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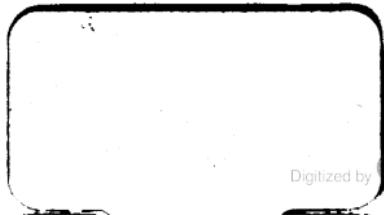
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# Sophocles



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**SOPHOCLES**  
**II**



# SOPHOCLES

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY  
F. STORR, B.A.

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IN TWO VOLUMES

II

AJAX  
ELECTRA TRACHINIAE  
PHILOCTETES



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# AJAX

**VOL. II.**

**B**



## ARGUMENT

The arms of Achilles, claimed by Ajax as the bravest warrior in the host, were through intrigue given to Odysseus, and Ajax vows vengeance both on the winner and on the awarders of the prize. But Athena, his patron goddess, whom his arrogance has estranged, sends him a delusion so that he mistakes for his foes the sheep and cattle of the Greeks. Athena, when the play opens, is discovered conversing with Odysseus outside the tent of Ajax; she will show him his mad foe mauling the beasts within. The mad fit passes and Ajax bewails his insensate folly and declares that death alone can wipe out the shame. His wife Tecmessa and the Chorus try to dissuade him, but he will not be comforted and calls for his son Eurysaces. The child is brought, and after leaving his last injunctions for his brother Teucer, Ajax takes a tender farewell. He then fetches his sword from the tent and goes forth declaring that he will purge himself of his stains and bury his sword. Presently a Messenger from the camp announces that Teucer has returned from his foray and has learnt from Calchas, the seer, that if only Ajax can be kept within the camp for that day all may yet be well. The Chorus and Tecmessa set forth in quest of Ajax, and Tecmessa discovers him lying transfixed by his sword. Teucer finds the mourners gathered round the corpse and is preparing to bury him, when Menelaus hurries up to forbid the burial. After an angry wrangle with Teucer, Menelaus departs, but is succeeded by Agamemnon, who enforces his brother's veto and is hardly persuaded by Odysseus to relent. Ajax is carried by his Salaminians to his grave, a grave (so they prophesy) that shall be famous for all time.

## **ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ**

**ΑΘΗΝΑ  
ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ  
ΑΙΑΣ  
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΣΑΛΑΜΙΝΙΩΝ ΝΑΥΤΩΝ  
ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ  
ΑΙΓΓΕΛΟΣ  
ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ  
ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ  
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ**

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

**ATHENA.**

**ODYSSEUS,** *King of Ithaca.*

**AJAX,** *son of Telamon and Euboea, leader of the men of Salamis.*

**TECMESSA,** *his captive wife, daughter of Telenas, King of Phrygia.*

**EURYSACES,** *their infant son.*

**TEUCER,** *son of Telamon by Hesione.*

**MENELAUS,** *King of Sparta.*

**AGAMEMNON,** *his brother, captain of the host.*

**MESSENGER,** *one of Ajax's men.*

**CHORUS,** *Mariners of Salamis.*

**SCENE:** The shore on the Northern coast of the Troad  
**before the tent of Ajax.** **TIME:** Early morning.

## ΑΙΑΣ

### ΑΘΗΝΑ

Ἄει μέν, ὡ παῖ Λαρτίου, δέδορκά σε  
πεῖράν τιν' ἐχθρῶν ἀρπάσαι θηρώμενον.  
καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ σκηναῖς σε ναυτικαῖς ὄρῳ  
Αἴαντος, ἐνθα τάξιν ἐσχάτην ἔχει,  
πάλαι κυνηγετοῦντα καὶ μετρούμενον  
ἴχνη τὰ κείνου νεοχάραχθ', ὅπως ἵδῃς  
εἴτ' ἐνδον εἴτ' οὐκ ἐνδον. εὐ δέ σ' ἐκφέρει  
κυνὸς Λακαίνης ὡς τις εὔρινος βάσις.  
ἐνδον γάρ ἀνὴρ ἄρτι τυγχάνει, κάρα  
στάζων ἰδρῶτι καὶ χέρας ξιφοκτόνους.  
καὶ σ' οὐδὲν εἴσω τῆσδε παπταίνειν πύλης  
ἔτ' ἔργον ἐστίν, ἐννέπειν δ' ὅτου χάριν  
σπουδὴν ἔθου τήνδ', ὡς παρ' εἰδυίας μάθης.

### ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ

ὦ φθέγγμ' Ἀθάνας, φιλτάτης ἐμοὶ θεῶν,  
ώς εὐμαθές σου, κὰν ἀποπτος ἦς ὅμως,  
φώνημ' ἀκούω καὶ ξυναρπάζω φρενὶ<sup>την</sup>  
χαλκοστόμου κώδωνος ώς Τυρσηνικῆς.  
καὶ νῦν ἐπέγνωσιν μ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ δυσμενεῖ  
βάσιν κυκλοῦντ', Αἴαντι τῷ σακεσφόρῳ.

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## AJAX

*Enter ODYSSEUS, scanning recent footprints in the sand  
ATHENA, invisible to ODYSSEUS, is seen by the  
spectators above the stage in the air.*

### ATHENA

Son of Laertes, ever on the prowl  
To seize some coign of vantage 'gainst thy foes,  
Now at the tent of Ajax by the ships,  
Where he is posted on the flank, I see thee  
Following the trail and scanning his fresh tracks,  
To learn if Ajax be within or no.  
Bravely thy long search brings thee to the goal,  
Like a keen-scented hound of Spartan breed ;  
The man has even now returned, his brow  
Bedewed with sweat and hands besmeared with gore  
No further need to peer within these doors ;  
Say rather what the purpose of thy search  
Thus keenly urged, and learn from one who knows.

### ODYSSEUS

Voice of Athena, Goddess most by me  
Beloved, how clearly, though I see thee not,  
Those accents strike my ear and thrill my soul,  
Like some Tyrrhenian trumpet, brazen-mouthed.  
Yea, thou hast well divined why thus I cast  
About in hot pursuance of a foe,  
Ajax, the bearer of the seven-fold shield :

κεῖνον γάρ, ὁὐδέν' ἄλλον, ἵχνεύω πάλαι.  
 νυκτὸς γὰρ θῆμᾶς τῆσδε πρᾶγος ἀσκοπον  
 ἔχει πεμάνας, εἴπερ εἴργασται τάδε·  
 ἵσμεν γὰρ οὐδὲν τρανές, ἀλλ' ἀλώμεθα·  
 κάγῳ 'θελοντὴς τῷδ' ὑπεζύγην πόνῳ.  
 ἐφθαρμένας γὰρ ἀρτίως εὐρίσκομεν  
 λείας ἀπάσας καὶ κατηναρισμένας  
 ἐκ χειρὸς αὐτοῖς ποιμνίων ἐπιστάταις.  
 τήνδ' οὖν ἐκείνῳ πᾶς τις αἰτίαν νέμει.  
 καὶ μοί τις ὀπτὴρ αὐτὸν εἰσιδὼν μόνον  
 πηδῶντα πεδία σὺν νεορράντῳ ξίφει  
 φρύξει τε κάδήλωσεν· εὐθέως δὲ ἐγὼ  
 κατ' ἵχνος ἀσσω, καὶ τὰ μὲν σημαίνομαι,  
 τὰ δὲ ἐκπέπληγμαι κούκ ἔχω μαθεῦν ὅτου.  
 καιρὸν δὲ ἐφήκεις· πάντα γὰρ τά τ' οὖν πάρος  
 τά τ' εἰσέπειτα σῇ κυβερνῶμαι χερί.

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἔγνων, 'Οδυσσεῦ, καὶ πάλαι φύλαξ ἔβην  
 τῇ σῇ πρόθυμος εἰς οὐδὸν κυναγίᾳ.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἢ καί, φίλη δέσποινα, πρὸς καιρὸν πονῶ;

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

ώς ἔστιν ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε τάργα ταῦτά σοι.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

καὶ πρὸς τί δυσλόγιστον ὡδὲ ήξεν χέρα;

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

χόλῳ βαρυνθεὶς τῶν Ἀχιλλείων ὅπλων.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τί δῆτα ποίμναις τήνδ' ἐπεμπίπτει βάσιν;

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

δοκῶν ἐν ὑμῖν χείρα χραίνεσθαι φόνῳ.

## AJAX

Him and none other I have tracked full long.  
Last night a monstrous thing he wrought on us,  
If it be he in sooth—'tis all surmise.  
So for the hard task of discovery  
I volunteered. This very morn we found  
Our herds, the spoil of war, all hacked and hewn,  
Slain with their herdsmen by some human hand.  
On him with one consent all lay the guilt :  
And by a scout who marked him o'er the plain,  
In mad career, alone, with reeking sword,  
I duly was informed, and instantly  
I sped upon the spoor, and now the tracks  
I recognise, and now am all at fault,  
Without a clue to tell me whose they are.  
Most welcome then thy advent ; thine the hand  
That ever guided and shall guide my path.

ATHENA

I know, Odysseus, and set forth betimes  
To meet thee and abet thee in this chace.

ODYSSEUS

Tell me, dear mistress, will my quest succeed ?

ATHENA

Know that the guilty man is he thou seek'st.

ODYSSEUS

What moved him to this rash, insensate deed ?

ATHENA

Resentment touching dead Achilles' arms.

ODYSSEUS

Why did he fall upon the innocent sheep ?

ATHENA

He thought his hands were gory with *your* blood.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἢ καὶ τὸ βούλευμ' ὡς ἐπ' Ἀργείοις τόδ' ἦν;

ΑΘΗΝΑ

κανέξεπράξατ', εἰ κατημέλησ' ἐγώ.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ποίαισι τόλμαις ταῦσδε καὶ φρενῶν θράσει;

ΑΘΗΝΑ

νύκτωρ ἐφ' ὑμᾶς δόλιος ὄρμάται μόνος.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἢ καὶ παρέστη κάπι τέρμ' ἀφίκετο;

ΑΘΗΝΑ

καὶ δὴ πὶ δισσαῖς ἦν στρατηγίσιν πύλαις.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

καὶ πῶς ἐπέσχε χεῖρα μαιμῶσαν φόνου;

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἐγώ σφ' ἀπείργω, δυσφόρους ἐπέ<sup>τοργάλιν</sup> ὅμμασι γνώμας βαλοῦσα τῆς ἀνηκέστον χαρᾶς, καὶ πρός τε ποίμνας ἐκτρέπω σύμμικτά τε λείας ἄδαστα βουκόλων φροντήματα·

ἔνθ' εἰσπεσὼν ἔκειρε πολύκερων φόνου κύκλῳ ραχίζων· καδόκει μὲν ἔσθ' ὅτε δισσοὺς Ἀτρείδας αὐτόχειρ κτείνειν ἔχων, ὅτ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλον ἐμπίτυνων στρατηλατῶν. ἐγὼ δὲ φοιτῶντ' ἄνδρα μανιάσιν νόσοις ὕτρυνον, εἰσέβαλλον ~~τοις~~ ἔρκη κακά.

κάπειτ' ἐπειδὴ τοῦδ' ἐλώφησεν πόνου, τοὺς ζῶντας αὖ δεσμοῖσι συνδήσας βοῶν ποίμνας τε πάσας εἰς δόμους κομίζεται, ὡς ἄνδρας, οὐχ ὡς εὔκερων ἄγραν ἔχων, καὶ νῦν κατ' οἴκους συνδέτους αἰκίζεται. δείξω δὲ καὶ σοὶ τήνδε περιφανῆ νόσον, ὡς πᾶσιν Ἀργείοισιν εἰσιδῶν θροῆς,

50

60

## AJAX

ODYSSEUS

What, was this onslaught planned against the Greeks?

ATHENA

Aye, and it had succeeded, but for me.

ODYSSEUS

How could he venture such fool-hardiness?

ATHENA

He schemed a night attack, by stealth, alone.

ODYSSEUS

And did he reach us and arrive his goal?

ATHENA

At the tent door of the two chiefs he stood.

ODYSSEUS

What then arrested him athirst for blood?

ATHENA

I, by the strong delusion that I sent,  
A vision of the havoc he should make.  
I turned his wrath aside upon the flocks  
And the promiscuous cattle in the charge  
Of drovers, booty not apportioned yet.  
On them he fell and hewing right and left  
Dealt death among the hornèd herd ; and now  
It was the two Atridae whom he slew,  
And now a third, and now some other chief.  
'Twas I that goaded him while thus distraught,  
And thrust him deeper in the coils of fate.  
Then pausing in this toil he turned to bind  
The oxen left alive with all the sheep,  
And drove them home, as if his spoil were men,  
And not poor innocent beasts with hoofs and horns,  
And now is mangling them fast bound within.  
Thou too this raving madness shalt behold,  
That thou mayst bruit the sight to all the Greeks.

θαρσῶν δὲ μίμνε μηδὲ συμφορὰν δέχουσαν τὸν ἄνδρον· ἐγὼ γάρ ὁμμάτων ἀποστρόφους αὐγὰς ἀπείρξω σὴν πρόσοψιν εἰσιδεῖν. οὗτος, σὲ τὸν τὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας χέρας δεσμοῖς ἀπευθύνοντα προσμολεῖν καλῶ· Άλιαντα φωνῶ· στείχε δωμάτων πάρος.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τί δρᾶς, Ἀθάνα; μηδαμῶς σφ' ἔξω κάλει.

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

οὐ σὺγ' ἀνέξει μηδὲ δειλίαν ἀρεῖ;

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν, ἀλλ' ἐνδον ἀρκείτω μένων.

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

τί μὴ γένηται; πρόσθεν οὐκ ἀνήρ ὅδ' ἵν;

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἔχθρος γε τῷδε τάνδρὶ καὶ ταῦτην ἔτι.

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

οὔκουν γέλως ἥδιστος εἰς ἔχθροὺς γελάν;

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀρκεῖ τοῦτον ἐν δόμοις μένειν.

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

μεμηνότ' ἄνδρα περιφανῶς ὀκνεῖς ἰδεῖν;

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

φρονοῦντα γάρ νιν οὐκ ἀν ἔξεστην ὀκνφ.

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ νῦν σε μὴ παρόντ' ἵδη πέλας.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

πῶς, εἴπερ ὀφθαλμοῖς γε τοῖς αὐτῷσι ὄρᾳ;

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἐγὼ σκοτώσω βλέφαρα καὶ δεδορκότα.

## AJAX

Be of good heart and stand thy ground ; no harm  
Shall come from him, for I will turn aside  
His vision, lest he should behold thy face.

(*To AJAX within the tent.*)

Ho, thou that bind'st with cords behind their backs  
Thy captives' hands, ho Ajax, hear'st thou not ?  
I summon thee to come before the tent.

ODYSSEUS

What dost thou, Goddess ? Nowise call him forth.

ATHENA

Bridle thy tongue ; earn not a coward's name.

ODYSSEUS

Nay, nay ; suffice it that he bide within.

ATHENA

What fear'st thou ? Is he not, as erst, a man ?

ODYSSEUS

Yea, and to me sworn foeman, and is still.

ATHENA

What mockery sweeter than to mock at foes ?

ODYSSEUS

Enough for me to hear of him within.

ATHENA

What, fear to see a madman face to face ?

ODYSSEUS

I had not quailed to face him, were he sane.

ATHENA

Insane, he shall not see thee now, though near.

ODYSSEUS

If he has eyes as erst, how can that be ?

ATHENA

I will obscure his vision, howe'er clear.

ΑΙΑΣ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

γένοιτο μένταν πᾶν θεοῦ τεχνωμένου.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

σίγα νυν ἔστως καὶ μέν' ὡς κυρεῖς ἔχων.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

μένοιμ' ἄν· ἥθελον δ' ἄν ἐκτὸς ὅν τυχεῖν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ὦ οὖτος, Λίας, δεύτερόν σε προσκαλῶ.  
τί βαιὸν οὕτως ἐντρέπει τῆς συμμάχου;

90

ΑΙΑΣ

ὦ χαῖρ' Ἀθάνα, χαῖρε Διογενὲς τέκνου,  
ώς εὐ παρέστης· καί σε παγχρύσοις ἐγὼ  
στέψω λαφύροις τῆσδε τῆς ἄγρας χάριν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνό μοι φράσον,  
ἔβαψας ἔγχος εὺ πρὸς Ἀργείων στρατῷ;

ΑΙΑΣ

κόμπος πάρεστι κούκ ἀπαρνοῦμαι τὸ μή.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἢ καὶ πρὸς Ἀτρείδαισιν ἥχμασας χέρα;

ΑΙΑΣ

ώστ' οὕποτ' Αἴανθ' οἵδ' ἀτιμάσουσ' ἔτι.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

τεθνᾶσιν ἄνδρες, ώς τὸ σὸν ξυνῆκ' ἐγώ.

ΑΙΑΣ

θανόντες ἥδη τάμ' ἀφαιρείσθων ὄπλα.

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ΑΘΗΝΑ

εἰεν, τί γὰρ δὴ παῖς ὁ τοῦ Λαερτίου,  
ποὺ σοι τύχης ἔστηκεν; ἢ πέφευγέ σε;

ΑΙΑΣ

ἢ τούπίτριπτον κίναδος ἔξηρου μ' ὄπου;

## AJAX

ODYSSEUS

Well, when a god works, all is possible.

ATHENA

Peace ! stand thy ground and budge not from the spot.

ODYSSEUS

So will I—yet had liefer been far hence.

ATHENA (*to AJAX*)

Ho, Ajax ! once again I summon thee.  
Say, why this scant regard for thine ally ?

*Enter AJAX.*

AJAX

Hail O Athena, Zeus-born maiden, hail !  
Thine aid how opportune ! for this I'll crown  
Thy shrine with votive spoils of purest gold.

ATHENA

Fair words ; but tell me, hast thou well imbrued  
Thy sword with carnage of the Argive host ?

AJAX

A glorious deed that I will not disclaim.

ATHENA

Haply thou has assailed the Atridae too ?

AJAX

So that they ne'er will outrage Ajax more.

ATHENA

If I interpret rightly, they are dead.

AJAX

Both dead ; now let them cheat me of my arms !

ATHENA

Good ; and how fares it with Laertes' son ?  
How hast thou left him ? or has he escaped ?

AJAX

He ! That sly fox—wouldst know what's come of him ?

**ΑΙΑΣ**

**ΑΘΗΝΑ**

ἔγωγ'· Ὁδυσσέα τὸν σὸν ἐνστάτην λέγω.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

ἥδιστος, ὡ δέσποινα, δεσμώτης ἔσω  
θακεῖ· θανεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸν οὐ τί πω θέλω.

**ΑΘΗΝΑ**

πρὶν ἀν τί δράσῃς ἢ τί κερδάνης πλέον;

**ΑΙΑΣ**

πρὶν ἀν δεθεὶς πρὸς κίον' ἔρκειον στέγης

**ΑΘΗΝΑ**

τί δῆτα τὸν δύστηνον ἐργάσει κακόν;

**ΑΙΑΣ**

μάστιγι πρῶτον υῶτα φοινιχθεὶς θάνη.

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**ΑΘΗΝΑ**

μὴ δῆτα τὸν δύστηνον ὥδε γ' αἰκίσῃ.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

χαίρειν, Ἀθάνα, τἄλλ' ἐγώ σ' ἐφίεμαι·  
κεῖνος δὲ τίσει τήνδε κούκ ἄλλην δίκην.

**ΑΘΗΝΑ**

σὺ δ' οὖν, ἐπειδὴ τέρψις ἥδε σοι τὸ δρᾶν,  
χρῶ χειρί, φείδου μηδὲν ὧνπερ ἐννοεῖς.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

χωρῶ πρὸς ἔργον· σοὶ δὲ τοῦτ' ἐφίεμαι,  
τοιάνδ' ἀεί μοι σύμμαχον παρεστάναι.

**ΑΘΗΝΑ**

όρᾶς, Ὁδυσσεῦ, τὴν θεῶν ἴσχὺν ὅση;  
τούτου τίς ἂν σοι τάνδρὸς ἢ προνούστερος  
ἢ δρᾶν ἀμείνων ηγρέθη τὰ καίρια;

**ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ**

ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδέν' οἰδ'· ἐποικτίρω δέ νιν  
δύστηνον ἔμπας, καίπερ ὅντα δισμενῆ,

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## AJAX

ATHENA

Of him—Odysseus, thy antagonist.

AJAX

A welcome guest he sits within, fast bound.  
I have no mind that he should die outright.

ATHENA

What would'st thou first? what further profit win?

AJAX

I'll bind him to a pillar of my tent.

ATHENA

What vengeance wilt thou wreak on the poor wretch?

AJAX

Flay with my scourge his back before he die.

ATHENA

O torture not the wretch so savagely.

AJAX

In all but this, Athena, have thy will;  
This and none else, must be his punishment.

ATHENA

Well, since it is thy pleasure, be it so:  
Lay on, abate no jot of thine intent.

AJAX

I will to work then, and I look to thee  
To be my true ally all times, as now.

[*Exit* AJAX.]

ATHENA

Odysseus, see how great the might of gods.  
Couldst thou have found a man more circumspect,  
Or one more prompt for all emergencies?

ODYSSEUS

I know none such, and though he be my foe,  
I still must pity him in his distress.

## ΛΙΑΣ

όθούνεκ' ἄτη συγκατέζευκται κακῆ,  
οὐδὲν τὸ τούτου μᾶλλον ἢ τούμὸν σκοπῶν·  
όρω γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν δυτας ἄλλο πλὴν  
εἴδωλ' ὅσοιπερ ζῷμεν ἢ κούφην σκιάν.

### ΑΘΗΝΑ

τοιαῦτα τοίνυν εἰσορῶν ὑπέρκοπον  
μηδέν ποτ' εἴπης αὐτὸς εἰς θεοὺς ἔπος,  
μηδ' ὅγκον ἄρη μηδέν', εἴ τινος πλέον  
ἢ χειρὶ βρίθεις ἢ μακροῦ πλούτου βάθει.  
ώς ἡμέρα κλίνει τε κάναγει πάλιν  
ἀπιντα τάνθρωπεια· τοὺς δὲ σώφρονας  
θεοὶ φιλοῦσι καὶ στυγοῦσι τοὺς κακούς.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

Τελαμώνιε παῖ, τῆς ἀμφιρύτου  
Σαλαμῖνος ἔχων βάθρον ἀγχιάλου,  
σὲ μὲν εὖ πράσσοντ' ἐπιχαίρω·  
σὲ δ' ὅταν πληγὴ Διὸς ἢ ζαμενῆς  
λόγος ἐκ Δαναῶν κακόθρους ἐπιβῆ,  
μέγαν δκνον ἔχω καὶ πεφόβημαι  
πτηνῆς ὡς ὅμμα πελείας.

ώς καὶ τῆς νῦν φθιμένης νυκτὸς  
μεγάλοι θόρυβοι κατέχουσ' ἡμᾶς  
ἐπὶ δυσκλείᾳ, σὲ τὸν ἵππομανῆ  
λειμῶν' ἐπιβάντ' ὀλέσαι Δαναῶν  
βοτὰ καὶ λείαν,  
ἥπερ δορίληπτος ἔτ' ἦν λοιπή,  
κτείνοντ' αἴθωνι σιδήρῳ.  
τοιούσδε λόγους ψιθύρους πλάσσων  
εἰς ὧτα φέρει πᾶσιν Ὁδυσσεύς,

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## AJAX

Bound, hand and foot, to fatal destiny;  
And therein mind my case no less than his.  
Alas ! we living mortals, what are we  
But phantoms all or unsubstantial shades ?

### ATHENA

Warned by these sights, Odysseus, see that thou  
Utter no boastful word against the gods,  
Nor swell with pride if haply might of arm  
Exalt thee o'er thy fellows, or vast wealth.  
A day can prostrate and a day upraise  
All that is mortal ; but the gods approve  
Sobriety and frowardness abhor.

[*Exeunt ATHENA and ODYSSEUS.* *Enter CHORUS.*

### CHORUS

Son of Telamon, thou whose isle,  
Sea-girt Salamis, doth smile  
O'er the surge, thy joys I share  
When thy fortunes promise fair ;  
But if stroke of Zeus assail,  
Or the slanderous tongues prevail  
Of the Danaï, to blast  
Thy repute, I cower aghast,  
Like a dove with quivering eye.  
For of yesternight there fly  
Bitter plaints and loud-voiced blame  
Crowding on us to our shame—  
How thou speddest o'er the meads  
Rich in troops of unbacked steeds,  
And with flashing sword didst slay  
All the yet unparted prey  
Of the Greeks, in foray ta'en,  
Spoiling all their hard earned gain.  
Such the scandal, as we hear,  
Odysseus breathes in every ear ;

καὶ σφόδρα πείθει· περὶ γὰρ σοῦ νῦν  
εὑπειστα λέγει, καὶ πᾶς ὁ κλύων  
τοῦ λέξαντος χαίρει μᾶλλον  
τοὺς σοῖς ἄχεσιν καθυβρίζων.  
τῶν γὰρ μεγάλων ψυχῶν ἵεις  
οὐκ ἀν ἀμάρτοις· κατὰ δ' ἂν τις ἐμοῦ  
τοιαῦτα λέγων οὐκ ἀν πείθοι·  
πρὸς γὰρ τὸν ἔχονθ' ὁ φθόνος ἔρπει.  
καίτοι σμικροὶ μεγάλων χωρὶς  
σφαλερὸν πύργου ρύμα πέλονται·  
μετὰ γὰρ μεγάλων βαιὸς ἄριστ' ἀν  
καὶ μέγας ὁρθοῖθ' ὑπὸ μικροτέρων.  
ἀλλ' οὐ δυνατὸν τοὺς ἀνοήτους  
τούτων γνώμας προδιδάσκειν.  
ὑπὸ τοιούτων ἀνδρῶν θορυβεῖ  
χῆμεῖς οὐδὲν σθένομεν πρὸς ταῦτ'  
ἀπαλέξασθαι σοῦ χωρίς, ἄναξ.  
ἀλλ' ὅτε γὰρ δὴ τὸ σὸν δῆμον ἀπέδραν,  
παταγοῦσιν ἀπέρ πτηνῶν ἀγέλαι·  
μέγαν αἰγυπιὸν δ'<sup>1</sup> ὑποδείσαντες  
τάχ' ἀν ἔξαιφνης, εἰ σὺ φανείης,  
σιγῇ πτήξειαν ἄφωνοι.

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ἡ ῥά σε Ταυροπόλα Διὸς Ἀρτεμις—  
ῳ μεγάλα φάτις, ὡ  
μᾶτερ αἰσχύνας ἐμᾶς—  
ῷρμασε πανδάμους ἐπὶ βοῦς ἀγελαίας,  
ἡ πού τινος νίκας ἀκάρπωτον χάριν,  
ἢ ῥά κλυτῶν ἐνάρων  
ψευσθεῖσ', ἀδώροις,<sup>2</sup> εἴτ' ἐλαφαβολίας;

στρ.

<sup>1</sup> Dawes adds δ'.<sup>2</sup> ψευσθεῖσα δάροις MSS., Stephanus corr.

## AJAX

And he wins belief, for now  
Thou dost seem thy guilt to avow,  
And the rumour spreads and swells.  
Even more than he who tells,  
Every hearer takes delight  
In thy woes, for envious spite.      \*\*  
So it falls ; the noblest heart  
Is a target for each dart ;  
Aimed at me such shafts would fail :  
Envy doth the great assail.  
Yet without the great the small  
Ill could guard the city wall ;  
Leagued together small and great  
Best defend the common state.  
Fools this precept will not heed,  
And these men are fools indeed  
Who against thee rail ; and we  
Can do nothing without thee,  
To confound their charge, O King.  
Like to birds they flap the wing,  
And chatter, when they 'scape thine eye ;  
But if hovering in the sky  
The great vulture should appear,  
Mute they cower in sudden fear.

Was it the Tauric Artemis, Jove's daughter,    (*Str.*)  
(O dread report, begetter of my shame !)  
Drove thee the flocks, our common stock, to  
slaughter ?  
Didst thou in victory rob her of her claim  
To tithe of spoil, her part,  
When to thy bow there fell some noble hart ?

ἡ χαλκοθώραξ μή τιν' <sup>1</sup> Ἐυνάλιος  
μομφὰν ἔχων ξυνοῦ δορὸς ἐνυγχίοις  
μαχαναῖς ἐτίσατο λώβαν;

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ἀντ.

οὐ ποτε γάρ φρενόθεν γ' ἐπ' ἀριστερά,  
πᾶν Τελαμῶνος, ἔβας  
τόσσου, ἐν ποίμναις πίτνων.  
ἥκοι γάρ ἀν θεία νόσος· ἀλλ' ἀπερύκοι  
καὶ Ζεὺς κακὰν καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀργείων φάτιν.  
εἰ δ' ὑποβαλλόμενοι  
κλέπτουσι μύθους οἱ μεγάλοι βασιλῆς  
ἢ τᾶς ἀσώτου Σισυφιδᾶν γενεᾶς,  
μὴ μή, ἄναξ, ἔθ' ὡδ' ἐφάλοις κλισίαις  
δομῇ ἔχων κακὰν φάτιν ἄρῃ.

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ἀλλ' ἄνα ἐξ ἐδράνων, ὅπου μακραίωνι  
στηρίζει ποτὲ τῷδ' ἀγωνίφ σχολᾶ  
ἄταν οὐρανίαν φλέγων.  
έχθρων δ' ὕβρις ὡδ' ἀτάρβητα  
ορμάται ἐν εὐανέμοις βάσσαις,  
πάντων καγχαζόντων  
γλώσσαις βαρυάλγητα.  
ἔμοι δ' ἄχος ἐστακεν.

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## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ναὸς ἀρωγοὶ τῆς Αἴαντος,  
γενεᾶς χθονίων ἀπ' Ἐρεχθειδῶν,  
ἔχομεν στοναχὰς οἱ κηδομενοὶ  
τοῦ Τελαμῶνος τηλόθεν οἴκου.  
νῦν γάρ ὁ δεινὸς μέγας ὡμοκρατής  
Αἴας θολερῷ  
κεῖται χειμῶνι νοσήσας.

<sup>1</sup> η τιν' MSS., Musgrave corr.

## AJAX

Or did the mail-clad God of War resent  
Thy negligence thank-offering to pay?  
By him at night was the delusion sent  
That led astray?

(*Ant.*)

Ne'er wouldest thou, Ajax, of thine own intent  
Have wrought this havoc and the cattle slain.  
Such frenzy comes from Heaven in punishment.  
(Zeus and Apollo prove the rumour vain!)  
And if the great chiefs falsely charge thee, King,  
Spreading foul scandal, or the accursed race  
Of Sisyphus,<sup>1</sup> let not this ill fame cling  
To us thy friends; no longer hide thy face,  
Quit, we implore,  
Thy tent upon the shore.

Rouse thee, my King, where'er thou sittest brooding;  
Too long thou mak'st the stour of battle cease,  
While in the camp red ruin flames to heaven,  
And, like the west wind soughing in the trees,  
Unchecked the mockery goes  
Of thy o'erweening foes.  
My woe no respite knows!

*Enter TECMESSA from the tent.*

### TECMESSA

Crew of Ajax, men who trace  
Back to Erechtheus your famed race,  
Woe is ours who muse upon  
The far-off house of Telamon;  
For our lord of dreaded might  
Stricken lies in desperate plight,  
And his soul is dark as night.

<sup>1</sup> Odysseus, reputed son of Sisyphus, not Laertes.

ΑΙΑΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἐνήλλακται τῆς ἡμερίας  
νὺξ ἥδε βάρος;  
παῖ τοῦ Φρυγίου Τελεύταντος,  
λέγ', ἐπεὶ σὲ λέχος δουριάλωτον  
στέρεξας ἀνέχει θούριος Αἴας·  
ῶστ' οὐκ ἀν αἰδρις ὑπείποις.

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ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

πῶς δῆτα λέγω λόγον ἄρρητον;  
θανάτῳ γὰρ ἵσον βάρος ἐκπεύσει.  
μανίᾳ γὰρ ἀλοὺς ἡμὶν ὁ κλεινὸς  
νύκτερος Αἴας ἀπελωβήθη.  
τοιαῦτ' ἀν ἵδοις σκηνῆς ἔνδον  
χειροδάϊκτα σφάγι' αίμοβαφη,  
κείνου χρηστήρια τάνδρός.

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ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἶαν ἐδήλωσας ἀνέρος<sup>1</sup> αἴθονος  
ἀγγελίαν ἄτλατον οὐδὲ φευκτάν,  
τῶν μεγάλων Δαναῶν ὅπο κληζομέναν,  
τὰν ὁ μέγας μῦθος ἀέξει.  
οἵμοι φοβοῦμαι τὸ προσέρπον· περίφαντος ἀνὴρ  
θανεῖται, παραπλάκτω χερὶ συγκατακτὰς  
κελαινοῖς ξίφεσιν βοτὰ καὶ βοτῆρας ἴππονώμας.

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ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ῶμοι· κεῖθεν κεῖθεν ἄρ' ἡμῖν  
δεσμῶτιν ἄγων ἥλυθε ποίμνην·  
ὦν τὴν μὲν ἔσω σφάζει ἐπὶ γαίας,  
τὰ δὲ πλευροκοπῶν δίχ' ἀνερρήγνυν.  
δύο δ' ἀργύριοδας κριοὺς ἀνελῶν  
τοῦ μὲν κεφαλὴν καὶ γλῶσσαν ἄκραν

<sup>1</sup> MSS. ἀνδρὸς.

## AJAX

### CHORUS

What the change so grievous, say,  
Of the morn from yesterday ?  
Daughter of Teleutas, tell ;  
Stalwart Ajax loves thee well,  
Thee his spear-won bride ; 'tis thine  
What befalls him to divine.

### TECMESSA

Ah, how tell a tale so drear ?  
Sad as death what thou shalt hear  
Of great Ajax, undone quite,  
Smit with madness, in the night.  
Look within and see the floor  
Reeking with his victims' gore ;  
Slain by his own hand there lies  
His ungodly sacrifice.

### CHORUS

O fatal tidings of the hot-brained chief; (*Str.*)  
Intolerable, yet without relief !  
What flagrant charge amid the Greek host goes  
That spread by rumour grows ?  
Ah me, doom stalks amain !  
And if with his dark blade the man hath slain  
The herds and mounted herdsmen, sure he dies,  
A malefactor shamed before all eyes.

### TECMESSA

Ah me, 'twas thence I saw him come  
Driving his captive cattle home.  
Of some he gashed the throats amain,  
There where they stood upon the ground ;  
And some were ripped and rent in twain.  
Then two white-footed rams he found ;

## ΑΙΑΣ

ριπτεῖ θερίσας, τὸν δ' ὄρθὸν ἄνω  
κίονι δήσας  
μέγαν ἵπποδέτην ῥυτῆρα λαβὼν  
παίει λιγυρῷ μάστιγι διπλῇ,  
κακὰ δευνάζων ῥήμαθ', ἀ δαίμων  
κούδεὶς ἀνδρῶν ἐδίδαξεν.

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## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώρα τιν' ἡδη τοι κράτα καλύμμασι  
κρυψάμενον ποδοῦν κλοπὰν ἀρέσθαι  
ἡ θοὸν εἰρεσίας ζυγὸν ἔχόμενον  
ποντοπόρῳ ναť μεθεῖναι.  
τοίας ἐρέσσουσιν ἀπειλὰς δικρατεῖς Ἀτρεῖδαι  
καθ' ἡμῶν· πεφόβημαι λιθόλευστον Ἀρη  
ξυναλγεῖν μετὰ τοῦδε τυπείς, τὸν αἰσ'  
ἄπλατος ἴσχει.

ἀντ.

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## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οὐκέτι· λαμπρᾶς γὰρ ἄτερ στεροπῆς  
ἄξας ὁξὺς νότος ὡς λήγει,  
καὶ νῦν φρόνιμος νέον ἄλγος ἔχει  
τὸ γὰρ ἐσλεύσειν οἰκεῖα πάθη,  
μηδενὸς ἄλλου παραπράξαντος,  
μεγάλας ὁδύνας ὑποτείνει.

26

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὶ πέπαυται, κάρτ' ἀν εὔτυχεῖν δοκῶ·  
φρούδον γὰρ ἡδη τοῦ κακοῦ μείων λόγος.

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

πότερα δ' ἄν, εὶ νέμοι τις αἴρεσιν, λάβοις,  
φίλους ἀνιῶν αὐτὸς ἡδονὰς ἔχειν,  
ἡ κοινὸς ἐν κοινοῖσι λυπεῖσθαι ξυνών;

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τό τοι διπλάζον, ὡ γύναι, μεῖζον κακόν,

26

## AJAX

Of one, beheaded first, the tongue  
He snipped, then far the carcase flung.  
The other to a pillar lashed  
Erect, with doubled rein, he thrashed,  
And as he plied the whistling thong  
He uttered imprecations strong,  
Dread words a god, no man, had taught.

### CHORUS

'Tis time to veil the head and steal away      (*Ant.*)  
On foot, or straight embarking ply the oar,  
And let the good ship bear us from the bay ;  
Such bitter threats the Atridae on us pour.  
Me too, if I be by him, they will stone ;  
                He stands alone,  
                Fate marks him for her own.

### TECMESSA

No more ; for like the southern blast  
When lightnings flash, his rage is past.  
But, now he is himself again,  
Reviving memory brings new pain.  
What keener anguish than to know  
Thyself sole cause of self-wrought woe ?

### CHORUS

Nay, if he have surcease, good hope is mine  
All may be well, for men are less concerned  
With evil doing when the trouble's past.

### TECMESSA

Come tell me, which wouldst choose, if choice were  
free,  
To vex thy friends while thou thyself wert glad,  
Or share the pain, grieving with them that grieve ?

### CHORUS

The twofold sorrow, lady, is the worse.

## ΑΙΑΣ

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ήμεῖς ἄρ' οὐ νοσοῦντες ἀτώμεσθα νῦν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; οὐ κάτοιδ' ὅπως λέγεις.

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἀνὴρ ἐκεῖνος, ἡνίκ' ἦν τῇ νόσῳ,  
αὐτὸς μὲν ἥδεθ οἰσιν εἴχετ' ἐν κακοῖς,  
ἡμᾶς δὲ τοὺς φρονοῦντας ἡνία ξυνών·  
νῦν δ' ὡς ἔληξε κάνεπνευσε τῆς νόσου,  
κεῖνός τε λύπη πᾶς ἐλήλαται κακῆ  
ήμεῖς θ' ὁμοίως οὐδὲν ἥσσον ἢ πάρος.  
ἄρ' ἔστι ταῦτα δὶς τόσ' ἐξ ἀπλῶν κακά;

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ξύμφημι δή σοι καὶ δέδοικα μὴ 'κ θεοῦ  
πληγή τις ἥκη.<sup>1</sup> πῶς γάρ, εἰ πεπαυμένος  
μηδέν τι μᾶλλον ἢ νοσῶν εὐφραίνεται;

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ώς ὡδ' ἔχόντων τῶνδ' ἐπίστασθαι σε χρή.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς γάρ ποτ' ἀρχὴ τοῦ κακοῦ προσέπτατο;  
δήλωσον ἡμῖν τοῖς ξυναλγοῦσιν τύχας.

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἄπαν μαθήσει τοῦργον ὡς κοινωνὸς ὕν.  
κεῖνος γὰρ ἄκρας νυκτός, ἡνίχ' ἔσπεροι  
λαμπτῆρες οὐκέτ' ἥθον, ἄμφηκες λαβὼν  
ἐμαίετ' ἔγχος ἐξόδους ἔρπειν κενάς.  
κάγὼ πιπλήσσω καὶ λέγω· τί χρῆμα δρᾶς,  
Αἴας; τί τήνδ' ἄκλητος οὕθ' ὑπ' ἀγγέλων  
κληθεὶς ἀφορμᾶς πεῖραν οὔτε τοῦ κλύων  
σάλπιγγος; ἀλλὰ νῦν γε πᾶς εῦδει στρατός.  
ό δ' εἰπε πρός με βαί', ἀεὶ δ' ὑμνούμενα·

<sup>1</sup> ήκοι MSS., Suidas corr.

## AJAX

TECMESSA

Then are we losers now our plague is past.

CHORUS

What meanest thou ? it passes my poor wit.

TECMESSA

Yon man, while stricken, had himself delight  
In his sick fancies, though his presence grieved  
Us who were sane ; but now that he is whole,  
Eased of his frenzy, he is racked with grief,  
And we are no less troubled than before.  
Are there not here two ills in place of one ?

CHORUS

'Tis even so, and much I fear it prove  
A stroke from heaven, if indeed, now cured,  
He is no gladder than he was when sick.

TECMESSA

His case is as thou sayest, rest assured.

CHORUS

But tell us how the plague first struck him down.  
We share thy sorrow and would know it all.

TECMESSA

Hear then the story of our common woe.  
At dead of night when all the lamps were out,  
He took his two-edged sword, as if intent  
On some wild expedition. So I chid him,  
Saying, " What dost thou, Ajax, why go forth ?  
No summons, messenger or trumpet blast,  
Hath called thee ; nay, by now the whole host sleeps."  
He answered lightly with an ancient saw,

γύναι, γυναιξὶ κόσμον ἡ σιγὴ φέρει.  
 κάγω μαθοῦσ' ἔληξ, ὁ δ' ἐσσύθη μόνος.  
 καὶ τὰς ἑκεῖ μὲν οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν πάθας·  
 ἔσω δ' ἐσῆλθε συνδέτους ἄγων ὁμοῦ  
 ταύρους, κύνας βοτῆρας, εὔερόν<sup>1</sup> τ' ἄγραν.  
 καὶ τοὺς μὲν ηὐχένιζε, τοὺς δ' ἄνω τρέπων  
 ἐσφαζε κάρραχιζε, τοὺς δὲ δεσμίους  
 ἥκιζεθ' ὥστε φῶτας ἐν ποίμναις πίτνων. 300  
 τέλος δ' ὑπάξας διὰ θυρῶν σκιᾶ τινι  
 λόγους ἀνέσπα, τοὺς μὲν Ἀτρειδῶν κάτα,  
 τοὺς δ' ἀμφ' Ὁδυσσεῖ, συντιθεὶς γέλων πολύν,  
 δσην κατ' αὐτῶν ὕβριν ἐκτίσαιτ' ἵών·  
 κάπειτ' ἐπάξας αὐθις ἐς δόμους πάλιν,  
 ἔμφρων μόλις πως ξὺν χρόνῳ καθίσταται,  
 καὶ πλῆρες ἄτης ὡς διοπτεύει στέγος,  
 παίσας κάρα θώϋξεν· ἐν δ' ἐρειπίοις  
 νεκρῶν ἐρειφθεὶς ἔξετ' ἀρνείον φόνου,  
 κόμην ἀπρίξ ὅνυξι συλλαβὼν χερί. 310  
 καὶ τὸν μὲν ἡστο πλεῖστον ἄφθογγος χρόνον·  
 ἐπειτ' ἐμοὶ τὰ δείν' ἐπηπείλησ' ἐπη,  
 εἰ μὴ φανοίην πᾶν τὸ συντυχὸν πάθος,  
 κάνήρετ' ἐν τῷ πράγματος κυροῦ ποτέ.  
 κάγω, φίλοι, δείσασα τούξειργασμένου  
 ἔλεξα πᾶν δσονπερ ἐξηπιστάμην.  
 ὁ δ' εὐθὺς ἔξώμωξεν οἰμωγὰς λυγράς,  
 ἀς οὖποτ' αὐτοῦ πρόσθεν εἰσήκουσ' ἐγώ·  
 πρὸς γάρ κακοῦ τε καὶ βαρυψύχου γόους  
 τοιούσδ' ἀεί ποτ' ἀνδρὸς ἐξηγεῖτ' ἔχειν. 320  
 ἀλλ' ἀψόφητος ὀξέων κωκυμάτων  
 ὑπεστέναξε ταῦρος ὡς βρυχώμενος.  
 νῦν δ' ἐν τοιᾶδε κείμενος κακῇ τύχῃ

<sup>1</sup> εὔερων MSS., Schneidewin corr.

## AJAX

“Woman, for women silence is a grace.”  
Admonished thus I held my tongue ; but he  
Sped forth alone. What happened afterwards  
I know not, but he came back with his spoil,  
Oxen and sheep dogs with their fleecy charge.  
Some he beheads, of some the upturned necks  
He cuts, or cleaves the chine ; others again  
He buffeted and mangled in their bonds,  
Mauling the beasts, as if they had been men.  
At last he darted through the door and held  
Wild converse with some phantom of the brain ;  
Now the Atridae, and Odysseus now,  
He mocked with peals of laughter, vaunting loud  
The vengeance he had wreaked on them. Anon  
He rushed indoors again ; and then in time  
With painful struggles was himself again.  
And as he scanned the havoc all around,  
He smote his head and wailed and sank to earth,  
A wreck among the wreck of slaughtered sheep,  
Digging into his hair his clenched nails.  
At first—a long, long while—he spake no word,  
Then against me he uttered those dire threats,  
If I declared not all that had befallen,  
Bidding me tell him in what plight he stood.  
And I a-tremble told him what had chanced,  
So far as I had knowledge. Whereat he  
Broke into lamentations, piercing, shrill,  
Such as I ne'er had heard from him before.  
For 'twas his creed that wailings and lament  
Are for the craven and faint-hearts ; no shrill  
Complaint escaped him ever ; his low moan  
Was like the muffled bellowing of a bull.  
But now, confounded in his abject woe,

ΑΙΑΣ

ἄσιτος ἀνήρ, ἄποτος, ἐν μέσοις βοτοῖς  
σιδηροκμῆσιν ἥσυχος θακεῖ πεσών·  
καὶ δῆλός ἐστιν ὡς τι δρασείων κακόν.  
τοιαῦτα γάρ πως καὶ λέγει κώδύρεται.  
ἀλλ', ὡς φίλοι, τούτων γὰρ οῦνεκ' ἐστάλην,  
ἀρήξατ' εἰσελθόντες, εἰ δύνασθέ τι·  
φίλων γὰρ οἱ τοιοίδε νικῶνται λόγοις.

330

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Τέκμησσα, δεινά, παῖ Τελεύταντος, λέγεις  
ἡμῖν, τὸν ἄνδρα διαπεφοιβάσθαι κακοῖς.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

τάχ', ὡς ἔοικε, μᾶλλον· ἢ οὐκ ἡκούσατε  
Αἴαντος οἴαν τήνδε θωῦσσει βοήν;

ΑΙΑΣ

ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀνὴρ ἔοικεν ἢ νοσεῖν ἢ τοῖς πάλαι  
νοσήμασιν ξυνοῦσι λυπεῖσθαι παρών.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἰὼ παῖ παῖ.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ῶμοι τάλαιν· Εὐρύσακες, ἀμφὶ σοὶ βοᾶ.  
τί ποτε μενοινᾶ; ποῦ ποτ' εἰλ; τάλαιν' ἔγω.

340

ΑΙΑΣ

Τεῦκρον καλῶ. ποῦ Τεῦκρος; ἢ τὸν εἰσαεὶ  
λεηλατήσει χρόνον, ἐγὼ δ' ἀπόλλυμαι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀνὴρ φρουρεῖν ἔοικεν. ἀλλ' ἀνοίγετε.  
τάχ' ἂν τιν' αἰδῶ κάπ' ἐμοὶ βλέψας λάβοι.

## AJAX

Refusing food or drink, he sits there still,  
Just where he fell amid the carcases  
Of the slain sheep and cattle. And 'tis plain  
He meditates some mischief, so I read  
His muttered exclamations and laments.  
Come, friends, and help me, if so be ye can—  
This was my errand—men in case like his  
Are won to reason by the words of friends.

CHORUS

Tecmessa, daughter of Teleutas, dread  
Thy tidings of our master thus distraught.

AJAX

Woe, woe is me !

TECMESSA

Worse is to come, I fear me. Heard ye not  
The voice of Ajax—that heartrending cry ?

AJAX

Woe, woe is me !

CHORUS

'Tis a fresh fit, methinks, or else he groans  
At sight of all the ills his frenzy wrought.

AJAX

My son, my son !

TECMESSA

Ah me ! Eurysaces, 'tis for thee he calls.  
What would he ? Where art thou, my son ? ah me !

AJAX

Ho Teucer ! where is Teucer ? Will his raid  
End never ? And the while I am undone !

CHORUS

He seems himself again. Quick, ope the door.  
Perchance the sight of us his humble friends  
May bring him to a soberer mood.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

**ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ**

ἰδού, διοίγω· προσβλέπειν δ' ἔξεστί σοι  
τὰ τοῦδε πράγη, καύτὸς ώς ἔχων κυρεῖ.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

ἰὼ

φίλοι ναυβάται, μόνοι ἐμῶν φίλων,  
μόνοι ἔτ' ἐμμένοντες ὁρθῷ νόμῳ,  
ἴδεσθέ μ' οἶον ἄρτι κῦμα φοινίας ὑπὸ ζάλης  
ἀμφίδρομον κυκλεῖται.

στρ. α'

350

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

οἵμ' ώς ἔοικας ὁρθὰ μαρτυρεῖν ἄγαν.  
δῆλοι δὲ τούργον ώς ἀφρούτιστως ἔχει.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

ἰὼ

ἀντ. α'

γένος ναῖας ἀρωγὸν τέχνας,  
ἄλιον δις ἐπέβας ἐλίσσων πλάται,  
σέ τοι σέ τοι μόνον δέδορκα πημονὰν ἐπαρκέσοντ<sup>3</sup>. 360  
ἀλλά με συνδάϊξον.

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

εὔφημα φώνει· μὴ κακὸν κακῷ διδοὺς  
ἄκος, πλέον τὸ πῆμα τῆς ἄτης τίθει.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

όρᾶς τὸν θρασύν, τὸν εὐκάρδιον,  
τὸν ἐν δαῖοις ἄτρεστον μάχαις,  
ἐν ἀφόβοις με θηρσὶ δεινὸν χέρας;  
ώμοι γέλωτος, οἶον ὑβρίσθην ἄρα.

στρ. β'

**ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ**

μή, δέσποτ' Αἴας, λίσσομαι σ', αῦδα τάδε.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

οὐκ ἐκτός; οὐκ ἄψορρον ἐκνεμεῖ πόδα;  
αἰαῖ αἰαῖ.

370

## AJAX

### TECMESSA

I open,  
And thou mayst view his works and his own plight.

### AJAX

Mariners, ever leal and true, (Str. 1)  
Alas my friends have left me, all but you,  
See how disasters whelmed me like a flood,  
And now I welter in a surge of blood.

### CHORUS

Ah, lady, thy report was all too true,  
Too clear the tokens of an unhinged brain.

### AJAX

Sailors brave, whose flashing oar (Ant. 1)  
Swift and sure the good ship bore,  
To you I look for comfort, none but you ;  
Come slay me too.

### CHORUS

O hush, essay not ill by ill to cure,  
Nor aggravate the burden of thy doom.

### AJAX

See'st thou the bold, stout-hearted knight (Str. 2)  
Who never quailed to face the fight,  
Now on tame beasts that fear no harm  
He proves the puissance of his arm.  
Ah me ! the mockery, the scorn, the shame !

### TECMESSA

Ajax, my dearest master, speak not so.

### AJAX

Out with thee, woman ; hence, avaunt, begone !  
Ah me ! ah me !

ΑΙΑΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώ πρὸς θεῶν ὑπεικε καὶ φρόνησον εὖ.

ΑΙΑΣ

ώ δύσμορος, δος χερὶ μὲν  
μεθῆκα τοὺς ἀλάστορας, ἐν δὲ ἐλίκεσσι  
βουσὶ καὶ κλυτοῖς πεσὼν αἰπολίοις  
έρεμνὸν αἷμ’ ἔδευσα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δῆτ’ ἀν ἀλγοίης ἐπ’ ἔξειργασμένοις;  
οὐ γὰρ γένοιτ’ ἀν ταῦθ’ ὅπως οὐχ ὡδ’ ἔχειν.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἰὼ πάνθ’ ὁρῶν ἀπάντων τ’ ἀεὶ                          ἀντ. β'  
κακῶν ὅργανον, τέκνον Λαρτίου,  
κακοπινέστατόν τ’ ἄλημα στρατοῦ,  
ἥ που πολὺν γέλωθ’ ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς ἄγεις.

380

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ξύν τοι θεῷ πᾶς καὶ γελᾷ κώδυρεται.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἴδοιμι μήν<sup>1</sup> νιν, καίπερ ὡδ’ ἀτώμενος.  
ἰὼ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μηδὲν μέγ’ εἴπης· οὐχ ὄρᾶς ἵν’ εἰ κακοῦ;

ΑΙΑΣ

ώ Ζεῦ, προγόνων προπάτωρ,  
πῶς ἀν τὸν αἵμυλώτατον, ἔχθρὸν ἄλημα,  
τούς τε διστάρχας δλέσσας βασιλῆς  
τέλος θάνοιμι καύτός;

390

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ὅταν κατεύχῃ ταῦθ’, ὁμοῦ κάμοὶ θανεῖν  
εὔχου· τί γὰρ δεῖ ζῆν με σοῦ τεθνηκότος;

<sup>1</sup> Dindorf adds μήν.

## AJAX

### CHORUS

O listen, I adjure thee, and be ruled.

### AJAX

Wretch to let those fiends, my foes,  
Slip, while on the flock my blows  
And the goodly cattle rained,  
Till with their dark blood all the house was stained.

### CHORUS

Why vex thyself for what is past recall ?  
What's done is done and naught can alter it.

### AJAX

Spy of the time, apt tool for any guile,      (*Ant. 2*)  
Of all the host the subtlest knave, most vile,  
Son of Laertes, loud and long, I trow,  
Thou laughest in malignant triumph now.

### CHORUS

Laughter or mourning comes as God ordains.

### AJAX

Would I could see him, shattered though I be !  
Ah me !

### CHORUS

No boastful words ; see'st not thy piteous case ?

### AJAX

O Zeus, my grand sire, would that I  
Might slay that knave, my bane,  
That arch-dissembler and the generals twain.  
Then let me die !

### TECMESSA

When thus thou prayest, pray that I with thee  
May die ; why should I live when thou art dead ?

ΑΙΑΣ

ΑΙΑΣ

ἰὼ

στρ. γ'

σκότος, ἐμὸν φάος,  
 ἔρεβος ὡ φαεννότατον, ὡς ἐμοί,  
 ἐλεσθ' ἐλεσθέ μ' οἰκήτορα,  
 ἐλεσθέ μ'. οῦτε γὰρ θεῶν γένος οῦθ' ἀμερίων  
 ἐτ' ἄξιος βλέπειν τιν' εἰς ὄνασιν ἀνθρώπων.

400

ἀλλά μ' ἀ Διὸς  
 ἀλκίμα θεὸς  
 ὀλέθρι' αἰκίζει.  
 ποῖ τις οὖν φύγη;  
 ποῖ μολὼν μενῶ;  
 εἰ τὰ μὲν φθίνει, φίλοι, τοιοῖσδ'<sup>1</sup>  
 ὁμοῦ πέλας, μώραις δ' ἄγραις προσκείμεθα,  
 πᾶς δὲ στρατὸς δίπαλτος ἄν με  
 χειρὶ φονεύοι.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ὦ δυστάλαινα, τοιάδ' ἄνδρα χρήσιμον  
 φωνεῦν, ἢ πρόσθεν οὐτος οὐκ ἔτλη ποτ' ἄν.

410

ΑΙΑΣ

ἰὼ

ἀντ. γ'

πόροι ἀλίρροθοι  
 πάραλά τ' ἄντρα καὶ νέμος ἐπάκτιον,  
 πολὺν πολύν με δαρόν τε δὴ  
 κατείχετ' ἀμφὶ Τροίαν χρόνον· ἀλλ' οὐκέτι μ', οὐκ  
 ἐτ' ἀμπνοὰς ἔχοντα· τεῦτό τις φρονῶν ἔστω.  
 ὦ Σκαμάνδριοι  
 γείτονες ροαί,  
 εὔφρονες Ἀργείοις,  
 οὐκέτ' ἄνδρα μὴ  
 τόνδ' ἰδητ', ἔπος

420

<sup>1</sup> τοῖσδ' MSS., Jebb corr.

## AJAX

### AJAX

O woe is me ! (Str. 3)  
Darkness, my light !  
O nether gloom to me more bright  
Than midday, take, O take me to your care !  
I am too vile to share  
The kindly aid of mortals, and the gods  
Have left me. Nay, the Warrior Maid, Zeus-born,  
Laughs me to scorn ;  
I quail beneath her rods.  
Whither to fly ? What hope of rest is left,  
If of my ancient fame bereft,  
Dead as these slaughtered sheep around me slain,  
A madman's crown I gain,  
While all the host at my devoted head  
Would strike, and smite me dead ?

### TECMESSA

Ah me that one so good should utter words  
That hitherto he ne'er had deigned to breathe !

### AJAX

Paths of the roaring waves, (Ant. 3)  
Ye salt sea caves  
And pastures by the shore,  
Where long, too long I roam  
In Troy-land, far from home ;  
Me shall ye see no more —  
No more in life. Give ear  
All who can hear.  
Streams of Scamander, rills  
That flow from Ida's hills,  
Streams to the Greeks so dear,  
Ne'er shall ye look on Ajax more ;

## ΑΙΑΣ

ἐξερῶ μέγ', οἶον ὄντινα  
Τροία στρατοῦ δέρχθη χθονὸς μολόντ' ἀπὸ  
Ἐλλαινίδος· τανῦν δ' ἄτιμος  
ώδε πρόκειμαι.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὗτοι σ' ἀπείργειν οὐδὲ δπως ἐώ λέγειν  
ἔχω, κακοῖς τοιοῖσδε συμπεπτωκότα.

## ΑΙΑΣ

αἰαῖ· τίς ἂν ποτ' ὥφεθ' ὡδ' ἐπώνυμον  
τούμὸν ξυνοίσειν ὄνομα τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς;  
νῦν γὰρ πάρεστι καὶ δὶς αἰάζειν ἐμοὶ  
καὶ τρίς· τοιούτοις γὰρ κακοῖς ἐντυγχάνω.  
ὅτου πατὴρ μὲν τῆσδε ἀπ' Ἰδαίας χθονὸς  
τὰ πρῶτα καλλιστεῖ ἀριστεύσας στρατοῦ  
πρὸς οἰκον ἥλθε πᾶσαν εὔκλειαν φέρων.  
ἐγὼ δ' ὁ κείνου παῖς, τὸν αὐτὸν ἐς τόπον  
Τροίας ἐπελθὼν οὐκ ἐλάσσονι σθένει  
οὐδὲ ἔργα μείω χειρὸς ἀρκέσας ἐμῆς,  
ἄτιμος Ἀργείοισιν ὡδ' ἀπόλλυμαι.  
καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ' ἔξεπίστασθαι δοκῶ.  
εἰ ζῶν Ἀχιλλεὺς τῶν δπλῶν τῶν ὧν πέρι  
κρίνειν ἔμελλε κράτος ἀριστείας τινί,  
οὐκ ἂν τις αὐτ' ἔμαρψει ἄλλος ἀντ' ἐμοῦ.  
νῦν δ' αὐτ' Ἀτρεῖδαι φωτὶ παντουργῷ φρένας  
ἐπραξαν, ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε ἀπώσαντες κράτη.  
κεὶ μὴ τόδε δόμμα καὶ φρένες διάστροφοι  
γνώμης ἀπῆξαν τῆς ἐμῆς, οὐκ ἂν ποτε  
δίκην κατ' ἄλλου φωτὸς ὡδὲ ἐψήφισαν.  
νῦν δὲ ή Διὸς γοργῶπις ἀδάματος θεὰ

430

440

450

## AJAX

A paladin whose peer  
(For I will utter a proud boast)  
In all the Grecian host  
That sailed from Hellas' shore  
Troy ne'er beheld. But now  
Low in the dust, o'erthrown, his head doth bow.

### CHORUS

How to restrain or how to let thee speak  
I cannot tell, beset by endless woes.

### AJAX

Ay me ! Whoe'er had thought how well my name  
Would fit my misery ? Ay me ! Ay me !<sup>1</sup>  
Yea, twice and thrice may I repeat the wail  
That syllables my woe-begone estate.  
My sire, a peerless warrior, home returned  
Back from the land of Ida, crowned with fame,  
Proclaimed as champion bravest of the brave.  
And I, his son, in might not less than he,  
Sailed after him to this same land of Troy,  
And served the host by deeds of no less worth,  
And for reward I perish by the Greeks  
Dishonoured. Yet one thing I know full well :  
If to Achilles living it had fallen  
His arms as meed of valour to award,  
No man had grasped the prize, preferred to me.  
But now the Atridae, scouting my just claim,  
Have yielded to a miscreant's base intrigue.  
Had not mine eyes been dazed, my mind distraught  
And wrested from its purpose, they had never  
Procured false sentence 'gainst a second man.  
Alas ! the grim-eyed goddess, unsubdued  
Daughter of Zeus—as I was at their heels,

<sup>1</sup> Like Shakespeare's 'Gaunt' (*Richard II*, II, i) he plays on his name *Aias*,

ηδη μ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς χεῖρ' ἐπεντύνοντ' ἐμὴν  
ἔσφηλεν, ἐμβαλοῦσα λυσσώδη νόσον,  
ῶστ' ἐν τοιοῖσδε χεῖρας αἰμάξαι θοτοῖς·  
καὶ οὗτοι δὲ ἐπεγγελῶσιν ἐκπεφευγότες,  
ἐμοῦ μὲν οὐχ ἔκόντος· εἰ δέ τις θεῶν  
βλάπτοι, φύγοι τὰν χῶ κακὸς τὸν κρείσσονα.  
καὶ νῦν τί χρὴ δρᾶν; ὅστις ἐμφανῶς θεοῖς  
ἔχθαιρομαι, μισεῖ δέ μ' Ἐλλήνων στρατός,  
ἔχθει δὲ Τροία πᾶσα καὶ πεδία τάδε.  
πότερα πρὸς οἴκους, ναυλόχους λιπὼν ἔδρας  
μόνους τ' Ἀτρείδας, πέλαγος Αἰγαίον περῶ;  
καὶ ποιον δόμμα πατρὶ δηλώσω φανεὶς  
Τελαμῶνι; πῶς με τλήσεται ποτ' εἰσιδεῖν  
γυμνὸν φανέντα τῶν ἀριστείων ἄτερ,  
ῶν αὐτὸς ἔσχε στέφανον εὐκλείας μέγαν;  
οὐκ ἔστι τοῦργον τλητόν. ἀλλὰ δῆτ' ἵων  
πρὸς ἔρυμα Τρώων, ξυμπεσὼν μόνος μόνοις  
καὶ δρῶν τι χρηστόν, εἴτα λοίσθιον θάνω;  
ἀλλ' ὡδέ γ' Ἀτρείδας ἀν εὐφράναιμί που.  
οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα. πεῖρά τις ζητητέα  
τοιάδ' ἀφ' ἡς γέροντι δηλώσω πατρὶ  
μή τοι φύσιν γ' ἀσπλαγχνος ἐκ κείνου γεγώς.  
αἰσχρὸν γὰρ ἄνδρα τοῦ μακροῦ χρήζειν βίον,  
κακοῖσιν ὅστις μηδὲν ἔξαλλάσσεται.  
τί γὰρ παρ' ἡμαρ ἡμέρα τέρπειν ἔχει  
προσθεῖσα κάναθεῖσα τοῦ γε κατθανεῖν;  
οὐκ ἀν πριαίμην οὐδενὸς λόγου βροτὸν  
ὅστις κεναῖσιν ἐλπίσιν θερμαίνεται.  
ἀλλ' ἡ καλῶς ζῆν ἡ καλῶς τεθνηκέναι  
τὸν εὐγενῆ χρῆ. πάντ' ἀκήκοας λόγον.

## AJAX

Almost at grips with them, in act to strike—  
Foiled me, abused me by a frenzy fit,  
Imbruised my hands with blood of these poor beasts.  
And thus my foes exult in their escape,  
Albeit I willed it not, and mock at me.  
But if some god or goddess intervene,  
Even a knave may worst the better man.  
And now what's left me? By the gods, 'tis clear,  
I am detested, hated by the host  
Of Greeks, abhorred by Troy and all the camp.  
Shall I sail homeward o'er the Aegean, leave  
The sons of Atreus to fight on alone,  
This roadstead undefended? Then how face  
My father Telamon? How will he endure  
To look on me returning empty-handed  
Without the meed of valour that he held  
Himself, a crown of everlasting fame?  
That were intolerable. Am I then  
Alone to storm the Trojan battlements,  
And facing single-handed a whole host,  
Do some high deed of prowess—and so die?  
Nay, that methinks would give the Atridae joy.  
It may not be; some emprise must be found  
That shall convince my aged sire his son  
Is not, in soul at least, degenerate.  
Base were it that a man whose misery  
Knows neither change nor respite should desire  
To drain life to the dregs. What joy is there?  
Day follows day; each added to the sum  
Of life is one step nearer to the grave.  
I would not count that mortal worth a doigt  
Who lives on, fed by visionary hopes.  
Nobly to live—that is the true knight's choice,  
Or nobly end his life. I have said my say.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ούδεις ἐρεῖ ποθ' ὡς ὑπόβλητον λόγου,  
Αἴας, ἔλεξας, ἀλλὰ τῆς σαυτοῦ φρενός·  
παῦσαι γε μέντοι καὶ δὸς ἀνδράσιν φίλοις  
γνώμης κρατῆσαι, τάσδε φροντίδας μεθείς.

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ω̄ δέσποτ' Αἴας, τῆς ἀναγκαίας τύχης  
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν μεῖζον ἀνθρώποις κακόν.  
ἐγὼ δὲ ἐλευθέρου μὲν ἔξεφυν πατρός,  
εἰπερ τινὸς σθένοντος ἐν πλούτῳ Φρυγῶν·  
νῦν δὲ εἰμὶ δούλη· θεοῖς γὰρ ὁδὸς ἔδοξε που  
καὶ σῇ μάλιστα χειρί. τοιγαροῦν, ἐπεὶ  
τὸ σὸν λέχος ξυνῆλθον, εὖ φρονῶ τὰ σά,  
καὶ σ' ἀντιάξω πρός τ' ἐφεστίου Διὸς  
εὐνῆς τε τῆς σῆς, ἥ συνηλλάχθης ἐμοί,  
μή μ' ἀξιώσης βάξιν ἀλγεινὴν λαβεῖν  
τῶν σῶν ὑπὸ ἐχθρῶν, χειρίαν ἐφείς τινι.  
ἥ γὰρ θάνης σὺν καὶ τελευτήσας ἀφῆς,  
ταύτη νόμιζε κάμε τῇ τόθ' ἡμέρᾳ  
βίᾳ ξυναρπασθεῖσαν Ἀργείων ὑπὸ<sup>490</sup>  
ξὺν παιδὶ τῷ σῷ δουλίαν ἔξειν τροφήν.  
καὶ τις πικρὸν πρόσφθεγμα δεσποτῶν ἐρεῖ  
λόγοις ίάπτων· ἵδετε τὴν ὄμευνέτιν  
Αἴαντος, δις μέγιστου ἵσχυσεν στρατοῦ,  
οἵας λατρείας ἀνθ' ὅσου ζῆλου τρέφει.  
τοιαῦτ' ἐρεῖ τις· κάμε μὲν δαίμων ἐλᾶ,  
σοὶ δὲ αἰσχρὰ τάπη ταῦτα καὶ τῷ σῷ γένει.  
ἀλλ' αἰδεσαι μὲν πατέρα τὸν σὸν ἐν λυγρῷ  
γήρᾳ προλείπων, αἰδεσαι δὲ μητέρα  
πολλῶν ἐτῶν κληροῦχον, ἥ σε πολλάκις  
θεοῖς ἀράται ζῶντα πρὸς δόμους μολεῖν·  
οἴκτιρε δὲ, ὠναξ, παῖδα τὸν σόν, εἰ μέας

500

510

510



## AJAX

### CHORUS

No man will charge thee, Ajax, with feigned words.  
'Twas thy heart spoke ; yet pause and put aside  
These dark thoughts ; let thyself be ruled by  
friends.

### TECMESSA

Ah, my lord Ajax, heavier lot is none  
Than to lie helpless in the coils of fate.  
I was the daughter of a high-born sire  
Of Phrygians unsurpassed in wealth and might.  
And now, I am a slave ; 'twas so ordained  
By Heaven, methinks, and by thy might of arm.  
Since fate has willed, then, I should share thy bed,  
Thy good is mine ; and O by the god of the hearth,  
O by the wedded bond that made us one,  
Let me not fall into a stranger's hand,  
A laughing-stock ! For, surely, if thou die  
And leave me widowed, on that very day  
I shall be seized and haled away by force,  
I and thy son, prey to the Argive host,  
Our portion slavery. Then shall I hear  
The flouts and gibes that my new lords let fly.  
"Look on her," one will say, "the leman once  
Of Ajax, mightiest of the Argive chiefs,  
How has she fallen from her place of pride !"  
Thus will they prate, and hard will be my lot,  
But on thy race and thee how foul a slur.  
Take pity and bethink thee of the sire  
Thou leavest, an old man, disconsolate ;  
Bethink thee of thy mother bowed with years,  
Think of her prayers and vows for thy return.  
And, O my lord, take pity on thy son,

## ΑΙΑΣ

τροφῆς στερηθεὶς σοῦ διοίσεται μόνος  
ὑπ' ὄρφανιστῶν μὴ φίλων, ὅσον κακὸν  
κείνῳ τε κάμοι τοῦθ', ὅταν θάνης, νεμεῖς.  
ἔμοι γὰρ οὐκέτ' ἔστιν εἰς ὃ τι βλέπω  
πλὴν σοῦ. σὺν γάρ μοι πατρίδ' ἥστωσας δόρει,  
καὶ μητέρ' ἀλλη μοῖρα τὸν φύσαντά τε  
καθεῖλεν "Αἰδου θανασίμους οἰκήτορας.  
τίς δῆτ' ἔμοι γένοιτ' ἀν ἀντὶ σοῦ πατρίς;  
τίς πλοῦτος; ἐν σοὶ πᾶσ' ἔγωγε σώζομαι. 520  
ἀλλ' ἵσχε κάμοι μυῆστιν· ἀνδρί τοι χρεὼν  
μυῆμην προσεῖναι, τερπνὸν εἴ τι που πάθοι.  
χάρις χάριν γάρ ἔστιν ἡ τίκτουσ' ἀεί·  
ὅτου δ' ἀπορρεῖ μυῆστις εὖ πεπονθότος,  
οὐκ ἀν γένοιτ' ἔθ' οὗτος εὐγενῆς ἀνήρ.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

Αἴας, ἔχειν σ' ἀν οἰκτον ώς κάγῳ φρενὶ<sup>1</sup>  
θέλοιμ<sup>2</sup> ἄν· αἰνοίης γὰρ ἀν τὰ τῆσδ' ἔπη.

## ΑΙΑΣ

καὶ κάρτ' ἐπαίνου τεύξεται πρὸς γοῦν ἔμοῦ,  
ἐὰν μόνον τὸ ταχθὲν εὖ τολμᾷ τελεῖν.

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἀλλ' ὡ φίλ' Αἴας, πάντ' ἔγωγε πείσομαι.

## ΑΙΑΣ

κόμιζέ νύν μοι παῖδα τὸν ἔμόν, ώς ἵδω. 530

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

καὶ μὴν φόβοισί γ' αὐτὸν ἔξελυσάμην.

## ΑΙΑΣ

ἐν τοῦσδε τοῦς κακοῖσιν; ἡ τί μοι λέγεις;

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

μὴ σοί γέ που δύστημος ἀντήσας θάνοι.

## ΑΙΑΣ

πρέπουν γέ τὰν ἦν δαίμονος τούμοῦ τόδε.

## AJAX

Orphaned, without a father's fostering care,  
The ward of loveless guardians ; if thou die,  
What heritage of woe is his and mine !  
For I have naught to look to anywhere  
Save thee. By thee my country was laid waste,  
My mother and my father too were snatched  
To dwell with Hades by another fate.  
What home is left me then, if thou art ta'en ?  
What weal ? my welfare is bound up in thee.  
Think of me also : gratitude is due  
From man for favours that a woman gives.  
Kindness return of kindness e'er begets.  
Who lets the memory of service pass  
Him will I ne'er with noble spirits rank.

### CHORUS

Ajax, I would that thou wert moved as I  
To pity ; then wouldest thou approve her rede.

### AJAX

Yea, and my full approval she shall win,  
If only she take heart to do my hest.

### TECMESSA

Aye, my dear lord, I will obey in all.

### AJAX

Bring hither then my son, that I may see him.

### TECMESSA

Oh, in alarm I sent him from my charge.

### AJAX

When I was stricken ? Or what meanest thou ?

### TECMESSA

Yea, lest the poor child meeting thee should die.

### AJAX

That fate indeed had matched my fortunes well.

ΑΙΑΣ

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἀλλ' οὖν ἐγὼ 'φύλαξα τοῦτό γ' ἀρκέσαι.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἐπήνεστ' ἔργου καὶ πρόνοιαν ἦν ἔθου.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

τί δῆτ' ἀν ώς ἐκ τῶνδ' ἀν ὡφελοῖμί σε;

ΑΙΑΣ

δός μοι προσειπεῖν αὐτὸν ἐμφανῆ τ' ἵδεῖν.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

καὶ μὴν πέλας γε προσπόλοις φυλάσσεται.

ΑΙΑΣ

τί δῆτα μέλλει μὴ οὐ παρουσίαν ἔχειν;

540

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ὦ παῖ, πατὴρ καλεῖ σε. δεῦρο προσπόλων  
ἄγ' αὐτὸν ὅσπερ χερσὶν εὐθύνων κυρεῖς.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἔρποντι φωνεῖς ἢ λελειμμένῳ λόγων;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

καὶ δὴ κομίζει προσπόλων ὅδ' ἐγγύθεν.

ΑΙΑΣ

αἰρ' αὐτόν, αἰρε δεῦρο· ταρβήσει γὰρ οὐ  
νεοσφαγῇ που τόνδε προσλεύσσων φόνου,  
εἴπερ δικαίως ἔστ' ἐμὸς τὰ πατρόθεν.

ἀλλ' αὐτίκ' ὡμοῖς αὐτὸν ἐν νόμοις πατρὸς  
δεῖ πωλοδαμεῖν κάξομοιοῦσθαι φύσιν.

ὦ παῖ, γένοιο πατρὸς εὔτυχέστερος,  
τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ὅμοιος· καὶ γένοι' ἀν οὐ κακός.  
καίτοι σε καὶ νῦν τοῦτό γε ζηλοῦν ἔχω,  
όθουνεκ' οὐδὲν τῶνδ' ἐπαισθάνει κακῶν·  
ἐν τῷ φρονεῖν γὰρ μηδὲν ἥδιστος βίος,

550

## AJAX

TECMESSA

Well, I averted that calamity.

AJAX

Thy forethought and the action I commend.

TECMESSA

As the case stands, how can I do thy hest?

AJAX

Let me speak to him—see him face to face.

TECMESSA

Good; he is in our servants' charge close by.

AJAX

Then wherefore is his coming thus delayed?

TECMESSA

My child, thy father calls thee.

(*To the SERVANTS*)

Bring him hither,

Whoever of you guides his infant steps.

AJAX

Comes he, or has he failed to hear thy call?

TECMESSA

I see one just approaching with the boy.

(*EURYSACES is led forward.*)

AJAX

Lift him, O lift him to my arms; no dread,  
If he be mine, his father's true-born son,  
He'll feel in gazing on this fresh spilt blood.  
He must be early trained and broken in  
To the stern rule of life his father held,  
And moulded to the likeness of his sire.

My boy, mayst thou prove happier than thy sire,  
But like him in all else, and thou wilt prove  
No weakling; nay, e'en now, in this at least  
I envy thee: of woes thou wottest naught,

[τὸ μὴ φρονεῖν γὰρ κάρτ' ἀνώδυνον κακόν]<sup>1</sup>  
 ἔως τὸ χαίρειν καὶ τὸ λυπεῖσθαι μάθησ.  
 ὅταν δὲ ἵκη πρὸς τοῦτο, δεῖ σ' ὅπως πατρὸς  
 δείξεις ἐν ἔχθροῖς, οἷος ἐξ οἴου τράφης.  
 τέως δὲ κούφοις πνεύμασιν βόσκου, νέαν  
 ψυχὴν ἀτάλλων, μητρὶ τῇδε χαρμούνην.  
 οὗτοι σ' Ἀχαιῶν, οἵδα, μή τις ὑβρίσῃ  
 στυγναῖσι λώβαις, οὐδὲ χωρὶς ὄντ' ἐμοῦ. 560  
 τοῖον πυλωρὸν φύλακα Τεῦκρον ἀμφί σοι  
 λείψω τροφῇ τ' ἄσκονον ἔμπα, κεὶ τανῦν  
 τηλωπὸς οἰχνεῖ, δυσμενῶν θήραν ἔχων.  
 ἀλλ', ἄνδρες ἀσπιστῆρες, ἐνάλιος λεώς,  
 ὑμῖν τε κοινὴν τήνδ' ἐπισκήπτω χάριν,  
 κείνῳ τ' ἐμὴν ἀγγείλατ' ἐντολήν, ὅπως  
 τὸν παῖδα τόνδε πρὸς δόμους ἐμοὺς ἄγων  
 Τελαμῶνι δείξει μητρί τ', Ἐριβοίᾳ λέγω,  
 ὡς σφιν γένηται γηροβοσκὸς εἰσαεί, 570  
 [μέχρις οὖ μυχοὺς κίχωσι τοῦ κάτω θεοῦ],<sup>2</sup>  
 καὶ τὰμὰ τεύχη μήτ' ἀγωνάρχαι τινὲς  
 θήσουσ' Ἀχαιοῖς μήθ' ὁ λυμεων ἐμός.  
 ἀλλ' αὐτό μοι σύ, παῖ, λαβὼν ἐπώνυμον,  
 Εύρύστακες, ἵσχε διὰ πολυρράφου στρέφων  
 πόρπακος, ἐπτάβοιον ἄρρηκτον σάκος.  
 τὰ δὲ ἄλλα τεύχη κοίν' ἐμοὶ τεθάψεται.  
 ἀλλ' ὡς τάχος τὸν παῖδα τόνδ' ἥδη δέχου  
 καὶ δῶμα πάκτου, μηδὲ ἐπισκήνους γόους  
 δάκρυε· κάρτα τοι φιλοίκτιστον γυνή.  
 πύκαζε θᾶσσον· οὐ πρὸς ἰατροῦ σοφοῦ  
 θρηνεῖν ἐπωδὰς πρὸς τομῶντι πήματι. 580

<sup>1</sup> Omitted by Stobaeus.<sup>2</sup> Omitted as spurious by most Editors.

## AJAX

For ignorance is life's extremest bliss—  
The years when joy and sorrow are both unknown.  
But when thou reachest manhood, then's the time  
To prove the inbred virtue of thy race,  
And shew thy father's foes whose son thou art.  
Meanwhile let light airs feed thee ; cherish thou  
Thy tender years to glad thy mother's heart.  
Thou need'st not fear that any of the Greeks  
Will tease or vex thee, e'en when I am gone.  
So stout a guardian will I leave in charge,  
Whose watchful eye will slumber not, though now  
A foray 'gainst his enemies keeps him hence.  
And ye, my seamen, comrades in the fight,  
(On you no less than him I lay this charge  
Of love) to him convey my last behest.  
Bid him from me take home this son of mine  
To Eriboea and to Telamon,  
That he may comfort their old age till death.  
And for my arms, let no Greek arbiter  
Of games (so bid him) nor my venomous foe  
Set them as prize for the Achaean host.  
But this, the shield from which thou took'st thy name,<sup>1</sup>  
Take this, my son, this sevenfold, spear-proof targe,  
Take it and wield it by the close-stitched thongs.  
My other arms shall lie with me interred.  
Quick, take the child, delay not ; close the doors,  
Nor at the tent side moan and make lament.  
In sooth a woman is a tearful thing.  
Quick, make all fast : 'tis not a skilful leech  
Who mumbles charms o'er ills that need the knife.

<sup>1</sup> Eurysaces means 'broad shield.'

**ΑΙΑΣ**

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

δέδοικ' ἀκούων τήνδε τὴν προθυμίαν·  
οὐ γάρ μ' ἀρέσκει γλώσσα σου τεθηγμένη.

**ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ**

ω δέσποτ' Αἴας, τί ποτε δρασείεις φρενί;

**ΑΙΑΣ**

μὴ κρῖνε, μὴ ἔέταξε· σωφρονεῖν καλόν.

**ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ**

οἵμ' ως ἀθυμῶ· καὶ σε πρὸς τοῦ σοῦ τέκνου  
καὶ θεῶν ἵκνοῦμαι, μὴ προδοὺς ἡμᾶς γένη.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

ἄγαν γε λυπεῖς· οὐ κάτοισθ' ἐγὼ θεοῖς  
ώς οὐδὲν ἀρκεῖν εἴμ' ὀφειλέτης ἔτι;

590

**ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ**

εὔφημα φώνει.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

τοῖς ἀκούουσιν λέγε.

**ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ**

σὺ δ' οὐχὶ πείσει;

**ΑΙΑΣ**

πόλλα' ἄγαν ἥδη θροεῖς.

**ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ**

ταρβῶ γάρ, ὠναξ.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

οὐ ξυνέρξεθ' ως τάχος;

**ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ**

πρὸς θεῶν, μαλάσσου.

**ΑΙΑΣ**

μῶρά μοι δοκεῖς φρονεῖν,  
εἰ τούμὸν ἥθος ἄρτι παιδεύειν νοεῖς.

## AJAX

### CHORUS

I tremble as I mark this eager haste :  
Thy words are sharp as swords and like me not.

### TECMESSA

O my lord Ajax, what is in thy heart ?

### AJAX

Question not, ask not ; be discreet and wise.

### TECMESSA

Ah me, I quail, I faint. O by thy child,  
By heaven I implore thee, fail us not.

### AJAX

Thou art importunate ; know'st not that I  
Henceforward owe no duty to the gods ?

### TECMESSA

Oh hush, blaspheme not !

### AJAX

Speak to ears that hear.

### TECMESSA

Wilt thou not heed ?

### AJAX

I have heard from thee too much.

### TECMESSA

Fear, my lord, makes me speak.

### AJAX

Quick, close the doors.

### TECMESSA

Yield, I implore thee.

### AJAX

Fond simplicity

If at this hour thou think'st to mould my mood.

[*Exit* AJAX.]

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ω κλεινὰ Σαλαμίς, σὺ μέν που στρ. α'  
 ναίεις ἀλίπλακτος, εὐδαιμων,  
 πᾶσιν περίφαντος ἀεί·  
 ἐγὼ δ' ὁ τλάμων παλαιὸς ἀφ' οὐ χρόνος  
 'Ιδαῖα μίμνων λειμώνι ἔπαυλα μηνῶν  
 ἀνήριθμος αἰὲν εὔνωμαι<sup>1</sup>  
 χρονῷ τρυχόμενος,  
 κακὰν ἐλπιδ' ἔχων  
 ἔτι μέ ποτ' ἀνύσειν  
 τὸν ἀπότροπον ἀΐδηλον "Αἰδαν.

καὶ μοι δυσθεράπευτος Αἴας ἀντ. α'  
 ξύνεστιν ἔφεδρος, ωμοὶ μοι,  
 θείᾳ μανίᾳ ξύναυλος.  
 δν ἔξεπέμψω πρὶν δή ποτε θουρίῳ  
 κρατοῦντ' ἐν "Αρει· νῦν δ' αὖ φρενὸς οἰοβάτας  
 φίλοις μέγα πένθος ηὔρηται.  
 τὰ πρὶν δ' ἔργα χεροῖν  
 μεγίστας ἀρετᾶς  
 ἄφιλα παρ' ἀφίλοις  
 ἔπεισ' ἔπεισε μελέοις 'Ατρείδαις. 620

στρ. β'  
 ἡ που παλαιὰ μὲν σύντροφος<sup>2</sup> ἀμέρα,  
 λευκῷ δὲ γήρᾳ μάτηρ νιν ὅταν νοσοῦντα  
 φρενομόρως ἀκούσῃ,  
 αἴλινον αἴλινον  
 οὐδ' οἰκτρᾶς γόουν ὅρνιθος ἀηδοῦς  
 ἥσει δύσμορος, ἀλλ' ὀξυτόνους μὲν ωδὰς 630

<sup>1</sup> Ιδαῖα μίμνων | λειμώνια ποίαι, μήλων | ἀνήριθμος αἰὲν εὔνωμαι L.; Lobeck, Bergk, and Jebb corr.

<sup>2</sup> ξύντροφος MSS., Nauck corr.

## AJAX

### CHORUS

Ah Salamis, blest isle, (Str. 1)  
Secure, serene,  
Above the waves that lash thy shore,  
As ocean's queen,  
Thou sittest evermore.  
But I in exile drear,  
Month after month, year after year,  
On Ida's meads must bivouac, all forlorn  
By time outworn;  
And ever nearer, ever darker loom  
The night of Hades and eternal gloom.

And now to crown my grief (Ant. 1)  
Comes a new woe,  
My leader Ajax, mad beyond relief,  
By heaven laid low;  
How fallen from that impetuous chief,  
Who sailed to meet the foe.

Now, to his friends' distress,  
He sits and broods in sullen loneliness;  
Those doughty deeds his right hand wrought  
Now count for naught,  
And from that loveless pair, those men of sin,  
No love but despite win.

(Str. 2)  
Ah, when his mother, blanched with age and  
frail  
Hears of his shattered reason, what wild wail  
Will she upraise, a dirge of shrill despair,

## ΑΙΑΣ

θρηνήσει, χερόπλακτοι δ'  
ἐν στέρνοισι πεσοῦνται  
δοῦποι καὶ πολιάς ἄμυγμα χαίτας.

ἀντ. β'

κρείσσων παρ' "Αἰδα κεύθων ὁ νοσῶν μάταν,  
ὅς ἐκ πατράς ήκων γενεᾶς ἄριστος <sup>1</sup>  
πολυπόνων Αχαιῶν,  
οὐκέτι συντρόφοις  
ὄργαῖς ἔμπεδος, ἀλλ' ἐκτὸς ὄμιλεῖ.  
ώ τλάμον πάτερ, οἴαν σε μένει πυθέσθαι  
παιδὸς δύσφορον ἄταν,  
ἄν οὕπω τις ἔθρεψεν  
δίων Αἰακιδᾶν ἄτερθε τοῦδε.

640

## ΑΙΑΣ

ἄπανθ' ὁ μακρὸς κάναριθμητος χρόνος  
φύει τ' ἄδηλα καὶ φανέντα κρύπτεται·  
κούκ ἔστ' ἄελπτον οὐδέν, ἀλλ' ἀλίσκεται  
χὼ δεινὸς ὄρκος χαὶ περισκελεῖς φρένες.  
κάγῳ γάρ, ὃς τὰ δείν' ἐκαρτέρουν τότε,  
βαφῇ σίδηρος ὡς ἔθηλύνθην στόμα  
πρὸς τῆσδε τῆς γυναικός· οἰκτίρω δέ νιν  
χήραν παρ' ἔχθροῖς παῖδά τ' ὄρφανὸν λιπεῖν.  
ἄλλ' εἰμι πρός τε λουτρὰ καὶ παρακτίους  
λειμῶνας, ὡς ἀν λύμαθ' ἀγνίσας ἐμὰ  
μῆνιν βαρεῖαν ἔξαλύξωμαι θεᾶς·  
μολών τε χῶρον ἔνθ' ἀν ἀστιβῆ κίχω,  
κρύψω τόδ ἔγχος τούμόν, ἔχθιστον βελῶν,  
γαίας ὄρύξας ἔνθα μή τις δψεται·  
ἄλλ' αὐτὸ νὺξ "Αἰδης τε σφέζοντων κάτω.  
ἔγῳ γάρ ἔξ οὐ χειρὶ τοῦτ' ἐδεξάμην

650

660

<sup>1</sup> ἄριστος added by Triclinius.

## AJAX

(No plaintive ditty of the nightingale)  
With beating of the breast and rending of white  
hair.

(*Ant. 2*)

Better be buried with the dead  
Who lives with brain bewilderèd.  
Of all the Greeks toil-worn  
Behold the noblest born,  
Now from his native temper warped and strange,  
Whose thoughts in alien paths distracted range.  
O wretched father, what a curse 'tis thine  
Upon thy son to hear—curse that on none  
E'er fell of all the Aeacidae's great line  
Save him alone.

*Enter AJAX.*

### AJAX

Time in its slow, illimitable course  
Brings all to light and buries all again ;  
Strange things it brings to pass, the dreadest oath  
Is broken and the stubbornest will is bent.  
E'en I whose will aforetime was as iron  
Steeled in the dipping, now have lost the edge  
Of resolution, by this woman's words  
Unmanned, to pity melted at the thought  
Of her a widow and my orphan son  
Left amidst foemen. But I go my way  
To the sea baths and meadows by the beach,  
That I may there assoil me and assuage  
The wrathful goddess, having purged my sin.  
Then will I seek some solitary spot  
And hide this sword, of weapons most accursed,  
Deep under earth, consigned to Night and Hell,  
Where never eye of man may see it more ;  
For since the day I hanselled it, a gift

παρ' Ἔκτορος δώρημα δυσμενεστάτου,  
οὗπω τι κεδύδων ἔσχον Ἀργείων πάρα.  
ἀλλ' ἔστ' ἀληθῆς ἡ βροτῶν παροιμία,  
ἐχθρῶν ἄδωρα δῶρα κούκ οὐήσιμα.  
τοιγὰρ τὸ λοιπὸν εἰσόμεσθα μὲν θεοῖς  
εἴκειν, μαθησόμεσθα δ' Ἀτρείδας σέβειν.  
ἀρχοντές εἰσιν, ὥσθ' ὑπεικτέον. τί μήν<sup>1</sup> ;  
καὶ γὰρ τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τὰ καρτερώτατα  
ἔτοιμ' ὑπείκειν· τοῦτο μὲν νιφοστιβεῖς  
χειμῶνες ἐκχωροῦσιν εὐκάρπῳ θέρει.  
ἔξισταται δὲ νυκτὸς αἰανῆς κύκλος  
τῇ λευκοπώλῳ φέγγος ἡμέρᾳ φλέγειν.  
δεινῶν τ' ἄημα πνευμάτων ἔκοιμισε  
στένοντα πόντον· ἐν δ' ὁ παγκρατῆς ὑπνος  
λύει πεδήσας, οὐδὲ ἀεὶ λαβὼν ἔχει.  
ἡμεῖς δὲ πῶς οὐ γνωσόμεσθα σωφρονεῖν;  
ἔγωγ'<sup>2</sup> ἐπίσταμαι γὰρ ἀρτίως ὅτι  
δ' τ' ἐχθρὸς ἡμῶν ἐσ τοσόνδ' ἐχθαρτέος,  
ώς καὶ φιλήσων αὐθίς, ἐσ τε τὸν φῦλον  
τοσαῦθ' ὑπουργῶν ὠφελεῖν βουλήσομαι,  
ώς αἰὲν οὐ μενοῦντα· τοῖς πολλοῖσι γὰρ  
βροτῶν ἄπιστός ἐσθ' ἐταιρείας λιμήν.  
ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ μὲν τούτοισιν εὖ σχήσει· σὺ δὲ  
ἔσω θεοῖς ἐλθοῦσα διὰ τάχους, γύναι,  
εὔχου τελεῖσθαι τούμὸν ὃν ἐρῷ κέαρ.  
ὑμεῖς δ', ἐταῖροι, ταῦτα τῇδέ μοι τάδε  
τιμάτε, Τεύκρῳ τ', ἦν μόλῃ, σημήνατε  
μέλειν μὲν ἡμῶν, εὐνοεῖν δ' ὑμῶν ἄμα.  
ἔγὼ γὰρ εἰμ' ἐκεῖσ' ὅποι πορευτέον·

670

680

690

<sup>1</sup> τί μή MSS., Herwerden corr.<sup>2</sup> ἔγὼ δ' ἐπίσταμαι MSS., Blaydes corr.

