 οὐ γὰρ τὸ νικῶν τοῦτ' ἐκέρδαινεν μόνον,
 ἀλλ' ὥχετ' εἰς τὸ κάμνον οἰκείου στρατοῦ.
 710 ἔρρηξε δ' αὐδήν, ὥσθ' ὑπηχῆσαι χθόνα·
 ὡς παιδεῖ, εἰ μὴ σχήσετε στερρὸν δόρυ
 σπαρτῶν τόδ' ἀνδρῶν, οἴχεται τὰ Παλλάδος.
 θάρσος δ' ἐνώρσε παντὶ Κραναΐδων στρατῷ.
 αὐτός θ' ὄπλισμα τούπιδαύριον λαβὼν
 δεινῆς κορύνης διαφέρων ἐσφευδόνα,

¹ Murray's re-arrangement adopted.

SUPPLIANTS

There where the chariots and the warriors grappled.
Of thousand horrors there, which first to tell
I know not—or of dust that surged and soared
Upward unto the heavens, clouds on clouds,—
Of men, by tangling reins snatched from the cars,
Slung earthward,—of the murder-streams of gore,— 690
Men falling here, and there, as crashed the chariots,
With violence hurled head downwards to the earth,
And battered out of life by chariot-shards.

But Creon, marking how our horse prevailed
On one wing, grasped his buckler in his hand,
And vanward pressed, ere allies' hearts should faint.
All down the lines the fronts of battle clashed :
Men slew—were slain—a thunder of wild war-cries 700
Rang, roared, of men on-cheering each his fellow—
“Smite !”—“Drive the spear against Erechtheus'
sons !”

Ha, but the heart of Theseus fainted not !
On charged he, tossing high his flaming shield.
But the host wrought to man of dragon-teeth
Was a grim wrestler : back it bowed our wing
Far on the left ; but, by our right o'erborne,
Fled theirs : so equal-balanced was the fight.

Then did our captain well and worshipfully ;
His triumph on the right sufficed him not,
But he to his hard-pressed half-array sped fast,
And sent a shattering shout,—earth rang again,— 710
“ My sons, except ye stay the stubborn spear
Of the Dragon-seed, your Pallas' cause is lost ! ”
So thrilled with courage all his Cranaid host.
Himself that Epidaurian weapon seized,
The fearful mace, and slingwise swung it round,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

όμοιν τραχήλους κάπικείμενον κάρα
κυνέας θερίζων κάποκαυλίζων ξυλώ.
μόλις δέ πως ἔτρεψεν εἰς φυγὴν πόδα.
ἔγὼ δ' ἀνηλάλαξα κάνωρχησάμην
720 κάκρουσα χεῖρας. οἱ δ' ἔτεινον εἰς πύλας.
βοὴ δὲ καὶ κωκυτὸς ἦν ἀνὰ πτόλιν
νέων, γερόντων, ἵερά τ' ἔξεπίμπλασαν
φόβῳ. παρὸν δὲ τειχέων εἴσω μολεῖν,
Θησεὺς ἐπέσχεν· οὐ γάρ ὡς πέρσων πόλιν
μολεῖν ἔφασκεν, ἀλλ' ἀπαιτήσων νεκρούς.
τοιόνδε τοι στρατηγὸν αἴρεισθαι χρεών,
δις ἐν τε τοῖς δεινοῖσίν ἐστιν ἄλκιμος
μισεῖ θ' ὑβριστὴν λαόν, δις πράσσων καλῶς
εἰς ἄκρα βῆναι κλιμάκων ἐνήλata
730 ζητῶν ἀπώλεσ' ὅλβον φέρεισθαι παρῆν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νῦν τήνδ' ἄελπτον ἡμέραν ἴδουσ' ἔγὼ
θεοὺς νομίζω, καὶ δοκῶ τῆς συμφορᾶς
ἔχειν ἔλασσον, τῶνδε τισάντων δίκην.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δῆτα τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτοὺς
φρονεῖν λέγουσι; σοῦ γὰρ ἔξηρτήμεθα
δρῶμέν τε τοιαῦθ' ἀν σὺ τυγχάνῃς θέλων.
ἡμῖν γάρ ἦν τό τ' Ἀργος οὐχ ὑποστατόν,
αὐτοί τε πολλοὶ καὶ νέοι βραχίοσιν.
Ἐτεοκλέους δὲ σύμβασιν ποιουμένου,
740 μέτρια θέλοντος, οὐκ ἔχρήζομεν λαβεῖν,
καπεῖτ' ἀπωλόμεσθ. ο δ' αὖ τότ' εὐτυχής,
λαβὼν πένης ὡς ἀρτίπλουστα χρήματα,
ὑβρίζει, ὑβρίζων τ' αὐθις ἀνταπώλετο
Κάδμου κακόφρων λαός. ὡς καιροῦ πέρα¹

¹ Murray's transposition of κεν. βρ. and κ. περ. adopted.

SUPPLIANTS

Down-mowing and clean-lapping with his club
Alike their necks and heads in helmets cased :
And scarce even then those stubborn feet would fly.
And I, for joy I shouted, yea, I danced,
And clapped mine hands. On strained they to the
gates.

720

Then rang a cry and wailing through the town
Of young and old : the panic-stricken thronged
The fanes. But, though the way within lay clear,
There Theseus stayed :—“ Not to destroy the town
Came I,” spake he, “ but to reclaim the dead.”
Well might men choose such battle-chief as this,
Who is in peril’s midst a tower of strength,
But hates the scorner who, in fortune’s hour
Seeking to mount the ladder’s topmost round,
Let slip the bliss that lay within their hands.

730

CHORUS

Now I, beholding this unhopèd-for day,
Know that Gods live, and feel my load of ill
Lighter, since these have paid the penalty.

ADRASTUS

Zeus, wherefore do they say that wretched man
Is wise ? For lo, we hang upon thy skirts,
And that we do, it is but as thou wilt.
We deemed before our Argos none might stand,
Ourselves, a countless host of lusty arms ;
And, when Eteocles proffered terms of peace,
Fair was his offer, yet we would not hear ;
So were undone. Now, prospering in their turn,
Like beggar-wight with sudden-gotten wealth,
Wanton they waxed, and perished in their pride
Cadmus’ mad-hearted sons. O foolish men

740

557

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

τὸ τόξον ἐντείνοντες, ὡς κενοὶ βρὸτῶν,
καὶ πρὸς δίκης γε πολλὰ πάθχοντες κακά,
φίλοις μὲν οὐ πείθεσθε, τοῖς δὲ πράγμασι·
πόλεις τ', ἔχουσαι διὰ λόγου κάμψαι κακά,
φόνῳ καθαιρεῖσθ', οὐ λόγῳ, τὰ πράγματα.
ἀτὰρ τί ταῦτα; κεῖνο βούλομαι μαθεῖν,
πῶς ἔξεσώθης· εἴτα τἄλλ' ἐρήσομαι.

750

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐπεὶ ταραγμὸς πόλιν ἐκίνησεν δορί,
πύλας διῆλθον, ἥπερ εἰσήγει στρατός.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦν δ' εἶνεχ' ἀγὼν ἦν, νεκροὺς κομίζετε;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὅσοι γε κλεινοῖς ἔπτ' ἐφέστασαν λόχοις.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

πῶς φήσ; οὐδὲ ἄλλος ποῦ κεκμηκότων ὅχλος;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τάφῳ δέδονται πρὸς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τούκειθεν ἢ τούνθένδε; τίς δ' ἔθαψέ νιν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θησεύς, σκιώδης ἔνθ' Ἐλευθερὶς πέτρᾳ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὖς δ' οὐκ ἔθαψε ποῦ νεκροὺς ἤκεις λιπών;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἔγγυς· πέλας γὰρ πᾶν ὃ τι σπουδάζεται.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἢ που πικρῶς νιν θέραπες ἥγον ἐκ φόνου;

760

SUPPLIANTS

Who strain the bow beyond the mark, and suffer
Much harm at justice' hand, and yield at last
Not to friends' mediation, but stern facts !
O foolish states, which might by parley end
Feuds, yet decide them in the field of blood !
Yet wherefore this ?—fain would I know of thee 750
How thou didst 'scape ; then will I ask the rest.

MESSENGER

When tumult's battle-earthquake shook the town,
Through that gate slipt I where the host poured in.

ADRASTUS

And the dead bring ye, cause of all the strife ?

MESSENGER

Evenall which captained those seven bands renowned.

ADRASTUS

Ha !—and the rest which perished, where be they ?

MESSENGER

Laid in the tomb, hard by Cithaeron's folds.

ADRASTUS.

On that side, or on this ?¹—who buried them ?

MESSENGER

Theseus, where hangs Eleutherae's shadowing rock.

ADRASTUS

Where leftest thou those whom he buried not ? 760

MESSENGER

At hand : for earnest haste brings all things near.

ADRASTUS

With loathing, surely, thralls took up the slain.