## AJAX

From Hector, my arch-enemy, to this hour,  
No favour from Achaeans have I won.  
So true the word familiar in men's mouths,  
A foe's gifts are no gifts and profit not.  
Henceforward I shall know to yield to Heaven,  
And school myself the Atridae to respect.  
They are our rulers and obey we must ;  
How otherwise ? Dread potencies and powers  
Submit to law. Thus winter snow-bestrown  
Gives place to opulent summer. Night's dim orb  
Is put to flight when Dawn with her white steeds  
Kindles the day-beams ; and the wind's fierce breath  
Can lay the storm and lull the moaning deep.  
E'en thus all-conquering sleep holds not for ever  
Whom he has bound, and must relax his grasp.  
And we, shall we not likewise learn to yield ?  
I most of all ; for I have learnt, though late,  
This rule, to hate an enemy as one  
Who may become a friend, and serve a friend  
As knowing that his friendship may not last.  
An unsafe anchorage to most men proves  
The bond of friendship. As for present needs  
All shall be well. Woman, go thou within  
And pray the gods that all my heart's desires  
May find their consummation to the full.  
And ye, my comrades, see that ye respect,  
No less than she, my wishes ; and enjoin  
On Teucer, when he comes, to care for me,  
And show good will to you, my friends, withal.  
For I am going whither I am bound.

ΑΙΑΣ

ὑμεῖς δὲ ἂν φράζω δρᾶτε, καὶ τάχ' αὖ μὲν ισως πύθοισθε, κεί νῦν δυστυχῶ, σεσωσμένον.

ХОРОΣ

ἔφριξ' ἔρωτι, περιχαρῆς δ' ἀνεπτόμαν. στρ.  
ἰω ἵω Πὰν Πάν,  
ῳ Πὰν Πὰν ἀλίπλαγκτε, Κυλλανίας χιονοκτύπου  
πετραίας ἀπὸ δειράδος φάνηθ', ώ  
θεῶν χοροποῖ ἄναξ, ὅπως μοι  
Νύτια Κυώσι' ὀργήματ' αὐτοδαῆ ξυψῶν ἴάγκες: 700

Νύσια Κνώσι' ὄρχήματ' αὐτοδαῆ ξυνῶν ίάψης. 700  
νῦν γὰρ ἐμοὶ μέλει χορεῦσαι.

Ίκαρίων δ' ὑπὲρ πελαγέων μολὼν ἄναξ Ἀπόλλων  
οἱ Δάλιοι εὐγνωστος  
ἔμοι ξυνείη διὰ παντὸς εὔφρων.

ἔλυσεν αἰνὸν ἄχος ἀπ' ὄμματων Ἀρης.                  ἀντ.

*ἰὼ ἱώ, νῦν αὖ,  
νῦν, ὡ Ζεῦ, πάρα λευκὸν εὐάμερον πελάσαι φάος  
θοᾶν ὠκυάδων μεῶν. ὅτ’ Αἴας*

λαθίπουος πάλιν, θεῶν δ' αὐ  
πάνθυτα θέσμι' ἔξήνυσ' εὐνομίᾳ σέβων μεγίστᾳ.  
πάνθ' δ' μέγας χρόνος μαραίνει,  
κούδεν ἀναύδατον φατίσαιμ' ἄν, εὐτέ γ' ἔξ ἀέλπτων  
Αἴας μετανεγνώσθη

θυμοῦ τὸν Ἀτρείδαις μεγάλων τε νεικέων.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄνδρες φίλοι, τὸ πρῶτον ἀγγεῖλαι θέλω·

Τεῦκρος πάρεστιν ἄρτι Μυσίων ἀπὸ<sup>720</sup>  
κρημνῶν· μέσον δὲ προσμολὼν στρατήγιον  
κυδάζεται τοῖς πᾶσιν Ἀργείοις ὅμοι.  
στείχοντα γὰρ πρόσωθεν αὐτὸν ἐν κύκλῳ

<sup>1</sup> θυμόν τ' or θυμόν MSS., Hermann corr.

## AJAX

Do ye my bidding, and perchance, though now  
I suffer, ye may hear of my release. [Exit AJAX.]

### CHORUS

I thrill with rapture, all my heart upsprings ! (Str.)  
Pan, Pan, O Pan, appear.  
Come to us o'er the sea, sea-rover, leaving  
The ridges of Cyllenè's driven snow,  
Come to us, hand in hand blithe dances weaving,  
Thou leader of the dance in heaven ; show  
Of Nysa and of Cnosos measures rare,  
For in my rapture I the dance would share.  
Come, and upon his footsteps swiftly follow,  
Winging thy way across the Icarian main,  
Show thy bright presence, Delos' own Apollo,  
God of my life, thou healer of all pain !

(Ant.)

Grim Ares from mine eyes the cloud of sadness  
Has lifted ; now the radiant Dawn anew,  
Angel of light, and harbinger of gladness,  
Visits our ships that swiftly cleave the blue.  
O joy, when Ajax has forgot once more  
His woe, and turns the godhead to adore !  
Due rites he pays with contrite heart and lowly.  
O all-devouring time, what miracles  
Thou workest ! lo, his feud forgotten wholly,  
Ajax at peace with the Atridae dwells.

*Enter MESSENGER.*

### MESSENGER

Teucer is here—that, friends, is my first news—  
Back from the Mysian highlands newly come.  
But as he neared headquarters in mid camp,  
He was beset with universal shouts  
Of obloquy ; they spied him from afar,

## ΑΙΛΣ

μαθόντες ἀμφέστησαν, εἰτ' ὄνείδεσιν  
ἥρασσον ἔνθεν κάνθεν οὕτις ἔσθ' δις οὕ,  
τὸν τοῦ μανέντος κάπιβουλευτοῦ στρατοῦ  
ξύναιμον ἀποκαλοῦντες, ὡς οὐκ ἀρκέσοι  
τὸ μὴ οὐ πέτροισι πᾶς καταξανθεῖς θανεῖν.  
ῶστ' εἰς τοσοῦτον ἥλθον ὕστε καὶ χεροῖν  
κολεῶν ἐρυστὰ διεπεραιώθη ξίφη.  
λήγει δὲ ἔρις δραμοῦσα τοῦ προσωτάτω  
ἀνδρῶν γερόντων ἐν ξυναλλαγῇ λόγου.  
ἄλλ' ἡμὲν Αἴας ποῦ στιν, ὡς φράσω τάδε;  
τοῖς κυρίοις γὰρ πάντα χρὴ δηλοῦν λόγον.

730

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔνδον, ἀλλὰ φροῦδος ἀρτίως, νέας  
βουλὰς νέοισιν ἐγκαταζεύξας τρόποις.

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἰοὺς ιούς.

Βραδεῖαν ἡμᾶς ἀρ' ὁ τήνδε τὴν ὄδὸν  
πέμπων ἐπεμψεν ἡ 'φάνην ἐγὼ βραδύς.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δέ ἐστὶ χρείας τῆσδ' ὑπεσπανισμένου;

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τὸν ἄνδρ' ἀπηύδα Τεῦκρος ἔνδοθεν στέγης  
μὴ ἔω παρήκειν, πρὶν παρὼν αὐτὸς τύχῃ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄλλ' οἴχεται τοι, πρὸς τὸ κέρδιστον τραπεῖς  
γνώμης, θεοῖσιν ὡς καταλλαχθῆ χόλου.

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ταῦτ' ἐστὶ τάπη μωρίας πολλῆς πλέα,  
εἴπερ τι Κάλχας εὖ φρονῶν μαντεύεται.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῖον; τί δέ εἰδὼς τοῦδε πράγματος πάρει; <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> πέρι MSS., Schneidewin corr.

## AJAX

And crowding round him as he nearer came,  
Rained on him taunts from this side and from that,  
Railed at the kinsman of the crazy wretch,  
Plotter of mischief 'gainst the host—"To die  
By stoning, mauled and mangled, is thy doom ;  
Think not to 'scape it, villain," so they cried.  
It came to such a pass that swords were drawn  
And brandished ; then the riot, having run  
To the very verge of bloodshed, was allayed  
By intervention of the elder men.  
But where is Ajax ? Him I fain would tell ;  
'Tis meet your lords should know whate'er befell.

### CHORUS

He is not within; but now he went abroad,  
Yoking some new resolve to his new mood.

### MESSENGER

Alack, alack !  
Too late then on this errand was I sent,  
Or I, a laggard, have arrived too late.

### CHORUS

What pressing business has been slackly done ?

### MESSENGER

Teucer enjoined his brother should not forth,  
Or quit his tent till he himself should come.

### CHORUS

Well, he is gone, and with the best resolve  
To make his peace with heaven.

### MESSENGER

Folly sheer,  
If there be sense in Calchas' prophecy.

### CHORUS

What prophecy ? what knowest thou thereof ?

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τοσούντον οίδα καὶ παρὼν ἐτύγχανον.  
 ἐκ γὰρ συνέδρου καὶ τυραννικοῦ κύκλου  
 Κάλχας μεταστὰς οἰος Ἀτρειδῶν δίχα,  
 εἰς χεῖρα Τεύκρου δεξιὰν φιλοφρόνως  
 θεὶς εἰπε κάπτεσκηψε, παντοίᾳ τέχνῃ  
 εἰρξαι κατ' ἡμαρ τούμφανες τὸ νῦν τόδε  
 Αἴανθ' ὑπὸ σκηναῖσι μηδ' ἀφέντ' ἔân,  
 εἰς ζῶντ' ἐκεῖνον εἰσιδεῖν θέλοι ποτέ.

ἐλᾶ γὰρ αὐτὸν τῇδε θῆμέρᾳ μόνη  
 δίας Ἀθάνας μῆνις, ώς ἔφη λέγων.  
 τὰ γὰρ περισσὰ κάνοντα σώματα  
 πίπτειν βαρείαις πρὸς θεῶν δυσπραξίαις  
 ἔφασχ' ὁ μάντις, ὅστις ἀνθρώπου φύσιν  
 βλαστὼν ἔπειτα μὴ κατ' ἄνθρωπον φρονῇ.  
 κεῖνος δ' ἀπ' οἴκων εὐθὺς ἔξορμώμενος  
 ἄνους καλῶς λέγοντος ηύρεθη πατρός.  
 ὁ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐννέπει τέκνουν, δόρει  
 βούλου κρατεῖν μέν, σὺν θεῷ δ' ἀεὶ κρατεῖν.  
 ὁ δ' ὑψικόμπως κάφρόνως ἡμείψατο.  
 πάτερ, θεοῖς μὲν καὶν ὁ μηδὲν ὧν ὄμοι  
 κράτος κατακτήσαιτ· ἔγω δὲ καὶ δίχα  
 κείνων πέποιθα τοῦτ' ἐπισπάσειν κλέος.  
 τοσόνδ' ἐκόμπει μῦθον. είτα δεύτερον  
 δίας Ἀθάνας, ἥνικ' ὀτρύνουσά νιν  
 ηὐδᾶτ' ἐπ' ἔχθροῖς χεῖρα φοινίαν τρέπειν,  
 τότ' ἀντιφωνεῖ δεινὸν ἄρρητόν τ' ἔπος·  
 ἄνασσα, τοῖς ἄλλοισιν Ἀργείων πέλας  
 ἵστω, καθ' ἡμᾶς δ' οὗποτ' ἐκρήξει μάχη.  
 τοιοῖσδέ τοι λόγοισιν ἀστεργῆ θεᾶς  
 ἐκτήσατ' ὄργην, οὐ κατ' ἄνθρωπον φρονῶν.  
 ἀλλ' εἰπερ ἔστι τῇδε θῆμέρᾳ, τάχ' ἀν

750

760

770

## AJAX

### MESSENGER

Thus much I know, for I was there. The seer  
Leaving the council of assembled chiefs,  
From the Atridae drew aside and laid  
His right hand lovingly in Teucer's hand,  
And spake and charged him straitly by all means,  
For this one day whose light yet shines, to keep  
Ajax within his tent nor let him forth,  
If he would see him still a living man.  
“Only to-day,” said Calchas, “will the wrath  
Of dread Athena vex him, and no more.  
O'erweening mortals waxing fat with pride  
Fall in their folly, smitten by the gods  
With dire disaster” (so the prophet spake),  
“Whene'er a mortal born to man's estate  
Exalts himself in thoughts too high for man.  
Thus Ajax, e'en when first he left his home,  
In folly spurned his father's monishments—  
‘Seek victory, my son’ (so warned the sire),  
‘But seek it ever with the help of heaven.’  
He in his wilful arrogance, replied,  
‘Father, with gods to aid, a man of naught  
Might well prevail, but I without their help.’  
Such was his haughty boast. A second time,  
To Queen Athena, as she spurred him on  
To turn his reeking hand upon his foes,  
He spake a blasphemous, outrageous word,  
‘Queen, stand beside the other Greeks; where I  
Am posted, fear not that our ranks will break.’  
Such vaunting words drew on him the dire wrath  
Of the goddess—pride too high for mortal man.

γενοίμεθ' αύτοῦ σὺν θεῷ σωτήριοι.  
τοσαῦθ' ὁ μάντις εἶφ'. ὁ δ' εὐθὺς ἐξ ἔδρας  
πέμπει με σοὶ φέροντα τάσδ' ἐπιστολὰς  
Τεῦκρος φυλάσσειν. εἰ δ' ἀπεστερήμεθα,  
οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνὴρ κείνος, εἰ Κάλχας σοφός.

780

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ δαῖα Τέκμησσα, δύσμορον γένος,  
ὅρα μολοῦσα τόνδ' ὅποῦ ἔπη θροεῖ  
ξυρεῖ γὰρ ἐν χρῷ τοῦτο μὴ χαίρειν τινά.

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

τί μ' αὖ τάλαιναν, ἀρτίως πεπαυμένην  
κακῶν ἀτρύτων, ἐξ ἔδρας ἀνίστατε;

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῦδ' εἰσάκουε τάνδρός, ὡς ἥκει φέρων  
Αἴαντος ἡμῖν πρᾶξιν ἦν ἥλγησ' ἐγώ.

790

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οἴμοι, τί φῆς, ἄνθρωπε; μῶν ὀλώλαμεν;

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα τὴν σὴν πρᾶξιν, Αἴαντος δ' ὅτι,  
θυραῖος εἴπερ ἔστιν, οὐθαρσῶ πέρι.

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

καὶ μὴν θυραῖος, ὥστε μ' ὠδίνειν τί φῆς.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐκεῖνον εἴργειν Τεῦκρος ἐξεφίεται  
σκηνῆς ὕπαυλον μηδ' ἀφιέναι μόνον.

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ποῦ δ' ἔστι Τεῦκρος, κἀπὶ τῷ λέγει τάδε;

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πάρεστ' ἐκεῖνος ἄρτι· τήνδε δ' ἔξοδον  
ὸλεθρίαν Αἴαντος ἐλπίζει φέρειν.

## ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οἴμοι τάλαινα, τοῦ ποτ' ἄνθρωπων μαθών;

800

## AJAX

But if he can survive this day, perchance  
With God's good aid we may avail to save him."  
So spake the seer, and Teucer straightway rose  
And sent me with these mandates. Have I failed,  
Ajax is doomed, or Calchas is no seer.

### CHORUS

Ill-starred Tecmessa, born to woe, come forth,  
And hearken to this messenger, whose words  
That touch us to the quick brook no delay.

*Enter TECMESSA.*

### TECMESSA

Why break my rest and trouble me again,  
Relieved awhile from woes that have no end?

### CHORUS

List to this man—the tidings he has brought  
Of Ajax' fortunes, filling me with grief.

### TECMESSA

What is thy news, man? Say, are we undone?

### MESSENGER

I know not of thy fortunes, only this—  
If Ajax is abroad, I augur ill.

### TECMESSA

Alas! he is. How thy words chill my soul!

### MESSENGER

Teucer's injunction is to keep him close  
Indoors, nor let him go abroad alone.

### TECMESSA

And where is Teucer? Wherefore speaks he thus?

### MESSENGER

He hath returned but lately and forbodes  
Grave jeopardy, if Ajax goes abroad.

### TECMESSA

Ah woe is me! Who warned him of this peril?

## ΑΙΑΣ

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τοῦ Θεστορείου μάντεως, καθ' ἡμέραν  
τὴν νῦν, ὅτ' αὐτῷ θάνατον ἡ βίον φέρει.

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οἱ γώ, φίλοι, πρόστητ' ἀναγκαίας τύχης,  
καὶ σπεύσαθ', οἵ μὲν Τεῦκρον ἐν τάχει μολεῖν,  
οἵ δ' ἐσπέρους ἀγκῶνας, οἵ δ' ἀντηλίους  
ζητεῖν' ἴόντες τάνδρὸς ἔξοδον κακήν.  
ἔγνωκα γὰρ δὴ φωτὸς ἡ πατημένη  
καὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς χάριτος ἐκβεβλημένη.  
οἵμοι, τί δράσω, τέκνον; οὐχ ἰδρυτέον·  
ἀλλ' εἰμι κάγῳ κεῖσ' ὅποιπερ ἀν σθένω.  
χωρῶμεν, ἐγκονῶμεν, οὐχ ἔδρας ἀκμὴ  
σφέζειν θέλοντας ἄνδρα γ δι σπεύδῃ θανεῖν.

810

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

χωρεῖν ἔτοιμος, κού λόγῳ δείξω μόνον·  
τάχος γὰρ ἔργου καὶ ποδῶν ἂμ' ἔψεται,

## ΑΙΑΣ

οἱ μὲν σφαγεὺς ἔστηκεν ἡ τομώτατος  
γένοιτ' ἄν, εἴ τω καὶ λογίζεσθαι σχολή·  
δῶρον μὲν ἀνδρὸς "Ἐκτορος ξένων ἐμοὶ<sup>θ</sup> ὁρᾶν·  
μάλιστα μισθέντος ἔχθιστου θ' ὄραν·  
πέπηγε δ' ἐν γῇ πολεμὰ τῇ Τρωάδι,  
σιδηροβρῶτι θηγάνη νεηκονής·  
ἔπηξα δ' αὐτὸν εὖ περιστείλας ἐγώ,  
εὐνούστατον τῷδ' ἄνδρὶ διὰ τάχους θανεῖν.  
οὕτω μὲν εὐσκευοῦμεν· ἐκ δὲ τῶνδέ μοι  
σὺ πρῶτος, ὡ Ζεῦ, καὶ γὰρ εἰκός, ἄρκεσον.  
αἰτήσομαι δέ σ' οὐ μακρὸν γέρας λαχεῖν.  
πέμψον τιν' ἡμῖν ἄγγελον, κακὴν φάτιν

820

## AJAX

### MESSENGER

The prophet, son of Thestor, but to-day,  
When in the scales for him hang life and death.

### TECMESSA

Help, friends, protect me from the impending doom !  
Speed, some to hasten Teucer on his way,  
Some to the western creeks and some to those  
That front the morn ; pursue his ill-starred track.  
I see too well my lord hath cheated me,  
Withdrawn the favour that long time was mine.  
Ah me ! What shall I do, my child ? No time  
To sit with folded hands ; I too will go,  
So far as this weak frame allows, in search.  
Up, quick, to work ! no moment must be lost,  
If we would save a man who hastes to death.

### CHORUS

Ready am I ; not words alone shall prove,  
But speed of act and foot, my readiness. [Exeunt.  
[AJAX alone on the sea-shore, planting his sword in the  
ground.]

### AJAX

The slayer standeth where his stroke is sure ;  
If I have time to muse thus curiously.  
The gift of Hector erst my foeman-friend,  
The man most hateful to my soul and sight ;  
Now fixed in foemen's land, the land of Troy ;  
Fresh edged upon the iron-fretting stone,  
Here have I planted it and set it fast,  
A friend to help me to a speedy death.  
My part is done ; for what remains, O Zeus,  
First I invoke thine aid ; and claim my due ;  
'Tis no excessive boon I shall demand.  
I pray thee send some messenger to bear

Τεύκρῳ φέροντα, πρῶτος ὡς με βαστάσῃ .  
 πεπτῶτα τῷδε περὶ νεορράντῳ ξίφει,  
 καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἔχθρῶν του κατοπτευθεὶς πάρος  
 ῥιφθῶ κυσὶν προβλητος οἰώνοις θ' ἔλωρ. 831)  
 τοσαῦτά σ', ὡς Ζεῦ, προστρέπω, καλῶ δ' ἄμα  
 πομπαῖον Ἐρμῆν χθόνιον εὖ με κοιμίσαι,  
 ξὺν ἀσφαδάστῳ καὶ ταχεῖ πηδήματι  
 πλευρὰν διαρρήξαντα τῷδε φασγάνῳ.  
 καλῶ δ' ἀρωγοὺς τὰς ἀεί τε παρθένους  
 ἀεί θ' ὄρώσας πάντα τὰν βροτοῖς πάθη,  
 σεμνὰς Ἐρινῦς τανύποδας, μαθεῖν ἐμὲ  
 πρὸς τῶν Ἀτρειδῶν ὡς διόλλυμαι τάλας,  
 καὶ σφας κακοὺς κάκιστα καὶ πανωλέθρους  
 ξυναρπάσειαν, ὥσπερ εἰσορῶσ' ἐμὲ 840  
 [αὐτοσφαγῇ πίπτοντα, τὼς αὐτοσφαγεῖς  
 πρὸς τῶν φιλίστων ἐκγόνων δλοίατο].<sup>1</sup>  
 ἵτ, ὡς ταχεῖαι ποίνιμοι τ' Ἐρινύες,  
 γεύεσθε, μὴ φείδεσθε πανδήμου στρατοῦ.  
 σὺ δ', ὡς τὸν αἰπὺν οὐρανὸν διφρηλατῶν  
 "Ηλιε, πατρώαν τὴν ἐμὴν ὅταν χθόνα  
 ἴδης, ἐπισχὼν χρυσόνωτον ἡνίαν  
 ἄγγειλον ἄτας τὰς ἐμὰς μόρον τ' ἐμὸν  
 γέροντι πατρὶ τῇ τε δυστήνῳ τροφῷ.  
 ἡ που τάλαινα, τήνδ' ὅταν κλύη φάτιν, 850  
 ἥσει μέγαν κωκυτὸν ἐν πάσῃ πόλει.  
 ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἔργον ταῦτα θρηνεῖσθαι μάτην,  
 ἀλλ' ἀρκτέον τὸ πρᾶγμα σὺν τάχει τινί.  
 ὡς Θάνατε Θάνατε, νῦν μ' ἐπίσκεψαι μολών.  
 καίτοι σὲ μὲν κάκει προσαυδήσω ξυνών.  
 σὲ δ', ὡς φαενῆς ἡμέρας τὸ νῦν σέλας,  
 καὶ τὸν διφρευτὴν "Ηλιον προσεννέπω,

<sup>1</sup> Rejected by Hermann, etc.

## AJAX

To Teucer the sad tale, that he may come  
To lift me where I lie a bleeding corpse,  
Fallen on this gory sword, lest I be first  
Discovered by some enemy and cast forth,  
A prey to dogs and birds. Thus much, O Zeus,  
I crave of thee; and Hermes I invoke,  
Born guide of spirits to the nether world,  
To lay me soft to rest at one swift gasp,  
Without a struggle, when into my side  
I plunge this sword. Ye too I call to aid,  
Maidens immortal, with immortal eyes  
Beholding all the many woes of man,  
Swift-footed hounds of vengeance, mark ye well  
How by the Atridae I am all undone.  
Swoop on them, Furies, blight and blast them both  
In utter ruin, as they see me now!  
On, ye Avengers, glut your maw, spare not,  
Let ruin seize the whole Achaean host!  
And thou whose chariot climbs the steep of heaven,  
When in thy course thou see'st my father-land,  
Draw in thy gold-bedizened rein and tell  
My aged sire and mother of their son,  
His sorrows and his end. Poor mother! when  
She hears the tale, her piercing wail will ring  
Through all the city. But how profitless  
These idle lamentations and delay!  
With such despatch as may be let's to work.

• O Death, Death, Death, draw nigh and look on me—  
Yet there below I shall have time enow  
To converse face to face with Death. But thee,  
O bright effulgence of this radiant day,  
On thee, the Sun-god charioteer, I call

πανύστατον δὴ κοῦποτ' αὐθις ὕστερον.  
 ὡς φέγγοις, ὡς γῆς ἵερὸν οἰκείας πέδουν  
 Σαλαμῖνος, ὡς πατρῷον ἐστίας βάθρον  
 κλειναί τ' Ἀθῆναι καὶ τὸ σύντροφον γένος  
 κρήναι τε ποταμοί θ' οἵδε, καὶ τὰ Τρωϊκὰ  
 πεδία προσαυδῶ, χαίρετ', ὡς τροφῆς ἐμοὶ·  
 τοῦθ' ὑμὶν Αἴας τοῦπος ὕστατον θροεῖ,  
 τὰ δὲ ἄλλ' ἐν "Αἰδου τοῖς κάτω μυθήσομαι.

860

HMIXOPION α'

πόνος πόνω φόνον φέρει.

*πᾶ πᾶ*

πᾶ γάρ οὐκ ἔβαν ἐγώ;  
 κούδεις ἐπίσταται με συμμαθεῖν<sup>1</sup> τόπος.  
 ἴδού.

870

δούπον αὖ κλύω τινά.

HMIXOPION β'

ἡμῶν γε ναὸς κοινόπλουν ὁμιλίαν.

HMIXOPION α'

τί οὖν δῆ;

HMIXOPION β'

πᾶν ἐστίβηται πλευρὸν ἔσπερον νεῶν

HMIXOPION α'

ἔχεις οὖν;

HMIXOPION β'

πόνου γε πλιγθος, κούδεν εἰς ὅψιν πλέον.

HMIXOPION α'

ἄλλ' οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ τὴν ἀφ' ἥλιου βολῶν  
 κέλευθον ἀνὴρ οὐδαμοῦ δηλοῖ φανείς.

<sup>1</sup> The Greek is obscure and probably corrupt. Jebb suggests, but does not print σφε συνναίειν.

## AJAX

For the last time and never more again.  
O light ! O sacred soil of mine own land,  
My Salamis ! my home, my ancestral hearth !  
O far-famed Athens, race akin to mine,  
Ye Trojan springs and streams, ye plains of Troy,  
Farewell, ye nurses of my fame, farewell !  
This is the last word Ajax speaks to you.  
Henceforth he talks in Hades with the dead.

[*He falls upon his sword.*

*Re-enter CHORUS.*

SEMI-CHORUS 1

Toil, toil, and toil on toil !  
Where have my steps not roamed, and yet,  
No place that hath a secret for my ear.<sup>1</sup>  
Hist ! hist ! what sound was that ?

SEMI-CHORUS 2

'Tis we, thy mates.

SEMI-CHORUS 1

What cheer, mates ?

SEMI-CHORUS 2

All westward of the fleet we've ranged and found

SEMI-CHORUS 1

Found, say you !

SEMI-CHORUS 2

Of moil enow, of what we sought no trace.

SEMI-CHORUS 1

No better luck to the eastward ; on the road  
That fronts the sunrise not a trace of him.

<sup>1</sup> Or, 'No spot can tell me of his presence there.'

## ΑΙΑΣ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἀν δῆτά μοι, τίς ἀν φιλοπόνων  
ἀλιαδᾶν ἔχων ἀύπνους ἄγρας,  
ἢ τίς Ὄλυμπιάδων θεᾶν ἢ ρυτῶν  
Βοσπορίων ποταμῶν, τὸν ὡμόθυμον  
εἴ ποθι πλαζόμενον λεύσσων  
ἀπύοι; σχέτλια γὰρ  
ἔμε γε τὸν μακρῶν ἀλάταν πόνων  
οὐρίφ μὴ πελάσαι δρόμῳ,  
ἀλλ' ἀμενηνὸν ἄνδρα μὴ λεύσσειν ὅπου.

στρ. 880

890

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἰώ μοί μοι.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίνος βοὴ πάραυλος ἔξέβη νάπους;

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἰὼ τλήμων.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὴν δουρίληπτον δύσμορον νύμφην ὁρῶ  
Τέκμησσαν, οἴκτῳ, τῷδε συγκεκραμένην.

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ῳχωκ', ὅλωλα, διαπεπόρθημαι, φίλοι.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν;

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

Αἰας δέ νῦν ἀρτίως νεοσφαγής  
κεῖται, κρυφαίῳ φασγάνῳ περιπτυχής.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ῶμοι ἐμῶν νόστων·  
ῶμοι, κατέπεφνεις, ἄναξ,  
τόνδε συνναύταν, τάλας  
ὦ ταλαιφρων γύναι.

900

AJAX

## CHORUS

O that some toiling fisher by the bay, (Str.)

**Dragging his nets all night,**

## **Some Oread from Olympus' height,**

Or nymph who haunts the tides of Bosphorus,  
Might spy the wanderer on his wayward way.

And bring the tale to us.

**Hard lot is ours who tack**

To east, to west, and find no track,

To east, to west, and find no track,  
Ne'er in our luckless course descriv-

**The derelict nor come anigh.**

*(They hear a cry in the covert.)*

TECMESSA

**Woe, woe is me !**

## CHORUS

**Whose was that cry from out the covert's fringe?**

**TECMESSA**

## **Me miserable !**

## CHORUS

My hapless mistress, Ajax' spear-won bride,  
Tecmessa, whelmed in anguish I behold.

TECMESSA

I'm lost, undone, of all bereft, my friends.

## CHORUS

## What aileth thee?

TECMESSA

Here lies our Ajax, newly slain, impaled  
Upon his sword, new planted in the ground.

## CHORUS

## O for my hope of return !

O my chief, thou hast slain

## **Me thy shipmate! my heart**

Bleeds for thee, lady forlorn.

## ΑΙΑΣ

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ώς ὁδε τοῦδ ἔχοντος αἰάζειν πάρα.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίνος ποτ' ἄρ' ἐπραξε χειρὶ δύσμορος;

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

αὐτὸς πρὸς αὐτοῦ, δῆλον· ἐν γάρ οἱ χθονὶ<sup>910</sup>  
πηκτὸν τόδ ἔγχος περιπετὲς κατηγορεῖ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ῶμοι ἐμᾶς ἄτας, οἷος ἄρ' αἰμάχθης, ἄφαρκτος  
φίλων.

ἐγὼ δ' ὁ πάντα κωφός, ὁ πάντ' ἄϊδρις, κατ-  
ημέλησα. πᾶ πᾶ  
κεῖται ὁ δυστράπελος, δυσώνυμος Αἴας;

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οὗτοι θεατός· ἀλλά νιν περιπτυχεῖ  
φάρει καλύψω τῷδε παμπήδην, ἐπεὶ  
οὐδεὶς ἄν, δστις καὶ φίλος, τλαίη βλέπειν  
φυσῶντ' ἄνω πρὸς ῥῖνας ἐκ τε φοινίας  
πληγῆς μελανθὲν αἷμ' ἀπ' οἰκείας σφαγῆς.<sup>920</sup>  
οἵμοι, τί δράσω; τίσ σε βαστάσει φίλων;  
ποὺ Τεῦκρος; ως ἀκμαῖ ἄν, εἰ βαίη, μόλοι,  
πεπτῶτ' ἀδελφὸν τούδε συγκαθαρμόσαι.  
ὦ δύσμορ' Αἴας, οἷος ὧν οἶως ἔχεις,  
ώς καὶ παρ' ἐχθροῦς ἄξιος θρήνων τυχεῖν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔμελλεις, τάλας, ἔμελλεις χρόνῳ

ἀντ.

στερεόφρων ἄρ' ἔξανύσσειν κακὰν  
μοῖραν ἀπειρεσίων πόνων. τοιά μοι  
πάννυχα καὶ φαέθοντ' ἀνεστέναξες  
ώμόφρων ἐχθροδόπ' Ἀτρείδαις.

930

## AJAX

TECMESSA

Thus lies he overthrown ; 'tis ours to wail.

CHORUS

By whose hand did he thus procure his death ?

TECMESSA

By his own hand, 'tis manifest ; the sword  
Set in the ground, on which he fell, is proof.

CHORUS

Out on my blindness ! All alone

Unwatched of friends he bled to death !

And I saw naught, heard naught, recked naught of  
thee !

Where lies he, Ajax, the self-willed,

The unbending, luckless as his name ?

TECMESSA

No eye shall look on him ; this robe around  
Shall lap him and enshroud from head to foot.  
For none who knew him, not his dearest friend,  
Could bear to see him, as the dark blood spurts  
Up through his nostrils from the self-wrought wound.  
What shall I do ? What friend shall lift him up ?  
Where, where is Teucer ? Timely would he come,  
If come he might, to raise him and lay out  
His brother's corse. Ah me ! How high thou stood'st,  
My Ajax, and how low thou liest here !  
A sight to melt to tears e'en foemen's eyes !

CHORUS

Ah woeful hero, 'twas thy fate,

(Ant.)

With that unyielding soul of thine,

In endless misery to decline,

And reach the goal of ruin, soon or late.

I knew it as I heard thee eve and morn

Against the Atridae vent

Thy passionate complaint,

ΑΙΑΣ

οὐλίῳ σὺν πάθει.  
μέγας ἄρ' ἦν ἐκεῖνος ἄρχων χρόνος  
πημάτων, ἥμος ἀριστοχειρ  
— — — ὅπλων ἔκειτ' ἄγων πέρι.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χωρεῖ πρὸς ἡπαρ, οἴδα, γενναία δύη.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδέν σ' ἀπιστῶ καὶ δὶς οἱμῶξαι, γύναι,  
τοιοῦδ' ἀποβλαφθεῖσαν ἀρτίως φίλου.

940

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

σοὶ μὲν δοκεῖν ταῦτ' ἔστ', ἐμοὶ δ' ἄγαν φρονεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ξυναυδῶ.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οἴμοι, τέκνον, πρὸς οἴλα δουλείας ζυγὰ  
χωροῦμεν, οίοι νῷν ἐφεστᾶσιν σκοποί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ῶμοι, ἀναλγήτων  
δισσῶν ἐθρόησας ἀναυδ'  
ἔργ'<sup>1</sup> Ἀτρειδᾶν τῷδ' ἄχει.  
ἀλλ' ἀπείργοι θεός.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οὐκ ἀν τάδ' ἔστη τῇδε μὴ θεῶν μέτα.

950

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄγαν ὑπερβριθὲς γὰρ<sup>2</sup> ἄχθος ἤνυσταν.

<sup>1</sup> ἀναυδὸν ἔργου MSS., Hermann corr.

<sup>2</sup> Elmsley adds γὰρ.

## AJAX

A bitter cry of proud disdain and scorn.

Aye, then began my woes  
When first arose

The contest who those arms could claim  
As guerdon for the first in warlike fame.

TECMESSA

Woe, woe is me !

CHORUS

The anguish, well I know it,  
Pierces to thy true heart.

TECMESSA

Woe, woe is me !

CHORUS

No marvel thou shouldst wail and wail again  
Bereft so lately and of one so loved.

TECMESSA

The woe I feel thou canst in part conceive.

CHORUS

'Tis true.

TECMESSA

Alas, my child, to what hard yoke  
Of bondage must we come, so merciless  
The taskmasters set over thee and me !

CHORUS

The Atridae, ruthless pair,  
And their grim deeds ineffable  
Thy boding soul prefigures. God avert it !

TECMESSA

Save by God's will we were not in this case.

CHORUS

They have laid on us a load too hard to bear.

## ΑΙΑΣ

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

τοιόνδε μέντοι Ζηνὸς ἡ δεινὴ θεὸς  
Παλλὰς φυτεύει πῆμ' Οδυσσέως χάριν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡ ρά κελαινώπαν θυμὸν ἐφυβρίζει πολύτλας ἀνήρ,  
γελᾷ δὲ τοῦσδε μαινομένοις ἄχεσιν πολὺν γέλωτα,  
φεῦ φεῦ,  
ξύν τε διπλοὶ βασιλῆς κλύουντες Ἀτρεῖδαι.

960

### ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οἱ δὲ οὖν γελώντων κάπιχαιρόντων κακοῖς  
τοῖς τοῦδε· ἵσως τοι, κεὶ βλέποντα μὴ πόθουν,  
θανόντ' ἀν οἰμώξειαν ἐν χρείᾳ δορός.

οἱ γὰρ κακοὶ γνώμαισι τάγαθὸν χεροῦν  
ἔχοντες οὐκ ἴσασι, πρίν τις ἐκβάλῃ.  
ἐμοὶ πικρὸς τέθηκεν ἡ κείνοις γλυκύς,  
αὐτῷ δὲ τερπνός· ὃν γὰρ ἡράσθη τυχεῖν  
ἐκτήσαθ' αὐτῷ, θάνατον ὅνπερ ἥθελεν.  
τί δῆτα τοῦδε ἐπεγγελῶν ἀν κάτα;  
θεοῖς τέθηκεν οὗτος, οὐ κείνοισιν, οὐ.

970

πρὸς ταῦτα· Οδυσσεὺς ἐν κενοῖς ὑβριζέτω.  
Αἴας γὰρ αὐτοῖς οὐκέτ' ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ  
λιπῶν ἀνίας καὶ γόους διοίχεται.

### ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ἰώ μοί μοι.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

σίγησον· αὐδὴν γὰρ δοκῶ Τεύκρου κλύειν  
βοῶντος ἄτης τῆσδε ἐπίσκοπον μέλοις.

### ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὦ φίλτατ' Αἴας, ὦ ξύναιμον ὅμμ' ἐμοί,  
ἀρ, ἡμπόληκας, ὥσπερ ἡ φάτις κρατεῖ;

## AJAX

TECMESSA

Yet such the plague wherewith the daughter dire  
Of Zeus afflicts us for Odysseus' sake.

CHORUS

Yea, how the patient hero must exult  
In his dark soul and mock  
With fiendish laughter at our frenzied grief ;  
And the two chiefs withal,  
The Atridae, when they learn his fate.

TECMESSA

Well, let them laugh and mock at Ajax fall'n.  
It may be, though they missed him not in life,  
When comes the stress of war they'll mourn him  
dead.

Men of mean judgment know not the good thing  
They have and hold till they have squandered it.  
He by his death more sorrow gave to me  
Than joy to them ; to himself 'twas pure content,  
For all he yearned to attain he won himself—  
Death that he chose. Then wherefore scoff at him ?  
The gods were authors of his death, not they.  
So let Odysseus, if it please him, vent  
Vain taunts ; for them there is no Ajax more,  
And dying he has left me naught but woe.

TEUCER

Woe, woe is me !

CHORUS

Hist, hist ! methinks 'tis Teucer's voice I hear,  
That woeful strain of mourning at our loss.

*Enter TEUCER.*

TEUCER

Beloved Ajax, dearest of my kin,  
Did fame not lie then ? hast thou fared thus ill ?

81

ΑΙΑΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δλωλεν ἀνήρ, Τεῦκρε, τοῦτ' ἐπίστασο.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ῶμοι βαρείας ἀρα τῆς ἐμῆς τύχης.

980

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώς ὡδὸς ἔχόντων

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, τάλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πάρα στενάζειν.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὦ περισπερχὲς πάθος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄγαν γε, Τεῦκρε.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

φεῦ τάλας· τί γὰρ τέκνου  
τὸ τοῦδε, ποῦ μοι γῆς κυρεῖ τῆς Τρῳάδος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μόνος παρὰ σκηναῖσιν.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

οὐχ ὅσον τάχος  
δῆτ’ αὐτὸν ἄξεις δεῦρο, μὴ τις ὡς κενῆς  
σκύμνον λεάίνης δυσμενῶν ἀναρπάσῃ;  
ἴθ’, ἐγκόνει, σύγκαμνε· τοῖς θανοῦσί τοι  
φιλοῦσι πάντες κειμένοις ἐπεγγελᾶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἔτι ζῶν, Τεῦκρε, τοῦδέ σοι μέλειν  
ἐφίεθ’ ἀνὴρ κείνος, ὥσπερ οὖν μέλει.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὦ τῶν ἀπάντων δὴ θεαμάτων ἐμοὶ  
ἄλγιστον ων προσεῖδον ὁφθαλμοῖς ἐγώ,

990

## AJAX

CHORUS

He hath perished, Teucer, and report spake true.

TEUCER

Then woe is me for my most grievous loss.

CHORUS

And since 'tis thus—

TEUCER

Alas for me, alas !

CHORUS

The hour for mourning—

TEUCER

O sharp pang of pain !

CHORUS

Is come, O Teucer, as thou say'st.

TEUCER

Ay me !

But his son—where in Troy-land bides he now ?

CHORUS

Alone beside the tent.

TEUCER

Then bring him quickly,

Lest of our foemen one should snatch him up,  
As from a lioness forlorn her cub.

Go quick, bestir thyself. 'Tis the world's way  
To flout and triumph o'er the prostrate dead.

[*Exit TECMESSA.*

CHORUS

Yea, while he yet lived Ajax left to thee,  
Teucer, this child, to tend him, as thou dost.

TEUCER

O saddest sight of all I ever saw,  
O bitterest of all paths I ever trod,

όδός θ' ὁδῶν πασῶν ἀνιάσασα δὴ  
μάλιστα τούμὸν σπλάγχνου, ἦν δὴ νῦν ἔβην.  
ῷ φίλτατ' Αἴας, τὸν σὸν ὡς ἐπησθόμην  
μόρον διώκων κὐξιχνοσκοπούμενος.

ὅξεῖα γάρ σου βάξις ὡς θεοῦ τινος  
διῆλθ' Ἀχαιοὺς πάντας ὡς οἴχει θαυών.  
ἀγὼ κλύων δύστηνος ἐκποδὼν μὲν ὅν  
ὑπεστέναζον, νῦν δ' ὄρων ἀπόλλυμαι.  
οἵμοι.

ἴθ', ἐκκάλυψον, ως ἵδω τὸ πᾶν κακόν.  
ῳ δυσθέατον ὅμμα καὶ τόλμης πικρᾶς,  
σσας ἀνίας μοι κατασπείρας φθίνεις.

ποὶ γὰρ μολεῦν μοι δυνατόν, εἰς ποίους βροτούς,  
τοῖς σοῖς ἀρήξαντ' ἐν πόνοισι μηδαμοῦ;

ἢ πού με<sup>1</sup> Τελαμών, σὸς πατὴρ ἐμός θ' ἄμα,  
δέξαιτ' ἀν εὐπροσωπος ἵλεώς τ' ἵσως

χωροῦντ' ἄνευ σοῦ. πῶς γὰρ οὔχ; ὅτῳ πάρα  
μηδὲ εὐτυχοῦντι μηδὲν ἥδιον γελάν.

οὗτος τί κρύψει; ποῖον οὐκ ἔρει κακὸν  
τὸν ἐκ δορὸς γεγώτα πολεμίου νόθον,

τὸν δειλίᾳ προδόντα καὶ κακανδρίᾳ

σέ, φίλτατ' Αἴας, ἢ δόλοισιν, ως τὰ σὰ  
κράτη θανόντος καὶ δόμους νέμοιμι σούς.  
τοιαῦτ' ἀνὴρ δύσοργος, ἐν γήρᾳ βαρύς,  
ἔρει, πρὸς οὐδὲν εἰς ἔριν θυμούμενος.

τέλος δ' ἀπωστὸς γῆς ἀπορριφθήσομαι,  
δοῦλος λόγοισιν ἀντ' ἐλευθέρου φανείς.

τοιαῦτα μὲν κατ' οἶκον· ἐν Τροιᾳ δέ μοι  
πολλοὶ μὲν ἔχθροί, παῦρα δ' ὀφελήσιμα.

καὶ ταῦτα πάντα σοῦ θανόντος ηνρόμην.  
οἵμοι, τί δράσω; πῶς σ' ἀποσπάσω πικροῦ

<sup>1</sup> MSS. omit με, added by Kuster.

## AJAX

The path that led me hither, Ajax loved,  
My best-loved Ajax ! when I learnt thy fate,  
E'en as I tracked in desperate haste thy steps ;  
For a swift rumour, like a voice from heaven,  
Ran through the host that thou wert dead and  
gone.

I heard it and I moaned in spirit afar,  
But now the sight strikes death into my soul.  
O woe !

Come, lift the searcloth ; let me see the worst.  
O bleeding form, O agonising sight !  
How brave, how rash, how cruel in thy death ;  
Thy death, what seed of misery for me !  
Where can I turn, what race of men will house me,  
The wretch who failed to help thee in thy woes ?  
How Telamon, thy sire and mine withal,  
Will beam upon me (can't not picture him ?)  
When I return without thee ! Telamon  
Who in his hours of fortune never smiles !  
Will he refrain ? Will he not curse and ban  
The bastard of his spear-won concubine,  
The wretch who like a coward and poltroon  
Forsook thee, dearest Ajax, or conspired  
To hold thy realm and halls when thou wert dead ?  
Thus will he rave, the choleric, soured old man,  
Ready to pick a quarrel for a straw.  
And in the end I shall be banned, defamed,  
Rejected, branded—*No free man, a slave.*  
Such cheer at home awaits me, and at Troy  
My foes are many and my friends to seek.  
Thus by thy death I've profited ! Ah me !  
How tear thee from this cruel glittering blade,

## ΑΙΑΣ

τοῦδ' αἰόλου κυνώδοντος, ὡς τάλας, ὑφ' οὐ  
φοινέως ἄρ' ἔξεπινευσας; εἰδεις ὡς χρόνῳ  
ἔμελλέ σ' "Εκτωρ καὶ θανὼν ἀποφθίσειν;  
σκέψασθε, πρὸς θεῶν, τὴν τύχην δυοῖν βροτοῖν.  
"Εκτωρ μέν, φόδη τοῦδ' ἐδωρήθη πάρα,  
ζωστῆρι πρισθεὶς ἵππικῶν ἔξι ἀντύγων  
ἐκνάπτετ' αἰέν, ἔστ' ἀπέψυξεν βίον.  
οὗτος δ' ἐκείνου τήνδε δωρεὰν ἔχων  
πρὸς τοῦδ' ὅλωλε θανασίμῳ πεσήματι.  
ἄρ' οὐκ Ἐρινὺς τοῦτ' ἔχάλκευσεν ξίφος  
κάκείνουν "Αιδης, δημιουργὸς ἄγριος;  
ἔγω μὲν οὖν καὶ ταῦτα καὶ τὰ πάντ' ἀεὶ<sup>1</sup>  
φάσκοιμ' ἀν ἀνθρώποισι μηχανᾶν θεούς.  
ὅτῳ δὲ μὴ τάδ' ἔστιν ἐν γνώμῃ φίλα,  
κεῖνός τ' ἐκεῖνα στεργέτω κάγῳ τάδε.

1030

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

μὴ τεῖνε μακράν, ἀλλ' ὅπως κρύψεις τάφῳ  
φράζου τὸν ἄνδρα χῶ τι μυθησει τάχα.  
βλέπω γάρ ἐχθρὸν φῶτα, καὶ τάχ' ἀν κακοῖς  
γελῶν ἂ δὴ κακούργος ἐξίκοιτ' ἀνήρ.

1040

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

τίς δ' ἔστιν ὄντιν' ἄνδρα προσλεύσσεις στρατοῦ;

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

Μενέλαιος, φόδη τόνδε πλοῦν ἔστείλαμεν.

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

όρῳ· μαθεῖν γάρ ἐγγὺς ὅν οὐ δυσπετής.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὗτος, σὲ φωνῷ τόνδε τὸν νεκρὸν χεροῦν  
μὴ συγκομίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐᾶν ὅπως ἔχει.

## AJAX

That stands arraigned thine executioner ?  
See'st thou how Hector dead and turned to dust  
Was fated in the end to be thy death ?  
Look on the fortunes of the two, I pray ye :  
Hector, who by the very belt he wore,  
A gift from Ajax, lashed to the car-rail  
Was dragged and mangled till his ghost expired ;<sup>1</sup>  
And this the sword whose murderous edge transfixed  
The side of Ajax—this was Hector's gift.  
Say, was it not some Fury forged this blade,  
Was not that hellish girdle wove by Death ?  
I hold, for my part, these and all things else  
The gods contrive for mortals. But may be  
Some disapprove my creed ; let such an one  
Cling to his own belief, as I to mine.

### CHORUS

Abridge thy large discourse ; think how to lay  
The dead man in his grave and what thy plea  
Shall be anon ; I see a foe approach.  
Perchance he comes with mocking of our grief,  
As miscreants use.

### TEUCER

What captain dost thou see ?

### CHORUS

Menelaus, he at whose behest we sailed.

### TEUCER

'Tis he, not hard to recognise thus near.

*Enter MENELAUS*

### MENELAUS

Stop, sirrah, bear no hand in raising up  
The corse, I charge thee ; leave it where it lies.

<sup>1</sup> Homer knows nothing of the belt and it is the *dead* Hector who is dragged round the tomb of Patroclus.

ΑΙΑΣ

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

τίνος χάριν τοσόνδ' ἀνήλωσας λόγουν;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

δοκοῦντ' ἐμοί, δοκοῦντα δ' ὃς κραίνει στρατοῦ.

1050

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

οῦκουν ἀν εἴποις ἥντιν' αἰτίαν προθείς;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐθούνεκ' αὐτὸν ἐλπίσαντες οἴκοθεν  
ἄγειν Ἀχαιοῖς ξύμμαχόν τε καὶ φίλον,  
ἔξηγρομεν ζητοῦντες ἔχθιώ Φρυγῶν·

ὅστις στρατῷ ξύμπαντι βουλεύσας φόνου  
νύκτωρ ἐπεστράτευσεν, ώς ἔλοι δόρει·  
κεὶ μὴ θεῶν τις τήνδε πεῖραν ἔσβεσεν,  
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἀν τήνδ' ἦν ὅδ' εἴληχεν τύχην  
θανόντες ἀν προυκείμεθ' αἰσχίστῳ μορφῃ,  
οὗτος δ' ἀν ἔζη.    νῦν δ' ἐνήλλαξεν θεὸς

1060

τὴν τοῦδ' ὕβριν πρὸς μῆλα καὶ ποίμνας πεσεῖν.  
ών εἶνεκ' αὐτὸν οὔτις ἔστ' ἀνὴρ σθένων  
τοσοῦτον ὥστε σῶμα τυμβεῦσαι τάφῳ,  
ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ χλωρὰν ψάμμαθον ἐκβεβλημένος  
ὅρνισι φορβὴ παραλίοις γενήσεται.

πρὸς ταῦτα μηδὲν δεινὸν ἔξαρης μένος.  
εὶ γὰρ βλέποντος μὴ 'δυνήθημεν κρατεῖν,  
πάντως θανόντος γ' ἄρξομεν, κὰν μὴ θέλῃς,  
χερσὶν παρευθύνοντες· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπου  
λόγων γ' ἀκοῦσαι ζῶν ποτ' ἡθέλησ' ἐμῶν.  
καίτοι κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ὄντα δημότην  
μηδὲν δικαιοῦν τῶν ἐφεστώτων κλύειν.  
οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὔτ' ἀν ἐν πόλει νόμοι καλῶς  
φέροιντ' ἄν, ἔνθα μὴ καθεστήκῃ δέος,  
οὔτ' ἀν στρατός γε σωφρόνως ἄρχοιτ' ἔτι,  
μηδὲν φόβου πρόβλημα μηδ' αἰδοῦς ἔχων.

1070

## AJAX

TEUCER

Wherefore dost waste thy breath in these proud words?

MENELAUS

Such is my will and the great general's will.

TEUCER

On what pretence? wilt please to tell us that?

MENELAUS

Hear then. We thought to bring from Salamis  
For Greeks a friend and firm ally, but found him  
On trial worse than any Phrygian foe;  
Who plotted death and sallied forth by night  
'Gainst the whole host, to slay us with the spear;  
And had some god not intervened to foil  
This enterprise, his fate had now been ours,  
To perish by an ignominious death,  
While he had now been living. But a god  
Turned his blind malice on the flocks and herds.  
Thus hath he done, and no man shall prevail  
By might to lay his body in the tomb.  
He shall be cast forth on the yellow sands  
To feed the carrion birds that haunt the beach.  
Rage not nor bluster as thou hear'st, for we,  
E'en if we could not master him alive,  
In any case will lord it o'er him dead,  
Rule him and discipline, in thy despite,  
By force—my words he ne'er would heed, alive.  
Yet 'tis a mark of villainy when one  
Of the common deigns not to obey his lords.  
For in a State that hath no dread of law  
The laws can never prosper and prevail,  
Nor could an arm'd force be disciplined  
Lacking the guard of awe and reverence.

ἀλλ' ἄνδρα χρή, καὶ σῶμα γεννήσῃ μέγα,  
δοκεῖν πεσεῖν ἀν καὶ ἀπὸ σμικροῦ κακοῦ.  
δέος γὰρ φί πρόσεστιν αἰσχύνη θ' ὁμοῦ,  
σωτηρίαν ἔχοντα τόνδε ἐπίστασο·

1080

ὅπου δὲ ὑβρίζειν δρᾶν θ' ἀ βούλεται παρῆ,  
ταύτην νόμιζε τὴν πόλιν χρόνῳ ποτὲ  
ἔξ οὐρίων δραμοῦσαν εἰς βυθὸν πεσεῖν.  
ἀλλ' ἔστάτω μοι καὶ δέος τι καίριον,  
καὶ μὴ δοκῶμεν δρῶντες ἀν ἡδώμεθα  
οὐκ ἀντιτίσειν αὐθις ἀν λυπώμεθα.

ἔρπει παραλλάξ ταῦτα. πρόσθεν οὗτος ἦν  
αἴθων ὑβριστής, νῦν δὲ ἐγὼ μέγ' αὖ φρονῶ.  
καὶ σοι προφωνῶ τόνδε μὴ θάπτειν, ὅπως  
μὴ τόνδε θάπτων αὐτὸς εἰς ταφὰς πέσης.

1090

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

Μενέλαε, μὴ γνώμας ὑπόστήσας σοφὰς  
εἰτ' αὐτὸς ἐν θανοῦσιν ὑβριστής γένη.

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἄν ποτ', ἄνδρες, ἄνδρα θαυμάσαιμ' ἔτι,  
δις μηδὲν διν γοναῖσιν εἰθ' ἀμαρτάνει,  
δοθ' οἱ δοκοῦντες εὐγενεῖς πεφυκέναι  
τοιαῦθ' ἀμαρτάνουσιν ἐν λόγοις ἔπη·  
ἄγ' εἰπ' ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐθις, ἡ σὺ φῆς ἄγειν  
τόνδε ἄνδρ' Ἀχαιοῖς δεῦρο σύμμαχον λαβών;  
οὐκ αὐτὸς ἔξέπλευσεν ως αὐτοῦ κρατῶν;  
ποῦ σὺ στρατηγεῖς τοῦδε; ποῦ δὲ σοὶ λεῶν  
ἔξεστ' ἀνάσσειν διν ὅδ' ἥγαγ' οἴκοθεν;  
Σπάρτης ἀνάσσων ἡλθεις, οὐχ ἡμῶν κρατῶν.  
οὐδὲ ἔσθ' ὅπου σοὶ τόνδε κοσμῆσαι πλέον  
ἀρχῆς ἔκειτο θεσμὸς ἡ καὶ τῷδε σέ.  
ὑπαρχος ἄλλων δεῦρ' ἔπλευσας, οὐχ δλων

1100

## AJAX

Nay, though a man should tower in thews and might,  
A giant o'er his fellows, let him think  
Some petty stroke of fate may work his ruin.  
Where dread prevails and reverence withal,  
Believe me, there is safety ; but the State,  
Where arrogance hath licence and self-will,  
Though for a while she run before the gale,  
Will in the end make shipwreck and be sunk.  
Dread in its proper season and degree  
Must be maintained; let us not fondly dream  
That we can act at will to please ourselves,  
Nor pay the price of pleasure by our pains.  
'Tis turn and turn ; now this man lorded it  
In insolence ; 'tis now my hour of pride.  
So I forewarn thee bury him not, lest thou  
In burying shouldst dig thyself a grave.

### CHORUS

Sage precepts these, my lord, and do not thou  
Thyself become a scoffer of the dead.

### TEUCER

Friends, I shall never marvel after this  
If any baseborn fellow gives offence,  
When men who pride them on their lineage  
By their perverted utterance thus offend.  
Repeat thy tale : thou claimest to have brought  
My brother hither as a Greek ally,  
Secured by thee forsooth. Sailed he not forth  
As his own master, of his own free will ?  
Who made thee lord of him ? What right hast thou  
To rule the clansmen whom he brought from home ?  
Thou cam'st as Sparta's king, no lord of ours.  
Thou hast no more prerogative or right  
To govern him than he to govern thee ;  
Thou sailedst under orders, not as chief,

στρατηγός, ὥστ' Αἴαντος ἡγεῖσθαι ποτε.  
 ἀλλ' ὅνπερ ἄρχεις ἄρχε καὶ τὰ σέμν' ἔπη  
 κόλαξ' ἐκείνους· τόνδε δ', εἴτε μὴ σὺ φῆς  
 εἴθ' ἄτερος στρατηγός, εἰς ταφὰς ἐγὼ  
 θήσω δικαίως, οὐ τὸ σὸν δείσας στόμα. 1110  
 οὐ γάρ τι τῆς σῆς εἴνεκ' ἐστρατεύσατο  
 γυναικός, ὕσπερ οἱ πόνου πολλοῦ πλέω,  
 ἀλλ' εἴνεχ' ὄρκων οἰσιν ἦν ἐνώμοτος,  
 σοῦ δὲ οὐδέν· οὐ γὰρ ἡξίου τοὺς μηδένας.  
 πρὸς ταῦτα πλείους δεῦρο κήρυκας λαβὼν  
 καὶ τὸν στρατηγὸν ἤκε, τοῦ δὲ σοῦ ψόφου  
 οὐκ ἀν στραφείην, ἔως ἂν ἡς οἰός περ εἰ.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδ' αὖ τοιαύτην γλῶσσαν ἐν κακοῖς φιλῶ·  
 τὰ σκληρὰ γάρ τοι, καὶ νέπερδικ' ἡ, δάκνει.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὅ τοξότης ἔοικεν οὐ σμικρὸν φρονεῖν. 1120

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

οὐ γὰρ βάναυσον τὴν τέχνην ἐκτησάμην.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

μέγ' ἀν τι κομπάσειας, ἀσπίδ' εἰ λάθοις.

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

καὶ ν ψιλὸς ἀρκέσαιμι σοί γ' ὠπλισμένῳ.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἡ γλῶσσά σου τὸν θυμὸν ὡς δεινὸν τρέφει.

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ξὺν τῷ δικαίῳ γὰρ μέγ' ἔξεστιν φρονεῖν.

## AJAX

And captain unto Ajax ne'er couldst be.  
Go, lord it o'er thy henchmen, chasten them  
With lordly pride ; but this man, whether thou,  
Aye, or thy brother-general forbid,  
I with due rites and offices will bury  
Despite thy threatenings. 'Twas not to bring back  
Thy wife that Ajax joined in the campaign,  
Like thy serf drudges, but to keep the oath  
Whereto he had bound himself, no whit for thee ;  
Of underlings like thee he took no heed.  
Go then and bring more heralds back with thee  
And the commander ; for thy noisy rant,  
Whilst thou art what thou art, I care no straw.

### CHORUS

This speech again mislikes me in the midst  
Of woes ; hard words, how just soever, wound.

### MENELAUS

Methinks this archer<sup>1</sup> hath a captain's pride.

### TEUCER

Aye, as the master of no vulgar art.

### MENELAUS

How wouldest thou strut, promoted to a shield !

### TEUCER

Without a shield I were a match for thee  
In panoply.

### MENELAUS

How valorous with thy tongue !

### TEUCER

He can be bold who hath his quarrel just.

<sup>1</sup> 'Archer' like 'ranker' by itself is a term of reproach. In the *Iliad* Teucer is the best Bowman in the Achaeans host, but also a good man-at-arms.

ΑΙΑΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

δίκαια γὰρ τόνδ' εὐτυχεῖν κτείναντά με;

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

κτείναντα; δεινόν γ' εἰπας, εἰ καὶ ζῆς θανών.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

θεὸς γὰρ ἐκσφέζει με, τῷδε δ' οἴχομαι.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

μή νυν ἀτίμα θεούς, θεοῖς σεσωσμένος.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἐγὼ γὰρ ἀν ψέξαιμι δαιμόνων νόμους;

1130

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

εἰ τοὺς θανόντας οὐκ ἔξι θάπτειν παρών.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τούς γ' αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ πολεμίους. οὐ γὰρ καλόν.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ἢ σοὶ γὰρ Αἴας πολέμιος προύστη ποτέ;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

μισοῦντ' ἐμίσει· καὶ σὺ τοῦτ' ἡπίστασο.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

κλέπτης γὰρ αὐτοῦ ψηφοποιὸς ηύρεθης.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἐν τοῖς δικασταῖς, κούκ ἐμοί, τόδ' ἐσφάλη.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

πόλλ' ἀν κακῶς λάθρᾳ σὺ κλέψειας κακά.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τοῦτ' εἰς ἀνίαν τοῦπος ἔρχεται τινι.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

οὐ μᾶλλον, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἢ λυπήσομεν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἐν σοι φράσω· τόνδ' ἐστὶν οὐχὶ θαπτέον.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἀντακούσει τοῦτον ὡς τεθάψεται.

1140

## AJAX

MENELAUS

Justice quotha, to exalt my murderer?

TEUCER

Murdered, and yet thou livest! that is strange!

MENELAUS

Heaven saved me; in intention I was slain.

TEUCER

If the gods saved thee, sin not 'gainst the gods.

MENELAUS

I! could I e'er abuse the laws of Heaven?

TEUCER

Yea, if thou com'st to stop the burial.

MENELAUS

Of mine own foes; to bury them were sin.

TEUCER

Was Ajax e'en thine enemy in the field?

MENELAUS

He loathed me, as I him, thou knowest well.

TEUCER

Aye, thou hadst robbed him by suborning votes.

MENELAUS

'Twas by the judges he was cast, not me.

TEUCER

A fair face thou canst put on foulest frauds.

MENELAUS

Someone I know will suffer for that word.

TEUCER

He who provoked is like to suffer more.

MENELAUS

One word more; he shall not be burièd.

TEUCER

One word in answer; buried he shall be.

## ΑΙΑΣ

### ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἥδη ποτ' εἶδον ἄνδρ' ἐγὼ γλώσσῃ θρασὺν  
ναύτας ἐφορμήσαντα χειμῶνος τὸ πλεῖν,  
ῳ φθέγμ' ἀν οὐκ ἀν ηὔρεις, ἥνικ' ἐν κακῷ  
χειμῶνος εἴχετ', ἀλλ' ὑφ' εἴματος κρυφεὶς  
πατεῖν παρεῖχε τῷ θέλοντι ναυτίλων.  
οὗτοι δὲ καὶ σὲ καὶ τὸ σὸν λάθρον στόμα  
σμικροῦ νέφους τάχ' ἄν τις ἐκπνεύσας μέγας  
χειμῶν κατασβέσειε τὴν πολλὴν βοήν.

### ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ἐγὼ δέ γ' ἄνδρ' ὅπωπα μωρίας πλέων,  
ὅς ἐν κακοῖς ὕβριζε τοῖσι τῶν πέλας.  
κατ' αὐτὸν εἰσιδών τις ἐμφερῆς ἐμὸλ  
ὄργην θ' ὅμοιος εἰπε τοιοῦτον λόγον·  
ῶνθρωπε, μὴ δρᾶ τοὺς τεθνηκότας κακῶς.  
εἰ γὰρ ποήσεις, ἵσθι πημανούμενος.  
τοιαῦτ' ἄνολβον ἄνδρ' ἐνουθέτει παρών.  
ὅρῳ δέ τοι νιν, κᾶστιν, ώς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ,  
οὐδεὶς ποτ' ἄλλος ή σύ. μῶν ηγιξάμην;

1150

### ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἀπειμι· καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρόν, εἰ πύθοιτό τις  
λόγοις κολάζειν φίαζεσθαι πάρα.

1160

### ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ἄφερπέ νυν· κάμοι γὰρ αἰσχιστον κλύειν  
ἄνδρὸς ματαίου φλαῦρ' ἔπη μυθουμένου.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔσται μεγάλης ἔριδός τις ἀγών.  
ἄλλ' ως δύνασαι, Τεῦκρε, ταχύνας  
σπεῦσον κοίλην κάπετόν τιν' ἰδεῖν  
τῷδ', ἔνθα βροτοῖς τὸν ἀείμνηστον  
τάφον εύρώεντα καθέξει.

## AJAX

### MENELAUS

Once did I see a braggart, bold of tongue,  
Who had pressed his crew to sail in time of storm,  
But when the storm was on him he was mum—  
Lay like a dead log muffled in his cloak,  
And let the sailors trample him at will.  
E'en so with thee and thy unbridled tongue.  
Perchance a mighty hurricane may rise,  
Sprung from a cloud no bigger than a hand,  
Swoop down on thee and quench thy blustering.

### TEUCER

Once too I knew a fool, a silly fool,  
Who triumphed at his neighbour's woes and mocked ;  
And then it chanced that one, a man like me  
In looks and character, addressed him thus :  
*Man, do not evil to the dead, for if*  
*Thou doest evil, thou wilt surely rue it.*  
So to his face he chid that silly fool.  
I see that wight before me, and methinks  
'Tis none but thou. Can't read my riddle plain ?

### MENELAUS

I go, for 'twould disgrace me, were it known  
That I, with power to act, chastised with words.

### TEUCER

Begone then ! 'twere for me a worse disgrace  
To listen to a bragster's idle prate. [Exit MENELAUS.]

### CHORUS

Soon a mortal strife will come.  
Seek a hollow grave, and haste,  
Teucer, with what speed thou may'st,  
To prepare the mouldering tomb,  
Where the warrior shall lie,  
Deathless in men's memory.

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἐς αὐτὸν καιρὸν οἶδε πλησίοι  
πάρεισιν ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε παῖς τε καὶ γυνή,  
τάφον περιστελοῦντε δυστήμου νεκροῦ.  
1170  
ὡ παῖ, πρόσελθε δεῦρο καὶ σταθεὶς πέλας  
ἰκέτης ἔφαψαι πατρός, δις σ' ἐγείνατο.  
θάκει δὲ προστρόπαιος ἐν χεροῦ ἔχων  
κόμας ἐμὰς καὶ τῆσδε καὶ σαυτοῦ τρίτου,  
ἰκτήριον θησαυρόν. εἰ δέ τις στρατοῦ  
βίᾳ σ' ἀποσπάσειε τοῦδε τοῦ νεκροῦ,  
κακὸς κακῶς ἄθαπτος ἐκπέσοι χθονός,  
γένους ἄπαντος ρίζαν ἐξημημένος,  
αὐτῶς ὅπωσπερ τούδ' ἐγὼ τέμνω πλόκον.  
1180  
ἔχ' αὐτόν, ὡ παῖ, καὶ φύλασσε, μηδέ σε  
κινησάτω τις, ἀλλὰ προσπεσὼν ἔχουν.  
ὑμεῖς τε μὴ γυναικες ἀντ' ἀνδρῶν πέλας  
παρέστατ', ἀλλ' ἀρήγετ', ἔστ' ἐγὼ μολὼν  
τάφον μεληθῶ τῷδε, καν μηδεὶς ἔφη.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

τίς ἄρα νέατος ἐς πότε λήξει πολυπλάγκτων  
ἐτέων ἀριθμός,  
τὰν ἄπανστον αἰὲν ἐμοὶ δορυσσοήτων  
μόχθων ἄταν ἐπάγων  
ἀν τὰν εὐρώδεα Τρῳαν,<sup>1</sup>  
δύστανον δνειδος Ἐλλάνων;  
1190

ἀντ. α'

δφελε πρότερον αἰθέρα δῦναι μέγαν ἦ τὸν  
πολύκοινον "Αιδαν  
κεῖνος ἀνήρ, δις στυγερῶν ἔδειξεν ὅπλων  
"Ἐλλασιν κοινὸν "Αρη.

<sup>1</sup> ἀντά τὰν εὐρώδη Τροίαν MSS., Ahrens corr.

## AJAX

*Enter TECMESSA and CHILD.*

TEUCER

Lo ! in good time I see his child and wife  
Draw near to tend the hero's obsequies.  
Come hither, child, and take thy place beside him  
And lay, in suppliant guise, thy hand in his,  
And kneel as one who hath taken sanctuary,  
With locks of hair as offering in thine hand—  
Mine, hers, and thine,—all-potent means of grace.  
Then if by violence any of the host  
Should drag thee from the dead man, be his lot  
To perish banned, cast forth without a grave,  
Cut off with kith and kindred, root and branch,  
Even as I cut this lock from off my head.  
Take it and keep it, child ; let no man move thee.  
Kneel thou, and clasp in close embrace the dead.  
And ye, his comrades, stand not idly by  
As women mourners ; quit yourselves as men  
In his defence, till I have made a grave  
To bury him, though all the world forbid.

[*Exit TEUCER.*

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

When shall the score be told, the sum of the endless  
years ?  
Weary am I of camps and tramps and the hurtling  
of spears.  
Hither and thither I roam o'er the windswept  
Trojan plain,  
Shame and reproach for Greece, for Grecians trouble  
and pain.

(Ant. 1)

Would he had sunk to hell, or vanished in ether afar,  
Who first admonished the Greeks to league them-  
selves for the war—

ΑΙΑΣ

ὶώ πόνοι πρόγονοι πόνων  
κεῖνος γὰρ ἔπερσεν ἀνθρώπους.

ἐκεῖνος οὗτε στεφάνων  
οὗτε βαθεῖαν κυλίκων  
νεῖμεν ἐμοὶ τέρψιν ὄμιλεῖν,  
οὗτε γλυκὺν αὐλῶν δτοβον,  
δύσμορος, οὗτ' ἐννυχίαν<sup>1</sup>  
τέρψιν ἰαύειν.  
ἔρωτων δ', ἔρωτων ἀπέπαυσεν, ὕμοι.  
κεῖμαι δ' ἀμέριμνος οὗτως,  
ἀεὶ πυκιναῖς δρόσοις  
τεγγόμενος κόμας,  
λυγρᾶς μνήματα Τροίας.

στρ. β'

1200

καὶ πρὸν μὲν αἰὲν νυχίου·  
δεῖματος δὲν μοι προβολὰ  
καὶ βελέων θούριος Αἴας·  
νῦν δ' οὗτος ἀνεῖται στυγερῷ  
δαίμονι· τίς μοι, τίς ἔτ' οὖν  
τέρψις ἐπέσται;  
γενοίμαν ἵν' ὑλᾶεν ἔπεστι πόντου  
πρόβλημ' ἀλίκλυστον, ἄκραν  
ὑπὸ πλάκα Σουνίου,  
τὰς ἱερὰς δπως  
προσείποιμεν Ἀθάνας.

ἀντ. β'

1210

1220

<sup>1</sup> ἐννυχίου MSS., Wolff corr.

## AJAX

War, the father of toils, whence mortal sorrows  
began;

Yea, it was he who begat the plague and ruin of man.

Wretch ! for me no garlands fine, (Str. 2.)  
Cups o'erbrimming with red wine ;  
No shrill flutes didst thou assign.

Wretch ! a foe to all delight.  
E'en the slumbers soft of night  
Thy alarms have banished quite.

And my loves, ah well-a-day !  
Thou hast driven them all away ;  
Here I lie on the cold clay :

All alone, with none to care,  
While the dank dews wet my hair.  
Such, accursèd Troy, thy fare !

Erewhile Ajax, stalwart knight, (Ant. 2.)  
Was my buckler in the fight,  
Shield against the alarm of might.

Now by Fate a victim led  
To the altar, he hath bled ;  
And for me all joy hath fled.

O that from this barren strand  
Wafted to Athena's land  
I on Sunium's brow might stand ;

Hear the waves that round it beat  
Wash the wooded headland's feet,  
Sacred Athens thence to greet !

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἴδιων ἔσπευσα τὸν στρατηλάτην  
 'Αγαμέμνον' ἡμῖν δεῦρο τόνδ' ὄρμώμενον·  
 δῆλος δέ μούστι σκαιὸν ἐκλύσων στόμα.

## ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

σὲ δὴ τὰ δεινὰ ρήματ' ἀγγέλλουσί μοι  
 τλῆναι καθ' ἡμῶν ὡδ' ἀνοιμωκτὶ χανεῖν;  
 σέ τοι, τὸν ἐκ τῆς αἰχμαλωτίδος λέγω,  
 ἡ που τραφεὶς ἀν μητρὸς εὐγενοῦς ἅπο  
 ὑψήλ' ἐκόμπεις κάπ' ἄκρων ὀδοιπόρεις,  
 δτ' οὐδὲν ὧν τοῦ μηδὲν ἀντέστης ὑπερ,  
 κοῦτε στρατηγοὺς οὔτε ναυάρχους μολεῖν  
 ἡμᾶς 'Αχαιῶν οὐδὲ σοῦ διωμόσω,  
 ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἄρχων, ώς σὺ φήσ, Αἴας ἔπλει.  
 ταῦτ' οὐκ ἀκούειν μεγάλα πρὸς δούλων κακά;  
 ποίου κέκραγας ἀνδρὸς ὡδ' ὑπέρφρονα;  
 ποὶ βάντος ἡ ποὺ στάντος οὐπερ οὐκ ἐγώ;  
 οὐκ ἀρ' 'Αχαιοῖς ἀνδρες εἰσὶ πλὴν ὅδε;  
 πικροὺς ἔοιγμεν τῶν 'Αχιλλείων ὅπλων  
 ἀγώνας 'Αργείοισι κηρῦξαι τότε,  
 εὶ πανταχοῦ φανούμεθ' ἐκ Τεύκρου κακοί,  
 κούκ ἀρκέσει ποθ' ὑμὸν οὐδὲ ἡσσημένοις  
 εἴκειν ἀ τοῖς πολλοῖσιν ἥρεσκεν κριταῖς,  
 ἀλλ' αἰὲν ἡμᾶς ἡ κακοῖς βαλεῖτέ που  
 ἡ σὺν δόλῳ κεντήσεθ' οἱ λελειμμένοι.  
 ἐκ τῶνδε μέντοι τῶν τρόπων οὐκ ἄν ποτε  
 κατάστασις γένοιτ' ἀν οὐδενὸς νόμου,  
 εὶ τοὺς δίκη νικῶντας ἔξωθήσομεν  
 καὶ τοὺς διπισθεν εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν ἀξομεν.  
 ἀλλ' εἰρκτέον τάδ' ἔστιν· οὐ γὰρ οἱ πλατεῖς  
 οὐδὲ εὐρύνωτοι φῶτες ἀσφαλέστατοι,

## AJAX

*Enter TEUCER.*

TEUCER

Lo I return in haste ; I saw approach  
Great Agamemnon, captain of the host ;  
'Tis plain he means to vent on us his spleen

*Enter AGAMEMNON.*

AGAMEMNON

So, Sirrah, it is thou (for thus I learn)  
Hast dared to rant and curse and threaten us,  
Thus far unpunished ; thou the bondmaid's son.  
Ha ! had thy mother been a high-born dame,  
How grand thy speech, how proud had been thy  
gait,

When now, a nobody, thou championest  
That thing of naught, maintaining that we kings.  
Had no commission, or on sea or land,  
To rule the Greeks or thee, and (such thy claim)  
That Ajax sailed, an independent chief.  
Is this not rank presumption in a slave ?  
And what is he whose might thou vauntest thus ?  
Where did he hold his ground or lead the assault  
Where I was not ? Have Greeks no *man* but him ?  
'Twas in an evil hour we made proclaim  
Of open contest for Achilles' arms,  
If Teucer must denounce us as corrupt,  
Whate'er the issue, and if ye reject  
The adverse judgment of the major part,  
But must for ever gird at us and rail,  
Or plot to stab us, when ye lose your suit.  
Never with tempers such as yours could law  
Be firmly based, if we are called to oust  
The rightful victors and promote the worse.  
This must be stopped. 'Tis not the brawny, big,  
Broad-shouldered men who prove the best at need ;

ἀλλ' οἱ φρονοῦντες εὖ κρατοῦσι πανταχοῦ.  
 μέγας δὲ πλευρὰ βοῦς ὑπὸ σμικρᾶς ὅμως  
 μάστιγος ὀρθὸς εἰς ὅδὸν πορεύεται.  
 καὶ σοὶ προσέρπον τοῦτ' ἐγὼ τὸ φάρμακον  
 ὅρῳ τάχ', εἰ μὴ νοῦν κατακτήσει τινά·  
 δις ἀνδρὸς οὐκέτ' ὄντος, ἀλλ' ἥδη σκιᾶς,  
 θαρσῶν ὑβρίζεις καξέλευθεροστομεῖς.  
 οὐ σωφρονήσεις; οὐ μαθὼν δις εἰ φύσιν  
 ἄλλον τιν' ἄξεις ἄνδρα δεῦρ' ἐλεύθερον,  
 δστις πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀντὶ σοῦ λέξει τὰ σά;  
 σοῦ γὰρ λέγοντος οὐκέτ' ἀν μάθοιμ' ἐγώ·  
 τὴν βάρβαρον γὰρ γλῶσσαν οὐκ ἔπαιω.

1260

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἴθ' ὑμὸν ἀμφοῦν νοῦς γένοιτο σωφρονεῖν·  
 τούτου γὰρ οὐδὲν σφῶν ἔχω λόγον φράσαι.

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

φεῦ· τοῦ θανόντος ὡς ταχεῖά τις βροτοῖς  
 χάρις διαρρεῖ καὶ προδοῦσ' ἀλίσκεται,  
 εἰ σοῦ γ' ὅδ' ἀνὴρ οὐδὲν ἐπὶ σμικρῶν λόγων,  
 Αἴας, ἔτ' ἵσχει μνῆστιν, οὐ σὺ πολλάκις  
 τὴν σὴν προτείνων προύκαμες ψυχὴν δόρει.  
 ἀλλ' οὕχεται δὴ πάντα ταῦτ' ἐρριμμένα.  
 ὡς πολλὰ λέξας ἄρτι κάνοητ' ἔπη,  
 οὐ μυημονεύεις οὐκέτ' οὐδέν, ἡνίκα  
 ἔρκεων ποθ' ὑμᾶς οὔτος ἐγκεκλημένους,  
 ἥδη τὸ μηδὲν ὄντας, ἐν τροπῇ δορὸς  
 ἐρρύσατ' ἐλθὼν μοῦνος, ἀμφὶ μὲν νεῶν  
 ἄκροισιν ἥδη ναυτικοῖς ἐδωλίοις  
 πυρὸς φλέγοντος, εἰς δὲ ναυτικὰ σκάφη  
 πηδῶντος ἄρδην "Εκτορος τάφρων ὑπερ·  
 τίς ταῦτ' ἀπεῦρξεν; οὐχ ὅδ' ἦν ὁ δρῶν τάδε,

1270

1280

## AJAX

The wise and prudent everywhere prevail.  
The broad-ribbed ox is guided on his path  
Down the straight furrow by a little goad.  
A like corrective is in store for thee,  
If thou acquire not some small sense full soon.  
The man is dead, a shadow, and yet thou  
Let'st thy tongue wag and waxest insolent.  
Come to a sober mind ; recall thy birth,  
Bring hither someone else, a free-born man,  
To plead thy cause before us in thy stead ;  
For when thou speak'st thy words convey no sense ;  
I understand not a barbarian tongue.

### CHORUS

I would ye twain might learn sobriety ;  
'Tis the best counsel I can give you both.

### TEUCER

Out on man's gratitude ! how soon it fades,  
Or proves a traitor when a friend is dead !  
What memory, what tittle of regard  
Hath he for thee, my Ajax, thou who oft  
At peril of thy life didst toil for him ?  
Lost labour, cast away and all forgot !  
Vain, windy orator, canst not recall  
The day when ye were cooped within your lines,  
Scattered, half routed and as good as lost,  
How single-handed he stood forth and saved you,  
Though at your ships the poop decks were ablaze,  
And Hector o'er the fosse came bounding, prompt  
To board them ? Who averted then the rout ?  
The very man of whom thou sayest now,  
" He did no deed I have not done myself."

δν ούδαμοῦ φής, οὐ σὺ μή, βῆμαι<sup>1</sup> ποδί;  
 ἀρ' ὑμὶν οὔτος ταῦτ' ἔδρασεν ἔνδικα;  
 χῶτ' αὐθις αὐτὸς "Εκτορος μόνος μόνου  
 λαχών τε κάκελευστος ἥλθ' ἐναντίος,  
 οὐ δραπέτην τὸν κλῆρον ἔστι μέσον καθείς,  
 ὑγρᾶς ἀρούρας βῶλον, ἀλλ' ὃς εὐλόφου  
 κυνῆς ἔμελλε πρῶτος ἄλμα κουφιεῖν;  
 δός ἦν οἱ πράσσων ταῦτα, σὺν δὲ ἐγὼ παρών,  
 ὁ δοῦλος, οὐκ τῆς βαρβάρου μητρὸς γεγώς.  
 δύστηνε, ποὶ βλέπων ποτ' αὐτὰ καὶ θροεῖς;  
 οὐκ οἰσθα σοῦ πατρὸς μὲν δὲ προύφυ πατὴρ  
 ἀρχαῖον ὄντα Πέλοπα βάρβαρον Φρύγα;  
 'Ατρέα δέ, διὸς αὖ σ' ἔσπειρε δυσσεβέστατον,  
 προθέντ' ἀδελφῷ δεῖπνον οἰκείων τέκνων;  
 αὐτὸς δὲ μητρὸς ἔξεφυς Κρήσσης, ἐφ' οὐ  
 λαβὼν ἐπακτὸν ἄνδρ' ὁ φιτύσας πατὴρ  
 ἐφῆκεν ἐλλοῖς ἵχθύσιν διαφθοράν.  
 τοιοῦτος ὧν τοιῷδ' ὄνειδίζεις σποράν;  
 διὸς ἐκ πατρὸς μὲν εἴμι Τελαμῶνος γεγώς,  
 ὅστις στρατοῦ τὰ πρῶτ' ἀριστεύσας ἐμὴν  
 ἰσχει ἔνυνευνον μητέρ', ἦ φύσει μὲν ἦν  
 βασίλεια, Λαομέδοντος· ἔκκριτον δέ νιν  
 δώρημα κείνῳ δωκεν Ἀλκμήνης γόνος.  
 ἀρ' ὡδὸς ἀριστος ἔξ ἀριστέοιν δυοῖν  
 βλαστὼν ἀν αἰσχύνοιμι τοὺς πρὸς αἴματος,  
 οὓς νῦν σὺ τοιοῖσδ' ἐν πόνοισι κειμένους  
 ὥθεῖς ἀθάπτους, οὐδὲ ἐπαισχύνει λέγων;  
 εὖ νυν τόδ' ἵσθι, τοῦτον εὶς βαλεῖτέ που,

1290

1300

<sup>1</sup> οὐδὲ συμβῆναι MSS., Madvig corr.

## AJAX

Was that no loyal service? Judge yourselves;  
Or once again when he in single fight  
Confronted Hector, under no constraint,  
But by the lot he drew—no skulking lot,<sup>1</sup>  
No lump of loam, but one that well he knew  
Would first leap lightly from the crested helm?  
Such deeds were his, and at his side was I,  
This slave, of a barbarian mother born.  
How canst thou prate thus idly? Look at home.  
Hast thou forgotten that thine own sire's sire  
Was Phrygian Pelops, a barbarian?  
That Atreus who begat thee, wretch, did set  
Before his brother a most impious feast,  
His brother's children's flesh? That thou thyself  
Com'st of a Cretan mother whom her sire  
Caught with an alien slave, her paramour,  
And sent to feed dumb fishes of the deep?  
Thus basely born thou twit'st me with my birth!  
My sire was Telamon who won the prize  
As champion of the host, a peerless bride,  
A princess, daughter of Laomedon,  
The meed assigned him by Alcmena's son.  
She was my mother. And am I, thus born  
Nobly of parents both of noblest birth,  
Am I to shame my kindred overthrown,  
Now helpless, whelmed in utter misery,  
Whom thou wouldst spurn and rob of burial rites,  
Nor art ashamed to promulgate this ban?  
Know this full well, where'er ye cast this man,

<sup>1</sup> An allusion to the story of Cresphontes who after the Dorian Conquest agreed to cast lots for his share of the Peloponnese and in order to secure the last lot, which he coveted, put a lump of clay into the urn instead of a potsherd.

βαλεῖτε χήμâις τρεῖς ὁμοῦ συγκειμένους.

ἔπεὶ καλόν μοι τοῦδ' ὑπερπονουμένῳ

θανεῖν προδήλως μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς σῆς ὑπὲρ  
γυναικός, ἢ τοῦ σοῦ γ<sup>1</sup> ὁμαίμονος λέγω;  
πρὸς ταῦθ' ὅρα μὴ τούμον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ σόν.  
ώς εἰ με πημανεῖς τι, βουλήσει ποτὲ  
καὶ δειλὸς εἶναι μᾶλλον ἢ 'ν ἐμοὶ θρασύς.

1310

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄναξ Ὁδυσσεῦ, καιρὸν ἵσθ' ἐληλυθώσ,  
εὶ μὴ ξυνάψων, ἀλλὰ συλλύσων πάρει.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν, ἄνδρες; τηλόθεν γὰρ ησθόμην  
βοὴν Ἀτρειδῶν τῷδ' ἐπ' ἀλκίμῳ νεκρῷ.

## ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

οὐ γὰρ κλύοντές ἐσμεν αἰσχίστους λόγους,  
ἄναξ Ὁδυσσεῦ, τοῦδ' ὑπ' ἄνδρὸς ἀρτίως;

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ποίους; ἐγὼ γὰρ ἄνδρὶ συγγνώμην ἔχω  
κλύοντι φλαῦρα συμβαλεῖν ἔπη κακά.

## ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ηκουσεν αἰσχρά· δρῶν γὰρ ἦν τοιαῦτά με.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τί γάρ σ' ἔδρασεν, ὥστε καὶ βλάβην ἔχειν;

## ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

οῦ φησ' ἐάσειν τόνδε τὸν νεκρὸν ταφῆς  
ἀμοιρον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς βίαν θάψειν ἐμοῦ.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἔξεστιν οὖν εἰπόντι τὰληθῆ φίλῳ  
σοὶ μηδὲν ἡσσον ἢ πάρος ξυνηρετεῖν;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> σοῦ θ MSS., Bothe corr.    <sup>2</sup> ξυνηρετμεῖν MSS., Lobeck corr,

## AJAX

We three, three corpses, ye will cast beside.  
For me 'twere nobler before all men's eyes  
To fall in his behalf than for a wife  
Of thine—or of thy brother, should I say?  
Therefore bethink thee—'tis thine interest  
No less than mine—if on me thou dar'st lay  
A finger, thou wilt surely wish full soon  
Rather to bear the brand of cowardice  
Than prove thy reckless bravery on me.

*Enter ODYSSEUS.*

### CHORUS

My lord Odysseus, thou art come in time,  
If thou art here to mediate, not embroil.

### ODYSSEUS

What is it, sirs? Far off I heard loud words  
Of the Atridae o'er the hero's corpse.

### AGAMEMNON

True, lord Odysseus; were we not provoked  
By the most shameful taunts from yonder man?

### ODYSSEUS

What taunts? For my part I can pardon one  
Who when reviled retorts in angry words.

### AGAMEMNON

I did abuse him as his acts deserved.

### ODYSSEUS

Say by what action gave he just offence?

### AGAMEMNON

He vows he will not leave unsepultured  
The corpse, but bury it in my despite.

### ODYSSEUS

May I be candid with thee as a friend  
Without suspicion of my loyalty?

## ΑΙΑΣ

### ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

εἴπ'. ἡ γὰρ εἴην οὐκ ἀν εὑ φρουνῶν, ἐπεὶ  
φίλον σ' ἔγω μέγιστον Ἀργείων νέμω.

1330

### ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ

ἄκουε νυν. τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε πρὸς θεῶν  
μὴ τλῆς ἄθαπτον ὡδὸν ἀναλγήτως βαλεῖν·  
μηδὲ ἡ βία σε μηδαμῶς νικησάτω  
τοσόνδε μισεῖν ὥστε τὴν δίκην πατεῖν.  
κάμοι γὰρ ἦν ποθ' οὗτος ἔχθιστος στρατοῦ,  
ἔξ οὐν κράτησα τῶν Ἀχιλλείων ὅπλων,  
ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἔμπας ὅντ' ἔγω τοιόνδ' ἐμοὶ<sup>1</sup>  
οὐκ ἀντατιμάσαιμ' ἄν, ὥστε μὴ λέγειν  
ἔν' ἄνδρ' ἵδεν ἄριστον Ἀργείων, ὅσοι  
Τροίαν ἀφικόμεσθα, πλὴν Ἀχιλλέως.  
ώστ' οὐκ ἀν ἐνδίκως γ' ἀτιμάζοιτό σοι·  
οὐ γάρ τι τοῦτον, ἀλλὰ τοὺς θεῶν νόμους  
φθείροις ἄν. ἄνδρα δ' οὐ δίκαιον, εἰ θάνοι,  
βλάπτειν τὸν ἐσθλόν, οὐδὲ ἐὰν μισῶν κυρῆς.

1340

### ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

σὺ ταῦτ', Ὁδυσσεῦ, τοῦδ' ὑπερμαχεῖς ἐμοί;

### ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ

ἔγωγ· ἐμίσουν δ', ἡνίκ' ἦν μισεῖν καλόν.

### ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

οὐ γὰρ θανόντι· καὶ προσεμβῆναι σε χρή;

### ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ

μὴ χαῖρ', Ἀτρείδη, κέρδεσιν τοῖς μὴ καλοῖς.

### ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

τόν τοι τύραννον εὔσεβεῖν οὐ ῥάδιον.

1350

### ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ

ἀλλ' εὐ λέγουσι τοῖς φίλοις τιμᾶς νέμειν.

## AJAX

AGAMEMNON

Surely. I am not senseless, and I count  
Thee among all the Greeks my chiefest friend.

ODYSSEUS

Then hear me. O for pity's sake forbear,  
Repent, and let not violence and hate  
Blind thee to trample justice under foot.  
I also counted him my deadliest foe  
In all the army, ever since the day  
When by award I won Achilles' arms ;  
Yet for all that, foe as he was to me,  
I would not so requite his wrong with wrong  
As not to own that, save Achilles, he  
In all the host of Argives had no peer.  
Unjustly thou wouldest thus dishonour him ;  
For not to him, but to the laws of heaven  
Wouldst thou do wrong ; and wrong it is to insult  
A brave man dead, e'en if he be thy foe.

AGAMEMNON

Wilt thou, Odysseus, take his part against me?

ODYSSEUS

Yea, yet I hated him so long as hate  
Was honourable.

AGAMEMNON

Why not hate him still,  
And set thy heel on his dead body too ?

ODYSSEUS

Delight not, son of Atreus, in ill gains.

AGAMEMNON

'Tis hard for monarchs to show piety.

ODYSSEUS

But not respect for friends who counsel well.

ΑΙΑΣ

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

κλύειν τὸν ἐσθλὸν ἄνδρα χρὴ τῶν ἐν τέλει.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

παῦσαι· κρατεῖς τοι τῶν φίλων νικώμενος.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

μέμινησ' ὅποιῷ φωτὶ τὴν χάριν δίδωσ.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὅδ' ἔχθρὸς ἀνήρ, ἀλλὰ γενναῖός ποτ' ἦν.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

τί ποτε ποήσεις; ἔχθρὸν ὡδ' αἰδεῖ νέκυν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

νικᾶ γὰρ ἀρετή με τῆς ἔχθρας πολύ.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

τοιοίδε μέντοι φῶτες ἔμπληκτοι βροτῶν.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἢ κάρτα πολλοὶ νῦν φίλοι καῦθις πικροί.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

τοιούσδ' ἐπαινεῖς δῆτα σὺ κτᾶσθαι φίλους;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

σκληρὰν ἐπαινεῖν οὐ φιλῶ ψυχὴν ἐγώ.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ἡμᾶς σὺ δειλοὺς τῇδε θήμέρᾳ φανεῖς.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἄνδρας μὲν οὖν "Ἐλλησι πᾶσιν ἐνδίκους.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ἄνωγας οὖν με τὸν νεκρὸν θάπτειν ἔāν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἔγωγε· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἐνθάδ' ἵξομαι.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ἢ πάνθ' ὅμοια πᾶς ἀνὴρ αὐτῷ πονεῖ.

## AJAX

AGAMEMNON

A true man ever heeds authority.

ODYSSEUS

Forbear : thou conquerest, yielding unto friends.

AGAMEMNON

Think to what kind of man thou shovest grace.

ODYSSEUS

My foe he was, but still a noble foe.

AGAMEMNON

What wouldst thou ? Honour a dead foeman's  
corpse ?

ODYSSEUS

With me his worth outweighs his enmity.

AGAMEMNON

Such sudden change of mind we call caprice.

ODYSSEUS

Common enough the change from friend to foe.

AGAMEMNON

Dost thou commend such fickle friends as these ?

ODYSSEUS

A stubborn temper I would ne'er commend.

AGAMEMNON

Thou mind'st this day to make us seem as cowards.

ODYSSEUS

Nay, as just rulers in the eyes of Greece.

AGAMEMNON

Thou bidst me then permit the burial?

ODYSSEUS

Yes, for I too shall come to need the same.

AGAMEMNON

How true the saw, each labours for himself.

ΑΙΑΣ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τῷ γάρ με μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἡ ὑμαυτῷ πονεῖν;

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

σὸν ἄρα τοῦργου, οὐκ ἐμὸν κεκλήσεται.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ώς ἀν ποήσῃς, πανταχῇ χρηστός γ' ἔσει.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ἀλλ' εὖ γε μέντοι τοῦτ' ἐπίστασ' ώς ἐγὼ  
σοὶ μὲν νέμοιμ' ἀν τῆσδε καὶ μείζω χάριν,  
οὗτος δὲ κάκει κάνθαδ' ὧν ἔμοιγ' ὁμῶς  
ἔχθιστος ἔσται· σοὶ δὲ δρᾶν ἔξεσθ' ἀ χρῆς.<sup>1</sup>

1370

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅστις σ', Ὁδυσσεῦ, μὴ λέγει γνώμῃ σοφὸν  
φῦναι, τοιοῦτον ὅντα, μῶρός ἔστ' ἀνήρ.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

καὶ νῦν γε Τεύκρῳ τάπὸ τοῦδ' ἀγγέλλομαι,  
ὅσον τότ' ἔχθρὸς ἡ, τοσόνδ' εἰναι φίλος.  
καὶ τὸν θανόντα τόνδε συνθάπτειν θέλω  
καὶ ξυμπονεῖν καὶ μηδὲν ἐλλείπειν ὅσων  
χρὴ τοῖς ἀρίστοις ἀνδράσιν πονεῖν βροτούς.

1380

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ἄριστ' Ὁδυσσεῦ, πάντ' ἔχω σ' ἐπαινέσαι  
λόγοισι, καί μ' ἔψευσας ἐλπίδος πολύ.  
τοῦτῳ γὰρ ὧν ἔχθιστος Ἀργείων ἀνήρ  
μόνος παρέστης χερσίν, οὐδ' ἔτλης παρὼν  
θανόντι τῷδε ξῶν ἐφυβρίσαι μέγα,  
ώς ὁ στρατηγὸς οὐπιβρόντητος μολὼν  
αὐτός τε χώ ξύναιμος ἡθελησάτην  
λωβητὸν αὐτὸν ἐκβαλεῖν ταφῆς ἄτερ.  
τοιγάρ σφ' Ὄλύμπου τοῦδ' ο πρεσβεύων πατὴο

1390

<sup>1</sup> χρή MSS., Dindorf corr.

## AJAX

ODYSSEUS

And who deserves my labour more than I ?

AGAMEMNON

Well, let it seem thy doing, friend, not mine.

ODYSSEUS

Howe'er 'tis done, 'twill prove thee good and kind.

AGAMEMNON

To thee, my friend, of this be well assured,  
I'd grant a favour greater e'en than this.  
But that man, as in living so in death,  
Shall have my hate. So do as pleaseth thee.

[*Exit AGAMEMNON.*

CHORUS

Whoe'er, Odysseus, having proof like this,  
Denies thy wisdom is himself a fool.

ODYSSEUS

And now to Teucer, once my foe, henceforth  
I proffer friendship staunch and true as was  
Mine enmity ; and I would ask to share  
With you in obsequies and ritual  
To grace his grave ; no service would I stint  
That man can render to the mighty dead.

TEUCER

Noblest Odysseus, I have naught but praise  
For thy good words that all belie my fears.  
Of all the Greeks thou wast his deadliest foe,  
Yet thou alone didst dare espouse his cause,  
And hadst no heart to insult this dumb cold clay,  
Like yonder crack-brained chief of the host who came,  
He and his brother general, with intent  
To cast him forth defamed without a grave.  
For that may he who rules in heaven supreme,

## ΑΙΑΣ

μνήμων τ' Ἐρινὺς καὶ τελεσφόρος Δίκη  
κακοὺς κακῶς φθείρειαν, ὥσπερ ἡθελον  
τὸν ἄνδρα λώβαις ἐκβαλεῖν ἀναξίως.  
σὲ δέ, ὡ γεραιοῦ σπέρμα Λαέρτου πατρός,  
τάφου μὲν ὀκνῷ τοῦδε ἐπιψαύειν ἔāν,  
μὴ τῷ θανόντι τοῦτο δυσχερὲς ποιῶ·  
τὰ δέ ἄλλα καὶ ξύμπρασσε, κεῖ τινα στρατῷ  
θέλεις κομίζειν, οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἔξομεν.  
ἔγὼ δὲ τἄλλα πάντα πορσυνῶ· σὺ δὲ  
ἀνὴρ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐσθλὸς ὧν ἐπίστασο.

## ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἄλλ' ἡθελον μέν· εἰ δὲ μή στί σοι φίλον  
πράσσειν τάδε ἡμᾶς, εἰμ' ἐπαινέσας τὸ σόν.

## ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ἄλις· ἡδη γὰρ πολὺς ἐκτέταται  
χρόνος. ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν κοίλην κάπετον  
χερσὶ ταχύνατε, τοὶ δέ ὑψίβατον  
τρίποδ' ἀμφίπυρον λουτρῶν ὁσίων  
θέσθ' ἐπίκαιρον·  
μία δ' ἐκ κλισίας ἀνδρῶν ἵλη  
τὸν ὑπασπίδιον κόσμον φερέτω.  
παῖ, σὺ δὲ πατρός γ', ὅσον ἴσχύεις,  
φιλότητι θιγὼν πλευρὰς σὺν ἐμοὶ  
τάσδε ἐπικούφιζ· ἔτι γὰρ θερμαὶ  
σύριγγες ἄνω φυσῶσι μέλαν  
μένος. ἀλλ' ἄγε πᾶς, φίλος ὅστις ἀνὴρ

1400

1410

## AJAX

And the Erinys who forgetteth not,  
And Justice who accomplisheth the end,  
Curse those accursed sinners and confound them,  
E'en as they would have wronged the innocent dead.  
But for thine aid in these our funeral rites,  
Son of Laertes, old and honoured chief,  
I must reject the service, though full loath,  
Lest I should do displeasure to the dead.  
In all the rest be one of us, and if  
Thou wouldest invite some comrade from the camp  
To join the mourning, we shall welcome him.  
All else I will provide. Rest well assured,  
We reckon thee a true great-hearted friend.

### ODYSSEUS

Well I was fain to assist, but if your will  
Consents not, I will acquiesce and go.

### TEUCER

Enough : too long have we delayed.  
Go some with mattock armed and spade,  
Dig the grave pit speedily ;  
Lustral waters to supply,  
Others set the cauldron high,  
Piling around it faggots dry,  
Let another band be sent  
To fetch his harness from his tent.  
Thou too, child, draw near and lay  
Thy little hands on this cold clay ;  
Though thy help may not be much,  
Thy sire shall feel thy loving touch.  
Help to raise this prostrate form.  
These limbs are cold, yet still the warm  
Veins from the heart and wounded side  
Jet forth their dark ensanguined tide.

## ΑΙΑΣ

φησὶ παρεῖναι, σούσθω, βάτω,  
τῷδ' ἀνδρὶ ποιῶν τῷ πάντ' ἀγαθῷ  
κούδενί πω λέσσοι θυητῶν  
[Αἴαντος, δτ' ἦν, τότε φωνῶ].<sup>1</sup>

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἢ πολλὰ βροτοῖς ἔστιν ἵδοῦσιν  
γνῶναι· πρὶν ἴδεῖν δὲ οὐδεὶς μάντις  
τῶν μελλόντων, ὅ τι πράξει.

<sup>1</sup> Rejected by Dindorf.

## AJAX

Haste, each who claims the name of friend,  
Haste one and all the dead to tend  
With service due. Since time began  
There lived on earth no nobler man.

### CHORUS

Wisdom still by seeing grows,  
But no man the unseen knows.  
Shall he fare or ill or well  
Who of mortals can foretell ?



# **ELECTRA**

## ARGUMENT

ORESTES, admonished by the Delphic oracle to avenge his murdered father, sets forth for Mycenae accompanied by his aged Paedagogus and Pylades. When in sight of the palace they lay their plot. The Paedagogus is to present himself as a Phocian messenger and announce to Clytemnestra that Orestes has been killed in a chariot race at the Pythian games. Meanwhile Orestes and Pylades are to make funeral offerings at the tomb of Agamemnon and then, disguised as Phocians, to carry to the Queen a funeral urn, telling her it holds the ashes of Orestes. Clytemnestra, warned by an evil dream, sends Chrysothemis to pour a libation on the tomb. Electra meets her on the way thither and persuades her to leave these impious offerings and take instead such gifts as the two sisters can make to their father's ghost. Clytemnestra enters with a handmaid bearing fruits to be laid on the altar of Apollo. She rates Electra for being abroad without her leave, and defends her past acts against Electra's reproaches. The announcement of a messenger ends the altercation, and the Queen hears with feigned sorrow and ill-concealed joy the news of Orestes' death, and invites the messenger to accompany her to the palace.

## ARGUMENT

*Chrysothemis returns from the tomb, reporting that someone has been there before her, has wreathed the mound with flowers, and left on the edge a lock of hair. Who can it be but Orestes? Electra disabuses her, repeating the messenger's sad tale, and entreats her aid in executing the resolve to slay with her own hands their unnatural mother and her paramour. Orestes joins them with Pylades and attendants bearing the funeral urn. She takes the urn in her hands and makes her moan over her lost brother. As they converse together Orestes by degrees reveals himself and discloses his purpose. With Pylades he enters the palace, and shortly a death-shriek is heard. He comes forth, and in answer to Electra replies that all is well in the house. Aegisthus is seen approaching, exultant at the report he has heard of Orestes' death. Electra confirms it, and bids him enter the palace and see with his own eyes the corpse. At his bidding the palace doors are thrown open and on a bier is seen a veiled corpse. Aegisthus lifts the face cloth and beholds the corpse of Clytemnestra with Orestes standing hard by. He knows that his fate is sealed, and is driven at the sword's point by Orestes to be slain in the hall where Agamemnon was slain. The Chorus of free Mycenean women hail the death of the usurper which ends the curse on the house of Atreus.*

## **ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ**

**ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ  
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ  
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ  
ΧΟΡΟΣ  
ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ  
ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ  
ΑΙΓΙΞΘΟΣ**

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

**AGED SERVANT OF ORESTES**

**Orestes, son of Agamemnon, the late king of Argos, and Clytemnestra**

**ELECTRA            } daughters of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra**

**CLYTEMNESTRA, Queen of Argos and Mycenae.**

**AEGISTHUS, cousin of Agamemnon, sometime paramour of Clytemnestra and now prince consort**

**CHORUS OF MYCENEAN WOMEN.**

**SCENE: At Mycenae before the Palace of Agamemnon.**

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

’Ω τοῦ στρατηγήσαντος ἐν Τροίᾳ ποτὲ  
’Αγαμέμνονος παῖ, νῦν ἐκεῖν’ ἔξεστί σοι  
παρόντι λεύσσειν, ὃν πρόθυμος ἦσθ’ ἀεί.  
τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν Ἀργος οὐπόθεις τόδε,  
τῆς οἰστροπλῆγος ἄλσος Ἰνάχου κόρης·  
αὗτη δ’, Ὁρέστα, τοῦ λυκοκτόνου θεοῦ  
ἀγορὰ Λύκειος· οὐξὶ ἀριστέρας δ’ ὅδε  
”Ἡρας ὁ κλεινὸς ναός· οἱ δ’ ἱκάνομεν,  
φάσκειν Μυκήνας τὰς πολυχρύσους ὄρâν  
πολύφθορόν τε δῶμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε,  
ὅθεν σε πατρὸς ἐκ φουνῶν ἐγώ ποτε  
πρὸς σῆς ὀμαίμου καὶ κασιγνήτης λαβὼν  
ἥνεγκα καὶ ἔσωσα καὶ εθρεψάμην  
τοσόνδ’ ἐς ἥβης, πατρὶ τιμωρὸν φόνου.  
νῦν οὖν, Ὁρέστα καὶ σὺ φίλτατε ξένων  
Πυλάδη, τί χρὴ δρᾶν ἐν τάχει βουλευτέον.

10

## ELECTRA

'Enter AGED SERVANT with ORESTES and PYLADES.

### AGED SERVANT

O Child of Agamemnon, who sometime  
Was Captain of the host that leaguered Troy,  
'Tis thine at last to view before thee spread  
The scene thy heart was set on. Yonder lies  
Old Argos thou so long hast yearned to see,  
Once refuge of the gadfly-driven maid,<sup>1</sup>  
Daughter of Inachus ; and, Orestes, here  
The market-place from the Wolf-slayer<sup>2</sup> named ;  
There on our left is Hera's far-famed shrine ;  
And lo ! before us, at our very feet  
Thou seest Mycenae of the golden hoard,  
And there the palace grim of Pelops' line,  
Deep stained with murder. Thence I bore thee once  
Snatched from beside thy father's bleeding corse  
By kindly hands, thy sister's ; rescued thus  
I fostered thee till thou hadst reached the age  
To be the avenger of thy father's blood.  
But now, Orestes, and thou, Pylades,  
Dearest of friends, the hour for you is ripe  
To take resolve and that right speedily.

<sup>1</sup> Inachus, the river god, was the legendary founder of Argos, whither his daughter Io, changed by the jealous Hera into a cow, was driven in her wanderings.

<sup>2</sup> Apollo *Lukeios*, the god of light, but by folk-etymology connected with *λύκος*, wolf.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ώς ήμιν ἥδη λαμπρὸν ἡλίου σέλας  
έῳα κινεῖ φθέγματ' ὄρνιθων σαφῆ  
μέλαινά τ' ἀστρων ἐκλέλοιπεν εὐφρόνη.  
πρὶν οὖν τιν' ἀνδρῶν ἔξοδοιπορεῦν στέγης,  
ξυνάπτετον λόγοισιν· ώς ἐνταῦθ' ἐμέν,<sup>1</sup>  
ἴν' οὐκέτ' ὀκνεῖν καιρός, ἀλλ' ἔργων ἀκμῇ.

20

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ώ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν προσπόλων, ως μοι σαφῆ  
σημεῖα φαίνεις ἐσθλὸς εἰς ἡμᾶς γεγώς.  
ώσπερ γὰρ ἵππος εὐγενής, κανὴ γέρων,  
ἐν τοῖσι δεινοῖς θυμὸν οὐκ ἀπώλεσεν,  
ἀλλ' ὅρθὸν οὓς ἵστησιν, ώσαύτως δὲ σὺ  
ἡμᾶς τ' ὀτρύνεις καύτὸς ἐν πρώτοις ἔπει.  
τοιγὰρ τὰ μὲν δόξαντα δηλώσω, σὺ δὲ  
δόξεῖαν ἀκοὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις διδούς,  
εἰ μὴ τι καιροῦ τυγχάνω, μεθάρμοσον.  
ἔγω γὰρ ἡνίχ' ικόμην τὸ Πυθικὸν  
μαντεῖον, ως μάθοιμ' ὅτῳ τρόπῳ πατρὶ<sup>30</sup>  
δίκας ἀροίμην τῶν φονευσάντων πάρα,  
χρῆ μοι τοιαῦθ' ὁ Φοῖβος ων πεύσει τάχα.  
ἀσκευον αὐτὸν ἀσπίδων τε καὶ στρατοῦ  
δόλοισι κλέψαι χειρὸς ἐνδίκους σφαγάς.  
ὅτ' οὖν τοιόνδε χρησμὸν εἰσηκούσαμεν,  
σὺ μὲν μολὼν, ὅταν σε καιρὸς εἰσάγῃ,  
δόμων ἔσω τῶνδ', ἵσθι πᾶν τὸ δρώμενον,  
ὅπως ἀν εἰδὼς ἡμὶν ἀγγεῖλῃς σαφῆ.  
οὐ γάρ σε μὴ γῆρᾳ τε καὶ χρόνῳ μακρῷ  
γνῶσ', οὐδὲ ὑποπτεύσουσιν ὡδ' ἡνθισμένον.  
λόγῳ δὲ χρῶ τοιῷδ', ὅτι ξένος μὲν εἰ  
Φωκέως παρ' ἀνδρὸς Φανοτέως ἥκων· ὃ γὰρ

30

40

<sup>1</sup> ἐμέν cannot stand. Hartung's ως, ίν' ξεταμεν, οὐκ ξετ' ετ' ὀκνεῖν καιρός is the most probable emendation.

## ELECTRA

For lo, already the bright beams of day  
Waken to melody the pipe of birds,  
And black night with her glimmering stars has  
waned.  
So ere a soul be stirring in the streets  
Confer together and resolve yourselves.  
No time for longer pause ; now must we act.

### ORESTES

Dearest of followers, how well thou show'st  
The constant service of thy loyalty !  
For as the high-bred steed, though he be old,  
Pricks up his ears and champs the bit for joy  
When battle rages, even so dost thou  
Both urge us on and follow with the first.  
Therefore I will unfold our plans, and thou  
Note well my words, and if in aught I seem  
To miss the mark, admonish and correct.  
Know then that when I left thee to consult  
The Pythian oracle and learn how best  
To execute just vengeance for my sire  
On those that slew him, Phoebus answered thus :  
*Trust not to shields or armed hosts, but steal  
The chance thyself the avenging blow to deal.*  
Since then the Pythian god hath thus advised,  
Go thou and watch thine opportunity  
To enter in the palace and observe  
What happens there and bring us full report.  
. And fear not to be recognised ; long years  
And thy white locks, the blossom of old age, /  
Have changed thee wholly. Forge some specious tale :  
Thou art a Phocian stranger hither sent  
By Phanoteus their doughtiest ally.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μέγιστος αὐτοῖς τυγχάνει δορυξένων.  
ἄγγελλε δ' ὄρκου<sup>1</sup> προστιθεὶς ὁθούνεκα  
τέθυηκ' Ὁρέστης ἐξ ἀναγκαίας τύχης,  
ἄθλοισι Πυθικοῖσιν ἐκ τροχηλάτων  
δίφρων κυλισθείσι· ὡδὸς μῦθος ἐστάτω. 50  
ἡμεῖς δὲ πατρὸς τύμβον, ως ἐφίετο,  
λοιβαῖσι πρῶτον καὶ καρατόμοις χλιδαῖς  
στέψαντες εἰτ' ἄψορρον ἥξομεν πάλιν,  
τύπωμα χαλκόπλευρον ἡρμένοι χεροῖν,  
διὰ σὺ θάμνοις οἰσθά που κεκρυμμένον,  
ὅπως λόγῳ κλέπτοντες ἡδεῖαν φάτιν  
φέρωμεν αὐτοῖς, τούμὸν ως ἔρρει δέμας  
φλοιγιστὸν ἥδη καὶ κατηνθρακωμένον.  
τί γάρ με λυπεῖ τοῦθ', ὅταν λόγῳ θανὼν  
ἔργοισι σωθῶ κάξενέγκωμαι κλέος; 60  
δοκῶ μέν, οὐδὲν ρήμα σὺν κέρδει κακόν.  
ἥδη γάρ εἰδον πολλάκις καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς  
λόγῳ μάτην θυήσκοντας· εἰθ', ὅταν δόμους  
ἔλθωσιν αὐθις, ἐκτετίμηνται πλέον.  
ώς καմ' ἐπαυχῶ τῆσδε τῆς φήμης ἀπό<sup>70</sup>  
δεδορκότ' ἐχθροῖς ἀστρον ὡς λάμψειν ἔτι.  
ἀλλ', ω πατρῷα γῇ θεοί τ' ἐγχώριοι,  
δέξασθέ μ' εὐτυχοῦντα ταῖσδε ταῖς ὄδοῖς,  
σύ τ', ω πατρῷον δῶμα· σοῦ γάρ ἔρχομαι  
δίκῃ καθαρτῆς πρὸς θεῶν ὡρμημένος·  
καὶ μή μ' ἄτιμον τῆσδ' ἀποστείλητε γῆς,  
ἀλλ' ἀρχέπλουτον καὶ καταστάτην δόμων.  
εἴρηκα μέν νυν ταῦτα· σοὶ δ' ἥδη, γέρον,  
τὸ σὸν μελέσθω βάντι φρουρῆσαι χρέος.  
νὼ δ' ἔξιμεν καιρὸς γάρ, ὅσπερ ἀνδράσιν  
μέγιστος ἔργου παντός ἐστ' ἐπιστάτης.

<sup>1</sup> δρκφ MSS., Reiske corr.

## ELECTRA

Report, confirming with an oath the tale,  
How that Orestes by a fatal chance  
Hath perished, from his speeding chariot hurled  
(So let thy tale run) at the Pythian games.  
And we meanwhile, as the god ordered us,  
First having crowned my father's sepulchre  
With pure libations and rich offerings  
Of new-shorn tresses, will return anon,  
An urn of well-wrought brasswork in our hands,  
The same we hid in the brush-wood, as thou know'st.  
This will confirm the feignèd tale we bring,  
That I am dead and to the pyre consigned,  
Naught left of me but ashes and grey dust :  
Little reck I by rumour to be dead,  
So I live on to win me deathless fame.  
The end, methinks, gives any fraud excuse.  
Oft have I heard of men, reputed wise,  
Who spread the rumour of their death, and so  
Returning home a heartier welcome found.  
Thus by my bruited death I too aspire  
To blaze a sudden meteor on my foes.  
But O my country and my country's gods,  
Give me fair welcome, prosper my emprise !  
And greet me too, thou palace of my sires ;  
A heaven-sent purger of thy stain I come.  
Send me not forth again to banishment,  
But O ! restore to me its ancient wealth,  
May I refound its old prosperity !  
Enough of words ; go presently, old friend,  
Attend thy business ; and we two will go,  
And watch the time, for opportunity  
Is the best captain of all enterprise.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰώ μοί μοι δύστηνος.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ μὴν θυρῶν ἔδοξα προσπόλων τινὸς  
ὑποστενούσης ἔνδον αἰσθέσθαι, τέκνου.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄρ' ἐστὶν ἡ δύστηνος Ἡλέκτρα· θέλεις  
μείνωμεν αὐτοῦ κάπακούσωμεν<sup>1</sup> γόων;

80

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ῆκιστα· μηδὲν πρόσθεν ἡ τὰ Λοξίου  
πειρώμεθ' ἔρδειν κάπò τῶνδ' ἀρχηγετεῖν,  
πατρὸς χέοντες λουτρά· ταῦτα γὰρ φέρει  
νίκην τ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ κράτος τῶν δρωμένων.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φάος ἄγνὸν  
καὶ γῆς ἴσόμοιρ' ἀήρ, ὡς μοι  
πολλὰς μὲν θρήνων ὠδάς,  
πολλὰς δ' ἀντήρεις ἥσθου  
στέρινων πληγὰς αίμασσομένων,  
όπόταν δνοφερὰ νὺξ ὑπολειφθῆ·  
τὰ δὲ παννυχίδων ἥδη στυγεραὶ  
ξυνίσασ' εύναι μογερῶν οἴκων,  
ὅσα τὸν δύστηνον ἐμὸν θρηνῶ  
πατέρ', δν κατὰ μὲν βάρβαρον αἰαν  
φοίνιος Ἀρης οὐκ ἔξενισεν,  
μήτηρ δ' ἡμὴ χώ κοινολεχής  
Αἴγισθος ὅπως δρῦν ὑλοτόμοι

90

<sup>1</sup> κανακούσωμεν MSS., Nauck corr.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA (*within*)

Ah me ! unhappy me !

AGED SERVANT

Hist ! from the doors a voice, my son, methought,  
A wailing as of some handmaid within.

ORESTES

Can it be sad Electra ! Shall we stay  
And overhear her lamentable plaint ?

AGED SERVANT

Not so ; we first must strive before all else  
To do as Loxias bade us and thence take  
Our auspices—with lustral waters lave  
Thy father's grave, thus shall we surely win  
Vantage at each step, victory in the end.

[*Exeunt. Enter ELECTRA from the palace.*

ELECTRA

O holy light,  
O circumambient air,  
What wailings of despair,  
What sight

Have ye not witnessed in the first grey morn,  
Beatings of breasts and bosoms madly torn !

By night for me is spread  
No festal banquet in this haunted hall,  
But my lone pallet bed.  
All night I muse upon my father dead,  
Not in a foreign land at Ares' call,  
But here, at home, by my own mother slain ;  
Her and Aegisthus, these adulterers twain ;  
Felled by their axe's bloody stroke,  
E'en as the woodman fells an oak.

НАДЕКТРА

*σχίζουσι κάρα φονίῳ πελέκει,  
κούδεις τούτων οίκτος ἀπ' ἄλλης  
ἢ μοῦ φέρεται, σοῦ, πάτερ, οὗτως  
αἰκῶς οίκτρως τε θανόντος.*

100

ἀλλ' οὐ μὲν δὴ  
λήξω θρήνων στυγερῶν τε γόων,  
ἔστ' ἀν παμφεγγεῖς ἄστρων  
ριπάς, λεύσσω δὲ τόδ' ἡμαρ,  
μὴ οὐ τεκνολέτειρ' ὡς τις ἀηδῶν  
ἐπὶ κωκυτῷ τῶνδε πατρών  
πρὸ θυρῶν ἡχὰ πᾶσι προφωνεῖν.  
ὦ δῶμ', Αἴδους καὶ Περσεφόνης,  
ὦ χθόνι 'Ερμῆ καὶ πότνι 'Αρὰ  
σεμναί τε θεῶν παιδεῖς 'Ερινύες,  
αὶ τοὺς ἀδίκως θυήσκοντας ὄρâθ',  
αὶ τοὺς εὐνὰς ὑποκλεπτομένους,  
ἔλθετ', ἀρήξατε, τίσασθε πατρὸς  
φόνον ἡμετέρου,  
καὶ μοι τὸν ἐμὸν πέμψατ' ἀδελφόν  
μούνη γὰρ ἄγειν οὐκέτι σωκῷ  
λύπης ἀντίρροπον ἄχθος.

110

120

ХОРОХ

ώ παῖ, παῖ δυστανοτάτας  
'Ηλέκτρα ματρός, τίν' ἀεὶ<sup>1</sup>  
τάκεις ωδὴ ἀκόρεστον οἰμωγὰν  
τὸν πάλαι ἐκ δολερᾶς ἀθεώτατα  
ματρὸς ἀλόντ' ἀπάταις 'Αγαμέμνονα  
κακῷ τε χειρὶ πρόδοτον; ώς ὁ τάδε π  
ὅλοιτ', εἴ̄ μοι θέμις τάδ' αὐδᾶν.

$\sigma\tau\rho.$  a'

## ELECTRA

And I, O father, I alone of all  
Thy house am left forlorn  
To make my moan, to mourn  
Thy piteous fall.

Yet never, while these eyes  
Behold or sun or star-bespangled skies,  
Will I restrain my plaint, my bitter cries ;  
But like some nightingale  
My ravished nest bewail,  
And through these halls shall sound my groans  
and sighs.  
Halls of Persephonè and Death,  
Guide of the shades, O Hermes, and O Wraith,  
Ye god-sprung Furies dread  
Who watch when blood is shed,  
Or stained the marriage bed,  
O aid me to avenge my father slain,  
O send my brother back again !  
Alone, no more I countervail  
Grief that o'erloads the scale.

*Enter CHORUS.*

### CHORUS

Child of a mother all unblest, (Str. 1)  
Electra, how in grief that knows no rest  
Thou witherest ;  
Mourning thy father's cruel fate,  
By her betrayed and slaughtered by her mate.  
Black death await  
The plotter of that sin,  
If prayer so bold may answer win !

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ῳ γενέθλα γενναιών,  
ἥκετ' ἐμῶν καμάτων παραμύθιον.  
οἴδα τε καὶ ξυνίημι τάδ', οὐ τί με  
φυγγάνει, οὐδὲ ἔθέλω προλιπεῖν τόδε,  
μὴ οὐ τὸν ἐμὸν στενάχειν πατέρ' ἄθλιον.  
ἀλλ' ὡς παντοίας φιλότητος ἀμειβόμεναι χάριν,  
ἔστε μὲν δέ ἀλύειν,  
αἰαῖ, ἵκνοῦμαι

130

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὗτοι τόν γ' ἔξ 'Αΐδα  
παγκοίνου λίμνας πατέρ' ἀν-  
στάσεις οὔτε γόοισιν οὔτ' εὐχαῖς.<sup>1</sup>  
ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων ἐπ' ἀμήχανον  
ἄλγος ἀεὶ στενάχουσα διόλλυσαι,  
ἐν οἷς ἀνάλυσίς ἔστιν οὐδεμία κακῶν.  
τί μοι τῶν δυσφόρων ἐφίει;

ἀντ. α'

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## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μήπιος δος τῶν οἰκτρῶς  
οἰχομένων γονέων ἐπιλάθεται.  
ἀλλ' ἐμέ γ' ἀ στονούσσος' ἄραρεν φρένας,  
ἄ "Ιτυν, αἱὲν "Ιτυν δλοφύρεται,  
ὅρνις ἀτυζομένα, Διὸς ἄγγελος.  
ἵω παντλάμων Νιόβα, σὲ δ' ἔγωγε νέμω θεόν,  
ἄτ' ἐν τάφῳ πετραίῳ  
αἱὲν δακρύεις.

150

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὕτοι σοὶ μούνᾳ, τέκνον,  
ἄχος ἐφάνη βροτῶν,

στρ. β'

<sup>1</sup> οὔτε γόοις οὔτε λιταῖσιν MSS., Erfurdt corr.

## ELECTRA

### ELECTRA

Ah, noble friends ye come, I see  
To ease my misery ;  
Your kind intent, O trust me, I perceive.  
Yet can I never leave  
My task, each day, each hour, anew to shed  
Tears o'er my father dead.  
O kindly hearts, so ready to repay  
All friendship owes,  
Leave me, O leave me (this one boon I pray)  
To my wiid woes.

### CHORUS

Yet him, thy sire, from Acheron's dark shore (*Ant.1*)  
By prayers or cries thou never can'st restore,  
    No, never more ;  
And by excess of grief thou perishest.  
If remedy be none, were it not best  
    From grief to rest ?  
    O rest thee ! why  
Thus nurse thy fruitless misery ?

### ELECTRA

That child's insensate who remembers not  
    His sire's sad lot.  
O bird of Zeus, to thine I'll set my note,  
    Who with full throat  
For Itys, Itys griev'st from eve till morn.  
    Ah ! Niobe forlorn,  
How blest art thou who tombed in stone dost lie  
    And weep for aye !

### CHORUS

Not thou alone, hast sorrow ; others share     (*Str. 2*)  
    Thy load of care.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πρὸς ὅ τι σὺ τῶν ἔνδον εἰ περισσά,  
οὶς ὁμόθεν εἰ καὶ γονᾶς ξύναιμος,  
οἵα Χρυσόθεμις ζώει καὶ Ἰφιάνασσα,  
κρυπτὰ τ' ἀχέων ἐν ἥβᾳ,  
ὅλβιος, δὲν ἀ κλεινὰ  
γὰ ποτε Μυκηναίων  
δέξεται εὐπατρίδαν, Διὸς εὐφρονι  
βῆματι μολόντα τάνδε γάν Όρέσταν.

160

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὗν γ' ἐγὼ ἀκάματα προσμένουσ', ἄτεκνος,  
τάλαιν', ἀνύμφευτος αἰὲν οἰχνῷ,  
δάκρυσι μυδαλέα, τὸν ἀνήνυτον  
οἴτον ἔχουσα κακῶν· ὁ δὲ λάθεται  
ῶν τ' ἔπαθ' ὡν τ' ἐδάη. τί γὰρ οὐκ ἐμοὶ<sup>170</sup>  
ἔρχεται ἀγγελίας ἀπατώμενον;  
ἀεὶ μὲν γὰρ ποθεῖ,  
ποθῶν δὲ οὐκ ἀξιοῦ φανῆναι.

170

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει μοι, θάρσει, τέκνον.                                                  ἀντ. β'  
ἔτι μέγας οὐρανῷ  
Ζεύς, δις ἐφορᾷ πάντα καὶ κρατύνει.  
φ τὸν ὑπεραλγῆ χόλον νέμουσα  
μήθ' οὶς ἔχθαιρεις ὑπεράχθεο μήτ' ἐπιλάθου·  
χρόνος γὰρ εὐμαρῆς θεός.  
οὔτε γὰρ ο τὰν Κρῖσαν  
βούνομον ἔχων ἀκτὰν  
παῖς Αγαμεμνονίδας ἀπερίτροπος  
οὐθ' ὁ παρὰ τὸν Αχέροντα θεὸς ἀνάσσων.

180

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' ἐμὲ μὲν ὁ πολὺς ἀπολέλοιπεν ἥδη  
βίοτος ἀνέλπιστος, οὐδὲ ἔτ' ἀρκῶ·

## ELECTRA

Think on thy kinsfolk whom afflictions press  
Than thine no less,  
Iphianassa and Chrysothemis.

Think of thy brother ; sorrow now is his,  
An exiled youth, yet shortly shall he come  
By heaven's good guidance home,  
And glad Mycenae shall Orestes own  
Heir to his father's throne.

## ELECTRA

Yea, for him long years I wait,  
Unwed, childless, desolate,  
Drenched with tears that ever flow  
For my barren load of woe ;  
And the wrongs whereof he wot,  
Or hath heard, are all forgot.  
All those messages are vain—  
How he hopes to come again,  
How for home his heart doth yearn !—  
Yet he wills not to return.

## CHORUS (Ant. 2)

Take heart, my child, Zeus still in heaven is king,  
And orders everything ;  
To him commit the wrath that gnaws thy breast,  
His will is ever best.  
Nurse, as is meet, thy vengeance, but abate  
Excess of hate,  
For Time can heal, a gentle god and mild.  
Nor Agamemnon's child  
Who long by Crisa's pastoral shore remains,  
Nor he who reigns  
O'er Acheron will nevermore relent.

## ELECTRA

Nay but for me is spent  
The best of life ; I languish in despair.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

άτις ἄνευ τεκέων<sup>1</sup> κατατάκομαι,  
ἀς φίλος οὕτις ἀνήρ ὑπερίσταται,  
ἄλλ' ἀπερεί τις ἔποικος ἀναξία  
οἰκουνομῶ θαλάμους πατρός, ὡδε μὲν  
ἀεικεῖ σὺν στολῇ,  
κεναῖς δ' ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις.

190

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἰκτρὰ μὲν νόστοις αὐδά,  
οἰκτρὰ δ' ἐν κοίταις πατρῷαις  
ὅτε οἱ<sup>2</sup> παγχάλκων ἀνταία  
γενύνων ὠρμάθη πλαγά.  
δόλος ἦν ὁ φράσας, ἔρος ὁ κτείνας,  
δεινὰν δεινῶς προφυτεύσαντες  
μορφάν, εἴτ' οὖν θεὸς εἴτε βροτῶν  
ἥν ὁ ταῦτα πράσσων.

στρ. γ'

200

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ώ πασᾶν κείνα πλέον ἀμέρα  
ἐλθοῦσ' ἐχθίστα δή μοι·  
ώ νύξ, ω δείπνων ἀρρήτων  
ἔκπαγλ' ἄχθη,  
τοὺς ἐμὸς ἵδε πατὴρ  
θανάτους αἰκεῖς διδύμαιν χειροῦν,  
αὶ τὸν ἐμὸν εἶλον βίον πρόδοτον, αἴ μ' ἀπώλεσαν·  
οὶς θεὸς ὁ μέγας Ὄλύμπιος  
ποίνιμα πάθεα παθεῖν πόροι,  
μηδέ ποτ' ἀγλαῖας ἀποναίατο  
τοιάδ' ἀνύσαντες ἔργα.

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### ΧΟΡΟΣ

φράζου μὴ πόρσω φωνεῖν.  
οὐ γνώμαν ἴσχεις ἐξ οἴων

ἀντ. γ'

<sup>1</sup> τοκέων MSS., Meineke corr.

<sup>2</sup> δτε σοι MSS., Hermann corr.

## ELECTRA

Fordone with care,  
Without a parent's love or husband's aid,  
An orphaned maid.  
Here in the chambers of my sire I wait  
In low estate,  
Or like a stranger who in beggar's weeds  
On fragments feeds.

### CHORUS

(Str. 3)

Dire was the voice that greeted first  
Thy sire's return, and dire the cry  
That from the banquet-chamber burst,  
A wail of agony ;  
What time the brazen axe's blow  
Struck him and laid him low,  
'Twas lust begat and craft conceived the deed,  
A monstrous offspring of a monstrous seed,  
Whether a god or mortal wrought the woe.

### ELECTRA

Dawn, the darkest of all morrows,  
Night, the crown of all my sorrows,  
When that foul feast for the dead  
By those traitors twain was spread,  
Who slew my sire—me too  
In slaying him they slew.  
May the great Olympian King  
Send on them like suffering ;  
Bitter be of sin the fruit ;  
May they perish branch and root !

### CHORUS

(Ant. 3)

O curb thy tongue ! hast thou no thought

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τὰ παρόντ' οἰκεία, εἰς ἄτας  
ἐμπίπτεις οὔτως αἰκῶς;  
πολὺ γάρ τι κακῶν ὑπερεκτήσω,  
σὰ δυσθύμῳ τίκτουσ' ἀεὶ<sup>220</sup>  
ψυχᾶ πολέμους· τὰ δὲ τοῖς δυνατοῖς  
οὐκ ἔριστὰ πλάθειν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δεινοῖς ἡναγκάσθην, δεινοῖς.  
ἴξοιδ', οὐ λάθει μ' ὁργά.  
ἀλλ' ἐν γὰρ δεινοῖς οὐ σχήσω  
ταύτας ἄτας,  
ὅφρα με βίος ἔχῃ.  
τίνι γάρ ποτ' ἀν, ὡ φιλία γενέθλα,  
πρόσφορον ἀκούσαιμ' ἔπος, τίνι φρονοῦντι καίρια;  
ἄνετέ μ' ἄνετε, παράγοροι.  
τάδε γὰρ ἄλυτα κεκλήσεται,  
οὐδέ ποτ' ἐκ καμάτων ἀποπαύσομαι  
ἀνάριθμος ὥδε θρήνων.

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ΧΟΡΟΣ  
ἀλλ' οὖν εὐνοίᾳ γ' αὐδῶ,  
μάτηρ ώσεί τις πιστά,  
μὴ τίκτειν σ' ἄταν ἄταις.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ τί μέτρον κακότατος ἔφυ; φέρε,  
πῶς ἐπὶ τοῖς φθιμένοις ἀμελεῖν καλόν;  
ἐν τίνι τοῦτ' ἔβλαστ' ἀνθρώπων;  
μήτ' εἴην ἔντιμος τούτοις  
μήτ', εἴ τῳ πρόσκειμαι χρηστῷ,  
ξυνναίοιμ' εὐκῆλος, γονέων  
ἐκτίμους ἵσχουσα πτέρυγας  
ὸξυτόνων γόων.

240

## ELECTRA

How thine own misery thou hast wrought,  
And mak'st a burden of thy life  
By ever heaping strife on strife  
In sullen mood? Ill fares the right  
When feebleness contends with might.

## ELECTRA

Bitter constraint compelled me, and I know  
My heart with wrath did overflow;  
But never while life lasts will I control,  
Thus wronged, the indignant passion of my soul.  
Ye mean me well, but solace is there none  
For woes like mine, so all who know must own.  
Forbear, kind comforters, forbear; be sure  
A case so desperate admits no cure.  
What respite to my sorrows, what relief?  
No tears, no moans, can satisfy such grief.

## CHORUS

O heap not misery on misery,  
As a fond mother I would plead with thee.

## ELECTRA

No, for this villainy grows and knows no bound.  
Where can a race be found  
So vile as they, to disregard the dead?  
By praise of such men I were ill bestead.  
O may I ne'er, if fate should on me smile,  
In careless ease sad memories beguile,  
Clipping the pinions of my mournful song,  
The dirges due that to my sire belong.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εὶ γὰρ ὁ μὲν θαυμὸν γâ τε καὶ οὐδὲν ὅν  
κείσεται τάλας,  
οἱ δὲ μὴ πάλιν  
δώσουσ' ἀντιφόνους δίκας,  
ἔρροι τ' ἀν αἰδὼς  
ἀπάντων τ' εὐσέβεια θυντῶν.

250

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν, ὡ παῖ, καὶ τὸ σὸν σπεύδουσ' ἄμα  
καὶ τούμὸν αὐτῆς ἥλθον· εἰ δὲ μὴ καλῶς  
λέγω, σὺ νίκα· σοὶ γὰρ ἐψόμεσθ' ἄμα.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αἰσχύνομαι μέν, ὡ γυναικες, εὶ δοκῶ  
πολλοῖσι θρήνοις δυσφορεῦν ὑμῖν ἄγαν.  
ἀλλ' ἡ βία γὰρ ταῦτ' ἀναγκάζει με δρᾶν,  
σύγγνωτε· πῶς γὰρ ἥπις εὐγενῆς γυνῆ,  
πατρῷ ὁρῶσα πήματ', οὐ δρῷη τάδ' ἄν;  
ἄγὼ κατ' ἡμαρ καὶ κατ' εὐφρόνην ἀεὶ<sup>260</sup>  
θάλλοντα μᾶλλον ἡ καταφθίνονθ' ὁρῶ·  
ἡ πρῶτα μὲν τὰ μητρός, ἡ μ' ἐγείνατο,  
ἔχθιστα συμβέβηκεν· εἴτα δώμασιν  
ἐν τοῖς ἔμαυτῆς τοῖς φονεῦσι τοῦ πατρὸς  
ξύνειμι, κάκ τῶνδ' ἄρχομαι κάκ τῶνδέ μοι  
λαβεῖν θ' ὄμοιώς καὶ τὸ τητάσθαι πέλει.  
ἔπειτα ποίας ἡμέρας δοκεῖς μ' ἄγειν,  
ὅταν θρόνοις Αἴγισθον ἐνθακοῦντ' ἵδω<sup>270</sup>  
τοῖσιν πατρώισι, εἰσίδω δ' ἐσθήματα  
φοροῦντ' ἐκείνω ταῦτὰ καὶ παρεστίους  
σπένδοντα λοιβᾶς ἐνθ' ἐκείνον ὕλεσεν,  
ἵδω δὲ τούτων τὴν τελευταίαν ὕβριν,  
τὸν αὐτοέντην ἡμὸν ἐν κοίτῃ πατρὸς  
ξὺν τῇ ταλαινῇ μητρί, μητέρ' εἰ χρεὼν

260

270

## ELECTRA

For if to dust and nothingness the dead  
Are doomed, nor blood for blood be shed,  
Farewell to sanctities of law,  
Farewell to reverence and awe.

### CHORUS

I came in thy behalf no less than mine,  
Daughter, but if my words displease thee, well,  
Have it thy way ; we follow thee no less.

### ELECTRA

It shames me, friends, that ye should thus set down  
To frowardness my too persistent grief.  
But since I yield to hard necessity,  
Bear with me. How indeed could any woman  
Of noble blood who sees her father's home  
Plague-stricken, as I see it night and day,  
And each day stricken worse, not do as I ?  
For me a mother's love has turned to hate ;  
In my own home on sufferance I live  
With my sire's murderers, on whose will it rests  
To give or to withhold my daily bread.  
Think what a life is mine, to see each day  
Aegisthus seated on my father's throne,  
Wearing the royal robes my father wore,  
Pouring libations on the hearth, whereat  
He slew him, and, to crown his insolence,  
The assassin lays him in my father's bed  
Beside my mother—mother shall I call

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## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ταύτην προσαυδάν τῷδε συγκοιμωμένην·  
 ἡ δὲ ὥδε τλήμων ὥστε τῷ μιάστορι  
 ξύνεστ', ἐρινὺν οὕτιν' ἐκφοβουμένη·  
 ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐγγελῶσα τοῖς ποιουμένοις,  
 εὑροῦντ' ἐκείνην ἡμέραν, ἐν ἣ τότε  
 πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν ἐκ δόλου κατέκτανεν,  
 ταύτη χοροὺς ἵστησι καὶ μηλοσφαγεῖ      280  
 θεοῖσιν ἔμμην' ἴερὰ τοῖς σωτηρίοις.  
 ἐγὼ δὲ ὄρῳ δὲ δύσμορος κατὰ στέγας  
 κλαίω, τέτηκα, κάπικωκύω πατρὸς  
 τὴν δυστάλαιναν δαῖτ' ἐπωνομασμένην  
 αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτήν. οὐδὲ γάρ κλαῦσαι πάρα  
 τοσόνδ' ὅσον μοι θυμὸς ἥδονὴν φέρει.  
 αὗτη γάρ ἡ λόγοισι γενναία γυνὴ  
 φωνοῦσα τοιάδ' ἔξονειδίζει κακά·  
 ὡ δύσθεον μίσημα, σοὶ μόνῃ πατήρ      290  
 τέθνηκεν; ἄλλος δὲ οὕτις ἐν πένθει βροτῶν;  
 κακῶς ὅλοιο, μηδέ σ' ἐκ γόων ποτὲ  
 τῶν νῦν ἀπαλλάξειαν οἱ κάτω θεοί.  
 τάδ' ἔξυβρίζει· πλὴν ὅταν κλύῃ τινὸς  
 ἥξοντ' Ὁρέστην· τηνικαῦτα δὲ ἔμμανῆς  
 βοᾷ παραστᾶσ'. οὐ σύ μοι τῶνδ' αἰτία;  
 οὐ σὸν τόδ' ἔστι τούργον, ἥτις ἐκ χερῶν  
 κλέψασ' Ὁρέστην τῶν ἐμῶν ὑπεξέθου;  
 ἀλλ' ἵσθι τοι τίσουσά γ' ἀξίαν δίκην.  
 τοιαῦθ' ὑλακτεῖ, σὺν δὲ ἐποτρύνει πέλας      300  
 ὁ κλεινὸς αὐτῇ ταύτᾳ νυμφίος παρών,  
 ὁ πάντ' ἄναλκις οὐτος, ἡ πᾶσα βλάβη,  
 ὁ σὺν γυναιξὶ τὰς μάχας ποιούμενος.  
 ἐγὼ δὲ Ὁρέστην τῶνδε προσμένουσ' ἀεὶ<sup>1</sup>  
 πανστῆρ' ἐφήξειν ἡ τάλαιν' ἀπόλλυμαι.  
 μέλλων γάρ ἀεὶ δρᾶν τι τὰς οὔσας τέ μου

## ELECTRA

His paramour? So lost to shame is she  
That the adulteress fears no vengeance. No,  
As if exulting in her infamy,  
She watches month to month to know the day  
Whereon by treachery she slew my sire,  
And keeps that day with dance and sacrifice,  
Each month, of sheep to tutelary gods.  
Beholding this I weep and waste within,  
And to myself bewail the unhallowed feast  
Named of my sire, with silent tears, for e'en  
The luxury of wailing is denied me.  
This woman (saintly is her speech) upbraids  
And rates me thus : " Ungodly, hateful girl,  
Hast thou alone to bear a father's loss,  
Art thou the only mourner? Out upon thee!  
Perdition seize thee! and in hell may'st thou  
Find no deliverance from thy present grief!"  
So rails she, save at times when rumours run  
Orestes is at hand, then wild with rage  
She thunders in my ears " This is thy doing;  
Was it not thou who from my hands didst steal  
Orestes and convey him safe away?  
Mark my words, thou shalt rue it!" So she screams,  
And her abettor's there to egg her on,  
Her glorious consort who repeats her gibes,  
That rogue in grain, that dastardly poltroon,  
Who fights his battles with a woman's aid.  
Meanwhile I wait until Orestes comes  
To end my woes, and waiting pine away.  
Still, still he means to act and never acts,

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ τὰς ἀπούσας ἐλπίδας διέφθορεν.  
ἐν οὐν τοιούτοις οὕτε σωφρονεῖν, φίλαι,  
οὔτ' εὐσεβεῖν πάρεστιν ἀλλ' ἐν τοι κακοῖς  
πολλή στ' ἀνάγκη κάπιτηδεύειν κακά.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

φέρ' εἰπέ, πότερον δοῦτος Αἰγίσθου πέλας  
λέγεις τάδ' ἡμῖν ἡ βεβώτος ἐκ δόμων;

310

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἡ κάρτα μὴ δόκει μ' ἄν, εἴπερ ἡν πέλας,  
θυραῖον οἰχνεῖν νῦν δ' ἀγροῦσι τυγχάνει.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡ κᾶν ἐγὼ θαρσοῦσα μᾶλλον ἐς λόγους  
τοὺς σοὺς ἴκοίμην, εἴπερ ὅδε ταῦτ' ἔχει;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὡς νῦν ἀπόντος ἴστόρει τί σοι φίλον;

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ δή σ' ἐρωτῶ τοῦ κασιγνήτου τί φήσ,  
ἥξοντος ἡ μέλλοντος; εἰδέναι θέλω.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φησίν γε φέσκων δ' οὐδὲν ὡν λέγει ποεῖ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

φιλεῖ γὰρ ὁκνεῖν πρᾶγμ' ἀνὴρ πράσσων μέγα. 320

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ἔγωγ' ἔσωσ' ἐκεῖνον οὐκ ὁκνῷ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει πέφυκεν ἐσθλός, ὥστ' ἀρκεῖν φίλοις.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πέποιθ', ἐπεί τὰν οὐ μακρὰν ἔζων ἐγώ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

μὴ νῦν ἔτ' εἴπης μηδέν· ως δόμων ὄρῳ  
τὴν σὴν ὅμαιμον ἐκ πατρὸς ταύτοῦ φύσιν,

## ELECTRA

And all my hopes are blasted, flower and root.  
In such a case what room is there, my friends,  
For patience, what for piety? In sooth  
Those in ill plight are driven to evil ways.

### CHORUS

Stay, tell me, is Aegisthus nigh at hand,  
While thus thou speakest, or is he from home?

### ELECTRA

From home, of course! Think you, were he within,  
I should thus venture forth? He is now afield.

### CHORUS

More freely then may I converse with thee,  
If this is so.

### ELECTRA

It is; ask what thou wilt.

### CHORUS

"Tis of thy brother I would question thee.  
Comes he, or tarries yet? I fain would know.

### ELECTRA

He says "I come," but does not what he says.

### CHORUS

A man thinks twice with some great work in hand.

### ELECTRA

I thought not twice when I delivered him.

### CHORUS

Take heart, he is loyal and will not fail his friends.

### ELECTRA

I trust him, else I had not lived so long.

### CHORUS

No more for this time; at the doors I see  
Chrysothemis, thy sister, of one sire

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Χρυσόθεμιν, ἐκ τε μητρός, ἐντάφια χεροῖν  
φέρουσαν, οὐα τοῖς κάτω νομίζεται.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

τίν' αὖ σὺ τήνδε πρὸς θυρῶνος ἔξόδοις  
ἐλθοῦσα φωνεῖς, ὡς κασιγνήτη, φάτιν,  
κούδ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ διδαχθῆναι θέλεις  
θυμῷ ματαίῳ μὴ χαρίζεσθαι κενά;  
καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ' οἶδα κάμαυτήν, ὅτι  
ἀλγῷ πὶ τοῖς παροῦσιν· ὥστ' ἄν, εἰ σθένος  
λάβαιμι, δηλώσαιμι' ἀν οἵ αὐτοῖς φρονῶ.  
νῦν δ' ἐν κακοῖς μοι πλεῖν ὑφειμένη δοκεῖ,  
καὶ μὴ δοκεῖν μὲν δρᾶν τι, πημαίνειν δὲ μῆ.  
τοιαῦτα δ' ἄλλα καὶ σὲ βούλομαι ποεῖν.  
καίτοι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον οὐχ ἦ γὰ λέγω,  
ἄλλ' ἦ σὺ κρίνεις· εἰ δ' ἐλευθέραν με δεῖ  
ζῆν, τῶν κρατούντων ἐστὶ πάντ' ἀκουστέα.

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## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δεινόν γέ σ' οὖσαν πατρὸς οὐ σὺ παῖς ἔφυς,  
κείνου λελῆσθαι, τῆς δὲ τικτούσης μέλειν.  
ἄπαντα γάρ σοι τὰμὰ νουθετήματα  
κείνης διδακτά, κούδεν ἐκ σαυτῆς λέγεις.  
ἔπειθ' ἐλοῦ γε θάτερ', ἦ φρονεῖν κακῶς  
ἢ τῶν φίλων φρονοῦσα μὴ μυήμην ἔχειν.  
ἥτις λεγεῖς μὲν ἀρτίως ὡς, εἰ λάβοις  
σθένος, τὸ τούτων μῖσος ἐκδείξειας ἄν,  
ἔμοῦ δὲ πατρὶ πάντα τιμωρουμένης  
οὔτε ξυνέρδεις τὴν τε δρῶσαν ἐκτρέπεις.  
οὐ ταῦτα πρὸς κακοῖσι δειλίαν ἔχει;  
ἔπει δίδαξον, ἦ μάθ' ἐξ ἔμοῦ, τί μοι  
κέρδος γένοιτ' ἀν τῶνδε ληξάσῃ γόων.  
οὐ ζῶ; κακῶς μέν, οἰδ', ἐπαρκούντως δ' ἔμοι.

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## ELECTRA

Born and one mother ; in her hands she bears  
Gifts for the tomb that use and wont ordain.

*Enter CHRYSOTHEMIS.*

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

Sister, why com'st thou once more to declaim  
In public at the outer gate ? Has time  
Not schooled thee to desist from idle rage ?  
I too, my sister, chafe no less than thou  
At our sad fortunes, and had I the power,  
Would make it plain how I regard our masters.  
But in the storm 'tis best to reef the sail,  
Nor utter threats we cannot execute.  
I would thou wert likeminded ; yet I know  
Justice is on thy side, and I am wrong.  
Yet if I am to keep my liberty,  
I needs must bow before the powers that be.

### ELECTRA

O shame that thou, the child of such a sire,  
Should'st him forget and take thy mother's part ;  
For all these admonitions are not thine,  
A lesson thou repeatest, learnt of her.  
Make thine election then, to be unwise,  
Or show thy wisdom by forgetting friends.  
Thou saidst, " If but the power were granted me,  
I would make plain the hate I feel for them ; "  
And yet when I am straining every nerve  
To avenge my sire, thou wilt not aid me ; nay,  
Dissuadest and wouldst have me hold my hand.  
Shall we to all our ills add cowardice ?  
Tell me—or let me tell thee—what have I  
To gain by ceasing from my sad complaint ?  
I still have life ? a sorry life, indeed,

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λυπῶ δὲ τούτους, ὥστε τῷ τεθνηκότι  
τιμᾶς προσάπτειν, εἴ τις ἔστ’ ἐκεῖ χάρις.  
σὺ δ’ ἡμὸν ἡ μισοῦσα μισεῖς μὲν λόγῳ,  
ἔργῳ δὲ τοῖς φονεῦσι τοῦ πατρὸς ξύνει.  
ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἀν ποτ’, οὐδὲ εἰ μοι τὰ σὰ  
μέλλοι τις οἰσειν δῶρο’, ἐφ’ οἷσι νῦν χλιδᾶς, 360  
τούτοις ὑπεικάθοιμι· σοὶ δὲ πλούσια  
τράπεζα κείσθω καὶ περιρρείτω βίος.  
ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἔστω τούμε μὴ λυπεῖν μόνον  
βόσκημα· τῆς σῆς δ’ οὐκ ἐρῶ τιμῆς τυχεῖν,  
οὐδὲ ἀν σύ, σώφρων γ’ οὖσα. νῦν δὲ ἔξὸν πατρὸς  
πάντων ἀρίστου παιδία κεκλήσθαι, καλοῦ  
τῆς μητρὸς· οὕτω γὰρ φανεῖ πλείστοις κακή,  
θαυόντα πατέρα καὶ φίλους προδοῦσα σούς.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

μηδὲν πρὸς ὄργην, πρὸς θεῶν· ὡς τοῖς λόγοις  
ἔνεστιν ἀμφοῖν κέρδος, εἰ σὺ μὲν μάθοις 370  
τοῖς τῆσδε χρῆσθαι, τοῖς δὲ σοῖς αὐτῇ πάλιν.

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἐγὼ μέν, ὡς γυναῖκες, ἡθάς εἰμί πως  
τῶν τῆσδε μύθων· οὐδὲ ἀν ἐμνήσθην ποτέ,  
εἰ μὴ κακὸν μέγιστον εἰς αὐτὴν ἵὸν  
ηκουσ’, δ ταύτην τῶν μακρῶν σχήσει γόων.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φέρ’ εἰπὲ δὴ τὸ δεινόν· εἰ γὰρ τῶνδέ μοι  
μεῖζόν τι λέξεις, οὐκ ἀν ἀντειποιμ’ ἔτι.

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ’ ἔξερῶ σοι πᾶν ὅσον κάτοιδ’ ἐγώ.  
μέλλουσι γάρ σ’, εἰ τῶνδε μὴ λήξεις γόων,  
ἐνταῦθα πέμψειν ἔνθα μή ποθ’ ἥλιου 380  
φέγγος προσόψει, ζῶσα δ’ ἐν κατηρεφεῖ  
στέγῃ χθονὸς τῆσδ’ ἔκτὸς ὑμνήσεις κακά.

## ELECTRA

But good enough for me ; and them I vex,  
And vexing them do honour to the dead,  
If anything can touch the world of shades.  
Thou hatest ? Nay, thy deeds belie thy words,  
While thou consortest with the murderers ;  
So would not I, though they should offer me  
The pomp that makes thee proud, the loaded board,  
Thy life of ease ; no, I would never yield.  
Enough for me spare diet and a soul  
Void of offence ; thy state I covet not,  
Nor wouldest thou, wert thou wise. Men might have  
called thee  
Child of the noblest sire that ever lived ;  
Be called thy mother's, rightly named as base,  
Betrayer of thy dead sire and thy kin.

### CHORUS

No angry words, I pray, for both of you  
There's profit in this parleying, if thou  
Wouldst learn of her, and she in turn of thee.

### CHRYSO THEMIS

I know her moods too well to take offence,  
Nor had I now approached her, but I learnt  
Of new impending peril that is like  
To put a finish to her long-drawn woes.

### ELECTRA

Say what can be this terror ; if 'tis worse  
Than what I now bear, I will call a truce.

### CHRYSO THEMIS

All I have learnt in full I will impart.  
They purpose, if thou wilt not stay thy plaints,  
To send thee where thou shalt not see the sun,  
Far hence, to some dark dungeon, there to spend  
Thy days and nights in litanies of woe.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πρὸς ταῦτα φράζου καί με μή ποθ' ὕστερον  
παθοῦσα μέμψῃ· νῦν γὰρ ἐν καλῷ φρονεῖν.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ ταῦτα δή με καὶ βεβούλευνται ποεῖν;

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

μάλισθ· ὅταν περ οἴκαδ' Αἴγισθος μόλῃ.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' ἔξικοιτο τοῦδέ γ' οὖνεκ' ἐν τάχει.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

τίν', ω τάλαιμα, τόνδ' ἐπηράσω λόγου;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐλθεῖν ἐκεῖνον, εἴ τι τῶνδε δρᾶν νοεῖ.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ὅπως πάθης τί χρῆμα; ποῦ ποτ' εἰ φρενῶν; 390

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὅπως ἀφ' ὑμῶν ώς προσωτάτω φύγω.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

βίου δὲ τοῦ παρόντος οὐ μνείαν ἔχεις;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καλὸς γὰρ οὐμὸς βίοτος ὥστε θαυμάσαι.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ' ἦν ἄν, εἴ σύ γ' εὐ φρονεῖν ἡπίστασο.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μή μ' ἐκδίδασκε τοῖς φίλοις εἶναι κακήν.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ διδάσκω· τοῖς κρατοῦσι δ' εἰκαθεῖν.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σὺ ταῦτα θώπευ· οὐκ ἐμοὺς τρόπους λέγεις.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καλόν γε μέντοι μὴ 'ξ ἀβουλίας πεσεῖν.

## ELECTRA

Therefore reflect, and blame me not too late ;  
Take warning and repent while yet 'tis time.

### ELECTRA

Have they indeed resolved to treat me thus ?

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

The instant that Aegisthus is returned.

### ELECTRA

Well, for my part I would he came back soon.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

Insensate girl ! What mean'st thou by this prayer ?

### ELECTRA

Would he were here, if this be his intent.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

That thou mayst suffer—what ? Hast lost thy wits ?

### ELECTRA

A flight long leagues away from all of you.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

Art thou indifferent to thy present life ?

### ELECTRA

O 'tis a marvellously happy life !

Now...?.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

It might have been, couldst thou have schooled  
thyself.

### ELECTRA

Teach me not basely to betray my friends.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

Not I ; I teach submission to the strong.

### ELECTRA

Fawn, if thou wilt ; such cringing suits not me.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

Yet not to fall through folly were no blame.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πεσούμεθ', εἰ χρή, πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

πατὴρ δὲ τούτων, οίδα, συγγνώμην ἔχει.

400

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ταῦτ' ἔστι τάπη πρὸς κακῶν ἐπαινέσαι.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

σὺ δ' οὐχὶ πείσει καὶ συναινέσεις ἐμοί;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐ δῆτα· μή πω νοῦ τοσόνδ' εἴην κενή.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

χωρήσομαι τάρ' οἶπερ ἐστάλην ὄδον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ποὶ δ' ἐμπορεύει; τῷ φέρεις τάδ' ἐμπυρα;

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

μήτηρ με πέμπει πατρὶ τυμβεῦσαι χοάς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς εἰπας; ἢ τῷ δυσμενεστάτῳ βροτῶν;

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

δν ἔκταν' αὐτή· τοῦτο γὰρ λέξαι θέλεις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐκ τοῦ φίλων πεισθεῖσα; τῷ τοῦτ' ἥρεσεν;

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἐκ δείματός του νικτέρου, δοκεῖν ἐμοί.

410

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ θεοὶ πατρῷοι, συγγένεσθέ γ' ἀλλὰ νῦν.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἔχεις τι θάρσος τοῦδε τοῦ τάρβους πέρι;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εἴ μοι λέγοις τὴν ὅψιν, εἴποιμ' ἀν τότε.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

If needs be, in a father's cause I'll fall.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

I trust our father pardons us for this.

ELECTRA

Traitors take refuge in like sentiments.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Thou wilt not heed then or be ruled by me ?

ELECTRA

I am not in my dotage, save the mark !

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Then I will do my errand.

ELECTRA

Whither away ?

For whom art carrying these burnt offerings ?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

My mother bids me crown our father's grave.

ELECTRA

Her mortal enemy's ! How sayest thou ?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

The husband whom she slew, so thou wouldest say.

ELECTRA

Which of her friends advised her ? whence this whim ?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

A nightly vision warned her, so I think.

ELECTRA

Gods of my fathers, aid me in this pass !

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Dost thou take heart of courage from her dread ?

ELECTRA

Before I answer let me hear the dream.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ κάτοιδα πλὴν ἐπὶ σμικρὸν φράσαι.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λέγ' ἀλλὰ τοῦτο· πολλά τοι σμικρὸν λόγοι  
ἔσφηλαν ἥδη καὶ κατώρθωσαν βροτούς.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

λόγος τις αὐτήν ἔστιν εἰσιδεῖν πατρὸς  
τοῦ σοῦ τε κάμοῦ δευτέραν ὄμιλίαν  
ἐλθόντος ἐς φῶς· εἴτα τόνδ' ἐφέστιον  
πῆξαι λαβόντα σκῆπτρον οὐφόρει ποτὲ  
αὐτός, τανῦν δ' Αἴγισθος· ἐκ δὲ τοῦδ' ἄνω  
βλαστεῖν βρύοντα θαλλόν, φὲ κατάσκιον  
πᾶσαν γενέσθαι τὴν Μυκηναίων χθόνα.  
τοιαῦτά του παρόντος, ἡνίχ' Ἡλίῳ  
δείκνυσι τοῦναρ, ἔκλυσιν ἐξηγουμένου.  
πλείω δὲ τούτων οὐ κάτοιδα, πλὴν ὅτι  
πέμπει με κείνη τοῦδε τοῦ φόβου χάριν.  
πρὸς νυν θεῶν σε λίστομαι τῶν ἐγγενῶν  
ἔμοι πιθέσθαι μηδ' ἀβουλίᾳ πεσεῖν.  
εἰ γάρ μ' ἀπώσει, σὺν κακῷ μέτει πάλιν.

420

430

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ', ὡ φίλη, τούτων μὲν ὡν ἔχεις χεροῖν  
τύμβῳ προσάγῃς μηδέν· οὐ γάρ σοι θέμις  
οὐδὲ ὅσιον ἔχθρᾶς ἀπὸ γυναικὸς ἰστάναι  
κτερίσματ' οὐδὲ λουτρὰ προσφέρειν πατρί·  
ἀλλ' ἡ πνοαῖσιν ἡ βαθυσκαφεῖ κόνει  
κρύψον νιν, ἔνθα μή ποτ' εἰς εὔνην πατρὸς  
τούτων πρόσεισι μηδέν· ἀλλ' ὅταν θάνη  
κειμήλι' αὐτῇ ταῦτα σφέζεσθω κάτω.  
ἀρχὴν δ' ἄν, εἰ μὴ τλημονεστάτη γυνὴ  
πασῶν ἔβλαστε, τάσδε δυσμενεῖς χοὰς

440

## ELECTRA

CHRYSOTHEMIS

There is but little that I have to tell.

ELECTRA

Tell it no less. A little word, men say,  
Hath oftentimes determined weal or woe.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

'Tis said that she beheld thy sire and mine  
In bodily presence standing by her side,  
Revisiting the light of day. He took  
The sceptre of Aegisthus, once his own,  
And at the household altar planted it,  
And from it sprang and spread a fruitful bough;  
Till it o'ershadowed all Mycenaë's land.  
Such is the tale one told me who was by  
When to the Sun-god she declared her dream.  
Further I know not, save that in alarm  
She sent me hither. Hearken then to me.  
Sister, I pray thee by our household gods,  
Fall not through folly; if thou spurn me now,  
Too late in sorrow wilt thou seek my aid.

ELECTRA

Nay, let not aught, my sister, touch the tomb,  
Of all thou bearest. 'Twere a shame, a sin,  
To offer on behalf of her, the accursed,  
Gifts or libations to our father's ghost.  
Scatter them to the winds or bury them  
Deep in the dust, where nothing may defile  
Our father's lone couch; let her find them there,  
A buried treasure when she comes to die.  
Were she not abjectest of womankind,  
She ne'er had thought with offerings of hate

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἄν ποθ' ὅν γ' ἔκτεινε, τῷδ' ἐπέστεφε.  
σκέψαι γάρ εἴς σοι προσφιλῶς αὐτῇ δοκεῖ  
γέρα τάδ' οὖν τάφοισι δεξεσθαι νέκυς,  
ὑφ' ἡς θανὼν ἄτιμος, ὥστε δυσμενής,  
ἔμασχαλίσθη, κάππῃ λουτροῖσιν κάρα  
κηλῖδας ἔξέμαξεν. ἀρα μὴ δοκεῖς  
λυτήρι' αὐτῇ ταῦτα τοῦ φόνου φέρειν;  
οὐκ ἔστιν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν μέθες· σὺ δὲ  
τεμοῦσα κρατὸς βοστρύχων ἄκρας φόβας  
κάμοῦ ταλαίνης, σμικρὰ μὲν ταδ', ἀλλ' ὅμως 450  
ἄχω, δὸς αὐτῷ, τήνδ' ἀλιπαρῆ τρίχα  
καὶ ζῶμα τούμὸν οὐ χλιδαῖς ἡσκημένον.  
αὐτοῦ δὲ προσπίτνουσα γῆθεν εὔμενη  
ἡμῖν ἀρωγὸν αὐτὸν εἰς ἔχθροὺς μολεῖν,  
καὶ παῖδ' Ὁρέστην ἔξ υπερτέρας χερὸς  
ἔχθροῖσιν αὐτοῦ ζῶντ' ἐπεμβῆναι ποδί·  
ὅπως τὸ λοιπὸν αὐτὸν ἀφνεωτέραις  
χερσὶν στέφωμεν ἢ ταυῦν δωρούμεθα.  
οἶμαι μὲν οὖν, οἶμαι τι κάκείνῳ μέλον  
πέμψαι τάδ' αὐτῇ δυσπρόσοπτ' ὀνείρατα. 460  
ὅμως δ', ἀδελφή, σοί θ' ὑπούργησον τάδε  
ἔμοι τ' ἀρωγὰ τῷ τε φιλτάτῳ βροτῷν  
πάντων, ἐν "Αἰδου κειμένῳ κοινῷ πατρί.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἡ κόρη λέγει· σὺ δέ,  
εἰ σωφρονήσεις, ω φίλη, δράσεις τάδε.

## ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

δράσω· τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οὐκ ἔχει λόγον  
δυοῖν ἐρίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐπισπεύδειν τὸ δρᾶν.

## ELECTRA

To crown her murdered victim's sepulchre.  
Thinkst thou 'tis likely that her buried lord  
Will take these honours kindly at her hands  
Who slew him without pity like a foe,  
Mangled<sup>1</sup> his corse, and for ablution washed  
The bloodstains on his head? Say, is it like  
These gifts will purge her of blood-guiltiness?  
It cannot be. Fling them away and cut  
A tress of thine own locks; and for my share  
Give him from me—a poor thing, but my best—  
This unkempt lock, this girdle unadorned.  
Then fall upon thy knees and pray that he  
May come, our gracious champion from the dead,  
And that the young Orestes yet may live  
To trample underfoot his vanquished foes.  
So may we some day crown our father's tomb  
With costlier gifts than these poor offerings.  
I can but think, 'tis but a thought, that he  
Had part in sending her this ominous dream.  
Still, sister, do this service and so aid  
Thyself and me, and him the most beloved  
Of all men, e'en though dead, thy sire and mine.

### CHORUS

'Tis piously advised, and thou, my daughter,  
Wilt do her bidding, if thou art discreet.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

I will. When duty calls, 'twere lack of sense  
For two to wrangle; both should join to act.

<sup>1</sup> The full meaning is "to cut off the hands and feet and suspend them to the armpits." This was done to prevent the victim from taking vengeance.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πειρωμένη δὲ τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἐμοὶ<sup>1</sup>  
σιγὴ παρ' ὑμῶν, πρὸς θεῶν, ἔστω, φίλαι·  
ώς εἰ τάδ' ή τεκοῦσα πεύσεται, πικρὰν  
δοκῶ με πεῖραν τήνδε τολμήσειν ἔτι.

470

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

εἰ μὴ γὰρ παράφρων μάντις ἔφυν καὶ γνώμας  
λειπομένα σοφᾶς,  
εἰσιν ἀ πρόμαντις  
Δίκα, δίκαια φερομένα χεροῦν κράτη·  
μέτεισιν, ὡς τέκνουν, οὐ μακροῦ χρόνου.  
ὕπεστί μοι θάρσος,  
ἀδυτηνόων κλύσουσαν  
ἀρτίως ὄνειράτων.

480

οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἀμναστεῖ γ' ὁ φύσας σ'<sup>1</sup>. Ἐλλάνων  
ἄναξ,  
οὐδ' ἀ παλαιὰ χαλκόπλακτος ἀμφάκης γένυς,  
ἄ νιν κατέπεφνεν αἰσχίσταις ἐν αἰκίαις.

ἀντ.

ἥξει καὶ πολύπους καὶ πολύχειρ ἀ δεινοῖς  
κρυπτομένα λόχοις  
χαλκόπους Ἐρινύς.

490

ἄλεκτρ' ἄνυμφα γὰρ ἐπέβα μιαιφόνων  
γάμων ἀμιλλήμαθ' οἴσιν οὐ θέμις.

πρὸ τῶνδέ τοι μ' ἔχει  
μή ποτε μή ποθ' ἡμῖν  
ἀψεγές πελᾶν τέρας

τοῖς δρῶσι καὶ συνδρῶσιν. ἡ τοι μαντεῖαι βροτῶν 500  
οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐν δεινοῖς ὄνειροις οὐδὲν θεσφάτοις,  
εἰ μὴ τόδε φάσμα νυκτὸς εὖ κατασχήσει.

<sup>1</sup> Wakefield adds σ'.

## ELECTRA

F

Only when I essay this perilous task,  
Be silent, an you love me, friends, for if  
My mother hears of it, I shall have cause  
To rue my indiscretion soon or late.

[*Exit CHRYSOTHEMIS.*

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

Count me a prophet false, a witless wight,  
If Justice, who inspires my prophecy,  
Comes not, my child, to vindicate the right.

She comes and that right speedily.  
My heart grows bold and nothing fears ;  
That dream was music in my ears.  
It tells me that thy sire who whilom led  
The Greeks to victory hath not forgot ;  
Yea, and that axe with double brazen head  
Still thirsts for blood to wipe away its blot.

(*Ant.*)

So leaping from her ambush, brazen-shod,  
Comes the Erinys with an armed host's tread,  
For she hath seen a pair who knew not God  
Driven by lust to an adulterous bed,  
A bed with stains of murder dyed,  
A bridal without groom or bride.  
Therefore I know that not in vain is sent  
This portent that the fall of guilt foretells,  
For, if this vision fails of its intent,  
Vain is all sooth, all dreams, all oracles.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ω Πέλοπος ἀ πρόσθεν  
πολύπονος ἵππεία,  
ώς ἔμολες αἰανής  
τᾶδε γά.  
εὐτε γάρ ὁ ποντισθεὶς  
Μυρτίλος ἐκοιμάθη,  
παγχρύσεων δίφρων  
δυστάνοις αἰκίαις  
πρόρριζος ἐκριφθείς,  
οὐ τι πω  
ἔλειπεν ἐκ τοῦδ' οἴκου  
πολύπονος αἰκία.

510

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ  
ἀνειμένη μέν, ώς ἔοικας, αὐτὸς στρέφει·  
οὐ γάρ πάρεστ' Αἴγισθος, ὃς σ' ἐπεῖχ' ἀεὶ<sup>520</sup>  
μή τοι θυραίαν γ' οὖσαν αἰσχύνειν φίλους·  
νῦν δ' ώς ἄπεστ' ἔκεῖνος, οὐδὲν ἐντρέπει  
ἔμοι γε· καίτοι πολλὰ πρὸς πολλούς μὲ δὴ  
ἔξειπτας ώς θρασεῖα καὶ πέρα δίκης  
ἄρχω, καθυβρίζουσα καὶ σὲ καὶ τὰ σά·  
ἔγω δ' ὕβριν μὲν οὐκ ἔχω, κακῶς δέ σε  
λέγω κακῶς κλύουσα πρὸς σέθεν θαμά·  
πατὴρ γάρ, οὐδὲν ἄλλο, σοὶ πρόσχημ' ἀεὶ<sup>530</sup>  
ώς ἔξ ἔμοι τέθνηκεν. ἔξ ἔμοι· καλῶς  
ἔξοιδα· τῶνδ' ἄρνησις οὐκ ἔνεστί μοι·  
ἡ γάρ Δίκη νιν εἶλεν, οὐκ ἔγὼ μόνη,  
ἡ χρῆν σ' ἀρήγειν, εἰ φρονοῦσ' ἐτύγχανες·  
ἐπεὶ πατὴρ σὸς οὗτος, δν θρηνεῖς ἀεὶ,

520

530

## ELECTRA

O chariot-race of Pelops old,  
The source of sorrows manifold,  
What endless curse hath fallen on us  
Since to his sea-grave Mytilus <sup>1</sup>  
Sank from the golden chariot hurled ;  
Woe upon woe, of woes a world.

*Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.*

### CLYTEMNESTRA

So once again I find thee here at large,  
For he who kept thee close and so restrained  
Thy scandalous tongue, Aegisthus, is away ;  
Yet thy complaints, repeated many a time  
To many, censured my tyrannic rule—  
The insults that I heaped on thee and thine.  
Was it an insult if I paid in kind  
The flouts and taunts wherewith thou girdest at me ?  
Thy father, the sole pretext of thy grief,  
Died by my hand, aye mine, I know it well,  
'Tis true beyond denial ; yet not I,  
Not I alone, but Justice slew him too :  
And thou shouldst side with Justice, wert thou wise.  
This sire of thine for whom thy tears still flow

<sup>1</sup> The charioteer of Oenomaüs. In the race for the hand of Hippodameia, the king's daughter, he betrayed his master by removing a lynch-pin. Pelops won the race, but afterwards for an insult offered to his wife, he hurled into the sea Mytilus, who invoked a dying curse on the house.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τὴν σὴν ὅμαιμον μοῦνος Ἐλλήνων ἔτλη  
θῦσαι θεοῖσιν, οὐκ ἵσον καμὸν ἐμοὶ<sup>λύπης, ὃς ἔσπειρ', ὥσπερ ἡ τίκτουσ' ἐγώ.</sup>  
εἰεν, δίδαξον δή με τοῦ χάριν, τίνων  
ἔθυσεν αὐτήν· πότερον Ἀργείων ἐρεῖς;  
ἀλλ' οὐ μετῆν αὐτοῖσι τήν γ' ἐμὴν κτανεῖν.  
ἀλλ' ἀντ' ἀδελφοῦ δῆτα Μενέλεω κτανὼν  
τάμ', οὐκ ἔμελλε τῶνδέ μοι δώσειν δίκην;  
πότερον ἔκείνῳ παιδες οὐκ ἡσαν διπλοῖ,  
οὓς τῆσδε μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἦν θυήσκειν, πατρὸς 540  
καὶ μητρὸς δύντας, ἡς ὁ πλοῦς ὅδ' ἦν χάριν;  
ἡ τῶν ἔμῶν "Αἰδης τιν'" ὑμερον τέκνων  
ἡ τῶν ἔκείνης ἔσχε δαίσασθαι πλέον;  
ἡ τῷ πανώλει πατρὶ τῶν μὲν ἐξ ἔμοῦ  
παιδῶν πόθος παρεῖτο, Μενέλεω δ' ἐνῇν;  
οὐ ταῦτ' ἀβούλου καὶ κακοῦ γνώμην πατρός;  
δοκῶ μέν, εἰ καὶ σῆς δίχα γνώμης λέγω.  
φαίη δ' ἀν ἡ θανοῦσά γ', εἰ φωνὴν λάβοι.  
ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ εἰμὶ τοὺς πεπραγμένους  
δύστυμος· εἰ δὲ σοὶ δοκῶ φρουρεῖν κακῶς,  
γνώμην δικαίαν σχούσα τοὺς πέλας ψέγε. 550

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐρεῖς μὲν οὐχὶ νῦν γέ μ' ὡς ἄρξασά τι  
λυπηρὸν εἴτα σοῦ τάδ' ἐξήκουσ' ὑπο·  
ἀλλ' ἡν ἔφῆς μοι, τοῦ τεθυηκότος θ' ὑπερ  
λέξαιμ' ἀν ὄρθως τῆς κασιγνήτης θ' ὄμοῦ.

## ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ἔφίημ'. εἰ δέ μ' ὠδ' ἀεὶ λόγους  
ἐξηρχεις, οὐκ ἀν ἡσθα λυπηρὰ κλύειν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι. πατέρα φῆς κτεῖναι. τίς ἀν  
τούτου λόγος γένοιτ' ἀν αἰσχίων ἔτι,

## ELECTRA

Alone of all the Greeks could steel his heart  
To yield thy sister as a sacrifice ;  
A father who begat her and ne'er felt  
A mother's pangs of travail. Tell me now  
Wherefore he offered her, on whose behalf ?  
The Greeks, thou sayest. And what right had they  
To kill my child ? For Menelaus' sake,  
His brother ? Should such pretext stay my hand ?  
Had not his brother children twain to serve  
As victims ? Should not they, as born of sire  
And mother for whose sake the host embarked,  
Have been preferred before my innocent child ?  
Had Death forsooth some craving for my child  
Rather than hers ? or had the wretch, her sire,  
A tender heart for Menelaus' brood,  
And for my flesh and blood no tenderness ?  
That choice was for a father rash and base ;  
So, though I differ from thee, I opine,  
And could the dead maid speak, she would agree.  
I therefore view the past without remorse,  
And if to thee I seem perverted, clear  
Thy judgment ere thou makst thyself a judge.

### ELECTRA

This time thou canst not say that I began  
The quarrel or provoked thee. But if thou  
Wilt give me leave, I fain would speak the truth  
Regarding both my sister and my sire.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

My leave is given, and, hadst thou always shown  
This temper, I had listened without pain.

### ELECTRA

Hear then. Thou say'st, " I slew thy father." Who  
Could well avow a blacker crime than that ?

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εἴτ' οὖν δικαίως εἴτε μή; λέξω δέ σοι  
 ώς οὐ δίκη γ' ἔκτεινας, ἀλλά σ' ἐσπασεν  
 πειθὼ κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρός, φέταννῦ ξύνει.  
 ἔροῦ δὲ τὴν κυναγὸν "Αρτεμιν, τίνος  
 ποινὰς τὰ πολλὰ πνεύματ' ἔσχ' ἐν Αὐλίδι·  
 ή γὰρ φράσω· κείνης γάρ οὐ θέμις μαθεῖν.  
 πατήρ ποθ' ούμος, ώς ἐγὼ κλύω, θεᾶς  
 παίζων κατ' ἄλσος ἔξεκίνησεν ποδοῖν  
 στικτὸν κεράστην ἔλαφον, οὐ κατὰ σφαγὰς  
 ἐκκομπάσας ἔπος τι τυγχάνει βαλών.  
 κάκ τοῦδε μηνίσασα Δητώρα κόρη  
 κατεῖχ' Αχαιούς, ώς πατήρ ἀντίσταθμον  
 τοῦ θηρὸς ἐκθύσειε τὴν αὐτοῦ κόρην.  
 ὡδ' ήν τὰ κείνης θύματ'· οὐ γὰρ ήν λύσις  
 ἄλλη στρατῷ πρὸς οἰκου οὐδέ εἰς "Ιλιον.  
 ἀνθ' ὅν, βιασθεὶς πολλὰ κάντιβάς, μόλις  
 ἔθυσεν αὐτήν, οὐχὶ Μενέλεω χάριν.  
 εἰ δ' οὖν, ἐρώ γὰρ καὶ τὸ σόν, κείνου θέλων  
 ἐπωφελῆσαι ταῦτ' ἔδρα, τούτου θανεῖν  
 χρήν αὐτὸν οῦνεκ' ἐκ σέθεν; ποίφ νόμῳ;  
 ὅρα τιθεῖσα τόνδε τὸν νόμον βροτοῖς  
 μὴ πῆμα σαυτῇ καὶ μετάγνοιαν τιθῆς.  
 εἰ γὰρ κτενοῦμεν ἄλλον ἀντ' ἄλλου, σύ τοι  
 πρώτη θάνοις ἄν, εἰ δίκης γε τυγχάνοις.  
 ἄλλ' εἰσόρα μὴ σκῆψιν οὐκ οὖσαν τίθης.  
 εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, δίδαξον ἀνθ' ὅτου τανῦν  
 αἰσχιστα πάντων ἔργα δρῶσα τυγχάνεις,  
 ήτις ξυνεύδεις τῷ παλαμυναίῳ, μεθ' οὐ  
 πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν πρόσθεν ἔξαπώλεσας,  
 καὶ παιδοποιεῖς, τοὺς δὲ πρόσθεν εὔσεβεῖς  
 καὶ εὔσεβῶν βλαστόντας ἐκβαλοῦσ' ἔχεις.  
 πῶς ταῦτ' ἐπαινέσαιμ' ἄν; ή καὶ ταῦτ' ἐρεῖς

560

570

580

590

## ELECTRA

Justly or not, what matters? But I'll prove  
There was no justice in it; 'twas the lure  
Of a vile wretch that hurried thee along,—  
Thy lover's. Ask the Huntress Artemis  
For what offence she prisoned every gust  
That blows at Aulis; rather, as from her  
Thou mayst not win an answer, I will tell thee.  
My father once—so have I heard the tale—  
Taking his pleasure in her sacred glade  
Started an antlered stag with dappled hide,  
Shot it, and shooting made some careless vaunt  
Latona's daughter, wroth thereat, detained  
The Achaeans, that in quittance for her hart  
My sire might give his daughter, life for life.  
And so it came to pass that she was slain:  
The fleet becalmed no other way could win  
Homeward or Troyward. For that cause alone  
Reluctantly, by hard constraint, at last  
He slew her, no wise for his brother's sake.  
But if, as thou interprettest the deed,  
'Twas done to please his brother, even thus  
Should he for that have died by hand of thine?  
What law is this? In laying down such law  
See that against thyself thou lay not up  
Dire retribution; for if blood for blood  
Be justice, thou wouldest justly die the first.  
Look, if thy pleading be not all a lie,  
Say, if thou wilt, why thou art living now  
A life of shame as partner of his bed,  
The wretch who aided thee to slay my sire,  
Bearing him children, casting out for them  
The rightful heirs in rightful wedlock born.  
Can I approve such acts, admit that this,

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ώς τῆς θυγατρὸς ἀντίποινα λαμβάνεις;  
αἰσχρῶς δ', ἐάν περ καὶ λέγης· οὐ γὰρ καλὸν  
ἐχθροῖς γαμεῖσθαι τῆς θυγατρὸς οὖνεκα.  
ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ νουθετεῦν ἔξεστί σε,  
ἢ πᾶσαν ἵης γλώσσαν ώς τὴν μητέρα<sup>600</sup>  
κακοστομοῦμεν. καί σ' ἔγωγε δεσπότιν  
ἢ μητέρ' οὐκ ἔλασσον εἰς ἡμᾶς νέμω,  
ἢ ζῷ βίου μοχθηρόν, ἔκ τε σοῦ κακοῖς  
πολλοῖς ἀεὶ ξυνοῦσα τοῦ τε συννόμου·  
δ' δ' ἄλλος ἔξω, χείρα σὴν μόλις φυγῶν,  
τλήμων Ὁρέστης δυστυχῆ τρίβει βίον.  
δν πολλὰ δή με σοὶ τρέφειν μάστορα  
ἐπητιάσω· καὶ τόδ', εἴπερ ἔσθενον,  
ἔδρων ἄν, εὐ τοῦτ' ἵσθι· τοῦδέ γ' οὖνεκα  
κήρυσσέ μ' εἰς ἅπαντας, εἴτε χρῆς κακῆν  
εἴτε στόμαργον εἴτ' ἀναιδείας πλέαν.  
εὶ γὰρ πέφυκα τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἕδρις,  
σχεδόν τι τὴν σὴν οὐ καταισχύνω φύσιν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

όρῳ μένος πνέουσαν· εἰ δὲ σὺν δίκῃ  
ξύνεστι, τοῦδε φροντίδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσορῷ.<sup>610</sup>

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ποίας δ' ἐμοὶ δεῖ πρός γε τήνδε φροντίδος,  
ἥτις τοιαῦτα τὴν τεκοῦσαν ὑβρισεν,  
καὶ ταῦτα τηλικοῦτος; ἀρά σοι δοκεῖ  
χωρεῖν ἀν εἰς πᾶν ἔργον αἰσχύνης ἄτερ;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εὐ νυν ἐπίστω τῶνδέ μ' αἰσχύνην ἔχειν,  
κεὶ μὴ δοκῶ σοι· μανθάνω δ' ὄθούνεκα  
ἔξωρα πράσσω κούκ ἐμοὶ προσεικότα.  
ἀλλ' ἡ γὰρ ἔκ σοῦ δυσμένεια καὶ τὰ σὰ

## ELECTRA

This too was vengeance for a daughter's blood?  
A shameful plea, if urged, for shame it is  
To wed a foeman for a daughter's sake.  
But in convincing thee I waste my breath;  
Thou hast no answer but to scream that I  
Revile a mother; and in sooth to us  
Thou art mistress more than mother, for I pine  
A wretched drudge, by thee and by thy mate  
Downtrodden; and that other child who scarce  
Escaped thy hands, Orestes, wears away  
In weary exile his unhappy days.  
Oft hast thou taxed me that I reared him up  
For vengeance; so I willed it, had I power.  
Go to, proclaim me out of my own mouth  
A shrew, a scold, a vixen—what thou wilt.  
For if I be accomplished in such arts,  
Methinks I show my breed, a trick o' the blood.

### CHORUS

I see she breathes forth fury and no more  
Heeds if her words with justice harmonize.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

Why then should *I* heed one who thus insults  
A mother, at her ripe age too? Dost think  
That she would stick at any deed of shame?

### ELECTRA

Nay, I am shamefast, though to thee I seem  
Shameless; I know such manners in a maid  
Are ill-becoming, in a daughter strange;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔργ' ἔξαναγκάζει με ταῦτα δρᾶν βίᾳ· 620  
αἰσχροῖς γὰρ αἰσχρὰ πράγματ' ἐκδιδάσκεται.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ώ θρέμμ' ἀναιδές, ή σ' ἐγὼ καὶ τάμ' ἔπη  
καὶ τάργα τάμα πόλλ' ἄγαν λέγειν ποεῖ.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σύ τοι λέγεις νιν, οὐκ ἐγώ· σὺ γὰρ ποεῖς  
τοῦργον· τὰ δ' ἔργα τοὺς λόγους εύρισκεται.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' οὐ μὰ τὴν δέσποιναν Ἀρτεμιν θράσους  
τοῦδ' οὐκ ἀλύξεις, εὗτ' ἀν Αἴγισθος μόλῃ.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

όρᾶς; πρὸς ὄργην ἐκφέρει, μεθεῖσά μοι  
λέγειν ἀ χρήζοιμ', οὐδ' ἐπίστασαι κλύειν.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

οὔκουν ἁάσεις οὐδ' ὑπ' εὐφήμου βοῆς 630  
θῦσαι μ', ἐπειδὴ σοί γ' ἐφῆκα πᾶν λέγειν;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

έῶ, κελεύω, θῦε· μηδ' ἐπαιτιῶ  
τούμὸν στόμ', ως οὐκ ἀν πέρα λέξαιμ' ἔτι.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἐπαιρε δὴ σὺ θύμαθ' ή παροῦσά μοι  
πάγκαρπ', ἄνακτι τῷδ' ὅπως λυτηρίους  
εὐχὰς ἀνάσχω δειμάτων, ἀ νῦν ἔχω.  
κλύοις ἀν ἥδη, Φοῖβε προστατήριε,  
κεκρυμμένην μου βάξιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐν φίλοις  
ὅ μυθος, οὐδὲ πᾶν ἀναπτύξαι πρέπει  
πρὸς φῶς παρούσης τῆσδε πλησίας ἐμοί,  
μη σὺν φθόνῳ τε καὶ πολυγλώσσῳ βοῇ  
σπείρη ματαίαν βάξιν εἰς πᾶσαν πόλιν.  
ἀλλ' ὡδ' ἄκονε· τῇδε γὰρ κάγὼ φράσω.

640

## ELECTRA

But thy malignity, thy cruel acts  
Compel me ; baseness is from baseness learnt.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

Thou brazen monster ! I, my words, my acts,  
Are matter for thy glib garrulity !

### ELECTRA

The fault is thine, not mine ; for thine the acts,  
And mine are but the words that show them forth.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

Now, by our lady Artemis, thou shalt rue  
Thy boldness when Aegisthus comes again.