¹ i.e. On the Theban or the Attic side of the range : the tombs would be in the possession of the people in whose land they were. Eleutherae was in Attica.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ούδεὶς ἐπέστη τῷδε δοῦλος ὃν πόνῳ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

* * * * *

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

φαίης ἄν, εἰ παρῆσθ' ὅτ' ἡγάπα νεκρούς.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἔνιψεν αὐτὸς τῶν ταλαιπώρων σφαγάς;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

κᾶστρωσέ γ' εὐνὰς κάκαλυψε σώματα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δεινὸν μὲν οὖν βάσταγμα κἀσχύνην ἔχον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τί δ' αἰσχρὸν ἀνθρώποισι τάλληλων κακά;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἵμοι πόσῳ σφιν συνθανεῖν ἄν ἥθελον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

770 ἄκραντ' ὁδύρει ταῖσδέ τ' ἔξαγεις δάκρυ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δοκῶ μέν, αὐταί γ' εἰσὶν αἱ διδάσκαλοι.
ἄλλ' εἰεν· αἴρω χεῖρ' ἀπαντήσας νεκροῖς
"Αἰδου τε μολπὰς ἐκχέω δακρυρρόους,
φίλους προσαυδῶν, ὃν λελειμμένος τάλας
ἔρημα κλαίω· τοῦτο γάρ μόνον βροτοῖς
οὐκ ἔστι τάνάλωμ' ἀναλωθὲν λαβεῖν,
ψυχὴν βροτείαν· χρημάτων δ' εἰσὶν πόροι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ μὲν εὖ, τὰ δὲ δυστυχῆ·

στρ. α'

πόλει μὲν εὐδοξίᾳ

780 καὶ στρατηλάταις δορὸς
διπλάζεται τιμά·

SUPPLIANTS

MESSENGER

Never a slave set hand unto the toil.

ADRASTUS

[How?—did the *king* endure this, of his love?]

MESSENGER

Hadst thou but seen his ministry of love!

ADRASTUS

*H*e washed, himself, the poor youths' slaughter-stains!

MESSENGER

And spread the biers, and veiled the bodies o'er.

ADRASTUS

An awful burden was it, fraught with shame!

MESSENGER

Nay, but what shame to men are brethren's ills?

ADRASTUS

Ah me, far liever had I died with them!

MESSENGER

Bootless thy mourning, stirring these to tears.

770

ADRASTUS

I trow themselves this mourning-lore have taught.
Enough: I raise mine hand to greet the dead,
And pour out songs of death with streaming eyes,
Hailing our loved, bereft of whom—ah me!—
Forlorn I weep: for the one loss is this
That never mortal maketh good again,—
The life of man, though wealth may be re-won.

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

There is joy, there is sorrow this day; for our town
Hath a garland of glory;
And the chiefs of the spear-host, lo, twofold renown 780
Maketh splendid their story.

561

VOL. III.

oo

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

έμοι δὲ παιδων μὲν εἰσιδεῖν μέλη
πικρόν, καλὸν θέαμα δ', εἴπερ ὅψομαι
τὰν ἀελπτον ἀμέραν,
ἴδουσα πάντων μέγιστον ἄλγος.

ἄγαμόν μ' ἔτι δεῦρ' ἀεὶ^{ἀντ. α'}
χρόνος παλαιὸς· πατὴρ
ώφελ' ἀμερᾶν κτίσαι.
τί γάρ μ' ἔδει παιδῶν;
τί μὲν γὰρ ἡλπιζον ἀν πεπονθέναι
πάθος περισσόν, εἰ γάμων ἀπεξύγην;
νῦν δ' ὁρῶ σαφέστατον
κακόν, τέκνων φιλτάτων στερεῖσθαι.

790

ἀλλὰ τάδ' ἥδη σώματα λεύσσω
τῶν οἰχομένων παιδῶν μελέα
πῶς ἀν ὀλούμην σὺν τοῖσδε τέκνοις
κοινὸν ἔστι "Αἰδην καταβάσα;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

800

στεναγμόν, ὡ ματέρες,
τῶν κατὰ χθονὸς νεκρῶν
ἀύσατ' ἀπύσατ' ἀντίφων' ἐμῶν
στεναγμάτων κλύουσται.

στρ. β'

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ παιδεῖ, ὡ πικρὸν φίλων
προσηγόρημα ματέρων,
προσαυδῶ σε τὸν θανόντα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰώ,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῶν γ' ἐμῶν κακῶν ἐγώ.

SUPPLIANTS

But to see my sons' limbs!—sight bitter for me,
Yet proud, for the day that I hoped not to see
 Hath uprisen before me,
Who have seen earth's ghastliest misery.

(*Ant.* 1)

Ah that Time the father, the ancient of days,
 Had but caused me unmarried
To abide! Was I wholly in evil case
 While childless I tarried?
Yea, what dark bodings of anguish broke
 790
My peace, when I thought to refuse love's yoke?
 But of dear sons harried
Now see I mine home, no visioned stroke.

Ah, yonder I see the forms draw nigh
 Of our perished children; alas!
O but with these my beloved to die,
 Unto union in Hades to pass!

Enter THESEUS, with Athenian soldiers marching in procession with corpses on biers.

ADRASTUS

Mothers, ring out the moan
 (Str. 2)
For dear dead 'neath the ground;
Echo my crying with accordant groan
 800
Of mournful-wailing sound.

CHORUS

O dead son!—bitter word
For mothers' lips to know!
I cry on thee, in ears that have not heard:
 Ah for my woe!

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

aiai.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

* * * * *

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐπάθομεν ω —

ΧΟΡΟΣ

. τὰ κύντατ' ἄλγη κακῶν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ω πόλις Ἀργεία, τὸν ἐμὸν πότμον οὐκ ἐσορᾶτε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

*όρωσιν ἐμὲ τὴν
τάλαιναν, τέκνων ἄπαιδα.*

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

προσάγετε τῶν δυσπότμων

ἀντ. β'

σώμαθ' αἴματοσταγῆ,

*σφαγέντας οὐκ ἀξί' οὐδὲ ὑπ' ἀξίων,
ἐν οἷς ἀγῶν ἐκράνθη.*

ΧΟΡΟΣ

*δόθ', ως περιπτυχαῖσι δὴ
χέρας προσαρμόσασ' ἐμοῖς
ἐν ἀγκῶσι τέκνα θῶμαι.*

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἔχεις ἔχεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πημάτων γ' ἄλις βάρος.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

aiai.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῖς τεκοῦσι δ' οὐ λέγεις;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἀλέτέ μου.

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

We suffered—

CHORUS

Deepest anguish !

ADRASTUS

Ah, fair town
Of Argos, see my fate !

CHORUS

O yea, upon our sorrows she looks down,
The childless desolate !

810

ADRASTUS

Bring them, the blood-besprent (*Ant.* 2)
Forms of the evil-starred,
When to unrighteous foes the victory went,
Slain, an unmeet reward !

CHORUS

Give them, that I may cast
Mine arms round these, and lull,
In death's sleep clasped, my children.

ADRASTUS

This thou hast.

CHORUS

Grief's cup is full !

ADRASTUS

Woe !

CHORUS

For these mothers wail !

ADRASTUS

Hear me !

565

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

820

ΧΟΡΟΣ
στένεις ἐπ' ἀμφοῖν ἄχη.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
εἴθε με Καδμείων ἔναρον στίχεις ἐν κονίαισιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἐμὸν δὲ μήποτ' ἔζυγη
δέμας γ' ἐς ἀνδρὸς εύνάν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἴδετε κακῶν πέλαγος, ὡ
ματέρες τάλαιναι τέκνων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
κατὰ μὲν ὄνυξιν ἥλοκίσμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ
σποδὸν κάρα κεχύμεθα.

830

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἰὼ ἰὼ μοί μοι ·
κατά με πέδον γᾶς ἔλοι,
διὰ δὲ θύελλα σπάσαι,
πυρός τε φλογυμὸς ὁ Διὸς ἐν κάρᾳ πέσοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πικροὺς ἐσεῖδες γάμους,
πικρὰν δὲ Φοίβου φάτιν ·
ἔρημά σ' ἀ πολύστονος Οἰδιπόδα
δώματα λιποῦσ' ἥλθ' Ἐρινύς.

840

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
μέλλων σ' ἐρωτᾶν, ἡνίκ' ἔξηντλεις στρατῷ
γόους, ἀφήσω τοὺς ἐκεῖ μὲν ἐκλιπῶν
εἴασα μυθους, νῦν δὲ "Αδραστον ἴστορῶ·
πόθεν ποθ' οὖδε διαπρεπεῖς εὐψυχίᾳ
θυητῶν ἔφυσαν; εἰπέ γ', ώς σοφώτερος,
νέοισιν ἀστῶν τῶνδ' ἐπιστήμων γὰρ εἰ.