### ELECTRA

See, rage distracts thee ; first thou grantest me  
Free speech, and wilt not listen when I speak.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

I let thee have thy say, and wilt not thou  
Hush thy wild tongue and let me sacrifice ?

### ELECTRA

Go, I adjure thee, sacrifice ; nor blame  
My voice ; henceforth I shall not speak one word.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

Bear this, my maid, this offering of earth's fruits,  
That to our King I may uplift my prayers,  
To rid me of the dread that haunts my soul.  
O Phoebus, our Defender, lend an ear  
To my petition ; dark and veiled the words  
For those who love me not, nor were it meet  
To lay my whole heart bare, while she is by,  
Ready to blab with her envenomed tongue  
Through all the town some empty, rash report.  
Darkly I pray ; to my dark prayer attend !

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀ γὰρ προσεῖδον συκτὶ τῇδε φάσματα  
δισσῶν ὄνείρων, ταῦτά μοι, Λύκει' ἄναξ,  
εἰ μὲν πέφηνεν ἐσθλά, δὸς τελεσφόρα,  
εἰ δ' ἔχθρα, τοὺς ἔχθροισιν ἔμπαλιν μέθεις·  
καὶ μὴ με πλούτου τοῦ παρόντος εἴ τινες  
δόλοισι βουλεύουσιν ἐκβαλεῖν, ἐφῆς,  
ἄλλ' ὡδέ μ' αἰεὶ ζῶσαν ἀβλαβεῖ βίφ  
δόμους Ἀτρειδῶν σκῆπτρά τ' ἀμφέπειν τάδε,  
φίλοισί τε ξυνοῦσαν οὶς ξύνειμι νῦν  
εὐημεροῦσαν καὶ τέκνων ὅσων ἐμοὶ  
δύσνοια μὴ πρόσεστιν ή λύπη πικρά.  
ταῦτ', ω Λύκει' Ἀπολλον, ἵλεως κλύων  
δὸς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν ὕσπερ ἔξαιτούμεθα.  
τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα καὶ σιωπώσης ἐμοῦ  
ἐπαξιῶ σε δαίμον' δην' ἔξειδέναι·  
τοὺς ἐκ Διὸς γὰρ εἰκός ἐστι πάνθ' ὄρāν.

650

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ξέναι γυναικες, πῶς ἀν εἰδείην σαφῶς  
εἱ τοῦ τυράννου δώματ' Αἰγίσθου τάδε;

660

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάδ' ἐστίν, ω ξέν· αὐτὸς ἥκασας καλῶς.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἥ καὶ δάμαρτα τήνδ' ἐπεικάζων κυρῶ  
κείνου; πρέπει γὰρ ώς τύραννος εἰσορᾶν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

μάλιστα πάντων· ἥδε σοι κείνη πάρα.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ω χαῖρ', ἄνασσα· σοὶ φέρων ἥκω λόγους  
ἥδεῖς φίλου παρ' ἀνδρὸς Αἰγίσθῳ θ' ὄμοῦ.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἐδεξάμην τὸ ρήθεν· εἰδέναι δέ σου  
πρώτιστα χρῆζω τίς σ' ἀπέστειλεν βροτῶν.

## ELECTRA

The vision that I yesternight beheld  
Of double import, if, Lycean King,  
It bodes me well, fulfil it ; but if ill,  
May it upon my enemies recoil !  
If there be some who treacherously plot  
To dispossess me of my wealth and power,  
Prevent them, and vouchsafe that I may rule  
The house of Atreus in security,  
And wield the sceptre, sharing prosperous days  
With the same friends and with my children—those  
By malice and blind rancour not estranged.  
Grant, O Lycean Phoebus, of thy grace,  
To me and mine fulfilment of my prayers.  
And for those other things my heart desires,  
Though unexpressed, thou as a god dost know them ;  
For naught is hidden from the sons of Zeus.

### AGED SERVANT

Good ladies, might a stranger crave to learn  
If this indeed be King Aegisthus' house ?

### CHORUS

It is, Sir ; thou thyself hast guessed aright.

### AGED SERVANT

And am I right conjecturing that I see  
His royal consort here ? She looks a queen.

### CHORUS

Indeed thou art in presence of the queen.

### AGED SERVANT

I greet thee, Madam, and I bear to thee  
Fair news, and to Aegisthus, from a friend.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

I welcome thy fair words, but first would know  
Who sends thee.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

Φανοτεὺς ὁ Φωκεύς, πρᾶγμα πορσύνων μέγα.

670

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

τὸ ποῖον, ὡς ξέν'; εἰπέ· παρὰ φίλου γὰρ ὅν  
ἀνδρός, σάφ' οἶδα, προσφιλεῖς λέξεις λόγους.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τέθυηκ' Ὁρέστης· ἐν βραχεῖ ξυνθεὶς λέγω.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἱ 'γὰ τάλαιν', δλωλα τῆδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

τί φής, τί φής, ὡς ξεῖνε; μὴ ταύτης κλύνε.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θανόντ' Ὁρέστην νῦν τε καὶ πάλαι λέγω.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, οὐδέν εἰμ' ἔτι.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

σὺ μὲν τὰ σαυτῆς πρᾶσσ', ἐμοὶ δὲ σύ, ξένε,  
τάληθὲς εἰπέ, τῷ τρόπῳ διόλλυται;

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

κἀπεμπόμην πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ τὸ πᾶν φράσω.

680

κεῖνος γὰρ ἐλθὼν εἰς τὸ κλεινὸν Ἑλλάδος

πρόσχημ, ἀγῶνος Δελφικῶν ἄθλων χάριν,

δτ' ἥσθετ' ἀνδρὸς ὁρθίων κηρυγμάτων

δρόμου προκηρύξαντος, οὐ πρώτη κρίσις,

εἰσῆλθε λαμπρός, πᾶσι τοῖς ἐκεῖνοι σέβας·

δρόμου δ' ἵσωσας τάφέσει<sup>1</sup> τὰ τέρματα

νίκης ἔχων ἐξῆλθε πάντιμον γέρας.

χῶπως μὲν ἐν πολλοῖσι παῦρά σοι λέγω

οὐκ οἶδα τοιοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἔργα καὶ κράτη·

ἐν δ' ἵσθ· δσων γὰρ εἰσεκήρυξαν βραβῆς

690

<sup>1</sup> τῇ φύσει MSS., Musgrave corr.

## ELECTRA

AGED SERVANT

Phanoteus, the Phocian,

On a grave mission.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Tell me, stranger, what.  
It must be friendly coming from a friend.

AGED SERVANT

Orestes' death, to sum in brief my tale.

ELECTRA

Me miserable ! Now am I undone.

CLYTEMNESTRA

What say'st thou, man, what say'st thou ? Heed  
not her.

AGED SERVANT

I say again, Orestes is no more.

ELECTRA

Ah me, I'm lost, ah wretched me, undone !

CLYTEMNESTRA

Attend to thine own business. (*To AGED SERVANT.*)

Tell me, Sir,

The circumstance and manner of his death.

AGED SERVANT

That was my errand, and I'll tell thee all.  
To the great festival of Greece he went,  
The Delphic Games, and when the herald's voice  
Announced the opening trial, the foot race,  
He stepped into the lists, a radiant form,  
The admired of all beholders. Like a shaft  
He sped from starting point to goal and back,  
And bore the crown of glorious victory.  
To speak in brief where there is much to tell,  
I never heard of prowess like to his.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

[δρόμων διαύλων πένταθλ' ἀ νομίζεται],<sup>1</sup>  
 τούτων ἐνεγκὼν πάντα τάπινίκια  
 ὠλβίζετ', Ἀργεῖος μὲν ἀνακαλούμενος,  
 ὄνομα δ' Ὁρέστης, τοῦ τὸ κλεινὸν Ἑλλάδος  
 Ἀγαμέμνονος στράτευμ' ἀγείραντός ποτε.  
 καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τοιαῦθ'. δταν δέ τις θεῶν  
 βλάπτη, δύναιτ' ἀν οὐδ' ἀν ἰσχύων φυγεῖν.  
 κεῖνος γὰρ ἄλλης ἡμέρας, ὅθ' ἵππικῶν  
 ἦν ἡλίου τέλλοντος ὥκυπους ἀγών,  
 εἰσῆλθε πολλῶν ἀρματηλατῶν μέτα. 700  
 εἰς ἦν Ἀχαιός, εἰς ἀπὸ Σπάρτης, δύο  
 Λίβυες ζυγωτῶν ἀρμάτων ἐπιστάται·  
 κάκεῖνος ἐν τούτοισι, Θεσσαλὰς ἔχων  
 ἵππους, ὁ πέμπτος· ἕκτος ἐξ Αἰτωλίας  
 ξανθαῖσι πώλοις· ἔβδομος Μάγνης ἀνήρ·  
 ὁ δ' ὅγδοος λεύκιππος, Αἰνιὰν γένος·  
 ἔνατος Ἀθηνῶν τῶν θεοδμήτων ἄπο·  
 Βοιωτὸς ἄλλος, δέκατον ἐκπληρῶν ὅχον.  
 στάντες δ' ἵν' αὐτοὺς οἱ τεταγμένοι βραβῆς 710  
 κλήροις ἐπηλαν καὶ κατέστησαν δίφρους,  
 χαλκῆς ὑπαὶ σάλπιγγος ἥξαν· οἱ δ' ἄμα  
 ἵπποις ὁμοκλήσαντες ἡνίας χεροῦν  
 ἔσεισαν· ἐν δὲ πᾶς ἐμεστώθη δρόμος  
 κτύπου κροτητῶν ἀρμάτων· κόνις δ' ἄνω  
 φορεῖθ'. ὁμοῦ δὲ πάντες ἀναμεμιγμένοι  
 φείδοντο κέντρων οὐδέν, ὡς ὑπερβάλλοι  
 χνόας τις αὐτῶν καὶ φρυάγμαθ' ἵππικά.  
 ὁμοῦ γὰρ ἀμφὶ νῶτα καὶ τροχῶν βάσεις  
 ἥφριζον, εἰσέβαλλον ἵππικαὶ πνοαί.  
 κεῖνος δ' ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἐσχάτην στήλην ἔχων 720

<sup>1</sup> Jebb with most critics rejects the line and alters τούτων in next line to οὐθῶν.

## ELECTRA

This much I'll add, the judges of the games  
Announced no single contest wherein he  
Was not the victor, and each time glad shouts  
Hailed the award—' An Argive wins, Orestes,  
The son of Agamemnon, King of men,  
Who led the hosts of Hellas.' So he sped.  
But when some angry godhead intervenes  
The mightiest man is foiled. Another day,  
When at sunsetting chariots vied in speed,  
He entered ; many were the charioteers.  
From Sparta one, and one Achaean, two  
From Libya, skilled to guide the yokèd team ;  
The fifth in rank, with mares of Thessaly,  
Orestes came, and an Aeolian sixth,  
With chestnut fillies, a Megarian seventh,  
The eighth, with milk-white steeds, an Aenian,  
The ninth from Athens, city built by gods ;  
Last a Boeotian made the field of ten.  
Then, as the appointed umpires signed to each  
By lot his place, they ranged their chariots,  
And at the trumpet's brazen signal all  
Started, all shook the reins and urged their steeds  
With shouts ; the whole plain echoed with a din  
Of rattling cars and the dust rose to heaven.  
They drove together, all in narrow space,  
And plied their goads, each keen to leave behind  
The press of whirling wheels and snorting steeds,  
For each man saw his car beflecked with foam  
Or felt the coursers' hot breath at his back.  
Orestes, as he rounded either goal,

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔχριμπτ' ἀεὶ σύριγγα, δεξιὸν δ' ἀνεὶς  
σειραῖον ἵππον ἔργε τὸν προσκείμενον.  
καὶ πρὶν μὲν ὄρθοὶ πάντες ἔστασαν δίφροι·  
ἔπειτα δ' Αἰνιάνος ἀνδρὸς ἄστομοι  
πῶλοι βίᾳ φέρουσιν· ἐκ δὲ ὑποστροφῆς  
τελοῦντες ἔκτον ἔβδομόν τ' ἥδη δρόμου  
μέτωπα συμπαίουσι Βαρκαίοις ὅχοις·  
κάντεῦθεν ἄλλος ἄλλον ἐξ ἐνὸς κακοῦ  
ἔθραυε κάνεπιπτε, πᾶν δὲ ἐπίμπλατο  
ναυαγίων Κρισαίον ἴππικῶν πέδον.

730

γνοὺς δὲ οὐξ Ἀθηνῶν δεινὸς ἡνιοστρόφος  
ἔξω παρασπᾷ κάνακωχεύει παρεὶς  
κλύδων' ἔφιππον ἐν μέσῳ κυκωμενον.  
ἥλαινη δὲ ἐσχατος μέν, ὑστέρας δὲ ἔχων  
πῶλους Ὁρεστης, τῷ τέλει πίστιν φέρων·  
ὅπως δὲ ὄρᾳ μόνον νιν ἐλλελειμμένον,  
ὁξὲν δι' ὕπων κέλαδον ἐνσείσας θοαῖς  
πῶλοις διώκει, κὰξισώσαντε ζυγά  
ἥλαινέτην, τότε ἄλλος, ἄλλοθ' ἄτερος  
κάρα προβάλλων ἴππικῶν ὄχημάτων.

740

καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους πάντας ἀσφαλεῖς δρόμους  
ώρμᾶθ' ὁ τλήμων ὄρθος ἐξ ὄρθῶν δίφρων.  
ἔπειτα λύων ἦνίαν ἀριστερὰν  
κάμπτοντος ἵππου λανθάνει στήλην ἄκραν  
παίσας· ἔθραυσε δὲ ἄξονος μέσας χνόας  
κὰξ ἀντύγων ὠλισθεν· ἐν δὲ ἐλίσσεται  
τμητοῖς ἴμασι· τοῦ δὲ πίπτοντος πέδῳ  
πῶλοι διεσπάρησαν ἐς μέσον δρόμου.  
στρατὸς δὲ ὅπως ὄρᾳ νιν ἐκπεπτωκότα  
δίφρων, ἀνωλόλυξε τὸν νεανίαν,  
οἵ ἔργα δράσας οἴλα λαγχάνει κακά,  
φορούμενος πρὸς οὐδας, ἄλλοτε οὐρανῷ

750

## ELECTRA

Steered close and shaved the pillar with his nave,  
Urging his offside trace-horse, while he checked  
The nearer. For a while they all sped on  
Unscathed, but soon the Aenian's hard-mouthed  
steeds

Bolted, and 'twixt the sixth and seventh round  
'Gainst the Barcaean chariot headlong dashed.  
Then on that first mishap there followed close  
Shock upon shock, crash upon crash, that strewed  
With wrack of cars all the Crisaean plain.  
This the shrewd charioteer of Athens marked,  
Slackened and drew aside, letting go by  
The surge of chariots running in mid course.  
Last came Orestes who had curbed his team  
(He trusted to the finish), but at sight  
Of the Athenian, his one rival left,  
With a shrill holloa in his horses' ears  
He followed ; and the two abreast raced on,  
Now one, and now the other a head in front.  
Thus far Orestes, ill-starred youth, had steered  
Steadfast at every lap his steadfast team,  
But at the last, in turning, all too soon  
He loosed the left-hand rein, and ere he knew it  
The axle struck against the pillar's edge.  
The axle box was shattered, and himself  
Hurled o'er the chariot rail, and in his fall  
Caught in the reins' grip he was dragged along,  
While his scared team dashed wildly o'er the course  
But as the crowd beheld his overthrow,  
There rose a wail of pity for the youth—  
His doughty deeds and his disastrous end—  
Now flung to earth, now bounding to the sky  
Feet uppermost. At length the charioteers

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σκέλη προφαίνων, ἐς τέ νιν διφρηλάται,  
μόλις κατασχεθόντες ἵππικὸν δρόμου,  
ἔλυσαν αἵματηρόν, ὥστε μηδένα  
γνῶναι φίλων ἴδοντ' ἀν ἄθλιον δέμας.  
καί νιν πυρᾶ κέαντες εὐθὺς ἐν βραχεῖ  
χαλκῷ μέγιστον σῶμα δειλαίας σποδοῦ  
φέρουσιν ἄνδρες Φωκέων τεταγμένοι,  
ὅπως πατρώας τύμβου ἐκλάχῃ χθονός. 760  
τοιαῦτά σοι ταῦτ' ἔστιν, ως μὲν ἐν λόγῳ  
ἀλγεινά, τοῖς δ' ἴδουσιν, οὕπερ εἴδομεν,  
μέγιστα πάντων ὡν ὅπωπ' ἐγὼ κακῶν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ πᾶν δὴ δεσπόταισι τοῖς πάλαι  
πρόρριζον, ως ἔοικεν, ἔφθαρται γένος.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί ταῦτα, πότερον εὔτυχῆ λέγω,  
ἢ δεινὰ μέν, κέρδη δέ; λυπηρῶς δ' ἔχει,  
εἰ τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τὸν βίον σφέζω κακοῖς.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί δ' ὡδὸς ἀθυμεῖς, ὢ γύναι, τῷ νῦν λόγῳ;

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

δεινὸν τὸ τίκτειν ἔστιν· οὐδὲ γὰρ κακῶς  
πάσχοντι μῆσος ὡν τέκη προσγύγνεται. 770

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

μάτην ἄρ' ἡμεῖς, ως ἔοικεν, ἥκομεν.

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

οὗτοι μάτην γε· πῶς γὰρ ἀν μάτην λέγοις,  
εἴ μοι θανόντος πίστ' ἔχων τεκμήρια  
προσῆλθεις, ὅστις τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς γεγώς,  
μαστῶν ἀποστὰς καὶ τροφῆς ἐμῆς, φυγὰς  
ἀπεξεινοῦτο καί μ', ἐπεὶ τῆσδε χθονὸς  
ἐξῆλθειν, οὐκέτ' εἶδεν, ἐγκαλῶν δέ μοι

## ELECTRA

Stayed in their wild career his steeds and freed  
The corpse all blood-bestained, disfigured, marred  
Past recognition of his nearest friend.  
Straightway the Phoeceans burnt him on a pyre,  
And envoys now are on their way to bring  
That mighty frame shut in a little urn,  
And lay his ashes in his fatherland.  
Such is my tale, right piteous to tell ;  
But for all those who saw it with their eyes,  
As I, there never was a sadder sight.

### CHORUS

Alas, alas ! our ancient masters' line,  
So it appears, hath perished root and branch.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

Are these glad tidings ? Rather would I say  
Sad, but of profit. Ah how hard my lot  
When I must look for safety to my losses.

### AGED SERVANT

Why, lady, why downhearted at my news ?

### CLYTEMNESTRA

Strange is the force of motherhood ; a mother,  
Whate'er her wrongs, can ne'er forget her child.

### AGED SERVANT

So it would seem our coming was in vain.

### CLYTEMNESTRA

Nay, not in vain. How canst thou say "in vain,"  
If of his death thou bringst convincing proof,  
Who from my life drew life, and yet, estranged,  
Forgat the breasts that suckled him, forgat  
A mother's tender nurture, fled his home,  
And since that day has never seen me more,

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φόνους πατρώους δείν' ἐπηπείλει τελεῖν;  
ῶστ' οὔτε νυκτὸς ὑπνον οὔτ' ἔξ ήμέρας  
ἔμε στεγάζειν ἡδύν, ἀλλ' ὁ προστατῶν  
χρόνος διῆγέ μ' αἰὲν ὡς θανουμένην.  
νῦν δ'—ήμέρᾳ γὰρ τῇδ' ἀπήλλαγμαι φόβου  
πρὸς τῇσδ' ἐκείνου θ· ἥδε γὰρ μείζων βλάβη  
ξύνοικος ἡν μοι, τούμὸν ἐκπίνουσ' ἀεὶ<sup>780</sup>  
ψυχῆς ἄκρατον αἷμα—νῦν δ' ἔκηλά που  
τῶν τῇσδ' ἀπειλῶν οὕνεχ' ήμερεύσομεν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἴμοι τάλαινα· νῦν γὰρ οἱ μῶξαι πάρα,  
'Ορέστα, τὴν σὴν ξυμφοράν, δθ' ὥδ' ἔχων  
πρὸς τῇσδ' ὑβρίζει μητρός. ἀρ' ἔχει καλῶς;  
790

## ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

οὗτοι σύ· κεῦνος δ' ὡς ἔχει καλῶς ἔχει.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄκουε, Νέμεσι τοῦ θανόντος ἀρτίως.

## ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἥκουσεν ὡν δεῖ κἀπεκύρωσεν καλῶς.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὑβριζε· νῦν γὰρ εὐτυχοῦσα τυγχάνεις.

## ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

οὔκουν 'Ορέστης καὶ σὺ παύσετον τάδε.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πεπαύμεθ' ήμεῖς, οὐχ ὅπως σὲ παύσομεν.

## ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

πολλῶν ἀν ἥκοις, ὡ ξέν', ἄξιος τυχεῖν,  
εἰ τήνδ' ἔπαυσας τῆς πολυγλώσσου βοῆς.

## ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐκοῦν ἀποστείχοιμ' ἄν, εἰ τάδ' εὖ κυρεῖ.

## ELECTRA

Slandered me as the murderer of his sire  
And breathed forth vengeance?—Neither night nor  
day

Kind slumber closed these eyes, and immanent dread  
Of death each minute stretched me on the rack.  
But now on this glad day, of terror rid  
From him and her, a deadlier plague than he,  
That vampire who was housed with me to drain  
My very life blood—now, despite her threats  
Methinks that I shall pass my days in peace.

ELECTRA

Ah woe is me! now verily may I mourn  
Thy fate, Orestes, when thou farest thus,  
Mocked by thy mother in death! Is it not well?

CLYTEMNESTRA

Not well with thee, but it is well with him.

ELECTRA

Hear her, Avenging Spirit of the dead  
Whose ashes still are warm!

CLYTEMNESTRA

The Avenger heard  
When it behoved her, and hath ruled it well.

ELECTRA

This is thine hour of victory; mock on.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Thou and Orestes then should silence me.

ELECTRA

We silence thee! We who are silent, both!

CLYTEMNESTRA

Thy coming, Sir, would merit large reward,  
If thou indeed hast stopped her wagging tongue.

AGED SERVANT

Then I may take my leave, if all is well.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ηκιστ· ἐπείπερ οὗτ· ἐμοῦ κατάξι· ἀν  
πράξειας οὔτε τοῦ πορεύσαντος ξένου.  
ἀλλ’ εἰσιθ’ εἴσω· τήνδε δ’ ἔκτοθεν βοᾶν  
ἔα τά θ’ αὐτῆς καὶ τὰ τῶν φίλων κακά.

800

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄρ’ ὑμὸν ὡς ἀλγοῦσα κώδυνωμένη  
δεινῶς δακρῦσαι κάπικωκῦσαι δοκεῖ  
τὸν υἱὸν ἡ δύστηνος ὁδὸν ὀλωλότα;  
ἀλλ’ ἐγγελῶσα φροῦδος· ὡς τάλαιν’ ἐγώ.  
‘Ορέστα φίλταθ’, ὥστε ἀπώλεσας θανών.  
ἀποσπάσας γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς οἰχεὶ φρενὸς  
αἴ μοι μόναι παρῆσταιν ἐλπίδων ἔτι,  
σὲ πατρὸς ἥξειν ζῶντα τιμωρόν ποτε  
κάμου ταλαίνης. νῦν δὲ ποῖ με χρὴ μολεῖν;  
μόνη γάρ εἰμι, σοῦ τ’ ἀπεστερημένη  
καὶ πατρός. ἥδη δεῖ με δουλεύειν πάλιν  
ἐν τοῖσιν ἔχθιστοισιν ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ  
φονεῦσι πατρός. ἄρα μοι καλῶς ἔχει;  
ἀλλ’ οὐ τι μὴν ἔγωγε τοῦ λοιποῦ χρόνου  
ξύνοικος, εἴσειμ,<sup>1</sup> ἀλλὰ τῆδε πρὸς πύλη  
παρεῖν’ ἐμαυτὴν ἄφιλος αὐτανῶ βίον.  
πρὸς ταῦτα καινέτω τις, εἰ βαρύνεται,  
τῶν ἔνδον ὅντων· ὡς χάρις μέν, ἦν κτάνη,  
λύπη δ’, ἐὰν ζῷ· τοῦ βίου δ’ οὐδεὶς πόθος.

810

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

ποῦ ποτε κεραυνοὶ Διὸς ἡ ποῦ φαέθων  
“Αλιος, εἰ ταῦτ’ ἐφορῶντες κρύπτουσιν ἔκηλοι;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ ἔ, αἰαῖ.

<sup>1</sup> Κεσσομ' MSS., Hermann corr.

## ELECTRA

### CLYTEMNESTRA

Not so ; such entertainment would reflect  
On me and on thy master, my ally.  
Be pleased to enter ; leave this girl without  
To wail her friends' misfortunes and her own.

[*Exeunt CLYTEMNESTRA and AGED SERVANT.*

### ELECTRA

Seemed she to you a mother woe-begone,  
Weeping and wailing for a son thus slain,  
This miserable woman ? No, she left us  
With mocking laughter. Dearest brother mine,  
Thy death was my death warrant. Woe is me !  
With thee has gone my last fond hope, that thou  
Wast living yet and wouldest return some day  
To avenge my sire and me, unhappy me.  
Now whither shall I turn, alone, bereft  
Of thee and of my sire ? Henceforth again  
Must I be slave to those I most abhor,  
My father's murderers. Is it not well with me ?  
No, never will I cross their threshold more,  
But at these gates will lay me down to die,  
There pine away. If any in the house  
Think me an eyesore, let him slay me ; life  
To me were misery and death a boon.

### CHORUS

(Str. 1)

Where, O Zeus, are thy bolts, O Sun-god, where is  
thy ray,  
If with thy lightning, thy light, these things be not  
shewn to the day ?

### ELECTRA

Ah me ! Ah me !

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

*ῳ παῖ, τί δακρύεις;*

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

*φεῦ.*

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

*μηδὲν μέγ' ἀντσῆς.*

830

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

*ἀπολεῖς.*

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

*πῶς;*

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

*εἰ τῶν φαινερῶς οἱ χομένων  
εἰς Ἀΐδαν ἐλπίδ' ὑποίσεις, κατ' ἐμοῦ τακομένας  
μᾶλλον ἐπεμβάσει.*

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

*ἀντ. α'*

*οἵδα γὰρ ἄνακτ' Ἀμφιάρεων χρυσοδέτοις  
ἔρκεσι κρυφθέντα γυναικῶν· καὶ νῦν ὑπὸ γαίας*

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

*Ἒ ἔ, ἵώ.*

840

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

*πάμψυχος ἀνάσσει.*

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

*φεῦ.*

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

*φεῦ δῆτ'· δλοὰ γὰρ*

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

*ἐδάμη.*

## ELECTRA

CHORUS

Daughter, why weepest thou ?

ELECTRA

Woe !

CHORUS

Hush ! No rash cry !

ELECTRA

Thou'l be my death.

CHORUS

What meanest thou ?

ELECTRA

If ye would whisper hope

That they we know for dead may be alive ;

Ye trample on a bleeding heart.

CHORUS

Nay, I bethink me how

(*Ant. 1*)

The Argive seer<sup>1</sup> was swallowed up,

Snared by a woman for a golden chain,

And now in the nether world—

ELECTRA

Ah me !

CHORUS

A living soul he reigns.

ELECTRA

Ah woe !

CHORUS

Aye woe ! for the murdereress—

ELECTRA

Was slain.

<sup>1</sup> Amphiaraus. Induced by his wife Eriphyle to join the expedition of Polyneices against Argos, he was swallowed up by an earthquake. His son (like Orestes) avenged his father and Amphiaraus was honoured as an earth-god.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

*vai.*

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἰδ' οἰδ'. ἐφάνη γὰρ μέλετωρ  
ἀμφὶ τὸν ἐν πένθει ἐμοὶ δὲ οὔτις ἔτ' ἔσθ'. δις γὰρ  
ἔτ' ἦν,  
φροῦδος ἀναρπασθείς.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

δειλαία δειλαίων κυρεῖς.

στρ. β'

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κάγῳ τοῦδ' ἵστωρ, ὑπερίστωρ,  
πανσύρτῳ παμμήνῳ πολλῶν  
δεινῶν στυγνῶν τ' αἰώνι.<sup>1</sup>

850

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἴδομεν ἀθρήνεις.<sup>2</sup>

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μή μέ νυν μηκέτι  
παραγάγῃς, ἵν' οὐ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί φής;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πάρεισιν ἐλπίδων ἔτι κοινοτόκων  
εὐπατριδᾶν ἀρωγαί.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πᾶσι θνατοῖς ἔφυ μόρος.

ἀντ. β' 860

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ καὶ χαλάργους ἐν ἀμύλαις  
οὔτως, ὡς κείνῳ δυστάνῳ,  
τμητοῖς ὄλκοῖς ἐγκύρσαι;

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄσκοπος ἀ λώβα.

<sup>1</sup> δχέων MSS., Hermann corr.   <sup>2</sup> & θροεῖς MSS., Dindorf corr.

## ELECTRA

### CHORUS

Aye, slain.

### ELECTRA

I know, I know. A champion was raised up  
To avenge the mourning ghost.  
No champion for me,  
The one yet left is taken, reft away.

### CHORUS

A weary, weary lot is thine.

(Str. 2)

### ELECTRA

I know it well, too well,  
When life, month in month out,  
Like a dark torrent flows,  
Horror on horror, pain on pain.

### CHORUS

We have watched its tearful course.

### ELECTRA

Cease then to turn it where—

### CHORUS

What wouldest thou say ?

### ELECTRA

No comfort's left of hope  
From him of royal blood,  
Sprung from one stock with me.

### CHORUS

Death is the common lot.

(Ant. 2)

### ELECTRA

To die as he died, hapless youth,  
Entangled in the reins  
Beneath the tramp of coursers' hoofs !

### CHORUS

Torture ineffable !

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς γὰρ οὐκ; εἰ ξένος  
ἄτερ ἐμᾶν χερῶν  
ΧΟΡΟΣ  
παπαῖ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κέκευθεν, οὔτε του τάφου ἀντιάσας  
οὔτε γόων παρ' ἡμῶν.

870

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ὑφ' ἡδονῆς τοι, φιλτάτη, διώκομαι  
τὸ κόσμιον μεθεῖσα σὺν τάχει μολεῦν.  
φέρω γὰρ ἡδονάς τε κάναπαυλαν ὡν  
πάροιθεν εἰχεις καὶ κατέστενες κακῶν

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πόθεν δ' ἀν εῦροις τῶν ἐμῶν σὺ πημάτων  
ἀρηξιν, οἷς ἵασιν οὐκ ἔνεστ' ἴδεῖν;

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

πάρεστ' Ὁρέστης ἡμίν, ἵσθι τοῦτ' ἐμοῦ  
κλύνουσ', ἐναργῶς, ὥσπερ εἰσορᾶς ἐμέ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' ἡ μέμηνας, ὡ τάλαινα, κάπι τοῖς  
σαυτῆς κακοῦσι κάπι τοῖς ἐμοῖς γελᾶς;

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

μὰ τὴν πατρώαν ἔστιαν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὕβρει  
λέγω τάδ', ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνον ὡς παρόντα νῦν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἵμοι τάλαινα· καὶ τίνος βροτῶν λόγον  
τόνδ' εἰσακούσασ' ὡδε πιστεύεις ἄγαν;

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ τε κούκ ἄλλης, σαφῆ  
σημεῖ' ἴδοῦσα, τῷδε πιστεύω λόγῳ.

880

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Yea, in a strange land far away—

CHORUS

Alas !

ELECTRA

To lie unintended by my hands,  
Unwept, ungraced with sepulture by me !

*Enter CHRYSOTHEMIS.*

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Joy, dearest sister, sped me hitherward,  
And haply with unseemly haste I ran  
To bring the joyful tidings and relief  
From all thy woes and weary sufferings.

ELECTRA

And where canst *thou* have found a remedy  
For irremediable woes like mine ?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Orestes—hear it from my lips—is here,  
In bodily presence, as thou see'st me now.

ELECTRA

Art mad, poor sister, making mockery  
Of thine own misery and mine withal?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

I mock not, by our father's hearth I swear it ;  
In very truth we have him here again.

ELECTRA

O misery ! And, prithee, from whose mouth  
Hadst thou this tale so blindly credited ?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

I trusted to none other than myself,  
The clearest proof and evidence of my eyes.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίν', ὡς τάλαιν', ἔχουσα πίστιν; ἐς τί μοι  
βλέψασα θάλπει τῷδ' ἀνηκέστω πυρί;

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

πρός νυν θεῶν ἄκουσον, ως μαθοῦσά μου  
τὸ λοιπὸν ἢ φρονοῦσαν ἢ μωρὰν λέγης.

890

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σὺ δ' οὖν λέγ', εἴ σοι τῷ λόγῳ τις ήδονή.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι πᾶν ὅσον κατειδόμην.  
ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἥλθον πατρὸς ἀρχαῖον τάφον,  
ὅρῳ κολώνης ἐξ ἄκρας νεορρύτους  
πηγὰς γάλακτος καὶ περιστεφῆ κύκλῳ  
πάντων ὅσ' ἐστὶν ἀνθέων θήκην πατρός.  
ἰδαῦσα δὲ ἔσχον θαῦμα, καὶ περισκοπῶ  
μή πού τις ήμῖν ἐγγὺς ἐγχρίμπη βροτῶν.  
ώς δὲ ἐν γαλήνῃ πάντ' ἐδερκόμην τόπουν,  
τύμβου προσεῖρπον ἀσσον· ἐσχάτης δὲ ὥρῳ  
πυρᾶς νεωρῇ βόστρυχον τετμημένον.  
κεύθὺς τάλαιν' ως εἰδον, ἐμπαίει τί μοι  
ψυχῇ σύνηθες ὅμμα, φιλτάτου βροτῶν  
πάντων Ὄρέστου τοῦθ' ὥρᾶν τεκμήριον.  
καὶ χερσὶ βαστάσασα δυσφημῶ μὲν οὐ,  
χαρᾶ δὲ πίμπλημ' εὐθὺς ὅμμα δακρύων.  
καὶ νῦν θ' ὁμοίως καὶ τότ' ἐξεπίσταμαι  
μή του τόδ' ἀγλαῖσμα πλὴν κείνου μολεῦν.  
τῷ γὰρ προσήκει πλὴν γ' ἐμοῦ καὶ σοῦ τόδε;  
κάγῳ μὲν οὐκ ἔδρασα, τοῦτ' ἐπίσταμαι,  
οὐδὲ αὖ σύ· πῶς γάρ; ἢ γε μηδὲ πρὸς θεοὺς  
ἔξεστ' ἀκλαύστῳ τῆσδ' ἀποστῆναι στέγης.  
ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ μητρὸς οὕθ' ὁ νοῦς φιλεῖ

900

910

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

What proof, what evidence ! What sight, poor girl,  
Lit this illusion in thy fevered brain ?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

O, as thou lov'st me, listen, then decide,  
My story told, if I am mad or sane.

ELECTRA

Well, if it pleases thee to speak, speak on.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

I will, and tell thee all that I have seen.  
As I approached our sire's ancestral tomb,  
I noted that the barrow still was wet  
With streams of milk, and round the monument  
Garlands were wreathed of every flower that blows.  
I marvelled much and peered around in dread  
Of someone watching me ; but when I found  
That nothing stirred, nearer the tomb I crept ;  
And there upon the grave's edge lay a lock  
Of hair fresh-severed ; at the sight there flashed  
A dear familiar image on my soul,  
Orestes ; 'twas a token and a sign  
From him whom most of all the world I love.  
I took it in my hands and not a sound  
I uttered but my eyes o'erbrimmed for joy.  
I knew, I knew it then as now, for sure :  
This shining treasure could be none but his.  
Who else could set it there save thee or me ?  
And 'twas not I assuredly, nor thou ;  
How couldst thou, when thou mayst not leave the  
house  
Not e'en to sacrifice ? Our mother then ?  
When did our mother's heart that way incline ?

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τοιαῦτα πράσσειν οὔτε δρῶσ' ἐλάνθαν' ἄν.<sup>1</sup>  
ἀλλ' ἔστι· Ὁρέστου ταῦτα τάπιτύμβια.<sup>2</sup>  
ἀλλ', ὡ φίλη, θάρσυνε· τοῖς αὐτοῖσί τοι  
οὐχ αὐτὸς αἰέλι δαιμόνων παραστατεῖ.  
ιών ἦν τὰ πρόσθεν στυγνός· ἢ δὲ νῦν ἵσως  
πολλῶν ὑπάρξει κύρος ἡμέρα καλῶν.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φεῦ, τῆς ἀνοίας ὡς σ' ἐποικτήρω πάλαι.

920

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν; οὐ πρὸς ἥδουνὴν λέγω τάδε;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ οἰσθ' ὅποι γῆς οὐδὲ ὅποι γυώμης φέρει.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

πῶς δ' οὐκ ἐγὼ κάτοιδ' ἂ γ' εἶδον ἐμφανῶς;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τέθνηκεν, ὡ τάλαινα, τάκείνου δέ σοι  
σωτήρι ἔρρει· μηδὲν εἰς κεῖνόν γ' ὅρα.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

οἴμοι τάλαινα· τοῦ τάδ' ἥκουσας βροτῶν;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τοῦ πλησίου παρόντος, ἥνικ' ὥλλυτο.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καὶ ποῦ στιν οὗτος; θαῦμά τοί μ' ὑπέρχεται.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κατ' οἰκον, ἥδὺς οὐδὲ μητρὶ δυσχερής.

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

οἴμοι τάλαινα· τοῦ γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ποτ' ἦν  
τὰ πολλὰ πατρὸς πρὸς τάφον κτερίσματα;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἵμαι μάλιστ' ἔγωγε τοῦ τεθνηκότος  
μνημεῖ· Ὁρέστου ταῦτα προσθεῖναι τινα.

<sup>1</sup> ἐλάνθανεν MSS., Heath corr.

<sup>2</sup> τάπιτίμια MSS., Dindorf corr.

## ELECTRA

Could she have 'scaped our notice, had she done it?  
No, from Orestes comes this offering.  
Courage, dear sister. Never destiny  
Ran one unbroken course. On us till now  
She frowned; to-day gives promise of her smiles.

ELECTRA

Alas! I pity thy simplicity,  
Fond sister.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Are not then my tidings glad?

ELECTRA

Thou knowst not in what land of dreams thou art.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Wouldst have me doubt the evidence of my eyes?

ELECTRA

He is dead, I tell thee; look not to the dead  
For a deliverer; *that* hope has gone.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Ah woe is me! Who told thee of his death?

ELECTRA

One who was present when he met his fate.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Where is the man? 'Tis strange, 'tis passing strange.

ELECTRA

Within; our mother's not unwelcome guest.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Ah me! Ah me! And whose then can have been  
Those wreaths, that milk outpoured upon the grave?

ELECTRA

To me it seems most like that they were brought  
A kindly offering to Orestes dead.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ω δυστυχής· ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν χαρᾷ λόγους  
τοιούσδ' ἔχουσ' ἔσπευδον, οὐκ εἰδυῖ ἄρα  
ἴν' ἡμεν ἄτης· ἀλλὰ νῦν, δθ' ἵκόμην,  
τά τ' ὅντα πρόσθεν ἄλλα θ' εὑρίσκω κακά.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὗτως ἔχει σοι ταῦτ· ἐὰν δέ μοι πίθη,  
τῆς νῦν παρούσης πημονῆς λύσεις βάρος.

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἢ τοὺς θανόντας ἔξαναστήσω ποτέ;

940

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἔσθ' ὁ γ' εἶπον· οὐ γάρ ὡδ' ἄφρων ἔφυν.

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

τί γάρ κελεύεις ὡν ἐγὼ φερέγγυος;

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τλῆναι σε δρῶσαν ἀν ἐγὼ παραινέσω.

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ' εἴ τις ὠφέλειά γ', οὐκ ἀπώσομαι.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὅρα, πόνου τοι χωρὶς οὐδὲν εὔτυχεῖ.

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ὅρω. ξυνοίσω πᾶν ὅσουνπερ ἀν σθένω.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν ἢ βεβούλευμαι ποεῖν.

παρουσίαν μὲν οἰσθα καὶ σύ που φίλων

ώς οὗτις ἡμῖν ἔστιν, ἀλλ' Αἰδης λαβὼν

ἀπεστέρηκε καὶ μόνα λελείμμεθον.

950

ἐγὼ δ' ἔως μὲν τὸν κασίγνητον βίω

θάλλουντ' ἔτ' εἰσήκουον, εἰχον ἐλπίδας

φόνου ποτ' αὐτὸν πράκτορ' ἕξεσθαι πατρός·

νῦν δ' ἡνίκ' οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, εἰς σὲ δὴ βλέπω,

ὅπως τὸν αὐτόχειρα πατρῷου φόνου

## ELECTRA

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

And I, poor fool, was hurrying in hot haste  
To bring my joyful message, unaware  
Of our ill plight ; and now that I have brought it  
I find fresh sorrows added to the old.

### ELECTRA

So stands the case ; but be advised by me  
And lighten this the burden of our woes.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

Wouldst have me raise the dead to life again ?

### ELECTRA

I meant not that ; I am not so demented.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

What wouldst thou then that lies within my powers ?

### ELECTRA

Be bold to execute what I enjoin.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

If it can profit, I will not refuse.

### ELECTRA

Success, remember, is the meed of toil.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

I know it, and will help thee all I can.

### ELECTRA

Then listen how I am resolved to act.

From friends, thou knowest now as well as I,  
We cannot look for succour ; death hath snatched  
All from us and we two are left alone.  
While yet my brother lived and tidings came  
Of his prosperity, I still had hopes  
That he would yet appear to avenge his sire :  
But now that he is dead, to thee I turn ;  
From thee a sister craves a sister's aid,

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ξὺν τῇδ' ἀδελφῆ μὴ κατοκήσεις κτανεῖν  
Αἴγισθον· οὐδὲν γάρ σε δεῖ κρύπτειν μ' ἔτι.  
ποὶ γὰρ μενεῖς ῥάθυμος, εἰς τίν' ἐλπίδων  
βλέψασ' ἔτ' ὄρθην; ἢ πάρεστι μὲν στένειν  
πλούτου πατρώου κτῆσιν ἐστερημένη,  
πάρεστι δ' ἀλγεῖν ἐς τοσόνδε τοῦ χρόνου  
ἄλεκτρα γηράσκουσαν ἀνυμέναιά τε.

καὶ τῶνδε μέντοι μηκέτ' ἐλπίσης ὅπως  
τεύξει ποτ· οὐ γὰρ ὡδ' ἄβουλός ἐστ' ἀνὴρ  
Αἴγισθος ὥστε σόν ποτ' ἢ κάμὸν γένος  
βλαστεῖν ἔᾶσαι, πημονὴν αὐτῷ σαφῆ.  
ἀλλ' ἦν ἐπίσπη τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλεύμασιν,  
πρῶτον μὲν εὐσέβειαν ἐκ πατρὸς κάτω  
θανόντος οἴσει τοῦ καστυγήτου θ' ἄμα·  
ἔπειτα δ', ὥσπερ ἐξέφυς, ἐλευθέρα  
καλεῖ τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ γάμων ἐπαξίων  
τεύξει· φιλεῖ γὰρ πρὸς τὰ χρηστὰ πᾶς ὁρᾶν.  
λόγων γε μὴν εὔκλειαν οὐχ ορᾶς ὅσην  
σαυτῇ τε κάμοὶ προσβαλεῖς πεισθεῖσ' ἐμοί;  
τίς γάρ ποτ' ἀστῶν ἢ ξένων ἡμᾶς ἴδων  
τοιοῦσδ' ἐπαίνοις οὐχὶ δεξιώσεται·  
ἴδεσθε τώδε τὰ καστυγήτω, φίλοι,  
ὦ τὸν πατρῷον οἶκον ἐξεσωσάτην,  
ὦ τοῖσιν ἐχθροῖς εὖ βεβηκόσιν ποτὲ  
ψυχῆς ἀφειδήσαντε προύστήτην φόνου·  
τούτῳ φιλεῖν χρή, τώδε χρή πάντας σέβειν,  
τώδ' ἐν θ' ἑορταῖς ἐν τε πανδήμῳ πόλει  
τιμᾶν ἀπαντας οὐνεκ' ἀνδρείας χρεών.  
τοιαῦτά τοι νὼ πᾶς τις ἐξερεῦ βροτῶν,  
ξώσαιν θανούσαιν θ' ὥστε μὴ κλιπεῖν κλέος.  
ἀλλ', ω φίλη, πείσθητι, συμπόνει πατρί,  
σύγκαμν ἀδελφῷ, παῦσον ἐκ κακῶν ἐμέ,

## ELECTRA

To slay—shrink not—our father's murderer,  
Aegisthus. There, I plainly tell thee all.  
Why hesitate? What faintest ray of hope  
Is left to excuse thy lethargy, whose lot  
Henceforth must be to mourn the ancestral wealth  
Whereof thou art defrauded, to lament  
A youth that withers fast, unloved, unwed.  
For dream not wedded bliss can e'er be thine;  
Too wary is Aegisthus to permit  
That children should be born of thee or me  
For his destruction. But, if thou attend  
My counsel, thou shalt reap large benefits:  
First, from our dead sire, and our brother too,  
A name for piety; and furthermore,  
A free-born woman thou shalt stand revealed;  
And worthy spousals shall be thine, for worth  
In women ever captivates all men.  
Seest thou not too the honour thou shalt win  
Both for thyself and me, if thou consent?  
What countryman, what stranger will not greet  
Our presence, when he sees us, with acclaim?  
"Look, friends, upon this sister pair," he'll cry,  
"Who raised their father's house, who dared confront  
Their foes in power, who jeopardised their lives  
In bloody vengeance. Honour to the pair,  
Honour and worship! Yea at every feast  
Let all the people laud their bravery."  
So will our fame be bruited far and wide,  
Nor shall our glory fail in life or death.  
Sweet sister, hear me, take thy father's part,  
Side with thy brother, give me, give thyself

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

παῦσον δὲ σαυτήν, τοῦτο γιγνώσκουσ' ὅτι  
ζῆν αἰσχρὸν αἰσχρῶς τοῖς καλῶς πεφυκόσιν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἐστὶν ἡ προμηθία  
καὶ τῷ λέγοντι καὶ κλύοντι σύμμαχος.

990

### ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καὶ πρίν γε φωνεῖν, ὡ γυναικες, εἰ φρενῶν  
ἐτύγχαν' αὐτῇ μὴ κακῶν, ἐσώζετ' ἀν  
τὴν εὐλάβειαν, ὥσπερ οὐχὶ σώζεται.

ποῖ γάρ ποτ' ἐμβλέψασα τοιοῦτον θράσος  
αὐτῇ θ' ὄπλίζει κάμ' ὑπηρετεῖν καλεῖς;  
οὐκ εἰσορᾶς; γυνὴ μὲν οὐδ' ἀνήρ ἔφυς,  
σθένεις δ' ἔλασσον τῶν ἐναντίων χερί.  
δαιίμων δὲ τοῖς μὲν εὐτυχεῖ καθ' ἡμέραν,

1000

ἡμῖν δ' ἀπορρεῖν κάπι μηδὲν ἔρχεται.  
τίς οὖν τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα βουλεύων ἐλεῖν  
ἄλυπος ἄτης ἔξαπαλλαχθήσεται;

ὅρα κακῶς πράσσοντε μη μείζω κακὰ  
κτησώμεθ', εἰ τις τούσδ' ἀκούσεται λόγους.

λύει γὰρ ἡμῖν οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἐπωφελεῖν.  
βάξιν καλὴν λαβόντε δυσκλεῶς θανεῖν.  
οὐ γὰρ θανεῖν ἔχθιστον, ἀλλ' ὅταν θανεῖν  
χρήζων τις εἴτα μηδὲ τοῦτ' ἔχῃ λαβεῖν.  
ἀλλ' ἀντιάζω, πρὶν πανωλέθρους τὸ πᾶν  
ἡμᾶς τ' ὀλέσθαι κὰξερημῶσαι γένος,  
κατάσχεις ὄργην. καὶ τὰ μὲν λελεγμένα  
ἄρρητ' ἔγώ σοι κάτελη φυλάξομαι,  
αὐτὴ δὲ νοῦν σχέεις ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ ποτέ,  
σθένουσα μηδὲν τοῖς κρατοῦσιν εἰκαθεῖν.

1010

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πείθου· προνοίας οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ  
κέρδος λαβεῖν ἄμεινον οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ.

## ELECTRA

Surcease of sorrow ; and remember this,  
A life of shame is shame for noble souls.

### CHORUS

Forethought for those that speak and those that hear,  
In such grave issues, is most serviceable.

### CHRYSOTHEMIS

Before she spake, were not her mind perverse,  
She had remembered caution, but she, friends,  
Remembers not. (*To ELECTRA.*) What glamour  
fooled thee thus

To take up arms thus boldly and enlist me ?  
Thou art a woman, see'st thou not ? no man,  
No match in battle for thine adversaries ;  
*Their* fortune rises with the flowing tide,  
Ours ebbs and leaves us soon a stranded hulk ;  
Who then could hope to grapple with a foe  
So mighty and escape without a fall ?  
Bethink thee, if thy speech were overheard,  
We are like to change our evil plight for worse.  
Small comfort or commodity to win  
Glory and die an ignominious death !  
Mere death were easy, but to crave for death  
And be denied that last boon—there's the sting.  
Nay, I entreat, before we wreck ourselves  
And perish root and branch, restrain thy rage.  
All thou hast said for me shall be unsaid,  
An empty breath. O learn at length, though late,  
To yield, nor match thy weakness with their strength.

### CHORUS

Hearken ! for mortal man there is no gift  
Greater than forethought and sobriety.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀπροσδόκητον οὐδὲν εἴρηκας· καλῶς δ'  
ἡδῆ σ' ἀπορρίψουσαν ἀπηγγελλόμην.  
ἀλλ' αὐτόχειρι μοι μόνῃ τε δραστέον  
τοῦργον τόδ'. οὐ γάρ δὴ κενόν γ' ἀφήσομεν. 1020

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

φεῦ·  
εἴθ' ὥφελες τοιάδε τὴν γνώμην πατρὸς  
θυήσκοντος εἶναι· πᾶν γάρ ἀν κατειργάσω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' ἡ φύσιν γε, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἥσσων τότε.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἄσκει τοιαύτη νοῦν δὶ' αἰώνος μένειν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ώς οὐχὶ συνδράσουσα νουθετεῖς τάδε.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

εἰκὸς γάρ ἐγχειροῦντα καὶ πράσσειν κακῶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ζηλῶ σε τοῦ νοῦ, τῆς δὲ δειλίας στυγῶ.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀνέξομαι κλύουσα χῶταν εὖ λέγης.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' οὐ ποτ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ γε μὴ πάθης τόδε.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

μακρὸς τὸ κρῖναι ταῦτα χὼ λοιπὸς χρόνος. 1030

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄπελθε· σοὶ γάρ ὥφέλησις οὐκ ἔνι.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἔνεστιν· ἀλλὰ σοὶ μάθησις οὐ πάρα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐλθοῦσα μητρὶ ταῦτα πάντ' ἔξειπε σῆ.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

'Tis as I thought : before thy answer came  
I knew full well thou wouldest refuse thine aid.  
Unaided then and by myself I'll do it,  
For done it must be, though I work alone.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Ah well-a-way !  
Would thou hadst been so minded on that day  
Our father died ! What couldst thou not have  
wrought !

ELECTRA

My temper was the same, my mind less ripe.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Study to keep the same mind all thy days.

ELECTRA

This counsel means refusal of thine aid.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Yes, for misfortune dogs such enterprise.

ELECTRA

I praise thy prudence, hate thy cowardice.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

E'en when thou shalt commend me, I will bear  
Thy commendation no less patiently.

ELECTRA

That trial thou wilt ne'er endure from me.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Who lives will see ; time yet may prove thee wrong

ELECTRA

Begone ! in thee there is no power to aid.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Not so ; in thee there is no will to learn.

ELECTRA

Go to thy mother ; tell it all to her.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

οὐδ' αὐ τοσοῦτον ἔχθος ἔχθαιρω σ' ἐγώ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' οὖν ἐπίστω γ' οἱ μ' ἀτιμίας ἄγεις.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀτιμίας μὲν οὕ, προμηθίας δὲ σοῦ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τῷ σῷ δικαίῳ δῆτ' ἐπισπέσθαι με δεῖ;

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ὅταν γὰρ εὑ φρονῆς, τόθ' ἡγήσει σὺ νῷν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ δεινὸν εὑ λέγουσαν ἔξαμαρτάνειν.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

εἴρηκας ὄρθως φ σὺ πρόσκεισαι κακῷ.

1040

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ'; οὐ δοκῶ σοι ταῦτα σὺν δίκῃ λέγειν;

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἔνθα χὴ δίκῃ βλάβην φέρει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τούτοις ἐγὼ ζῆν τοῖς νόμοις οὐ βούλομαι.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ ποήσεις ταῦτ', ἐπαινέσεις ἐμέ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ποήσω γ' οὐδὲν ἐκπλαγεῖσά σε.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καὶ τοῦτ' ἀληθές, οὐδὲ βουλεύσει πάλιν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

βουλῆς γὰρ οὐδέν ἔστιν ἔχθιον κακῆς.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

φρονεῖν ἔοικας οὐδὲν ὡν ἐγὼ λέγω.

## ELECTRA

CHRYSOTHEMIS

My hatred of thee does not reach so far.

ELECTRA

Thou wouldest dishonour me ; that much is sure.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Dishonour ? No, I seek to save thine honour.

ELECTRA

Am I to make thy rule of honour mine ?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

When thou art wise, then thou shalt guide us both.

ELECTRA

Sound words ; 'tis sad they are so misapplied.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Thou hittest well the blot that is thine own.

ELECTRA

How ? dost deny the plea I urge is just ?

CHRYSOTHEMIS

No ; but e'en justice sometimes worketh harm.

ELECTRA

I choose not to conform to such a rule.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Well, if thy purpose hold, thou'l own me right.

ELECTRA

It holds ; I shall not swerve in awe of thee.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Is this thy last word ? Wilt not be advised ?

ELECTRA

No, naught is loathlier than ill advice.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Thou seemest deaf to all that I can urge.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πάλαι δέδοκται ταῦτα κοὺ νεωστί μοι.

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀπειμι τοίνυν· οὔτε γὰρ σὺ τάμ' ἔπη  
τολμᾶς ἐπαινεῖν οὔτ' ἐγὼ τοὺς σοὺς τρόπους.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' εἴσιθ'. οὐ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαι ποτε,  
οὐδὲ ήν σφόδρ' ίμείρουσα τυγχάνης· ἐπεὶ  
πολλῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τὸ θηρᾶσθαι κενά.

### ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι  
φρονεῖν, φρόνει τοιαῦθ'. ὅταν γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς  
ἥδη βεβήκης, τάμ' ἐπαινέσεις ἔπη.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

τί τοὺς ἄνωθεν φρονιμωτάτους οἰωνοὺς ἐσορώμενοι 1060  
τροφᾶς

κηδομένους ἀφ' ὧν τε βλάστωσιν ἀφ' ὧν τ' ὄνασιν  
εῦρ-

ωσι, τάδ' οὐκ ἐπ' ἵσας τελοῦμεν;

ἀλλ' οὐ τὰν Διὸς ἀστραπὰν

καὶ τὰν οὐρανίαν Θέμιν,

δαρὸν οὐκ ἀπόνητοι.

ὦ χθονία βροτοῦσι φάμα, κατά μοι βόασον οἰκτρὰν  
ὅπα τοῖς ἔνερθ' Ἀτρείδαις, ἀχόρευτα φέρουσ'  
ὄνείδη.

ἀντ. α'

ὅτι σφὶν ἥδη τὰ μὲν ἐκ δόμων νοσεῖ δή,<sup>1</sup> τὰ δὲ 1070  
πρὸς τέκνων διπλῆ

φύλοπις οὐκέτ' ἔξισοῦται φιλοτασίῳ διαι-  
τᾳ· πρόδοτος δὲ μόνα σαλεύει

<sup>1</sup> Triclinius adds δῃ.



## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

’Ηλέκτρα, τὸν ἀεὶ<sup>1</sup> πατρὸς  
δειλαίᾳ στενάχουσ’, ὅπως  
ἀ πάνδυρτος ἀηδών,  
οὕτε τι τοῦ θανεῖν προμηθῆς τό τε μὴ βλέπειν  
έτοίμα,  
διδύμαν ἐλοῦσ’ Ἐρινύν· τίς ἀν εὔπατρις ὡδε 1080  
βλάστοι;

οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀγαθῶν γὰρ<sup>2</sup> στρ. β'  
ξῶν κακῶς εὔκλειαν αἰσχῦναι θέλει  
νώνυμος, ὃ παῖ παῖ.  
ώς καὶ σὺ πάγκλαυτον αἰώνα κοινὸν εἶλου,  
τὸ μὴ καλὸν καθοπλίσασα, δύο φέρειν ἐν ἐνὶ<sup>3</sup>  
λόγῳ,  
σοφά τ’ ἀρίστα τε παῖς κεκλήσθαι.  
ξώης μοι καθύπερθεν ἀντ. β'. 1090  
χειρὶ καὶ πλούτῳ τεῶν ἔχθρῶν ὅσον  
νῦν ὑπόχειρ<sup>3</sup> ναίεις.  
ἐπεὶ σ’ ἐφηύρηκα μοίρᾳ μὲν οὐκ ἐν ἐσθλῷ  
βεβῶσαν, ἀ δὲ μέγιστ’ ἔβλαστε νόμιμα, τῶνδε  
φερομέναν  
ἄριστα τὰ Ζηνὸς<sup>4</sup> εὐσεβείᾳ.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀρ’, ὃ γυναῖκες, ὁρθά τ’ εἰσηκούσαμεν  
ὁρθῶς θ’ ὁδοιποροῦμεν ἔνθα χρήζομεν;

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ’ ἔξερευνᾶς καὶ τί βουληθεὶς πάρει; 1100

<sup>1</sup> The text is corrupt, and no plausible emendation has yet been suggested.

<sup>2</sup> Hermann adds *γὰρ metri gratia*.

<sup>3</sup> ὑπὸ χείρα MSS., Musgrave corr.

<sup>4</sup> Διὸς MSS., Triclinius corr.

ELECT'RA

**Alone Electra bides,  
Alone she braves the surging swell.**

Disconsolate doth she her sire bewail,  
Like the forlornest nightingale ;  
Reckless of life, could she but quell  
The cursed pair, those Furies fell.  
Where shall ye find on earth  
A maid to match her worth ?

O may I see thée tower (Ant. 2)  
As high above thy foes in wealth and power  
As now they tower o'er thee ;  
For now thy state is piteous to see.  
Yet brightly dost thou shine,  
For fear of Zeus far-famed and love of laws divine.

*Enter ORESTES.*

ORESTES

Pray tell me, ladies, were we guided right,  
And are we close upon our journey's end?

## CHORUS

**What seek'st thou, stranger, and with what intent?**

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Αἴγισθον ἔνθ' φκηκεν ἵστορῶ πάλαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὐ θ' ἵκανεις χῶ φράσας ἀξήμιος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τίς οὖν ἀν ὑμῶν τοῖς ἔσω φράσειεν ἀν  
ἡμῶν ποθεινὴν κοινόπουν παρουσίαν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἢδ', εἰ τὸν ἄγχιστόν γε κηρύσσειν χρεών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἴθ', ω γύναι, δήλωσον εἰσελθοῦσ' ὅτι  
Φωκῆς ματεύουσ' ἄνδρες Αἴγισθόν τινες,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἵμοι τάλαιν', οὐ δή ποθ' ἡς ἡκούσαμεν  
φήμης φέροντες ἐμφανῆ τεκμήρια;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ οἶδα τὴν σὴν κληδόν· ἀλλά μοι γέρων  
ἐφεῖτ' Ὁρέστου Στρόφιος ἀγγεῖλαι πέρι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ' ἔστιν, ω̄ ξέν'; ω̄ς μ' ὑπέρχεται φόβος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φέροντες αὐτοῦ σμικρὰ λείψαν' ἐν βραχεῖ  
τεύχει θαυόντος, ω̄ς ὄρᾶς, κομίζομεν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἱ γῶ τάλαινα, τοῦτ' ἔκειν' ἢδη σαφὲς  
πρόχειρον ἄχθος, ω̄ς ἔοικε, δέρκομαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἴπερ τι κλαίεις τῶν Ὁρεστείων κακῶν,  
τόδ' ἄγγος ἵσθι σῶμα τούκείνου στέγον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ω̄ ξεῖνε, δός νυν, πρὸς θεῶν, εἴπερ τόδε  
κέκευθεν αὐτὸν τεύχος, εἰς χεῖρας λαβεῖν,

1110

1120

## ELECTRA

ORESTES

I seek and long have sought Aegisthus' home.

CHORUS

'Tis here ; thy guide is nowise blameable.

ORESTES

Would one of you announce to those within  
The auspicious advent of our company ?

CHORUS

This maiden, as the next of kin, will do it.

ORESTES

Go, madam, say that visitors have come  
And seek Aegisthus — certain Phocians.

ELECTRA

Ah woe is me ! You come not to confirm  
By ocular proof the rumours that we heard ?

ORESTES

I've heard no "rumours." Agèd Strophius  
Charged me with tidings of Orestes.

ELECTRA

Ha !

What tidings, stranger? how I quake with dread !

ORESTES

Ashes within this narrow urn we bear,  
All that remains of him, as thou mayst see.

ELECTRA

Ah me unhappy ! in my very sight  
Lies palpable the burden of my woes.

ORESTES

If for Orestes thou art weeping, know  
This brazen urn contains the dust of him.

ELECTRA

O if it hold his ashes, let me, friend,  
O let me, let me take it in my hands.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὅπως ἐμαυτὴν καὶ γένος τὸ πᾶν ὁμοῦ  
ἔνν τῇδε κλαύσω κάποδύρωμαι σποδῷ.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δόθ', ἦτις ἐστί, προσφέροντες· οὐ γὰρ ὡς  
ἐν δυσμενείᾳ γ' οὐσ' ἐπαιτεῖται τάδε,  
ἀλλ' ἡ φίλων τις ἡ πρὸς αἴματος φύσιν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φιλτάτου μνημεῖον ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ  
ψυχῆς Ὀρέστου λοιπόν, ὡς σ' ἀπ' ἐλπίδων  
οὐχ ὠνπερ ἐξέπεμπον εἰσεδεξάμην.  
νῦν μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ὄντα βαστάζω χεροῖν,  
δόμων δέ σ', ὡς παῖ, λαμπρὸν ἐξέπεμψ' ἐγώ.  
ὦς ὥφελον πάροιθεν ἐκλιπεῖν βίον,  
πρὶν ἐς ξένην σε γαῖαν ἐκπέμψαι χεροῖν  
κλέψασα ταῦνδε κάνασσασθαι φόνου,  
ὅπως θανὼν ἔκεισο τῇ τόθ' ἡμέρᾳ,  
τύμβου πατρώφου κοινὸν εἰληχῶς μέρος.  
νῦν δ' ἐκτὸς οἴκων κάπι γῆς ἄλλης φυγὰς  
κακῶς ἀπώλου, σῆς κασιγνήτης δίχα,  
κοῦτ' ἐν φίλαισι χερσὸν ἡ τάλαιν' ἐγώ  
λουτροῖς σ' ἐκόσμησ' οὔτε παμφλέκτου πυρὸς  
ἀνειλόμην, ὡς εἰκός, ἄθλιον βάρος,  
ἄλλ' ἐν ξέναισι χερσὶ κηδευθεὶς τάλας  
σμικρὸς προσήκεις ὅγκος ἐν σμικρῷ κύτει.  
οἵμοι τάλαια τῆς ἐμῆς πάλαι τροφῆς  
ἀνωφελήτου, τὴν ἐγώ θάμ' ἀμφὶ σοὶ  
πόνῳ γλυκεῖ παρέσχον· οὔτε γάρ ποτε  
μητρὸς σύ γ' ἡσθα μᾶλλον ἡ κάμοῦ φίλος,  
οὕθ' οἱ κατ' οἴκουν ἡσαν, ἄλλ' ἐγώ τροφός,  
ἐγώ δ' ἀδελφὴ σοὶ προσηνδώμην· ἀεί.  
νῦν δ' ἐκλέλοιπε ταῦτ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ

1130

1140

## ELECTRA

Not for this dust alone, but for myself  
And all my house withal, I'll weep and wail.

### ORESTES

Bring it and give it her, whoe'er she be ;  
For not as an ill-wisher, but as friend,  
Or haply near of kin, she asks the boon.

### ELECTRA

Last relics of the man I most did love,  
Orestes ! high in hope I sent thee forth ;  
How hast thou dashed all hope in thy return !  
Radiant as day thou speddest forth, and now  
I hold a dusty nothing in my hands.  
Would I had died before I rescued thee  
From death and sent thee to a foreign land !  
Then hadst thou fallen together with thy sire  
And lain beside him in the ancestral tomb :  
Now in a strange land, exiled, far from home,  
Far from thy sister thou hast died, ah me !  
How miserably ! I was not by to lave  
And deck with loving hands thy corse, and snatch  
Thy charrèd bones from out the flaming pyre.  
Alas ! by foreign hands these rites were paid,  
And now thou comest back to me, of dust  
A little burden in this little urn.  
O for the nursing and the toil, no toil,  
I spent on thee an infant, all in vain !  
For thou wast ne'er thy mother's babe, but mine ;  
Thou hadst no nurse in all the house but me,  
I was *thy sister*, none so called but me.  
But now all this hath vanished in a day,

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

θανόντι σὺν σοί· πάντα γὰρ συναρπάσας  
θύελλ’ ὅπως βέβηκας. οἴχεται πατήρ·  
τέθνηκ’ ἐγὼ σοί· φροῦδος αὐτὸς εἰ θανών·  
γελῶσι δὲ ἔχθροι· μαίνεται δὲ νόφ’ ἡδονῆς  
μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ, ἡς ἐμοὶ σὺ πολλάκις  
φήμας λάθρᾳ προύπεμπες ὡς φανούμενος  
τιμωρὸς αὐτός. ἀλλὰ ταῦθ’ ὁ δυστυχὴς  
δαιμῶν ὁ σός τε κάμος ἔξαφείλετο,  
ὅς σ’ ὥδε μοι προύπεμψεν ἀντὶ φιλτάτης  
μορφῆς σποδόν τε καὶ σκιὰν ἀνωφελῆ.  
οἴμοι μοι.

1150

ῳ δέμας οἰκτρόν. φεῦ φεῦ.  
ῳ δεινοτάτας, οἴμοι μοι,  
πεμφθεὶς κελεύθους, φίλταθ’, ὡς μὲν ἀπώλεσας·  
ἀπώλεσας δῆτ’, ὠς κασίγνητον κάρα.  
τοιγὰρ σὺ δέξαι μὲν ἐστι τὸ σὸν τόδε στέγος,  
τὴν μηδὲν εἰς τὸ μηδέν, ὡς σὺν σοὶ κάτω  
ναίω τὸ λοιπόν· καὶ γὰρ ἡνίκ’ ἡσθ’ ἄνω,  
ξὺν σοὶ μετεῖχον τῶν ἵσων, καὶ νῦν ποθῶ  
τοῦ σοῦ θανοῦσα μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι τάφου.  
τοὺς γὰρ θανόντας οὐχ ὄρῳ λυπουμένους.

1160

1170

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

θυητοῦ πέφυκάς πατρός, Ἡλέκτρα, φρόνει,  
θυητὸς δὲ Ὁρέστης. ὥστε μὴ λίαν στένε.  
πᾶσιν γὰρ ἡμῖν τοῦτ’ ὀφείλεται παθεῖν.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ φεῦ. τί λέξω; ποι λόγων ἀμηχανῶν  
ἔλθω; κρατεῖν γὰρ οὐκέτι γλώσσης σθένω.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δὲ ἔσχες ἄλγος; πρὸς τί τοῦτ’ εἰπὼν κυρεῖς;

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἢ σὸν τὸ κλεινὸν εἶδος; Ἡλέκτρας τόδε;

## ELECTRA

Dead with thy death, a whirlwind that passed by,  
And left all desolate ; thy father's gone,  
And I am dead in thee, and thou art lost ;  
And our foes laugh. That mother, mother none,  
Whose crimes, as oft thou gav'st me secret word,  
Thou wouldest thyself full speedily avenge,  
Is mad for joy. But now malignant fate,  
Thy fate and mine, hath blasted all and sent me,  
Instead of that dear form I loved so well,  
Cold ashes and an unavailing shade.

Ah me ! Ah me !

O piteous corse !

Ah woe is me !

O woeful coming ! I am all undone,  
Undone by thee, beloved brother mine !  
Take me, O take me to thy last lone home,  
A shadow to a shade, that I may dwell  
With thee for ever in the underworld ;  
For here on earth we shared alike, and now  
I fain would die to share with thee thy tomb ;  
For with the dead there is no mourning, none.

### CHORUS

Child of a mortal sire, Electra, think,  
Orestes too was mortal ; calm thy grief.  
Death is a debt that all of us must pay.

### ORESTES

Ah me ! what shall I say where all words fail ?  
And yet I can no longer curb my tongue.

### ELECTRA

What sudden trouble made thee speak like this ?

### ORESTES

Is this the famed Electra I behold ?

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τόδ' ἔστ' ἐκεῦνο, καὶ μάλ' ἀθλίως ἔχον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἵμοι ταλαιίνης ἄρα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐ δή ποτ', ω̄ ξέν', αμφ' ἐμοὶ στένεις τάδε; 1180

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ώ̄ σῶμ' ἀτίμως κἀθέως ἐφθαρμένουν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὔτοι ποτ' ἄλλην ἦ̄ μὲ δυσφημεῖς, ξένε.

ΟΤΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ τῆς ἀνύμφου δυσμόρου τε σῆς τροφῆς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δή ποτ', ω̄ ξέν', ώδ' ἐπισκοπῶν στένεις;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ώ̄ς οὐκ ἄρ' ἥδη τῶν ἐμῶν οὐδὲν κακῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐν τῷ διέγνως τοῦτο τῶν εἰρημένων;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὅρῶν σε πολλοῖς ἐμπρέπουσαν ἄλγεσιν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ὄρᾶς γε παῦρα τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ πῶς γένοιτ' ἀν τῶνδ' ἔτ' ἐχθίω βλέπειν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

όθούνεκ' εἰμὶ τοῖς φουεῦσι σύντροφος

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τοῖς τοῦ; πόθεν τοῦτ' ἐξεσήμηνας κακόν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τοῖς πατρός· εἴτα τοῦσδε δουλεύω βίᾳ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τίς γάρ σ' ἀνάγκη τῆδε προτρέπει βροτῶν;

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

'Tis she, and very wretched is her state.

ORESTES

O for the heavy change ! Alas, alas !

ELECTRA

Surely thy pity, sir, is not for *me*.

ORESTES

O beauty marred by foul and impious spite !

ELECTRA

Yea, sir, this wreck of womanhood am I.

ORESTES

Alas, how sad a life of singleness !

ELECTRA

Why gaze thus on me, stranger, and lament ?

ORESTES

Of my own ills how little then I knew !

ELECTRA

Was this revealed by any word of mine ?

ORESTES

By seeing thee conspicuous in thy woes.

ELECTRA

And yet my looks reveal but half my woes.

ORESTES

Could there be woes more piteous to behold ?

ELECTRA

Yea, to be housemate with the murderers—

ORESTES

Whose murderers ? at what villainy dost hint ?

ELECTRA

My father's ; and their slave am I perforce.

ORESTES

Who is it puts upon thee this constraint ?

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μήτηρ καλεῖται, μητρὶ δὲ οὐδὲν ἔξισοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δρῶσα; πότερα χερσὸν ἢ λύμη βίου;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ χερσὸν καὶ λύμαισι καὶ πᾶσιν κακοῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐδὲ οὐπαρήξων οὐδὲ ὁ κωλύσων πάρα;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐ δῆθ'. δις ἦν γάρ μοι σὺ προῦθηκας σποδόν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ δύσποτμ', ως ὄρων σ' ἐποικτίρω πάλαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μόνος βροτῶν νυν ἵσθ' ἐποικτίρας ποτέ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μόνος γὰρ ἥκω τοῖς ἵσοις ἀλγῶν κακοῖς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐ δή ποθ' ἡμὲν ξυγγενὴς ἥκεις ποθέν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐγὼ φράσαιμ' ἄν, εἰ τὸ τῶνδ' εὔνουν πάρα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' ἔστιν εὔνουν, ὥστε πρὸς πιστὰς ἐρεῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μέθεις τόδ' ἄγγος νῦν, ὅπως τὸ πᾶν μάθης.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μὴ δῆτα πρὸς θεῶν τοῦτό μ' ἐργάσῃ, ξένε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πείθου λέγοντι κούχῳ ἀμαρτήσει ποτέ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μή, πρὸς γενείου, μὴ ἔξελη τὰ φίλτατα.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

My mother, not a mother save in name.

ORESTES

By blows or petty tyrannies or how ?

ELECTRA

By blows and tyrannies of every kind.

ORESTES

And is there none to help or stay her hand ?

ELECTRA

None ; there *was* one, the man whose dust I hold.

ORESTES

Poor maid ! my pity's stirred at sight of thee.

ELECTRA

Thou art the first who ever pitied me.

ORESTES

I am the first to feel a common woe.

ELECTRA

What, canst thou be some kinsman from afar ?

ORESTES

If these are friends who hear us, I would answer.

ELECTRA

Yes, they are friends ; thou needst not fear to speak

ORESTES

Give back this urn, and then I'll tell thee all.

ELECTRA

Ask not so hard a thing, good sir, I pray.

ORESTES

Do as I bid thee ; thou shalt not repent it.

ELECTRA

O, I adjure thee, rob me not of that  
The most I prize on earth.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οῦ φημ' ἐάσειν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ῷ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ σέθεν,

Ὀρέστα, τῆς σῆς εἰ στερήσομαι ταφῆς.

1210

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὔφημα φώνει πρὸς δίκης γὰρ οὐ στένεις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς τὸν θανόντ' ἀδελφὸν οὐ δίκη στένω;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οῦ σοι προσήκει τήνδε προσφωνεῖν φάτιν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὗτως ἄτιμός είμι τοῦ τεθνηκότος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄτιμος οὐδενὸς σύ· τοῦτο δ' οὐχὶ σόν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εἴπερ γ' Ὀρέστου σῶμα βαστάζω τόδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐκ Ὀρέστου, πλὴν λόγῳ γ' ἡσκημένον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ποῦ δ' ἔστ' ἐκείνου τοῦ ταλαιπώρου τάφος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστι· τοῦ γὰρ ζῶντος οὐκ ἔστιν τάφος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς εἶπας, ὥ παῖ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ψεῦδος οὐδὲν ὡν λέγω.

1220

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ ζῆ γὰρ ἀνήρ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἴπερ ἔμψυχός γ' ἐγώ.

## ELECTRA

ORESTES

It may not be.

ELECTRA

Ah ! woe for thee, Orestes, woe is me,  
If I am not to give thee burial.

ORESTES

Guard well thy lips ; thou hast no right to mourn.

ELECTRA

No right to mourn a brother who is dead !

ORESTES

To speak of him in this wise is not meet.

ELECTRA

What, am I so dishonoured of the dead ?

ORESTES

Of none dishonoured : this is not thy part.

ELECTRA

Not if Orestes' ashes here I hold ?

ORESTES

They are not his, though feigned to pass for his.

ELECTRA

Where then is my unhappy brother's grave ?

ORESTES

There is no grave ; we bury not the quick.

ELECTRA

What sayst thou, boy ?

ORESTES

Nothing that is not true.

ELECTRA

He lives ?

ORESTES

As surely as I am alive.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ γὰρ σὺ κεῖνος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τήνδε προσβλέψασά μου  
σφραγῆδα πατρὸς ἔκμαθ' εἰ σαφῆ λέγω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατον φῶς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φίλτατον, συμμαρτυρῶ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φθέγμ', ἀφίκου;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μηκέτ' ἄλλοθεν πύθη,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔχω σε χερσίν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ώς τὰ λοίπ' ἔχοις ἀει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλταται γυναικεῖς, ὦ πολίτιδες,  
όρᾶτ' Ὁρέστην τόνδε, μηχανᾶσι μὲν  
θανόντα, νῦν δὲ μηχανᾶις σεσωσμένον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

όρῶμεν, ὦ παῖ, κἀπὶ συμφοραῖσί μοι  
γεγηθὸς ἔρπει δάκρυον ὁμμάτων ἄπο.

1230

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἴὼ γοναῖ,  
γοναὶ σωμάτων ἐμοὶ φιλτάτων,  
ἐμόλετ' ἀρτίως,  
ἐφηύρετ', ἥλθετ', εἴδεθ' οὖς ἐχρῆζετε.

στρ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πάρεσμεν ἀλλὰ σῆγ' ἔχουσα πρόσμενε.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

What, art thou he ?

ORESTES

Look at this signet ring,  
My father's ; let it witness if I lie.

ELECTRA

O happy day !

ORESTES

O, happy, happy day !

ELECTRA

Thy voice I greet !

ORESTES

My voice gives greeting back.

ELECTRA

My arms embrace thee !

ORESTES

May they clasp me aye !

ELECTRA

My countrywomen, dearest friends, behold  
Orestes who in feigning died, and so  
By feigning is alive again and safe.

CHORUS

We see him, daughter, and this glad surprise  
Makes our eyes overflow with happy tears.

ELECTRA

Son of my best loved sire,  
Now hast thou come, art here to find, to see  
Thy heart's desire.

(Str.)

ORESTES

E'en so ; but best keep silence for a while.

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## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ' ἔστιν;

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σιγᾶν ἄμεινον, μή τις ἔνδοθεν κλύη.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' οὐ μὰ τὴν ἀδμητὸν αἰὲν "Αρτεμιν,<sup>1</sup>  
τόδε μὲν οὖ ποτ' ἀξιώσω τρέσαι,  
περισσὸν ἄχθος ἔνδον  
γυναικῶν δὲν αἰεί.

1240

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὅρα γε μὲν δὴ κάν γυναιξὶν ώς "Αρης  
ἔνεστιν· εὐ δ' ἔξοισθα πειραθεῖσά που.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὅτοτοτοῖ τοτοῦ,  
ἀνέφελον ἐνέβαλες οὖ ποτε καταλύσιμον,  
οὐδέ ποτε λησόμενον ἀμέτερον  
οίον ἔφυ κακόν.

1250

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔξοιδα, παῖ, ταῦτ' ἀλλ' ὅταν παρουσία  
φράζῃ, τότ' ἔργων τῶνδε μεμνῆσθαι χρεών.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ό πᾶς ἐμοί,  
ό πᾶς δὲν πρέποι παρὼν ἐνυέπειν  
τάδε δίκα χρόνος·  
μόλις γὰρ ἔσχον νῦν ἐλεύθερον στόμα.

ἀντ.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ξύμφημι κάγω· τοιγαροῦν σφέζου τόδε.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δρῶσα;

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ μή στι καιρὸς μὴ μακρὰν βούλου λέγειν.

<sup>1</sup> ἀλλ' οὐ τὰν "Αρτεμιν τὰν αἰὲν ἀδμήταν MSS., Fröhlich corr.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

What need for silence ?

ORESTES

'Twere wise, lest someone from the house should hear.

ELECTRA

Nay, by Queen Artemis the virgin maid,  
Of women-folk I ne'er will be afraid,  
Those stay-at-homes, mere cumberers of the ground.

ORESTES

Yet note that in the breasts of women dwells  
The War-God too, as thou methinks hast found.

ELECTRA

Ah me, ah me !  
Thou wak'st a memory  
Inveterate, ineffaceable,  
An ache time cannot quell.

ORESTES

I know it too ; but when the hour shall strike  
Then it behoves us to recall those deeds.

ELECTRA

All time, each passing hour (Ant.)  
Henceforward I were fain  
To tell my griefs, my pain,  
For late and hardly have I won free speech.

ORESTES

'Tis so ; then forfeit not this liberty.

ELECTRA

How forfeit it ?

ORESTES

By speaking out of season overmuch.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίς οὖν ἀν ἀξίαν γε σοῦ πεφηνότος  
μεταβάλοιτ' ἀν ὡδε σιγὰν λόγων;  
ἐπεὶ σε νῦν ἀφράστως  
ἀέλπτως τ' ἐσεῖδον.

1260

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τότ' εἰδεις, εὐτε<sup>1</sup> θεοί μ' ἐπώτρυναν μολεῖν  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔφρασας ὑπερτέραν  
τᾶς πάρος ἔτι χάριτος, εἴ σε θεὸς ἐπόρισεν  
ἀμέτερα πρὸς μέλαθρα δαιμόνιον  
αὐτὸ τίθημ' ἐγώ.

1270

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὰ μέν σ' ὄκνῳ χαίρουσαν εἰργαθεῖν, τὰ δὲ  
δέδοικα λίαν ἥδονῇ νικωμένην.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰὼ χρόνῳ μακρῷ φιλτάταν ὄδὸν.  
ἐπαξιώσας ὡδέ μοι φανῆναι,  
μή τι με, πολύπονον ὡδὸν ἴδων

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί μὴ ποήσω;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μή μ' ἀποστερήσῃς  
τῶν σῶν προσώπων ἀδονὰν μεθέσθαι.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἢ κάρτα κᾶν ἄλλοισι θυμοίμην ἴδων.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ξυναινεῖς;

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί μὴν οὔ;

1280

<sup>1</sup> MSS. ὅτε, Jebb. corr. MSS. ὕτρυναν, Reiske corr.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

But who would barter speech for silence now,  
Who could be dumb,  
Now that beyond all thought and hope  
I've seen thee come?

ORESTES

That sight was then vouchsafed thee when the gods  
First monished me to turn my steps towards home.

ELECTRA

If a god guided thee  
To seek our halls, this boon  
Surpasses all before, I see  
The hand of heaven.

ORESTES

To check thy gladness I am loth, and yet  
This ecstasy of joy—it makes me fear.

ELECTRA

O after many a weary year  
Restored to glad my eyes,  
Seeing my utter misery, forbear—

ORESTES

What is thy prayer?

ELECTRA

Forbear to rob me of the light,  
The presence of thy face.

ORESTES

If any dared essay it, I were wrath.

ELECTRA

Dost thou consent?

ORESTES

How could I otherwise?

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ώ φίλαι, ἔκλυον ἀν ἐγὼ οὐδ' ἀν ἡλπισ' αὐδάν,  
οὐδ' ἀν ἔσχον ὄρμὰν<sup>1</sup>  
ἀναυδον οὐδὲ σὺν θοῷ κλύουσα,  
τάλαινα. νῦν δ' ἔχω σε προυφάνης δὲ  
φιλτάταν ἔχων πρόσοψιν,  
ἄς ἐγὼ οὐδ' ἀν ἐν κακοῖς λαθοίμαν.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὰ μὲν περισσεύοντα τῶν λόγων ἄφει,  
καὶ μήτε μήτηρ ὡς κακὴ δίδασκέ με,  
μήθ' ὡς πατρώαν κτῆσιν Αἴγισθος δόμων  
ἀντλεῖ, τὰ δ' ἔκχει, τὰ δὲ διασπείρει μάτην.  
χιόνου γὰρ ἄν σοι καιρὸν ἔξειργοι λόγος.  
ἄ δ' ἀρμόσει μοι τῷ παρόντι νῦν χρόνῳ  
σήμαιν, ὅπου φανέντες ἡ κεκρυμμένοι  
γελῶντας ἔχθροὺς παύσομεν τῇ νῦν ὁδῷ.  
οὗτο δ' ὅπως μήτηρ σε μὴ πιγνώσεται  
φαιδρῷ προσώπῳ νῦν ἐπελθόντοιν δόμους.  
ἄλλ' ὡς ἐπ' ἄτῃ τῇ μάτην λελεγμένῃ  
στέναξ; δταν γὰρ εὐτυχήσωμεν, τότε  
χαίρειν παρέσται καὶ γελᾶν ἐλευθέρως.

1290

1300

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄλλ' ὡς κασίγνηθ', ὡδ' ὅπως καὶ σοὶ φίλον  
καὶ τούμὸν ἔσται τῇδ'. ἐπεὶ τὰς ἥδονὰς  
πρὸς σοῦ λαβοῦσα κούκ ἐμὰς ἐκτησάμην,  
κούδ' ἄν σε λυπήσασα δεξαίμην βραχὺ<sup>ν</sup>  
αὐτὴ μέγ' εὐρεῖν κέρδος· οὐ γὰρ ἀν καλῶς  
ὑπηρετοίην τῷ παρόντι δαίμονι.  
ἄλλ' οἰσθα μὲν τάνθένδε, πῶς γὰρ οὐ; κλύων  
όθοιύνεκ' Αἴγισθος μὲν οὐ κατὰ στέγας,  
μήτηρ δ' ἐν οἴκοις· ἦν σὺ μὴ δείσης ποθ' ὡς

<sup>1</sup> Arndt adds οὐδ' ἀν. Blomfield reads ὄρμὰν for ὄργαν of MSS.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA (*to CHORUS*)

Friends, a voice is in my ear,  
That I never hoped to hear.  
At the glad sound how could I  
Be mute nor raise a joyous cry ?  
But I have thee, and the light  
Of thy countenance so bright  
Not e'en sorrow can eclipse,  
Or still the music of those lips.

ORESTES

Spare me all superfluity of words—  
How vile our mother, how Aegisthus drains  
By waste and luxury our father's house ;  
The time admits not such prolixity.  
But tell me rather what will best subserve  
Our present need—where we must show ourselves,  
Or lie in wait, and either way confound  
The mockery and triumph of our foes.  
And see that when we twain are gone within  
Our mother read not in thy radiant looks  
Our secret; weep as overwhelmed with grief  
At our feigned story; when the victory's won  
We shall have time and liberty to laugh.

ELECTRA

Yea, as it pleaseth thee it pleases me,  
Brother, for all my pleasure is thy gift,  
Not mine; nor would I purchase for myself  
The greatest boon that cost thee the least pang :  
So should I cross the providence that guides us.  
How it stands with us, doubtless thou hast heard.  
Aegisthus, as thou knowest, is away;  
Only our mother keeps the house, and fear not

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

γέλωτι τούμὸν φαιδρὸν ὄψεται κάρα.  
μῆσός τε γὰρ παλαιὸν ἐντέτηκε μοι,  
κάπει σ' ἐσεῦδον, οὐ ποτ' ἐκλήξω χαρᾶ  
δακρυρροοῦσα· πῶς γὰρ ἀν λήξαιμ' ἔγώ,  
ἥτις μιὰ σε τῇδ' ὁδῷ θανόντα τε  
καὶ ζῶντ' ἐσεῦδον; εὕργασαι δέ μ' ἀσκοπα·  
ῶστ' εἰ πατήρ μοι ζῶν ἵκοιτο, μηκέτ' ἀν  
τέρας νομίζειν αὐτό, πιστεύειν δ' ὄρâν.  
ὅτ' οὖν τοιαύτην ἡμὸν ἔξήκεις ὁδόν,  
ἄρχ' αὐτὸς ὡς σοι θυμός· ὡς ἔγὼ μόνη  
οὐκ ἀν δυοῖν ἥμαρτον· ἡ γὰρ ἀν καλῶς  
ἔσωστ' ἐμαυτὴν ἡ καλῶς ἀπωλόμην.

1310

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ  
σιγᾶν ἐπήνεστ' ὡς ἐπ' ἔξόδῳ κλύω  
τῶν ἔνδοθεν χωροῦντος.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εἴσιτ', ω ξένοι,  
ἄλλως τε καὶ φέροντες οἵ τε τις  
δόμων ἀπώσαιτ' οὔτ' ἀν ἡσθείη λαβῶν.

## ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ω πλεῖστα μῶροι καὶ φρενῶν τητώμενοι,  
πότερα παρ' οὐδὲν τοῦ βίου κήδεσθ' ἔτι  
ἢ νοῦς ἔνεστιν οὕτις ὑμὸν ἐγγενῆς,  
ὅτ' οὐ παρ' αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ' ἐν αὐτοῖσιν κακοῖς  
τοῖσιν μεγίστοις ὅντες οὐ γυγνώσκετε;  
ἀλλ' εἰ σταθμοῖσι τοῖσδε μὴ κύρουν ἔγώ  
πάλαι φυλάσσων, ἦν ἀν ὑμὸν ἐν δόμοις  
τὰ δρώμεν' ὑμῶν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ σώματα·  
νῦν δ' εὐλάβειαν τῶνδε προυθέμην ἔγώ.  
καὶ νῦν ἀπαλλαχθέντε τῶν μακρῶν λόγων  
καὶ τῆς ἀπλήστου τῆσδε σὺν χαρᾷ βοῆς

1320

## ELECTRA

That she will see my face lit up with smiles ;  
My hatred of her is too deep engrained.  
Moreover, since thy coming I have wept,  
Wept for pure joy and still must weep to see  
The dead alive, on one day dead and living.  
It works me strangely ; if my sire appeared  
In bodily presence, I should now believe it  
No mocking phantom but his living self.  
Thus far no common fate hath guided thee ;  
So lead me as thou wilt, for left alone  
I had myself achieved of two things one,  
A noble living or a noble death.

### ORESTES

Hush, hush ! I hear a stir within the house  
As if one issued forth.

ELECTRA (*to ORESTES and PYLADES*)

Pass in, good sirs,

Ye are sure of welcome ; they within will not  
Reject your gift, though bitter it may prove.

*Enter AGED SERVANT.*

### AGED SERVANT

Fools ! madmen ! are ye weary of your lives,  
Or are your natural wits too dull to see  
That ye are standing, not upon the brink,  
But in the midst of mortal jeopardy ?  
Nay, had I not kept watch this weary while,  
Here at the door, your plot had slipped inside  
Ere ye yourselves had entered. As it is,  
My watchfulness has fended this mishap.  
Now that your wordy eloquence has an end,  
And your insatiate cries of joy, go in.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εῖσω παρέλθεθ', ώς τὸ μὲν μέλλειν κακὸν  
ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἔστ', ἀπηλλάχθαι δ' ἀκμή.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἔχει τάντεῦθεν εἰσιόντι μοι;

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καλῶς· ὑπάρχει γάρ σε μὴ γνῶναι τινα.

1340

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἥγγειλας, ώς ἔοικεν, ώς τεθνηκότα.

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

εὶς τῶν ἐν "Αἰδου μάνθαν' ἐνθάδ' ὧν ἀνήρ.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

χαίρουσιν οὖν τούτοισιν; ἢ τίνες λόγοι;

### ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τελουμένων εἴποιμ' ἄν· ώς δὲ νῦν ἔχει,  
καλῶς τὰ κείνων πάντα, καὶ τὰ μὴ καλῶς.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίς οὐτός ἔστ', ἀδελφέ; πρὸς θεῶν φράσον.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐχὶ ξυνίης;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐδέ γ' ἐσ θυμὸν φέρω.

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ οἰσθ' ὅτῳ μ' ἔδωκας εἰς χέρας ποτέ;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ποίῳ; τί φωνεῖς;

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ τὸ Φωκέων πέδον  
ὑπεξεπέμφθην σῇ προμηθίᾳ χεροῖν.

1350

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ κεῖνος οὗτος, ὃν ποτ' ἐκ πολλῶν ἐγὼ  
μόνον προσηγόρου πιστὸν ἐν πατρὸς φόνῳ;

## ELECTRA

'Tis ill delaying in such case, and well  
To make an end.

ORESTES  
How shall I fare within ?

AGED SERVANT  
Right well ; to start with, thou art known to none.

ORESTES  
Thou hast reported, I presume, my death.

AGED SERVANT  
They'll speak of thee as though thou wert a shade

ORESTES  
And are they glad thereat, or what say they ?

AGED SERVANT  
I'll tell thee when the time is ripe : meanwhile  
Whate'er they do, however ill, is well.

ELECTRA  
I pray thee, brother, tell me who is this ?

ORESTES  
Dost thou not see ?