SUPPLIANTS

CHORUS

Thy moan
For us, for thee, is sped. 820

ADRASTUS

Oh had the foe slain me !

CHORUS

Oh to have known
Never a husband's bed !

ADRASTUS

Ah mother !—ah, dead child !
Lo, what a trouble-sea !

CHORUS

Our cheeks are furrow-scarred, and our white heads
are marred
With ashes all defiled.

ADRASTUS

Woe's me, ah woe is me !
Yawn for my grave, earth's floor !
Storm-blast, in pieces break ! 830

O that on mine head dashed the flame of Zeus down
flashed !

CHORUS

Ruin those bridals bore :
Thy ruin Phoebus spake.

The curse of Oedipus, with sighing fraught,
Childless hath left his house, and thee hath sought.

THESEUS (*to leader of CHORUS*)

Thee had I asked, but, for thy mourning poured
Forth to the host, refrain, and my request
To thee forgo, and ask Adrastus now :— 840
Of what race sprang these chiefs, above all men
Which shone in valour ? To my young Athenians
Tell, of thy fuller wisdom ; for thou know'st.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

εἰδες¹ γὰρ αὐτῶν κρείσσον' ἡ λέξαι λόγῳ
τολμήμαθ', οἷς ἥλπιζον αἱρήσειν πόλιν.
ἐν δ' οὐκ ἐρήσομαι σε, μὴ γέλωτ' ὅφλω,
ὅτῳ ξυνέστη τῶνδ' ἔκαστος ἐν μάχῃ
ἡ τραῦμα λόγχης πολεμίων ἐδέξατο.
κοινὸν² γὰρ οὐτοι τῶν τ' ἀκουόντων λόγοι
καὶ τοῦ λεγοντος· πῶς τις ἐν μάχῃ βεβώς
λόγχης ιούσης πρόσθεν ὄμμάτων πυκνῆς
σαφῶς ἀπήγγειλ' ὅστις ἐστὶν ἀγαθός;
οὐκ ἀν δυναίμην οὔτ' ἐρωτήσαι τάδε
οὔτ' ἀν πιθέσθαι τοῖσι τολμῶσιν λέγειν.
μόλις γὰρ ἂν τις αὐτὰ τάναγκαῖ ὄραν
δύναιτ' ἀν ἐστὼς πολεμίοις ἐναντίος.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἄκουε δή νυν· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἄκοντί μοι
δίδως ἔπαινον τῶνδ', ἐγώ τε βούλομαι
φίλων ἀληθῆ καὶ δίκαιοι εἰπεῖν πέρι.
ορᾶς τὸ Δίον οὐ βέλος διέπτατο;
Καπανεὺς ὅδ' ἐστίν· φίλος μὲν ἦν πολύς,
ῆκιστα δ' ὅλβῳ γαῦρος ἦν· φρόνημα δὲ
οὐδέν τι μεῖζον εἶχεν ἢ πένης ἀνήρ,
φεύγων τραπέζαις ὅστις ἔξογκοῖτ' ἄγαν
τάρκοῦντ' ἀτίξων· οὐ γὰρ ἐν γαστρὸς βορᾶ
τὸ χρηστὸν εἶναι, μέτρια δ' ἔξαρκεῖν ἔφη.
φίλος τ' ἀληθῆς ἦν φίλοις παροῦσι τε
καὶ μὴ παροῦσιν· ὃν ἀριθμὸς οὐ πολύς.
ἀψευδὲς ἦθος, εὐπροσήγορον στόμα,
ἄκραντον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἐσ οἰκέτας ἔχων
οὔτ' εἰς πολίτας. τὸν δὲ δεύτερον λέγω

¹ Paley; for MSS. *εἶδον*.

² So MSS. Grotius, *κενὸν*: "For this, for those that tell
and those that hear, Were an idle tale."

SUPPLIANTS

Their gallant deeds, too great for words to speak,
Thou saw'st, whereby they hoped to win yon Thebes.

One question, meet for laughter, I ask not—
Whom each of these encountered in the strife,
Or from what foeman's spear received his wound.
For they that hear such tales as much could say
As he which tells. Who, that hath stood in fight, 850
When spear on spear is flying before men's eyes,
Can certainly report who bravely bears him ?
I could not ask such vanity as this,
Nor them believe whose impudence would tell.
Scarce can a man see what needs must be seen,
What time he standeth foot to foot with foes.

ADRASTUS

Hear then. To no unwilling lips thou givest
The praise of these : full fain am I to speak
Both truth and justice touching men I loved.

Seest thou yon corpse wherethrough leapt Zeus's
bolt? 860

Capaneus he, a mighty man of wealth,
Yet naught thereby exalted, but he bare
A spirit no whit loftier than the poor,
Shunning the man whose pomp of banquets scorned
That which sufficeth. "Not in gluttony,"
Said he, "is good : enough is as a feast."
True friend to friends was he, alike when near
And far : of such is there no multitude.
A guileless heart, a mouth of gracious speech,
Who left no dues unrendered, or to servants 870
Or citizens. Now of the next I speak,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

'Επέοκλον, ἀλλην χρηστότητ' ἡσκηκότα·
 νεανίας ἦν τῷ βίῳ μὲν ἐνδεής,
 πλείστας δὲ τιμᾶς ἔσχ' ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονί.
 φίλων δὲ χρυσὸν πολλάκις δωρουμένων
 οὐκ εἰσεδέξατ' οἶκον ὥστε τοὺς τρόπους
 δούλους παρασχεῖν χρημάτων ζευχθεὶς ὑπο·
 τοὺς δ' ἔξαμαρτάγοντας, οὐχὶ τὴν πόλιν
 ἥχθαιρ· ἐπεὶ τοι κούδεν αὖτις πόλις
 κακῶς κλύουσα διὰ κυβερνήτην κακόν.
 880 ὁ δ' αὖ τρίτος τῶνδ' Ἰππομέδων τοιόσδ' ἔφυ·
 παῖς ὁν ἐτόλμησ' εὐθὺς οὐ πρὸς ἡδονὰς
 Μουσῶν τραπέσθαι πρὸς τὸ μαλθακὸν βίου,
 ἀγροὺς δὲ ναίων, σκληρὰ τῇ φύσει διδοὺς
 ἔχαιρε πρὸς τάνδρεῖον, εἰς τ' ἄγρας ἴων
 ἵπποις τε χαίρων τόξα τ' ἐντείνων χεροῖν,
 πόλει παρασχεῖν σῶμα χρήσιμον θέλων.
 ὁ τῆς κυναγοῦ δ' ἄλλος Ἀταλάντης γόνος,
 890 παῖς Παρθενοπαῖος, εἶδος ἔξοχώτατος,
 'Αρκὰς μὲν ἦν, ἐλθὼν δ' ἐπ' Ἰνάχου ροὰς
 παιδεύεται κατ' Ἀργος. ἐκτραφεὶς δ' ἐκεῖ
 πρῶτον μέν, ὡς χρῆ τοὺς μετοικοῦντας ξένους,
 λυπηρὸς οὐκ ἦν οὐδὲ ἐπίφθονος πόλει
 οὐδὲ ἔξεριστὴς τῶν λόγων, ὅθεν βαρὺς
 μάλιστ' ἀν εἴη δημότης τε καὶ ξένος·
 λόχοις δ' ἐφεστῶς ὥσπερ Ἀργεῖος γεγώς
 ἥμινε χώρᾳ, χώπότ' εὐ πράσσοι πόλις,
 ἔχαιρε, λυπρῶς δ' ἐφερεν, εἰ τι δυστυχοῖ.
 πολλοὺς δ' ἐραστὰς κάπτο θηλειῶν ὅσας
 ἔχων, ἐφρούρει μηδὲν ἔξαμαρτάνειν.
 900 Τυδέως δ' ἐπαινον ἐν βραχεῖ θήσω μέγαν·
 οὐκ ἐν λόγοις ἦν λαμπρός, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀσπίδι
 δεινὸς σοφιστὴς πολλά τ' ἔξευρεν σοφός.

SUPPLIANTS

Eteocles, graced, he too, with excellence.
A young man he, not rich in this world's goods,
But in the Argive land dowered rich with honour;
Who oft, when friends would lavish on him gold,
Received it not his doors within, to make
His life a slave bowed 'neath the yoke of wealth.
He loathed wrong-doers, not his erring country;
Seeing the guilt is nowise in the State
That through an evil pilot wins ill fame.
Such too Hippomedon was, the third with these.
From childhood up he deigned not turn aside
Unto the Muses' joys, for ease of life;
But in the field abode, enduring hardness
Gladly for valour's sake, and, hunting still,
Joyed in the steed and hands that strain the bow,
Eager to yield his land his body's best.

The fourth was huntress Atalanta's son,
Parthenopaeus, unmatched in goodlihead:
Arcadian he, but came to Inachus,
And lived his youth at Argos. Fostered there,
First, as beseems the sojourner in the land,
He vexed not, nor was jealous of the state,
Nor was a wrangler, whereby citizens
Or aliens most shall jar with fellow-men;
But in the ranks stood like an Argive born,
Fought for the land, and, whenso prospered Argos,
Rejoiced, and grieved when it went ill with her;—
Of many a man, of many a woman loved,
Yet from transgression did he keep him pure.

Tydeus' high praise next will I sum in brief.
In speech he shone not; a dread reasoner he
In logic of the shield, and war's inventions:

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

γνώμη δ' ἀδελφοῦ Μελεάγρου λελειμμένος,
ἴσον παρέσχεν δνομα, διὰ τέχνης δορός
εὐρὼν ἀκριβῆ μουσικὴν ἐν ἀσπίδι·
φιλότιμον ἥθος, πλούσιον φρόνημα δὲ
ἐν τοῖσιν ἔργοις, οὐχὶ τοῖς λόγοις ἴσον.
ἐκ τῶνδε μὴ θαύμαζε τῶν εἰρημένων,
910 Θησεῦ, πρὸ πύργων τούσδε τολμῆσαι θαυμῆν.
τὸ γὰρ τραφῆναι μὴ κακῶς αἰδῶ φέρει·
αἰσχυνεται δὲ τάγαθ' ἀσκήσας ἀνήρ
κακός κεκλῆσθαι πᾶς τις. ή δ' εὐανδρία
διδακτός, εἰπερ καὶ βρέφος διδάσκεται
λέγειν ἀκούειν θ' ὃν μάθησιν οὐκ ἔχει.
ἄ δ' ἀν μάθη τις, ταῦτα σφόζεσθαι φιλεῖ
πρὸς γῆρας. οὕτω παῖδας εὖ παιδεύετε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ τέκνον, δυστυχῆ σ'
ἔτρεφον, ἔφερον ὑφ' ἥπατος
πόνους ἐνεγκοῦσ' ἐν ὡδῖσι· καὶ νῦν
"Αἰδας τὸν ἐμὸν ἔχει
μόχθον ἀθλίας, ἔγω δὲ
γηροβοσκὸν οὐκ ἔχω
τεκοῦσ' ἀ τάλαινα παῖδα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

καὶ μὴν τὸν Οἰκλέους γε γενναῖον τόκον
θεοὶ ζῶντ' ἀναρπάσαντες εἰς μυχοὺς χθονὸς
αὐτοῖς τεθρίπποις εὐλογοῦσιν ἐμφανῶς·
τὸν Οἰδίπου δὲ παῖδα, Πολυνείκην λέγω,
ἥμεῖς ἐπαινέσαντες οὐ φευδοίμεθ' ἄν.
930 ξένος γάρ ἦν μοι πρὶν λιπῶν Κάδμου πόλιν

SUPPLIANTS

In counsel not as his brother Meleager,
Yet of like fame, through science of the spear
Getting him ripest scholarship of war.
A soaring soul was his, a spirit rich
Where deeds might serve ; in speech of less avail.

Hearing my words, O Theseus, marvel not
That these before yon towers feared not to die. 910
The fruit that noble nurture bears is honour ;
And whosoe'er hath practised knightly deeds
Would blush to be called craven. Ye may teach
This chivalry ; for even the babe is taught
To speak and hear things not yet understood ;
And what one learneth, that he is wont to keep
To hoary hairs. Then train ye well the child.

CHORUS

O son, for thy sorrow I gave thee
Life of my life 'neath my zone,
And I bore for thee travail-pain : 920
And now is my loss death's gain ;
Of my labours no fruit doth remain,
Nor to foster mine eld may I have thee.
Woe's me that I bare a son !

THESEUS

To Oekleus' noble son the very Gods,
Who whelmed him with his car down earth's abyss
Living, gave manifest token of their praise.¹
But Oedipus' son—I tell of Polyneices—
Myself shall praise, nor falsely speak herein.
My guest was he, ere, leaving Cadmus' town 930

¹ As being rescued from pursuers, and entombed by the Gods.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

φυγῆ πρὸς Ἀργος διαβαλεῖν αὐθαίρετος.
ἀλλ' οἰσθ' ὁ δρᾶσαι βούλομαι τούτων πέρι;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἐν, σοῦσι πείθεσθαι λόγοις.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
τὸν μὲν Διὸς πληγέντα Καπανέα πυρί—

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἢ χωρὶς ἴερὸν ως νεκρὸν θάψαι θέλεις;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ναί· τοὺς δέ γ' ἄλλους πάντας ἐν μιᾷ πυρᾷ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ποῦ δῆτα θήσεις μνῆμα τῷδε χωρίσας;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
αὐτοῦ παρ' οἴκους τούσδε συμπήξας τάφον.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
οὗτος μὲν ἥδη δμωσὶν ἀν μέλοι πόνος.

940 **ΘΗΣΕΤΣ**
ἡμῖν δέ γ' οἶδε· στειχέτω δ· ἄχθη νεκρῶν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἴτ', ὡς τάλαιναι μητέρες, τέκνων πέλας.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ἥκιστ', Ἀδραστε, τοῦτο πρόσφορον λέγεις.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
πῶς; τὰς τεκούσας οὐ χρεών ψαῦσαι τέκνων;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
ὅλοιντ' ἵδοῦσαι τούσδ' ἀν ἡλλοιωμένους.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
πικρὰ γὰρ δῆμις αἷμα κῶτειλαὶ νεκρῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
τί δῆτα λύπην ταισδε προσθεῖναι θέλεις;

SUPPLIANTS

Self-banished, unto Argos he crossed o'er.
But knowest thou my wish as touching these?

ADRASTUS

Naught know I, save one thing—to heed thy words.

THESEUS

Capaneus, stricken by the fire of Zeus—

ADRASTUS

Wouldst bury him apart, a hallowed corpse?

THESEUS

Yea, but the rest all on one funeral-pyre.

ADRASTUS

Where wilt thou set for him that several tomb?

THESEUS

Here, by these halls I have built his sepulchre.

ADRASTUS

Our servants' tendance shall he straightway have.

THESEUS

These, mine. Now let the biers of death move on. 940

ADRASTUS

Come, hapless mothers, to your sons draws nigh.

THESEUS

Adrastus, this thou say'st were all unmeet.

ADRASTUS

How should the mothers choose but touch their sons?

THESEUS

'Twere death to look on them so sorely marred.

ADRASTUS

Bitter to see are slain men's blood and wounds.

THESEUS

Why then wouldst add fresh anguish to their grief?

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

950 νικᾶς· μένειν χρὴ τλημόνως· λέγει γάρ εὐ
Θησεύς. ὅταν δὲ τούσδε προσθῶμεν πυρί,
ὸστά προσάξεσθ'. ὡς ταλαίπωροι βροτῶν,
τί κτᾶσθε λόγχας καὶ κατ' ἀλλήλων φόνους
τίθεσθε; παυσασθ', ἀλλὰ λήξαντες πόνων
ἀστη φυλάσσεσθ' ἥσυχοι μεθ' ἥσυχων.
σμικρού τὸ χρῆμα τοῦ βίου· τοῦτον δὲ χρὴ
ώς ῥᾷστα καὶ μὴ σὺν πόνοις διεκπερᾶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκέτ' εὔτεκνος, οὐκέτ' εὔπαις, στρ.
οὐδὲ εὐτυχίας μετεστίν μοι
κουροτόκοις ἐν Ἀργείαις·
οὐδὲ Ἀρτεμις λοχία
προσφθέγξαιτ' ἀν τὰς ἀτέκνους.
960 δυσαιων δ' ὁ βίος,
πλαγκτὰ δ' ὧσεί τις νεφέλα,
πνευμάτων ὑπὸ δυσχίμων ἀΐσσω.

970 ἔπτὰ ματέρες ἔπτὰ κούρους
ἐγεινάμεθ' αἱ ταλαίπωροι
κλεινοτάτους ἐν Ἀργείοις·
καὶ νῦν ἄπαις ἄτεκνος
γηράσκω δυστηνοτάτως,
οὔτ' ἐν φθιμένοις
οὔτ' ἐν ζῶσιν κρινομένα,
χωρὶς δή τινα τῶνδ' ἔχουσα μοῖραν.

976 ὑπολελειμμένα μοι δάκρυα· ἐπῳδ.
μέλεα παιδὸς ἐν οἴκοις
κεῖται μνήματα, πένθιμοι
κουραὶ καὶ στέφανοι κόμας,

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Well said. Ye, tarry patiently, for well
Speaks Theseus. When to fire we have given these,
Yourselves the bones shall gather. Hapless mortals !
Why do ye get you spears and deal out death 950
To fellow-men ? Stay, from such toils forbear,
And peaceful mid the peaceful ward your towns.
Short is life's span : behoves to pass through this
Softly as may be, not with travail worn.

The funeral procession passes on to the pyres, which are kindled in sight of the stage.