ELECTRA  
I know not, nor can guess.

ORESTES  
Not know the man to whom thou gav'st me once ?

ELECTRA  
What man ? how mean'st thou ?

ORESTES  
He that stole me hence,  
Through thy forethought, and safe to Phocis bore.

ELECTRA  
Can this be he who, when our sire was slain,  
Faithful among the many false I found ?

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὅδ' ἔστι· μή μ' ἔλεγχε πλείοσιν λόγοις.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ώ φίλτατον φῶς, ω̄ μόνος. σωτὴρ δόμων  
'Αγαμέμνονος, πῶς ἥλθες; ή σὺ κεῦνος εἰ,  
δις τόνδε κάμ' ἔσωσας ἐκ πολλῶν πόνων;  
ώ φίλταται μὲν χεῖρες, ἥδιστον δ' ἔχων  
ποδῶν ὑπηρέτημα, πῶς οὕτω πάλαι  
ξυνών μ' ἔληθες οὐδ' ἔφαινες, ἀλλά με  
λόγοις ἀπώλλυς, ἔργη ἔχων ἥδιστ' ἔμοι;  
χαῖρ', ω̄ πάτερ· πατέρα γὰρ εἰσορᾶν δοκῶ.  
χαῖρ'. ἵσθι δ' ώς μάλιστά σ' ἀνθρώπων ἐγὼ  
ἥχθηρα κάφιλησ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ.

## ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἀρκεῖν δοκεῖ μοι· τοὺς γὰρ ἐν μέσῳ λόγους  
πολλαὶ κυκλοῦνται νύκτες ἡμέραι τ' ἵσαι,  
αὶ ταῦτά σοι δείξουσιν, Ἡλέκτρα, σαφῆ.  
σφῶν δ' ἐννέπω γε τοῖν παρεστώτοιν ὅτι  
νῦν καιρὸς ἔρδειν· νῦν Κλυταιμνήστρα μόνη,  
νῦν οὗτις ἀνδρῶν ἔνδον· εἰ δ' ἐφέξετον,  
φροντίζεθ' ώς τούτοις τε καὶ σοφωτέροις  
ἄλλοισι τούτων πλείοσιν μαχούμενοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἀν μακρῶν ἔθ' ἡμὶν οὐδὲν ἀν λόγων,  
Πυλάδη, τόδ' εἴη τοῦργον, ἀλλ' ὅσον τάχος  
χωρεῖν ἔσω, πατρῶα προσκύσανθ' ἔδη  
θεῶν, ὅσοιπερ πρόπυλα ναίουσιν τάδε.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄναξ "Απολλον, ἶλεως αὐτοῖν κλύε

## ELECTRA

ORESTES

'Tis he ; let that suffice thee ; ask no more.

ELECTRA

O happy day ! O sole deliverer  
Of Agamemnon's house, how cam'st thou hither ?  
Art thou indeed our saviour who redeeined  
From endless woes my brother and myself ?  
O hands beloved, O messenger whose feet  
Were bringers of glad tidings, how so long  
Couldst thou be with me and remain unknown,  
Stay me with feignèd fables and conceal  
The truth that gave me life ? Hail, father, hail !  
For 'tis a father whom I seem to see.  
Verily no man in the self-same day  
Was hated so and so much loved as thou.

AGED SERVANT

Enough methinks ; the tale 'twixt then and now—  
Many revolving nights and days as many  
Shall serve, Electra, to unfold it all.

(To ORESTES and PYLADES)

Why stand ye here ! 'tis time for you to act,  
Now Clytemnestra is alone ; no man  
Is now within ; but, if ye stay your hand,  
Not only with her house-carls will ye fight  
But with a troop more numerous and more skilled.

ORESTES

Our business, Pylades, would seem to crave  
No longer parley ; let us instantly  
Enter, but ere we enter first adore  
The gods who keep the threshold of the house.

[ORESTES and PYLADES enter the palace.

ELECTRA

O King Apollo ! lend a gracious ear

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐμοῦ τε πρὸς τούτοισιν, ἢ σε πολλὰ δὴ  
ἀφ' ὧν ἔχοιμι λιπαρεῖ προύστην χερί.  
νῦν δ', ὡς Λύκει<sup>1</sup> "Απολλον, ἐξ οἴων ἔχω  
αἰτῶ, προπίτνω, λίσσομαι, γενοῦ πρόφρων  
ἡμῖν ἀρωγὸς τῶνδε τῶν βουλευμάτων,  
καὶ δεῖξον ἀνθρώποισι τάπιτίμια  
τῆς δυσσεβείας οἷα δωροῦνται θεοί.

1380

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴδεθ' ὅποι προνέμεται στρ.  
τὸ δυσέριστον αἷμα φυσῶν<sup>2</sup> Αρης.  
βεβᾶσιν ἄρτι δωμάτων ὑπόστεγοι  
μετάδρομοι κακῶν πανουργημάτων ἄφυκτοι κύνες,  
ῶστ' οὐ μακρὰν ἔτ' ἀμμενεῖ  
τούμδον φρενῶν δύνειρον αἰώρούμενον.

1390

παράγεται γάρ ἐνέρων  
ἀντ. δολιόπους ἀρωγὸς εἴσω στέγας,  
ἀρχαιόπλουτα πατρὸς εἰς ἐδώλια,  
νεακόνητον αἷμα χειροῖν ἔχων· ὁ Μαίας δὲ παῖς  
Ἐρμῆς σφ' ἄγει δόλον σκότῳ  
κρύψας πρὸς αὐτὸν τέρμα κούκέτ' ἀμμένει.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ἄνδρες αὐτίκα  
στρ. τελοῦσι τούργον· ἀλλὰ σῆγα πρόσμενε.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς δή; τί νῦν πράσσουσιν;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ μὲν ἐς τάφον  
λέβητα κοσμεῖ, τὰ δὲ ἐφέστατον πέλας.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ δὲ ἐκτὸς ηξας πρὸς τί;

238

1400

ELECTRA

To them and me, to me too who so oft  
Laid on thy shrine with humble hands my best.  
And now with vows (I cannot offer more),  
Apollo, Lord Lycean, I beseech,  
Implore, adjure thee, prosper this our work,  
Defend the right and show to godless men  
How the gods vindicate impiety.

## CHORUS

Breathing out blood and vengeance, lo ! (Str.)  
Stalks Ares, sure though slow.  
E'en now the hounds are on the trail ;  
Within, the sinners at their coming quail.  
A little while and death shall realise  
The vision that now floats before mine eyes.

For now within the house is led (Ant.)  
By stealth the champion of the dead ;  
He treads once more the ancestral hall of kings,  
And death new-whetted in his hands he brings.  
Great Maia's son conducts him on his way  
And shrouds his guile and brooks not more delay.

ELECTRA

O dearest women, even as I speak (Str.)  
The men are at their work ; but not a word,

## **CHORUS**

## **What work? what are they at?**

**ELECTRA**

E'en now she decks  
The urn for burial and the pair stand by.

## **CHORUS**

Why spedst thou forth ?

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φρουρήσουσ' ὅπως  
Αἴγισθος ἡμᾶς μὴ λάθη μολῶν ἔσω.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

αἰαῖ. ἵω στέγαι  
φίλων ἔρημοι, τῶν δ' ἀπολλύντων πλέαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

βοᾷ τις ἔνδον· οὐκ ἀκούετ', ὡ φίλαι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡκουσ' ἀνήκουστα δύστανος, ὥστε φρίξαι.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

οἵμοι τάλαιν· Αἴγισθε, ποῦ ποτ' ὧν κυρεῖς;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰδοὺ μάλ' αὖ θροεῖ τις.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ώ τέκνου τέκνου,  
οἴκτιρε τὴν τεκοῦσαν.

1410

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκ σέθεν  
φίκτιρεθ' οὗτος οὐδ' ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώ πόλις, ω γενεὰ τάλαινα, νῦν σοι<sup>1</sup>  
μοῖρα καθαμερία φθίνει φθίνει.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ῶμοι πέπληγμαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

παῖσον, εὶ σθένεις, διπλῆν.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ῶμοι μάλ' αὐθις.

<sup>1</sup> νῦν σε MSS., corr. R. Whitelaw

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

To keep a watch for fear  
Aegisthus should forestall us unawares.

CLYTEMNESTRA (*within*)

Woe ! woe ! O woeful house,  
Of friends forsaken, full of murderers !

ELECTRA

Listen ! a cry within—hear ye not, friends ?

CHORUS

I heard and shuddered—oh, an awesome cry.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Ah woe is me ! Aegisthus, where art thou ?

ELECTRA

Hark ; once again a wail.

CLYTEMNESTRA

O son, my son,  
Have pity on thy mother !

ELECTRA

Thou hadst none  
On him or on the father that begat him.

CHORUS

Unhappy realm and house,  
The curse that dogged thee day by day  
Is dying, dying fast.

CLYTEMNESTRA

I am stricken, ah !

ELECTRA

Strike, if thou canst, again.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Woe, woe is me once more !

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ  
εὶ γὰρ Αἰγίσθῳ θ' ὄμοῦ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τελοῦσ' ἀραί· ζῶσιν οἱ γᾶς ὑπαὶ κείμενοι.  
παλίρρυτον γὰρ αἷμ' ὑπεξαιροῦσι τῶν  
κτανόντων οἱ πάλαι θανόντες.

1420

καὶ μὴν πάρεισιν οἵδε· φουνία δὲ χεὶρ  
στάζει θυηλῆς "Αρεος, οὐδ' ἔχω ψέγειν.

ἀντ.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

'Ορέστα, πῶς κυρεῖτε;

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὰν δόμοιστι μὲν  
καλῶς, Ἀπόλλων εἰς καλῶς ἐθέσπισεν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τέθυηκεν ή τάλαινα;

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μηκέτ' ἐκφοβοῦ  
μητρώου ὡς σε λῆμ' ἀτιμάσει ποτέ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

παύσασθε· λεύσσω γὰρ Αἴγισθον ἐκ προδήλου.

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ .

ω παιδες, οὐκ ἄψορρον;

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰσοράτε ποῦ

1430

τὸν ἄνδρ';

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐφ' ἡμῖν οὗτος ἐκ προαστίου  
χωρεῖ γεγηθὼς \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

βάτε κατ' ἀντιθύρων ὅσον τάχιστα,  
νῦν, τὰ πρὸν εὖ θέμενοι, τάδ' ὡς πάλιν.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

I would that woe

Were for Aegisthus not for thee alone.

CHORUS

The curses work ; the buried live again,  
And blood for blood, the slayer's blood they drain,  
The ghosts of victims long since slain.

*Enter ORESTES and PYLADES from the palace.*

Lo they come forth with gory hands that reek (*Ant.*)  
Of sacrifice to Ares—'twas done well.

ELECTRA

How have ye sped, Orestes ?

ORESTES.

All within  
Is well, if Phoebus' oracle spake well.

ELECTRA

The wretched woman's dead ?

ORESTES

No longer fear

Thy mother's arrogance will flout thee more.

CHORUS

Cease, for I see Aegisthus full in sight.

ELECTRA

Back, youths, back to the house !

ORESTES

Where see ye him ?

ELECTRA

Approaching from the suburb with an air  
Of exultation. He is ours !

CHORUS

Quick to the palace doorway ! half your work  
Is well done ; do no less well what remains.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θάρσει τελοῦμεν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἢ νοεῖς ἔπειγέ νυν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ δὴ βέβηκα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τάνθάδ' ἀν μέλοιτ' ἐμοί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δι' ὡτὸς ἀν παῦρά γ' ὡς ἡπίως ἐννέπειν  
πρὸς ἄνδρα τόνδε συμφέροι, λαθραῖον ὡς  
ὅρούσῃ πρὸς δίκας ἀγῶνα.

1440

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

τίς οἰδεν ὑμῶν ποῦ ποθ' οἱ Φωκῆς ξένοι,  
οὓς φασ'. Ορέστην ἡμὶν ἀγγεῖλαι βίον  
λελοιπόθ' ἵππικοῖσιν ἐν ναυαγίοις;  
σέ τοι, σὲ κρίνω, ναὶ σέ, τὴν ἐν τῷ πάρος  
χρόνῳ θρασεῖαν· ὡς μάλιστα σοὶ μέλειν  
οἴμαι, μάλιστα δ' ἀν κατειδοῖαν φράσαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔξοιδα· πῶς γὰρ οὐχί; συμφορᾶς γὰρ ἀν  
ἔξωθεν εἴην τῶν ἐμῶν τῆς φιλτάτης.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτ' ἀν εἴεν οἱ ξένοι; δίδασκέ με.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔνδον· φίλης γὰρ προξένου κατήνυσαν.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἢ καὶ θανόντ' ἥγγειλαν ὡς ἐτητύμως;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὔκ, ἀλλὰ κάπέδειξαν, οὐ λόγῳ μόνον.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

πάρεστ' ἄρ' ἡμῖν ὕστε κάμφανῇ μαθεῖν;

1450

## ELECTRA

ORESTES

Fear not, we shall.

ELECTRA

Then speed thee on thy way.

ORESTES

See, I am gone.

ELECTRA

Leave what is here to me.

[*Exeunt ORESTES and PYLADES ; AEGISTHUS approaches.*

CHORUS

"Twere not amiss to breathe some soft words in his ear,  
That he may blindly rush into the lists of doom.

AEGISTHUS

Could any of you tell me where to find  
The Phocian strangers who, I hear, have brought  
News of Orestes midst the chariots wrecked ?  
Thee, thee I question, thee, in former days  
So foward : it concerns thee most, methinks,  
And thou, as best informed, canst tell me best.

ELECTRA

I know for sure, else were I unconcerned  
In what has happened to my nearest kin.

AEGISTHUS

Where then are these newcomers ? Tell me straight.

ELECTRA

Within ; they've won their kindly hostess' heart.

AEGISTHUS

Did they in very truth report his death ?

ELECTRA

They did ; and more, they showed us the dead man.

AEGISTHUS

May I too view the body to make sure ?

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πάρεστι δῆτα, καὶ μάλ’ ἄξηλος θέα.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἢ πολλὰ χαίρειν μ' εἴπας οὐκ εἰωθότως.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

χαίροις ἄν, εἴ σοι χαρτὰ τυγχάνοι τάδε.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

σιγᾶν ἄνωγα κάναδεικνύναι πύλας  
πᾶσιν Μυκηναίοισιν Ἀργείοις θ' ὄρāν,  
ώς εἴ τις αὐτῶν ἐλπίσιν κεναῖς πάρος  
ἔξήρετ' ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε, νῦν ὄρῶν νεκρὸν  
στομια δέχηται τάμα μηδὲ πρὸς βίαν  
ἐμοῦ κολαστοῦ προστυχῶν φύση φρένας.

1460

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ δὴ τελεῖται τάπ' ἐμοῦ· τῷ γὰρ χρόνῳ  
νοῦν ἔσχον, ὥστε συμφέρειν τοῖς κρείσσοσιν.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, δέδορκα φάσμ' ἄνευ φθόνου μὲν οὐ  
πεπτωκός· εἰ δ' ἔπεστι νέμεσις, οὐ λέγω.  
χαλάτε πᾶν κάλυμμ' ἀπ' ὁφθαλμῶν, ὅπως  
τὸ συγγενές τοι κάπ' ἐμοῦ θρήνων τύχῃ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αὐτὸς σὺ βάσταξ· οὐκ ἐμὸν τόδ', ἀλλὰ σόν,  
τὸ ταῦθ' ὄρāν τε καὶ προσηγορεῖν φίλως.

1470

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὖ παραινεῖς κάπιπείσομαι· σὺ δέ,  
εἴ που κατ' οἰκόν μοι Κλυταιμνήστρα, κάλει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αὕτη πέλας σοῦ· μηκέτ' ἄλλοσε σκόπει.

## ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Thou mayst, but 'tis a gruesome spectacle.

AEGISTHUS

Thou givest me much joy against thy wont.

ELECTRA

I wish thee joy, if here is food for joy.

AEGISTHUS

Silence ! attend ! throw open wide the gate,  
For all Mycenae, Argos all, to see.

If any heretofore was puffed with hopes  
Of this pretender, now he sees him dead,  
Let him in time accept my yoke, nor wait  
Wisdom by chastisement to learn too late.

ELECTRA

My lesson's learnt already ; time hath taught me  
The wisdom of consenting with the strong.

(*The scene opens showing a shrouded corpse with ORESTES  
and PYLADES beside it.*)

AEGISTHUS

O Zeus, I look upon this form laid low  
By jealousy of Heaven, but if my words  
Seem to thee overbold, be they unsaid.  
Take from the face the face-cloth ; I, as kin,  
I too would pay my tribute of lament.

ORESTES

Lift it thyself ; 'tis not for me but thee  
To see and kindly greet what lieth here.

AEGISTHUS

Well said, so will I. (*To ELECTRA.*) If she be within  
Go call me Clytemnestra, I would see her—.

ORESTES

She is beside thee ; look not otherwhere.

(AEGISTHUS lifts the face-cloth.)

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

οῖμοι, τί λεύσσω;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τίνα φοβεῖ; τίν' ἀγνοεῖς;

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

τίνων ποτ' ἀνδρῶν ἐν μέσοις ἀρκυστάτοις  
πέπτωχ' ὁ τλήμων;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ γὰρ αἰσθάνει πάλαι  
ζῶντας<sup>1</sup> θανοῦσιν οὕνεκ' ἀνταυδᾶς ἵσα;

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

οῖμοι, ξυνῆκα τοῦπος· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως  
οὅδ' οὐκ Ὁρέστης ἔσθ' ὁ προσφωνῶν ἐμέ.

1480

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ μάντις ὧν ἄριστος ἐσφάλλου πάλαι.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ὅλωλα δὴ δείλαιος. ἀλλά μοι πάρες  
κἄν σμικρὸν εἴπειν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μὴ πέρα λέγειν ἔα  
πρὸς θεῶν, ἀδελφέ, μηδὲ μηκύνειν λόγους.  
τί γὰρ βροτῶν ἀν σὺν κακοῖς μεμιγμένων  
θυήσκειν ὁ μέλλων οὐ χρόνου κέρδος φέροι;  
ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστα κτεῦνε καὶ κτανὼν πρόθες  
ταφεῦσιν, ὧν τόνδ' εἰκός ἔστι τυγχάνειν,  
ἄποπτον ἡμῶν· ὡς ἐμοὶ τόδ' ἀν κακῶν  
μόνον γένοιτο τῶν πάλαι λυτήριον.

1490

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

χωρόοις ἀν εἴσω σὺν τάχει· λόγων γὰρ οὐ  
νῦν ἔστιν ἀγών, ἀλλὰ σῆς ψυχῆς πέρι.

<sup>1</sup> ζῶν τοῖς MSS., Tyrwhitt corr.

## ELECTRA

AEGISTHUS

O horror!.

ORESTES

Why dost start? is the face strange?

AEGISTHUS

Who spread the net wherein, O woe is me,  
I lie enmeshed?

ORESTES

Hast thou not learnt ere this  
The dead of whom thou spakest are alive?

AEGISTHUS

Alas! I read thy riddle; 'tis none else  
Than thou, Orestes, whom I now address.

ORESTES

A seer so wise, and yet befooled so long!

AEGISTHUS

O I am spoiled, undone! yet suffer me,  
One little word.

ELECTRA

Brother, in heaven's name

Let him not speak a word or plead his cause.  
When a poor wretch is in the toils of fate  
What can a brief reprieve avail him? No,  
Slay him outright and having slain him give  
His corse to such grave-makers as is meet,  
Far from our sight; for me no otherwise  
Can he wipe out the memory of past wrongs.

ORESTES (*to AEGISTHUS*)

Quick, get thee in; the issue lies not now  
In words; the case is tried and thou must die,

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

τί δ' ἐσ δομους ἄγεις με; πῶς, τόδ' εἰ καλὸν  
τοῦργον, σκότου δεῖ κού πρόχειρος εἴ κτανεῖν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μὴ τάσσε· χώρει δ' ἔνθαπερ κατέκτανες  
πατέρα τὸν ἀμόν, ὡς ἀν ἐν ταύτῳ θάνης,

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἢ πᾶσ' ἀνάγκη τήνδε τὴν στέγην ἵδεῖν  
τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα Πελοπιδῶν κακό;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὰ γοῦν σ'. ἐγώ σοι μάντις εἰμὶ τῶνδ' ἄκρος.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ πατρῷαν τὴν τέχνην ἐκόμπασας.

1500

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πόλλα' ἀντιφωνεῖς, ἢ δ' ὁδὸς βραδύνεται.  
ἀλλ' ἔρφ'.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ὑφηγοῦ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σοὶ βαδιστέον πάρος.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἢ μὴ φύγω σε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μὴ μὲν οὖν καθ' ἡδονὴν  
θάνης· φυλάξαι δεῖ με τοῦτο σοι πικρόν.  
χρῆν δ' εὐθὺς εἶναι τήνδε τοῖς πᾶσιν δίκην,  
ὅστις πέρα πράσσειν τι τῶν νόμων θέλει,  
κτείνειν· τὸ γὰρ πανούργον οὐκ ἀν ἥν πολύ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ῳ σπέρμ' Ἀτρέως, ὡς πολλὰ παθὸν  
δι' ἐλευθερίας μόλις ἐξῆλθες  
τῇ νῦν ὄρμῇ τελεωθέν.

1510

## ELECTRA

AEGISTHUS

Why hale me indoors ? if my doom be just,  
What need of darkness ? Why not slay me here ?

ORESTES

'Tis not for thee to order ; go within ;  
Where thou didst slay my father thou must die.

AEGISTHUS

Ah ! is there need this palace should behold  
All woes of Pelops' line, now and to come ?

ORESTES

Thine own they shall ; thus much I can predict.

AEGISTHUS

Thy skill as seer derives not from thy sire.

ORESTES

Thou bandiest words ; our going is delayed.  
Go.

AEGISTHUS

Lead the way.

ORESTES

No, thou must go the first.

AEGISTHUS

Lest I escape ?

ORESTES

Nay, not to let thee choose  
The manner of thy death ; thou must be spared  
No bitterness of death, and well it were  
If on transgressors swift this sentence fall,  
*Slay him* ; so wickedness should less abound.

CHORUS

House of Atreus ! thou hast passed  
Through the fire and won at last  
Freedom, perfected to-day  
By this glorious essay.



# TRACHINIAE

## ARGUMENT

*DEIANIRA, alarmed at the long absence of her husband, resolves to send their son Hyllus in quest of his father. When he left home Heracles had told her that in fifteen months would come the crisis of his fate—either death or glory and rest from his toils. As she meditates, Lichas, the henchman of Heracles, comes in sight, tells her that his master is safe and will shortly follow. He is now at Cape Cenaeum in Euboea, about to raise an altar to Zeus in honour of his victories. With Lichas are a train of captive maidens and among them she espies Iolè. By cross-questioning she learns that Heracles has transferred to Iolè his love, and determines to win it back by means of a love-charm that the Centaur Nessus had left to her as he lay dying. So she sends by the hand of Lichas a festal robe besmeared with what proves to be a burning poison. Too late she discovers her mistake. The flock of wool that she had used to apply the charm and flung away smoulders self-consumed before her eyes. Hyllus returns from Euboea and denounces his mother as a murderer, describing the agonies of his tortured father.*

## ARGUMENT

*At the news Deianira passes within the house and slays herself with a sword. The dying Heracles is borne home on a litter. He gives his last injunctions to Hyllus, to bear him to Mount Oeta, there burn him on a pyre, and then to return and take Iolè to wife. With a bitter word against the gods who have thus afflicted their own son, the noblest man on earth, Hyllus gives an unwilling consent.*

## ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ  
ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ  
ΤΛΛΟΣ  
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩΝ ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΩΝ  
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ  
ΛΙΧΑΣ  
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ  
ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ  
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

**HERACLES, son of Zeus and Alcmena.**

**DEIANIRA, daughter of Oeneus, his wife**

**HYLLUS, their son.**

**LICHAS, herald of Heracles.**

**A MESSENGER.**

**NURSE.**

**OLD MAN.**

**IOLE, daughter of Eurytus, captive wife  
to Heracles** }  
**CAPTIVE WOMEN.** } *mute characters.*

**CHORUS OF TRACHINIAN MAIDENS.**

**SCENE : Before the house of Heracles at Trachis.**

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

Λόγος μέν ἐστ' ἀρχαῖος ἀνθρώπων φανεῖς,  
ώς οὐκ ἀν αἰῶν' ἐκμάθοις βρότῶν, πρὶν ἀν  
θάνη τις, οὕτ' εἰ χρηστὸς οὕτ' εἴ τῳ κακός·  
ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν ἔμον, καὶ πρὶν εἰς "Αἰδου μολεῖν,  
ἔξοιδ' ἔχουσα δυστυχῆ τε καὶ βαρύν,  
ἥτις πατρὸς μὲν ἐν δομοισιν Οἰνεώς  
ναίουσ' ἔτ'<sup>1</sup> ἐν Πλευρῶνι νυμφείων ὅκνον  
ἄλγιστον ἔσχον, εἴ τις Αἰτωλὸς γυνή.  
μηνστὴρ γὰρ ἦν μοι ποταμός, Ἀχελῷον λέγω,  
ὅς μ' ἐν τρισὶν μορφαῖσιν ἔξήτει πατρός,  
φοιτῶν ἐναργῆς ταῦρος, ἄλλοτ' αἰόλος  
δράκων ἐλικτός, ἄλλοτ' ἀνδρείψ κύτει  
βούπρωρος· ἐκ δὲ δασκίου γενειάδος  
κρουνοὶ διερραίνοντο κρηναίου ποτοῦ.  
τοιόνδ' ἐγὼ μηνστῆρα προσδεδεγμένη  
δύστηνος αἰεὶ κατθανεῖν ἐπηυχόμην,  
πρὶν τῆσδε κοίτης ἐμπελασθῆναι ποτε.  
χρόνῳ δ' ἐν ὑστέρῳ μέν, ἀσμένῃ δέ μοι,  
οἱ κλεινὸς ἡλθε Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τε παῖς.  
ὅς εἰς ἀγῶνα τῷδε συμπεσὼν μάχης  
ἐκλύεται με· καὶ τρόπον μὲν ἀν πόνων  
οὐκ ἀν διείποιμ· οὐ γὰρ οἰδ· ἀλλ' ὅστις ἦν

10

20

<sup>1</sup> ξτ' added by Erfurdt.

## TRACHINIAE

*Enter DEIANIRA and NURSE.*

### DEIANIRA

THERE is an old-world saying current still,  
“ Of no man canst thou judge the destiny  
To call it good or evil, till he die.”  
But I, before I pass into the world  
Of shadows, know *my* lot is hard and sad.  
E'en in my childhood's home, while yet I dwelt  
At Pleuron with my father, I had dread  
Of marriage more than any Aetolian maid ;  
For my first wooer was a river god,  
Achelouïs, who in triple form appeared  
To sue my father Oeneus for my hand,  
Now as a bull, now as a sinuous snake  
With glittering coils, and now in bulk a man  
With front of ox, while from his shaggy beard  
Runnels of fountain-water spouted forth.  
In terror of so strange a wooer, I  
Was ever praying death might end my woes,  
Before I came to such a marriage bed.  
Then to my joy, though long delayed, the son  
Of Zeus and of Alcmena, good at need,  
Grappled the monster and delivered me.  
The circumstance and manner of that fight  
I cannot tell, not knowing ; whoso watched it,

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

θακῶν ἀταρβῆς τῆς θέας, ὅδ' ἀν λέγοι·  
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἡμην ἐκπεπληγμένη φόβῳ  
μή μοι τὸ κάλλος ἄλγος ἔξεύροι ποτέ.  
τέλος δ' ἔθηκε Ζεὺς ἀγώνιος καλῶς,  
εἰ δὴ καλῶς. λέχος γὰρ Ἡρακλεῖ κριτὸν  
ξυστᾶσ' ἀεί τιν' ἐκ φόβου φόβου τρέφω,  
κείνου προκηραίνουσα· νῦν γὰρ εἰσάγει  
καὶ νῦν ἀπωθεῖ διαδεδεγμένη πόνον.

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κάφυσαμεν δὴ παιδας, οὓς κείνος ποτε,  
γῆτης ὅπως ἄρουραν ἕκτοπον λαβών,  
σπείρων μόνον προσεῦδε κάξαμῶν ἄπαξ.  
τοιοῦτος αἰών εἰς δόμους τε κάκ δόμων  
αἰεὶ τὸν ἄνδρ' ἐπεμπε λατρεύοντά τω.  
νῦν δ' ἡνίκ' ἄθλων τῶνδ' ὑπερτελῆς ἔφυ,  
ἐνταῦθα δὴ μάλιστα ταρβήσασ' ἔχω.  
ἔξ οὐ γὰρ ἕκτα κείνος Ἰφίτου βίαν,  
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐν Τραχῖνι τῇδ' ἀνάστατοι  
ξένῳ. παρ' ἄνδρὶ ναίομεν, κείνος δ' ὅπου  
βέβηκεν οὐδεὶς οἶδε· πλὴν ἐμοὶ πικρὰς  
ώδινας αὐτοῦ προσβαλῶν ἀποίχεται.

40

σχεδὸν δ' ἐπίσταμαι τι πῆμ' ἔχοντά νιν·  
χρόνον γὰρ οὐχὶ βαίον, ἀλλ' ἥδη δέκα  
μῆνας πρὸς ἄλλοις πέντ' ἀκήρυκτος μένει.  
κάστιν τι δεινὸν πῆμα· τοιαυτην ἐμοὶ  
δέλτον λιπῶν ἔστειχε, τὴν ἐγὼ θαμὰ  
θεοῖς ἀρῷμαι πημονῆς ἄτερ λαβεῖν.

## ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

δέσποινα Δηάνειρα, πολλὰ μέν σ' ἐγὼ  
κατεῦδον ἥδη πανδάκρυτ' ὁδύρματα  
τὴν Ἡράκλειον ἔξοδον γωμένην·  
νῦν δ', εἰ δίκαιον τοὺς ἐλευθέρους φρενοῦν

50

## TRACHINIAE

Indifferent to the issue, might describe.  
For me—I sat distracted by the dread  
That beauty in the end might prove my bane.  
But Zeus who holds the arbitrament of war  
Ordered it well, if well indeed it be.  
For since, his chosen bride, I shared the home  
Of Heracles, my cares have never ceased ;  
Terror on terror follows, dread on dread,  
And one night's trouble drives the last night's out.  
Children were born to us, but them he sees  
E'en as the tiller of a distant field  
Sees it at seedtime, sees it once again  
At harvest, and no more. Such life was his  
That kept him roaming to and fro from home,  
To drudge for some taskmaster. And to-day  
When he has overcome these many toils,  
To-day I am terror-stricken most of all.  
For since he slew the doughty Iphitus,  
We have been dwelling with a stranger, here  
In Trachis, banished from our home, and he—  
None knoweth where he bides ; but this I know,  
He has gone and left me here to yearn and pine.  
Surely some mischief has befallen him,  
(For since he went an age—ten long, long months,  
And other five—has passed, and not a word),  
Some dread calamity, as signifies  
This tablet that he left me. Oh ! how oft  
I've prayed it prove no harbinger of woe.

### NURSE

My lady Deianira, many a time  
I've listened to thy lamentable plaints  
And groanings for the absence of thy lord.  
Now, if I seem not overbold, a slave

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

γνώμαισι δούλαις, καὶ μὲ χρὴ φράσαι τὸ σόν·  
πῶς παισὶ μὲν τοσοῦσδε πληθύεις, ἀτὰρ  
ἀνδρὸς κατὰ ζήτησιν οὐ πέμπεις τινά,  
μάλιστα δ' ὅνπερ εἰκὸς "Τλλον, εἰ πατρὸς  
νέμοι τιν' ὥραν τοῦ καλῶς πράσσειν δοκεῖν;  
ἔγγυς δ' ὅδ' αὐτὸς ἀρτίπους θρώσκει δόμους,  
ῶστ' εἴ τι σοι πρὸς καιρὸν ἐννέπειν δοκῶ,  
πάρεστι χρῆσθαι τάνδρὶ τοῖς τ' ἐμοῖς λόγοις.

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### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ῳ τέκνουν, ὠ παῖ, καὶ ἀγεννήτων ἄρα  
μῦθοι καλῶς πίπτουσιν· ηδε γὰρ γυνὴ  
δούλη μέν, εἱρηκεν δ' ἐλεύθερον λόγον.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

ποῖον; δίδαξον, μῆτερ, εἰ διδακτά μοι.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

σὲ πατρὸς οὔτω δαρὸν ἔξενωμένου  
τὸ μὴ πυθέσθαι ποῦ στιν, αἰσχύνην φέρειν.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' οἶδα, μύθοις εἴ τι πιστεύειν χρεών.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

καὶ ποῦ κλύεις νιν, τέκνουν, ἰδρῦσθαι χθονός;

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

τὸν μὲν παρελθόντ' ἄροτον ἐν μήκει χρόνου  
Λυδῇ γυναικί φασί νιν λάτριν πονεῖν.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

πᾶν τοίνυν, εἰ καὶ τοῦτ' ἔτλη, κλύοι τις ἄν.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἔξαφεῖται τοῦδέ γ', ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ποῦ δῆτα νῦν ζῶν ἡ θαυμὸν ἀγγέλλεται;

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## TRACHINIAE

Would lend her counsel to a free-born dame.  
Why, since thou art so rich in sons, not send  
One on the quest, and Hyllus most of all?  
Who could assist thee better, if he cares  
To ascertain the safety of his sire?  
And lo, I see him in the nick of time  
Approaching hotfoot. Wherefore, if I seem  
To speak in season, use my rede and him.

*Enter HYLLUS.*

DEIANIRA

My child, my boy! wise words in sooth may fall  
From humble lips. This woman is a slave,  
But her words breathe the spirit of the free.

HYLLUS

What, mother? tell me, if it may be told.

DEIANIRA

She said that never to have gone in search  
Of thy long absent father brings thee shame.

HYLLUS

Nay, but if rumour's true, I know of him.

DEIANIRA

Where hast thou heard, my son, that he abides?

HYLLUS

Last season, so they say, the whole year through  
He served as bondsman to a Lydian dame.

DEIANIRA

Naught would surprise me if he sank so low.

HYLLUS

Well, that disgrace is over, so I hear.

DEIANIRA

Where is he now reported, living or dead?

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ΤΛΛΟΣ

Εὐβοῖδα χώραν φασίν, Εὐρύτου πόλιν,  
ἐπιστρατεύειν αὐτὸν ἡ μέλλειν ἔτι.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἀρ' οἰσθα δῆτ', ὡς τέκνουν, ώς ἔλειπέ μοι  
μαντεῖα πιστὰ τῆσδε τῆς χώρας πέρι;

ΤΛΛΟΣ

τὰ ποῖα, μῆτερ; τὸν λόγον γὰρ ἀγνοῶ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ώς ἡ τελευτὴν τοῦ βίου μέλλει τελεῖν  
ἡ τοῦτον ἄρας ἀθλον εἰς τό γ' ὕστερον<sup>1</sup>  
τὸν λοιπὸν ἥδη βίοτον εὐαίων' ἔχειν.  
ἐν οὐν ῥοπῆ τοιάδε κειμένῳ, τέκνουν,  
οὐκ εὶξυνέρξων, ἡνίκ' ἡ σεσώσμεθα  
[ἢ πίπτομεν σοῦ πατρὸς ἐξολωλότος]  
κείνουν βίου σώσαντος, ἡ οἰχόμεσθ' ἄμα;

80

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἴμι, μῆτερ· εἰ δὲ θεσφάτων ἐγὼ  
βάξιν κατήδη τῶνδε, καν πάλαι παρῇ·  
νῦν δ' ὁ ξυνήθης πότμος οὐκ εἴα<sup>2</sup> πατρὸς  
ἡμᾶς προταρβεῖν οὐδὲ δειμαίνειν ἄγαν.  
νῦν δ' ως ξυνίημ', οὐδὲν ἐλλείψω τὸ μὴ οὐ  
πᾶσαν πυθέσθαι τῶνδ' ἀλήθειαν πέρι.

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ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

χώρει νυν, ὡς παῖ· καὶ γὰρ ὑστέρῳ τό γ' εὖ  
πράσσειν, ἐπεὶ πύθοιτο, κέρδος ἐμπολῆ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δὸν αἰόλα νὺξ ἐναριζομένα στρ. α'  
τίκτει κατευνάζει τε, φλογιζόμενον  
"Αλιον" "Αλιον αἰτῶ  
τοῦτο καρῦξαι, τὸν Ἀλκμήνας πόθι μοι πόθι παῖς

<sup>1</sup> εἰς τὸν ὕστερον MSS., Reiske corr.

<sup>2</sup> εἰς MSS., Vauvilliers corr,

## TRACHINIAE

HYLLUS

He wars, or is about to war, they say,  
Against Euboea and King Eurytus.

DEIANIRA

Know'st thou, my son, that when he went away  
He left sure oracles a'ntent that land?

HYLLUS

What, mother? I ne'er heard of them before.

DEIANIRA

That either he should find his death, or when  
He had achieved this final task, henceforth  
Lead an unbroken life of peaceful ease.  
Son, when his fate thus trembles in the scale,  
Wilt thou not go to aid him? If he's saved,  
We too are saved; if lost, we perish too.

HYLLUS

Ay, mother, I'll away; had I but known  
Of this prediction I had long been gone.  
But, as it was, his happy star forbade  
Excess of fear or doubt; but, now I know,  
No pains I'll spare to learn the perfect truth.

DEIANIRA

Go then, my son. However late the quest,  
The bringer of good news is well repaid!

Enter CHORUS.

[*Exit HYLLUS.*

CHORUS

Child of star-bespangled Night, (Str. 1)  
Born as she dies,  
Laid to rest in a blaze of light,  
Tell me, Sun-god, O tell me, where  
Tarries the child of Alcmena fair;

TPAXINIAI

- ναιει ποτ', ω λαμπρά στεροπά φλεγέθων,  
ή ποντίας αύλωνος ή δισσαῖσιν ἀπείροις κλιθείς, 100  
εἴπ', ω κρατιστεύων κατ' ὅμμα.

ποθουμένᾳ γάρ φρενὶ πυνθάνομαι . . . . . ἀντ. α'  
τὰν ἀμφινεικῆ Δηιάνειραν ἀεί,  
οἴλα τιν' ἄθλιον ὅρνιν,  
οὐπτὸτ' εὐνάζειν ἀδακρύτων βλεφάρων πόθον, ἀλλ᾽  
εῦμναστον ἀνδρὸς δεῖμα τρέφουσαν ὁδοῦ  
ἐνθυμίοις εὐναῖς ἀνανδρώτοισι τρύχεσθαι, κακὰν 110  
δύστανον ἐλπίζουσαν αἰσαν.

στρ. β'

πολλὰ γὰρ ὥστ' ἀκάμαντος ἡ νότου ἡ βορέα τις  
κύματ' ἀν εὐρέῃ πόντῳ βάντ' ἐπιόντα τ' ἵδοι,  
οὗτῷ δὲ τὸν Καδμογενῆ στρέφει,<sup>1</sup> τὸ δὲ αὔξει,  
βιότου πολύπονον ὥσπερ πέλαγος  
Κρήσιον. ἀλλά τις θεῶν αἰὲν ἀναμπλάκητον "Αἰδα  
σφε δόμων ἐρύκει.

ἀντ. β  
ων ἐπιμεμφομένα σ' αἰδοῖα<sup>2</sup> μέν, ἀντία δ' οἴσω.  
φαμὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀποτρύειν ἐλπίδα τὰν ἀγαθὰν  
χρήναι· σ· ἀνάλυητα γὰρ οὐδ' ὁ πάντα κραίνων  
βασιλεὺς ἐπέβαλε θνατοῖς Κρονίδας·  
ἄλλ· ἐπὶ πῆμα καὶ χαρὰ πᾶσι κυκλοῦσιν, οἷον  
ἄρκτου στροφάδες κέλευθοι.

μένει γὰρ οὗτ' αἰόλα  
νὺξ βροτοῖσιν οὔτε κῆρες

<sup>1</sup> τρέφει MSS., Reiske corr.

<sup>2</sup> ἀδεῖα MSS., Musgrave corr.

## TRACHINIAE

Thou from whose eyes,  
Keen as lightning, naught can hide.  
Doth he on either mainland bide ?  
Roams he over the sea straits driven ?  
Thou, omniscient eye of heaven,  
Declare, declare !

For like bird bereft of her mate (Ant. 1)

(Sad my tale)

Deianira, desolate,  
She the maiden of many wooed,  
Pines by fears for her lord pursued ;  
Ever she bodes some instant harm  
Ever she starts at a new alarm,  
With vigils pale.

(Str. 2)

For as the tireless South or Northern blast  
Billow on billow rolls o'er ocean wide,  
So on the son of Cadmus follows fast  
Sea upon sea of trouble, tide on tide ;  
And now he sinks, now rises ; still some god  
Is nigh to save him from Death's whelming flood.

(Ant. 2)

Bear with me, lady, if I seem to chide thee.  
Why by despondency is fair hope slain ?  
Think that high Zeus, if evil now betide thee,  
No human lot ordaineth free from pain ;  
But as the Bear revolves in heaven all night,  
So mortals move 'twixt sorrow and delight.

The sheen of night with daybreak wanes ;  
Pleasure follows after pains.

οῦτε πλοῦτος, ἀλλ' ἄφαρ  
βέβακε, τῷ δὲ ἐπέρχεται  
χαίρειν τε καὶ στέρεσθαι.  
ἀ καὶ σὲ τὰν ἄνασσαν ἐλπίσιν λέγω  
τάδ' αἰὲν ἵσχειν· ἐπεὶ τίς ὡδε  
τέκνοισι Ζῆν' ἄβουλον εἶδεν;

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## ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

πεπυσμένη μέν, ώς ἀπεικάσαι, πάρει  
πάθημα τούμον· ώς δὲ ἐγὼ θυμοφθορῶ,  
μήτ' ἐκμάθοις παθοῦσα νῦν τὸ ἀπειρος εἰ.  
τὸ γὰρ νεάζον ἐν τοιοῦσδε βόσκεται  
χώροισιν αὐτοῦ, καί νιν οὐ θάλπος θεοῦ  
οὐδὲ ὅμβρος οὐδὲ πνευμάτων οὐδὲν κλονεῖ,  
ἀλλ' ἡδοναῖς ἀμοχθον ἔξαιρει βίον  
ἐς τοῦθ' ἔως τις ἀντὶ παρθένου γυνὴ  
κληθῆ λάβῃ τὸ ἐν νυκτὶ φροντίδων μέρος,  
ἥτοι πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἡ τέκνων φοβουμένη. 150  
τότε ἀν τις εἰσίδοιτο, τὴν αὐτοῦ σκοπῶν  
πρᾶξιν, κακοῖσιν οἷς ἐγὼ Βαρύνομαι.  
πάθη μὲν οὖν δὴ πόλλα ἔγωγ' ἐκλαυσάμην  
ἐν δ', οἷον οὕπω πρόσθεν, αὐτίκ' ἔξερῶ.  
όδὸν γὰρ ἡμος τὴν τελευταίαν ἄναξ  
ώρματ' ἀπ' οἴκων 'Ηρακλῆς, τότε ἐν δόμοις  
λείπει παλαιὰν δέλτον ἐγγεγραμμένην  
ξυνθήμαθ', ἀμοὶ πρόσθεν οὐκ ἔτλη ποτέ,  
πολλοὺς ἀγῶνας ἔξιών, οὕπω φράσαι,  
ἀλλ' ὡς τι δράσων εἰρπε κού θανούμενος.  
νῦν δὲ ὡς ἔτ' οὐκ ὧν εἰπε μὲν λέχους ὅ τι  
χρείη μ' ἐλέσθαι κτῆσιν, εἰπε δὲ ἦν τέκνοις

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## TRACHINIAE

If perchance to-day thou art sad,  
Then another man is glad.  
Gains with losses alternate ;  
Naught is constant in one state :  
Ponder this, my Queen, nor let  
Carking care thy spirit fret.  
Tell me hast thou ever known  
Zeus unmindful of his own ?

### DEIANIRA

Doubtless ye must have heard of my distress,  
And therefore come ; but how my heart is racked  
Ye cannot know—pray God ye ne'er may know it  
By suffering !

Like to us, the tender plant  
Is reared and nurtured in some garden close ;  
Nor heat, nor rain, nor any breath of air  
Vexes it, but unruffled, unperturbed,  
It buds and blossoms in sequestered bliss ;  
So fare we till the maid is called a wife  
And finds her married portion in the night—  
Dread terror for her husband or her child.  
Only the woman who by trial knows  
The cares of wedlock knows what I endure.  
Many have been my sorrows in the past,  
But now of one, the woefullest of all,  
I have to tell. When Heracles, my lord,  
On his last travel was about to start,  
He left an ancient tablet in the house,  
Inscribed with characters that ne'er before,  
However desperate the enterprise,  
He would interpret ; for he aye set forth  
As one about to do and not to die.  
This time, as on his death bed, he prescribed  
Due portion of his substance as my dower,

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

μοῖραν πατρώας γῆς διαιρετὸν νέμοι,  
χρόνον προτάξας ὡς τρίμηνον ἡνίκα  
χώρας ἀπείη κάνιαύσιον βεβώς,  
τότ' ἡ θανεῦν χρείη σφε τῷδε τῷ χρόνῳ  
ἢ τοῦθ' ὑπεκδραμόντα τοῦ χρόνου τέλος  
τὸ λοιπὸν ἥδη ζῆν ἀλυπήτῳ βίῳ.  
τοιαῦτ' ἔφραξε πρὸς θεῶν εἰμαρμένα  
τῶν Ἡρακλείων ἐκτελευτᾶσθαι πόνων, 170  
ὡς τὴν παλαιὰν φηγὸν αὐδῆσαι ποτε  
Δωδῶνι δισσῶν ἐκ Πελειάδων ἔφη.  
καὶ τῶνδε ναμέρτεια συμβαίνει χρόνου  
τοῦ νῦν παρόντος, ὡς τελεσθῆναι χρεών·  
ῶσθ' ἥδεως εὔδουσαν ἐκπηδᾶν ἐμὲ  
φόβῳ, φίλαι, ταρβοῦσαν, εἴ με χρὴ μένειν  
πάντων ἀρίστου φωτὸς ἐστερημένην.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὐφημίαν νῦν ἵσχ'. ἐπεὶ καταστεφῆ  
στείχονθ' ὄρῳ τιν' ἄνδρα πρὸς χαρὰν λόγων.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

δέσποινα Δηάνειρα, πρῶτος ἀγγέλων  
δκνου σε λύσω· τὸν γὰρ Ἀλκμήνης τόκον  
καὶ ζῶντ' ἐπίστω καὶ κρατοῦντα κάκ μάχης  
ἄγοντ' ἀπαρχὰς θεοῖσι τοῖς ἐγχωρίοις.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τίν' εἰπας, ὡ γεραιέ, τόνδε μοι λόγου;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τάχ' ἐς δόμους σοὺς τὸν πολύζηλον πόσιν  
ἥξειν φανέντα σὺν κράτει νικηφόρῳ.

## TRACHINIAE

And to his children severally assigned  
Their heritage of lands ; and fixed a date,  
Saying that when a year and three full moons  
Had passed since he departed from his home,  
He needs must die, or, if he then survived,  
Live ever after an untroubled life ;  
So by the mouth of the two priestly Doves<sup>1</sup>  
Dodona's sacred oak had once declared.  
And now, this very day, the hour has struck  
For confirmation of the prophecy.  
Thus from sweet slumber, friends, ye see me start  
With terror at the thought of widowed days,  
If he, the noblest of all men, were gone.

### CHORUS

Hush ! no ill-omened words ! I see approaching  
A messenger, bay-wreathed—he brings good news.  
*Enter MESSENGER.*

### MESSENGER

Queen Deianira, let me be the first  
To rid thee of thy fears. Be well assured  
Alcmena's son is living ; o'er his foes  
Victorious he is bringing home the spoils,  
To offer firstfruits to his country's gods.

### DEIANIRA

Old man, what dost thou tell me ?

### MESSENGER

That anon

Thou shalt behold in presence, at thy gate,  
Illustrious, crowned with victory, thy lord.

<sup>1</sup> The Peleads were the priestesses of Dodona who interpreted the rustling of the oak or the cooing of the sacred doves and their name in folk etymology was identified with *peleiai*, doves.

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

καὶ τοῦ τόδ' ἀστῶν ἡ ξένων μαθὼν λέγεις;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐν βουθερεῖ λειμῶνι πρὸς πολλοὺς θροεῖ  
Λίχας ὁ κῆρυξ ταῦτα· τοῦδ' ἐγὼ κλύων  
ἀπῆξ, ὅπως τοι πρώτος ἀγγείλας τάδε  
πρὸς σοῦ τι κερδάναιμι καὶ κτῷμην χάριν.

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ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

αὐτὸς δὲ πῶς ἄπεστιν, εἴπερ εὔτυχεῖ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ εὔμαρείᾳ χρώμενος πολλῇ, γύναι.  
κύκλῳ γάρ αὐτὸν Μηλιεὺς ἄπας λεὼς  
κρίνει παραστάς, οὐδὲ ἔχει βῆναι πρόσω·  
τὸ γὰρ ποθοῦν ἔκαστος ἐκμαθεῖν<sup>1</sup> θέλων  
οὐκ ἀν μεθεῖτο, πρὶν καθ' ἡδονὴν κλύειν.  
οὕτως ἐκεῖνος οὐχ ἑκών, ἐκοῦσι δὲ  
ξύνεστιν· ὅψει δ' αὐτὸν αὐτίκ' ἐμφανῆ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸν Οἰτης ἄτομον δις λειμῶν' ἔχεις,  
ἔδωκας ἡμῖν ἀλλὰ σὺν χρόνῳ χαράν.  
φωνήσατ', ὦ γυναικες, αἴ τ' εἴσω στέγης  
αἴ τ' ἐκτὸς αὐλῆς, ὡς ἀελπτον δῆμον ἐμοὶ<sup>2</sup>  
φήμης ἀνασχὸν τῆσδε νῦν καρπούμεθα.

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ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀνολολυξάτω<sup>2</sup> δόμοις ἐφεστίοις  
ἀλαλαγαῖς ἀ<sup>3</sup> μελλόνυμφος, ἐν δὲ  
κοινὸς ἀρσένων ἵτω  
κλαγγὰ τὸν εὐφαρέτραν  
Ἄπολλω προστάταν· ὁμοῦ δὲ

<sup>1</sup> M. L. Carle's ἐκτλῆσαι is the likeliest emendation of a probably corrupt line.

<sup>2</sup> ἀνολολύξατε MSS., Burges corr.   <sup>3</sup> δ MSS., Erfurdt corr.

## TRACHINIAE

DEIANIRA

Some stranger or a native told thee this?

MESSENGER

The herald Lichas is proclaiming it  
There in the summer pastures to the crowd.  
From him I heard, and sped to be the first  
To bring the news and win reward and thanks.

DEIANIRA

If such his news, why comes he not himself?

MESSENGER

That were no light task; all our Malian folk  
Cluster around him, hem him on all sides,  
Ply him with questions, one and all intent  
To hear his news; he cannot stir a step,  
Midst willing hosts a most unwilling guest,  
Till all their eagerness is satisfied.  
But thou shalt see him face to face anon.

DEIANIRA

Lord of the unshorn meads of Oeta, Zeus,  
Though long delayed, thou giv'st me joy at last.  
Women within, and ye without the gates,  
Uplift your voices, hail the new-born light  
That dawns to glad me when all hope had fled.

CHORUS

Maidens, let your joyous shout  
Of triumph from the hearth ring out,  
Swell the quire of men who raise  
Their paean to Apollo's praise.

Sing, man and maid,  
Phoebus our aid,  
Lord of the quiver,  
Strong to deliver!

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

παιᾶνα παιᾶν' ἀνάγετ', ὡς παρθένοι,  
βοᾶτε τὰν ὁμόσπορον  
Ἄρτεμιν Ὁρτυγίαν  
ἔλαφαβόλον ἀμφίπυρον,  
γείτονάς τε Νύμφας.  
ἀείρομαι οὐδὲ ἀπώσομαι  
τὸν αὐλόν, ὡς τύραννε τᾶς ἐμᾶς φρενός.  
ἰδού μὲν ἀναταράσσει,  
εὐοῖ μὲν,  
ὅ κισσὸς ἄρτι βακχίαν  
ὑποστρέφων ἄμιλλαν. ἵω ἵω Παιάν.  
ἴδε, ὡς φίλα γύναι,  
τάδε ἀντίπρωρα δή σοι  
βλέπειν πάρεστ' ἐναργῆ.

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ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ  
όρω, φίλαι γυναῖκες, οὐδέ μ' ὅμματος  
φρουρὰν παρῆλθε, τόνδε μὴ λεύσσειν στόλον.  
χαίρειν δὲ τὸν κήρυκα προυννέπω, χρόνῳ  
πολλῷ φανέντα, χαρτὸν εἴ τι καὶ φέρεις.

ΔΙΧΑΣ  
ἀλλ' εὖ μὲν ἔγμεθ', εὖ δὲ προσφωνούμεθα,  
γύναι, κατ' ἔργου κτῆσιν ἀνδρα γὰρ καλῶς  
πράσσοντ' ἀνάγκη χρηστὰ κερδαίνειν ἔπη.

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ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ  
ὡς φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, πρῶθ' ἀπρῶτα βούλομαι  
δίδαξον, εἰς ζωνθ' Ἡρακλῆ προσδέξομαι.

## TRACHINIAE

Hymn his sister, maid and man,  
Artemis Ortygian.

Slayer of deer,  
With fiery brand  
In either hand,  
O goddess, hear !

Hymn ye the nymphs too, her attendant band.  
My spirit spurns the ground ;  
Bid the shrill fife outsound,  
My sovereign I obey.

Evoë !

The thyrsus, see,  
Calls me ; I must away  
To join the Bacchic rout,  
With Maenads dance and shout,  
Once more the paean raise ;  
For, lady, here,  
In presence clear,  
My joy takes shape and stands before thy gaze.

### DEIANIRA

Kind friends, I see, nor have my wistful eyes  
Failed to perceive this company's approach—  
Hail to thee, herald, if indeed thou bring'st  
News that will gladden me, though long delayed.

*Enter LICHAS with CAPTIVE WOMEN.*

### LICHAS

Yea, lady, glad is our return and glad  
Thy greeting, as befits the deed achieved.  
He who speeds well a welcome fair deserves.

### DEIANIRA

First tell me what I first would learn, best friend,  
Shall I embrace my Heracles alive ?

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἔγωγέ τοι σφ' ἔλειπον ἵσχύοντά τε  
καὶ ζῶντα καὶ θάλλοντα κοὺ νόσῳ βαρύν.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ποῦ γῆς; πατρώας εἴτε βαρβάρου; λέγε.

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἀκτή τις ἔστ' Εὐβοίας, ἐνθ' ὁρίζεται  
βωμοὺς τέλη τ' ἔγκαρπα Κηναίφ Διι.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

εὐκταῖ τοι φαίνων ἡ ἀπὸ μαντείας τινός;

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

εὐχαῖς δθ' ἥρει τῶνδ' ἀνάστατον δορὶ<sup>240</sup>  
χωραν γυναικῶν ὧν ὁρᾶς ἐν ὅμμασιν.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

αὗται δέ, πρὸς θεῶν, τοῦ ποτ' εἰσὶ καὶ τίνες;  
οἴκτραὶ γάρ, εἰ μὴ ξυμφοραὶ κλέπτουσί με.

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ταύτας ἐκεῖνος Εὐρύτου πέρσας πόλιν  
ἐξείλεθ' αὐτῷ κτῆμα καὶ θεοῖς κριτόν.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἡ κάπι ταύτῃ τῇ πόλει τὸν ἄσκοπον  
χρόνον βεβώς ἦν ἡμερῶν ἀνήριθμον;

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

οὐκ, ἀλλὰ τὸν μὲν πλεῦστον ἐν Λυδοῖς χρόνον  
κατείχεθ', ὡς φησ' αὐτός, οὐκ ἐλεύθερος,  
ἀλλ' ἐμποληθείς τοῦ λόγου δ' οὐ χρὴ φθόνον,<sup>250</sup>  
γύναι, προσεῖναι, Ζεὺς δτον πράκτωρ φανῆ.  
κεῖνος δὲ πραθεὶς Ὁμφάλῃ τῇ βαρβάρῳ  
ἐνιαυτὸν ἐξέπλησεν, ὡς αὐτὸς λέγει.

## TRACHINIAE

LICHAS

Surely ; I left him both alive and hale,  
In lusty strength and sound in every limb.

DEIANIRA

Where ? upon Greek soil, tell me, or abroad ?

LICHAS

Upon a headland in Euboea, where  
He marks out altars to Cenaean Zeus,  
And dedicates the fertile lands around.

DEIANIRA

In payment of some former vow, or warned  
By oracles ?

LICHAS

'Tis for a vow he made

When he went forth to conquer and despoil  
Oechalia of these women whom thou see'st.

DEIANIRA

O tell me who these captives are and whose ;  
So piteous, to judge them by their plight.

LICHAS

He chose them for himself and for the gods,  
When he had sacked the town of Eurytus.

DEIANIRA

Was it to take that city he delayed  
All those interminable, countless days ?

LICHAS

Not so ; that time he mostly was detained  
In Lydia ; by his own account, not free,  
But sold in bondage ; nor shouldst thou resent  
A tale of outrage, when the doer is Zeus.  
Thus he fulfilled (these were his very words)  
A year of servitude to Omphalè,  
The barbarous queen. So grievous was the sting

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

χοῦτως ἐδιήχθη τοῦτο τοῦνειδος λαβὼν  
 ὡσθ' ὄρκον αὐτῷ προσβαλὼν διώμοσεν,  
 ἢ μὴν τὸν ἀγχιστῆρα τοῦδε τοῦ πάθους  
 ξὺν παιδὶ καὶ γυναικὶ δουλώσειν ἔτι.  
 κούχη λίωσε τοῦπος, ἀλλ' ὅθ' ἀγνὸς ἦν,  
 στρατὸν λαβὼν ἐπακτὸν ἔρχεται πόλιν  
 τὴν Εύρυτείαν. τόνδε γὰρ μεταίτιον  
 μόνον βροτῶν ἔφασκε τοῦδε εἶναι πάθους·  
 ὃς αὐτὸν ἐλθόντ' ἐς δόμους ἐφέστιον,  
 ξένον παλαιὸν ὄντα, πολλὰ μὲν λόγοις  
 ἐπερρόθησε, πολλὰ δ' ἀτηρᾶ φρενί,  
 λέγων χεροῖν μὲν ὡς ἄφυκτον ἔχων βέλη  
 τῶν ὧν τέκνων λείποιτο πρὸς τόξου κρίσιν,  
 φωνεῖ δὲ δοῦλος ἀνδρὸς ὡς ἐλευθέρου  
 ραίοιτο· δείπνοις δ' ἡνίκ' ἦν φύνωμένος,  
 ἔρριψεν ἐκτὸς αὐτόν. ὧν ἔχων χόλον,  
 ὡς ἵκετ' αὐθὶς Ἰφιτος Τιρυνθίαν  
 πρὸς κλιτύν, ἵππους νομάδας ἐξειχνοσκοπῶν,  
 τότ' ἀλλοσ' αὐτὸν ὅμμα, θατέρᾳ δὲ νοῦν  
 ἔχοντ', ἀπ' ἄκρας ἥκε πυργώδους πλακός.  
 ἔργου δ' ἔκατι τοῦδε μηνίσας ἄναξ·  
 ο τῶν ἀπάντων Ζεὺς πατὴρ Ὄλύμπιος  
 πρατόν νιν ἐξέπεμψεν οὐδὲ ἡνέσχετο,  
 ὅθούνεκ' αὐτὸν μοῦνον ἀνθρώπων δόλῳ  
 ἔκτεινεν· εἰ γὰρ ἐμφανῶς ἥμύνατο,  
 Ζεύς τὰν συνέγνω ξὺν δίκῃ χειρουμένῳ·  
 ὕβριν γὰρ οὐ στέργουσιν οὐδὲ δαιμονες.  
 κεῖνοι δ' ὑπερχλίοντες ἐκ γλώσσης κακῆς  
 αὐτοὶ μὲν "Αἰδου πάντες εἴσ' οἰκήτορες,  
 πόλις δὲ δούλη· τάσδε δ' ἀσπερ εἰσορᾶς  
 ἐξ ὀλβίων ἄζηλον εὑροῦσαι βίον  
 χωροῦσι πρὸς σέ· ταῦτα γὰρ πόσις τε σὸς

260

270

280

## TRACHINIAE

Of his reproach, that by a mighty oath  
He swore one day to enslave with wife and child  
The author of this foul calamity.  
Nor vain that vow. No sooner was he purged,  
Than he enlisted straight an alien host,  
And marched against the city of Eurytus ;  
For Eurytus alone of men he deemed  
The guilty cause, who when he came a guest  
To one by ties of ancient friendship bound,  
With many a bitter taunt and bitter spite  
Assailed him, saying, "Thou indeed hast shafts  
Unerring, yet in feats of archery  
My sons surpass thee," or again he'd cry,  
"Out on thee, slave, a freeman's down-trod thrall."  
Once at a banquet too he cast him forth  
When he was in his cups. Whereat incensed,  
Encountering Iphitus upon the hill  
Of Tiryns in pursuit of his strayed mares,  
As the youth stood at gaze, his wits afield,  
He hurled him from the craggy battlements.  
That deed of violence provoked our King,  
The sire of all, Olympian Zeus, who drove him  
Forth to be sold, and spared him not, because  
That once (his sole offence) he slew a foe  
By treachery ; had he slain him in fair fight,  
Zeus had approved his righteous wrath, for gods  
No more than men can suffer insolence.  
So all those braggarts of outrageous tongue  
Lie low in Hades and their town's enslaved,  
And these, the women whom thou seeest, fallen  
To abject misery from their high estate,  
Are to thy hands delivered. Thus my lord

## TPAXINIAI

έφειτ', ἐγὼ δὲ πιστὸς ὡν κείνῳ τελῶ.  
αὐτὸν δ' ἔκεινον, εὗτ' ἀν ἄγνα θύματα  
ρέξη πατρῷφ Ζηνὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως,  
φρόνει νιν ὡς ἥξοντα· τοῦτο γὰρ λόγου  
πολλοῦ καλῶς λεχθέντος ἥδιστον κλύειν.

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### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄνασσα, νῦν σοι τέρψις ἐμφανὴς κυρεῖ,  
τῶν μὲν παρόντων, τὰ δὲ πεπυσμένη λόγῳ.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

πῶς δ' οὐκ ἐγὼ χαίροιμ' ἄν, ἀνδρὸς εὔτυχῆ  
κλύουσα πρᾶξιν τήνδε, πανδίκῳ φρενί;  
πολλή' στ' ἀνάγκη τῇδε τοῦτο συντρέχειν.  
ὅμως δ' ἔνεστι τοῖσιν εὐ σκοπουμένοις  
ταρβεῖν τὸν εὐ πράσσοντα, μὴ σφαλῇ ποτε.  
ἔμοὶ γὰρ οἴκτος δεινὸς εἰσέβη, φίλαι,  
ταύτας ὁρώσῃ δυσπότμους ἐπὶ ξένης  
χώρας ἀοίκους ἀπάτοράς τ' ἀλωμένας,  
αἱ πρὶν μὲν ἥσαν ἔξ ἐλευθέρων ἵσως  
ἀνδρῶν, ταῦν δὲ δοῦλον ἵσχουσιν βίον.  
ὁ Ζεῦ τροπαῖε, μή ποτ' εἰσίδοιμί σε  
πρὸς τούμὸν οὕτω σπέρμα χωρήσαντά ποι,  
μηδ', εἴ τι δράσεις, τῆσδε γε ζώσης ἔτι.  
οὕτως ἐγὼ δέδοικα τάσδ' ὄρωμένη.  
ὁ δυστάλαινα, τίς ποτ' εἰ νεανίδων;  
ἄνανδρος ἡ τεκνοῦσσα<sup>1</sup>; πρὸς μὲν γὰρ φύσιν  
πάντων ἅπειρος τῶνδε, γενναία δέ τις.  
Λίχα, τίνος ποτ' ἔστιν ἡ ξένη βροτῶν;  
τίς ἡ τεκοῦσα, τίς δ' ὁ φιτύσας πατήρ;  
ἔξειπτ'. ἐπεί νιν τῶνδε πλεῖστον ὕκτισα  
βλέπουσ', ὁσφωπερ καὶ φρονεῖν οἶδεν μόνη.

300

310

<sup>1</sup> τεκοῦσα MSS., Brunck corr.

## TRACHINIAE

Charged me, and I, his liegeman true, obey.  
Doubt not himself, so soon as he has paid  
Due sacrifices for his victory  
To Zeus his sire, will presently be here.  
This crowns and consummates my happy tale.

### CHORUS

Now, lady, is thy joy assured, in part  
Present, with promise sure for what remains.

### DEIANIRA

Hearing these happy tidings of my lord  
How can I but rejoice, as it is meet,  
For our two fortunes run in parallels.  
Yet one who thinks on change and chance must dread  
Lest such success be prelude to a fall.  
And a strange pity hath come o'er me, friends,  
At sight of these poor wretches, motherless,  
Fatherless, homeless, in an alien land,  
Daughters, it well may be, of free-born sires,  
And now condemned to live the life of slaves.  
Never, O Zeus who turn'st the tide of war,  
Never may I behold a child of mine  
Thus visited, or if such lot must be,  
May it not fall while Deianira lives.  
Such dread, as I behold these maids, is mine.

(*To IOLÈ*)

Say, who art thou, most miserable girl,  
Mother or maid? To judge thee by thy looks  
Thou hast full warrant of virginity,  
Yea and of high birth. Lichas, who is she?  
Who was her father, and her mother? Speak.  
Her most of all I pity, for she shows  
Alone the sense of her calamity.

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

τί δ' οἰδ' ἐγώ, τί δ' ἀν με καὶ κρίνοις; ἵσως  
γένυνημα τῶν ἐκεῖθεν οὐκ ἐν ὑστάτοις.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

· μὴ τῶν τυράννων; Εὔρύτου σπορά τις ἦν;  
οὐκ οἶδα· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ ἀνιστόρουν μακράν.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οὐδὲ ὄνομα πρός του τῶν ξυνεμπόρων ἔχεις;

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἡκιστα· σιγῇ τούμὸν ἔργον ἥνυτον.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

εἴπ', ὡ τάλαιν', ἀλλ' ἡμὶν ἐκ σαυτῆς, ἐπεὶ  
καὶ ξυμφορά τοι μὴ εἰδέναι σέ γ' ἥτις εἰ.

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### ΛΙΧΑΣ

οῦ τᾶρα τῷ γε πρόσθεν οὐδὲν ἔξ ἵσου  
χρόνῳ διήσει<sup>1</sup> γλῶσσαν, ἥτις οὐδαμὰ  
προύφηνεν οὕτε μείζον' οὔτ' ἐλύσσονα,  
ἀλλ' αἰὲν ὠδίνουσα συμφορᾶς βάρος  
δακρυρροεῖ δύστηνος, ἔξ ὅτου πάτραν  
διήνεμον λέλοιπεν· ἡ δέ τοι τύχη  
κακὴ μὲν αὐτῇ γ', ἀλλὰ συγγνωμην ἔχει.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἡ δ' οὖν ἐάσθω, καὶ πορευέσθω στέγας

οὗτως ὅπως ἥδιστα, μηδὲ πρὸς κακοῖς

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τοῖς οὖσιν ἄλλην<sup>2</sup> πρός γ' ἐμοῦ λύπην λάβῃ.<sup>3</sup>  
ἄλις γὰρ ἡ παροῦσα. πρὸς δὲ δώματα  
χωρῶμεν ἥδη πάντες, ώς σύ θ' οἱ θέλεις  
σπεύδης, ἐγώ τε τάνδον ἔξαρκή τιθῶ.

<sup>1</sup> διοίσει MSS., Wakefield corr.

<sup>2</sup> οὖσι λύπην MSS., F. W. Schmidt corr.

<sup>3</sup> λάβοι MSS., Blaydes corr.

## TRACHINIAE

LICHAS

How should I know? Why question me? Perchance  
She was of noblest lineage in that land.

DEIANIRA

What, of their kings? Had Eurytus a daughter?

LICHAS

I know not, did not question her at length.

DEIANIRA

Did'st thou not even learn her name from one  
Of her companions?

LICHAS

No, I had my work  
To do, and had no time for questioning.

DEIANIRA

Then speak to *me* and tell me who thou art,  
Poor maid; it grieves me truly not to know.

LICHAS

Well, if she opens now her lips, 'twill be  
Unlike her former self, for hitherto  
She hath not uttered word or syllable;  
But still in travail with her heavy grief  
She weeps and stays not weeping since she left  
Her wind-swept home. 'Tis sad and ill for her,  
This melancholy, yet 'tis natural.

DEIANIRA

Leave her in peace and let her pass within,  
As is her humour. Heaven forbid that I  
Should add another to her present pains,  
Enough God knows. Now let us all go in,  
That thou may'st start at once upon thy way.  
And I make all things ready in the house.

[*Exeunt LICHAS and CAPTIVES.*

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

αὐτοῦ γε πρῶτον βαιὸν ἀμμείνασ', ὅπως  
μάθης ἄνευ τῶνδ', οὕστινάς τ' ἄγεις ἔσω,  
ών τ' οὐδὲν εἰσήκουσας ἐκμάθης ἢ δεῖ.  
τούτων ἔχω γὰρ πάντ' ἐπιστήμην ἔγω.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τί δ' ἔστι; τοῦ με τήνδ' ἐφίστασαι βάσιν;

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

σταθεῖσ' ἄκουσον· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ τὸν πάρος  
μῦθον μάτην ἡκουσας, οὐδὲ νῦν δοκῶ.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

πότερον ἐκείνους δῆτα δεῦρ' αὐθις πάλιν  
καλῶμεν, ἢ μοὶ ταῖσδέ τ' ἐξειπεῖν θέλεις;

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

σοὶ ταῖσδέ τ' οὐδὲν εἴργεται, τούτους δ' ἔα.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

καὶ δὴ βεβᾶσι, χὼ λόγος σημαινέτω.

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀνὴρ ὅδ' οὐδὲν ὃν ἔλεξεν ἀρτίως  
φωνεῖ δίκης ἐς ὁρθόν, ἀλλ' ἡ νῦν κακὸς  
ἡ πρόσθεν οὐ δίκαιος ἄγγελος παρῆν.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τί φής; σαφῶς μοι φράζε πᾶν ὅσον νεοῖς.  
ἄλλην γὰρ ἔξειρηκας ἀγνοίᾳ μ' ἔχει.

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τούτου λέγοντος τάνδρὸς εἰσήκουσ' ἔγω,  
πολλῶν παρόντων μαρτύρων, ὡς τῆς κόρης  
ταύτης ἔκατι κεῦνος Εὔρυτόν θ' ἔλοι  
τήν θ' ὑψίπυργον Οἰχαλίαν, Ἔρως δέ νιν  
μόνος θεῶν θέλξειεν αἰχμάσαι τάδε,

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## TRACHINIAE

MESSENGER

So be it, but first tarry here awhile  
That thou may'st learn in private who are these  
Whom thou dost welcome 'neath thy roof, and hear  
Matters of import still untold, whereof  
I have full cognisance.

DEIANIRA

What meanest thou ?

Why dost thou bid me pause and stay my steps ?

MESSENGER

Attend and listen. As my former news  
Was worth the hearing, so methinks is this.

DEIANIRA

Say, shall I call the others back to hear,  
Or wouldest thou speak with me and these alone ?

MESSENGER

With thee and these ; the rest are well away.

DEIANIRA

See, they are gone ; proceed then with thy tale.

MESSENGER

Yon fellow spake not the straightforward truth  
In aught he told thee ; either now he's false,  
Or else before was no true messenger.

DEIANIRA

How say'st thou ? Tell me clearly all thy mind.  
These covert hints I cannot understand.

MESSENGER

'Twas for this maiden's sake (I heard the man,  
And many witnesses were by, declare it)  
That Heracles laid prostrate in the dust  
Oechalia's battlements and Eurytus.  
Love was his leader, love alone inspired  
This doughty deed, not his base servitude

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

οὐ τὰπὶ Λυδοῖς οὐδ' ὑπ' Ὁμφάλη πόνων  
λατρεύματ' οὐδ' ὁ ριπτὸς Ἰφίτου μόρος.  
ὅν νῦν παρώσας οὗτος ἔμπαλιν λέγει.  
ἀλλ' ίνικ' οὐκ ἔπειθε τὸν φυτοσπόρουν  
τὴν παιδὰ δοῦναι, κρύφιον ὡς ἔχοι λέχοι,  
ἔγκλημα μικρὸν αἰτίαν θέτοιμάσας  
ἐπιστρατεύει πατρίδα τὴν ταύτης, ἐν ᾧ  
τὸν Εὔρυτον τόνδ' εἰπε δεσπόζειν θρόνων,  
κτείνει τ' ἄνακτα πατέρα τῆσδε καὶ πόλιν  
ἔπερσε. καὶ νῦν, ὡς ὁρᾶς, ἥκει δόμους  
ὡς τούσδε πέμπων οὐκ ἀφοντίστως, γύναι,  
οὐδὲ ὥστε δούλην· μηδὲ προσδόκα τόδε·  
οὐδὲ εἰκός, εἴπερ ἐντεθέρμανται πόθῳ.  
ἔδοξεν οὖν μοι πρὸς σὲ δηλῶσαι τὸ πᾶν,  
δέσποιν', δι τοῦδε τυγχάνω μαθὼν πάρα.  
καὶ ταῦτα πολλοὶ πρὸς μέσην Τραχινίων  
ἀγορᾶ συνεξήκουνον ὡσαύτως ἐμοί,  
ῶστ' ἐξελέγχειν· εἰ δὲ μὴ λέγω φίλα,  
οὐχ ἥδομαι, τὸ δ' ὅρθὸν ἐξείρηχ' ὅμως.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οἵμοι τάλαινα, ποῦ ποτ' εἰμὶ πράγματος;  
τιν' εἰσδέδεγμαι πημονὴν ὑπόστεγον  
λαθραῖον; ὡς δύστηνος· ἀρ' ἀνώνυμος  
πέφυκεν, ὥσπερ οὐπάγων διώμυντο;

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἢ κάρτα λαμπρὰ καὶ κατ' ὅνομα καὶ φύσιν,  
πατρὸς μὲν οὐσα γένεσιν Εὐρύτου ποτὲ  
Ἰόλη καλεῖτο, τῆς ἐκεῖνος οὐδαμὰ  
βλάστας ἐφώνει, δῆθεν οὐδὲν ἴστορῶν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅλοιντο — μή τι πάντες οἱ κακοί, τὰ δὲ  
λαθραῖ δι σκεῖ μὴ πρέποντ' αὐτῷ κακά.

## TRACHINIAE

As bondsman under Lydian Omphalè,  
Nor ruth for Iphitus hurled headlong down,  
As Lichas feigned, who shrank to tell of love.  
So, when he failed to win her sire's consent  
To give the maiden for his paramour,  
Picking some petty cause of quarrel, he  
Made war upon her land (the land in which  
Eurytus, as the herald said, was King)  
And slew the prince her sire and sacked the town.  
Now, as thou see'st, he comes and sends before him  
The maiden, with set purpose, to his house ;  
Not as a slave—how could he so intend,  
Seeing his heart is kindled with love's fire ?  
So I determined, Queen, to tell thee all  
I had heard from Lichas ; many heard it too  
Who stood with me in the Trachinean mote,  
And can convict him. If my words give pain,  
It grieves me, but, alas, they are too true.

### DEIANIRA

Ah me unhappy ! in what plight I stand !  
What bane have I received beneath my roof,  
Unwitting, for my ruin ! Is she then  
A nameless maid, as he who brought her sware ?

### MESSENGER

Nay, she hath name and fame, a princess born,  
Iolè, daughter of King Eurytus ;  
This girl whose parents Lichas could not tell,  
Because, forsooth, he had not questioned her.

### CHORUS

A curse on evil doers, most on him  
Who by deceit worketh iniquity !

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τί χρή ποεῖν, γυναῖκες; ὡς ἐγὼ λόγοις  
τοῖς νῦν παροῦσιν ἐκπεπληγμένη κυρῶ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πεύθου μολούσα τάνδρός, ὡς τάχ' ἀν σαφῆ  
λέξειεν, εἴ τιν πρὸς βιαν κρίνειν θέλοις.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἀλλ' εἰμι· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γνώμης λέγεις.

### ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἡμεῖς δὲ προσμένωμεν; ἢ τί χρὴ ποεῖν;

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### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

μίμν', ὡς ὅδ' ἀνὴρ οὐκ ἐμῶν ὑπ' ἀγγέλων,  
ἀλλ' αὐτόκλητος ἐκ δόμων πορεύεται.

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

τί χρή, γύναι, μολόντα μ' Ἡρακλεῖ λέγειν;  
δίδαξον, ὡς ἔρποντος, ὡς ὁρᾶς,<sup>1</sup> ἐμοῦ.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ὡς ἐκ ταχείας σὺν χρόνῳ βραδεῖ μολὼν  
ἄσσεις, πρὶν ἡμᾶς κάννεώσασθαι λόγους.

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἀλλ' εἴ τι χρήζεις ἴστορεῖν, πάρειμ' ἐγώ.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἢ καὶ τὸ πιστὸν τῆς ἀληθείας νέμεις;

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἴστω μέγας Ζεύς, ὃν γ' ἀν ἔξειδὼς κυρῶ.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τίς ἡ γυνὴ δῆτ' ἐστὶν ἦν ἥκεις ἄγων;

400

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

Εὐθοιύς· ὡν δ' ἔβλαστεν οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν.

<sup>1</sup> εἰσορᾶς MSS., Wakefield corr

## TRACHINIAE

DEIANIRA

My friends, what shall I do? this latest news  
Bewilders me.

MESSENGER

Go in and question Lichas;  
Perchance, if pressed, he'll tell thee all the truth.

DEIANIRA

There's reason in thy counsel; I will go.

MESSENGER

And I—shall I remain, or what wouldst thou  
That I should do?

DEIANIRA

Remain, for here he comes  
Without my summons, of his own accord.

*Re-enter LICHAS.*

LICHAS

Lady, what message shall I bear my lord?  
Instruct me; I am starting, as thou see'st.

DEIANIRA

Thou cam'st at leisure, but dost part in haste,  
And hast no time for further talk with me.

LICHAS

If thou wouldst question me, I wait thy pleasure.

DEIANIRA

Say, dost thou reverence the honest truth?

LICHAS

So help me Zeus, I'll speak what truth I know.

DEIANIRA

Who is this woman then whom thou hast brought?

LICHAS

Euboean; of her parents I know naught.

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὗτος, βλέφ' ὡδε· πρὸς τίν' ἐννέπειν δοκεῖς;

ΛΙΧΑΣ

σὺ δ' εἰς τί δή με τοῦτ' ἐρωτήσας ἔχεις;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τόλμησον εἰπεῖν, εὶ φρονεῖς, ὃ σ' ίστορῶ.

ΛΙΧΑΣ

πρὸς τὴν κρατοῦσαν Δηάνειραν, Οἰνέως  
κόρην δάμαρτά θ' Ἡρακλέους, εὶ μὴ κυρῶ  
λεύσσων μάταια, δεσπότιν τε τὴν ἐμήν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τοῦτ' αὐτὸν ἔχρηζον, τοῦτό σου μαθεῖν· λέγεις  
δέσποιναν εἶναι τήνδε σήν;

ΛΙΧΑΣ

δίκαια γάρ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τί δῆτα; ποίαν ἀξιοῦς δοῦναι δίκην,  
ἢν εύρεθῆς ἐς τήνδε μὴ δίκαιος ὡν;

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ΛΙΧΑΣ

πῶς μὴ δίκαιος; τί ποτε ποικίλας ἔχεις;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐδέν· σὺ μέντοι κάρτα τοῦτο δρῶν κυρεῖς.

ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἄπειμι· μῶρος δ' ἢ πάλαι κλύων σέθεν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐ, πρίν γ' ἀν εἴπης ίστορούμενος βραχύ.

ΛΙΧΑΣ

λέγ', εἴ τι χρήζεις· καὶ γὰρ οὐ σιγηλὸς εἰ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τὴν αἰχμάλωτον, ḥν ἔπεμψας ἐς δόμους,  
κάτοισθα δήπου;

## TRACHINIAE

MESSENGER

Hark, sirrah, look me in the face : dost know  
To whom thou speakest ?

LICHAS

Who art thou to ask me ?

MESSENGER

Be pleased to answer, if thou hast the wit.

LICHAS

To my most gracious mistress whom I serve,  
Daughter of Oeneus, spouse of Heracles,  
Deianira, if I be not blind.

MESSENGER

My question's answered to the point. Thou sayest  
She is thy sovereign.

LICHAS

Whom I am bound to serve.

MESSENGER

Then tell me what should be thy punishment,  
If in thy duty thou art proved to fail.

LICHAS

Fail in my duty ? What dark riddle is this ?

MESSENGER

My words are plain, the riddling speech is thine.

LICHAS

I go ; I was a fool to stay for thee.

MESSENGER

Depart, but answer one brief question first.

LICHAS

Ask what thou wilt ; thou hast a wagging tongue.

MESSENGER

That captive whom thou broughtest here—thou  
know'st

The maid I mean ?

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ΛΙΧΑΣ

φημί· πρὸς τὶ δ' ἴστορεῖς;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οῦκουν σὺ ταύτην, ἦν ὑπ' ἀγνοίας ὁρᾶς,  
Ίόλην ἔφασκες Εὐρύτου σπορὰν ἄγειν;

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ΛΙΧΑΣ

ποίοις ἐν ἀνθρώποισι; τίς πόθεν μολὼν  
σοὶ μαρτυρήσει ταῦτ' ἐμοῦ κλύειν πάρα;<sup>1</sup>

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πολλοῦσιν ἀστῶν· ἐν μέσῃ Τραχινίων  
ἀγορᾶ πολύς σου ταῦτά γ' εἰσήκουσ' ὅχλος.

ΛΙΧΑΣ

κλύειν γ' ἔφασκον· ταῦτὸ δ' οὐχὶ γίγνεται  
δόκησιν εἰπεῖν κὰξακριβῶσαι λόγον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ποίαν δόκησιν; οὐκ ἐπώμοτος λέγων  
δάμαρτ' ἔφασκες Ἡρακλεῖ ταύτην ἄγειν;

ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἐγὼ δάμαρτα; πρὸς θεῶν, φράσον, φίλη  
δέσποινα, τόνδε τίς ποτ' ἐστὶν ὁ ξένος.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὅς σοῦ παρὼν ἥκουσεν, ὡς ταύτης πόθῳ  
πόλις δαμείη πᾶσα, κούχη ή Λυδία  
πέρσειεν αὐτήν, ἀλλ' ὁ τῆσδ' ἔρως φανείς.

ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἄνθρωπος, ὡ δέσποιν', ἀποστήτω· τὸ γὰρ  
νοσοῦντι ληρεῖν ἀνδρὸς οὐχὶ σώφρονος.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

μή, πρός σε τοῦ κατ' ἄκρον Οἴταιον νάπος  
Διὸς καταστράπτοντος, ἐκκλέψης λόγου.

<sup>1</sup> παρών MSS., Bothe corr.

## TRACHINIAE

LICHAS

I know, and what of her ?

MESSENGER

Said'st thou not she thou scarce dost know by sight  
Was Iolè, the child of Eurytus ?

LICHAS

To whom and when ? What witness canst thou bring  
To vouch for hearing such a tale from me ?

MESSENGER

Scores of our townsfolk—all the multitude  
That heard thee at the great Trachinean mote.

LICHAS

They may have said so, but the vulgar bruit  
Of mere surmise is not strict evidence.

MESSENGER

'Surmise,' quotha ! Did'st thou not say on oath,  
'I am bringing home a bride for Heracles' ?

LICHAS

'Bringing a bride ?' Dear lady, tell me, pray,  
Who is this stranger ?

MESSENGER

One who heard thy tale  
How a whole city fell for love of her,  
That 'twas the passion kindled by her eyes,  
And not the Lydian queen who sacked the town.

LICHAS

Send him away, good lady ; 'tis not wise  
To bandy folly with a brain-sick fool.

DEIANIRA

Nay, by the god, I pray, who hurls his bolts  
On Oeta's wooded heights, hold nothing back ;

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

οὐ γὰρ γυναικὶ τοὺς λόγους ἐρεῖς κακῆ  
οὐδ' ἡτις οὐ κάτοιδε τάνθρωπων, ὅτι  
χαίρειν πέφυκεν οὐχὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἀει.

440

<sup>τ</sup>Ερωτι μέν νυν δοτις ἀντανίσταται  
πύκτης ὅπως ἐις χεῖρας, οὐ καλῶς φρονεῖ·  
οὗτος γὰρ ἄρχει καὶ θεῶν ὅπως θέλει,  
κάμοῦ γε πῶς δὲ οὐ χάτέρας οἴας γ' ἐμοῦ;  
ῶστ' εἰ τι τῷμῷ τ' ἀνδρὶ τῇδε τῇ νόσῳ  
ληφθέντι μεμπτός εἰμι, κάρτα μαίνομαι,  
ἢ τῇδε τῇ γυναικὶ τῇ μεταιτίᾳ  
τοῦ μηδὲν αἰσχροῦ μηδὲν ἐμοὶ κακοῦ τινος.  
οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτ' ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἐκ κείνου μαθὼν  
ψεύδει, μάθησιν οὐ καλὴν ἐκμανθάνεις.

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εἰ δὲ ἀντὸς αὐτὸν ὥδε παιδεύεις, ὅταν  
θέλῃς γενέσθαι χρηστός, ὁφθήσει κακός.  
ἀλλ' εἰπὲ πᾶν τάληθές· ως ἐλευθέρῳ  
ψευδεῖ καλεῖσθαι κὴρ πρόσεστιν οὐ καλή.  
ὅπως δὲ λήσεις, οὐδὲ τοῦτο γίγνεται·  
πολλοὶ γὰρ οἱς εἱρηκας, οἱ φράσοντος ἐμοί.  
κεὶ μὲν δέδοικας, οὐ καλῶς ταρβεῖς, ἐπεὶ  
τὸ μὴ πυθέσθαι, τοῦτό μ' ἀλγύνειεν ἄν.  
τὸ δὲ εἰδέναι τί δεινόν; οὐχὶ χάτέρας  
πλείστας ἀνὴρ εἰς Ἡρακλῆς ἔγημε δῆ;  
κοῦπτω τις αὐτῶν ἐκ γ' ἐμοῦ λόγου κακὸν  
ἡνέγκατ' οὐδὲ δινειδος· ἦδε τ' οὐδὲν ἀν εἰ  
κάρτ' ἐντακείη τῷ φιλεῖν, ἐπεὶ σφ' ἐγὼ  
φόκτηρα δὴ μάλιστα πρυσβλέψασ', ὅτι  
τὸ κάλλος αὐτῆς τὸν βίον διώλεσεν,  
καὶ γῆν πατρώαν οὐχ ἔκοῦσα δύσμορος  
ἐπερσε κάδουλωσεν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν  
ρέύτω κατ' οὐρον· σοὶ δὲ ἐγὼ φράζω κακὸν  
πρὸς ἄλλον είναι, πρὸς δὲ ἔμ' ἀψευδεῖν ἀεί,

460

## TRACHINIAE

To no ungenerous woman wilt thou speak,  
But one that knows the inconstancy of men,  
Who e'en in joys delight not in one kind.  
The gamester who would pit himself 'gainst Love  
Is ill advised. Love rules at will the gods,  
And me—why not then others weak as I?  
So were I mad indeed either to blame  
My husband stricken with love's malady,  
Or her the partner of his dalliance :  
That brings to them no shame or wrong to me.  
I have more sense. But if he taught thee thus  
To lie, the lesson thou hast learnt is base ;  
Or if thy fraud is self-taught, thou art like  
To prove most cruel, meaning to be kind.  
Nay, tell me the whole truth. The name of liar  
Is to the free-born man a deadly brand.  
And think not that thy lying will not out,  
For many heard thy tale and will inform me.  
Art thou afraid of me? Thy fears are vain.  
'Twould vex me much not to be told the truth ;  
To know it hurts not. Hath not Heracles  
Had loves before (no mortal more than he)  
And no one of them ever had harsh word  
Or taunt from me ; nor shall this maid, howe'er  
She dotes, consumed with passion, on my lord.  
Nay, my heart bled for pity seeing her  
Whose beauty was her bane ; poor innocent,  
Who brought to wrack and bondage her own land.  
All that is past and over, let it sail  
Adown the stream of time. But O, be thou,  
Whate'er thou art to others, true to me.

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πείθου λεγούση χρηστά, κού μέμψει χρόνῳ  
γυναικὶ τῇδε κάπ' ἐμοῦ κτήσει χαριν.

470

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἀλλ', ὡς φίλη δέσποιν', ἐπεί σε μανθάνω  
θυητὴν φρονοῦσαν θυητὰ κούκ ἀγνώμονα,  
πᾶν σοι φράσω τάληθὲς οὐδὲ κρυψομαι.  
ἔστιν γὰρ οὔτως ὥσπερ οὗτος ἐννέπει.  
ταύτης ο δεινὸς ἴμερός ποθ' Ἡρακλῆ  
διῆλθε, καὶ τῆσδ' εἴνεχ' ἡ πολύφθορος  
καθηρέθη πατρῷος Οἰχαλία δόρει.  
καὶ ταῦτα, δεῖ γὰρ καὶ τὸ πρὸς κείνου λέγειν,  
οὗτ' εἴπει κρύπτειν οὕτ' ἀπηρνήθη ποτέ,  
ἀλλ' αὐτός, ὡς δέσποινα, δειμαίνων τὸ σὸν  
μὴ στέρινον ἀλγύνοιμι τοῖσδε τοῖς λόγοις,  
ῆμαρτον, εἴ τι τήνδ' ἄμαρτίαν νέμεις.  
ἐπει γε μὲν δὴ πάντ' ἐπιστασαι λόγον,  
κείνου τε καὶ σὴν ἔξισου κοινὴν χάριν  
καὶ στέργε τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ βούλου λόγους,  
οὓς εἶπας ἐς τήνδ' ἐμπέδως εἰρηκέναι·  
ώς τāλλ' ἐκεῖνος πάντ' ἀριστεύων χεροῖν  
τοῦ τῆσδ' ἔρωτος εἰς ἅπανθ' ἡσσων ἔφυ.

480

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἀλλ' ὡδε καὶ φρονοῦμεν ὥστε ταῦτα δρᾶν,  
κούτοι νόσον γ' ἐπακτὸν ἔξαρούμεθα,  
θεοῖσι δυσμαχοῦντες. ἀλλ' εἰσω στέγης  
χωρῶμεν, ὡς λόγων τ' ἐπιστολὰς φέρης,  
ἄ τ' ἀντὶ δώρων δῶρα χρὴ προσαρμοσαι,  
καὶ ταῦτ' ἄγγες· κενὸν γὰρ οὐ δίκαια σε  
χωρεῖν προσελθόνθ' ὡδε σὺν πολλῷ στόλῳ.

490

## TRACHINIAE

### CHORUS

Heed her, she counsels well, and thou shalt win  
Her commendation soon, and thanks from me.

### LICHAS

Nay, then, dear mistress, since I see 'thou hast  
A human feeling for the infirmities  
Of poor humanity, I will tell thee all  
Frankly and fully. 'Tis as this man saith ;  
The overmastering passion that inspired  
The soul of Heracles was for this maid,  
And for her sake he sacked Oechalia,  
Her desolate home. This much in his defence  
I needs must add, he ne'er himself denied  
Nor bade me hide it from thee. It was I,  
Fearing to wound thee, lady, I who sinned,  
If such concealment should be deemed a sin.  
Now, lady, that thou know'st the tale in full,  
For both your sakes—thine own no less than his—  
Suffer this maiden gladly, and abide  
By the kind words thou spak'st concerning her.  
For he who never yielded to a foe,  
By her was vanquished and by love laid low.