CHORUS

Crowned with fair sons above others (Str.)
No more am I seen,
Neither blessed mid Argive mothers ;
Nor the Travail-queen
To the childless shall give fair greeting !
Forlorn is my life, as a fleeting 960
Lone cloud that flees from the beating
Of storm-scourges keen.

Seven mothers—and heroes seven (Ant.)

To our sorrow we bare :
None princelier to Argos were given.
Now in childless despair
Drear old age creepeth upon me ;
Yet the ranks of the dead have not known me,
Nor the count of the living may own me ;
But an outcast I fare. 970

For me are but tears remaining : (Epode)

Saddest memorials rest
In mine halls of my son—shorn hair
And garlands of mourning are there ;

577

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

λοιβαί τε νεκύων φθιμένων,
ἀοιδαί θ' ἀς χρυσοκόμας
Ἄπόλλων οὐκ ἐνδέχεται·
γύοισιν δ' ὄρθρευομένα
δάκρυσι νοτερὸν ἀεὶ πέπλων
πρὸς στέρνῳ πτύχα τέγξω.

- 980 καὶ μὴν θαλάμας τάσδ' ἐσορῷ δὴ
Καπανέως ἥδη τύμβον θ' ἵερὸν
μελάθρων τ' ἔκτὸς
Θησέως ἀναθήματα νεκροῖς,
κλεινήν τ' ἄλοχον τοῦ καταφθιμένου
τοῦδε κεραυνῷ πέλας Εὐάδνην,
ἥν Ἱφις ἄναξ παῖδα φυτεύει.
τί ποτ' αἰθερίαν ἔστηκε πέτραν,
ἥ τῶνδε δόμων ὑπερακρίζει,
τήνδ' ἐμβαίνονσα κέλευθον;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

- 990 τί φέγγος, τίν' αἴγλαν
ἐδίφρευε τόθ' ἄλιος
σελάνα τε κατ' αἰθέρα,
λαμπάσιν ὡκυθόαις λυγρᾶς¹
ἰππεύονσα δι' ὅρφνας,
* * * ἀνίκα γάμων
τῶν ἐμῶν πόλις Ἀργοὺς
ἀοιδὰς εὐδαιμονίας
ἐπύργωσε καὶ γαμέτα
χαλκεοτευχοῦς τε Καπανέως;
1000 δρομὰς ἐξ ἐμῶν πρὸς σ' ἔβαν
οἶκων ἐκβακχευσαμένα,
- στρ.

¹ Text corrupt. Paley's reading and interpretation.

SUPPLIANTS

Libations—for dead lips' draining ;
Songs—which the golden-tressed
 Apollo shall turn from in scorn ;
 And with wails shall I greet each morn,
Ever drenching with tears fast raining
 The vesture-folds on my breast.

Lo, yonder the fiery bower,
Even Capaneus' sacred pyre :
I see it without the fane,
With Theseus' gifts to the slain
Ha ! the wife draweth nigh in this hour
To the slain of the levin-fire,
Evadne the princess renowned !
On yon cliff why is she found
Whose crags above this fane tower ?
And she climbs, and she climbs ever higher !

*EVADNE appears on the cliff above the pyre of Capaneus,
dressed in festal attire.*

EVADNE

What light ill-omened shone
When flashed thy wheels, O Sun,
And when the moon raced on,
 And star-lamps glancing
Raced through a lowering sky,
When Argos tossed on high
The gladsome bridal-cry,
 And throbbed with dancing,
And thrilled with song, to see
Mine hero wed with me ?
O love, I rush to thee
 From mine home, raving,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

πυρὸς φῶς τάφον τε
ματεύουσα τὸν αὐτόν,
ἐς "Αἰδαν καταλύσουσ' ἔμμοχθον
βίοτον αἰώνος τε πόνους·
ηδιστος γάρ τοι θάνατος
συνθνήσκειν θνήσκουσι φίλοις,
εὶ δαίμων τάδε κραίνοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1010 καὶ μὴν ὄρᾶς τήνδ' ἡς ἐφέστηκας πέλας
πυράν, Διὸς θησαυρόν, ἐνθ' ἔνεστι σὸς
πόσις δαμασθεὶς λαμπάσιν κεραυνίοις.

ΕΤΑΔΗΗ

1020 ὄρῳ δὴ τελευτάν,
ἴν' ἔστακα τύχα δέ μοι
ξυνάπτει ποδος· ἀλλὰ τῆς
εὐκλείας χάριν ἐνθεν ὄρ-
μάσω τᾶσδ' ἀπὸ πέτρας
πηδήσασα πυρὸς ἔσω,
σῶμά τ' αἰθοπι φλογυμῷ
πόσει συμμίξασα φίλον,
χρῶτα χρωτὶ πέλας θεμένα
Περσεφονείας ἥξω θαλάμους,
σὲ τὸν θανόντ' οὕποτ' ἐμᾶ
προδοῦσα ψυχᾶ κατὰ γᾶς.
ἴτω φῶς γάμοι τε.
τεῖθ' ἀμεινονες εύναι
δικαίων ὑμεναίων ἐν Ἀργει
φανεῖεν τέκνοισιν ἐμοῖς,
εἴη δ' εύναιος γαμέτας¹

¹ Text uncertain. Paley's reading and interpretation.

SUPPLIANTS

Seeking thy tomb, thy pyre,
Longing with strong desire
To end in that same fire
 Mine anguish, braving
Hades—to end life's woe ;
For death is sweetest so
With dear dead to lie low :—
 God grant my craving !

CHORUS

Lo, the pyre nigh,—above it dost thou stand,—
Zeus' own possession, on the which is laid
Thy lord, o'erthrown by flash of levin-bolt.

1010

EVADNE

The end!—I see it now,
Here standing. Friend art thou,
Fortune! From this cliff's brow,
For wifehood's glory,
With spurning feet I dart
Down into yon fire's heart
To meet him, ne'er to part,—

(Ant.)

Flames reddening o'er me,
To nestle to his side,
In Cora's¹ bowers a bride !
O love, though thou hast died,
I'll not forsake thee.
Farewell life, bridal bed !
By happier omens led,
Ah, be our children wed !
May leal love make ye,
Bridegrooms to be, life through
Unto my daughters true :

1020

¹ Persephone, queen of Hades.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

συντηχθεὶς αὔραις ἀδόλοις
γενναίας ψυχᾶς ἀλόχῳ.

1030

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὅδ' αὐτὸς σὸς πατὴρ βαίνει πέλας,
γεραιὸς Ἰφις εἰς νεωτέρους λόγους,
οὗς οὐ κατειδὼς πρόσθεν ἀλγήσει κλύων.

ΙΦΙΣ

ὦ δυστάλαιναι, δυστάλας δ' ἐγὼ γέρων,
ἥκω διπλοῦν πένθημ' ὁμαιμόνων ἔχων,
τὸν μὲν θανόντα παῖδα Καδμείων δορὶ¹
Ἐτεοκλον εἰς γῆν πατρίδα ναυσθλώσων νεκρόν,
ζητῶν δ' ἐμὴν παῖδ', ἡ δόμων ἔξωπιος
βέβηκε πηδήσασα Καπανέως δάμαρ,
θανεῖν ἐρώσα σὺν πόσει. χρόνον μὲν οὖν
τὸν πρόσθ' ἐφρουρεῖτ' ἐν δόμοις· ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγὼ
φυλακὰς ἀνῆκα τοῖς παρεστῶσιν κακοῖς,
βέβηκεν, ἀλλὰ τῇδέ νιν δοξάζομεν
μάλιστ' ἀν εἴναι φράζετ' εἰ κατείδετε.

1040

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

τί τάσδ' ἐρωτᾶς; ἥδ' ἐγὼ πέτρας ἔπι
ὅρνις τις ὡσεὶ Καπανέως ὑπὲρ πυρᾶς
δύστηνον αἰώρημα κουφίζω, πάτερ.

ΙΦΙΣ

τέκνουν, τίς αὔρα; τίς στόλος; τίνος χάριν
δόμων ὑπερβάσ' ἥλθεις εἰς τήνδε χθόνα;

1050

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ὅργην λάβοις ἀν τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων
κλύων· ἀκοῦσαι δ' οὐ σε βούλομαι, πάτερ.

ΙΦΙΣ

τί δ'; οὐ δίκαιον πατέρα τὸν σὸν εἰδέναι;

SUPPLIANTS

One love-breath breathe in you.
Now, Death, come—take me !

1030

CHORUS

Lo, here himself, thy sire, is drawing nigh,
Old Iphis, within sound of thy strange speech,
Which, heard not yet, shall wring his heart to hear.

Enter IPHIS.

IPHIS

O hapless ye!—O hapless ancient I!
Burdened with twofold grief for kin I came,
To bear unto his fatherland oversea
My son Eteoclus, slain by Theban spear,
And seeking for my daughter, who hath fled
Forth of mine halls, the wife of Capaneus,
Longing with him to die. Through days o'erpast 1040
Guarded she was at home: but soon as I
Slackened the watch, for ills that pressed on me,
Forth did she pass. Howbeit here, methinks,
Is she most like to be. Say, have ye seen her?

EVADNE

Wherfore ask these? Here am I on the rock.
Even as a bird, my father, hang I poised
In misery o'er the pyre of Capaneus.

IPHIS

My child, what wind hath blown, what journeying
led thee?
Why flee thine home and come unto this land?

EVADNE

Thou wouldst be wroth to hear my purposes. 1050
O father, I would not that thou shouldst hear.

IPHIS

How?—were't not just thy very father knew?

583

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

κριτης ἀν εἴης οὐ σοφὸς γνώμης ἐμῆς.

ΙΦΙΣ

σκευῇ δὲ τῇδε τοῦ χάριν κοσμεῖς δέμας;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

θέλει τι κλεινὸν οὗτος ὁ στολμός, πάτερ.

ΙΦΙΣ

ώς οὐκ ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ πένθιμος πρέπεις ὄρâν.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

εἰς γάρ τι πρᾶγμα νεοχμὸν ἐσκευάσμεθα.

ΙΦΙΣ

κάπειτα τύμβῳ καὶ πυρᾷ φαίνει πέλας;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ καλλίνικος ἔρχομαι.

ΙΦΙΣ

νικῶσα νίκην τίνα; μαθεῖν χρῆζω σέθεν.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

πάσας γυναικας ἂς δέδορκεν ἥλιος.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἔργοις Ἀθάνας ἡ φρενῶν εὐβουλίᾳ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἀρετῇ· πόσει γὰρ συνθανοῦσα κείσομαι.

ΙΦΙΣ

τί φῆς; τί τοῦτ' αἰνιγμα σημαίνεις σαθρόν;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἄσσω θανόντος Καπανέως τήνδ' εἰς πυράν.

ΙΦΙΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, οὐ μὴ μῦθον εἰς πολλοὺς ἐρεῖς;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

τοῦτ' αὐτὸ χρῆζω, πάντας Ἀργείους μαθεῖν.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδέ τοι σοι πείσομαι δρώσῃ τάδε.

SUPPLIANTS

EVADNE

Thou wouldst be no wise judge of my resolve.

IPHIS

And why in this attire array thy form ?

EVADNE

Father, this vesture glorious meaning hath.

IPHIS

Thou seemest not as one that mourns her lord.

EVADNE

For deed unheard-of have I decked me thus.

IPHIS

By tomb and pyre appear'st thou in such guise ?

EVADNE

Yea, I for victory's triumph hither come.

IPHIS

What victory this ? Fain would I learn of thee. 1060

EVADNE

Over all wives on whom the sun looks down.

IPHIS

In works by Pallas taught, or prudent wit ?

EVADNE

In courage. With my lord will I lie dead.

IPHIS

How sayest thou ?—what sorry riddle this ?

EVADNE

I plunge to yon pyre of dead Capaneus.

IPHIS

O daughter, speak not so before a throng !

EVADNE

Even this would I, that all the Argives hear.

IPHIS

Nay, surely will I let thee from this deed.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

1070 δομοιον· οὐ γὰρ μὴ κίχης μ' ἐλῶν χερί.
καὶ δὴ παρεῖται σῶμα, σοὶ μὲν οὐ φίλον,
ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τῷ συμπυρουμένῳ πόσει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰώ, γύναι, δεινὸν ἔργον ἔξειργάσω.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, Ἀργείων κόραι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔ ἔ, σχέτλια τάδε παθών,
τὸ πάντολμον ἔργον ὅψει τάλας.

ΙΦΙΣ

οὐκ ἄν τιν' εῦροιτ' ἄλλον ἀθλιώτερον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ τάλας·

μετέλαχες τύχας Οἰδιπόδα, γέρον,
μέρος καὶ σὺ καὶ πόλις ἐμὰ τλάμων.

ΙΦΙΣ

1080 οἴμοι· τί δὴ βροτοῖσιν οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε,
νέους δὶς εἶναι καὶ γέροντας αὖ πάλιν;
ἄλλ' ἐν δόμοις μὲν ἦν τι μὴ καλῶς ἔχη,
γνώμαισιν ὑστέραισιν ἔξορθούμεθα,
αἰώνα δ' οὐκ ἔξεστιν. εἰ δ' ἡμεν νέοι
δὶς καὶ γέροντες, εἴ τις ἔξημάρτανε,
διπλοῦ βίου τυχόντες ἔξωρθούμεθ' ἄν.
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἄλλους εἰσορῶν τεκνουμένους
παιδῶν τ' ἔραστὴς ἥ πόθῳ τ' ἀπωλλύμην.
εἰ δ' εἰς τόδ' ἥλθον κάξεπειράθην παθὼν¹
οἷον στέρεσθαι πατέρα γίγνεται τέκνων,
οὐκ ἄν ποτ' εἰς τόδ' ἥλθον εἰς ὁ νῦν κακόν.

¹ Paley; for MSS. τέκνων.

SUPPLIANTS

EVADNE

Let or let not—thou canst not reach nor seize me.
Lo, hurled my body falls, for grief to thee, 1070
For joy to me and him with me consumed.

Throws herself from the cliff on to the pyre.

CHORUS

O lady, what awful deed hath been compassed of
thee!

IPHIS

O Argos' daughters, wretched I!—undone!

CHORUS

Woe for thee, woe, who hast borne this misery!
Yet its fulness of horror remaineth for thee to see.

IPHIS

None other shall ye find more sorrow-crushed.

CHORUS

O ancient, O sore-stricken heart,
In the fortune partaker thou art [part.
Of Oedipus: thou and mine hapless city therein have

IPHIS

Ah me, why is not this to men vouchsafed,
Twice to see youth, and twice withal old age?

Now in our homes, if aught shall fall out ill,
By wisdom's second thoughts this we amend;
Life lived we may not. Might we but be young
And old twice o'er, if any man should err,
We would amend us in that second life.

For I, beholding others rich in sons,
For children yearned, and by my longing perished.
Had I to that come first,—by suffering proved
What to a father child-bereavement means,
I had never come to this, to this day's woe,

1080

1090

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ὅστις φυτεύσας καὶ νεανίαν τεκὼν
ἀριστον, εἴτα τοῦδε νῦν στερίσκομαι.
εἰεν· τί δὴ χρὴ τὸν ταλαιπωρόν με δρᾶν;
στέχειν πρὸς οἴκους; κατ’ ἔρημίαν ἵδω
πολλὴν μελάθρων ἀπορίαν τ’ ἐμῷ βίῳ;
ἢ πρὸς μέλαθρα τοῦδε Καπανέως μόλω;
ἥδιστα πρίν γε δῆθ’, δτ’ ἦν παῖς ἥδε μοι.
ἀλλ’ οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν ἢ γ’ ἐμὴν γενειάδα
1100 προσήγετ’ ἀεὶ στόματι καὶ κάρα τόδε
κατέιχε χερσίν· οὐδὲν ἥδιον πατρὶ¹
γέρουντι θυγατρός· ἀρσένων δὲ μείζουες
ψυχαί, γλυκεῖαι δ’ ἡσσον εἰς θωπεύματα.
οὐχ ὡς τάχιστα δῆτά μ’ ἄξετ’ εἰς δόμους
σκότῳ τε δώσετ’; ἐνθ’ ἀσιτίαις ἐμὸν
δέμας γεραιὸν συντακεὶς ἀποφθερώ.
τί μ’ ὠφελήσει παιδὸς ὁστέων θυγεῖν;
ῳ δυσπάλαιστον γῆρας, ὡς μισῶ σ’ ἔχων,
1110 μισῶ δ’ ὅσοι χρήζουσιν ἐκτείνειν βίον,
βρωτοῖσι καὶ ποτοῦσι καὶ μαγεύμασι
παρεκτρέποντες ὄχετὸν ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν.
οὺς χρῆν, ἐπειδὰν μηδὲν ὠφελῶσι γῆν,
θανόντας ἔρρειν κάκποδῶν εἶναι νέοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰώ, τάδε δὴ παιδῶν φθιμένων
ὁστᾶ φέρεται. λάβετ’, ἀμφίπολοι
γραίας ἀμενοῦς· οὐ γάρ ἐνεστιν
ρώμη παιδῶν ὑπὸ πένθους,

¹ Burney: for MSS. χειρὶ· πατρὶ δ’ οὐδὲν ἥδιον.