### DEIANIRA

This way my thoughts too, as thou bidst, inclined,  
Nor will I fondly aggravate my trouble  
By warring against Heaven. Let us indoors,  
That thou may'st bear a message to my lord,  
And, as a fit return for gifts received,  
My gift withal. It were not meet that thou  
Should'st leave me empty-handed, having come  
Accompanied by such a goodly train.

[*Exeunt LICHAS and DEIANIRA.*

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

μέγα τι σθένος ἀ Κύπρις ἐκφέρεται νίκας ἀεί.

καὶ τὰ μὲν θεῶν

παρέβαν, καὶ ὅπως Κρονίδαν ἡπάτασεν οὐ λέγω, 500  
οὐδὲ τὸν ἔννυχον "Αἰδαν

ἢ Ποσειδάωνα τινάκτορα γαίας·

ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τάνδ' ἄρ' ἄκοιτιν

τίνεις ἀμφίγυνοι κατέβαν πρὸ γάμων,

— τίνεις πάμπληκτα παγκόνιτά τ' ἐξῆλθον ἄεθλ'  
ἀγώνων;

ἀντ.

οἱ μὲν ἦν ποταμοῦ σθένος, ὑψίκερω τετραόρου  
φάσμα ταύρου,

'Αχελῷος ἀπ' Οἰνιαδᾶν, οἱ δὲ Βακχίας ἀπὸ

510

ἡλθε παλίντονα Θήβας

τόξα καὶ λόγχας ρόπαλόν τε τινάσσων,

παῖς Διός· οἱ τότ' ἀολλεῖς

ἴσαν ἐς μέσον ιέμενοι λεχέων·

μόνα δ' εὐλεκτρος ἐν μέσῳ Κύπρις ραβδονόμει  
ξυνοῦσα.

τότ' ἦν χερός, ἦν δὲ τόξων πάταγος,  
ταυρείων τ' ἀνάμιγδα κεράτων·

ἦν δ' ἀμφίπλεκτοι κλίμακες,

520

ἴν δὲ μετώπων ὄλόεντα

πλήγματα, καὶ στόνος ἀμφοῖν,

## TRACHINIAE-

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

Many a trophy of war the Cyprian bears away ;  
To tell of the triumphs she wins o'er gods I may not  
stay,  
How the Olympian King and the Lord of the realms  
of night,  
Yea, and the Shaker of Earth, Poseidon, owns her  
might.  
Fitter theme for my song the well-matched champion  
pair,  
Rivals who entered the lists to win the hand of the  
fair.  
Dread the strife, and the sky with dust of battle was  
full.

(*Ant.*)

One was a river-god, four-footed and horned like a  
bull,  
Oeneadae was his home and Acheloüs his name ;  
But from Thebè, beloved of Bacchus, the other came,  
With bow and with brandished club and javelins  
twain at his side,  
Child of Zeus. So they met and fought for a winsome  
bride.  
But with her umpire wand the Cyprian Queen was  
there,  
Goddess who rules the fight and assigns the hand of  
the fair.

Hark ! the thud of fisted blow,  
Crash of horns and twanging bow,  
Grapplings close-entwined, and now  
Buttings of the hornèd brow ;  
And amid the storm, in tones  
Faint and muffled, deep-drawn groans.

## TPAXINIAI

ἀ δ' εὐώπις ἀβρὰ  
 τηλαυγεῖ παρ' ὄχθῳ  
 ἡστο, τὸν δὲ προσμένουσ' ἀκοίταν.  
 ἀγῶν δὲ μαργᾶ<sup>1</sup> μὲν οἴλα φράξω·  
 τὸ δ' ἀμφινείκητον δύμα νύμφας  
 ἐλεινὸν ἀμμένει·  
 κάπο ματρὸς ἄφαρ βέβακεν,  
 ὥστε πόρτις ἑρήμα.

530

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἥμος, φίλαι, κατ' οἰκον ὁ ξένος θροεῖ  
 ταῖς αἰχμαλώτοις παισὶν ως ἐπ' ἔξοδῳ,  
 τῆμος θυραῖος ἥλθον ως ὑμᾶς λάθρᾳ,  
 τὰ μὲν φράσουσα χερσὶν ἀτεχνησάμην,  
 τὰ δὲ οἴλα πάσχω συγκατοικτιουμένη.  
 κόρην γάρ, οἵμαι δὲ οὐκέτ', ἀλλ' ἔζευγμένην,  
 παρεισδέδεγμαι φόρτον ὥστε ναυτίλος,  
 λωβητὸν ἐμπόλημα τῆς ἐμῆς φρενός.  
 καὶ νῦν δύ' οὐσαι μίμνομεν μιᾶς ὑπὸ<sup>540</sup>  
 χλαίνης ὑπαγκάλισμα. τοιάδ' Ἡρακλῆς,  
 ο πιστὸς ἡμῶν κάγαθὸς καλούμενος,  
 οἰκούρι ἀντέπεμψε τοῦ μακροῦ χρόνου.  
 ἐγὼ δὲ θυμοῦσθαι μὲν οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι  
 νοσοῦντι κείνῳ πολλὰ τῇδε τῇ νόσῳ·  
 τὸ δὲ αὖ ξυνοικεῖν τῇδ' ὁμοῦ τίς ἀν γυνὴ  
 δύναιτο, κοινωνοῦσα τῶν αὐτῶν γάμων;  
 ὅρῳ γὰρ ἥβην τὴν μὲν ἔρπουσαν πρόσω,  
 τὴν δὲ φθίνουσαν ὃν ἄφαρπάζειν φιλεῖ  
 ὀφθαλμὸς ἄνθος, τῶν δὲ ὑπεκτρέπει πόδα.  
 ταῦτ' οὖν φοβοῦμαι μὴ πόσις μὲν Ἡρακλῆς<sup>550</sup>  
 ἐμὸς καλῆται, τῆς νεωτέρας δὲ ἀνήρ.

<sup>1</sup> ἐγὼ δὲ μάτηρ of MSS. is clearly corrupt. Jebb suggests, but does not print, ἀγῶν δὲ μαργᾶ.

## TRACHINIAE

But afar upon the sward  
Sate the tender tearful maid,  
While in doubt the battle swayed,  
Musing who should be her lord.  
Long she sate and wept forlorn,  
Then, like heifer driven to stray,  
Weanèd, from her dam away,  
Sudden from her home was torn.

*Enter DEIANIRA.*

DEIANIRA

Friends, while our herald guest is in the house  
Conversing with the captives, ere he leaves,  
I have stolen forth to speak with you alone ;  
Partly to tell you what my hands have wrought,  
And to command your sympathy. This maid—  
No maiden she but mistress now, methinks—  
I have harboured (as some merchant takes on board  
An over-freight) to wreck my peace of mind.  
And now we twain must share a common couch,  
To one lord wedded. Such the recompense  
That Heracles, whom I was wont to extol  
As model of all virtue, makes me now  
For ail my faithful service as a wife.  
Yet to be wroth with one like him, infect  
With this love-plague, I cannot bring myself ;  
But then to share his bed and board with her—  
What wife could bear it ? She's the budding rose,  
And I o'erblown and withering on the thorn.  
Men pull the flower and when the bloom has fled  
Fling it far from them. This then is my fear,  
That Heracles will leave me the bare name  
Of consort, while the younger is his wife.

ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ἀλλ' οὐ γάρ, ὥσπερ εἰπον, ὁργαίνειν καλὸν  
γυναικα νοῦν ἔχουσαν· ἡ δ' ἔχω, φίλαι,  
λυτήριον λώφημα,<sup>1</sup> τῆδ' ὑμῖν φράσω.  
ἢν μοι παλαιὸν δῶρον ἀρχαίου ποτὲ  
θηρός, λέβητι χαλκέῳ κεκρυμμένον,  
ἢ παῖς ἔτ' οὐσα τοῦ δασυστέρου παρὰ  
Νέσσου φθίνοντος ἐκ φουῶν ἀνειλόμην,  
ὅς τὸν βαθύρρουν ποταμὸν Εὔηνον βροτοὺς  
μισθοῦν πόρευε χερσίν, οὕτε πομπίμοις  
κώπαις ἐρεσσων οὕτε λαίφεσιν νεώς.  
ὅς κάμε, τὸν πατρῷον ἡνίκα στόλον  
ξὺν Ἡρακλεῖ τὸ πρῶτον εὖνις ἐσπόμην,  
φέρων ἐπ' ὄμοις, ἡνίκ' ἡ μέσῳ πόρῳ,  
ψαύει ματαίαις χερσίν· ἐκ δ' ἡνσ' ἐγώ,  
χὼ Ζηνὸς εὐθὺς παῖς ἐπιστρέψας χεροῖν  
ἡκεν κομήτην ίόν· ἐσ δὲ πλεύμονας  
στέρνων διερροίζησεν. ἐκθνήσκων δ' ὁ θὴρ  
τοσοῦτον εἰπε· παῖ γέροντος Οἰνέως,  
τοσόνδ' ὄνήσει τῶν ἐμῶν, ἐὰν πίθῃ,  
πορθμῶν, ὅθούνεχ' ὑστάτην σ' ἐπεμψ' ἐγώ·  
ἐὰν γὰρ ἀμφίθρεπτον αἷμα τῶν ἐμῶν  
σφαγῶν ἐνέγκη χερσίν, ἡ μελαγχόλους  
ἔβαψεν ίοὺς θρέμμα Λερναίας ὕδρας,  
ἔσται φρενός σοι τοῦτο κηλητήριον  
τῆς Ἡρακλείας, ὥστε μήτιν' εἰσιδὼν  
στέρξει γυναικα κείνος ἀντὶ σοῦ πλέον.  
τοῦτ' ἐννοήσασ', ὡ φίλαι, δόμοις γὰρ ἦν  
κείνου θανόντος ἐγκεκλημένον καλῶς,  
χιτῶνα τόνδ' ἔβαψα, προσβαλοῦσ' ὅσα  
ζῶν κείνος εἰπε· καὶ πεπείρανται τάδε.

560

570

580

<sup>1</sup> λύπημα MSS., Jebb corr.

## TRACHINIAE

But, as I said, 'tis folly to be wroth.  
I have a better way to ease my pain,  
A remedy that I will now reveal.  
Stored in an urn of brass I long have kept  
A keepsake of the old-world monster ; this  
The shaggy-breasted Nessus gave to me  
While yet a girl, and from his wounded side  
I took it as he lay at point of death ;  
Nessus who ferried wayfarers for hire  
Across the deep Evenus in his arms,  
Without the help of oar or sail. I too,  
When first I went with Heracles, a bride  
Assigned him by my sire; I too was borne  
On his broad shoulders, and in mid-stream he  
Touched me with wanton hands. I shrieked aloud,  
He turned, the son of Zeus, and straight let fly  
A winged shaft that, whizzing in the air,  
Pierced to the lungs. Faint with approaching death  
The Centaur spake : " Daughter of Oeneus old,  
This profit of my ferrying at least,  
As last of all I've ferried, shall be thine,  
If thou wilt heed me. Gather with thy hands  
The clotted gore that curdles round my wound,  
Just where the Hydra, Lerna's monstrous breed,  
Has tinged the barbed arrow with her gall.  
Thus shalt thou have a charm to bind the heart  
Of Heracles, and never shall he look  
On wife or maid to love her more than thee."  
So I bethought me of this philtre, friends,  
Which since the Centaur's death I had preserved  
Locked in a secret place, and I have smeared  
This robe as he directed while he lived.  
My work is now accomplished. Far from me

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

κακὰς δὲ τόλμας μητ' ἐπισταίμην ἐγὼ  
μήτ' ἐκμάθοιμ, τάς τε τολμώσας στυγῶ·  
φίλτροις δ' ἔαν πως τήνδ' ὑπερβαλώμεθα  
τὴν παῖδα καὶ θέλκτροισι τοῖς ἐφ' Ἡρακλεῖ,  
μεμηχάνηται τοῦργον, εῦ τι μὴ δοκῶ  
πράσσειν μάταιον· εἰ δὲ μή, πεπαύσομαι.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἴ τις ἔστι πίστις ἐν τοῖς δρωμένοις,  
δοκεῖς παρ' ἡμῖν οὐ βεβουλεῦσθαι κακῶς.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οὕτως ἔχει γ' ἡ πίστις, ὡς τὸ μὲν δοκεῖν  
ἔνεστι, πείρᾳ δ' οὐ προσωμίλησά πω·

590

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἰδέναι χρὴ δρῶσαν, ὡς οὐδὲ εἰ δοκεῖς  
ἔχειν, ἔχοις ἀν γνῶμα, μὴ πειρωμένη.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἀλλ' αὐτίκ' εἰσόμεσθα, τόνδε γὰρ βλέπω  
θυραιὸν ἥδη· διὰ τάχους δ' ἐλεύσεται.  
μόνον παρ' ὑμῶν εὐ στεγοίμεθ· ὡς σκότῳ  
κἀν αἰσχρὰ πράσσης, οὐποτ' αἰσχύνη πεσεῖ.

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

τί χρὴ ποεῖν; σήμαινε, τέκνον Οἰνέως,  
ὡς ἐσμὲν ἥδη τῷ μακρῷ χρόνῳ βραδεῖς.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἀλλ' αὐτὰ δή σοι ταῦτα καὶ πράσσω, Λίχα, 600  
ἔως σὺ ταὶς ἔσωθεν ἡγορῷ ξέναις,  
ὅπως φέρης μοι τόνδε ταναῦφῆ πέπλον,  
δώρημ' ἔκείνῳ τάνδρῳ τῆς ἐμῆς χερός.  
διδοὺς δὲ τόνδε φράξ· ὅπως μηδεὶς βροτῶν  
κείνου πάροιθεν ἀμφιδύσεται χροτό,  
μηδὲ ὅψεται νιν μήτε φέγγος ἥλιου

## TRACHINIAE

Be thought of evil witch-craft or desire  
To learn it ; wives who try such arts I hate.  
But how by love-charms I may win again  
My Heracles and wean him from this maid,  
This I have planned—unless indeed I seem  
O'erwanton ; if ye think so, I desist.

### CHORUS

If thou hast warranty thy charm will work,  
We think that thou hast counselled not amiss.

### DEIANIRA

No warrant, for I have not tried it yet,  
But of its potency I am assured.

### CHORUS

Without experiment there cannot be  
Assurance, howsoever firm thy faith.

### DEIANIRA

Well, we shall know ere long, for there I see  
Lichas just starting ; he is at the gate.  
Only do you be secret ; e'en dark deeds  
If they be done in darkness bring no blame.  
*Enter LICHAS*

### LICHAS

What are thy orders, child of Oeneus, say ;  
Already I have tarried over long.

### DEIANIRA

Whilst thou wert talking with the maids within  
I have been busied, Lichas, with thy charge,  
This robe ; 'twas woven by my hands, a gift  
That thou must carry to my absent lord.  
Instruct him straitly, when thou givest it,  
That he, and none before him, put it on ;  
And let no sunlight, nor the altar flame  
Behold it, nor the fire upon his hearth,

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

μήθ' ἔρκος ἱερὸν μιῆτ' ἐφέστιον σέλας,  
πρὶν κεῖνος αὐτὸν φανερὸς ἐμφανῶς σταθεὶς  
δείξῃ θεοῖσιν ἡμέρᾳ ταυροσφάγῳ.  
οὗτῳ γὰρ ηὔγμην, εἰ ποτ' αὐτὸν ἐς δόμους  
ἴδοιμι σωθέντ' ή κλύοιμι πανδίκως,  
στελεῖν χιτῶνι τῷδε καὶ φανεῦν θεοῖς  
θυτῆρα καινῷ καινὸν ἐν πεπλώματι.  
καὶ τῶνδ' ἀποίσεις σῆμ', δὲ κεῖνος εὐμαθὴς  
σφραγῖδος ἔρκει τῷδ' ἐπὸν μαθήσεται.<sup>1</sup>  
ἀλλ' ἔρπε, καὶ φύλασσε πρῶτα μὲν νόμον,  
τὸ μὴ πιθυμεῖν πομπὸς ὧν περισσὰ δρᾶν.  
ἔπειθ' ὅπως ἀνὴρ χάρις κείνου τέ σοι  
κάμον ἔννελθοῦσ', ἐξ ἀπλῆς διπλῆς φανῆ.

610

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἀλλ' εἴπερ Ἐρμοῦ τήνδε πομπεύω τέχνην  
βέβαιον, οὐ τι μὴ σφαλῶ γ' ἐν σοί ποτε,  
τὸ μὴ οὐ τόδ' ἄγγος ὡς ἔχει δεῖξαι φέρων,  
λόγων τε πίστιν ὧν λέγεις<sup>2</sup> ἐφαρμοσαι.

620

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

στείχοις ἀνὴρ· καὶ γὰρ ἐξεπίστασαι  
τά γ' ἐν δόμοισιν ὡς ἔχοντα τυγχάνει.

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἐπίσταμαι τε καὶ φράσω σεσωσμένα.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἀλλ' οὐσθα μὲν δὴ καὶ τὰ τῆς ξένης ὄρων  
προσδέγματ', αὐτὴν ὡς ἐδεξάμην φίλως.

### ΛΙΧΑΣ

ῶστ' ἐκπλαγῆναι τούμὸν ἡδονῆ κέαρ.

<sup>1</sup> ἐπ' ὅμμα θήσεται MSS., Billerbeck corr.

<sup>2</sup> ξχεις MSS., Wunder corr.

## TRACHINIAE

Till he stand forth in sight of all arrayed  
For gods to see it, at some solemn feast.  
For I had vowed, if ever I should see  
Or hear for certain of his safe return,  
To invest him in this newly-woven robe,  
And so present him duly to the gods,  
A votary for the sacrifice new-dight.  
And as a token point him out this seal,  
The impress of my signet-ring, that he  
Will surely recognise.

Now go thy way,  
And heed the rule of messengers, nor let  
Thy zeal outrun thy orders, but so act  
That thou may'st win a double meed of thanks  
For service rendered both to him and me.

### LICHAS

Call me no master of the mystery  
Of Hermes, if in ought I trip or fail—  
Deliver not this casket as it is,  
And add in attestation of the gift  
Thy very words.

### DEIANIRA

Thou may'st be going now.  
How things are in the house thou know'st full well.

### LICHAS

I know, and will report all safe and sound.

### DEIANIRA

And thou canst tell him of the captive maid—  
How kindly I received and welcomed her.

### LICHAS

Yea, I was filled with wonder and delight.

# ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

## ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τί δῆτ' ἀν ἄλλο γ' ἐννέποις; δέδοικα γὰρ  
μὴ πρῷ λέγοις ἀν τὸν πόθον τὸν ἔξ ἐμοῦ,  
πρὶν εἰδέναι τάκεῖθεν εὶ ποθούμεθα.

630

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ῳ ναύλοχα καὶ πετραῖα στρ. α'  
θερμὰ λουτρὰ καὶ πάγους  
Οἴτας παραναιετάοντες, οἴ τε μέσσαν Μηλίδα πὰρ  
λίμναν  
χρυσαλακάτου τ' ἀκτὰν κόρας,  
ἔνθ' Ἑλλάνων ἀγοραὶ  
Πυλάτιδες κλέονται.

ὁ καλλιβόας τάχ' ὑμῖν ἀντ. α' 640  
αὐλὸς οὐκ ἀναρσίαν  
ἀχῶν καναχὰν ἐπάνεισιν, ἀλλὰ θείας ἀντίλυρον  
μούσας.

ὁ γὰρ Διὸς Ἀλκμήνας κόρος  
σοῦται πάσας ἀρετᾶς  
λάφυρ' ἔχων ἐπ' οἴκους.

δν ἀπόπτολιν εἴχομεν παντᾶ,  
δυοκαιδεκάμηνον ἀμμένουσαι  
χρόνον, πελάγιον, ἵδριες οὐδέν.  
ἄ δέ οἱ φίλα δάμαρ  
τάλαιναν δυστάλαινα καρδίαν  
πάγκλαυτος αἰὲν ὥλλυτο.  
νῦν δ' Ἄρης οἰστρηθεὶς  
ἔξέλυσ' ἐπίπονον ἀμέραν.

στρ. β'

650

ἀφίκοιτ' ἀφίκοιτο· μὴ σταίη  
πολύκωπον ὅχημα ναὸς αὐτῷ,

ἀντ. β'

## TRACHINIAE

### DEIANIRA

What further message have I? None, I fear;  
To tell him of my longing were too soon,  
Before I know that he too longs for me.

[*Exeunt LICHAS and DEIANIRA.*

### CHORUS

Ye who on Oeta dwell, (Str. 1)  
Or where the hot springs well  
And down the cliffs their steaming waters pour;  
Or by the inmost shore  
Of Malis, where the golden-arrowed Maid  
Haunts the green glade,  
Where at thy Gates, far-famed from times of old,  
Greeks counsel hold;

Soon shall the clear-voiced flute (Ant. 1)  
Sweet as Apollo's lute,  
Echo amid your hills and vales again,  
No sad funereal strain,  
But hymeneals meet for gods to hear.  
For now he draweth near,  
The Zeus-born conqueror, Alcmena's son,  
His victory won.

Him twelve weary months we wait. (Str. 2)  
Wondering what may be his fate;  
And his true wife wastes away,  
Pining at her lord's delay.  
But the War-god, with his foes  
Wroth, has given at last repose.

Spread the sail and ply the oar, (Ant. 2)  
Waft him, breezes, from the shore,

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

πρὶν τάνδε πρὸς πόλιν ἀνύσειε,  
νασιώτιν ἐστίαν  
ἀμείψας, ἔνθα κλήζεται θυτήρ·  
οὗτον μόλοι πανίμερος,<sup>1</sup>  
τὰς πειθοῦς παγχρίστῳ  
συγκραθεὶς ἐπὶ προφάσει φάρους.<sup>2</sup>

660

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

γυναικες, ώς δέδοικα μὴ περαιτίρω  
πεπραγμέν' ή μοι πάνθ' ὅσ' ἀρτίως ἔδρων.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστι, Δηάνειρα, τέκνου Οἰνέως;

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οὐκ οἰδ'. ἀθυμῶ δ', εἰ φανήσομαι τάχα  
κακὸν μέγ' ἐκπράξασ' ἀπ' ἐλπίδος καλῆς.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐ δή τι τῶν σῶν Ἡρακλεῖ δωρημάτων;

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

μάλιστά γ', φστε μήποτ' ἀν προθυμίαν  
ἀδηλον ἔργου τῷ παραινέσαι λαβεῖν.

670

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

δίδαξον, εἰ διδακτόν, ἐξ ὅτου φοβεῖ.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τοιοῦτον ἐκβέβηκεν οἰον, ἦν φράσω,  
γυναικες, ὑμᾶς<sup>3</sup> θαῦμ' ἀνέλπιστον μαθεῖν.  
ὦ γάρ τὸν ἐνδυτῆρα πέπλον ἀρτίως  
ἔχριον, ἀργῆς οἰος εὐέρους πόκος,<sup>4</sup>  
τοῦτ' ἡφάνισται διάβορον πρὸς οὐδενὸς  
τῶν ἔνδον, ἀλλ' ἐδεστὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ φθίνει,

<sup>1</sup> πανάμερος MSS., Mudge corr.

<sup>2</sup> θηρός MSS., Haupt corr.

<sup>3</sup> ὑμῶν MSS., Jebb corr.

<sup>4</sup> ἀργῆτ' . . . πόκοφ MSS., Lobeck corr.

## TRACHINIAE

Where to Zeus, his vows all paid,  
Sacrifices he hath made.  
May the magic mantle fire  
All his heart with fond desire,  
Speed him to his true love's arms  
Captive to her subtle charms.

*Enter DEIANIRA.*

DEIANIRA

Maidens, I fear I have been over bold  
And ill advised in all I did of late.

CHORUS

What mean'st thou, Deianira, Oeneus' child.

DEIANIRA

I know not, but I tremble lest deceived  
By fond hopes I have wrought a grievous harm.

CHORUS

Thou speak'st not of thy gift to Heracles?

DEIANIRA

'Tis so; and I would henceforth counsel none  
To act in haste, unless the issue's clear.

CHORUS

Tell, if thou may'st, the cause of thy alarm.

DEIANIRA

My friends, a thing has come to pass, so strange  
That, if I tell it, you will deem you hear  
A miracle. The flock of wool wherewith  
E'en now I smeared the festal robe ('twas plucked  
From a white fleece) has disappeared, untouched  
By aught within the house, but self-consumed

ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

καὶ ψῆ κατ' ἄκρας σπιλάδοις· ὡς δ' εἰδῆς ἄπαν,  
ἢ τοῦτ' ἐπράχθη, μείζον' ἔκτενῷ λόγον.  
ἐγὼ γὰρ ὧν οὐ θήρ με Κένταυρος, πονῶν  
πλευρὰν πικρᾶ γλωχῖνι, προυδιδάξατο  
παρῆκα θεσμῶν οὐδεν, ἀλλ' ἐσφεύγομην  
χαλκῆς ὅπως δύσνιπτον ἐκ δέλτου γραφήν.  
καί μοι τάδ' ἦν πρόρρητα καὶ τοιαῦτ' ἔδρων·  
τὸ φάρμακον τοῦτ' ἀπυρον ἀκτῖνός τ' ἀεὶ<sup>680</sup>  
θερμῆς ἄθικτον ἐν μυχοῖς σφέειν ἐμέ,  
ἔως νιν ἀρτίχριστον ἀρμόσαιμί που.  
κᾶδρων τοιαῦτα. οὐν δ', δτ' ἦν ἐργαστέον,  
ἔχρισα μὲν κατ' οἰκου ἐν δόμοις κρυφῆ  
μαλλῳ, σπάσασα κτησίου βοτοῦ λάχνην,  
κάθηκα συμπτύξασ' ἀλαμπὲς ἥλιον  
κοῖλῳ ζυγάστρῳ δῶρον, ὕσπερ εἴδετε.  
εἰσω δ' ἀποστείχουσα δέρκομαι φάτιν  
ἄφραστον, ἀξύμβλητον ἀνθρώπῳ μαθεῖν.  
τὸ γὰρ κάταγμα τυγχάνω ρίψασά πως·  
τῆς οἵος, φ προύχριον, ἐς μέσην φλόγα,  
ἀκτῖν' ἐς ἥλιωτιν· ὡς δ' ἐθάλπετο,  
ρεῖ πᾶν ἀδηλον καὶ κατέψηκται χθονί,  
μορφῇ μάλιστ' είκαστὸν ὕστε πρίονος  
ἐκβρώματ' ἀν βλέψειας ἐν τομῇ ξύλου.  
τοιὸνδε κεῖται προπετές· ἐκ δὲ γῆς, δθεν  
προύκειτ', ἀναζεουσι θρομβώδεις ἀφροί,  
γλαυκῆς ὀπώρας ὕστε πίονος ποτοῦ  
χυθέντος εἰς γῆν Βακχίας ἀπ' ἀμπέλου.  
ὅστ' οὐκ ἔχω τάλαινα ποι γνώμης πέσω·  
όρῳ δέ μ' ἔργον δεινὸν ἔξειργασμένην.  
πόθεν γὰρ ἀν ποτ', ἀντὶ τοῦ θυήσκων οὐ θήρ  
ἐμοὶ παρέσχ' εὔνοιαν, ἡς ἔθυησχ' ὑπερ;  
οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ τὸν βαλόντ' ἀποφθίσαι

## TRACHINIAE,

It wasted, melting on the flags, away.  
But all that chanced I will relate in full.  
The precepts given me by the Centaur-beast,  
What time the barb was rankling in his side,  
Fixed in my memory, like some ordinance  
Graven on brass indelible, I kept.  
All that he then commanded me I did :  
He bade me hide in some dark nook the salve,  
Remote from firelight and the sun's hot ray,  
Till I had need to use it, freshly smeared.  
And so I did, and, when the occasion rose,  
I took a tuft of wool that I had plucked  
From one of our home flock ; therewith I spread  
The unguent in my chamber privily ;  
Then folded and within its coffer laid,  
Safe from the sunlight, as ye saw, my gift.  
But as I passed indoors behold a sight  
Portentous, well nigh inconceivable.  
It chanced that I had thrown the hank of wool  
Used for the smearing into the full blaze  
Of sunlight ; with the gradual warmth dissolved  
It shrank and shrivelled up till naught was left  
Save a fine powder, likest to the dust  
That strews the ground when sawyers are at work—  
Mere dust and ashes. But from out the spot  
Where lay the strewments clotted froth upwelled,  
As when the spilth of Bacchus, from the grapes  
New pressed and purple, on the ground is poured.  
Thus I for trouble know not where to turn,  
And only see a fearful thing I have done.  
Why should the dying Centaur then have shown  
Regard for me, the author of his death ?  
Impossible ! no, he was cozening me,

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

χρήζων ἔθελγέ μ'. ὡν ἐγὼ μεθύστερον,  
ὅτ' οὐκέτ' ἀρκεῖ, τὴν μάθησιν ἄρνυμαι.  
μόνη γὰρ αὐτόν, εἴ τι μὴ ψευσθήσομαι  
γνώμης, ἐγὼ δύστηνος ἔξαποφθερῶ.  
τὸν γὰρ βαλόντ' ἄτρακτον οἶδα καὶ θεὸν  
Χείρωνα πημήναντα, χῶνπερ ἀν θίγη,  
φθείρει τὰ πάντα κυάδαλ'. ἐκ δὲ τοῦδ' ὅδε  
σφαγῶν διελθὼν ἵὸς αἷματος μέλας  
πῶς οὐκ ὄλει καὶ τόνδε; δόξῃ γοῦν ἐμῇ.  
καίτοι δέδοκται, κεῖνος εἰ σφαλήσεται,  
ταύτη σὺν ὄρμῇ κάμε συνθανεῖν ἄμα.  
ζῆν γὰρ κακῶς κλύουσαν οὐκ ἀνασχετόν,  
ἥτις προτιμᾷ μὴ κακὴ πεφυκέναι.

710

ΧΟΡΟΣ  
ταρβεῖν μὲν ἔργα δείν' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει,  
τὴν δ' ἐλπίδ' οὐ χρὴ τῆς τύχης κρίνειν πάρος.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τοῖς μὴ καλοῖς βουλεύμασιν  
οὐδὲ ἐλπίς, ἥτις καὶ θράσος τι προξενεῖ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ τοῖς σφαλεῖσι μὴ 'ξ ἐκουσίας  
ὄργη πέπειρα, τῆς σε τυγχάνειν πρέπει.

### ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τοιαῦτα δ' ἀν λέξειν οὐχ ὁ τοῦ κακοῦ  
κοινωνός, ἀλλ' φί μηδέν ἔστ' οἴκοι βαρύ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

σιγᾶν ἀν ἀρμόζοι σε τὸν πλείω λόγον,  
εἴ μή τι λέξεις παιδὶ τῷ σαυτῆς· ἐπεὶ  
πάρεστι, μαστὴρ πατρὸς δι πρὶν φέντο.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

ὦ μῆτερ, ὡς ἀν ἐκ τριῶν σ' ἐν εἰλόμην,  
ἢ μηκέτ' εἴναι ζῶσαν, ἢ σεσωσμένην

720

730

## TRACHINIAE

And sought, through me, his slayer to undo.  
Too late, too late, when knowledge naught avails,  
My eyes are opened. I alone am doomed,  
(Unless my fears prove false) to slay my lord.  
I know the shaft that slew the Centaur scathed  
E'en Cheiron, though a god, and any beast  
It touches dies. So the black venomed gore  
That from the wound of Nessus oozed must slay  
Likewise my lord. Thus I, alas, must think.  
Howbeit I am resolved, if fall he must,  
The selfsame stroke of fate shall end my days.  
What woman noble born would dare live on  
Dishonoured when her fair repute is gone ?

### CHORUS

'Tis true dread perils threaten ; yet 'twere well  
To cherish hope till the event be known.

### DEIANIRA

They who have counselled ill cannot admit  
One ray of hope to fortify their soul.

### CHORUS

Men will not look severely on an act  
Unwittingly committed, as was thine.

### DEIANIRA

With a good conscience one might urge this plea  
Which ill becomes a partner in the crime.

### CHORUS

'Twere better to refrain from further speech,  
Unless thou wouldest address thy son ; for he  
Who went to seek his father is at hand.

*Enter HYLLUS.*

### HYLLUS

Mother, I would that of three wishes one  
Were granted me—that thou wert lying dead,

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ἄλλου κεκλήσθαι μητέρ', ἡ λώους φρένας  
τῶν νῦν παρουσῶν τῶνδ' ἀμείψασθαι ποθεν.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τί δ' ἐστίν, ὡς παῖ, πρός γ' ἐμοῦ στυγούμενον;

ΤΛΛΟΣ

τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν σὸν ἵσθι, τὸν δὲ ἐμὸν λέγω  
πατέρα, κατακτείνασσα τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.

740

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οἴμοι, τίν' ἔξήνεγκας, ὡς τέκνου, λόγουν;

ΤΛΛΟΣ

δν οὐχ οἰόν τε μὴ οὐ τελεσθῆναι· τὸ γὰρ  
φανθὲν τίς ἀν δύναιτ' ἀν ἀγένητου ποεῖν;

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

πῶς εἰπας, ὡς παῖ; τοῦ παρ' ἀνθρώπων μαθὼν  
ἀξηλον οὕτως ἔργουν εἰργάσθαι με φής;

ΤΛΛΟΣ

αὐτὸς βαρεῖαν ξυμφορὰν ἐν δύμμασιν  
πατρὸς δεδορκῶς κού κατὰ γλῶσσαν κλύων.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ποῦ δὲ ἐμπελάζεις τάνδρὶ καὶ παρίστασαι;

ΤΛΛΟΣ

εὶ χρὴ μαθεῖν σε, πάντα δὴ φωνεῖν χρεών.

ὅθ' εἰρπε κλεινὴν Εύρύτου πέρσας πόλιν,

νίκης ἄγων τροπαῖα κάκροθίνια,

ἀκτή τις ἀμφίκλυστος Εύβοίας ἄκρον

Κήναιόν ἐστιν, ἔνθα πατρῷφ Διὶ

βωμοὺς ὁρίζει τεμενίαν τε φυλλάδα·

οὖν τὰ πρῶτ' ἐσεῖδον ἀσμενος πόθῳ.

μέλλοντι δ' αὐτῷ πολυθύτους τεύχειν σφαγὰς

κῆρυξ ἀπ' οἰκων ἵκετ' οἰκεῖος Λίχας,

τὸ σὸν φέρων δώρημα, θανάσιμον πέπλον·

750

## TRACHINIAE

Or, if alive, no mother wert of mine,  
Or that thy nature might be wholly changed.

DEIANIRA

What dost thou so abhor in me, my son?

HYLLUS

Woman, I tell thee thou hast done to death  
Thy husband, yea my sire, this very day.

DEIANIRA

Ah me! what word hath passed thy lips, my son?

HYLLUS

A word that of fulfilment shall not fail;  
For what is done no mortal can undo.

DEIANIRA

What say'st thou, son? What warranty is thine  
To charge me with a deed so terrible?

HYLLUS

The evidence of my eyes; myself I saw  
My father's anguish; 'tis no hearsay charge.

DEIANIRA

Where didst thou find him? wast thou by his side?

HYLLUS

As thou must hear it, I must tell thee all.  
He had sacked the famous town of Eurytus,  
And thence returning rich with spoils of war,  
Had reached a sea-washed promontory, named  
Cenaeum, where Euboea fronts the north.  
There I first met him as he marked the bounds  
Of altars and a sacred grove to Zeus,  
His father. At the sight my heart was glad.  
He stood addressed to offer sacrifice,  
A lordly hecatomb, when Lichas came,  
His own familiar herald, bringing him

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

δν κεῖνος ἐνδύς, ὡς σὺ προυξεφίεσο,  
ταυροκτονεῖ μὲν δώδεκ' ἐντελεῖς ἔχωι  
λείας ἀπαρχὴν βοῦς· ἀτὰρ τὰ πάνθ' ὁμοῦ  
ἐκατὸν προσῆγε συμμιγῇ βοσκήματα.

καὶ πρῶτα μὲν δεῖλαιος Ἰλεω φρενί,  
κόσμῳ τε χαίρων καὶ στολῇ, κατηύχετο·  
ὅπως δὲ σεμνῶν ὄργίων ἐδαίετο  
φλὸξ αἴματηρά κάπτο πιείρας δρυός,  
ἰδρὼς ἀνήει χρωτί, καὶ προσπτύσσεται  
πλευραῖσιν ἀρτίκολλος, ὥστε τέκτονος,  
χιτὼν ἅπαν κατ' ἄρθρον· ἥλθε δ' ὀστέων  
ἀδαγμὸς ἀντίσπαστος· εἴτα φοινίας  
ἐχθρᾶς ἔχίδνης ἴὸς ὡς ἐδάίνυτο.

ἐνταῦθα δὴ 'βόησε τὸν δυσδαιμονα  
Λίχαν, τὸν οὐδὲν αἴτιον τοῦ σοῦ κακοῦ,  
ποίαις ἐνέγκοι τόνδε μηχαναῖς πέπλον·  
ο δ' οὐδὲν εἰδὼς δύσμορος τὸ σὸν μόνης  
δώρημ' ἔλεξεν, ὥσπερ ἦν ἐσταλμένον.  
κάκεῖνος ὡς ἥκουσε καὶ διώδυνος  
σπαραγμὸς αὐτοῦ πλευμόνων ἀνθήψατο,  
μάρψας ποδός νιν, ἄρθρον ἢ λυγίζεται,  
ριπτεῖ πρὸς ἀμφίκλυστον ἐκ πόντου πέτραι·  
κόμης δὲ λευκὸν μυελὸν ἔκραινει, μέσον  
κρατὸς διασπαρέντος αἴματός θ' ὁμοῦ.  
ἄπας δ' ἀνηυφήμησεν οἵμωγῇ λεώς,  
τοῦ μὲν νοσοῦντος, τοῦ δὲ διαπεπραγμένου·  
κούδεὶς ἐτόλμα τάνδρὸς ἀντίον μολεῖν.  
ἐσπάτο γάρ πέδονδε καὶ μετάρσιος,  
βοῶν, ἴυζων· ἀμφὶ δ' ἐκτύπουν πέτραι,  
Λοκρῶν τ' ὅρειοι πρῶνες Εὐβοίας τ' ἄκραι.

760

770

780

## TRACHINIAE

Thy gift, the fatal robe ; he put it on  
According to thy precept ; then began  
His sacrifice with twice six faultless bulls,  
The firstfruits of the booty ; but in all  
A hundred victims at the altar bled.

At first, poor wretch, with joyous air serene,  
Proud of the pomp and ceremony, he prayed ;  
But when the blood-red flame began to blaze  
From the high altars and the resinous pine,  
A sweat broke out upon him ; and the coat  
Stuck to his side, and clung to every limb,  
Glued, as it were, by some skilled artisan.  
A pricking pain began to rack his bones.  
Soon the fell venom of the hydra dire  
Worked inward and devoured him. Thereupon  
He called for Lichas, who, poor witless wretch,  
Had in thy guilt no part or lot, demanding  
Who hatched the plot and why he had brought the  
robe.

The youth unwitting said it was thy gift,  
Thine only, and delivered as 'twas sent.  
While yet he listened a convulsive spasm  
Shot through his lungs. He caught him by the foot,  
Just at the ankle joint, and hurled him full  
Against a rock out-jutting from the foam :  
His skull was crushed to fragments, and his hair  
Bedaubed with blood and flecked with scattered  
brains.

A cry of horror from the crowd arose  
At sight of one distraught and one struck dead ;  
And no man dared to face him, for the pain  
Now dragged him down, now made him leap in air,  
While with his yells and screams the rocks resound  
From Locrian headlands to Euboean capes.

ἐπεὶ δ' ἀπεῖπε, πολλὰ μὲν τάλας χθονὶ<sup>790</sup>  
 ρίπτων ἔαυτόν, πολλὰ δ' οἰμωγῇ βοῶν,  
 τὸ δυσπάρευνον λέκτρον ἐνδατούμενος  
 σοῦ τῆς ταλαίνης, καὶ τὸν Οἰνέων γάμον  
 οἶνον κατακτήσαιτο λυμαντὴν βίου,  
 τότ' ἐκ προσέδρου λιγνύος διάστροφον  
 ὀφθαλμὸν ἄρας εἰδέ μ' ἐν πολλῷ στρατῷ  
 δακρυρροοῦντα, καὶ με προσβλέψας καλεῖ·<sup>800</sup>  
 ὡς παῖ, πρόσελθε, μὴ φύγῃς τούμὸν κακόν,  
 μηδ' εἴ σε χρὴ θανόντι συνθανεῖν ἐμοί·  
 ἀλλ' ἄρον ἔξω, καὶ μάλιστα μέν με θὲς  
 ἐνταῦθ' ὅπου με μή τις ὄψεται βροτῶν.  
 εἰ δ' οἰκτον ἵσχεις, ἀλλά μ' ἐκ γε τῆσδε γῆς  
 πόρθμευσον ὡς τάχιστα, μηδὲ αὐτοῦ θάνω.<sup>810</sup>  
 τοσαῦτ' ἐπισκήψαντος, ἐν μέσῳ σκάφει  
 θέντες σφε πρὸς γῆν τὴνδ' ἐκέλσαμεν μόλις  
 βρυχώμενον σπασμοῖσι· καὶ νιν αὐτίκα  
 ἡ ζῶντ' ἐσόψεσθ' ἡ τεθυηκότ' ἀρτίως.  
 τοιαῦτα, μῆτερ, πατρὶ βουλεύσασ' ἐμῷ  
 καὶ δρῶσ' ἐλήφθης, ὃν σε ποίιμος Δίκη  
 τίσαιτ' Ἐρινύς τ'. εἰ θέμις δ', ἐπεύχομαι  
 θέμις δ', ἐπεί μοι τὴν θέμιν σὺ προύβαλες,  
 πάντων ἄριστον ἄνδρα τῶν ἐπὶ χθονὶ<sup>810</sup>  
 κτείνασ', ὃποιον ἄλλον οὐκ ὄψει ποτέ.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί σūγ' ἀφέρπεις; οὐ κάτοισθ' ὁθούνεκα  
 ξυνηγορεῖς σιγῶσα τῷ κατηγόρῳ;

## ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἔάτ' ἀφέρπειν· οὐρος ὄφθαλμῶν ἐμῶν  
 αὐτῇ γένοιτ' ἄπωθεν ἐρπούση καλός.  
 δύκον γὰρ ἄλλως ὄνόματος τί δεῖ τρέφειν

## TRACHINIAE

But when his agony had spent itself—  
Now writhing prone, now making loud lament,  
With curses on his marriage bed and thee,  
The bride he won from Oeneus for his bane—  
From out the cloud of smoke that compassed him  
He wildly gazed and spied me in the throng  
Weeping, and fixed his eye on me and spake :  
“ Come hither, boy, shun not my misery,  
E'en if my son must share his father's death,  
But bear me hence and set me, if thou wilt,  
Where none shall see me more, no matter where ;  
Or if thou hast no heart for this, at least  
Ferry me quickly hence, lest here I die.”  
So he enjoined. We laid him on the deck  
In torment, groaning loud ; and presently  
Ye shall behold him living or just dead.

Such, mother, is the evil 'gainst my sire  
That thou hast planned and wrought. Thy guilt is  
plain :

May Vengeance and the Erinys visit thee !  
So pray I, if 'tis right, and right it is,  
For I have seen thee trample on the right,  
Slaying the noblest man who ever lived,  
Whose peer thou never shalt behold again.

[*Exit DEIANIRA.*

### CHORUS

Why dost thou steal away thus silently ?  
Such silence sure is eloquent of guilt.

### HYLLUS

Let her depart and speed before the gale  
Out of my sight. Why should the empty name  
Of mother henceforth swell her vanity,

ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

μητρῷον, ἥτις μηδὲν ὡς τεκοῦσα δρᾶ;  
ἀλλ' ἐρπέτω χαιρουσα· τὴν δὲ τέρψιν ἥν  
τῷμῳ δίδωσι πατρί, τήνδ' αὐτὴ λάβοι.

820

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴδ' οἰον, ὃ παιδεῖς, προσέμεξεν ἄφαρ στρ. α'.  
τούπος τὸ θεοπρόπον ἡμῖν  
τᾶς παλαιφάτου προνοίας,  
ὅ τ' ἔλακεν, ὅπότε τελεόμηνος ἐκφέροι  
δωδέκατος ἄροτος, ἀναδοχὰν τελεῖν πόνων  
τῷ Διὸς αὐτόπαιδι· καὶ τάδ' ὁρθῶς  
ἔμπεδα κατουρίζει. πῶς γὰρ ἀν ὁ μὴ λεύσσων  
ἔτι ποτ' ἔτ' ἐπίπονον πόνων<sup>1</sup> ἔχοι θανὼν λα-  
τρείαν;

830

εἰ γάρ σφε Κενταύρου φονίᾳ νεφέλᾳ ἀντ. α'  
χρίει δολοποιὸς ἀνάγκα  
πλευρά, προστακέντος ἰοῦ,  
δν τέκετο θάνατος, ἔτρεφε<sup>2</sup> δ' αἰόλος δράκων,  
πῶς ὅδ' ἀν ἀέλιον ἔτερον ἡ τανῦν ἴδοι,  
δεινοτάτῳ μὲν ὑδρας προστετακώς  
φάσματι; μελαγχαίτα δ' ἄμμιγά νιν αἰκίζει  
Νέσσου ὑποφόνια δολιόμυθα<sup>3</sup> κέντρ' ἐπιξέσαντα.

840

στρ. β'  
ῶν ἄδ' ἀ τλάμων ἄοκνος μεγάλαν προορῶσα  
δόμοισι βλάβαν νέων  
ἀτσσονσαν<sup>4</sup> γάμων τὰ μὲν αὐτὰ<sup>5</sup> προσέβαλε, τὰ  
δ' ἀπ' ἀλλόθρου

<sup>1</sup> Gleditsch inserts πόνων.      <sup>2</sup> ἔτεκε MSS., Lobeck corr.

<sup>3</sup> νέσσου θ' ὑποφόνια δολιόμυθα MSS., Gleditsch corr.

<sup>4</sup> ἀτσσόντων MSS., Nauck corr.      <sup>5</sup> οὗ τι MSS., Blaydes corr.

## TRACHINIAE

Who in her deeds shows naught of motherhood ?  
Let her depart in peace, and may she share  
Herself the happiness she brings my sire !

### CHORUS

Lo, maidens, in our eyes (Str. 1)

Fulfilled this day

The word inspired of ancient prophecies.

Did not the god's voice say,

The twelfth year, when its tale of months is run,  
Shall end his toils for Zeus's true-born son ?

That promise doth not fail,

'Tis wafted on the gale.

Can he when once the light of life has fled

Be subject still to bondage 'mongst the dead ?

(Ant. 1)

And if the mists of death enfold him now,

If the doom grips his heart,

Wrought by the Centaur's art ;

How racked by venom bred

Of Death, on asp's blood fed,

How in the clutches of the Hydra, how

Can he survive to see to-morrow's sun,

When through each vein doth run

The leprous bane prepared

By the fell beast, black-haired

Nessus, his life to drain,

And vex him with tumultuous pain ?

Of this our ill-starred queen, (Str. 2)

All innocent, knew naught :

Only the curse to void, I ween,

Of a new bride she sought.

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

γνώμας μολόντ' ὀλεθρίαισι συναλλαγαῖς  
ἢ που ὄλοὰ στένει,  
ἢ που ἀδινῶν χλωρὰν  
τέγγει δακρύων ἄχναν.  
ἀ δ' ἐρχομένα μοῖρα προφαίνει δολίαν  
καὶ μεγάλαν ἄταν.

850

ἀντ. β'

ἔρρωγεν παγὰ δακρύων· κέχυται νόσος, ὡς πόποι,  
οἶλον ἀναρσίων  
οὕπω Ἡρακλέους<sup>1</sup> ἀγακλειτὸν ἐπέμολε πάθος  
οἰκτίσαι.  
ἰὼ κελαινὰ λόγχα προμάχου δορός,  
ἄ τότε θοὰν νύμφαν  
ἄγαγες ἀπ' αἰπεινᾶς  
τάνδ' Οἰχαλίας αἰχμᾶ·  
ἀ δ' ἀμφίπολος Κυπρις ἄναυδος φανερὰ  
τῶνδ' ἐφήνη πράκτωρ.

860

HMIXOPION α'  
πότερον ἐγὼ μάταιος, ἢ κλύω τινὸς  
οἴκτου δι' οἴκων ἀρτίως ὄρμωμένου;  
τί φημι;

### HMIXOPION β'

ἡχεῖ τις οὐκ ἄσημον, ἀλλὰ δυστυχῆ  
κωκυτὸν εἴσω, καὶ τι καινίζει στέγη.

### HMIXOPION

ξύνεις δὲ  
τήνδ' ὡς κατηφῆς<sup>2</sup> καὶ συνωφρυωμένη  
χωρεῖ πρὸς ἡμᾶς γραῖα σημανοῦσά τι.

870

<sup>1</sup> Ἡρακλέους is clearly a gloss, and the true reading must remain conjectural.      <sup>2</sup> ἀηθῆς MSS., Blaydes corr.

## TRACHINIAE

Witless a stranger's remedy she used.  
How was her fond simplicity abused !

Too late her error doth she rue,  
And pearly tears her eyes bedew :  
Awe-stricken we await  
The swoop of instant fate.

Our pent up tears outflow. (Ant. 2)

Ye gods ! did e'er such blow  
From his worst foes afflict our King before  
As this fell plague ? O bloodstained spear that  
bore

From proud Oechalia's height  
Stormed by the hero's might,  
A vanished bride, how clear  
The Cyprian's wiles appear !  
Unseen, thy spear she steeled,  
And now she stands revealed.

### SEMI-CHORUS 1

Listen ! I seem to hear—or do I dream ? —  
A cry of sorrow pealing through the house.  
Heard you it ?

### SEMI-CHORUS 2

Yea, a despairing wail rings out within,  
Distinct ; the house has suffered something  
strange.

### CHORUS

Mark ye that aged crone !  
With what a cloud upon her puckered brow  
She comes to bring us news of grave import !

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ώ παῖδες, ώς ἄρ' ἡμὶν οὐ σμικρῶν κακῶν  
ἡρξεν τὸ δῶρον Ἡρακλεῖ τὸ πόμπιμον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ', ω γεραιά, καινοποιηθὲν λέγεις;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

βέβηκε Δηάνειρα τὴν πανυστάτην  
όδῶν ἀπασῶν ἐξ ἀκινήτου ποδός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐ δή ποθ' ώς θανοῦσα;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

πάντ' ἀκήκοας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τέθυηκεν ἡ τάλαινα;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

δεύτερον κλύεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάλαιν' ὀλεθρία· τίνι τρόπῳ θανεῖν σφε φής;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

σχετλιώτατά γε πρὸς πρᾶξιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γύναι, ξυντρέχει.  
εἰπὲ τῷ μόρῳ,

αὐτὴν διηίστωσε.

880

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ  
τίς θυμὸς ἡ τίνεις νόσοι  
τάνδ' αἰχμᾶ<sup>1</sup> βέλεος κακοῦ ξυνεῖλε; πως ἐμήσατο  
πρὸς θανάτῳ θάνατον ἀνύσασα μόνα;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

στονόεντος ἐν τομᾷ σιδάρου.

<sup>1</sup> αἰχμὰν MSS., Hermann corr.

## TRACHINIAE

*Enter NURSE from the house.*

NURSE

My daughters, what a crop of miseries  
We are reaping from that gift to Heracles !

CHORUS

What new misfortune, mother, hast to tell ?

NURSE

Deianira has departed hence  
On her last journey, yet not stirred a step.

CHORUS

Thou canst not mean she is dead.

NURSE

My tale is told.

CHORUS

Poor lady, dead !

NURSE

I say it once again.

CHORUS

Alas, poor wretch ! How came she by her end ?

NURSE

O 'twas a gruesome deed !

CHORUS

Say woman, how ?

NURSE

By her own hand.

CHORUS

What rage, what fit of madness,  
Whetted the felon blade, how compassed she  
This death on death, herself alone the cause ?

NURSE

By the stroke of a dolorous sword.

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

έπειδες, ω ματαία, τάνδε τὴν ὕβριν;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

έπειδον, ώς δὴ πλησία παραστάτις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἡν; πῶς; φέρ' εἰπέ.

890

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτῆς χειροποιεῖται τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί φωνεῖς;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

σαφηνῆ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔτεκεν ἔτεκε δὴ μεγάλαν

ἀ νέορτος ἄδε νύμφα

δόμοισι τοῖσδ' ἐρινύν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἄγαν γε· μᾶλλον δ', εἰ παροῦσα πλησία

ἔλευσσες οἵ ἔδρασε, κάρτ' ἀν φκτισας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ ταῦτ' ἔτλη τις χείρ γυναικεία κτίσαι;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

δεινῶς γε· πεύσει δ', ὥστε μαρτυρεῖν ἐμοί.

έπει γὰρ ἡλθε δωμάτων εἴσω μόνη

καὶ παῖδ' ἐν αὐλαῖς εἶδε κοῖλα δέμνια

στορυνύνθ', ὅπως ἄψορρον ἀντῷ πατρί,

κρύψασ' ἑαυτὴν ἐνθα μή τις εἰσίδοι,

βρυχάτο μὲν βωμοῖσι προσπίπτουσ' ὅτι

γένοιντ' ἔρημοι, κλαιε δ' ὄργανων ὅτου

ψαύσειεν οἷς ἔχρητο δειλαία πάρος·

ἄλλῃ δὲ κᾶλλῃ δωμάτων στρωφωμένη,

900

## TRACHINIAE

CHORUS

Saw'st thou the horror, beldam ?

NURSE

I saw it ; I was standing at her side

CHORUS

Saw what ? what did she ? speak !

NURSE

Herself upon herself she did the deed.

CHORUS

What dost thou say ?

NURSE

Plain truth.

CHORUS

Verily this new bride

Hath borne, as the fruit of her womb,

A curse, a curse to the house.

NURSE

Too true ; and had you been at hand to see,  
The pity of it would have touched you more.

CHORUS

Could woman's hand perform so bold a deed !

NURSE

'Twas passing strange, but when ye hear the tale  
Ye'll bear me out.

She went indoors alone,  
And in the court she came upon her son  
Preparing a deep litter wherewithal  
To bear his sire back. Seeing him she fled,  
And, crouching by the altar out of sight,  
She groaned aloud, " O altars desolate ! "  
Then each familiar chattel in the house  
She fingered tenderly, poor wretch, and wept.  
Then roaming through the palace, up and down,

ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

εἴ του φίλων βλέψειεν οἰκετῶν δέμας,  
 ἔκλαιειν ἡ δύστηνος εἰσορωμένη,  
 αὐτὴ τὸν αὐτῆς δαίμον' ἀνακαλουμένη  
 καὶ τὰς ἄπαιδας ἐσ τὸ λοιπὸν οὐσίας.<sup>1</sup>  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ τῶνδ' ἔληξεν, ἔξαίφνης σφ' ὁρώ  
 τὸν Ἡράκλειον θάλαμον εἰσορμωμένην.  
 κάγὼ λαθραῖον δόμμ' ἐπεσκιασμένη  
 φρούρουν· ὁρώ δὲ τὴν γυναικα δεμνίοις  
 τοῦς Ἡρακλείοις στρωτὰ βάλλουσαν φάρη,  
 ὅπως δ' ἐτέλεσε τοῦτ', ἐπειθοροῦσ' ἄνω  
 καθέζετ' ἐν μέσοισιν εὐνατηρίοις,  
 καὶ δακρύων ρήξασα θερμὰ νάματα  
 ἔλεξεν· ὡς λέχη τε καὶ νυμφεῖ ἐμά,  
 τὸ λοιπὸν ἡδη χαίρεθ', ως ἔμ' οὕποτε  
 δέξεσθ' ἔτ' ἐν κοίταισι ταῖσδ' εὐνάτριαν.  
 τοσαῦτα φωνήσασα συντόνῳ χερὶ<sup>2</sup>  
 λύει τὸν αὐτῆς πέπλον, ἥ<sup>2</sup> χρυσήλατος  
 προύκειτο μαστῶν περονίς, ἐκ δ' ἐλώπισεν  
 πλευρὰν ἄπασαν ὠλένην τ' εὐώνυμον.  
 κάγὼ δρομαία βᾶσ', ὅσονπερ ἔσθενον,  
 τῷ παιδὶ φράζω τῆς τεχνωμένης τάδε.  
 κάνῳ τὸ κεῖσε δεῦρό τ' ἔξορμώμεθα,  
 ὁρῶμεν αὐτὴν ἀμφιπλῆγι φασγάνῳ  
 πλευρὰν ὑφ' ἡπαρ καὶ φρένας πεπληγμένην.  
 ἴδων δ' ὁ παῖς φύμαξεν· ἔγνω γὰρ τάλας  
 τούργον κατ' ὄργὴν ως ἐφάγειεν τόδε,  
 ὅψ' ἐκδιδαχθεὶς τῶν κατ' οἰκους οὖνεκα  
 ἄκουσα πρὸς τοῦ θηρὸς ἔρξειεν τάδε.  
 κάνταῦθ' ὁ παῖς δύστηνος οὗτ' ὀδυρμάτων

<sup>1</sup> The line is corrupt. The translation follows Jebb's conjecture, καὶ τῆς ἐπ' ἄλλοις ἐσ τὸ λοιπὸν οὐσίας,

<sup>2</sup> φ MSS., Wakefield corr.

## TRACHINIAE

As one or other of her maids she met,  
She gazed upon her long and wept again,  
Bewailing her own fortunes and the house  
Henceforth condemned to serve an alien lord.  
Then she was silent, and I saw her speed  
Within the bed chamber of Heracles.  
I from a coign of spial, unobserved  
Watched, and I saw her snatch a coverpane  
And fling it on the bed of Heracles.  
That done, she leapt upon it, sat her down  
And loosed the floodgate of hot tears and spake :  
“ O bridal bed and chamber, fare ye well,  
A long farewell ; never again shall ye  
Lap me to slumber in your soft embrace ! ”  
That was her last word ; with a sudden wrench  
She tore the gold-wrought brooch above her breast  
And laid her left arm and her side all bare.  
I ran at once, as fast as age allowed,  
In haste to warn the son of her intent.  
Alack ! between my going and return,  
In that brief space, she had driven a two-edged sword  
Home through the midriff to the very heart.  
He saw and shrieked heart-stricken at the sight,  
Knowing his wrath had goaded her to death.  
For all too late from those about the queen  
He learned that she in utter innocence  
Had done according to the Centaur’s word.  
Since then, poor boy, his misery has no end :

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ἐλείπετ' οὐδέν, ἀμφί νιν γοώμενος,  
οὐτ' ἀμφιπίπτων στόμασιν, ἀλλὰ πλευρόθεν  
πλευρὰν παρεὶς ἔκειτο πόλλ' ἀναστένων,  
ὡς νιν ματαίως αἰτία βάλοι κακῆ,  
κλαίων ὄθουνεκ' ἐκ δύοιν ἔσοιθ' ἄμα,  
πατρός τ' ἔκεινης τ', ωρφανισμένος βίου.  
τοιαῦτα τάνθάδ' ἐστίν· ὥστ' εἴ τις δύο  
ἢ καί τι πλείους<sup>1</sup> ἡμέρας λογίζεται,  
μάταιος ἐστιν· οὐ γάρ ἔσθ' ἢ γ' αὔριον,  
πρὶν εὖ πάθη τις τὴν παροῦσαν ἡμέραν.

940

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πότερα πρότερον ἐπιστένω,  
πότερα μέλεα<sup>2</sup> περαιτέρω,  
δύσκριτ<sup>3</sup> ἔμοιγε δυστάνω.

στρ. α'

τάδε μὲν ἔχομεν ὄρᾶν δόμοις,  
τάδε δὲ μένομεν ἐπ' ἐλπίσιν  
κοινὰ δ' ἔχειν τε καὶ μέλλειν.

ἀντ. α' 950

εἴθ' ἀνεμόεσσά τις  
γένοιτ<sup>4</sup> ἔπουρος ἐστιώτις αὔρα,  
ἥτις μ' ἀποικίσειεν ἐκ τόπων, ὅπως  
τὸν Δίον<sup>5</sup> ἄλκιμον γόνον  
μὴ ταρβαλέα θάνοιμι  
μοῦνον είσιδούσ' ἄφαρ·  
ἐπεὶ ἐν δυσαπαλλάκτοις ὁδύναις  
χωρεῖν πρὸ δόμων λέγουσιν  
ἄσπετόν τι θαῦμα.

στρ. β'

960

ἀγγοῦ δ' ἄρα κού μακρὰν  
προύκλαιον, δξύφωνος ὡς ἀηδῶν.

ἀντ. β'

<sup>1</sup> καὶ πλείους τις MSS., Dindorf corr.

<sup>2</sup> τέλεα MSS., Musgrave corr.

<sup>3</sup> διὸς MSS., Nauck corr.

## TRACHINIAE

He mourned for her with sighs and sobs and groans,  
He kissed her lips, he clasped her in his arms,  
And prone beside her railed against himself:  
“ By my foul slander have I stricken her,”  
He cried, “ and now am I bereaved of both,  
Of father and of mother, in one day.”  
So fares it with us. And if any man  
Counts on the morrow, or on morrows more,  
He reckons rashly. Morrow is there none,  
Until to-day its course has safely run.

## **CHORUS**

Which first of woes, which next,  
Wherewith my soul is vexed,  
To wail, I am perplexed;

One here accomplishèd,  
One hanging o'er my head,  
One as the other dread.

O that a gale might suddenly upspring      (*Str. 2*)  
To waft me out of sight,  
Lest when the Zeus-born hero home they bring,  
I die of panic fright.  
E'en now, they say, in pains no leech can quell,  
Home is he borne. O piteous spectacle !

Ah, not far off, but nigh,  
The woe that stirred my cry,  
A boding wail  
As of some shrill-voiced nightingale.

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ξένων γὰρ ἐξόμιλος ἥδε τις βάσις.  
πᾶ δ' αὖ φορεῖ νιν; ὡς φίλου  
προκηδομένα βαρεῖαν  
ἄψοφον φέρει βάσιν.  
αἰαῖ, ὅδ' ἀναύδατος φέρεται.  
τί χρὴ θανόντα νιν ἢ καθ'  
ὕπνον ὄντα κρῦναι;

970

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

οἴμοι ἐγὼ σοῦ,  
πάτερ, οἴμοι ἐγὼ σοῦ μέλεος.  
τί πάθω; τί δὲ μήσομαι; οἴμοι.

### ΠΡΕΣΒΤΣ

σίγα, τέκνου, μὴ κινήσῃς  
ἀγρίαν δδύνην πατρὸς ὠμόφρονος·  
ξῆ γὰρ προπετής· ἀλλ' ἵσχε δακῶν  
στόμα σόν.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

πῶς φής, γέρον; ἢ ζῆ;

### ΠΡΕΣΒΤΣ

οὐ μὴ ἔειγερεῖς τὸν ὕπνῳ κάτοχον  
κάκκινήσεις κάναστήσεις  
φοιτάδα δεινὴν  
νόσον, ὡ τέκνου.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐπί μοι μελέψῃ  
βάρος ἅπλετον· ἐμμέμονεν φρήν.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ,  
ποῖ γάς ἥκω; παρὰ τοῖσι βροτῶν  
κείμαι πεπονημένος ἀλλήκτοις  
ὅδύναις; οἴμοι μοι<sup>1</sup> ἐγὼ τλάμων·  
ἢ δ' αὖ μιαρὰ βρύκει. φεῦ.

<sup>1</sup> Brunck adds μοι.

980

## TRACHINIAE

Lo a foreign train appear,  
And they move with muffled tread,  
Mute as bearers of a bier.  
Is it sleep, or is he dead ?

*Enter HYLLUS, an OLD MAN, and ATTENDANTS bearing HERACLES on a litter.*

HYLLUS

Ah woe is me,  
Woe, father, woe for thee !  
Alack ! I am undone,  
Help know I none.

OLD MAN

Hush, son, lest thou awake  
The intolerable ache.  
He lives, though nigh to death ;  
Hold hard thy breath.

HYLLUS

What, is he still alive ?

OLD MAN

Hush, hush, lest thou revive  
And waken from its fitful rest  
The plague that racks his breast.

HYLLUS

Beneath this weight of misery  
My spirit sinks ; it maddens me.

HERACLES

O Zeus, where am I ? who  
These strangers standing by,  
As tortured here I lie ?  
Ah me ! the foul fiend gnaws anew.

# ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

## ΠΡΕΣΒΤΣ

ἀρ' ἔξηδη σ' δσον ἦν κέρδος  
σιγῇ κεύθειν καὶ μὴ σκεδάσαι  
τῷδ' ἀπὸ κρατὸς  
βλεφάρων θ' ὑπνον;

990

ΤΛΛΟΣ  
οὐ γὰρ ᔁχω πῶς ἀν  
στέρξαιμι κακὸν τόδε λευσσων.

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ Κηναία κρηπὶς βωμῶν,  
ἰερῶν οἴαν οἶων ἐπὶ μοι  
μελέψ χάριν ἡνύσω. ὦ Ζεῦ.  
οἴαν μ' ἄρ' ἔθου λώβαν, οἴαν  
ἡν μη ποτ' ἐγὼ προσιδεῖν ὁ τάλας  
ῶφελον δσσοις, τόδ' ἀκῆλητον  
μανίας ἀνθος καταδερχθῆναι.  
τίς γὰρ ἀοιδός, τίς ὁ χειροτέχνης  
ἰατορίας, δς τήνδ' ἄτην  
χωρὶς Ζηνὸς κατακηλήσει;  
θαῦμ' ἀν πόρρωθεν ἴδοιμην.

1000

ἢ ἔ,  
ἐᾶτέ μ', ἐᾶτέ με δύσμορον ὕστατον,  
ἐᾶθ' ὕστατον εὐνᾶσθαι.<sup>1</sup>

στρ. α'

πᾶ πᾶ μου ψαύεις; ποὶ κλίνεις;  
ἀπολεῖς μ', ἀπολεῖς.

στρ. β

ἀνατέτροφας ὅ τι καὶ μύση.

ἡπταὶ μου, τοτοτοῦ, ἥδ' αὐθ' ἔρπει. πόθεν ἔστ', ὦ 1010  
πάντων Ἑλλάνων ἀδικώτατοι ἀνέρες, οὓς δὴ

<sup>1</sup> ἐᾶτέ με δύστατον εὐνᾶσθαι MSS., Wunder corr.

## TRACHINIAE

OLD MAN

Did I not bid thee keep  
Silence, nor scare the sleep  
That over eyes and head  
Awhile like balm was spread?

HYLLUS

Nay, how can I refrain  
At sight of such grim pain?

HERACLES

O altar on Cenaean height,  
How ill dost thou requite  
My sacrifice and offerings!  
O Zeus, thy worship ruin brings.  
Accursed headland, would that ne'er  
My eyes had seen thine altar-stair!  
So had I 'scaped this frenzied rage  
No incantation can assuage.  
Where is the charmer, where the leech,  
Whose art a remedy could teach,  
Save Zeus alone? If one could tell  
Of such a wizard, 'twere a miracle.

O leave me, let me lie  
In my last agony!

(Str. 1)

Ye touch me? have a care!  
Would turn me? O forbear!  
To agony ye wake  
The slumbering ache.  
Once more it has me in its grip, the fiend comes  
on apace.  
O Greeks, if ye be Greeks indeed, most faithless of  
your race!

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

πολλὰ μὲν ἐν πόντῳ κατά τε δρία πάντα καθαιρων  
ώλεκόμαν ὁ τάλας, καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ τῷδε νοσοῦντι  
οὐ πῦρ, οὐκ ἔγχος τις ὀνήσιμον οὐκέτιτρέψει;

ἔ ἔ,ἀντ. α'  
οὐδ' ἀπαράξαι κράτα βίᾳ<sup>1</sup> θέλει  
μολὼν τοῦ στυγεροῦ; φεῦ φεῦ.

### ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

ὦ παῖ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, τοῦργον τόδε μεῖζον ἀνήκει  
ἡ κατ' ἐμὰν ρώμαν· σὺ δὲ σύλλαβε. σοὶ γὰρ  
ἔτοίμα  
ἐς πλέον ἡ δι' ἐμοῦ σφέζειν.<sup>2</sup>

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

ψαύω μὲν ἔγωγε,1020  
λαθίπονον δ' ὁδυνᾶν οὔτ' ἔνδοθεν οὔτε θύραθεν  
ἔστι μοι ἔξανύσαι βίοτον· τοιαῦτα νέμει Ζεύς.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ παῖ, ποῦ ποτ' εἰ; τὰδέ με τὰδέ με  
πρόσλαβε κουφίσας. ἔ ἔ, ίώ δάιμον.στρ. γ'

θρώσκει δ' αὖ, θρώσκει δειλαίαἀντ. β'  
διολοῦσ' ἡμᾶς  
ἀποτίβατος ἀγρία νόσος.1030

ὦ Παλλὰς Παλλάς, τόδε μ' αὖ λωβᾶται. ίώ παῖ,  
τὸν φύτορ' οἰκτίρας, ἀνεπίφθονον εἴρυσσον ἔγχος,  
παῖσσον ἐμᾶς ὑπὸ κλῆδος· ἀκοῦ δ' ἄχος, φ' μ'  
ἐχόλωσεν  
σὰ μάτηρ ἄθεος, τὰν ὡδ' ἐπίδοιμι πεσοῦσαν  
αὕτως, ὡδ' αὕτως ὡς μ' ὠλεσεν. ὦ γλυκὺς" Αἰδας,

<sup>1</sup> βίου MSS., Wakefield corr.

<sup>2</sup> σοὶ τε γὰρ δύμα ἔμπλεον MSS., Jebb corr.

## TRACHINIAE

For you I laboured hugely and spent myself, to free  
Your land from ravening beasts of prey and monsters  
of the sea ;  
And now in long drawn agony ye leave me to expire.  
Will none of you deliver me with sword or kindly fire ?

Would God that I were dead ! (Ant. 1)  
Will no man sever at a stroke this head ?

### OLD MAN

O help me, son of Heracles, for I am all too frail  
To ease him ; if thou lend thine aid, perchance we  
may prevail.

HYLLUS

That will I, but nor thou nor I can rid him of the  
    pain  
That haunts him to the very end. Such doom the  
    gods ordain.

## **HERACLES**

*(Str. 3)*  
My son, where art thou ? Raise me, hold me here,  
here ! *(Ant. 2)*

Ah me ! once more the pest doth leap  
Upon me and its fangs bite deep.

Pallas ! 'tis torture. O for pity save  
Thy father ; son, unsheathe an innocent glaive,  
Pierce thy sire's heart and so the wild pain cure  
That from thine impious mother I endure.  
Thus may I see her die, like mine her end !

ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ἀντ. γ'  
ω Διὸς αὐθαίμων, εὔνασον εὔνασον μ'  
ώκυπέτᾳ μόρῳ τὸν μέλεον φθίσας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κλύνουσ' ἔφριξα τάσδε συμφοράς, φίλαι,  
ἄνακτος, οἴαις οἶος ὅν ἐλαύνεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ω πολλὰ δὴ καὶ θερμὰ κοὺ λόγῳ<sup>1</sup> κακὰ  
καὶ χερσὶ καὶ νώτοισι μοχθήσας ἐγώ·  
κοῦπω τοιούτον οὕτ' ἄκοιτις ή Διὸς  
προύθηκεν οὕθ' ὁ στυγνὸς Εύρυσθεὺς ἐμοί,  
οίον τόδ' ή δολῶπις Οἰνέως κόρη  
καθῆψεν ὡμοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς Ἐρινύων  
ὑφαντὸν ἀμφίβληστρον, φ διόλλυμαι.

πλευραῖσι γάρ προσμαχθὲν ἐκ μὲν ἐσχάτας  
βέβρωκε σάρκας, πλεύμονός τ' ἀρτηρίας  
ροφεῖ ξυνοικοῦν, ἐκ δὲ χλωρὸν αἷμα μου  
πέπωκεν ἥδη, καὶ διέφθαρμαι δέμας  
τὸ πᾶν, ἀφράστῳ τῇδε χειρωθεὶς πέδῃ.  
κοὺ ταῦτα λόγχη πεδιάς, οὕθ' ὁ γηγενὴς  
στρατὸς Γιγάντων οὗτε θήρειος βία,  
οὕθ' Ἑλλὰς οὕτ' ἄγλωσσος οὕθ' ὅσην ἐγώ  
γαῖαν καθαίρων ἴκόμην, ἔδρασέ πω·  
γυνὴ δέ, θῆλυς φῦσα<sup>2</sup> κούκ ἀνδρὸς φύσιν,  
μόνη με δὴ καθεῖλε φασγάνου δίχα.

ω παῖ, γενοῦ μοι παῖς ἐτήτυμος γεγώς,  
καὶ μὴ τὸ μητρὸς ὄνομα πρεσβεύσης πλέον.  
δός μοι χεροῦν σαῖν αὐτὸς ἐξ οἴκου λαβὼν  
ἐσ χείρα τὴν τεκούσαν, ως εἰδῶ σάφα  
εἰ τούμὸν ἀλγεῖς μᾶλλον ἦ κείνης ὁρῶν  
λωβητὸν εἶδος ἐν δίκῃ κακούμενον.

ἴθ', ω τέκνου, τόλμησον· οἴκτιρόν τέ με

<sup>1</sup> καὶ λόγῳ MSS., Bothe corr.      <sup>2</sup> οὖσα MSS., Nauck corr.

## TRACHINIAE

(Ant. 3)

Brother of Zeus, kind Death, be now my friend ;  
Lay me to rest and swift deliverance send.

### CHORUS

I shudder, friends, to hear this woful plaint.  
How great a hero, and how ill bestead !

### HERACLES

Many and grievous, not in name alone,  
The toils and burdens of these hands, these loins.  
Yet trial like to this was never set me  
By Heaven's Queen or grim Eurystheus' hate,  
Such as the child of Oeneus, false and fair,  
Hath fastened on my back, this hellish net  
She wove to snare me, in whose coils I die.  
It hugs me close, it eats into my flesh,  
It sucks the channels of my breath, hath drained  
My life-blood, and my whole frame wastes and  
withers,  
Fast locked in these unutterable bonds.  
And this my fall no warrior's lance hath wrought  
Nor Giant's earth-born brood, nor savage beast,  
Nor Grecian nor barbarian, nor the lands  
Whither I fared to rid them of their pests ;  
No, but a woman, weak as all her sex,  
Hath quelled me, single-handed and unarmed.  
Son, show thyself thy father's son in deed,  
Mine, not thy mother's—mother in name alone.  
Hale her thyself, hand her thyself to me,  
The wretch, that when she meets her righteous  
doom  
I may make trial which sight moves thee more,  
A mother's or a father's agony.  
For pity's sake shrink not ; to see me thus

ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

πολλοῖσιν οἰκτρόν, ὅστις ὕστε παρθένος  
 βέβρυχα κλαίων, καὶ τόδ' οὐδὲ ἀν εἰς ποτε  
 τόνδ' ἄνδρα φαίη πρόσθ' ἵδειν δεδρακότα,  
 ἀλλ' ἀστένακτος αἱὲν εἰπόμην κακοῖς.  
 νῦν δὲ ἐκ τοιούτου θῆλυς ηὔρημαι τάλας.  
 καὶ νῦν προσελθὼν στήθι πλησίον πατρός,  
 σκέψαι θ' ὅποιας ταῦτα συμφορᾶς ὑπο  
 πέπονθα· δείξω γὰρ τάδ' ἐκ καλυμμάτων.  
 ἴδού, θεᾶσθε πάντες ἄθλιον δέμας,  
 ὁρᾶτε τὸν δύστηνον, ώς οἰκτρῶς ἔχω. 1080  
 αἰαῖ, ἀ τάλας,  
 ἔθαλψεν ἄτης σπασμὸς ἀρτίως ὅδ' αὖ,  
 διῆξε πλευρῶν, οὐδὲ ἀγύμναστόν μ' ἔαν  
 ἔοικεν ἡ τάλαινα διάβορος νόσος.  
 ὠναξ Ἀίδη, δέξαι μ',  
 ὡ Διὸς ἀκτίς, παῖσον,  
 ἔνσεισον, ὠναξ, ἐγκατάσκηψον βέλος,  
 πάτερ, κεραυνοῦ· δαίνυται γὰρ αὖ πάλιν,  
 ἥνθηκεν, ἔξωρμηκειν. ὡ χέρες χέρες,  
 ὡ νῶτα καὶ στέρν', ὡ φίλοι βραχίονες, 1090  
 ὑμεῖς δὲ κεῖνοι δὴ καθέσταθ', οἴ ποτε  
 Νεμέας ἔνοικον, βουκόλων ἀλάστορα  
 λέοντ', ἀπλατον θρέμμα κάπροστήγορον,  
 βίᾳ κατειργάσασθε, Λερναίαν θ' ὕδραν,  
 διφυῇ τ' ἀμικτον ἵπποβάμονα στρατὸν  
 θηρῶν, ὑβριστὴν ἄνομον, ὑπέροχον βίαν,  
 Ἐρυμάνθιόν τε θῆρα, τόν θ' ὑπὸ χθονὸς  
 "Αἰδουν τρίκρανον σκύλακ", ἀπρόσμαχον τέρας,  
 δεινῆς Ἐχίδνης θρέμμα, τόν τε χρυσέων  
 δράκοντα μῆλων φύλακ' ἐπ' ἐσχάτους τόπους. 1100  
 ἄλλων τε μόχθων μυρίων ἐγευσάμην,  
 κούδεὶς τροπαῖ ἔστησε τῶν ἐμῶν χερῶν.

## TRACHINIAE

('Twould move to pity e'en a heart of stone)  
Puling and weeping like a girl, unmanned.  
So none can boast to have seen me, for till now  
I took whate'er befell me with a smile.  
And now—'tis I who play the woman now.  
Come closer, stand beside me ; see, my son,  
To what a pass ill fate hath brought thy sire.  
Lo, I will lift the veil ; look all of you  
On this poor maimèd body, and declare  
Was ever wretch so piteous as I.  
Ah me !

Again the deadly spasm; it shoots and burns  
Through all my vitals. Will it never end,  
This struggle with the never-dying worm ?  
Lord of the Dead, receive me !  
Smite me, O fire of Zeus !  
Hurl, Father, on my head thy crashing bolt !  
Again it burgeons, blossoms, blazes forth,  
The all-consuming plague.

O hands, my hands,  
Arms, breast and shoulders, once all puissant,  
Are ye the same whose thews of old subdued  
The scourge of herdsmen in his savage lair,  
The Nemean lion, a beast untamable ;  
Slew the Lenaean hydra ; overcame  
That twy-form multitude, half man, half horse,  
Rude, lawless, savage, unapproachable,  
Unmatched in might ; and the Erymanthian boar ;  
Tamed in the nether world the monstrous whelp  
Of dread Echidna, the three-headed hound  
Of Hades, and the dragon-guard who watched  
The golden apples at the world's far end.  
These were my toils, and others manifold,  
And none could ever boast of my defeat.

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

νῦν δ' ὡδὸς ἄναρθρος καὶ κατερρακωμένος  
τυφλῆς ὑπ' ἄτης ἐκπεπόρθημαι τάλας,  
ὅ τῆς ἀρίστης μητρὸς ὠνομασμένος,  
ὅ τοῦ κατ' ἄστρα Ζηνὸς αὐδηθεὶς γόνος.  
ἀλλ' εὐ γέ τοι τόδ' ἵστε, κὰν τὸ μηδὲν ὡ  
κὰν μηδὲν ἔρπω, τήν γε δράσασαν τάδε  
χειρώσομαι κύκ τῶνδε· προσμόλοι μόνον,  
ἴν' ἐκδιδαχθῆ πᾶσιν ἀγγέλλειν ὅτι  
καὶ ζῶν κακούς γε καὶ θανὼν ἐτισάμην.

1110

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ τλῆμον Ἑλλάς, πένθος οἰον εἰσορῷ  
ἔξουσαν, ἀνδρὸς τοῦδέ γ' εἰ σφαλήσεται.

### ΤΛΟΣ

ἐπεὶ παρέσχεις ἀντιφωνῆσαι, πάτερ,  
σιγὴν παρασχὼν κλῦθί μου, νοσῶν ὅμως·  
αἰτήσομαι γάρ σ' ὧν δίκαια τυγχάνειν.  
δός μοι σεαυτόν, μὴ τοσοῦτον ὡς δάκνει  
θυμῷ δύσοργος· οὐ γὰρ ἀν γνοίης ἐν οἷς  
χαίρειν προθυμεῖ κὰν ὅτοις ἀλγεῖς μάτην.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰπὼν δὲ χρήζεις λῆξον· ὡς ἐγὼ νοσῶν  
οὐδὲν ξυνίημ' ὧν σὺ ποικίλλεις πάλαι.

### ΤΛΟΣ

τῆς μητρὸς ἥκω τῆς ἐμῆς φρύσων ἐν οἷς  
νῦν ἐστιν ὡς θ' ἥμαρτεν οὐχ ἔκουσία.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ παγκάκιστε, καὶ παρεμνήσω γὰρ αὖ  
τῆς πατροφόντου μητρός, ὡς κλύειν ἐμέ;

### ΤΛΟΣ

ἔχει γὰρ οὗτως ὕστε μὴ σιγᾶν πρέπειν.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ δῆτα τοῖς γε πρόσθεν ἥμαρτημένοις.

1120

## TRACHINIAE

Now out of joint, a thing of shreds I lie  
Baffled by hands invisible, I who claim  
A mother of the noblest, and for sire  
The ruler of the starry heavens, Zeus.  
But of one thing be sure, though I am naught  
And cannot stir a step, yet even thus  
I am a match for her who wrought my woe.  
Let her but come that she may learn of me  
This lesson to repeat to all, that I  
Living and dying chastened all that's vile.

### CHORUS

O hapless Greece, what mourning will be thine,  
If thou must lose thy mightiest warrior?

### HYLLUS

O father, since thy silence seems to invite  
An answer, hear me, stricken though thou art.  
I shall but ask what's fair; O be again  
Thy true self, not by pain and rage distraught;  
Else wilt thou never learn how vain thy thirst  
For vengeance, how unjust thy bitterness.

### HERACLES

Say what thou wilt and end; I am too sick  
To catch the drift of all thy riddling words.

### HYLLUS

'Tis of my mother I would tell thee—how  
She fares, and how unwittingly she sinned.

### HERACLES

O shameless reprobate, thou dar'st to name  
Thy father's murderer, name her too to me?

### HYLLUS

Her case is such that silence were unmeet.

### HERACLES

Of her past misdeeds it was meet to speak.

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ τοῖς γ' ἐφ' ἡμέραν ἔρεις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

λέγ', εὐλαβοῦ δὲ μὴ φανῆς κακὸς γεγώς.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

λέγω· τέθυηκεν ἀρτίως νεοσφαγής.

1130

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πρὸς τοῦ; τέρας τοι διὰ κακῶν ἐθέσπισας.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτῆς, οὐδενὸς πρὸς ἐκτόπου.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἵμοι· πρὶν ὡς χρῆν σφ' ἐξ ἐμῆς θαυεῖν χερός;

ΤΛΛΟΣ

κάν σοῦ στραφείη θυμός, εἰ τὸ πᾶν μάθοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

δεινοῦ λόγου κατῆρξας· εἰπὲ δ' ἢ νοεῖς.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἄπαν τὸ χρῆμ', ἥμαρτε χρηστὰ μωμένη.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χρήστ', ὡς κάκιστε, πατέρα σὸν κτείνασα δρᾶ;

ΤΛΛΟΣ

στέργημα γὰρ δοκοῦσα προσβαλεῖν σέθεν  
ἀπήμπλαχ', ὡς προσεῖδε τοὺς ἔνδον γάμους.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ τίς τοσοῦτος φαρμακεὺς Τραχινίων;

1140

ΤΛΛΟΣ

Νέσσος πάλαι Κένταυρος ἐξέπεισέ νιν  
τοιῷδε φίλτρῳ τὸν σὸν ἐκμῆναι πόθον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἰοὺ ἰοὺ δύστηνος, οἴχομαι τάλας·

δλωλ' ὅλωλα, φέγγος οὐκέτ' ἔστι μοι.

## TRACHINIAE

HYLLUS

And of her deeds this day, as thou wilt own.

HERACLES

Speak, but I fear thy speech will prove thee base.

HYLLUS

Hear then. She is dead, slain but an hour agone.

HERACLES

By whom? this portent likes me not; 'tis strange.

HYLLUS

By her own hand, none other, was she slain.

HERACLES

Out on her! she hath baulked my just revenge.

HYLLUS

E'en thou wouldest soften if thou knewest all.

HERACLES

A wondrous prologue! make thy meaning plain.

HYLLUS

The sum is this: she erred with good intent.

HERACLES

"Good," say'st thou, wretch? Was it good to slay  
thy sire?

HYLLUS

Nay, when she saw thy new bride, she devised  
A charm to win thee back, but was misled.

HERACLES

Could Trachis boast a wizard of such might?

HYLLUS

The Centaur Nessus taught her long ago  
How to enkindle in thy heart love's flame.

HERACLES

Alas, alas! I am undone, undone,  
The light of day has left me; now I see

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

οῖμοι, φρονῶ δὴ ξυμφορᾶς ἵν' ἔσταμεν.  
ἴθ', ὡς τέκνουν, πατὴρ γάρ οὐκέτ' ἔστι σοι·  
κάλει τὸ πᾶν μοι σπέρμα σῶν ὁμαιμόνων,  
κάλει δὲ τὴν τάλαιναν Ἀλκμήνην, Διὸς  
μάτην ἄκοιτιν, ως τελευταίαν ἐμοῦ  
φήμην πύθησθε θεσφάτων ὅσ' οἰδ' ἐγώ.

1150

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὕτε μήτηρ ἐνθάδ', ἀλλ' ἐπακτίᾳ  
Τίρυνθι συμβέβηκεν ὥστ' ἔχειν ἔδραν.  
παιδῶν δὲ τοὺς μὲν ξυλλαβοῦσ' αὐτὴ τρέφει,  
τοὺς δ' ἀν τὸ Θήβης ἄστυ ναίοντας μάθοις·  
ἡμεῖς δ' ὅσοι πάρεσμεν, εἴ τι χρή, πάτερ,  
πράσσειν, κλύοντες ἔξυπηρετησομεν.

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ δ' οὖν ἄκουε τούργου· ἐξήκεις δ' ἵνα  
φανεῖς ὁποῖος ὧν ἀνὴρ ἐμὸς καλεῖ.  
ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἦν πρόφαντον ἐκ πατρὸς πάλαι,  
τῶν ἐμπνεόντων<sup>1</sup> μηδενὸς θανεῖν ὅποι,  
ἀλλ' ὅστις "Αἰδου φθίμενος οἰκήτωρ πέλοι.  
ὅδ' οὖν ὁ θὴρ Κένταυρος, ως τὸ θεῖον ἦν  
πρόφαντον, οὕτω ζῶντά μ' ἔκτεινεν θανών.  
φανῶ δ' ἐγὼ τούτοισι συμβαίνοντ' ἵσα  
μαντεῖα καινά, τοῖς πάλαι ξυνήγορα,  
ἄ τῶν ὀρείων καὶ χαμαικοιτῶν ἐγὼ  
Σελλῶν ἐσελθὼν ἄλσος εἰσεγραψάμην  
πρὸς τῆς πατρφάς καὶ πολυγλώσσου δρυός,  
ἥ μοι χρόνῳ τῷ ζῶντι καὶ παρόντι νῦν  
ἔφασκε μόχθων τῶν ἐφεστώτων ἐμοὶ  
λύσιν τελεῖσθαι· κάδόκουν πράξειν καλῶς.  
τὸ δ' ἦν ἄρ' οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν θανεῖν ἐμέ.  
τοῖς γὰρ θανοῦσι μόχθος οὐ προσγίγνεται.

1160

<sup>1</sup> πρὸς τῶν πνεύμτων MSS., Erfurdt corr.

## TRACHINIAE

In what extremity of fate I stand.  
Go, son, thy father is no more ; go summon  
Thy brethren one and all, go summon too  
Alcmena, bride of Zeus—an empty name—  
That from my dying lips ye all may learn  
What oracles I know.

### HYLLUS

I cannot call  
Thy mother ; she at Tiryns by the sea  
Far hence abides ; and of thy children some  
She took to live with her ; others at Thebes,  
As thou may'st learn, are lodged ; but all of us  
Here present, father, will obey thy hest.

### HERACLES

Then listen thou and heed me. Now's the hour  
To prove thy breed—if thou art rightly called  
My son. It was foreshown me by my sire  
That I should perish by no living wight,  
But by a dweller in the realms of Death.  
So by this Centaur beast, as was foretold,  
I perish, I the living by the dead.  
A later oracle, as thou shalt learn,  
Meets and confirms the ancient prophecy.  
'Twas in the grove whose priests, the Selli, make  
The earth their bed, rude hillsmen, that I heard it  
Breathed by my Father's oak of many tongues ;  
Heard it, and wrote it down, my present doom,  
Now at this living moment brought to pass.  
Release it promised from my toils, and I  
Augured a happy life, but it meant death,  
For with the dead there can be no more toil.

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ταῦτ' οὖν ἐπειδὴ λαμπρὰ συμβαίνει, τέκνου, δεῖ σ' αὐτὸν γενέσθαι τῷδε τάνδρὶ σύμμαχον καὶ μὴ πιμεῖναι τούμὸν ὁξῦναι στόμα, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν εἰκαθόντα συμπράσσειν, νόμον κάλλιστον ἔξευρόντα, πειθαρχεῖν πατρί.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ', ὡς πάτερ, ταρβῶ μὲν εἰς λόγου στάσιν τοιάνδ' ἐπελθών, πείσομαι δὲ αἱ σοι δοκεῖ.

1180

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔμβαλλε χεῖρα δεξιὰν πρώτιστά μοι.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ώς πρὸς τί πίστιν τήνδ' ἄγαν ἐπιστρέφεις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ θᾶσσον οἴσεις μηδὲ ἀπιστήσεις ἔμοι;

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἰδοὺ προτείνω, κούδεν ἀντειρήσεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὅμνυ Διός νυν τοῦ με φύσαντος κάρα,

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἢ μὴν τί δράσειν; καὶ τόδ' ἔξειρήσεται;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἢ μὴν ἔμοὶ τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ἐκτελεῖν.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ὅμνυμ' ἔγωγε, Ζῆν' ἔχων ἐπώμοτον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰ δὲ ἐκτὸς ἔλθοις, πημονὰς εὔχου λαβεῖν.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

οὐ μὴ λάβω· δράσω γάρ· εဉχομαι δὲ ὅμως.

1190

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἰσθ' οὖν τὸν Οἴτης Ζηνὸς ὑψιστον πάγον;

## TRACHINIAE

Since, then, my weird thus plainly comes to pass,  
Thou, son, must do thy part and lend thine aid.  
Delay not till I goad thee in my wrath,  
But aid me with a will as one who knows  
The golden rule, a father to obey.

HYLLUS

Yea, father, though the issue gives me pause  
And I misdoubt thy purport, I'll obey.

HERACLES

Well said, but first lay thy right hand in mine.

HYLLUS

Wherefore impose on me this needless pledge ?

HERACLES

Thy hand at once ; obey and argue not.

HYLLUS

Here is my hand ; I do as I am bid.

HERACLES

Now by the head of Zeus my Father swear.

HYLLUS

What wouldest thou have me swear ? May I not know ?

HERACLES

Swear to perform the task that I enjoin.

HYLLUS

I will and take the oath, so help me Zeus.

HERACLES

And add thereto the curse on perjurors.

HYLLUS

No need, for I shall keep it ; yet I will.

HERACLES

Thou know'st the peak of Oeta, shrine of Zeus ?