SUPPLIANTS

I, who begat a young son of my loins
Most goodly, and am now of him bereft !
No more !—what must I do, the sorrow-fraught ?
Wend home ?—and filled with desolation see
Home—for my life the hunger of despair ?
Or seek the mansion of yon Capaneus ?—
Once sweet, O sweet, when this my daughter lived !
Ah, but she is no more, who wont to draw
Down to her lips my face, fold in her arms 1100
Mine head :—naught sweeter than a daughter is
To grey-haired sire; sons' hearts be greater-framed,
But not, not theirs the dear caressing wiles !
Lead me, with speed O lead me to mine home,
And hide in darkness, there to make an end
Of this old frame, by fasting pined away.
What profit if I touch my daughter's bones ?
Strong wrestler Eld, O how I loathe thy grasp—
Loathe them which seek to lengthen out life's span,
By meats and drinks and magic philtre-spells 1110
To turn life's channel, that they may not die,
Who, when they are but cumberers of the ground,
Should hence, and die, and make way for the young.

The stage gradually fills with a procession, in which the sons of the dead chiefs bear the urns containing their ashes.
The members of the CHORUS advance to meet them.

CHORUS

Woe is me, woe !
Onward, onward the bones of sons, sons dead,
Are borne : O lend me your hands ; my strength is
sped,
Handmaids : stricken with eld, in childless pain
I faint for my dear sons slain,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

πολλοῦ τε χρόνου ζώσης μέτα δή,
καταλειβομένης τ' ἄλγεσι πολλοῖς.
1120 τί γάρ ἀν μεῖζον τοῦδ' ἔτι θυητοῖς
πάθος ἔξεύροις
ἢ τέκνα θανόντ' ἐσιδέσθαι;

ΠΑΙΔΕΣ

φέρω φέρω,¹ στρ. α'
τάλαινα μάτερ, ἐκ πυρᾶς πατρὸς μέλη,
βάρος μὲν οὐκ ἀβριθὲς ἀλγέων ὑπερ,
ἐν δ' ὀλίγῳ τάμα πάντα συνθείς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ιώ.
πᾶ δάκρυα φέρεις φίλα
ματρὶ τῶν ὀλωλότων,
1130 σποδοῦ τε πλῆθος ὀλίγον ἀντὶ σωμάτων
εὔδοκίμων δήποτ' ἐν Μυκήναις;

ΠΑΙΣ α'

παπαῖ παπαῖ. ἀντ. α'
ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος ἀθλίου πατρὸς τάλας
ἔρημον οἴκον ὁρφανεύσομαι λαβών,
οὐ πατρὸς ἐν χερσὶ τοῦ τεκόντος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

ἰὼ ιώ.
ποῦ δὲ πόνος ἐμῶν τέκνων,
ποῦ λοχευμάτων χάρις
τροφαῖ τε ματρὸς ἄυπνά τ' ὁμμάτων τέλη
καὶ φίλιαι προσβολαὶ προσώπων;

¹ Paley's arrangement of this *Commos* adopted.

SUPPLIANTS

Bowed down under the load of years on years,
Wasted ever with sorrows, aye with tears.

Couldst thou tell of a harder, sorer stroke 1120

That lighteth on mortal folk,

Than when mothers behold their dead sons' biers?

CHORUS OF CHILDREN

I bear, O I bear, (Str. 1)

Sad mother, the limbs of my sire from the
burning,— [there,—

A burden not light, for the weight of my sorrow is
All that I love in this little vial inurning.

CHORUS OF MOTHERS

Woe is me, woe!

Is it all that thou bringest, the salt tears' flow,
To the dead man's mother?—naught else canst
thou show? [the men of renown
To a handful of dust brought down are the forms of 1130
So glorious erewhile in Mycenae-town?

FIRST CHILD

Alas for my doom! (Ant. 1)

Sad son by an ill-starred father forsaken,
Henceforth I inherit the orphan's desolate home,
Unsheltered by arms of the sire from whose loins
I was taken.

FIRST MOTHER

Woe for my plight!

Whitherward hath my toil for my babes taken
flight?

What now doth the pain of my travail requite?
What reward hath the mother's breast, and the eyes
that would take no rest, [pressed?
And the face to the dear little babe-face

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΠΑΙΣ β'

βεβᾶσιν, οὐκέτ' εἰσίν· οἴμοι πάτερ. στρ. β'
1140 βεβᾶσιν αἰθὴρ ἔχει νιν ἥδη,

ΧΟΡΟΣ β'

πυρὸς τετακότας σποδῷ·
ποτανοὶ δ' ἥνυσαν τὸν "Αἰδαν.

ΠΑΙΣ γ'

πάτερ, μῶν σῶν κλύνεις τέκνων γόους;
ἀρ' ἀσπιδοῦχος ἔτι ποτ' ἀντιτίσομαι σὸν φόνον;

ΧΟΡΟΣ γ'

εἰ γὰρ γένοιτο, τέκνου.

ΠΑΙΣ δ'

ἔτ' ἀν θεοῦ θέλοντος ἔλθοι δίκα
πατρῷος· οὕπω κακὸν τόδ' εὗδει. ἀντ. β'

ΧΟΡΟΣ δ'

ἄλις γόων, ἄλις τύχας,
ἄλις δ' ἀλγέων ἐμοὶ πάρεστιν.

ΠΑΙΣ ε'

1150 ἔτ' Ἀσωποῦ με δέξεται γάνος
χαλκέοις ἐν ὅπλοις Δαναΐδῶν στρατηλάταν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ε'

τοῦ φθιμένου πατρὸς ἐκδικαστάν.

ΠΑΙΣ ζ'

ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν σε, πάτερ, ἐπ' ὁμμάτων δοκῶ— στρ. γ'

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζ'

φίλον φίλημα παρὰ γένυν τιθέντα σόν.

SUPPLIANTS

SECOND CHILD

(Str. 2)

They are gone! No sons hast thou any more—they
are lost!— [ghost.
Alas for my father!—through void air drifts each 1140

SECOND MOTHER

They crumbled to ashes mid flame as they lay,
And to Hades now have they winged their way.

THIRD CHILD

O my father, the wail of thy sons ringeth down
unto thee.
Ah shall I ever bear shield, an avenger to be
Of thy blood?

THIRD MOTHER

God grant it, my child, to thy destiny!

FOURTH CHILD

(Ant. 2)

My father's avenging!—one day unto me shall it
come, [the tomb.
If God will:—the wrong sleepeth not by his side in

FOURTH MOTHER

Ah, to-day's disaster and sorrow suffice:
Sufficeth the grief on mine heart that lies! 1150

FIFTH CHILD

Ha, yet shall they greet me, Asopus' ripples of light,
Leading the Danaans onward in brass-mail dight!

FIFTH MOTHER

A champion thou of thy perished father's right.

SIXTH CHILD

O father mine, methinks I see thee now— (Str. 3)

SIXTH MOTHER

Laying the kiss of love upon thy brow.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΠΑΙΣ ζ'
λόγων δὲ παρακέλευσμα σῶν
ἀέρι φερόμενον οἴχεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζ'
δυοῖν δ' ἄχη, ματέρι τ' ἔλιπε—
σέ τ' οὕποτ' ἄλγη πατρῷα λείψει.

ΠΑΙΣ ζ'
ἔχω τοσόνδε βάρος ὅσον μ' ἀπώλεσεν. ἀντ. γ'

1160 ΧΟΡΟΣ ζ'
φέρ', ἀμφὶ μαστὸν ὑποβάλω σποδόν.

ΠΑΙΣ ζ'
ἐκλαυσα τόδε κλύων ἔπος
στυγνότατον· ἔθιγέ μου φρενῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζ'
ὦ τέκνον, ἔβας· οὐκέτι φίλον
φίλας ἄγαλμ' ὅψομαί σε ματρός.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ
"Ἄδραστε καὶ γυναικες Ἀργεῖαι γένος,
ὅρᾶτε παιᾶς τούσδ' ἔχοντας ἐν χεροῦν
πατέρων ἀρίστων σώμαθ' ὃν ἀνειλόμην.
τούτοις ἐγώ σφε καὶ πόλις δωρούμεθα.
ὑμᾶς δὲ τῶνδε χρὴ χάριν μεμνημένους
σφέζειν, ὁρῶντας ὃν ἐκύρσατ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ.
παισὶν δ' ὑπεῦπον τοῖσδε τοὺς αὐτοὺς λόγους,
τιμᾶν πόλιν τήνδ', ἐκ τέκνων ἀεὶ τέκνοις
μνήμην παραγγέλλοντας ὃν ἐκύρσατε.
Ζεὺς δὲ ξυνίστωρ οἵ τ' ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοὶ¹
οἶων ὑφ' ἡμῶν στείχετ' ἡξιωμένοι.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
Θησεῦ, ξύνισμεν πάνθ' ὅσ' Ἀργείαν χθόνα
δέδρακας ἐσθλὰ δεομένην εὐεργετῶν,

SUPPLIANTS

SIXTH CHILD

But thy words of exhorting are come to naught ;
They are wafted afar on the wind's wing caught.

SIXTH MOTHER

Unto twain is anguish bequeathed, unto me,
And grief for thy father shall ne'er leave thee.