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΤΛΛΟΣ

οἰδ', ώς θυτήρ γε πολλὰ δὴ σταθεὶς ἄνω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐνταῦθά νυν χρὴ τούμὸν ἔξαραντά σε  
σῶμ' αὐτόχειρα καὶ ξὺν οἷς χρήζεις φίλων.  
πολλὴν μὲν ὑλην τῆς βαθυρρίζου δρυὸς  
κείραντα, πολλὸν δ' ἄρσεν' ἐκτεμόνθ' ὅμοι  
ἄγριον ἔλαιον, σῶμα τούμὸν ἐμβαλεῖν,  
καὶ πευκίνης λαβόντα λαμπάδος σέλας  
πρῆσαι. γόουν δὲ μηδὲν εἰσίτω δάκρυ,  
ἀλλ' ἀστένακτος κάδάκρυτος, εἴπερ εἰ  
τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, ἔρξον· εἰ δὲ μή, μενῶ σ' ἐγὼ  
καὶ νέρθεν ὧν ἀραῖος εἰσαεὶ βαρύς.

1200

ΤΛΛΟΣ

οἵμοι, πάτερ, τί δ' εἴπας; οἴλα μ' εἴργασαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

όποια δραστέ ἐστίν· εἰ δὲ μή, πατρὸς  
ἄλλου γενοῦ του μηδὲ ἐμὸς κληθῆς ἔτι.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

οἵμοι μάλ' αὐθις, οἴλα μ' ἐκκαλεῖ, πάτερ,  
φονέα γενέσθαι καὶ παλαμιναῖον σέθεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ δῆτ' ἔγωγ', ἀλλ' ὧν ἔχω παιώνιον  
καὶ μοῦνον ἰατῆρα τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ὑπαίθων σῶμ' ἀν ἴψμην τὸ σόν;

1210

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ φοβεῖ πρὸς τοῦτο, τᾶλλα γ' ἔργασαι.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

φορᾶς γέ τοι φθόνησις οὐ γενήσεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἢ καὶ πυρᾶς πλήρωμα τῆς εἰρημένης;

## TRACHINIAE

HYLLUS

Yea, I have climbed it oft to sacrifice.

HERACLES

Thither thyself, thou with what friends thou wilt,  
Must carry me. From the deep-rooted oak  
Lop many a branch, and many a faggot hew  
From the wild-olive's lusty stock, and lay me  
Upon the pyre. Kindle a torch of pine,  
And fire it. Not a tear or wail or moan !  
Unweeping, unlamenting must thou do  
Thy part and prove thou art indeed my son.  
Fail, and my ghost shall haunt thee ever more.

HYLLUS

O father, canst thou mean it ? Hear I right ?

HERACLES

Thou hast thy charge. If thou refuse it, get  
Another sire, be called no more my son.

HYLLUS

O woe is me ! What dost thou ask, that I  
Should be thy murderer, a parricide ?

HERACLES

Not so, but healer of my sufferings,  
The one physician that can cure my pains.

HYLLUS

How can I heal thy stricken frame by fire ?

HERACLES

Well, if thou shrink from this, perform the rest.

HYLLUS

The task of bearing thee I will not grudge.

HERACLES

Nor yet to heap the pyre, as I have bid ?

## ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

ὅσον γ' ἀν αὐτὸς μὴ ποτιψαύων χεροῖν·  
τὰ δ' ἄλλα πράξω κού καμεῖ τούμδον μέρος.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἀρκέσει καὶ ταῦτα· πρόσνειμαι δέ μοι  
χάριν βραχεῖαν πρὸς μακροῖς ἄλλοις διδούς.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

εἰ καὶ μακρὰ κάρτ' ἐστίν, ἐργασθήσεται.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τὴν Εὐρυτείαν οἰσθα δῆτα παρθένου;

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

Ίόλην ἔλεξας, ως γ' ἐπεικάζειν ἐμέ.

1220

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔγνως. τοσοῦτον δή σ' ἐπισκήπτω, τέκνουν·  
ταύτην ἐμοῦ θανόντος, εἴπερ εὐσεβεῖν  
βούλει, πατρών ὄρκίων μεμνημένος,  
προσθοῦ δάμαρτα, μηδ' ἀπιστήσῃς πατρί·  
μηδ' ἄλλος ἀνδρῶν τοῖς ἐμοῖς πλευροῖς ὅμοι  
κλιθεῖσαν αὐτὴν ἀντὶ σοῦ λάβῃ<sup>1</sup> ποτέ,  
ἄλλ' αὐτός, ω παῖ, τούτο κήδευσον λέχος.  
πείθου· τὸ γάρ τοι μεγάλα πιστεύσαντ' ἐμοὶ  
σμικροῖς ἀπιστεῖν τὴν πάρος συγχεῖ χάριν.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

οἵμοι· τὸ μὲν νοσοῦντι θυμοῦσθαι κακόν,  
τὸ δ' ὡδὸν φρονοῦντα τίς ποτ' ἀν φέροι;

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ώς ἐργασείων οὐδὲν ών λέγω θροεῖς.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

τίς γάρ ποθ', ἦ μοι μητρὶ μὲν θανεῖν μόνη  
μεταίτιος σοὶ τ' αὐθις ώς ἔχεις ἔχειν,

<sup>1</sup> λάβοι MSS., Elmsley corr.

## TRACHINIAE

HYLLUS

So that I light it not with my own hands ;  
All else I will perform and do my part.

HERACLES

That will suffice. But add one other boon,  
A little one, to crown the great ones given.

HYLLUS

It shall be granted, be it ne'er so great.

HERACLES

Thou know'st the maiden, child of Eurytus ?

HYLLUS

Methinks thou meanest Iolè.

HERACLES

None else.

This is my charge to thee concerning her.  
When I am dead, if thou wouldest keep the oath  
Thou sworest to obey thy father's will,  
Take her to wife, let not another have her  
Who by my side hath lain ; but thine, my son—  
Thine let her be, joined in the marriage bond.  
Much hast thou granted, to refuse one more,  
One little boon, would cancel all the score.

HYLLUS

Ah me ! 'tis ill to quarrel with one sick—  
But who could bear to see him in this mind ?

HERACLES

Thy murmuring augurs disobedience.

HYLLUS

What her, the sole cause of my mother's death,  
And worse, the cause of this thy grievous plight !

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

τίς ταῦτ' ἄν, δόστις μὴ 'ξ ἀλαστόρων νοσοῖ,  
ἔλοιτο; κρεῖσσον κάμέ γ', ω πάτερ, θαυεῖν  
ἢ τοῖσιν ἔχθιστοισι συνναίειν ὁμοῦ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄνηρ ὅδ', ως ἔοικεν, οὐ νεμεῖν ἐμοὶ<sup>ν</sup>  
φθίνοντι μοῖραν· ἀλλά τοι θεῶν ἀρὰ  
μενεῖ σ' ἀπιστήσαντα τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις.

1240

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ῶμοι, τάχ', ως ἔοικας, ως νοσεῖς φράσεις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ γάρ μ' ἀπ' εὐνασθέντος ἐκκινεῖς κακοῦ.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

δεῖλαιος, ως ἐς πολλὰ τάπορεῖν ἔχω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ γὰρ δικαιοῦς τοῦ φυτεύσαντος κλύειν.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐκδιδαχθώ δῆτα δυσσεβεῖν, πάτερ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ δυσσέβεια, τούμὸν εἰ τέρψεις κέαρ.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

πράσσειν ἄνωγας οὖν με πανδίκως τάδε;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔγωγε· τούτων μάρτυρας καλῶ θεούς.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

τοιγάρ ποήσω κούκ ἀπώσομαι, τὸ σὸν  
θεοῖστι δεικνὺς ἔργον· οὐ γὰρ ἄν ποτε  
κακὸς φανείην σοί γε πιστεύσας, πάτερ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καλῶς τελευτᾶς, κάπὶ τοῖσδε τὴν χάριν  
ταχεῖαν, ω παῖ, πρόσθεις, ως πρὸν ἐμπεσεῖν  
σπαραγμὸν ἢ τιν' οἰστρον, ἐς πυράν με θῆς.

1250

## TRACHINIAE

Who, were he not possessed of fiends, would do it ?  
Better, my father, I with thee should die  
Than live united with our direst foe.

HERACLES

The boy, it seems, is not inclined to heed  
A father's dying prayer ; but heaven's curse  
Awaits full sure a disobedient son.

HYLLUS

I fear thy frenzy soon will show itself.

HERACLES

Yea, for thou wakenest my pain that slept.

HYLLUS

O what a coil of dread perplexities !

HERACLES

Because thou wilt not deign to heed thy sire.

HYLLUS

What, must I learn impiety from thee ?

HERACLES

'Tis piety to glad a father's heart.

HYLLUS

I have thy warrant then for what I do ?

HERACLES

I call the gods to witness it is just.

HYLLUS

Then I consent and hesitate no more.  
Let heaven attest this act of thine, for I  
Cannot be blamed for filial piety.

HERACLES

Thou endest well. Now crown thy gracious words  
With action ; haste and lay me on the pyre  
Before the spasms and fever-fit return.

## ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ἄγ' ἐγκονεῖτ', αἱρεσθε· παῦλά τοι κακῶν  
αὕτη, τελευτὴ τοῦδε τάνδρὸς ὑστάτη.

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν εἴργει σοὶ τελειοῦσθαι τάδε,  
ἐπεὶ κελεύεις κάξαναγκάζεις, πάτερ.

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄγε νυν, πρὸν τήνδ' ἀνακινῆσαι  
νόσον, ω̄ ψυχὴ σκληρά, χάλυβος  
λιθοκόλλητον στόμιον παρέχουσ',  
ἀνάπταις βοήν, ω̄ς ἐπίχαρτον  
τελέουσ' ἀεκούσιον ἔργον.

1260

### ΤΛΛΟΣ

αἱρετ', ὀπαδοί, μεγάλην μὲν ἐμοὶ  
τούτων θέμενοι συγγνωμοσύνην,  
μεγάλην δὲ θεών ἀγνωμοσύνην  
εἰδότες ἔργων τῶν πρασσομένων,  
οἵ φύσαντες καὶ κληζόμενοι  
πατέρες τοιαῦτ' ἐφορᾶσι πάθη.  
τὰ μὲν οὖν μέλλοντ' οὐδεὶς ἐφορᾶ,  
τὰ δὲ νῦν ἐστῶτ' οἰκτρὰ μὲν ήμῖν,  
αἰσχρὰ δ' ἐκείνοις,  
χαλεπώτατα δ' οὖν ἀνδρῶν πάντων  
τῷ τήνδ' ἄτην ὑπέχοντι.

1270

λείπου μηδὲ σύ, παρθέν', ἀπ' οἴκων,  
μεγάλους μὲν ἴδοῦσα νέους θανάτους,  
πολλὰ δὲ πήματα καὶ καινοπαθῆ,  
κούδεν τούτων ὅ τι μὴ Ζεύς.

## TRACHINIAE

(*To ATTENDANTS*)

Ho, haste and lift me. Thus I find repose  
The end and consummation of my woes.

HYLLUS

Since, father, this thou straitly dost command,  
Naught hinders the fulfilment of thy will.

HERACLES

Rouse, arm thyself, O stubborn heart,  
Before again the plague upstart ;  
Set on thy lips a curb of steel,  
Thy mouth let stony silence seal ;  
Go meet thy doom without a cry,  
A victim, happy thus to die.

HYLLUS

Lift him, men, nor take amiss  
That I bear a part in this.  
We are blameless, but confess  
That the gods are pitiless.  
Children they beget, and claim  
Worship in a father's name,  
Yet with apathetic eye  
Look upon such agony.  
What is yet to be none knows,  
But the present's fraught with woes,  
Woes for us, for them deep shame ;  
And of all beneath the sun  
Worse than he hath suffered none.

Come, maidens, come away !  
Horrors have ye seen this day,  
Dire death and direr fall :  
And Zeus hath wrought it all.

[*Exeunt OMNES.*



# **PHILOCTETES**

## ARGUMENT

NINE years before the play begins Philoctetes, afflicted by a noisome wound, had been landed by the Greek chiefs on the desert island of Lemnos. He bore with him the famous bow and arrows of Heracles; and without these, as a seer afterwards declared to them, Troy could not be taken. So Odysseus was commissioned to bring back by force or fraud the hero and his arms, and he took with him, to aid him in his purpose, the son of Achilles, Philoctetes' dearest friend.

When the play begins Odysseus has landed and is instructing Neoptolemus in his part. He is to find Philoctetes and reveal who he is, but pretend that he has come to take him back, not to Troy, but home to Greece. Neoptolemus at first indignantly declines the task and is hardly persuaded to play the traitor. He meets Philoctetes coming forth from his cave, makes himself known, and, to gain his confidence, relates fictitious wrongs that he, too, has suffered at the hands of the Greeks. He consents to take Philoctetes home, but as they are starting for the ship a merchant-captain appears (a sailor disguised by Odysseus) who tells them that the Greek captains have sent in pursuit of both. They hasten their departure, but first visit the cave that Philoctetes may fetch away the simples he needs to dress his wound.

## ARGUMENT

*As he is leaving the cave Philoctetes is seized with a paroxysm of pain. Knowing that after such attacks deep slumber is wont to follow, he entrusts his bow and arrows to Neoptolemus who swears to keep them safe and restore them to their owner. On awakening he demands his bow, but Neoptolemus refuses to give it back and confesses the plot that Philoctetes now suspects. Stung by the denunciation of his treachery and the pathetic appeal to his better nature, Neoptolemus repents him and is in the act of restoring the bow, when Odysseus, who has been watching the scene in hiding, appears to prevent him. The bow Odysseus will have; Philoctetes may go or stay as he chooses. The pair depart together for the ships and Philoctetes is left behind with the chorus of sailors who endeavour to persuade him to return with them. But he is obdurate and they are about to leave him when Neoptolemus is seen hurrying back with the bow, closely followed by Odysseus who tries in vain to arrest him and threatens to denounce him as a traitor to the host. Philoctetes regains his bow and would have used it to let fly a mortal shaft at Odysseus, had not Neoptolemus stayed his hand. Again he is urged to go back to Troy and again he refuses. Neoptolemus true to his word, reluctantly agrees to convey him home. At this point an apparition is seen in the air above them, the divine form of Heracles, sent by Zeus from Olympus to bid Philoctetes go back to Troy with Neoptolemus and so fulfil the oracle. At last he bows to the will of Heaven.*

## **ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ**

**ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ  
ΧΟΡΟΣ  
ΣΚΟΠΟΣ ἢ ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ  
ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ  
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ  
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ**

## **DRAMATIS PERSONAE**

**ODYSSEUS.**

**NEOPTOLEMUS.**

**PHILOCTETES.**

**SAILOR** (*disguised as Merchant Captain*).

**HERACLES.**

**CHORUS**, *Scyrian sailors of Neoptolemus' Crew.*

**SCENE** : Rocky Coast on the Island of Lemnos.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

Ακτὴ μὲν ἥδε τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς  
Λήμνου, βροτοῖς ἀστιπτοῖς οὐδὲ οἰκουμένη,  
ἔνθ', ὡς κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἐλλήνων τραφεὶς  
Ἀχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε, τὰν Μηλιᾶ  
Ποίαντος νιὸν ἐξέθηκ' ἐγώ ποτε,  
ταχθεὶς τόδ' ἔρδειν τῶν ἀνασσάντων ὑπο,  
νόσφι καταστάζοντα διαβόρῳ πόδα·  
ὅτ' οὗτε λοιβῆς ἡμὲν οὕτε θυμάτων  
παρῆν ἐκήλοις προσθιγεῖν, ἀλλ' ἀγρίαις  
κατεῖχ' ἀεὶ πᾶν στρατόπεδον δυσφῆμάις,  
βοῶν, στενάζων. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τί δεῖ  
λέγειν; ἀκμὴ γὰρ οὐ μακρῶν ἡμῶν λόγων,  
μὴ καὶ μάθῃ μ' ἡκοντα κάκχέω τὸ πᾶν  
σόφισμα, τῷ νιν αὐτίχ' αἰρησειν δοκῶ.  
ἀλλ' ἔργον ἥδη σὸν τὰ λοιφ' ὑπηρετεῖν  
σκοπεῖν θ' ὅπου 'στ' ἐνταῦθα δίστομος πέτρα  
τοιάδ', ἵν' ἐν ψύχει μὲν ἡλίου διπλῆ  
πάρεστιν ἐνθάκησις, ἐν θέρει δὲ ὑπνον  
δι' ἀμφιτρῆτος αὐλίου πέμπει πνοή·  
βαιὸν δὲ ἐνερθεν ἐξ ἀριστερᾶς τάχ' ἀν  
ἴδοις ποτὸν κρηναῖον, εἴπερ ἐστὶ σῶν.  
ἄ μοι προσελθὼν σῆγα σήμαιν' εἴτ' ἐκεῖ

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## PHILOCTETES

*Enter ODYSSEUS, NEOPTOLEMUS; in the background, a SAILOR.*

ODYSSEUS

Son of Achilles, Neoptolemus,  
Sprung from the noblest of the Grecian host,  
This is the beach of Lemnos, sea-girt isle,  
A land untrod, untenanted, where once,  
As bidden by the chiefs, I put ashore  
The Malian, son of Poeas, grievously  
Afflicted by his foot's envenomed wound.  
For us there was no peace at sacrifice  
Or at libations, but the whole camp rang  
With his discordant screams and savage yells,  
Moaning and groaning. But what skills it now  
To tell this tale? No time for large discourse  
That might betray our presence and undo  
The plot I've laid to catch him presently.  
To work! it rests with thee to play thy part,  
And help me to discover hereabouts  
A cave with double mouth by nature made  
To catch on either side the winter sun,  
Or by the breeze that through the archway blows  
Invite in summer's heat to gentle sleep;  
And lower down, a little to the left,  
A spring, if still it flows, thou art like to find.  
Go warily to work and bring me word,

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

χῶρον τὸν αὐτὸν<sup>1</sup> τόνδ' ἔτ' εἴτ' ἄλλῃ κυρεῖ,  
ώς τάπιλουπα τῶν λόγων σὺ μὲν κλύης,  
ἔγὼ δὲ φράζω, κοινὰ δ' ἔξ ἀμφοῖν ἵη.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἄναξ Ὁδυσσεῦ, τοῦργον οὐ μακρὰν λέγεις·  
δοκῶ γὰρ οἶον εἰπας ἄντρον εἰσορᾶν.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἄνωθεν ἡ κάτωθεν; οὐ γὰρ ἐννοῶ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τόδ' ἔξυπερθε· καὶ στίβου γ' οὐδεὶς κτύπος.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ὅρα καθ' ὑπνου μὴ καταυλισθεὶς κυρεῖ.

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ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

όρῳ κενὴν οἰκησιν ἀνθρώπων δίχα.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὐδ' ἔνδον οἰκοποιός ἐστί τις τροφή;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

στιπτή γε φυλλὰς ώς ἐναυλίζοντί τῳ.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔρημα, κούδεν ἐσθ' ὑπόστεγον;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

αὐτόξυλόν γ' ἔκπωμα, φλαυρουργοῦ τινος  
τεχνήματ' ἀνδρός, καὶ πυρεῖ ὁμοῦ τάδε.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

κείνου τὸ θησαύρισμα σημαίνεις τόδε.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἰοὺς ιούς· καὶ ταῦτά γ' ἄλλα θάλπεται  
ῥάκη, βαρείας του νοσηλείας πλέα.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἀνὴρ κατοικεῖ τούσδε τοὺς τόπους σαφῶς,  
κᾶστ' οὐχ ἔκας που· πῶς γὰρ ἀν νοσῶν ἀνὴρ

<sup>1</sup> πρὸς αὐτὸν MSS., Blaydes corr.

## PHILOCTETES

Whether he still is there or further gone.  
That done, thy part will be to listen, mine  
To instruct, that both may gain our common end.

NEOPTOLEMUS

No distant quest, my lord Odysseus, this ;  
Here, if I err not, is the cave thou seek'st.

ODYSSEUS

Above me or below ? I see it not.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Up there ; but not a footfall can I hear.

ODYSSEUS

Look if he be not gone within to rest.

NEOPTOLEMUS

The chamber's empty ; no man is within.

ODYSSEUS

And no provision for a man's abode ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Litter of trodden leaves as for a couch.

ODYSSEUS

And is that all—no other sign of life ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

A cup of uncouth handiwork, rough hewn  
From out a log ; some tinder, too, I see.

ODYSSEUS

These are his household treasures.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Faugh ! and here  
Spread in the sun to dry, are filthy rags  
Dank with the ooze of some malignant sore.

ODYSSEUS

This clearly is his dwelling-place, and he  
Hard by, for how could any travel far

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

κῶλον παλαιὰ κηρὶ προσβαίη μακράν;  
ἀλλ’ ἡ πὶ φορβῆς νόστον ἔξελήλυθεν  
ἡ φύλλον εἴ τι νώδυνον κάτοιδέ που.  
τὸν οὖν παρόντα πέμψον εἰς κατασκοπήν,  
μὴ καὶ λάθη με προσπεσών· ώς μᾶλλον ἀν  
ἔλοιτό μ’ ἡ τοὺς πάντας Ἀργείους λαβεῖν.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ’ ἔρχεται τε καὶ φυλάξεται στίβος.  
σὺ δ’, εἴ τι χρήζεις, φράζε δευτέρῳ λόγῳ.

### ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

’Αχιλλέως παῖ, δεῦ σ’ ἐφ’ οἷς ἐλήλυθας  
γενναῖον εἶναι, μὴ μόνον τῷ σώματι,  
ἀλλ’ ἦν τι καινὸν ὃν πρὸν οὐκ ἀκήκοας  
κλύνης, ὑπουργεῖν, ώς ὑπηρέτης πάρει.

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### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί δῆτ’ ἄνωγας;

### ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τὴν Φιλοκτήτου σε δεῖ  
ψυχὴν ὅπως δόλοισιν<sup>1</sup> ἐκκλέψεις λέγων.  
ὅταν σ’ ἔρωτῷ τίς τε καὶ πόθεν πάρει,  
λέγειν, ’Αχιλλέως παῖς· τόδ’ οὐχὶ κλεπτέον·  
πλεῖς δ’ ώς πρὸς οἴκουν, ἐκλιπὼν τὸ ναυτικὸν  
στράτευμ’ ’Αχαιῶν, ἔχθος ἐχθήρας μέγα,  
οἵ σ’ ἐν λιταῖς στείλαντες ἔξ οἴκων μολεῖν,  
μόνην ἔχοντες τήνδ’ ἄλωσιν ’Ιλίου,  
οὐκ ἡξίωσαν τῶν ’Αχιλλείων ὅπλων  
ἐλθόντι δοῦναι κυρίως αἰτουμένῳ,  
ἀλλ’ αὕτ’ ’Οδυσσεῖ παρέδοσαν λέγων ὅσ’ ἀν  
θέλης καθ’ ἡμῶν ἐσχατ’ ἐσχάτων κακά.

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<sup>1</sup> λαγοῖσιν MSS., Gedike corr.

## PHILOCTETES

Thus maimed and hobbled by an ancient wound ?  
Either in quest of food, or else to find  
Some simples known to him as anodynes,  
He's gone abroad, and shortly will return ;  
So post thy henchman there to watch the path,  
Lest he surprise me. I of all the Greeks  
Am the one foe he liefest here would catch.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Guard shall be kept ; my man is on his way ;  
And now if thou hast more to say, say on.

[*Exit ATTENDANT*

ODYSSEUS

Son of Achilles, not in thews alone  
Or prowess must thou prove thy breed to-day.  
If tasks be set thee that seem strange, no less  
Thou must perform them ; therefore wast thou sent.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What is thy hest ?

ODYSSEUS.

Thou must cajole and cheat  
The soul of Philoctetes by fair words,  
And when he asks thee who and whence thou art,  
“Achilles’ son,” make answer ; hide not this.  
But add, “I am sailing homewards and have left  
The fleet in dudgeon, wroth against the chiefs  
Who first prevailed on me to quit my home,  
Because without me Troy could ne’er be taken,  
And then upon my coming basely spurned  
My righteous title to Achilles’ arms,  
And gave them to Odysseus.” At my name  
Heap on me every scoff and scorn and taunt ;

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τούτῳ<sup>1</sup> γάρ οὐδέν μ' ἀλγυνεῖς· εἰ δ' ἐργάσει  
μὴ ταῦτα, λύπην πᾶσιν Ἀργείοις βαλεῖς.  
εἰ γάρ τὰ τοῦδε τόξα μὴ ληφθήσεται,  
οὐκ ἔστι πέρσαι σοι τὸ Δαρδάνου πέδον.  
ώς δ' ἔστ' ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐχί, σοὶ δ' ὁμιλία  
πρὸς τόνδε πιστὴ καὶ βέβαιος, ἔκμαθε.  
σὺ μὲν πέπλευκας οὗτ' ἔνορκος οὐδενὶ<sup>70</sup>  
οὗτ' ἔξ ανάγκης οὔτε τοῦ πρώτου στόλου·  
ἐμοὶ δὲ τούτων οὐδέν ἔστ' ἀρνήσιμον.  
ῶστ' εἴ με τόξων ἐγκρατής αἰσθήσεται,  
ὅλωλα καὶ σὲ προσδιαφερῷ ξυνών.  
ἀλλ' αὐτὸς τοῦτο δεῖ σοφισθῆναι, κλοπεὺς  
ὅπως γενήσει τῶν ἀνικήτων ὅπλων.  
ἔξιδα, παῖ, φύσει σε μὴ πεφυκότα  
τοιαῦτα φωνεῖν μηδὲ τεχνᾶσθαι κακά·<sup>80</sup>  
ἀλλ' ἡδὺ γάρ τι κτῆμα τῆς οἰκης λαβεῖν,  
τόλμα· δίκαιοι δ' αὐθις ἐκφανούμεθα.  
νῦν δ' εἰς ἀναιδὲς ἡμέρας μέρος βραχὺ<sup>90</sup>  
δός μοι σεαυτόν, κάτα τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον  
κέκλησο πάντων εὐσεβέστατος βροτῶν.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἔγὼ μὲν οὓς ἀν τῶν λόγων ἀλγῶ κλύων,  
Λαερτίου παῖ, τούσδε καὶ πράσσειν στυγῶ·  
ἔφυν γάρ οὐδὲν ἐκ τέχνης πράσσειν κακῆς,  
οὗτ' αὐτὸς οὐθ', ὡς φασιν, οὐκφύσας ἐμέ.  
ἀλλ' εἴμ' ἑτοῖμος πρὸς βίαιν τὸν ἄνδρ' ἄγειν  
καὶ μὴ δόλοισιν· οὐ γάρ ἔξ ἐνὸς ποδὸς  
ἡμᾶς τοσούσδε πρὸς βίαιν χειρώσεται.  
πεμφθείς γε μέντοι σοὶ ξυνεργάτης ὀκνῶ  
προδότης καλεῖσθαι· βούλομαι δ', ἄναξ, καλῶς  
δρῶν ἔξαμαρτεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ νικᾶν κακῶς.

<sup>1</sup> τούτῳ MSS., Buttmann corr.

## PHILOCTETES

It will not hurt me, but if thou should'st fail  
'Twill sorely vex the Argives one and all.  
This man's artillery we needs must have ;  
No hope to capture Troy-town otherwise.  
Why *thou* canst hold free converse with the man  
Securely and I cannot, thou shalt learn.  
Thou wast not bound by oath or pledge to sail  
Nor wast thou with the fleet that first embarked ;  
But naught of this, if taxed, can I deny.  
Therefore, if, bow in hand, he counters me,  
I die, and shall involve thee in my death.  
How to possess us of those matchless arms—  
There is the puzzle ; set thy wits to that.  
I know, my son, thy honest nature shrinks  
From glozing words and practice of deceit ;  
But (for 'tis sweet to snatch a victory)  
Be bold to-day and honest afterwards.  
For one brief hour of lying follow me ;  
All time to come shall prove thy probity.

## NEOPTOLEMUS

Son of Laertes, what upon my ear  
Grates in the telling, I should hate to do.  
Such is my nature ; any taint of guile  
I loathe, and such, they tell me, was my sire.  
But I am ready, not by fraud, but force,  
To bring the man ; for, crippled in one foot,  
Against our numbers he can prove no match.  
Nathless, since I was sent to aid thee, prince,  
I fear to seem a laggard ; yet prefer  
To fail with honour than succeed by fraud.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

έσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖ, καύτὸς ὧν νέος ποτὲ  
γλῶσσαν μὲν ἀργόν, χεῖρα δὲ εἰχον ἐργάτιν·  
νῦν δὲ εἰς ἔλεγχον ἔξιών ὥρῳ βροτοῖς  
τὴν γλῶσσαν, οὐχὶ τάργα, πάνθ' ἡγουμένην.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί μ' οὖν ἄνωγας ἄλλο πλὴν ψευδῆ λέγειν; 100

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

λέγω σ' ἐγὼ δόλῳ Φιλοκτήτην λαβεῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί δὲ ἐν δόλῳ δεῖ μᾶλλον ἢ πείσαντ' ἄγειν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὐ μὴ πίθηται πρὸς βίαν δὲ οὐκ ἀν λάβοις.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὗτοις ἔχει τι δεινὸν ἴσχυος θράσος;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ιούς γ' ἀφύκτους καὶ προπέμποντας φόνον.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ ἀρέκειν φέρειν δὲ προσμίξαι θρασύ;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὐ, μὴ δόλῳ λαβόντα γέ, ὡς ἐγὼ λέγω.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ αἰσχρὸν ἡγεῖ δῆτα τὸ ψευδῆ λέγειν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὐκ, εἰ τὸ σωθῆναι γε τὸ ψεῦδος φέρει.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πῶς οὖν βλέπων τις ταῦτα τολμήσει λακεῖν; 110

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ὅταν τι δρᾶς εἰς κέρδος, οὐκ ὀκνεῖν πρέπει.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

κέρδος δὲ ἐμοὶ τί τοῦτον ἐστὶ Τροίαν μολεῖν;

## PHILOCTETES

ODYSSEUS

Son of a gallant sire, I too in youth  
Was slow of tongue and forward with my hand ;  
But I have learnt by trial of mankind  
Mightier than deeds of puissance is the tongue.

NEOPTOLEMUS

It comes to this that thou would'st have me lie.

ODYSSEUS

Entangle Philoctetes by deceit.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Why not persuade him rather than deceive ?

ODYSSEUS

Persuasion's vain, and force of no avail.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What arms hath he of such miraculous might ?

ODYSSEUS

Unerring arrows, tipp'd with instant death.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Might not a bold man come to grips with him ?

ODYSSEUS

No, as I told thee, guile alone avails.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Thou deem'st it, then, no shame to tell a lie ?

ODYSSEUS

Not if success depends upon a lie.

NEOPTOLEMUS

To utter falsehoods I should blush for shame.

ODYSSEUS

If thou wouldst profit thou must have no qualms.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What gain to me, should he be brought to Troy ?

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

αίρει τὰ τόξα ταῦτα τὴν Τροίαν μόνα.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ ἄρ' ὁ πέρσων, ως ἐφάσκετ', εἴμ' ἔγώ;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὔτ' ἀν σὺ κείνων χωρὶς οὔτ' ἐκεῖνα σοῦ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θηρατέ οὖν γύγνοιτ' ἄν, εἰπερ ὥδ' ἔχει.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ώς τοῦτο γ' ἔρξας δύο φέρει δωμήματα.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ποίω; μαθὼν γὰρ οὐκ ἀν ἀρνοίμην τὸ δρᾶν.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

σοφός τ' ἀν αὐτὸς κάγαθὸς κεκλῆ̄ ἄμα.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἴτω· ποήσω, πᾶσαν αἰσχύνην ἀφείς.

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ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἢ μνημονεύεις οὖν ἃ σοι παρήνεσα;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σάφ' ἵσθ', ἐπείπερ εἰσάπαξ συνήνεσα.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

σὺ μὲν μένων νυν κείνον ἐνθάδ' ἐκδέχου,  
ἔγὼ δ' ἅπειμι, μὴ κατοπτευθῶ παρῶν,  
καὶ τὸν σκοπὸν πρὸς ναῦν ἀποστελῶ πάλιν.  
καὶ δεῦρ', ἐάν μοι τοῦ χρόνου δοκήτε τι  
κατασχολάζειν, αὐθις ἐκπέμψω πάλιν  
τούτον τὸν αὐτὸν ἄνδρα, ναυκλήρου τρόποις  
μορφὴν δολώσας, ως ἀν ἀγνοίᾳ προσῆ·  
οὐ δῆτα, τέκνον, ποικίλως αὐδωμένου  
δέχου τὰ συμφέροντα τῶν ἀεὶ λόγων.  
ἔγὼ δὲ πρὸς ναῦν εἴμι, σοὶ παρεὶς τάδε.

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## PHILOCTETES

ODYSSEUS

Without these arms Troy-town cannot be sacked.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Ye told me *I* should take it. Was that false?

ODYSSEUS

Not thou apart from these nor these from thee.

NEOPTOLEMUS

The quarry's worth the chase, if this be so.

ODYSSEUS

Know that success a double meed shall win.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Make plain this twofold prize and I'll essay.

ODYSSEUS

Thou wilt be hailed as wise no less than brave.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I'll do it—here's my hand—and risk the shame.

ODYSSEUS

Good. My instructions—thou rememb'rest them?

NEOPTOLEMUS

I have consented; trust me for the rest.

ODYSSEUS

Stay here then and await his coming, whilst,  
Lest I should be espied, I go away  
And send back to the ship our sentinel;  
But if ye seem to dally overmuch,  
He shall return, the same man, but disguised  
Past recognition, as a sailor clad.  
When he accosts thee, mark each word, my son,  
To catch the hid significance, for he  
Will speak in riddles. This I leave to thee  
And seek the vessel. Hermes aid us both,  
Who sent us on our way, the God of cunning,

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

Ἐρμῆς δ' ὁ πέμπων δόλιος ἡγήσαιτο νῦν  
Νίκη τ' Ἀθάνα Πολιάς, ἢ σφέζει μὲν ἀεί.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

τί χρὴ τί χρή με, δέσποτ', ἐν ξένᾳ ξένου  
στέγειν ἢ τί λέγειν πρὸς ἄνδρ' ὑπόπταν;  
φράζε μοι. τέχνα γὰρ  
τέχνας ἐτέρας προύχει  
καὶ γνώμα παρ' ὅτῳ τὸ θεῖον  
Διὸς σκῆπτρον ἀνάσσεται.  
σὲ δ', ὡς τέκνουν, τόδ' ἐλήλυθεν  
πᾶν κράτος ὡγύγιον τό μοι ἔννεπε  
τί σοι χρεὼν ὑπουργεῖν.

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### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

νῦν μέν, ἵσως γὰρ τόπον ἐσχατιαῖς  
προσιδεῖν ἐθέλεις ὅντινα κεῖται,  
δέρκου θαρσῶν· ὅπόταν δὲ μόλῃ  
δεινὸς ὁδίτης, τῶνδ' οὐκ<sup>1</sup> μελάθρων  
πρὸς ἐμὴν αἰὲν χεῖρα προχωρῶν  
πειρῶ τὸ παρὸν θεραπεύειν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

μέλον πάλαι μέλημά μοι λέγεις, ἄναξ, ἀντ. α'  
φρουρεῖν δημού ἐπὶ σῷ μάλιστα καιρῷ.  
νῦν δέ μοι λέγ', αὐλάς  
ποίας ἔνεδρος ναίει  
καὶ χῶρον τίν' ἔχει. τὸ γάρ μοι  
μαθεῖν οὐκ ἀποκαίριον,  
μὴ προσπεσών με λάθη ποθέν.  
τίς τόπος ἢ τίς ἔδρα; τίν' ἔχει στίβον,  
ἔναυλον ἢ θυραῖον;

<sup>1</sup> ἐκ MSS., Jebb corr.

## PHILOCTETES

And she who never failed me yet, my queen,  
Athenè Polias, queen of victory !

[*Exit ODYSSEUS.*

*Enter CHORUS OF SCYRIAN SAILORS.*

CHORUS (Str. 1)

What, O my master, what must I conceal  
And what reveal,

In a strange land a stranger, by what wile  
His shrewd suspects beguile ?

Instruct me ; for his art all art excels  
With whom there dwells

The sovereignty of Zeus, the Kingly Crown  
That hath to thee come down,

My son, by immemorial right divine ;  
Such skill is thine ;

So teach me, master, how I best may speed  
Thy present need.

NEOPTOLEMUS

First to find his lair, no doubt,  
Ye are keen ; so boldly scout.

When the wild man ye have spied  
Who within this cave doth bide,  
Watch the motions of my hand,  
Prompt to act as I command.

CHORUS (Ant. 1)

Now, as at all times, Prince, I gladly heed,  
And serve thy need.

But first to learn his common haunts t'were well ;  
I pray thee tell,  
Lest he should light upon me unaware,  
His track, his lair.  
Say, if within his den he will be found,  
Or roaming round.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οίκου μὲν ορᾶς τόνδ' ἀμφίθυρον  
πετρίνης κοίτης.

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ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῦ γὰρ ὁ τλήμων αὐτὸς ἄπεστιν;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

δῆλον ἔμοιγ' ώς φορβῆς χρείᾳ  
στίβον ὄγμεύει τῇδε<sup>1</sup> πέλας που.  
ταύτην γὰρ ἔχειν βιοτῆς αὐτὸν  
λόγος ἐστὶ φύσιν, θηροβολοῦντα  
πτηνοῖς ίοῖς στυγερὸν στυγερῶς,  
οὐδέ τιν' αὐτῷ  
παιῶνα κακῶν ἐπινωμάν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἰκτίρω νιν ἔγωγ', ὅπως,  
μή του κηδομένου βροτῶν  
μηδὲ ξύντροφον δύμμ' ἔχων,  
δύστανος, μονος ἀεί,  
νοσεῖ μὲν τόσον ἀγρίαν,  
ἀλύει δέ ἐπὶ παντὶ τῷ  
χρείας ἴσταμένῳ. πῶς ποτε πῶς δύσμορος ἀν-  
τέχει;

στρ. β'

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— ω παλάμαι θεῶν,<sup>2</sup>  
ω δύστανα γένη βροτῶν,  
οὶς μὴ μέτριος αἴων.

οὗτος πρωτογόνων ἵσως  
οἴκων οὐδενὸς ὕστερος,  
πάντων ἀμμορος ἐν βίῳ  
κεῖται μοῦνος ἀπ' ἄλλων,

ἀντ. β' 180

<sup>1</sup> τόνδε MSS., Blaydes corr.

<sup>2</sup> θυητῶν MSS., Lachmann corr.

## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

See you that two-mouthed cavern? There  
His rocky dwelling-place.

CHORUS

And where  
Is the sad inmate of the grot?

NEOPTOLEMUS

I doubt not somewhere near the spot,  
Gone forth in search of daily food,  
Dragging his steps through wold or wood;  
For so, 'tis said, by toilsome pains  
A painful sustenance he gains,  
Shooting whatever living thing  
Comes within reach of his dread bow.  
The years go by and never bring  
A leach to heal his woe.

CHORUS

O how piteous thy lot,  
Luckless man, by man forgot;  
None thy solitude to share,  
None to tend with loving care;  
Plagued and stricken by disease,  
Never knowing hour of ease,  
Facing death each moment, how  
Hast, poor wretch, endured till now?  
O the crooked ways of heaven!  
Hapless men to whom are given  
Lots so changeful, so uneven.

(Str. 2)

He who with the best might vie,  
Of our Grecian chivalry.  
On a desert island left,  
Perishes, of all bereft;

(Ant. 2)

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

στικτῶν ἡ λασίων μετὰ  
θηρῶν, ἐν τ' ὁδύναις ὁμοῦ  
λιμῷ τ' οἰκτρός, ἀνήκεστα μεριμνήματ' ἔχων· ὁρεί-  
α δ'<sup>1</sup> ἀθυρόστομος  
'Αχὼ τηλεφανῆς πικραῖς  
οἰμωγαῖς ὑπακούει.<sup>2</sup>

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ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐδὲν τούτων θαυμαστὸν ἔμοι·  
θεῖα γάρ, εἴπερ κἀγώ τι φρονῶ,  
καὶ τὰ παθήματα κεῖνα πρὸς αὐτὸν  
τῆς ὠμόφρονος Χρύσης ἐπέβη,  
καὶ νῦν δὲ πονεῖ δίχα κηδεμόνων,  
οὐκ ἔσθ' ὡς οὐ θεῶν του μελέτη  
τοῦ μὴ πρότερον τόνδε ἐπὶ Τροίᾳ  
τεῖναι τὰ θεῶν ἀμάχητα βέλη,  
πρὶν δὲ ἐξήκοι χρόνος, φέλεται  
χρῆναι σφ' ὑπὸ τῶνδε δαμῆναι.

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ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὔστομ' ἔχε, παι.

στρ. γ'

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ  
τί τόδε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

προυφάνη κτύπος,  
φωτὸς σύντροφος ὡς τειρομένου του,<sup>3</sup>  
ἢ που τῇδ' ἢ τῇδε τόπων.  
βάλλει βάλλει μ' ἐτύμα  
φθογγά του στίβον κατ' ἀνάγκαν  
ἔρποντος, οὐδέ με λάθει  
βαρεῖα τηλόθεν αὐδὰ τρυσάνωρ· διάσημα γὰρ  
θρηνεῖ.

<sup>1</sup> Βαραῖα δ' MSS., Mekler corr.

<sup>2</sup> πικρᾶς οἰμωγᾶς ὑπάκειται MSS., Blaydes corr.

<sup>3</sup> του added by Porson.

## PHILOCTETES

With the savage beasts doth dwell  
Of spotted hide or shaggy fell ;  
Pangs of hunger doth endure,  
Racked with aches that know no cure.  
Echo, too, with babbling tongue,  
As she sits her hills among,  
Iterates in undertones  
His interminable groans.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Nothing strange I see in this.  
By heaven ordained (if not amiss  
I augur) comes this punishment,  
By the unpitying Chrysè<sup>1</sup> sent ;  
And what he suffers now must be  
Designed by some wise deity,  
Lest too soon 'gainst Troy should go  
The arrows of his wizard bow,  
For when the fated hour has come  
By them must Troy-town find its doom.

### CHORUS

Hush, my son !

(Str. 3)

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Wherefore ?

### CHORUS (back)

Hist ! there comes a sound

As of one sore afflicted. Is it here  
Or here ? 'Tis nearer now, I look around,  
The footfall of a laboured tread grows clear ;  
And now, though distant still, I catch a cry  
Distinct, the voice of human agony.

<sup>1</sup> The nymph by whose guardian serpent Philoctetes was bitten. See l. 1326.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἔχε, τέκνου,

ἀντ. γ'

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

λέγ' ὅ τι.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

φροντίδας νέας.

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ώς οὐκ ἔξεδρος, ἀλλ' ἐντοπος ἀνήρ,

οὐ μολπάν σύριγγος ἔχων,

ώς ποιμὴν ἀγροβότας, ἀλλ' ἡ που πταιών ὑπ'  
ἀνάγκας

βοᾶ τηλωπὸν ἰωάν,

ἡ ναὸς ἄξενον αὐγάζων ὅρμον προβοᾶ τι γὰρ  
δεινόν.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἰὼ ξένοι,

τίνεις ποτ' ἐσ γῆν τήνδε κάκ ποίας πάτρας  
κατέσχετ' οὔτ' εὔορμον οὔτ' οἰκουμένην;

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ποίας ἀν ὑμᾶς πατρίδος<sup>1</sup> ἡ γένους ποτὲ  
τύχοιμ' ἀν εἰπών; σχῆμα μὲν γὰρ Ἑλλάδος  
στολῆς ὑπάρχει προσφιλεστάτης ἐμοί·

φωνῆς δ' ἀκούσαι βούλομαι· καὶ μή μ' ὅκνῳ  
δείσαντες ἐκπλαγῆτ' ἀπηγριωμένου,  
ἀλλ' οἰκτίσαντες ἄνδρα δύστηνον, μόνον,  
ἔρημον ὥδε κάφιλον κακούμενον,<sup>2</sup>

φωνήσατ', εἴπερ ως φῖλοι προσήκετε.

ἀλλ' ἀνταμείψασθ'. οὐ γὰρ εἰκὸς οὔτ' ἐμὲ  
ὑμῶν ἀμαρτεῖν τοῦτο γ' οὕθ' ὑμᾶς ἐμοῦ.

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ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ', ω ξέν', ἵσθι τοῦτο πρῶτον, οῦνεκα

"Ἐλληνές ἐσμεν· τοῦτο γὰρ βούλει μαθεῖν.

<sup>1</sup> πάτρας ἀν ὑμᾶς MSS., Dindorf corr.

<sup>2</sup> καλούμενον MSS., Brunck corr.

# PHILOCTETES

## CHORUS

Bethink thee, Prince.

(*Ant.* 3)

## NEOPTOLEMUS

Of what?

## CHORUS

Some fresh device;

For now the man approaches very near.

This is no shepherd-swain who homeward hies,

No melody of pastoral pipe I hear;

But as he stumbles 'mid the jagged stones

He rends the air with far resounding groans,

Or as he eyes the sea without a sail,

He utters (hear his voice!) a hideous wail.

*Enter PHILOCTETES.*

## PHILOCTETES

Sirs, who are ye and whence, who have landed here

Upon this harbourless and desolate shore?

What countrymen and of what race? If I

Might make conjecture by your garb and mien,

Ye are Greeks—a sight most welcome to my eyes;

But I would hear your voices. Shrink not back

In horror at my savage aspect; speak;

Pity a lonely, friendless, stricken man

Thus stranded; if indeed as friends ye come,

Make answer, I entreat ye; fair reply

I may expect from you, as you from me.

## NEOPTOLEMUS

Well, I will answer first thy question, Sir;

Thou hast conjectured rightly, we are Greeks.

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## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ω φίλτατον φώημα· φεῦ τὸ καὶ λαβεῖν  
πρόσφθεγμα τοιοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ.  
τίς σ', ω τέκνου, προσέσχε, τίς προσήγαγεν  
χρεία; τίς ὄρμή; τίς ἀνέμων ὁ φίλτατος;  
γέγωνέ μοι πᾶν τούθ', δῆπως εἰδῶ τίς εἰ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐγὼ γένος μέν εἴμι τῆς περιρρύτου  
Σκύρου· πλέω δ' ἐις οἰκον· αὐδῶμαι δὲ παῖς 240  
'Αχιλλέως, Νεοπτόλεμος. οἰσθα δὴ τὸ πᾶν.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ω φιλτάτου παῖ πατρός, ω φίλης χθονός,  
ω τοῦ γέροντος θρέμμα Λυκομήδους, τίνι  
στόλῳ προσέσχεις τήνδε γῆν πόθεν πλέων;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἔξι Ιλίου τοι δὴ τανῦν γε ναυστολῶ.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πῶς εἶπας; οὐ γὰρ δὴ σύ γ' ησθα ναυβάτης  
ἡμῖν κατ' ἀρχὴν τοῦ πρὸς Ιλιον στόλου.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

η γὰρ μετέσχεις καὶ σὺ τοῦδε τοῦ πόνου;

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ω τέκνου, οὐ γὰρ οἰσθά μ' ὄντιν' εἰσορᾶς;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ κάτοιδ' ὅν γ' εἶδον οὐδεπώποτε; 250

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐδ' ὄνομ' ἄρ' <sup>1</sup> οὐδὲ τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν κλέος  
ησθον ποτ' οὐδέν, οἷς ἐγὼ διωλλύμην;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ώς μηδὲν εἰδότ' ἵσθι μ' ὡν ἀνιστορεῖς.

<sup>1</sup> Άρ' added by Erfurdt.

## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

O welcome utterance ! Ah how good it is  
To hear those accents, long unheard, from thee.  
What quest, my son, what venture brought thee here,  
What breeze compelled thy canvas ? Happy breeze !  
Speak, tell me all, that I may know my friend.

NEOPTOLEMUS

My home's the wave-lapped Scyros, and I sail  
Homewards ; my name is Neoptolemus,  
My sire Achilles. Now thou knowest all.

PHILOCTETES

Son of a sire most dear, and land most dear,  
Old Lycomedes' foster-child, what quest  
Has brought thee hither, from what port didst sail ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Hither I sailed direct from Ilium.

PHILOCTETES

From Ilium ? Surely thou wast not on board  
When first our expedition sailed for Troy.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What, wert thou partner in that enterprise ?

PHILOCTETES

Dost thou not know with whom thou speak'st, my  
son ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

How should I know a man ne'er seen before ?

PHILOCTETES

Know'st thou not e'en my name ? hast never heard  
How I was wasting inch by inch away ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Of all thou questionest I nothing know.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ω πόλλ' ἐγὼ μοχθηρός, ω πικρὸς θεοῖς,  
οὐ μηδὲ κληδῶν ὡδ' ἔχοντος οἴκαδε  
μηδ' Ἑλλάδος γῆς μηδαμοῦ διῆλθέ που.  
ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν ἐκβαλόντες ἀνοσίως ἐμὲ  
γελῶσι σūγ' ἔχοντες, ή δ' ἐμὴ νόσος  
ἀεὶ τέθηλε κάππι μεῖζον ἔρχεται.

ω τέκνου, ω παῖ πατρὸς ἐξ Ἀχιλλέως,  
δδ' εἴμ' ἐγώ σοι κεῖνος, δν κλυεις ἵσως  
τῶν Ἡρακλείων ὅντα δεσπότην ὅπλων,  
ὅ τοῦ Ποίαντος παῖς Φιλοκτήτης, δν οἱ  
δισσοὶ στρατηγοὶ χώ Κεφαλλήνων ἄναξ  
ἔρριψαν αἰσχρῶς ὡδ' ἔρημον, ἀγρίᾳ  
νόσῳ καταφθίνοντα, τῆς ἀνδροφθόρου  
πληγέντ' ἔχίδνης ἀγρίῳ χαράγματι.  
ξὺν η μ' ἐκεῖνοι, παῖ, προθέντες ἐνθάδε  
ῳχοντ' ἔρημον, ήνικ' ἐκ τῆς ποντίας  
Χρύσης κατέσχον δεῦρο ναυβάτη στόλῳ.  
τοτ' ἄσμενοί μ' ώς εἶδον ἐκ πολλοῦ σάλον  
εῦδοντ' ἐπ' ἀκτῆς ἐν κατηρεφεῖ πέτρᾳ,  
λιπόντες φύγονθ', οἰα φωτὶ δυσμόρῳ  
ράκη προθέντες βαιὰ καὶ τι καὶ βορᾶς  
ἐπωφέλημα σμικρόν, οἵ αὐτοῖς τύχοι.  
σὺ δή, τέκνου, ποίαν μ' ἀνάστασιν δοκεῖς  
αὐτῶν βεβώτων ἐξ ὑπου στῆναι τότε;  
ποὶ ἐκδακρύσαι, ποὶ ἀποιμῶξαι κακά;  
όρῶντα μὲν ναῦς, ἀς ἔχων ἐναυστόλουν,  
πάσας βεβώσας, ἀνδρα δ' οὐδέν' ἔντοπον,  
οὐχ ὅστις ἀρκέσειεν οὐδὲ ὅστις νόσου  
καμνοντι συλλάβοιτο· πάντα δὲ σκοπῶν  
ηὔρισκον οὐδὲν πλὴν ἀνιᾶσθαι παρόν,  
τούτου δὲ πολλὴν εὐμάρειαν, ω τέκνου.

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## PHILOCTETES

### PHILOCTETES

O what a heaven-forsaken wretch am I,  
Of whose disastrous plight no rumour yet  
Hath reached my home or any Grecian land !  
But they, the godless knaves who cast me forth,  
Laugh and are mute. My malady the while  
Rankles, and daily grows from bad to worse.  
O boy, O son sprung from Achilles' loins,  
I am that man, of whom thou mayst have heard,  
Heritor of the bow of Heracles,  
The son of Poeas, Philoctetes, whom  
The Atridae and the Cephallenian prince  
Cast forth thus shamelessly, a derelict,  
Plague-stricken, wasting slowly, marked for death  
By a man-slaying serpent's venomous fangs.  
Thus plagued, my son, they left me here, what time  
Their fleet from sea-girt Chrysè touched this shore.  
Tired with long tossing I had fallen asleep  
Beneath a rock upon the beach ; they laughed  
To see me witless, laughed and sailed away,  
Flinging me, as they went, some cast-off rags,  
A beggar's alms, and scraps of food. God grant  
That they may some day come to fare like me !  
Picture, my son, when I awoke and found  
All gone, what waking then was mine ; what tears,  
What lamentations, when I saw the ships  
In which I sailed all vanished ; not a soul  
To share my solitude or tend my wound.  
All ways I gazed and nothing found but pain,  
Pain, and of pain, God wot, enow, my son.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ μὲν χρόνος δὴ διὰ χρόνου προύβαινέ μοι,  
 κἄδει τι βαιᾶ τῇδ' ὑπὸ στέγη μόνον  
 διακονεῖσθαι. γαστρὶ μὲν τὰ σύμφορα  
 τόξον τόδ' ἔξηρισκε, τὰς ὑποπτέρους  
 βάλλον πελείας· πρὸς δὲ τοῦθ', ὁ μοι βάλοι  
 νευροσπαδῆς ἀτρακτος, αὐτὸς ἀν τάλας 290  
 εἰλυόμην, δύστηνον ἔξελκων πόδα,  
 πρὸς τοῦτ' ἄν· εἴ τ' ἔδει τι καὶ ποτὸν λαβεῖν,  
 καὶ που πάγου χυθέντος, οὐα χείματι,  
 ξύλον τι θραῦσαι, ταῦτ' ἀν ἔξερπων τάλας  
 ἐμηχανώμην· είτα πῦρ ἀν οὐ παρῆν,  
 ἀλλ' ἐν πέτραισι πέτρον ἐκτρίβων μόλις  
 ἔφην' ἄφαντον φῶς, δ καὶ σφέζει μ' ἀεί.  
 οἰκουμένη γάρ οὖν στέγη πυρὸς μέτα  
 πάντ' ἐκπορίζει πλὴν τὸ μὴ νοσεῖν ἐμέ.  
 φέρ', ὡ τέκνουν, μῦν καὶ τὸ τῆς νήσου μάθης. 300  
 ταύτῃ πελάζει ναυβάτης οὐδεὶς ἔκων·  
 οὐ γάρ τις ὅρμος ἔστιν οὐδὲ ὅποι πλέων  
 ἔξεμπολήσει κέρδος ἢ ξενώσεται.  
 οὐκ ἐνθάδ' οἱ πλοῦ τοῖσι σώφροσιν βροτῶν.  
 τάχ' οὖν τις ἄκων ἔσχε· πολλὰ γάρ τάδε  
 ἐν τῷ μακρῷ γένοιτ' ἀν ἀνθρώπων χρόνῳ.  
 οὗτοί μ', ὅταν μόλωσιν, ὡ τέκνουν, λογοις  
 ἐλεοῦσι μέν, καὶ πού τι καὶ βορᾶς μέρος  
 προσέδοσαν οἰκτίραντες ἢ τινα στολήν.  
 ἐκεῖνο δ' οὐδείς, ἡνίκ' ἀν μνησθῶ, θέλει,  
 σώσαί μ' ἐς οἴκους, ἀλλ' ἀπόλλυμαι τάλας 310  
 ἔτος τόδ' ἥδη δέκατον ἐν λιμῷ τε καὶ  
 κακοῖσι βόσκων τὴν ἀδηφάγον νόσον.  
 τοιαῦτ' Ἀτρεῖδαί μ' ἢ τ' Ὁδυσσέως βία,  
 ὡ παι, δεδράκασ', οἱ Ὄλύμπιοι θεοὶ<sup>1</sup>  
 δοῦνεν ποτ' αὐτοῖς ἀντίποιν' ἐμοῦ παθεῖν.

## PHILOCTETES

So passed the crawling hours, day upon day,  
Year after year. I shifted for myself  
Beneath this homeless, solitary roof.  
To sate my hunger with this bow I shot  
The wingèd doves and ever when my bolt  
Sped from the taut string to the mark, I crawled  
Thither my lamed foot trailing painfully.  
And if of water I had need, or when  
In winter time the ground was hoar with frost,  
And firewood must be fetched, forth would I creep  
Somewise to compass this. I had no fire,  
But from the hard rock striking flint on flint  
Brought forth the hidden spark that keeps me alive.  
For, look ye, a bare roof and fire withal  
Serve all my needs, save healing of my sore.

Now let me tell thee of this isle, my son.  
No mariner sails hither of his will,  
For anchorage is none, nor mart whereat  
He may find lodging and exchange his wares  
For profit; prudent men sail not this way.  
Yet a stray visitor—such accidents  
Must happen in long years—puts in perforce.  
From such, my son, when they do come, I get  
Kind words of pity and perchance an alms  
Of food or raiment, but at the first hint  
Of passage home, they one and all refuse.  
So here for ten long years I linger on,  
Consumed with hunger, dying inch by inch;  
Only the worm that gnaws me dieth not.  
To the Atridae and Odysseus, boy,  
I owe this misery. God in heaven requite  
In kind the wrongs that they have done to me!

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔοικα κάγῳ τοῖς ἀφιγμένοις ἵσα  
ξένοις ἐποικτίρειν σε, Ποίαντος τέκνου.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ καύτὸς τοῦσδε μάρτυς ἐν λόγοις,  
ώς εἰσ' ἀληθεῖς οἶδα, συντυχῶν κακῶν  
ἀνδρῶν Ἀτρειδῶν τῆς τ' Ὁδυσσέως βίας.

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### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἢ γάρ τι καὶ σὺ τοῖς πανωλέθροις ἔχεις  
ἔγκλημ' Ἀτρείδαις, ὥστε θυμοῦσθαι παθών;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θυμὸν γένοιτο χειρὶ πληρῶσαι ποτε,  
ἴν' αἱ Μυκῆναι γνοῖεν ἡ Σπάρτη θ' ὅτι  
χὴ Σκύρος ἀνδρῶν ἀλκίμων μήτηρ ἔφυ.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

εὐ γ', ὡς τέκνοιν τίνος γὰρ ὁδε τὸν μέγαν  
χόλον κατ' αὐτῶν ἔγκαλων ἐλήλυθας;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὦ παῖ Ποίαντος, ἐξερῶ, μόλις δ' ἐρῶ,  
ἄγωγ' ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἐξελωβήθην μολών.  
ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἔσχε μοῖρ' Ἀχιλλέα θανεῖν,

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### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἵμοι φράσης μοι μὴ πέρα, πρὶν ἀν μάθω  
πρῶτον τόδ', ἡ τέθνηχ' ὁ Πηλέως γόνος;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τέθνηκεν, ἀνδρὸς οὐδενός, θεοῦ δ' ὅπο,  
τοξευτός, ώς λέγουσιν, ἐκ Φοίβου δαμείς.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' εὐγενῆς μὲν ὁ κτανών τε χὼ θανών.  
ἀμηχανῶ δὲ πότερον, ὡς τέκνον, τὸ σὸν  
πάθημ' ἐλέγγχω πρῶτον ἡ κεῖνον στένω.

## PHILOCTETES

CHORUS

O son of Poeas, I too pity thee  
No less methinks than did those visitors.

NEOPTOLEMUS

And I myself am witness that thy tale  
Is true; for I have proved the villainy  
Of the Atridae, and Odysseus too.

PHILOCTETES

What have those cursed Atridae wrongèd *thee*?  
Art thou too stirred to anger by some wrong?

NEOPTOLEMUS

O that my wrath might vent itself in deeds!  
Mycenae then and Sparta both would learn  
That Scyros too is mother of brave sons.

PHILOCTETES

Well said, my son! But I would know the grounds  
Of thy resentment, what the charge thou bring'st,  
Why thou art here.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I scarce know how, O son  
Of Poeas, yet I'll tell the tale of wrongs  
I suffered on my coming at their hands.  
When by the doom of Fate Achilles died—

PHILOCTETES

Woe's me! No more; first tell me, is he dead,  
The son of Peleus?

NEOPTOLEMUS

He is dead indeed,  
Slain by no man but by a god; a shaft  
Pierced him; by Phoebus sped, so runs the tale.

PHILOCTETES

Noble alike the slayer and the slain!  
I know not whether first, my son, to make  
Inquiry of thy woes or weep for him.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οῖμαι μὲν ἀρκεῖν σοί γε καὶ τὰ σ', ὡς τάλας,  
ἀλγήμαθ', ὥστε μὴ τὰ τῶν πέλας στένειν.

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### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁρθῶς ἔλεξας· τοιγαροῦν τὸ σὸν φράσον  
αὐθις πάλιν μοι πρᾶγμ', ὅτῳ σ' ἐνύθρισαν.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἡλθόν με νηὶ ποικιλοστόλῳ μέτα  
διός τ' Ὁδυσσεὺς χώ τροφεὺς τούμοῦ πατρός,  
λέγοντες, εἴτ' ἀληθὲς εἴτ' ἄρ' οὖν μάτην,  
ώς οὐθέμις γίγνοιτ', ἐπεὶ κατέφθιτο  
πατὴρ ἐμός, τὰ πέργαμ' ἄλλον η̄ μ' ἐλεῖν.  
ταῦτ', ὡς ξέν', οὕτως ἐννέποντες οὐ πολὺν  
χρόνον μ' ἐπέσχον μῆ με ναυστολεῖν ταχύ,  
μάλιστα μὲν δὴ τοῦ θαυμόντος ἴμέρῳ,  
ὅπως ἵδοιμ' ἄθαπτον· οὐ γὰρ εἰδόμην.  
ἐπειτα μέντοι χώ λόγος καλὸς προσῆν,  
εἰ τὰπὶ Τροίᾳ πέργαμ' αἱρήσοιμ' ἵών.  
ἥν δ' ἡμαρ ηδη δευτερον πλέοντί μοι,  
κάγῳ πικρὸν Σίγειον οὐρίῳ πλάτῃ  
κατηγόμην· καὶ μ' εὐθὺς ἐν κύκλῳ στρατὸς  
ἐκβάντα πᾶς ἡσπάζετ', ὁμιλύντες βλέπειν  
τὸν οὐκέτ' ὄντα ζῶντ' Ἀχιλλέα πάλιν.  
κεῦνος μὲν οὖν ἔκειτ'. ἐγὼ δ' ὁ δύσμορος  
ἐπεὶ δάκρυσα κεῦνον, οὐ μακρῷ χρόνῳ  
ἔλθων Ἀτρεΐδας πρὸς φίλους, ώς εἰκος ἦν,  
τά θ' ὅπλ' ἀπήτουν τοῦ πατρὸς τά τ' ἄλλ' ὅσ' ἦν.  
οἱ δ' εἶπον, οἴμοι, τλημονέστατον λόγον.  
ὡς σπέρμ' Ἀχιλλέως, τāλλα μὲν πάρεστι σοι  
πατρῷ ἐλέσθαι, τῶν δ' ὅπλων κείνων ἀνήρ  
ἄλλος κρατύνει νῦν, ὁ Λαέρτου γόνος,

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## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

Thou hast enough of thine own pains, poor soul,  
Without lamenting for another's woe.

PHILOCTETES

True, true indeed ! So tell me once again  
From the beginning how they outraged thee.

NEOPTOLEMUS

To fetch me in a gay decked galley came  
Odysseus and my father's foster-sire.<sup>1</sup>  
They told me (if the tale was true or feigned  
I know not) that, my father having fallen,  
No hand but mine could take the Citadel.  
Thus urged I did not dally or delay.  
Forthwith I sailed. Chiefly I longed to see  
My father whom in life I had not seen,  
Before his burial, and in part, I own,  
The promise fair that I should take Troy-town  
Flattered my pride. Well, on the second day,  
With oars and breeze to speed us, we had reached  
Sigeum (hateful name) and when I landed  
The whole host pressed to greet me, and they swore  
They saw Achilles come to life again.  
There lay my sire in death, and I, poor fool,  
When I had mourned for him a while, betook me  
To the Atridae as my natural friends,  
Claiming my sire's arms and what else was his.  
O 'twas a sorry answer that they made :  
“ Child of Achilles, all that was thy sire's  
Is thine and welcome—all except his arms ;  
These to Laertes' son have been assigned.”

<sup>1</sup> Phoenix.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

κάγω δακρύσας εὐθὺς ἔξανίσταμαι  
 ὅργῃ βαρείᾳ, καὶ καταλυήσας λέγω·  
 ὡ σχέτλι', η 'τολμήσατ' ἀντ' ἐμοῦ τινι  
 δοῦναι τὰ τεύχη τάμα, πρὶν μαθεῖν ἐμοῦ;  
 ὁ δ' εἰπ 'Οδυσσεύς, πλησίον γάρ ὧν κυρεῖ,  
 ναί, παῖ, δεδώκασ' ἐνδίκως οὗτοι τάδε·  
 ἐγὼ γάρ αὐτ' ἔσωσα κάκεῖνον παρών.  
 κάγω χολωθεὶς εὐθὺς ἥραστον κακοῖς  
 τοῖς πᾶσιν, οὐδὲν ἐνδεὲς ποιούμενος,  
 εἰ τάμα κεῖνος ὅπλ' ἀφαιρήσοιτό με.  
 ὁ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἥκων, καίπερ οὐ δύσοργος ὡν,  
 δηχθεὶς πρὸς ἀξήκουσεν ὡδ' ἡμείψατο·  
 οὐκ ἡσθ' ἵν' ἡμεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀπῆσθ' ἵν' οὐ σ' ἔδει·  
 καὶ ταῦτ', ἐπειδὴ καὶ λέγεις θρασυστομῶν,  
 οὐ·μήποτ' ἐς τὴν Σκύρον ἐκπλεύσης ἔχων.  
 τοιαῦτ' ἀκούσας κάξουειδισθεὶς κακὰ  
 πλέω πρὸς οἴκους, τῶν ἐμῶν τητώμενος  
 πρὸς τοῦ κακίστου κάκ κακῶν 'Οδυσσέως.  
 κούκ αἰτιῶμαι κεῖνον ώς τοὺς ἐν τέλει·  
 πόλις γάρ ἐστι πᾶσα τῶν ἡγουμένων  
 στρατός τε σύμπας· οἱ δ' ἀκοσμοῦντες βροτῶν  
 διδασκάλων λόγοισι γίγνονται κακοί.  
 λόγος λέλεκται πᾶς· ὁ δ 'Ατρείδας στυγῶν  
 ἐμοί θ' ὅμοίως καὶ θεοῖς εἴη φίλος.

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### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄρεστέρα παμβῶτι Γᾶ, μᾶτερ αὐτοῦ Διός,  
 ἀ τὸν μέγαν Πακτωλὸν εὔχρυσον νέμεις,  
 σὲ κάκεῖ, μᾶτερ πότνι', ἐπηυδώμαν,

στρ.

## PHILOCTETES

I wept, I started to my feet in wrath,  
And bitterly I spake, "O tyrannous men,  
How dare ye give these arms, my own by right,  
My leave unasked, to any man but me?"  
Then said Odysseus who was standing by,  
"Yes, boy, and rightly are they given to me,  
Who rescued both their master and his arms."<sup>1</sup>  
I boiled with rage, I hurled at him abuse  
The bitterest tongue could frame, I cursed the man  
Who would defraud me of my rightful arms.  
He, though not choleric, challenged thus direct,  
Stung to the quick by my retort, replied :  
"Thou wast not with us, a maligner thou!  
Take this for answer to thy blustering boasts :  
To Scyros with these arms thou ne'er shalt sail."  
Thus flouted and abused I left the host,  
And now am sailing homewards, robbed by him,  
Odysseus, the base villain, basely born.  
Yet is he less to blame than those who rule ;  
For like a commonwealth each arm'd host  
Perforce is subject to authority,  
And all the lawless doings in the world  
Spring from ill teaching. All my tale is told.  
But whoso hates the Atridae, as do I,  
May he find Heaven, no less than me, his friend !

### CHORUS

O mother Earth, enthronèd on the hills, (Str.)  
Mother of Zeus himself, who feedest all ;  
From thee Pactolus draws his brimming rills,  
His golden sands ; Mother, to thee I call,

<sup>1</sup> According to the tradition that Ovid followed (*Met.* 13. 284) Odysseus rescued the body and arms of Achilles from the fray.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὅτ' ἔς τόνδ' Ἀτρειδᾶν ὕβρις πᾶσ' ἐχώρει,  
ὅτε τὰ πάτρια τεύχεα παρεδίδοσαν,  
ὶὼ μάκαιρα ταυροκτόνων  
λεόντων ἔφεδρε, τῷ Λαρτίου  
σέβας ὑπέρτατον.

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## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἔχοντες, ώς ἔοικε, σύμβολον σαφὲς  
λύπης πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὡς ἔνοι, πεπλεύκατε,  
καὶ μοι προσάδεθ' ὅστε γιγνώσκειν ὅτι  
ταῦτ' ἔξ 'Ατρειδῶν ἔργα κάξ 'Οδυσσέως.  
ἔξοιδα γάρ νυν παντὸς ἀν λόγου κακοῦ  
γλώσσῃ θιγόντα καὶ πανουργίας, ἀφ' ἧς  
μηδὲν δίκαιον ἔς τέλος μέλλοι ποεῦν.  
ἀλλ' οὐ τι τοῦτο θαῦμ' ἔμοιγ', ἀλλ' εἰ παρὼν  
Αἴας ὁ μείζων ταῦθ' ὄρῶν ἡνείχετο.

## ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ ἦν ἔτι ζῶν, ὡς ἔν'. οὐ γὰρ ἂν ποτε  
ζῶντός γ' ἐκείνου ταῦτ' ἐσυλήθην ἐγώ.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πῶς εἶπας; ἀλλ' ἡ χούτος οἴχεται θαυών;

## ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ώς μηκέτ' ὅντα κείνουν ἐν φάει νόει.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἵμοι τάλας. ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁ Τυδέως γόνος  
οὐδ' οὐμπολητὸς Σισύφου Λαερτίφ,  
οὐ μὴ θάνωσι· τούσδε γὰρ μὴ ζῆν ἔδει.

## ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ'. ἐπίστω τοῦτό γ'. ἀλλὰ καὶ μέγα<sup>420</sup>  
θᾶλλοντές εἰσι νῦν ἐν Ἀργείων στρατῷ.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τί δ'; οὐ παλαιὸς<sup>1</sup> κάγαθὸς φίλος τ' ἐμός,

<sup>1</sup> τί δ' ὡς παλαιός (οὐ δε π.) MSS., Meineke corr.

## PHILOCTETES

As once I called when, flushed with upstart pride,  
The fierce Atridae 'gainst my master raged,  
(O lady who on yokèd lions doth ride,  
Their bloody ravening by thee assuaged,) .  
What time the tyrants to Laertes' son  
The guerdon gave, those arms his sire had won.

### PHILOCTETES

Good sirs, ye bring me as a talisman,  
A common grief ; a plaint attuned to mine.  
Full well I recognise in this your tale  
The Atridae and Odysseus. He, I warrant,  
Would have a hand and lend his tongue to abet  
Any conspiracy, any deep-laid plot,  
If he could compass some dishonest end.  
This is not wonderful ; but was indeed  
The greater Ajax by, to see and brook it ?

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Ajax, my friend, was dead ; had he been living  
They would not thus have robbed me and despoiled.

### PHILOCTETES

What say'st thou, boy ? is he too dead and gone ?

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Yea he hath left the light.

### PHILOCTETES

Alas, alas !

But not the son of Tydeus, nor the son  
Named of Laertes, bred of Sisyphus ;  
They die not who should never have been born.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Not they indeed, I warrant ; they live on,  
And in the Argive host are mighty men.

### PHILOCTETES

And what of him, my good old friend and true,

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

Νέστωρ ὁ Πύλιος, ἔστιν; οὗτος γὰρ τά γε  
κείνων κάκ' ἐξήρυκε, βουλεύων σοφά.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

κεῖνός γε πράσσει νῦν κακῶς, ἐπεὶ θανὼν  
Ἀντίλοχος αὐτῷ φροῦδος, δις παρῆν, γόνος.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἴμοι, δῦ αὖ τώδ' ἀνδρ' ἔλεξας,<sup>1</sup> οἰν ἐγὼ  
ζῆκιστ' ἀν ἡθέλησ' ὀλωλότοιν κλύειν.  
φεῦ φεῦ· τί δῆτα δεῖ σκοπεῖν, δοθ' οἶδε μὲν  
τεθνᾶσ', Ὁδυσσεὺς δ' ἔστιν αὖ κάνταῦθ' ἵνα  
χρῆν ἀντὶ τούτων αὐτὸν αὐδᾶσθαι νεκρόν;

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### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σοφὸς παλαιστὴς κεῖνος· ἀλλὰ χαῖ σοφαὶ  
γνῶμαι, Φιλοκτῆτ', ἐμποδίζονται θαμά.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

φέρ' εἰπὲ πρὸς θεῶν, ποῦ γὰρ ἦν ἐνταῦθά σοι  
Πάτροκλος, δις σοῦ πατρὸς ἦν τὰ φίλτατα;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

χούτος τεθνηκώς ἦν λόγῳ δέ σ' ἐν βραχεῖ  
τοῦτ' ἐκδιδάξω· πόλεμος οὐδέν' ἀνδρ' ἐκῶν  
αἴρει πονηρὸν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς χρηστοὺς ἀεί.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ξυμμαρτυρῶ σοι· καὶ κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτό γε  
ἀναξίου μὲν φωτὸς ἐξερήσομαι,  
γλώσση δὲ δεινοῦ καὶ σοφοῦ, τί νῦν κυρεῖ.

440

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ποίου δὲ τούτου πλήν γ' Ὁδυσσέως ἐρεῖς;

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐ τοῦτον εἴπον, ἀλλὰ Θερσίτης τις ἦν,  
δις οὐκ ἀν εἴλετ' εἰσάπαξ εἴπειν, διπου  
μηδεὶς ἐψή· τοῦτον οἰσθ' εἰ ζῶν κυρεῖ;

<sup>1</sup> αὕτως δείν' ἔλεξας MSS., Jebb corr.

## PHILOCTETES

The Pylian Nestor, lives he not? for he  
Oft by his wisdom checked their ill designs.

NEOPTOLEMUS

He is not what he once was, since he lost  
His best belovèd son, Antilochus.

PHILOCTETES

Alas! thou tell'st me of a double loss,  
The two men whom of all I least could spare.  
Ah me! What hope is there when two such men  
Are taken and Odysseus lives, whose death  
Instead of theirs thou hadst by rights announced?

NEOPTOLEMUS

A cunning gamester, but the cunningest,  
O Philoctetes, are full often thrown.

PHILOCTETES

But tell me, prithee, where was he the while,  
Patroclus, once thy father's bosom friend?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Dead like the rest, for this in sooth is true:  
War never slays an evil man by choice,  
But still the good.

PHILOCTETES

In that I'll bear thee out.

By the same token, I would ask of one,  
A worthless wight, but shrewd and glib of tongue.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Thou mean'st Odysseus, surely?

PHILOCTETES

Not of him  
I asked, but of Thersites, one whose tongue  
Was ever wagging most when wanted least,  
An empty babbler. Know'st thou if he lives?

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ εἶδον αὐτόν, ἡσθόμην δ' ἔτ' ὅντα νιν.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἔμελλ'. ἐπεὶ οὐδέν πω κακόν γ' ἀπώλετο,  
ἀλλ' εὖ περιστέλλουσιν αὐτὰ δαίμονες,  
καὶ πως τα μὲν πανούργα καὶ παλιντριβῆ  
χαίρουσ' ἀναστρέφοντες ἐξ "Αἰδου, τὰ δὲ  
δίκαια καὶ τὰ χρήστ' ἀποστέλλουσ' ἀεί.  
ποὺ χρὴ τίθεσθαι ταῦτα, ποὺ δ' αἰνεῖν, ὅταν  
τὰ θεῖ' ἐπαινῶν τοὺς θεοὺς εὔρω κακούς;

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### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἔγὼ μέν, ω γένεθλον Οίταίου πατρός,  
τὸ λοιπὸν ἥδη τηλόθεν τό τ' Ἰλιον  
καὶ τοὺς Ἀτρείδας εἰσορῶν φυλάξομαι.  
ὅπου δ' ὁ χειρῶν τάγαθοῦ μεῖζον σθένει  
κάποφθίνει τὰ χρηστὰ χώδειλὸς κρατεῖ,  
τούτους ἐγὼ τοὺς ἄνδρας οὐ στέρξω ποτέ.  
ἀλλ' ή πετραία Σκύρος ἔξαρκονσά μοι  
ἔσται τὸ λοιπόν, ὥστε τέρπεσθαι δόμφῳ.  
νῦν δ' εἴμι πρὸς ναῦν· καὶ σύ, Ποίαντος τέκνον,  
χαῖρ' ώς μέγιστα, χαῖρε· καὶ σε δαίμονες  
νόσου μεταστήσειαν, ώς αὐτὸς θέλεις.  
ἡμεῖς δ' ἴωμεν, ώς ὅπηνίκ' ἀν θεὸς  
πλοῦν ἡμὸν εἴκῃ, τηνικαῦθ' ὄρμώμεθα.

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### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἥδη, τέκνον, στέλλεσθε;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

καιρὸς γὰρ καλεῖ  
πλοῦν μὴ ἔξ ἀπόπτου μᾶλλον ή γγύθεν σκοπεῖν.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πρός νῦν σε πατρὸς πρός τε μητρός, ω τέκνον,  
πρός τ' εἴ τι σοι κατ' οἰκόν ἔστι προσφιλέσ,

## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

I saw him not, but heard he was alive.

PHILOCTETES

I thought as much ; for evil never dies,  
Fostered too well by gods who take delight,  
Methinks, to turn back from the gates of hell  
All irredeemable rascality,  
But speed the righteous on their downward way.  
What should I deem of this, how justify  
The ways of Heaven, finding Heaven unjust ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

For my part, son of an Oetean sire,  
I shall take heed henceforward to behold  
Troy and the two Atridae from afar.  
Where villainy to goodness is preferred,  
And virtue withers, and the base hold sway,  
Such company I never will frequent.  
Enough for me henceforth my native rocks,  
My island home in Scyros ; there I'll bide.  
Now to the ships. Farewell, a fond farewell,  
O son of Poeas ; may the gods fulfil  
Thy heart's desire and heal thee of thy wound !  
Now we must leave thee and prepare to sail  
Whene'er the gods shall send a favouring breeze.

PHILOCTETES

So soon, my son, departing ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

'Tis high time,  
Not here, but from the strand to watch the tide.

PHILOCTETES

Oh ! in thy father's, in thy mother's name,  
By all the sanctities of home, my son,

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ικέτης ἵκνοῦμαι, μὴ λίπης μ' οὕτω μόνον,  
ἔρημον ἐν κακοῖσι τοῖσδ' οἶοις ὄρᾶς  
δσοισί τ' ἔξήκουσας ἐνναίοντά με·  
ἀλλ' ἐν παρέργῳ θοῦ με. δυσχέρεια μέν,  
ἔξοιδα, πολλὴ τοῦδε τοῦ φορηματος·  
δμῶς δὲ τλῆθι· τοῖσι γενναιοισί τοι  
τό τ' αἰσχρὸν ἐχθρὸν καὶ τὸ χρηστὸν εὔκλεές.  
σοὶ δ' ἐκλιπόντι τοῦτ' ὄνειδος οὐ καλόν,  
δράσαντι δ', ὡ παῖ, πλεῦστον εὔκλείας γέρας,  
ἐὰν μόλω γὰρ ζῶν πρὸς Ούταίαν χθόνα.  
ἴθ'. ἡμέρας τοι μόχθος οὐχ ὅλης μιᾶς.  
τόλμησον. ἐμβαλοῦ μ' ὅπῃ θέλεις ἄγων,  
εἰς ἀντλίαν, εἰς πρῷραν, εἰς πρύμνην, ὅποι  
ἡκιστα μέλλω τοὺς ξυνόντας ἀλγυνεῖν.  
νεῦσον, πρὸς αὐτοῦ Ζηνὸς ἱκεσίου, τέκνου,  
πείσθητι· προσπίτων σε γόνασι, καίπερ ὡν  
ἀκράτωρ ὁ τλήμων, χωλός. ἀλλὰ μή μ' ἀφῆς  
ἔρημον οὕτω χωρὶς ἀνθρώπων στίβου,  
ἀλλ' ἡ πρὸς οἴκον τὸν σὸν ἔκσωσόν μ' ἄγων  
ἡ πρὸς τὰ Χαλκάδοντος Εὐβοίας σταθμά·  
κάκειθεν οὖ μοι μακρὸς εἰς Οἴτην στόλος  
Τραχινίαν τε δεράδα<sup>1</sup> καὶ τὸν εὔροον  
Σπερχείὸν ἔσται· πατρί μ' ὡς δείξης φίλῳ,  
δν δὴ παλαιὸν ἔξ ὅτου δέδοικ' ἐγὼ  
μή μοι βεβήκῃ. πολλὰ γὰρ τοῦς ἴγμένοις  
ἔστελλον αὐτὸν ἱκεσίους πέμπων λιτάς,  
αὐτόστολον πέμψαντά μ' ἔκσωσαι δόμους.  
ἀλλ' ἡ τέθυηκεν ἡ τὰ τῶν διακόνων,  
ὡς εἰκός, οἵμαι, τούμδον ἐν σμικρῷ μέρος  
ποιούμενοι τὸν οἴκαδ' ἥπειγον στόλον.  
νῦν δ', εἰς σὲ γὰρ πομπόν τε καύτὸν ἄγγελον

470

480

490

500

<sup>1</sup> δειράδα MSS., Toup corr. Jebb reads δειράδ' ἡδ' ἐς εὔροον.

## PHILOCTETES

Leave me not, I adjure thee, here alone,  
Abandoned to such ills as thou hast seen  
And others worse whereof thou hast been told.  
Think of me as a stowaway! well I know  
The irksomeness of such a passenger.  
Bear it! to true nobility of soul  
All shame is shameful, honour honourable.  
And it would smirch thine honour to decline  
This task, my son; to do it, bring thee fame  
And glory, if ye carry me alive  
To Oeta. Come, 'tis but a day's annoy.  
Take heart of courage; stow me where thou wilt—  
The hold, the bows, the stern, no matter where—  
Wherever I shall least offend my mates.  
By Zeus, the god of suppliants, O consent,  
O hearken! at thy knees I fall, albeit  
A cripple maimed and helpless. Leave me not  
An outcast in a land where no man dwells;  
But either take me safe to thine own home,  
Or to Euboea and Chalcodon's realm,  
Whence I may cross to Oeta ('tis not far)  
And the Trachinean passes and the stream  
Of broad Spercheius, and behold once more  
My father. Ah! these weary years I've feared  
He must be dead, for messages full oft  
I sent by those who passed my way, entreating  
That he would fetch me in his own ship home  
But either he is dead, or, like enough,  
My envoys ('tis the way of envoys) recked  
Little of my concerns and hastened home.  
But now to thee, my messenger at once

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἥκω, σὺ σῶσον, σύ μ' ἐλέησον, εἰσορῶν  
ώς πάντα δεινὰ κἀπικυδύνως βροτοῖς  
κεῖται παθεῖν μὲν εὖ, παθεῖν δὲ θάτερα.  
χρὴ δ' ἐκτὸς ὅντα πημάτων τὰ δείν' ὄρâν,  
χῶταν τις εὖ ζῆ, τηνικαῦτα τὸν βίον  
σκοπεῖν μάλιστα, μὴ διαφθαρεὶς λάθη.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ.

οἴκτιρ', ἄναξ· πολλῶν ἔλεξεν δυσοίστων πόνων  
ἄθλ', οὐα μηδεὶς τῶν ἐμῶν τύχοι φίλων.  
εὶ δὲ πικρούς, ἄναξ, ἔχθεις Ἀτρεΐδας,  
ἔγὼ μέν, τὸ κείνων κακὸν τῷδε κέρδος  
μετατιθέμενυς, ἐνθαπερ ἐπιμέμονεν,  
ἐπ' εὐστόλου ταχείας νεώς  
πορεύσαιμ' ἀν ἐς δόμους, τὰν θεῶν  
νέμεσιν ἐκφυγών.

510

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὅρα σὺ μὴ νῦν μέν τις εὐχερῆς παρῆς,  
ὅταν δὲ πλησθῆς τῆς νόσου ξυνουσίᾳ,  
τότ' οὐκέθ' αὐτὸς τοῖς λόγοις τούτοις φανῆς.

520

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἥκιστα· τοῦτ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως ποτ' εἰς ἐμὲ  
τοῦνειδος ἔξεις ἐνδίκως ὀνειδίσαι.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' αἰσχρὰ μέντοι σοῦ γέ μ' ἐνδεέστερον  
ξένῳ φανῆναι πρὸς τὸ καίριον πονεῖν.  
ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ, πλέωμεν, ὁρμάσθω ταχύς.  
χὴ ναῦς γὰρ ἄξει κούκ ἀπαριηθήσεται.  
μόνον θεοὶ σφύζοιεν ἔκ τε τῆσδε γῆς  
ἡμᾶς ὅποι τ' ἐνθένδε βουλοίμεσθα πλεῖν.

## PHILOCTETES

And saviour, I appeal ; save, pity me,  
Seeing upon how slippery a place  
Fortune for mortals and misfortune stand.  
Therefore the man that lives at ease should look  
For rocks ahead, and when he prospers most  
Watch lest he suffer shipwreck unawares.

### CHORUS

Pity, my chief ! (Ant.)  
Pity a tale of agonizing grief !  
Pray God no friend  
Of mine may ever come to such an end !  
O pity him !  
I know thou hatest, prince, the Atridae grim ;  
Turn to his gain  
The villainy they plotted for his bane.  
O take him home !  
With him let our brave vessel cleave the foam ;  
There would he be ;  
Thus from the dread Avengers shall we flee.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

See that your present kindness be not  
A passing mood, lest after, when ye come  
In closer contact with his malady,  
Ye falter and belie these promises.

### CHORUS

No, I shall ne'er be open to such charge.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

'Twere shame indeed should I less zealous prove  
Than thou to help a stranger in his need.  
So, if you please, we'll sail ; let him aboard ;  
Our ship methinks will not refuse her aid.  
Only may heaven convey us from this shore  
Safe to the haven whither we would sail !

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ω φίλτατον μὲν ἡμαρ, ἥδιστος δ' ἀνήρ,  
φίλοι δὲ ναῦται, πῶς ἀν ύμὶν ἐμφανῆς  
ἔργῳ γενοίμην, ὡς μ' ἔθεσθε προσφιλῆ;  
ἴωμεν, ὡς παῖ, προσκύσαντε τὴν ἔσω  
ἄοικον εἰσοίκησιν, ὡς με καὶ μάθης  
ἀφ' ὧν διέζων ὡς τ' ἔφυν εὐκάρδιος.  
οἷμαι γὰρ οὐδέ δὲν δύμμασιν μόνην θέαν  
ἄλλον λαβόντα πλὴν ἐμοῦ τλῆναι τάδε·  
ἔγὼ δ' ἀνάγκη προύμαθον στέργειν κακά.

530

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐπίσχετον, μάθωμεν· ἄνδρε γὰρ δύο,  
οἱ μὲν νεώς σῆς ναυβάτης, οἱ δὲ ἄλλοθρους,  
χωρεῖτον, ὡν μαθόντες αὐθις εἴσιτον.

540

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

Ἄχιλλέως παῖ, τόνδε τὸν ξυνέμπορον,  
ὅς ἦν νεώς σῆς σὺν δυοῖν ἄλλοιν φύλαξ,  
ἐκέλευσ' ἐμοί σε ποῦ κυρῶν εἶης φράσαι,  
ἐπείπερ ἀντέκυρσα, δοξάζων μὲν οὔ,  
τύχῃ δέ πως πρὸς ταῦτὸν ὄρμισθεὶς πέδον.  
πλέων γὰρ ὡς ναύκληρος οὐ πολλῷ στόλῳ  
ἀπ' Ἰλίου πρὸς οἴκον ἐσ τὴν εὐβοτρυν  
Πεπάρηθον, ὡς ἤκουσα τοὺς ναύτας ὅτι  
σοὶ πάντες εἰεν συννεναυστοληκότες,  
ἔδοξέ μοι μὴ σῆγα, πρὶν φράσαιμέ σοι,  
τὸν πλοῦν ποεῖσθαι, προστυχόντι τῶν ἵσων.  
οὐδὲν σύ που κάτοισθα τῶν σαυτοῦ πέρι,  
ἀ τοῖσιν Ἀργείοισιν ἀμφὶ σοῦ νέα  
βουλεύματ' ἔστι, κού μόνον βουλεύματα,  
ἄλλ' ἔργα δρώμεν', οὐκέτ' ἔξαργούμενα.

550

## PHILOCTETES

### PHILOCTETES

O gladdest day, O dearest, dearest friend,  
And ye, kind sailors, would that I could prove  
By acts my heartfelt gratitude ! My son,  
Let us be going, but before I go  
Salute this homeless home, that thou mayst learn  
How hard my life, how great my hardihood.  
I think scarce any other man than I,  
Had he but seen it once, could have endured ;  
But I was schooled by hard necessity.

[NEOPTOLEMUS *is about to enter the cave with him.*

### CHORUS

Stay, for I see two men approach, the one  
A sailor from thy ship, and one a stranger.  
First let us learn their errand, then go in.

*Enter two SAILORS, one disguised as a Merchant Captain*

### SAILOR

Son of Achilles, finding I was moored  
In the same roadstead as thyself (by chance  
Not of intent), I asked thy shipmate here,  
Who with two other hands was left aboard  
On guard, to tell me where thou might'st be found.  
For I, the captain of a single craft,  
Was on my way from Ilium, homeward bound,  
To Peparethus, for its vintage famed ;  
And learning that the crew I met ashore  
Were all thy fellow-voyagers, I thought  
It would be well, before I sailed away,  
To have a word with thee and earn my dues.  
I doubt thou knowest naught of thy concerns—  
What new designs the Argives have upon thee :  
Designs, say I ? Nay rather, plots full hatched.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἡ χάρις μὲν τῆς προμηθίας, ξένε,  
εἰ μὴ κακὸς πέφυκα, προσφιλὴς μενεῖ·  
φράσον δ' ἄπερ, γ' ἔλεξας, ώς μάθω τί μοι  
νεώτερον βούλευμ' ἀπ' Ἀργείων ἔχεις.

560

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

φροῦδοι διώκοντές σε ναυτικῷ στόλῳ  
Φοῖνιξ ὁ πρέσβυς οὖ τε Θησέως κόροι.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ώς ἐκ βίας μ' ἄξοντες ἡ λόγοις πάλιν;

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ οἰδ'· ἀκούσας δ' ἀγγελος πάρειμί σοι.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἡ ταῦτα δὴ Φοῖνιξ τε χοὶ ξυνναυβάται  
οὕτω καθ' ὄρμὴν δρῶσιν Ἀτρειδῶν χάριν;

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

ώς ταῦτ' ἐπίστω δρώμεν', οὐ μέλλοντ' ἔτι.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πῶς οὖν Ὁδυσσεὺς πρὸς τάδ' οὐκ αὐτάγγελος  
πλεῖν ἦν ἔτοιμος; ἡ φόβος τις εἰργέ νιν;

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

κεῖνός γ' ἐπ' ἄλλον ἄνδρ' ὁ Τυδέως τε παῖς  
ἔστελλον, ἥνικ' ἔξανηγόμην ἐγώ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πρὸς ποῖον αὖ τόνδ' αὐτὸς οὖδυσσεὺς ἔπλει;

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

ἥν δή τις—ἄλλὰ τόνδε μοι πρῶτον φράσον  
τίς ἔστιν· ἀν λέγης δὲ μὴ φωνει μέγα.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὅδ' ἔσθ' ὁ κλεινός σοι Φιλοκτήτης, ξένε.

## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

I shall remember, sir, thy zealous care  
On my behalf ; I am no graceless churl.  
But tell me more precisely : let me learn  
These strange designs against me of the Greeks.

SAILOR

Old Phoenix has embarked with Theseus' sons  
On a war galley in pursuit of thee.

NEOPTOLEMUS

To bring me back by force or of my will ?

SAILOR

I know not ; I report but what I heard.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Are Phoenix and his co-mates fired with zeal  
To pleasure the Atridae ? can this be ?