SEVENTH CHILD

By this my burden am I all undone ! (Ant. 3) 1160

SEVENTH MOTHER

Let me embrace the ashes of my son !

SEVENTH CHILD

I weep to hearken thy piteous word,
Most piteous—the depths of mine heart hath it
stirred.

SEVENTH MOTHER

O son, thou art gone : never more shall I gaze
On the light of thy mother, thy glorious face !

THESEUS

Adrastus, and ye dames of Argive race,
Ye see these children bearing in their hands
The dust of gallant sires whom I redeemed :
That dust do I and Athens give to these.
But ye must guard the memory of this grace,
Keeping my boon for aye before your eyes ;
And on these boys I lay the selfsame charge,
To honour Athens, and from son to son
To pass on like a watchword this our boon.
Lo, Zeus is witness, and the Gods in heaven,
How honoured and how favoured hence ye pass.

1170

ADRASTUS

Theseus, our hearts know all thy noble deeds
To Argos, and thy kindness in her need.

595

q q 2

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

χάριν τ' ἀγήρων ἔξομεν· γενναῖα γὰρ
παθόντες ὑμᾶς ἀντιδρᾶν ὀφείλομεν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

1180 τί δῆτ' ἔθ' ὑμῖν ἄλλ' ὑπουργῆσαι με χρή;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

χαῖρ· ἄξιος γὰρ καὶ σὺ καὶ πόλις σέθευ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἔσται τάδ· ἄλλα καὶ σὺ τῶν αὐτῶν τύχοις.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἄκουε, Θησεῦ, τούσδ' Ἀθηναίας λόγους,
ἀ χρή σε δρᾶσαι, δρῶντα δ' ὠφελεῖν τάδε.
μὴ δῶς τάδ' ὀστᾶ τοῖσδ' ἐς Ἀργείαν χθόνα
παισὶν κομίζειν ῥᾳδίως οὕτω μεθείς,
ἄλλ' ἀντὶ τῶν σῶν καὶ πόλεως μοχθημάτων
πρῶτον λάβ' ὅρκον. τόνδε δ' ὁμοῦναι χρεὼν
Ἀδραστον· οὗτος κύριος, τύραννος ὅν,
πάσης ὑπὲρ γῆς Δαναϊδῶν ὅρκωμοτεῖν.

ο δ' ὅρκος ᔹσται, μήποτ' Ἀργείους χθόνα
εἰς τήνδ' ἐποίσειν πολέμιον παντευχίαν,
ἄλλων τ' ἴοντων ἐμποδῶν θήσειν δόρυ.
ἢν δ' ὅρκον ἐκλιπόντες ἔλθωσιν πόλιν,
κακῶς ὀλέσθαι πρόστρεπτ' Ἀργείων χθόνα.
ἐν φ' δὲ τέμνειν σφάγια χρή σ', ἄκουε μου.
ἔστιν τρίπους σοι χαλκόπους εἴσω δόμων,
δν Ἰλίου ποτ' ἔξαναστήσας βάθρα

σπουδὴν ἐπ' ἄλλην Ἡρακλῆς ὁρμώμενος
στῆσαι σ' ἐφεῖτο Πυθικὴν πρὸς ἐσχάραν.
ἐν τῷδε λαιμοὺς τρεῖς τριῶν μῆλων τεμῶν
ἔγγυραψον ὅρκους τρίποδος ἐν κοίλῳ κύτει,
κάπειτα σφέσιν θεῷ δὸς φ' Δελφῶν μέλει,
μνημεῖά θ' ὅρκων μαρτύρημά θ' Ἐλλάδι.
ἢ δ' ἀν διοίξης σφάγια καὶ τρώσης φόνον,

1190

1200

SUPPLIANTS

Our love shall ne'er wax old : ye havē dealt with us
Nobly : your debtors owe you like for like.

THESEUS

What service yet remains that I may render ? 1180

ADRASTUS

Fare well : for thou art worthy—thou and Athens.

THESEUS

So be it. The same fortune light on thee.

ATHENA appears in her chariot above the temple-roof.

ATHENA

Give ear, O Theseus, to Athena's hest

What thou must do—for Athens' service do :—

Yield thou not up thus lightly yonder bones

For these their sons to bear to Argive land.

Nay, first, for thine and Athens' travail's sake,

An oath take of them. Let Adrastus swear—

He answereth for them, despot of their folk,

For all troth of the land of Danaus' sons :—

1190

Be this the oath,—that never Argive men

Shall bear against this land array of war ;

If others come, their spear shall bar the way.

If they break oath, and come against our town,

Call down on Argos miserable ruin.

And where to slay the victims hear me tell :

Thou hast a brazen tripod in thine halls,

Which Hercules, from Ilium's overthrow

Hasting upon another mighty task,

Bade thee to set up at the Pythian hearth.

1200

O'er this three throats of three sheep sever thou,

And in the tripod's hollow grave the oath.

Then give it to the Delphian God to guard,

Token of oaths and witness unto Hellas. [gashed

And that keen knife, wherewith thou shalt have

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

οξύστομον μάχαιραν ἐς γαίας μυχοὺς
κρύψον παρ' αὐτὰς ἐπτὰ πυρκαιάς νεκρῶν.
φόβον γὰρ αὐτοῖς, ἦν ποτ' ἔλθωσιν πόλιν,
δειχθεῖσα θήσει καὶ κακὸν νόστον πάλιν.

- 1210 δράσας δὲ ταῦτα πέμπε γῆς ἔξω νεκρούς.
τεμένη δ', ἵν' αὐτῶν σώμαθ' ἡγνίσθη πυρί,
μέθεις παρ' αὐτὴν τρίοδον Ἰσθμίαν θεῷ.
σοὶ μὲν τάδ' εἰπον· παισὶ δ' Ἀργείων λέγω·
πορθήσεθ' ἡβήσαντες Ἰσμηνοῦ πόλιν,
πατέρων θανόντων ἐκδικάζοντες φόνον,
σύ τ' ἀντὶ πατρός, Αἴγιαλεν, στρατηλάτης
νέος καταστάς, παῖς τ' ἀπ' Αἰτωλῶν μολὼν
Τυδέως, δὲν ὀνόμαζε Διομήδην πατήρ.
ἀλλ' οὐ φθάνειν χρὴ συσκιάζοντας γένυν
1220 καὶ χαλκοπληθῆ Δαναΐδῶν ὄρμᾶν στρατὸν
ἐπτάστομον πύργωμα Καδμείων ἔπι.
πικροὶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἥξετ', ἐκτεθραμμένοι
σκυμνοὶ λεόντων, πόλεος ἐκπορθήτορες.
κούκ τοτεν ἄλλως· Ἐπίγονοι δ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδα
κληθέντες ὠδὰς ὑστέροισι θήσετε·
τοῖον στράτευμα σὺν θεῷ πορεύσετε.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

- 1230 δέσποιν· Ἀθάνα, πείσομαι λόγοισι σοῖς·
σὺ γάρ μ' ἀνορθοῖς, ὥστε μὴ ἔξαμαρτάνειν
καὶ τὸνδ' ἐν ὄρκοις ζεύξομαι· μόνον σύ με
εἰς ὄρθὸν ἵστη· σοῦ γὰρ εὐμενοῦς πόλει
οὔσης τὸ λοιπὸν ἀσφαλῶς οἰκήσομεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχωμεν, "Αδρασθ", ὄρκια δῶμεν
τῷδ' ἀνδρὶ πόλει τ'. ἄξια δ' ἡμῖν
προμεμοχθήκασι σέβεσθαι.

SUPPLIANTS

The victims with the death-wound, bury thou
In the earth's depths hard by the seven pyres.

For, if they march on Athens ever, this, [shame.
Shown them, shall daunt, and turn them back with
This done, then send the dead dust forth the land. 1210

The precinct where fire purified their limbs
Be the God's Close, by those three Isthmian ways.
This to thee : now to the Argives' sons I speak.
Ye shall, to man grown, waste Ismenus' town
In vengeance for the slaughter of dead sires.
Thou in thy sire's stead, Aegialeus,¹ shalt be
Their young chief : from Aetolia Tydeus' son,
Named Diomedes of his sire, shall come.

When beards your cheeks are shadowing, tarry not
To hurl a brazen-harnessed Danaid host 1220
On the Cadmean seven-gated hold.
Bitter to them, the lions' whelps full-grown
To strength, to sack their city shall ye come.
This is sure doom. "The After-born" through
Hellas

Named, shall ye kindle song in days to be ;
Such war-array with God's help shall ye lead.

THESEUS

Athena, Queen, thy words will I obey :
Thou guid'st me ever that I may not err.
Him will I bind with oaths : only do thou
Still lead me aright ; for, gracious while thou art 1230
To Athens, shall we ever safely dwell.

CHORUS

On pass we, Adrastus, and take oath-plight
Unto Theseus and Athens. That worship requite
Their travail for us, is meet and right.

[*Exeunt OMNES.*

¹ Son of Adrastus.

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