SAILOR

'Tis no surmise of mine ; they are on the way.

NEOPTOLEMUS

How came it that Odysseus had no mind  
To sail on his own business ? Was he afraid ?

SAILOR

He and the son of Tydeus were engaged  
In quest of yet another, when I sailed.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Another ? Who this second man for whom  
Odysseus sailed himself ?

SAILOR

A certain one . . .

Stay, who is this beside thee ? tell me first  
His name, and breathe it softly in my ear.

NEOPTOLEMUS

This, sir, is Philoctetes of world fame.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

μή νύν μ' ἔρη τὰ πλείον', ἀλλ' ὅσον τάχος  
ἔκπλει σεαυτὸν ξυλλαβὼν ἐκ τῆσδε γῆς.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τί φησιν, ω παῖ; τί με κατὰ σκότου ποτὲ  
διεμπολῷ λόγοισι πρός σ' ὁ ναυβάτης;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ οἰδά πω τί φησι· δεῖ δ' αὐτὸν λέγειν  
εἰς φῶς ὃ λέξει, πρὸς σὲ κάμε τούσδε τε.

580

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

ω σπέρμ' Ἀχιλλέως, μή με διαβάλῃς στρατῷ  
λέγονθ' ἂ μὴ δεῖ· πόλλ' ἐγώ κείνων ὅπο  
δρῶν ἀντιπάσχω χρηστά θ', οἵ ἀνὴρ πένης.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐγώ εἰμ' Ἀτρείδαις δυσμενής· οὗτος δέ μοι  
φίλος μέγιστος, οὕνεκ' Ἀτρείδας στυγεῖ.  
δεῖ δή σ' ἔμοιγ' ἐλθόντα προσφιλῆ, λόγων  
κρύψαι πρὸς ήμᾶς μηδέν' ὡν ἀκήκοας.

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

ὅρα τί ποιεῖς, παῖ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σκοπῶ κάγῳ πάλαι.

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

σὲ θήσομαι τῶνδ' αἴτιον.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ποιοῦ λέγων.

590

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

λέγω. πὶ τοῦτον ἄνδρε τώδ' ὥπερ κλύεις,  
ὁ Τυδέως παῖς ἢ τ' Ὁδυσσέως βία,  
διώμοτοι πλέουσιν ἢ μὴν ἢ λόγῳ  
πείσαντες ἄξειν ἢ πρὸς ἴσχυος κράτος.

## PHILOCTETES

SAILOR

Stop not for further questioning! Remove!  
Fly with all speed thou mayest from this land.

PHILOCTETES

What says he, boy? What does he whisper thee,  
As though I were a piece of merchandise.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I know not yet, but he shall tell his tale  
Aloud, for thee and me and these to hear.

SAILOR

Child of Achilles, charge me not to the host  
For blabbing secrets. I'm a poor man and  
Greatly beholden to the generals,  
Who've paid me for my service handsomely.

NEOPTOLEMUS

The Atridae are my enemies, and this man  
Because he hates them is my dearest friend.  
And, if indeed thou comest as a friend,  
Thou art bound to tell me all that thou hast learnt.

SAILOR

Take heed, boy, what thou'rt asking.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I have heeded.

SAILOR

Then thou must bear the consequence.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Say on.

SAILOR

Hear then : the two I named, Odysseus and  
The son of Tydeus now are hither bound  
To fetch this man, and they have sworn an oath  
To bring him by persuasion or by force.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

καὶ ταῦτ' Ἀχαιοὶ πάντες ἥκουν σαφῶς  
Ὀδυσσέως λέγοντος· οὗτος γὰρ πλέον  
τὸ θάρσος εἶχε θατέρου δράσειν τάδε.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τίνος δ' Ἀτρεῖδαι τοῦδ' ἄγαν οὕτω χρόνῳ  
τοσῷδ' ἐπεστρέφοντο πράγματος χάριν,  
ὅν γ' εἶχον ἡδη χρόνιον ἐκβεβληκότες; 600  
τίς ὁ πόθος αὐτοὺς ἵκετ'; ή θεῶν βίᾳ  
καὶ νέμεσις, οἵπερ ἔργ' ἀμύνουσιν κακά;

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

ἐγώ σε τοῦτ', ἵσως γὰρ οὐκ ἀκήκοας,  
πᾶν ἐκδιδάξω. μάντις ἦν τις εὐγενῆς,  
Πριάμου μὲν υἱός, δονομα δ' ὠνομάζετο  
Ἐλευνος, διν οὐτος μυκτὸς ἐξελθὼν μόνος,  
ὁ πάντ' ἀκούων αἰσχρὰ καὶ λωβήτ' ἔπη  
δόλιος Ὀδυσσεὺς εἶλε· δέσμιόν τ' ἄγων  
ἔδειξ' Ἀχαιοῖς ἐσ μέσον, θήραν καλήν.  
δις δὴ τά τ' ἄλλ' αὐτοῖσι πάντ' ἐθέσπισεν 610  
καὶ τὰπλὶ Τροίᾳ πέργαμ' ὡς οὐ μή ποτε  
πέρσοιεν, εἰ μὴ τόνδε πείσαντες λόγῳ  
ἄγοιντο μήσου τῆσδ' ἐφ' ἡσ ναίει ταῦν.  
καὶ ταῦθ' ὅπως ἥκουσ' ὁ Λαέρτου τόκος  
τὸν μάντιν εἰπόντ', εὐθέως ὑπέσχετο  
τὸν ἄνδρ' Ἀχαιοῖς τόνδε δηλώσειν ἄγων  
οἴοιτο μὲν μάλισθ' ἐκούσιον λαβών,  
εἰ μὴ θέλοι δ', ἀκοντα· καὶ τούτων κάρα  
τέμνειν ἐφεῖτο τῷ θέλοντι μὴ τυχών.  
ἥκουσας, ὡς παῖ, πάντα· τὸ σπεύδειν δέ σοι  
καῦτῷ παραινῶ κεῖ τινος κήδει πέρι. 620

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἵμοι τάλας· ἡ κεῖνος, ἡ πᾶσα βλάβη,  
ἔμ' εἰς Ἀχαιοὺς ὥμοσεν πείσας στελεῖν;

## PHILOCTETES

This by Odysseus plainly was professed  
In presence of the host ; for he, more bold  
Than his co-partner, staked his credit on it.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

But wherefore now, after the lapse of years  
Should the Atridae be concerned about  
A man they had abandoned and forgot ?  
Was it compassion touched them, of the dread  
Of retribution and the avenging gods ?

### SAILOR

A matter that perchance to thee is strange  
I will unfold. There was a high born seer,  
A son of Priam, Helenus was his name.  
Him that vile wretch—what epithet can match  
His utter villainy ?—that sly old fox,  
Odysseus, on a nightly prowl waylaid,  
Bound, and displayed him to the Argive host,  
A goodly prize. Much else of grave import  
The prophet uttered, and he spake this word :  
“ Ne'er can ye take the citadel of Troy  
Till by persuasion ye have won him over  
And brought him from the island where he bides.”  
Hearing the prophet's word, Odysseus straight  
Engaged himself to bring the man away  
And show him to the host. “ Willing ” (he said),  
“ I hope, but at the worst, against his will.”  
He staked his head on the venture ; any one  
Who chose might be his headsman if he failed.  
Thou hast heard all, my son ; be warned in time ;  
Take heed for thine own safety and thy friend's.

### PHILOCTETES

Ah me ! did that arch-felon swear indeed  
To bring me by persuasion to the Greeks ?

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πεισθήσομαι γὰρ ὁδε κάξ "Αἰδου θανὼν  
πρὸς φῶς ἀνελθεῖν, ὥσπερ οὐκείνου πατήρ.

### ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ' ἐγὼ ταῦτ· ἀλλ' ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμ' ἐπὶ<sup>630</sup>  
ναῦν, σφῶν δ' ὅπως ἄριστα συμφέροι θεός.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὔκουν τάδ', ὡς παῖ, δεινά, τὸν Λαερτίου  
ἔμ' ἐλπίσαι ποτ' ἀν λόγοισι μαλθακοῖς  
δεῖξαι νεώς ἄγοντ' ἐν Ἀργείοις μέσοις;  
οὕτοις θᾶσσον ἀν τῆς πλείστουν ἔχθιστης ἐμοὶ<sup>630</sup>  
κλύοιμ' ἔχιδνης, ηδὶ μ' ἔθηκεν ὁδὸς ἄπουν.  
ἀλλ' ἔστ' ἐκείνῳ πάντα λεκτά, πάντα δὲ  
τολμητά· καὶ μῦν οἰδ' ὄθοιύνεχ' ἵξεται.  
ἀλλ', ως τέκνουν, χωρῶμεν, ως ἡμᾶς πολὺ<sup>640</sup>  
πέλαγος ὄριζῃ τῆς Οδυσσέως νεώς.  
ἴωμεν· ηδὶ τοι καίριος σπουδὴ πόνου  
λήξαντος ὑπνουν κάναπαυλαν ἥγαγεν.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὔκονταν ἐπειδὰν πνεῦμα τούκ πρώρας ἀνῆ,  
τότε στελούμεν· μῦν γὰρ ἀντιοστατεῖ.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀεὶ καλὸς πλοῦς ἔσθ', ὅταν φεύγητ κακά.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὔκ, ἀλλὰ κάκείνοισι ταῦτ' ἐναντία.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστι λησταῖς πνεῦμ' ἐναντιούμενον,  
ὅταν παρῇ κλέψαι τι χάρπάσαι βίᾳ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ, χωρῶμεν, ἔνδοθεν λαβὼν  
ὅτου σε χρεία καὶ πόθος μάλιστ' ἔχει.

## PHILOCTETES

As soon by prayers shall I be brought again  
From death, as was his father,<sup>1</sup> to the light.

SAILOR

That's not for me to say, I must be going  
To join my ship. Farewell, and may the gods  
Be with you both and order all things well.

PHILOCTETES

What say'st thou, boy? That he, Laertes' son,  
Should think to wheedle me aboard his ship,  
And make a show of me to the Greek host!  
Is it not monstrous? Sooner would I heed  
My mortal foe, the snake that crippled me.  
But he—no word, no practice is too vile  
For him to stick at. He will come for sure.  
Haste thee, my son, and put a many leagues  
Of ocean 'twixt Odysseus and our ship.  
Bestir ye! Who in season labours best,  
His labours ended, has the sweetest rest.

NEOPTOLEMUS

All in good time; soon as the headwind drops  
We will weigh anchor; now 'tis in our teeth.

PHILOCTETES

To those who fly from ill all winds are fair.

NEOPTOLEMUS

But this wind's contrary for them no less.

PHILOCTETES

For pirates no wind's adverse, when there's chance  
Of pillaging or robbery under arms.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Well, as thou will'st, we'll sail; but from the cave  
Take anything thou needest or dost prize.

<sup>1</sup> Sisyphus, the reputed father of Odysseus, ordered his wife to leave his body unburied and so obtained leave from Pluto to return to earth in order to punish her impiety.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἔστιν ων δεῖ, καίπερ οὐ πολλῶν ἄπο.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί τοῦθ' δ μὴ νεώς γε τῆς ἐμῆς ἔπι;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

φύλλον τί μοι πάρεστιν, φ μάλιστ' ἀεὶ<sup>650</sup>  
κοιμῶ τόδ' ἔλκος, ὥστε πραῦνειν πάνυ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἔκφερ' αὐτό. τί γὰρ ἔτ' ἀλλ' ἐρᾶς λαβεῖν;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

εἴ μοί τι τόξων τῶνδ' ἀπημελημένου  
παρερρύηκεν, ώς λίπω μή τῷ λαβεῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἢ ταῦτα γὰρ τὰ κλεινὰ τόξ' ἀ νῦν ἔχεις;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ταῦτ', οὐ γὰρ ἀλλ' ἔστ', ἀλλ' ἀ βαστάζω χεροῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἄρ' ἔστιν ώστε κάγγύθεν θέαν λαβεῖν  
καὶ βαστάσαι με προσκύσαι θ' ὕσπερ θεόν;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

σοί γ', ω τέκνον, καὶ τοῦτο κᾶλλο τῶν ἐμῶν  
όποίον ἀν σοι ξυμφέρῃ γενήσεται.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἐρῶ γε, τὸν δ' ἔρωθ' οὔτως ἔχω.<sup>660</sup>  
εἴ μοι θέμις, θέλοιμ' ἀν· εἰ δὲ μή, πάρεσ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

δσιά τε φωνεῖς ἔστι τ', ω τέκνον, θέμις,  
δς γ' ἡλιον τόδ' εἰσορᾶν ἐμοὶ φάος  
μόνος δέδωκας, δς χθόν' Οίταιαν ἰδεῖν,  
δς πατέρα πρέσβυν, δς φίλους, δς τῶν ἐμῶν

## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

My store is scant, but certain things I need.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What that thou wilt not find on board my ship ?

PHILOCTETES

A herb of wondrous virtue wherewithal  
I use to mollify and lull my wound.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Then bring it with thee. What else wouldest thou  
take ?

PHILOCTETES

Some shafts, that may have dropped by accident,  
Lest a chance-comer find them, I would fetch.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Is that then in thy hands the famous bow ?

PHILOCTETES

This and none other is the famous bow.

NEOPTOLEMUS

May I have leave to gaze upon it close,  
Handle it, aye adore it as a god ?

PHILOCTETES

Right willingly, my son, and aught beside  
That I can do to profit thee, command.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I have this longing, I confess, but if  
My longing seem not lawful, let it be.

PHILOCTETES

A pious scruple ; but this privilege,  
My son, is thine by right, for thou alone  
Hast given me to behold the light of day,  
And Oeta, and my aged sire, and friends ;  
For when I lay beneath my enemies' heel,

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

έχθρων μ' ἔνερθεν ὅντ' ἀνέστησας πέρα.  
θάρσει, παρέσται ταῦτά σοι καὶ θιγγάνειν  
καὶ δόντι δοῦναι κάξεπεύξασθαι βροτῶν  
ἀρετῆς ἔκατι τῶνδ' ἐπιψαῦσαι μόνου·  
εὐεργετῶν γάρ καύτὸς αὗτ' ἐκτησάμην.

670

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ ἄχθομαι σ' ἵδων τε καὶ λαβὼν φίλον·  
ὅστις γάρ εὐ δρᾶν εὐ παθὼν ἐπίσταται,  
παντὸς γένοιτ' ἀν κτήματος κρείσσων φίλος.  
χωροῖς ἀν εἴσω.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

καὶ σέ γ' εἰσάξω· τὸ γὰρ  
νοσοῦν ποθεῖ σε ξυμπαραστάτην λαβεῖν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

λόγῳ μὲν ἔξήκουσ', δπωπα δ' οὐ μάλα, στρ. α'  
τὸν πελάταν λέκτρων ποτὲ τῶν Διὸς  
κατὰ δρομάδ' ἄμπυκα δέσμιον ὡς ἔβαλεν<sup>1</sup> παγ-  
κρατῆς Κρόνου παῖς.

680

ἄλλον δ' οὔτιν' ἔγωγ' οἶδα κλύων οὐδὲ ἐσιδῶν μοίρᾳ  
τοῦδ' ἔχθίοιν συντυχόντα  
θυντῶν, δις οὕτ' ἔρξας τιν' οὐ τι<sup>2</sup> νοσφίσας,  
ἄλλ' ἵσος ὁν ἵσοις ἀνήρ,  
ώλλυσθ' ὃδ' ἀναξίως.

τόδε τοι θαῦμά μ' ἔχει,  
πῶς ποτε πῶς ποτ' ἀμφιπλάκτων ροθίων μόνος  
κλύων,

πῶς ἄρα πανδάκρυτον οὔτω βιοτὰν κατέσχεν·

ἀντ. α'

ἴν' αὐτὸς ἦν πρόσουρος, οὐκ ἔχων βάσιν,  
οὐδέ τιν' ἔγχωρων κακογείτονα,

<sup>1</sup> Ἰξίονα κατ' ἄμπυκα δὴ δρομάδα δέσμιον ὡς ξλαβ<sup>2</sup> δ MSS., Schneidewin corr.

<sup>2</sup> οὕτε MSS., Schneidewin corr.

## PHILOCTETES

'Twas thou upliftedst me above their heads,  
It shall be thine to handle and return;  
Fear not, and thou shalt boast that thou alone  
Of mortals, for thy worth, hast handled it.  
'Twas for a service done it came to me.<sup>1</sup>

### NEOPTOLEMUS

'Tis pleasant to have found and proved a friend;  
For him who good for good returns I hold  
A friend more precious than unnumbered gold.  
Now go within.

### PHILOCTETES

That will I, and entreat  
Thine escort, for my ailment craves thine aid.

(*They enter the cave.*)

### CHORUS

I saw him not, yet fame affirms the tale      (*Str. 1*)  
Of one who dared the bed of Zeus assail.  
Him to the wheel that never stays its round  
Of torture, the great son of Kronos bound.

But, save of him alone,  
To me no sadder fate is known  
Than of this saddest wight,  
Or by report or sight :

Poor innocent who here to death art done !

*He* robbed or wrongèd none  
I marvel how thus desolate, all forlorn,  
These long long years of anguish he hath borne,  
Hearing the breakers glide the cold grey stones,

(*Ant. 1*)  
 Himself for neighbour to himself he groans ;

Limping with crippled feet,  
He treads his weary beat ;

<sup>1</sup> For kindling the funeral-pyre of Heracles on Mount Oeta.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

*παρ' ω στόνον ἀντίτυπον βαρυβρῶτ' ἀποκλαύ-  
σειεν αἴματηρόν.*

δις τὰν θερμοτάταν αἵμαδα κηκιομέναν ἐλκέων  
ἐνθήρου ποδὸς ἡπίοισι  
φύλλοις κατευνάσειεν, εἴ τις ἐμπέσοι,  
φορβάδος ἐκ γαίας ἑλών.  
εἰρπε γὰρ ἄλλοτ' ἄλλαχâ  
τοτ' ἀν εἰλυόμενος

παῖς ἄτερ ώς φίλας τιθήνας δθεν εὔμάρει' ὑπάρ-  
χοι πόρου, ἀνίκ' ἔξανείη δακέθυμος ἄτα.

700

στρ. β'

οὐ φορβὰν ἰερᾶς γᾶς σπόρον, οὐκ ἄλλων  
αἴρων τῶν νεμόμεσθ' ἀνέρες ἀλφησταί,  
πλὴν ἐξ ὠκυβόλων εἴ ποτε τόξων  
πτανοῖς ἴοις ἀνύσειε γαστρὶ φορβάν.

710

ῳ μελέα ψυχά,  
δις μηδ' οἰνοχύτου πώματος ἥσθη δεκέτει χρόνῳ,  
λεύσσων δ' ὅπου γνοίη στατὸν εἰς ὕδωρ,  
ἀεὶ προσενώμα.

ἀντ. β'

νῦν δ' ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν παιδὸς ὑπαντήσας  
εὐδαίμων ἀνύσει καὶ μέγας ἐκ κείνων

720

ὅς νιν ποντοπόρῳ δούρατι, πλήθει  
πολλῶν μηνῶν, πατρίαν ἄγει πρὸς αὐλὰν  
Μαλιάδων νυμφᾶν

Σπερχειοῦ τε παρ' ὅχθας, ἵν' ὁ χάλκασπις ἀνήρ  
θεοῖς

πλάθει πατρὸς<sup>1</sup> θείῳ πυρὶ παμφαής,  
Οἴτας ὑπὲρ ὅχθωι.

<sup>1</sup> πᾶσι MSS., Jebb corr.

## PHILOCTETES

No comrade by  
To give him sigh for sigh,  
No friend in whose responsive ear to pour  
His woes—the anguish of his festering sore ;  
To quell the burning rage,  
The throbs assuage  
With simples gathered from the kindly soil ;  
But 'twixt the spasms he must crawl and moil  
To find the herb, a spell to lay the curse,  
Like some weak infant parted from its nurse.

Not his to sow the seed  
Or on the largesse feed

That boon earth showers on all the sons of men;  
Happy, if now and then  
The bolt from his unerring bow can wing  
Some living thing.  
Poor wretch, who ten long years athirst did pine  
Without one draught of soul-refreshing wine,  
But sought some stagnant pool  
His parched throat to cool.

(Ant. 2)

Now hath he found a champion good and true,  
And by his woes ennobled shall renew  
His pristine fame. The tale of months complete,  
Home shall he journey with our homing fleet.  
There on Spercheios' marge, his ancient home,  
The haunt of Malian naiads, he shall roam,  
Where the famed hero of the brazen shield,  
His full divinity in flames revealed  
And in a fiery car ascending high  
O'er Oeta was translated to the sky.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

έρπ', εἰ θέλεις. τί δὴ ποθ' ὡδὸς ἐξ οὐδενὸς  
λόγου σιωπᾶς καπόπληκτος ὡδὸς ἔχει;

730

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀâ, ἀâ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί δ'<sup>1</sup> ἔστιν;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐδὲν δεινόν· ἀλλ' ἵθ', ὡ τέκνου.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

μῶν ἄλγος ἵσχεις τῆς παρεστώσης νόσου;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐ δῆτ' ἔγωγ', ἀλλ' ἄρτι κουφίζειν δοκῶ.  
ὦ θεοί.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί τοὺς θεοὺς ὡδὸς ἀναστένων καλεῖς;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

σωτῆρας αὐτοὺς ἡπίους θ' ἡμῖν μολεῖν.  
ἀâ, ἀâ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί ποτε πέπονθας; οὐκ ἐρεῖς, ἀλλ' ὡδὸς ἔσει  
συγηλός; ἐν κακῷ δέ τῷ φαίνει κυρῶν.

740

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀπόλωλα, τέκνουν, κού δυνήσομαι κακὸν  
κρύψαι παρ' ὑμῖν, ἀτταταῖ διέρχεται  
διέρχεται. δύστηνος, ὡ τάλας ἐγώ.  
ἀπόλωλα, τέκνουν βρύκομαι, τέκνουν παπαῖ,  
ἀπαππαπαῖ, παπαππαπαπαπαπαῖ.  
πρὸς θεῶν, πρόχειρον εἴ τί σοι, τέκνουν, πάρα  
ξιφος χεροῖν, πάταξον εἰς ἄκρον πόδα.  
ἀπάμησον ως τάχιστα· μὴ φείσῃ βίου.  
ἵθ', ὡ παῖ.

750

<sup>1</sup> Erfurdt added δ',

## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

Be moving if it please thee . . . Why, what means  
This sudden silence, this amazedness ?

PHILOCTETES

Ah me ! Ah me !

NEOPTOLEMUS

What is it ?

PHILOCTETES

A mere nothing, boy ; go on.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Thou feelest thine old malady again ?

PHILOCTETES

No, a mere twinge ; I think 'tis passing now—  
O God !

NEOPTOLEMUS

Why groan aloud and call on God ?

PHILOCTETES

To save me and deliver me . . . Ah me !

NEOPTOLEMUS

What ails thee ? Wilt not tell me ? Wilt not speak ?  
That something troubles thee is very plain.

PHILOCTETES

My son, I am lost, undone ! Impossible  
To hide it longer from you ; lost, undone !  
It stabs me, stabs me through and through and  
through.

Ah me ! ah me ! ah me !

For heaven's sake, if thou hast a sword at hand,  
Draw it, my son, strike swiftly, at a stroke  
Cut off this foot, no matter if it kill me ;  
Quick, quick, my son !

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

τί δ' ἔστιν οὕτω νεοχμὸν ἔξαιφνης, ὅτου  
τοστίνδ' ἴνγὴν καὶ στόνον σαυτοῦ ποεῖ;

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

οἰσθ', ω τέκνουν;

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

τί δ' ἔστιν;

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

οἰσθ', ω παῖ;

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

τί σοὶ;

οὐκ οἰδα.

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

πῶς οὐκ οἰσθα; παππαπαππαπαῖ.

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

δεινόν γε τούπίσαγμα τοῦ νοσήματος.

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

δεινὸν γὰρ οὐδὲ ρήτον· ἀλλ' οἴκτιρέ με.

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

τί δῆτα δράσω;

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

μή με ταρβήσας προδῷς.  
ἥκει γὰρ αὖτη διὰ χρόνου πλάνοις ἵσως  
ώς ἔξεπλήσθη.

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

ἰὼ ἰὼ δύστηνε σύ,

δύστηνε δῆτα διὰ πόνων πάντων φανείς.  
βούλει λάβωμαι δῆτα καὶ θίγω τι σου;

760

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

μὴ δῆτα τοῦτο γ'. ἀλλά μοι τὰ τόξ' ἐλών  
τάδ', ωσπερ ἥτου μ' ἀρτίως, ἔως ἀμή

## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

What is this sudden fit  
That makes thee moan so and bewail thyself?

PHILOCTETES

Thou knowest, boy.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What is it?

PHILOCTETES

Thou knowest.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Nay,

What ails thee?

PHILOCTETES

Knowest thou not? Ah me! Ah me!

NEOPTOLEMUS

The burden of thy pain is terrible.

PHILOCTETES

Yea, terrible, past words. O pity me.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What shall I do?

PHILOCTETES

Fear me not, leave me not:  
My ailment loves to play the truant, stray  
Awhile, and then come home again, belike  
Tired with its holiday.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Alas! poor wretch,  
Wretched indeed in all thy suffering proved.  
Wilt lean on me? Shall I take hold of thee?

PHILOCTETES

Nay touch me not, I beg, but take this bow  
Which thou didst crave to handle, and until

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τὸ πῆμα τοῦτο τῆς υόσου τὸ υῦν παρόν,  
σφέζ' αὐτὰ καὶ φύλασσε. λαμβάνει γὰρ οὖν  
ὕπνος μ', ὅταν περ τὸ κακὸν ἔξιη τόδε·  
κούκ ἔστι λῆξαι πρότερον· ἀλλ' ἐᾶν χρεὼν  
ἔκηλον εὔδειν. ἦν δὲ τῷδε τῷ χρόνῳ  
μόλωσ' ἐκεῖνοι, πρὸς θεῶν ἐφίεμαι  
ἐκόντα μηδὲ ἄκοντα μηδέ τῷ τέχνῃ  
κείνοις μεθεῖναι ταῦτα, μὴ σαυτόν θ' ἄμα  
κάμ', ὅντα σαυτοῦ πρόστροπον, κτείνας γένη.

770

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θάρσει προνοίας οῦνεκ· οὐ δοθήσεται  
πλὴν σοὶ τε κάμοι· ξὺν τύχῃ δὲ πρόσφερε.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἰδοὺ δέχου, παῖ· τὸν φθόνον δὲ πρόσκυσον  
μή σοι γενέσθαι πολυπον' αὐτὰ μηδ' ὅπως  
ἔμοι τε καὶ τῷ πρόσθ' ἐμοῦ κεκτημένῳ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὦ θεοί, γένοιτο ταῦτα νῷν· γένοιτο δὲ  
πλοῦς οὐριός τε κεύσταλής ὅποι ποτὲ  
θεὸς δικαιοῖ χώ στόλος πορσύνεται.

780

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὖν δέδοικα μὴ ἀτέλεστ' εὔχῃ, τέκνον.<sup>1</sup>  
στάζει γὰρ αὖ μοι φοίνιον τόδ' ἐκ βυθοῦ  
κηκίον αἷμα, καί τι προσδοκῶ νέον.

παπαῖ.

παπαῖ μάλ', ὦ πούς, οἴά μ' ἐργάσει κακά.

προσέρπει,

προσέρχεται τόδ' ἐγγύς. οἵμοι μοι τάλας.

ἔχετε τὸ πρᾶγμα· μὴ φύγητε μηδαμῆ.

ἀτταταῖ.

790

<sup>1</sup> ἀλλὰ δέδοικ', ὦ παῖ, μὴ μ' ἀτελῆς εὐχῇ MSS. The text is a combination of Triclinius and Jebb.

## PHILOCTETES

The spasm that now disables me is gone,  
Keep it and guard it well ; for when the fit  
Passes, a drowsiness comes over me ;  
And sleep's the only medicine that gives ease.  
So let me slumber undisturbed, and if  
*They* come the while, I charge thee, boy, by heaven,  
Let them not have it, yield not up the bow,  
Willing or nilling, or by force or fraud ;  
Lest thou should'st prove a double murderer,  
And slay thyself and me thy suppliant.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

I will be vigilant, fear not ; none shall have it  
But thou and I alone ; so give it to me.  
Good luck attend it !

### PHILOCTETES

Take it then, my son,  
But first propitiate the Jealous God,  
Lest it should prove to thee a bane, as erst  
To me and to its former lord it proved.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Heaven grant this prayer to both of us, and grant  
A fair and prosperous voyage whithersoe'er  
Our destined course is set and heaven ordains !

### PHILOCTETES

Alas, my son ! I fear thy prayers are vain ;  
For once again upwelling from the wound  
The black blood trickles auguring a relapse.  
Out, out upon thee, damned foot ! Alack !  
What plague hast yet in store for me ? Alack !  
It prowls, it stalks amain, ready to spring.  
Woe ! Now ye know my torture, leave me not !  
Ah me ! Ah me !

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ώξένε Κεφαλλήν, εἴθε σου διαμπερές  
στέρνων ἔχοιτ' ἄλγησις ἥδε. φεῦ, παπᾶ,  
παπᾶ μάλ' αὐθις.· ωδιπλοῖ στρατηλάται,  
Ἄγαμεμνον, ωδι Μενέλαε, πῶς ἀν ἀντ' ἐμοῦ  
τὸν ἵσον χρόνον τρέφοιτε τήνδε τὴν νόσον;  
ιώ μοι.

ωδι Θάνατε Θάνατε, πῶς ἀεὶ καλούμενος  
οὔτω κατ' ἡμαρ, οὐδύνᾳ μολεῖν ποτε;  
ωδι τέκνον ωδι γενναῖον, ἀλλὰ συλλαβὼν  
τῷ Δημηνίῳ τῷδ ἀνακαλουμένῳ πυρὶ 800  
ἔμπρησον, ωδι γενναῖε κάγω τοί ποτε  
τὸν τοῦ Διὸς παῖδ' ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν ὅπλων,  
ἀνῦν σὺ σώζεις, τοῦτ' ἐπηξίωσα δρᾶν.  
τί φῆς, παῖ;  
τί φῆς; τί συγάδεις; ποῦ ποτ' ᾧν, τέκνου, κυρεῖς;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἄλγω πάλαι δὴ τάπι σὸν στένων κακά.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἄλλ', ωδι τέκνον, καὶ θάρσος ἵσχ'. ωδι ἥδε μοι  
δέξεῖα φοιτᾶ καὶ ταχεῖ ἀπέρχεται.  
ἄλλ' ἀντιάζω, μή με καταλίπῃς μόνου.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θάρσει, μενοῦμεν.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἢ μενεῖς;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σαφῶς φρόνει. 810

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐ μήν σ' ἔνορκόν γ' ἀξιῶ θέσθαι, τέκνον.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ώδι οὐ θέμις γ' ἐμοῦστι σοῦ μολεῖν ἄτερ.

## PHILOCTETES

Would God, O Cepallenian, through thy breast  
This spasm might pass and hold thee in its grip !  
Woe's me and woe once more ! Ye generals twain,  
Menelaus, Agamemnon, might this worm  
Devour your vitals no less time than mine !  
O Death, Death, Death ! how is it that invoked  
Day after day, thou wilt not heed my call ?  
Boy, noble boy, of thy nobility  
I pray thee take and in those Lemnian flames  
Consume me, welcome now to me as when  
I dared to do it for the son of Zeus,  
And won for meed the bow thy bearest now.  
Speak ! answer ! why thus absent, O my son ?

### NEOPTOLEMUS

My heart was heavy, musing on thy woes.

### PHILOCTETES

Nay, be of better cheer, my son ; this pain,  
As in its onset sudden, so departs.  
Only, I pray thee, leave me not alone.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Take heart ; we'll stay.

### PHILOCTETES

Thou wilt ?

### NEOPTOLEMUS

In sooth I will.

### PHILOCTETES

It were not meet to bind thee with an oath.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

I am bound in honour not to leave thee here.

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**ἐμβαλλε χειρὸς πίστιν.**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

**ἐμβάλλω μενεῖν.**

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**ἐκεῖσε νῦν μ', ἐκεῖσε**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

**ποὶ λέγεις;**

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**ἄνω**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

**τί παραφρονεῖς αὖ; τί τὸν ἄνω λεύσσεις κύκλον;**

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**μέθεις μέθεις με.**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

**ποὶ μεθῶ;**

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**μέθεις ποτέ.**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

**οὐ φημ' ἔάσειν.**

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**ἀπό μ' ὀλεῖς, ἦν προσθίγγης.**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

**καὶ δὴ μεθίημ', εἴ τι<sup>1</sup> δὴ πλέον φρονεῖς.**

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**ῳ γαῖα, δέξαι θανάσιμόν μ' ὅπως ἔχω  
τὸ γὰρ κακὸν τόδ' οὐκέτ' ὁρθοῦσθαι μ' ἔδ.**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

**τὸν ἄνδρ' ἔοικεν ὑπνος οὐ μακροῦ χρόνου  
ἔξειν· κάρα γὰρ ὑπτιάζεται τόδε·  
ἰδρώς γέ τοι νιν πᾶν καταστάζει δέμας,**

<sup>1</sup> μεθίημι· τί δὴ MSS., Hermann corr.

## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

Thy hand upon it.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Here's my hand in pledge.

PHILOCTETES

Then yonder, let me yonder—

NEOPTOLEMUS

Whither then?

PHILOCTETES

Up higher—

NEOPTOLEMUS

Art thou wandering once again?

Why starest at the firmament on high?

PHILOCTETES

Let me go.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Whither?

PHILOCTETES

Let me go, I say.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Thou shalt not.

PHILOCTETES

Touch me not, 'twould be my death.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Well, I release thee. Thou art calmer now.

PHILOCTETES

Take me, O Earth, a dying man, so near  
His end with sickness that he cannot stand.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Methinks in no long time he'll be asleep;  
For, see, his head sinks backward, and o'er all  
His body, look you, trickle beads of sweat,

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

μέλαινά τ' ἄκρου τις παρέρρωγεν ποδὸς  
αιμορραγής φλέψ. ἀλλ' ἐάσωμεν, φίλοι,  
ἔκηλον αὐτόν, ώς ἂν εἰς ὕπνου πέσῃ.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

"Τπν' ὁδύνας ἀδαής,"Τπνε δ' ἀλγέων,

στρ.

εὐαὲς<sup>1</sup> ἡμῦν ἔλθοις,

εὐαίων εὐαίων, ὧναξ·

δμμασι δ' ἀντίσχοις

830

τάνδ' αἴγλαν, ἀ τέταται τανῦν.

ἴθι ἤθι μοι παιών.

ὦ τέκνον, ὅρα ποῦ στάσει,

ποῖ δέ μοι τάνθένδε βάσει,<sup>2</sup>

φροντίδος. ὥρᾶς ἥδη.

πρὸς τί μενοῦμεν πράσσειν;

καιρός τοι πάντων γνώμαν ἵσχων

πολύ τι πολὺ παρὰ πόδα κράτος ἄρνυται.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' ὅδε μὲν κλύει οὐδέν, ἐγὼ δ' ὥρῳ οὖνεκα θήραν  
τήνδ' ἀλίως ἔχομεν τόξων, δίχα τοῦνδε πλέοντες.

840

τοῦνδε γὰρ ὁ στέφανος, τοῦτον θεὸς εἶπε κομίζειν.

κομπεῖν δ' ἔστ' ἀτελῆ σὺν ψεύδεσιν αἰσχρὸν  
ὄνειδος.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλά, τέκνον, τάδε μὲν θεὸς δψεται·

ἀντ.

ῶν δ' ἀν ἀμείβῃ μ' αὐθις,

βαιάν μοι, βαιάν, ὦ τέκνον,

πέμπε λόγων φάμαν·

<sup>1</sup> εὐαῆς MSS., Hermann corr.

<sup>2</sup> ποῖ δὲ βάσει, πῶς δὲ μοι τάντεῦθεν MSS., Jebb corr.

## PHILOCTETES

And from an artery in his wounded foot  
The black blood spurts. So let us leave him, friends  
In peace and quiet till he fall asleep.

### CHORUS

Sleep immune of cares, (Str.)  
Sleep that knows not cumber,  
Breathe thy softest airs,  
Prince of painless slumber !  
O'er his eyes alway  
Let thy dream-light play ;  
Healer come, we pray.

My son, bethink thee how  
Thou standest, and what next  
Thou purposest; not now  
The time to halt perplexed.  
Why longer here remain?  
Ever occasion ta'en  
At the full flood brings gain.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

We might escape and steal his bow indeed  
(He hears us not); but little should we speed  
Without the man. Himself he must be brought,  
So the God bade; he is the prize we sought;  
He crowns our triumph, and 'twere double shame  
Falsely a fraud-won victory to claim.

### CHORUS

Far things with Heaven lie, (Ant.)  
Look thou to what is near,  
And, when thou mak'st reply,  
Low breathe it in my ear :

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ώς πάντων ἐν νόσῳ εὐδρακής  
ῦπνος ἄϋπνος λεύσσειν.  
ἀλλ' ὅτι δύνα μάκιστον  
κεῖνο δή μοι κεῖνο λάθρᾳ  
έξιδον ὅπᾳ πράξεις.  
οἰσθα γὰρ ἀν<sup>1</sup> αὐδῶμαι,  
εὶ ταύταν τούτων γνώμαν ἴσχεις,  
μάλα τοι ἅπορα πυκινοῖς ἐνιδεῖν πάθη.

οὐρός τοι, τέκνουν, οὐρος·  
ἀνὴρ δ' ἀνόμματος οὐδ' ἔχων  
ἀρωγὰν ἐκτέταται νύχιος,  
(ἀλεής ῦπνος ἐσθλός,)  
οὐ χερός, οὐ ποδός, οὐ τινος ἄρχων,  
ἀλλά τις ὡς Ἀΐδα παρακείμενος.  
δρα, βλέπ' εἰ καίρια  
φθέγγει· τὸ δ' ἀλώσιμον  
έμâ φροντίδι, παῖ,  
πόνος ὁ μὴ φοβῶν κράτιστος.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σιγᾶν κελεύω μηδ' ἀφεστάναι φρενῶν·  
κινεῖ γὰρ ἀνὴρ ὅμμα κάναγει κάρα.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὦ φέγγος ῦπνου διάδοχον τό τ' ἐλπίδων  
ἄπιστον οἰκούρημα τῶνδε τῶν ξένων.  
οὐ γάρ ποτ', ὦ παῖ, τοῦτ' ἀν ἔξηνχησ' ἐγώ,  
τλῆναι σ' ἐλεινῶς ὥδε τάμα πήματα  
μεῖναι παρόντα καὶ ξυνωφελοῦντά μοι.  
οὔκουν Ἀτρεῖδαι τοῦτ' ἔτλησαν εὐφόρως<sup>2</sup>  
οὔτως ἐνεγκεῖν, ἀγαθοὶ στρατηλάται.

<sup>1</sup> ἀν or δν MSS., Hermann corr.

<sup>2</sup> εὐφόρως MSS., Brunck corr.

## PHILOCTETES

Sleepless the sick man's sleep,  
Quick-eared to catch each sound ;  
His eyes, though closed, yet keep  
Sharp watch around.

Wherefore explore in stealth, my son,  
How what thou dost may best be done.  
If thy plan be still the same,  
What it is I need not name,  
Plain to one who looks before  
Are his troubles vast and sore.

The breeze sets fair, sets fair, my son,  
And there outstretched he lies  
As one who hath nor ears nor eyes.  
(How good to sleep i' the sun !)  
Of hand or foot, no motion has he, none  
More than the dead who in Earth's bosom rest.  
Then look, my son, look that thou utterest  
Sane counsels. If a plain man might advise  
Thy wisdom, the discreetest way is best.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Silence, and keep your wits ; his eyes begin  
To open and he raises now his head.

## PHILOCTETES

O sweet to wake to the broad day and find,  
What least I hoped, my kindly guardians by.  
For this, my son, I never had presumed  
To hope, that thou would'st thus compassionately  
Wait to attend my woes and minister.  
The Atridae, those brave captains never showed  
Courage to bear them patiently. But thou

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' εὐγενῆς γὰρ ή φύσις καξεῖ εὐγενῶν,  
ω τέκνουν, ή σή, πάντα ταῦτ' ἐν εὐχερεῖ  
ἔθου, βοῆς τε καὶ δυσοσμίας γέμων.  
καὶ νῦν ἐπειδὴ τοῦδε τοῦ κακοῦ δοκεῖ  
λήθη τις εἶναι κάναπαυλα δή, τέκνουν,  
σύ μ' αὐτὸς ἀρον, σύ με κατάστησον, τέκνουν,  
ἴν', ἡνίκ' ἀν κόπος μ' ἀπαλλάξῃ ποτέ,  
ὅρμωμεθ' ἐς ναῦν μηδὲ ἐπίσχωμεν τὸ πλεῖν.

880

## ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἥδομαι μέν σ' εἰσιδῶν παρ' ἐλπίδα  
ἀνώδυνον βλέποντα κάμπινέοντ' ἔτι·  
ώς οὐκέτ' ὄντος γὰρ τὰ συμβόλαια σου  
πρὸς τὰς παρούσας ξυμφορὰς ἐφαίνετο.  
νῦν δ' αἱρε σαυτόν· εἰ δέ σοι μᾶλλον φίλον,  
οἴσουσί σ' οὖδε· τοῦ πόνου γὰρ οὐκ ὅκνος,  
ἐπείπερ οὕτω σοί τ' ἔδοξ' ἐμοί τε δρᾶν.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

αἰνῶ τάδ', ω παῖ, καὶ μ' ἔπαιρ', ὕσπερ νοεῖς·  
τούτους δ' ἔασον, μὴ βαρυνθῶσιν κακῆ  
ὸσμῆ πρὸ τοῦ δέοντος· οὐπὶ νηὶ γὰρ  
ἄλις πόνος τούτοισι συνναίειν ἐμοί.

890

## ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἔσται τάδ· ἀλλ' ἵστω τε καύτὸς ἀντέχουν.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

θάρσει· τό τοι σύνηθες ὁρθώσει μ' ἔθος.

## ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

παπαῖ· τί δῆτ' ἀν δρῷμ' ἐγὼ τούνθένδε γε;

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν, ω παῖ; ποὶ ποτ' ἐξέβης λόγῳ;

## ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ οἰδ' ὅποι χρὴ τάπορον τρέπειν ἐπος.

## PHILOCTETES

By nature noble as by birth, my son,  
Mad'st light of all the sores to eye and ear,  
And nostrils, that my malady inflicts.  
But now at last, 'twould seem, a lull has come,  
A respite and oblivion of my ills ;  
Raise me thyself, boy, set me on my feet,  
That, when the attack has wholly spent itself,  
We may aboard and instantly set sail.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Right glad am I to see thee breathing still,  
Alive, beyond all hope, and freed from pain ;  
For to appearance thou didst bear the seal  
And signature of death. Now raise thyself,  
Or if thou choosest, these shall carry thee ;  
Such service will they readily perform,  
Since thou and I alike are thus resolved.

### PHILOCTETES

I thank thee, son, and, if it pleaseth thee,  
Raise me thyself and spare thy men this task,  
Lest they be sickened with my fetidness  
Before the time ; they'll have enough to bear  
With me for messmate when we are aboard.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

So be it ; now, stand up, lay hold of me.

### PHILOCTETES

Fear not, long use and wont has taught me how.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Ye Gods ! What now remains for me to do ?

### PHILOCTETES

What is it, my son, what mean these whirling  
words ?

### NEOPTOLEMUS

I speak perplexly, know not how to speak.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀπορεῖς δὲ τοῦ σύ; μὴ λέγ', ω τέκνου, τάδε.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐνθάδ' ηδη τοῦδε τοῦ πάθους κυρῶ.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐ δή σε δυσχέρεια τοῦ νοσήματος  
ἔπεισεν ὥστε μή μ' ἄγειν ναύτην ἔτι;

900

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἄπαντα δυσχέρεια, τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν  
ὅταν λιπών τις δρᾶ τὰ μὴ προσεικότα.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἔξω τοῦ φυτεύσαντος σύ γε  
δρᾶς οὐδὲ φωνεῖς, ἐσθλὸν ἄνδρ' ἐπωφελῶν.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

αἰσχρὸς φαινοῦμαι· τοῦτ' ἀνιώμαι πάλαι.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὔκουν ἐν οἷς γε δρᾶς· ἐν οἷς δ' αὐδᾶς ὀκνῶ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δράσω; δεύτερον ληφθῶ κακός,  
κρύπτων θ' ἀ μὴ δεῖ καὶ λέγων αἰσχιστ' ἐπῶν;

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀνὴρ ὅδ', εἰ μὴ 'γὰ κακὸς γνώμων ἔφυν,  
προδούς μ' ἔοικε κάκλιπων τὸν πλοῦν στελεῖν.

910

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

λιπὼν μὲν οὐκ ἔγωγε· λυπηρῶς δὲ μὴ  
πέμπω σε μᾶλλον, τοῦτ' ἀνιώμαι πάλαι.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τί ποτε λέγεις, ω τέκνου; ώς οὐ μανθάνω.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐδέν σε κρύψω· δεῖ γὰρ ἐς Τροίαν σε πλεῖν  
πρὸς τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς καὶ τὸν Ἀτρειδῶν στόλον.

## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

What can perplex thee? say not so, my son.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Too deep involved, I cannot otherwise.

PHILOCTETES

What! the offensiveness of my complaint  
Will stay thee now from taking me aboard?

NEOPTOLEMUS

All is offensive when a man is false  
To his true self and, knowing right, does wrong.

PHILOCTETES

But thou dost naught in word or deed to shame  
Thy birth in succouring a worthy man.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I shall be proved a rogue; this tortures me.

PHILOCTETES

Not in thy deeds—thy words do give me pause.

NEOPTOLEMUS

God help me now! Must I appear twice base,  
Hide what I should not and my shame reveal?

PHILOCTETES

The youth, if I misjudge him not, intends  
To play me false and leave me stranded here.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Leave thee? Not so, but what will irk thee more,  
Convey thee hence. 'Tis this that tortures me.

PHILOCTETES

Thy words are dark, I cannot catch their drift.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I will be plain and round with thee. To Troy  
Thou sailest, to the Atridae and the host.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οῖμοι, τί εἶπας;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

μὴ στέναξε, πρὶν μάθης.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ποῖον μάθημα; τί με νοεῖς δρᾶσαι ποτε;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σῶσαι κακοῦ μὲν πρῶτα τοῦδ', ἔπειτα δὲ  
ξὺν σὸν τὰ Τροίας πεδία πορθῆσαι μολών.

920

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

καὶ ταῦτ' ἀληθῆ δρᾶν νοεῖς;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πολλὴ κρατεῖ  
τούτων ἀνάγκη, καὶ σὺ μὴ θυμοῦ κλύων.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀπόλωλα τλήμων, προδέδομαι. τί μ', ὡς ξένε,  
δέδρακας; ἀπόδος ώς τάχος τὰ τόξα μοι.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐχ οἰόν τε· τῶν γὰρ ἐν τέλει κλύειν  
τό τ' ἔνδικόν με καὶ τὸ συμφέρον ποεῖ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὦ πῦρ σὺ καὶ πᾶν δεῖμα καὶ πανουργίας  
δεινῆς τέχνημ' ἔχθιστον, οἴά μ' εἰργάσω,  
οἵ ἡπάτηκας· οὐδὲ ἐπαισχύνει μὲν ὅρῳ  
τὸν προστρόπαιον, τὸν ἵκετην, ὡς σχέτλιε;  
ἀπεστέρηκας τὸν βίον τὰ τόξα ἐλών.  
ἀπόδος, ἴκνοῦμαί σ', ἀπόδος, ἴκετεύω, τέκνον.  
πρὸς θεῶν πατρώων, τὸν βίον με μὴ ἀφέληγ.<sup>1</sup>

930

<sup>1</sup> μὴ μ' ἀφέληγ MSS., Elmsley corr.

## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

Alas ! What say'st thou ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Murmur not but hear me—

PHILOCTETES

Hear me, quothe he ! what wilt thou do with me ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

First from this misery rescue thee, and then,  
With thee to aid me, ravage Ilium.

PHILOCTETES

Wilt thou indeed do this ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Necessity

Leaves me no choice ; so take it not amiss.

PHILOCTETES

Me miserable ! I am undone, betrayed  
How hast thou used me, sir ! I charge thee straight  
Give back my bow !

NEOPTOLEMUS

That cannot be, for I

By policy and duty both am bound  
To obey my chiefs.

PHILOCTETES

Thou fire, thou utter monster,  
Abhorred masterpiece of knavery,  
How hast thou served me, cheated me, abused ?  
Art not ashamed to look on me, thou wretch,  
Thy suppliant, thy bedesman ? Robbing me  
Of this my bow thou robbest me of life.  
Restore it, I beseech thee, O my son,  
Oh, an thou lov'st me, give me back my bow ;  
Rob me not, by thy gods I pray, of life !

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ῶμοι τάλας. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ προσφωνεῖ μ' ἔτι,  
ἀλλ' ὡς μεθήσων μήποθ', ωδὸς ὄρᾳ πάλιν.  
ῳ λιμένει, ὥ προβλῆτες, ὥ ξυνουσίαι  
θηρῶν ὄρείων, ὥ καταρρῶγες πέτραι,  
ὑμῖν τάδ', οὐ γὰρ ἄλλον οἰδ' ὅτῳ λέγω,  
ἀνακλαίομαι παροῦσι τοῖς εἰωθόσιν,  
οἱ ἔργ' ὁ παῖς μ' ἔδρασεν οὐξ Ἀχειλλέως·  
δομόσας ἀπάξειν οἴκαδ', ἐς Τροίαν μ' ἄγει·  
προσθείς τε χεῖρα δεξιάν, τὰ τόξα μου  
ιερὰ λαβὼν τοῦ Ζηνὸς Ἡρακλέους ἔχει,  
καὶ τοῦσιν Ἀργείοισι φῆνασθαι θέλει·  
ὡς ἄνδρ' ἑλὼν ἴσχυρόν ἐκ βίας μ' ἄγει,  
κούκ οἰδ' ἐναίρων νεκρὸν ἦ καπνοῦ σκιάν,  
εἰδῶλον ἄλλως· οὐ γὰρ ἀν σθένοντά γε  
εἶλέν μ'. ἐπει οὐδὲ ἀν ὠδὸς ἔχοντ', εἰ μὴ δόλῳ.  
νῦν δ' ἡπάτημαι δύσμορος. τί χρή με δρᾶν;  
ἀλλ' ἀπόδοσ, ἀλλὰ νῦν ἔτ' ἐν σαυτῷ γενοῦ.  
τί φής; σιωπᾶς; οὐδέν εἰμ' ὁ δύσμορος.  
ῳ σχῆμα πέτρας δίπυλον, αὐθις αὖ πάλιν  
εἴσειμι πρὸς σὲ ψιλός, οὐκ ἔχων τροφήν·  
ἀλλ' αὐλανοῦμαι τῷδ' ἐν αὐλίφ μόνος,  
οὐ πτηνὸν ὅρνιν οὐδὲ θῆρ' ὄρειβάτην  
τόξοις ἐναίρων τοισίδ', ἀλλ' αὐτὸς τάλας  
θαυῶν παρέξω δαῖθ' ἵψ' ὧν ἐφερβόμην,  
καὶ μ' οὓς ἐθήρων πρόσθε θηράσουσι νῦν·  
φόνον φόνου δὲ ρύσιον τίσω τάλας  
πρὸς τοῦ δοκοῦντος οὐδὲν εἰδέναι κακόν.  
ὅλοιο—μή πω, πρὶν μάθοιμ' εἰ καὶ πάλιν  
γυνώμην μετοίσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, θάνοις κακῶς.

940

950

960

## PHILOCTETES

Ah me ! he turns away, he will not speak ;  
His silence says he will not give it back.

Ye creeks, ye promontories, dens and lairs  
Of mountain beasts, ye cliffs precipitous,  
To you—none else will heed me—I appeal,  
On you, familiars of my woes, I call ;  
Hear what I suffer from Achilles' son !  
He swore to bring me home again, and now  
To Troy he takes me ; on his plighted troth  
I gave, he keeps my bow, the sacred bow  
That erst to Zeus-born Heracles belonged,  
To flout it 'fore the Argive host as his ;  
He takes me hence his prisoner, as if  
His arm had captured some great warrior,  
And sees not he is slaying a dead man,  
A shade, a wraith, an unsubstantial ghost ;  
For in my strength he had not ta'en me, no,  
Nor as I am, disabled, save by guile.  
But now, entrapped, ah whither shall I turn ?

Have pity, give me, give me back my bow !  
Be once again thy true self, even now.  
What answer ? None. O woe is me, I am lost !  
O cave with double mouth, to thee I turn ;  
Stripped of my arms and lacking means of life,  
Here shall I wither in this lonely cell.  
No bird of air, no beast of the upland wold  
Yon bow shall slay, but dying I shall make  
A feast for those who fed me when alive,  
A quarry for the creatures I pursued,  
My blood for their blood shed. And this I owe  
To one who seemed a child in innocence.  
My curse upon thee—nay I will forbear,  
Till first I hear whether thou wilt repent  
Or not ; if no, die blasted by my curse !

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δρῶμεν; ἐν σοὶ καὶ τὸ πλεῖν ἡμᾶς, ἄναξ,  
ηδη 'στὶ καὶ τοῖς τοῦδε προσχωρεῖν λόγοις.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐμοὶ μὲν οἰκτος δεινὸς ἐμπέπτωκέ τις  
τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς οὐ νῦν πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάλαι.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐλέησον, ὁ πᾶν, πρὸς θεῶν, καὶ μὴ παρῆς  
σαυτοῦ βροτοῦς δνειδος, ἐκκλέψας ἐμέ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οἴμοι, τί δράσω; μή ποτ' ὕφελον λιπεῖν  
τὴν Σκύρου· οὕτω τοῖς παροῦσιν ἄχθομαι.

970

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐκ εἶ κακὸς σύ, πρὸς κακῶν δ' ἀνδρῶν μαθὼν  
ἔοικας ἥκειν αἰσχρά· νῦν δ' ἄλλοισι δοὺς  
οὶς εἰκὸς ἔκπλει, τὰμά μοι μεθεὶς δπλα.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί δρῶμεν, ἀνδρες;

### ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ὁ κάκιστ' ἀνδρῶν, τί δρᾶς;  
οὐκ εἶ μεθεὶς τὰ τόξα ταῦτ' ἐμοὶ πάλιν;

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἴμοι, τίς ἀνήρ; ἀρ' Ὁδυσσέως κλύω;

### ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

὾δυσσέως, σάφ' ἵσθ', ἐμοῦ γ', δν εἰσορᾶς.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἴμοι πέπραμαι κάπολωλ· ὅδ' ἦν ἄρα  
ὅξυλλαβων με κάπονοσφίσας δπλων.

### ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἐγώ, σάφ' ἵσθ', οὐκ ἄλλος· ὁμολογῶ τάδε.

980

## PHILOCTETES

### CHORUS

What shall we do, prince ? 'tis for thee to say  
Whether we sail or hearken to his prayer.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

My heart is strangely wrought, and from the first  
I have been moved with pity for the man.

### PHILOCTETES

In heaven's name show mercy, let not men  
Brand thee as my betrayer, O my son !

### NEOPTOLEMUS

What shall I do ? Would I had never left  
Scyros, to fall into this desperate plight.

### PHILOCTETES

Thou art not base, but coming here wast schooled  
To play the rogue by villains ; leave that part  
To others framed by nature to be rogues.  
Sail hence, but ere thou sail give back my arms.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

What shall we do, friends ?

*ODYSSEUS appears suddenly from behind the cave.*

### ODYSSEUS

Wretch, what art thou at ?  
Back with thee, sirrah ! give the bow to me—

### PHILOCTETES

Ah who is here ? Is that Odysseus' voice ?

### ODYSSEUS

Odysseus, as thou seeest. Here am I.

### PHILOCTETES

Oh I am sold, betrayed. So it was he  
Who trapped me and bereft me of my arms.

### ODYSSEUS

I and no other. I avow 'twas I.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀπόδος, ἄφεις μοι, παῖ, τὰ τόξα.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τοῦτο μέν,  
οὐδὲ ἡν θέλῃ, δράσει ποτ'. ἀλλὰ καὶ σὲ δεῖ  
στείχειν ἅμ' αὐτοῖς, ἢ βίᾳ στελοῦσί σε.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἔμ', ω κακῶν κάκιστε καὶ τολμήστατε,  
οἴδ' ἐκ βίας ἄξουσιν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἢν μὴ ἔρπηγς ἔκών.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ω Λημνία χθῶν καὶ τὸ παγκρατὲς σέλας  
Ἡφαιστότευκτον, ταῦτα δῆτ' ἀνασχετά,  
εἰ μ' οὗτος ἐκ τῶν σῶν ἀπάξεται βίᾳ;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

Ζεύς ἐσθ', ἵν' εἰδῆς, Ζεύς, ὁ τῆσδε γῆς κρατῶν,  
Ζεύς, ω δέδοκται ταῦθ'. ὑπηρετῶ δ' ἔγώ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ω μῖσος, οīα κάξανευρίσκεις λέγειν.  
θεοὺς προτείνων τοὺς θεοὺς ψευδεῖς τίθης.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὔκ, ἀλλ' ἀληθεῖς· ἢ δ' ὁδὸς πορευτέα.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐ φημ'.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἔγὼ δέ φημι. πειστέον τάδε.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἵμοι τάλας. ἡμᾶς μὲν ὡς δούλους σαφῶς  
πατὴρ ἄρ' ἔξεφυσεν οὐδὲ ἐλευθέρους.

## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES  
(*To CHORUS*)

Ye also, friends, will ye abandon me  
And show no pity for my sad estate?

CHORUS

This stripling is our captain, and whate'er  
He says, we say the same ; his word is law.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I know I shall be twitted by my chief  
As weak and tender-hearted ; but what odds ?  
If our friend wills it, tarry here until  
Our crew have made all tight and yare, and we  
Have offered prayers, as fitting. He the while  
Perchance may come to a better mind and melt.  
So we will hasten forward, he and I,  
And ye, make haste to follow when we call.

[*Exeunt ODYSSEUS and NEOPTOLEMUS.*]

PHILOCTETES

O cavern'd rock, my cell  
Now hot, now icy chill, (Str. 1)  
How long with thee it was my lot to dwell :  
To thee till death I shall be constant still.  
Tell me, sad lodging, haunted by my pain,  
How shall I day by day my life sustain ?  
Ye timorous doves whose flight  
Whirrs in the air o'erhead,  
Now where ye will unharmed alight ;  
No shafts of mine henceforward need ye dread.

CHORUS.

'Tis thou hast willed it thus, infatuate,  
Thou art the author of thy sad estate ;

ΦΙΔΟΚΤΗΣ

ἄλλοθεν ἔχει τύχα τὰδ ἀπὸ μείζονος,  
εὐτέ γε παρὸν φρουρῆσαι  
τοῦ λόγου δάιμονος εἴλου τὸ κάκιον αἰνεῖν.<sup>1</sup>

1100

ФЛОКТНТН

1110

ХОРОХ

πότμος, πότμος σε δαιμόνων τάδ',  
οὐδὲ σέ γε δόλος,  
ἔσχει ύπὸ χειρὸς ἀμᾶς.<sup>2</sup> στυγερὰν ἔχε  
δύσποτμον ἄραν ἐπ' ἄλλοις.  
καὶ γὰρ ἐμοὶ τοῦτο μέλει, μὴ φιλότητ' ἀπώσῃ.

1120

ΦΙΔΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οῖμοι μοι, καὶ που πολιᾶς  
πόντου θινὸς ἐφήμενος  
ἔγγελῷ, χερὶ πάλλων  
τὰν ἐμὰν μελέου τροφάν,  
τὰν οὐδείς ποτ' ἐβάστασεν.  
ὦ τόξον φίλον, ὦ φίλων  
χειρῶν ἐκβεβιασμένου,

$\sigma\tau\rho.$   $\beta'$

<sup>1</sup> ἐλεῖν MSS., Hermann corr.

<sup>2</sup> ἔσχ' ὑπὸ χειρὸς ἐμᾶς MSS., Bergk corr.

## PHILOCTETES

Nor to some higher force canst thou assign  
Thy woes, but, when free choice was thine,  
The good thou did'st reject,  
The worse elect.

### PHILOCTETES

Ah wretched, wretched then am I,      (*Ant. 1*)  
Consumed with utter misery,  
Doomed for all time to linger on.  
Without one friend, one comrade, one,  
To aid me till I die.  
No more my arrows fleet  
Shall win my daily meat;  
Poor unsuspecting fool,  
A base intriguer's tool,  
By his forged legend caught!  
Wretch who my ruin wrought,  
Would I might see him pine  
Long years like me in agony like mine!

### CHORUS

By destiny, by destiny 'twas sent.  
To treachery my hand was never lent;  
Point not at me thy baleful curse, for fain  
Thy friend, as heretofore, I would remain.

### PHILOCTETES

Ah me! he's sitting now      (*Str. 2*)  
Upon the grey sea sands,  
And laughs at me, I trow;  
My bow is in his hands,  
The bow that was my life, the bow  
That never lord save me did know.

My bow, my matchless bow of yew,  
If thou canst feel, how must thou grieve,

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἡ που ἐλεινὸν ὁρᾶς, φρένας εἴ τινας  
ἔχεις, τὸν Ἡράκλειον  
ἀρθμον ὡδέ σοι  
οὐκέτι χρησόμενον τὸ μεθύστερον,  
ἄλλον δὲ ἐν μεταλλαγā  
πολυμηχάνου ἀνδρὸς ἔρέσσει,  
ὅρων μὲν αἰσχρὰς ἀπάτας, στυγνὸν δὲ φῶτ' ἔχθο-  
δοπόν,  
μυρὶ', ἀπ' αἰσχρῶν ἀνατέλλονθ', δις ἐφ' ἡμῖν κάκ'  
ἐμήσατ', ὡς Ζεῦ.<sup>1</sup>

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀνδρός τοι τὰ μὲν ἔνδικ' αἰὲν<sup>2</sup> εἰπεῖν,  
εἰπόντος δὲ μὴ φθονερὰν  
ἔξωσαι γλώσσας ὁδύναν.  
κείνος δὲ εἰς ἀπὸ πολλῶν  
ταχθεὶς τῶνδε ἐφημοσύνῃ  
κοινὰν ἦνσεν ἐς φίλους ἀρωγάν.

113

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ  
ὡς πταναὶ θῆραι χαροπῶν τ'  
ἔθνη θηρῶν, οὓς δόδ' ἔχει  
χῶρος οὐρεσιβώτας,  
μηκέτ' ἀπ' αὐλίων φύγα  
πηδᾶτ'.<sup>3</sup> οὐ γὰρ ἔχω χεροῖν  
τὰν πρόσθεν βέλεων ἀλκάν,  
ὦ δύστανος ἐγὼ τανῦν,  
ἄλλ' ἀνέδην, ὃ δὲ χῶρος ἄρ' οὐκέτι  
φοβητὸς οὐκέθ' ὑμῖν,<sup>4</sup>  
ἔρπετε· νῦν καλὸν  
ἀντίφονον κορέσαι στόμα πρὸς χάριν

ἀντ. β'

1140

<sup>1</sup> Οδυσσεύς MSS., Dindorf corr.

<sup>2</sup> τὸ μὲν εὖ δίκαιον MSS., Arndt corr.

<sup>3</sup> φυγῇ μ' οὐκέτ' ἀπ' αὐλίων | πελᾶτ' MSS., Jebb corr.

<sup>4</sup> δέ χῶρος ἔρύκεται | οὐκέτι φοβητὸς ὑμῖν MSS., Jebb corr,

## PHILOCTETES

Thus wrested from thy master true,  
Constrained his loving hands to leave,  
Thy master who, through Hellas famed,  
The friend of Heracles was named.

Now art thou handled by a knave,  
Past master in each cunning art,  
Must do his bidding, as a slave,  
In all his misdeeds take thy part.  
And aid the unrelenting foe,  
The source and spring of all my woe.

### CHORUS

A man should aye his rightful cause maintain,  
But from malign and venomous taunts refrain ;  
And he but serves the common interest,  
Speaks for the host, obeying their behest.

### PHILOCTETES

Ye feathered tribes, my prey,                   (*Ant.* 2)  
Ye bright-eyed beasts who roam  
The hills, start not away  
Scared from the hunter's home.  
Stray where ye will, secure, unharmed ;  
Why shun a helpless man unarmed ?

Gone is the mighty bow ;  
Flock hither without dread,  
Why should ye fear a foe  
So weak, so ill bestead.  
Draw near your glutinous mouths to fill,  
Mangle my carrion flesh at will.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐμᾶς σαρκὸς αἰόλας·

ἀπὸ γὰρ βίον αὐτίκα λείψω.

πόθεν γὰρ ἔσται βιοτά; τίς ὡδ' ἐν αὔραις τρέφεται, 1160  
μηκέτι μηδενὸς κρατύνων ὅσα πέμπει βιόδωρος  
αἴλα;

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς θεῶν, εἴ τι σέβει ξένον, πέλασσον,

εὔνοίᾳ πάσα πελάταν·

ἀλλὰ γνῶθ', εὖ γνῶθ' ἐπὶ σοὶ <sup>1</sup>

κῆρα τάνδ' ἀποφεύγειν.

οἴκτρὰ γὰρ βόσκειν, ἀδαής δ'

ἔχειν μυρίον ἄχθος, δὲ ξυνοικεῖ.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πάλιν πάλιν παλαιὸν ἄλγημ' ὑπέμνασας, ὁ

λῶστε τῶν πρὶν ἐντόπων.

τί μ' ὥλεσας; τί μ' εἴργασαι;

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας;

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

εἰ σὺ τὰν ἔμοὶ στυγερὰν

Τρφάδα γάν μ' ἥλπισας ἄξειν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

τόδε γὰρ νοῶ κράτιστον.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀπό νύν με λείπετ' ἥδη.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

φίλα μοι, φίλα ταῦτα παρήγγειλας ἐκόντι τε  
πράσσειν.

ἴωμεν ἴωμεν

ναὸς ἵν' ἡμῖν τέτακται.

1180

<sup>1</sup> δτι σοι MSS., Seyffert corr.

## PHILOCTETES

Here shall I waste away,  
Soon will ye eye me dead ;  
Who can survive one day  
By airs of heaven fed ?  
Of all that Earth affords each son,  
Herb, root and fruit, possessing none.

### CHORUS

If thou regardest a well-wishing friend,  
Draw near and to his kindly rule attend.  
Think well ; from this intolerable bane,  
That thou dost feed, and aggravate thy pain,  
With thee it rests deliverance to gain.

### PHILOCTETES

O why recall my ancient grief once more,  
Kindest of all who e'er have touched this shore ?  
Why twice undo a wretch undone before ?

### CHORUS

What meanest thou ?

### PHILOCTETES

I mean that thou wast fain  
To take me to the Troy I hate again.

### CHORUS

'Tis for thy good.

### PHILOCTETES

O leave me then, begone !

### CHORUS

Thanks for that word. We will be off anon,  
Back to the ship, and each man to his oar.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

μή, πρὸς ἀραιού Διός, ἔλθης, ἵκετεύω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μετρίαξ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὦ ξένοι,  
μεινατε, πρὸς θεῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί θροεῖς;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ, δαίμων δαίμων·  
ἀπόλωλ' ὁ τάλας·  
ὦ ποὺς πούς, τί σ' ἔτ' ἐν βίφ  
τεύξω τῷ μετόπιν τάλας;  
ὦ ξένοι, ἔλθετ' ἐπήλυδες αὐθις.

1190

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί ῥέξοντες ἀλλοκότῳ  
γνώμᾳ τῶν πάρος, ὡν προύφαινες;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὗτοι νεμεσητόν,  
ἀλύοντα χειμερίῳ  
λύπᾳ καὶ παρὰ νοῦν θροεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Βᾶθι νυν, ὦ τάλαν, ὡς σε κελεύομεν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐδέποτ' οὐδέποτ', ἵσθι τόδ' ἔμπεδον,  
οὐδὲ εἰ πυρφόρος ἀστεροπητῆς  
βροντᾶς αὐγαῖς μ' εἰσι φλογίζων.

ἔρρέτω "Ιλιον οἴ θ' ὑπ' ἐκείνῳ  
πιντεῖς δσοι τόδ' ἔτλασαν ἐμοῦ ποδὸς ἄρθρον  
ἀπώσαι.

Ἄλλ', ὦ ξένοι, ἐν γέ μοι εὐχος ὀρέξατε.

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## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

O leave me not, for God's sake, I implore.

CHORUS

Calm thyself.

PHILOCTETES

Stay, O stay !

CHORUS

Why should we wait ?

PHILOCTETES

O woe is me ! Out on my fate, my fate !

Accursed foot, what shall I make of thee ?

I am undone ! O friends, come back to me.

CHORUS

What would'st thou ? First thou bid'st us go, and  
then

In the same breath thou biddest us remain.

PHILOCTETES

O be not wrath if one distraught with pain  
Blurts out discordant words beside the mark.

CHORUS

Come then, unhappy man, with us embark.

PHILOCTETES

Never, no never, though the King of Heaven  
Should threat to blast me with his fiery leaven.  
No, perish rather Ilium, perish all  
The Achaeans host that batter at its wall ;  
Hard hearts who cast me forth as halt and maim  
From you, my friends, one parting boon I claim.

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H H

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῖον ἔρεις τόδ' ἔπος:

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ξίφος, εἴ ποθεν,

ἢ γένυν ἢ βελέων τι προπέμψατε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώς τίνα δὴ ρέξης παλάμαν ποτέ;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

χρῶτ'<sup>1</sup> ἀπὸ πάντα καὶ ἄρθρα τέμω χερί·  
φονᾶ φονᾶ νόος ἥδη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί ποτε;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πατέρα ματεύων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῖ γᾶς;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἔς "Αιδου·"

οὐ γάρ ἐστ' ἐν φάει γ' ἔτι.

ὦ πόλις, ὡ πατρία,

πῶς ἀν εἰσίδοιμ' ἄθλιός σ' ἀνήρ,

ὅς γε σὰν λιπῶν ἴερὰν

λιβάδ' ἔχθροῖς ἔβαν Δαναοῖς

ἄρωγός· ἔτ' οὐδέν είμι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν ἥδη καὶ πάλαι νεώς ὁμοῦ

στείχων ἀν ἦ σοι τῆς ἐμῆς, εἰ μὴ πέλας

'Οδυσσέα στείχουντα τόν τ' Ἀχιλλέως

γόνου πρὸς ἡμᾶς δεῦρ' ίόντ' ἐλεύσσομεν.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ

οὐκ ἀν φράσειας ἥντιν' αὖ παλίντροπος

κέλευθον ἔρπεις ὀδε σὺν σπουδῇ ταχύς;

<sup>1</sup> κράτ' MSS., Hermann corr.

## PHILOCTETES

CHORUS

What would'st thou ask ?

PHILOCTETES

An axe, a spear, a brand,  
No matter what—the weapon first to hand.

CHORUS

Wherefore ! What deed of violence wouldest thou do ?

PHILOCTETES

Hack, mangle, limb by limb my body hew ;  
My thoughts are bloody.

CHORUS

Wherefore ?

PHILOCTETES

I would go

To seek my father.

CHORUS

In what land ?

PHILOCTETES

Below ;

For I shall find him nowhere on this earth.  
My native land, fair land that gave me birth,  
Might I but see thee ! Wherefore did I roam  
And leave the sacred stream that guards my home ?  
To help the Greeks those stormy seas I crossed,  
My mortal foes, by them undone, lost, lost !

CHORUS

I should have left thee long ago and now  
Be near my ship, but that I saw Odysseus  
Advancing towards us and Achilles' son.

*Enter NEOPTOLEMUS followed by ODYSSEUS.*

ODYSSEUS

Wilt thou not tell me why thou hurriest back  
In such hot haste and on what errand bound ?

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

λύσων ὅσ' ἐξήμαρτον ἐν τῷ πρὶν χρόνῳ.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

δεινόν γε φωνεῖς· ἡ δὲ ἀμαρτία τίς ἦν;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἢν σοὶ πιθόμενος τῷ τε σύμπαντι στρατῷ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἔπραξας ἔργου ποίον ὃν οὐ σοὶ πρέπον;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀπάταισιν αἰσχραῖς ἄνδρα καὶ δόλοις ἐλών.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τὸν ποίον; ὕμοι· μῶν τι βουλεύει νέον;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

νέον μὲν οὐδέν, τῷ δὲ Ποίαντος τόκῳ,

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τί χρῆμα δράσεις; ὡς μὲν ὑπῆλθέ τις φόβος.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

παρ' οὐπερ ἔλαβον τάδε τὰ τόξ', αὐθις πάλιν

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί λέξεις; οὐ τί που δοῦναι νοεῖς;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

αἰσχρῶς γὰρ αὐτὰ κοὺ δίκη λαβὼν ἔχω.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

πρὸς θεῶν, πότερα δὴ κερτομῶν λέγεις τάδε;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

εἰ κερτόμησίς ἐστι τὰληθῆ λέγειν.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

τί φής, 'Αχιλλέως παῖ; τίν' εἴρηκας λόγον;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

δὶς ταῦτὰ βούλει καὶ τρὶς ἀναπολεῖν μ' ἔπη;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἀρχὴν κλύειν ἀν οὐδ' ἄπαξ ἐβουλόμην.

## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

I come to expiate all former wrongs.

ODYSSEUS

A strange reply. What wrong did'st thou commit?

NEOPTOLEMUS

When in obedience to the host and thee—

ODYSSEUS

Prithee, what did'st thou that beseemed thee not?

NEOPTOLEMUS

I snared a man by base deceit and guile.

ODYSSEUS

What man? Thou hast not something rash in hand?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Naught rash, but to the son of Poeas I—

ODYSSEUS

What wilt thou do? My soul forbodes some ill.

NEOPTOLEMUS

From whom I took the bow, to him again—

ODYSSEUS

Great Zeus! What meanest thou? Not give it back?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Yes, for I got it basely, shamefully.

ODYSSEUS

In Heaven's name, say'st thou this to mock at me?

NEOPTOLEMUS

If it be mockery to speak the truth.

ODYSSEUS

What now? What meanest thou, Achilles' son?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Must I repeat the same words twice and thrice?

ODYSSEUS

Far better had I never heard them once.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

εὖ νῦν ἐπίστω πάντ' ἀκηκοὼς λόγουν.

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ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἔστιν τις, ἔστιν ὅς σε κωλύσει τὸ δρᾶν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί φής; τίς ἔσται μ' οὐπικωλύσων τάδε;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ξύμπας Ἀχαιῶν λαός, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐγώ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σοφὸς πεφυκὼς οὐδὲν ἔξαυδᾶς σοφόν.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

σὺ δ' οὗτε φωνεῖς οὗτε δρασείεις σοφά.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ δίκαια, τῶν σοφῶν κρείσσω τάδε.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

καὶ πῶς δίκαιον, ἃ γ' ἔλαβεις βουλαῖς ἐμαῖς,  
πάλιν μεθεῖναι ταῦτα;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τὴν ἀμαρτίαν  
αἰσχρὰν ἀμαρτὼν ἀναλαβεῖν πειράσομαι.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

στρατὸν δ' Ἀχαιῶν οὐ φοβεῖ, πράσσων τάδε; 1250

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ξὺν τῷ δικαίῳ τὸν σὸν οὐ ταρβῶ φόβον.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

[ξὺν τῷ δικαίῳ χειρὶ ἐμῇ σ' ἀναγκάσει.]<sup>1</sup>

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδέ τοι σῇ χειρὶ πείθομαι τὸ δρᾶν.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὐ τάρα Τρωσίν, ἀλλὰ σοὶ μαχούμεθα.

<sup>1</sup> Hermann pointed out that a verse is here missing. The line in the text (one of Jebb's suggestions) with the same beginning would explain the omission.

## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

Rest well assured I have nothing more to add.

ODYSSEUS

There is, I tell thee, one to stay thy hand.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Who prithee? who to stay me or prevent?

ODYSSEUS

The whole Achaean host, and I for one.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Thy words lack wisdom though thou lack'st not wits.

ODYSSEUS

Unwisdom marks thy words and actions both.

NEOPTOLEMUS

If just, 'tis better than unjust and wise.

ODYSSEUS

Can it be justice to give back the prize

Won by my policy?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Shameful was my fault,

And I will try to make amends for it.

ODYSSEUS

Hast thou no terror of the Achaean host?

NEOPTOLEMUS

A bugbear this with justice on my side.

ODYSSEUS

[Justice must yield if I resort to force.]

NEOPTOLEMUS

Not even thou canst force me 'gainst my will.

ODYSSEUS

Then not with Trojans must we war, but thee.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἵτω<sup>1</sup> τὸ μέλλον.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ

χεῖρα δεξιὰν ὄρφας  
κώπης ἐπιψαύουσαν;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλὰ κάμέ τοι  
ταῦτὸν τόδ' ὅψει δρῶντα κού μέλλοντ' ἔτι.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ

καίτοι σ' ἔάσω· τῷ δὲ σύμπαντι στρατῷ  
λέξω τάδ' ἐλθών, ὃς σε τιμωρήσεται.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐσωφρόνησας· κάν τὰ λοιφ' οὕτω φρονῆς,  
ἴσως ἀν ἐκτὸς κλαυμάτων ἔχοις ποδα.  
σὺ δ', ὁ Ποίαντος παῖ, Φιλοκτήτην λέγω,  
ἔξελθ', ἀμείψας τάσδε πετρήρεις στέγας.

1260

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τίς αὖ παρ' ἄντροις θόρυβος ἵσταται βοῆς;  
τί μ' ἐκκαλεῦσθε; τοῦ κεχρημένοι, ξένοι;  
ῶμοι· κακὸν τὸ χρῆμα. μῶν τί μοι νέα  
πάρεστε πρὸς κακοῖσι πέμποντες κακά;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θάρσει· λόγους δ' ἄκουσον οὓς ἡκω φέρων.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

δέδοικ' ἔγωγε· καὶ τὰ πρὶν γὰρ ἐκ λόγων  
καλῶν κακῶς ἐπραξα, σοῦς πεισθεὶς λόγοις.

1270

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὔκουν ἔνεστι καὶ μεταγνῶναι πάλιν;

<sup>1</sup> Ίστω MSS., Wecklein corr.

## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

So be it, if it must be.

ODYSSEUS

See'st my hand  
Upon my sword-hilt?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Me too shalt thou see  
Ready to follow suit and keen to draw.

ODYSSEUS

Well, I will leave thee, but I shall report  
To the whole army. They shall punish thee.

NEOPTOLEMUS

A wise discretion. Keep this prudent mind,  
So mayest thou henceforth with a whole skin live.

[*Exit ODYSSEUS*

Ho! Philoctetes, son of Poeas, leave  
The shelter of thy rocky home; come forth!

PHILOCTETES

What means this hubbub at my cave again?  
Why summon me, what would ye with me, Sirs?

(*Appears at mouth of cave and sees NEOPTOLEMUS.*)

Ha! I mislike the look of it. Are ye come  
As heralds of new woes to crown the old?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Take heart and listen to the news I bring.

PHILOCTETES

I am afraid. Thou camest once before;  
I trusted thy fair words and ill I sped.

NEOPTOLEMUS

May not a man repent him?

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τοιοῦτος ἡσθα τοῖς λόγοισι χῶτε μου  
τὰ τόξ’ ἔκλεπτες, πιστός, ἀτηρὸς λάθρᾳ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ’ οὐ τι μὴν νῦν· βούλομαι δέ σου κλύειν,  
πότερα δέδοκταί σοι μένοντι καρτερεῖν  
ἢ πλεῖν μεθ’ ἡμῶν;

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

παῦε, μὴ λέξῃς πέρα·  
μάτην γάρ ἀν εἴπης γε πάντ’ εἰρήσεται.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὗτω δέδοκται;

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

καὶ πέρα γ’ ἵσθ’ ἢ λέγω.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ’ ἥθελον μὲν ἄν σε πεισθῆναι λόγοις  
ἐμοῖσιν· εἰ δὲ μή τι πρὸς καιρὸν λέγων  
κυρῶ, πέπαυμαί.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πάντα γάρ φράσεις μάτην.  
οὐ γάρ ποτ’ εὔνουν τὴν ἐμὴν κτήσει φρένα,  
ὅστις γ’ ἐμοῦ δόλοισι τὸν βίον λαβὼν  
ἀπεστέρηκας, κατὰ νουθετεῖς ἐμὲ  
ἐλθών, ἀρίστου πατρὸς αἰσχιστος γεγώς.  
ὅλοισθ’, Ατρεῖδαι μὲν μάλιστ’, ἔπειτα δὲ  
ὁ Λαρτίου παῖς καὶ σύ.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

μὴ ’πεύξῃ πέρα·  
δέχου δὲ χειρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς βέλη τάδε.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πῶς εἶπας; ἀρα δεύτερον δολούμεθα;

1280

## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

Such thou wast,  
No less fair-spoken, when thou wert about  
To steal my bow, black treachery in thy heart.

NEOPTOLEMUS

But now another man, who fain would learn  
Whether thou still persistest to stay here,  
Or wilt embark with us.

PHILOCTETES

Stop, say no more !  
All that thou sayest will be wasted breath.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Art resolute ?

PHILOCTETES

More resolute than words can tell.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Well, I would gladly have persuaded thee  
By argument, but if thou wilt not heed,  
Why, I have done.

PHILOCTETES

Thou needs must speak in vain.  
How canst thou win me o'er to friendliness,  
Thou who didst rob me of my life by fraud,  
And then dost come to counsel me ? Base son  
Of noblest sire ! Perdition on you all ;  
The Atridae first, Odysseus then, and thee !

NEOPTOLEMUS

Forbear thy curses. Take from me thy bow.

PHILOCTETES

What say'st thou ? Am I tricked a second time ?

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀπώμοσ' ἀγνὸν Ζηνὸς ὑψίστου σέβας.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ῳ φίλτατ' εἰπών, εἰ λέγεις ἐτήτυμα.

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ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τοῦργον παρέσται φανερόν· ἀλλὰ δεξιὰν  
προτεινε χεῖρα, καὶ κράτει τῶν σῶν ὅπλων.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἐγὼ δ' ἀπαυδῶ γ', φὲ θεοὶ ξυνίστορες,  
ὑπέρ τ' Ἀτρειδῶν τοῦ τε σύμπαντος στρατοῦ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τέκνου, τίνος φώνημα, μῶν Ὁδυσσέως,  
ἐπησθόμην;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

σάφ' ἵσθι· καὶ πέλας γ' ὥρᾶς,  
ὅς σ' ἐς τὰ Τροίας πεδὴ ἀποστελὼ βίᾳ,  
ἔάν τ' Ἀχιλλέως παῖς ἔάν τε μὴ θέλῃ·

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ τι χαίρων, ἦν τόδ' ὁρθωθῆ βέλος.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἄ, μηδαμῶς, μή, πρὸς θεῶν, μεθῆς βέλος.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

μέθεις με, πρὸς θεῶν, χεῖρα, φίλτατον τέκνου.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ ἀν μεθείην.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

φεῦ· τί μ' ἄνδρα πολέμου  
ἐχθρόν τ' ἀφεῖλου μὴ κτανεῖν τόξοις ἐμοῖς;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὗτ' ἐμοὶ τοῦτ' ἔστιν οὔτε σοὶ καλόν.

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## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

No, by the name of Zeus most high, I swear it.

PHILOCTETES

O comfortable words, if they be true.

NEOPTOLEMUS

The deed shall follow to attest this truth

Reach hither thy right hand and take thy bow.

(As he is handing the bow to PHILOCTETES, ODYSSEUS appears.)

ODYSSEUS

Hold ! I protest 'fore Heaven, and in the name  
Of the Atridae and the host forbid it.

PHILOCTETES

Who spake, my son, was that Odysseus' voice  
I heard ?

ODYSSEUS

None other ; and he's hard at hand,  
Ready to take thee back to Troy by force,  
Whether it please Achilles' son or no.

PHILOCTETES

But at thy peril, if this shaft fly straight.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Hold, hold ! in heaven's name let not fly thy shaft !

PHILOCTETES

Let go my hand in heaven's name, dearest son !

NEOPTOLEMUS

I will not.

PHILOCTETES

Why, O why didst thou prevent me  
From slaying with my bow the man I hate ?

NEOPTOLEMUS

That were dishonourable for thee and me.

[Exit ODYSSEUS.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΦΙΔΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὖν τοσοῦτόν γ' ἵσθι, τοὺς πρώτους στρατοῦ,  
τοὺς τῶν Ἀχαιῶν φευδοκήρυκας, κακοὺς  
δοντας πρὸς αὐχμῆν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς λόγοις θρασεῖς.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

εἰεν· τὰ μὲν δὴ τόξ' ἔχεις, κούκ' ἔσθ' ὅτου  
ὄργην ἔχοις ἀν οὐδὲ μέμψιν εἰς ἐμέ.

### ΦΙΔΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ξύμφημ· τὴν φύσιν δ' ἔδειξας, ὡς τέκνουν,  
ἔξ ής ἔβλαστες, οὐχὶ Σισύφου πατρός,  
ἀλλ' ἔξ Ἀχιλλέως, δις μετά ζώντων ὅτ' ἦν  
ἡκου' ἄριστα, νῦν δὲ τῶν τεθνηκότων.

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### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἥσθην πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν εὐλογοῦντά σε  
αὐτόν τ' ἔμ· ὡν δέ σου τυχεῖν ἐφίεμαι,  
ἄκουσον. ἀνθρώποισι τὰς μὲν ἐκ θεῶν  
τύχας δοθείσας ἔστ' ἀναγκαῖον φέρειν.  
ὅστοι δ' ἔκουσίοισιν ἔγκεινται βλάβαις,  
ῶσπερ σύ, τούτοις οὔτε συγγνώμην ἔχειν  
δίκαιον ἔστιν οὗτ' ἐποικτίρειν τινά.

σὺ δ' ἡγρίωσαι, κούτε σύμβουλον δέχει,  
ἐάν τε νουθετῇ τις εὐνοίᾳ λέγων,  
στυγεῖς, πολέμου δυσμενῆ θ' ἡγούμενος.  
ὅμως δὲ λέξω· Ζῆνα δ' ὄρκιον καλῶ·  
καὶ ταῦτ' ἐπίστω καὶ γράφου φρενῶν ἔσω.  
σὺ γάρ νοσεῖς τόδ' ἄλγος ἐκ θείας τύχης,  
Χρυσῆς πελασθεὶς φύλακος, δις τὸν ἀκαλυφῆ

σηκὸν φυλάσσει κρύφιος οἰκουρῶν ὅφις·  
καὶ παῦλαν ἵσθι τῆσδε μή ποτ' ἀν τυχεῖν  
νόσου βαρείας, ἔως ἀν αὐτὸς ἥλιος  
ταύτῃ μὲν αἴρῃ, τῇδε δ' αὖ δύνη πάλιν,  
πρὶν ἀν τὰ Τροίας πεδί' ἐκὼν αὐτὸς μόλης,

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## PHILOCTETES

### PHILOCTETES

Well of one thing thou may'st be sure, the chiefs,  
Those lying heralds of the Achaean host,  
Are brave in words and cowards in the fight.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

So be it. The bow is thine again, and now  
Thou hast no grief or quarrel against me.

### PHILOCTETES

None, my brave boy, for thou hast proved this day  
Thy race and lineage, not of Sisyphus,  
But of Achilles, noblest once of men  
In life, and now the noblest of the dead.

### NEOPTOLEMUS

Sweet to my ears the praises of my sire,  
And of myself; but now I crave of thee  
A boon. What fates the gods allot to men  
They needs must bear, but whoso hug their griefs,  
As thou dost,—who can pity or condone  
Such self-tormentors? Thou, inexorable,  
Wilt tolerate no counsel, deemest him  
Who would admonish thee in love a foe;  
Yet will I speak the truth, so help me Zeus!  
Write on the table of thy memory  
These words: thy sore plague is a heaven-sent doom;  
With foot profane, in Chrysè's roofless shrine,  
Thou didst insult her tutelary snake.  
For this sin wast thou stricken, and no relief  
Canst win from thy affliction, whilst the sun  
Shall run from East to West his daily course,  
Before of thy free will thou com'st to Troy.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

καὶ τοῖν παρ' ἡμῖν ἐντυχών Ἀσκληπίδαιν  
νόσου μαλαχθῆς τῆσδε, καὶ τὰ πέργαμα  
ξὺν τοῖσδε τόξοις ξύν τ' ἐμοὶ πέρσας φανῆς.  
ώς δὲ οἴδα ταῦτα τῷδ' ἔχοντ' ἐγὼ φράσω.  
ἀνὴρ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐστιν ἐκ Τροίας ἀλούς,  
"Ελευνος ἀριστόμαντις, δις λέγει σαφῶς  
ώς δεῖ γενέσθαι ταῦτα· καὶ πρὸς τοῖσδε ἔτι  
ώς ἔστ' ἀνάγκη τοῦ παρεστώτος θέρους  
Τροίαν ἀλῶναι πᾶσαν· ἢ δίδωσ' ἐκῶν  
κτείνειν ἑαυτόν, ἢν τάδε ψευσθῇ λέγων.  
ταῦτ' οὖν ἐπεὶ κάτοισθα, συγχώρει θέλων.  
καλὴ γὰρ ἡ πίκτησις, Ἐλλήνων ἔνα  
κριθέντ' ἄριστον τοῦτο μὲν παιωνίας  
ἐς χεῖρας ἐλθεῖν, εἴτα τὴν πολύστονον  
Τροίαν ἐλόντα κλέος ὑπέρτατον λαβεῖν.

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## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ῳ στυγνὸς αἰών, τί με, τί δῆτ' ἔχεις ἄνω  
βλέποντα κούκ ἀφῆκας εἰς "Αἰδου μολεῖν;  
οἴμοι, τί δράσω; πῶς ἀπιστήσω λόγοις  
τοῖς τοῦδ', δις εὔνους ὅν ἐμοὶ παρήνεσεν;  
ἀλλ' εἰκάθω δῆτ'; εἴτα πῶς ὁ δύσμορος  
εἰς φῶς τάδ' ἔρξας είμι; τῷ προσήγορος;  
πῶς, ὡς τὰ πάντ' ἴδόντες ἀμφ' ἐμοὶ κύκλοι,  
ταῦτ' ἔξανασχήσεσθε, τοῖσιν Ἄτρέως  
ἔμε ἔχνοντα παισίν, οἵ μ' ἀπώλεσαν;  
πῶς τῷ πανώλει παιδὶ τῷ Λαερτίου;  
οὐ γάρ με τᾶλγος τῶν παρελθόντων δάκνει,  
ἀλλ' οἴα χρὴ παθεῖν με πρὸς τούτων ἔτι  
δοκῶ προλεύσσειν· οἷς γὰρ ἡ γνώμη κακῶν  
μήτηρ γένηται, τᾶλλα παιδεύει κακούς.  
καὶ σοῦ δὲ ἐγωγε θαυμάσας ἔχω τόδε.  
χρῆν γάρ σε μήτ' αὐτόν ποτ' ἐς Τροίαν μολεῖν

1350

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## PHILOCTETES

There shalt thou find our famed Asclepidae,  
And healed by them, with thy bow's aid and mine,  
Shalt take and sack the towers of Ilium.  
Thou askest how I know all this. Attend :  
We have a Trojan prisoner, Helenus,  
Chiefest of seers, who plainly prophesied  
All I have told thee, and revealed besides  
That, ere this summer passes, Troy must fall ;  
His life the forfeit if his word proved false.  
Now that thou know'st this, yield with a good grace.  
How fair a vision—to be singled out  
As bravest of the host, and, first made whole  
By healing hands, as conqueror of Troy,  
Woe-wearied city, win undying fame !

## PHILOCTETES

O hateful life that keep'st me lingering on  
In this vile world and wilt not let me join  
The world of shades ! Ah me ! What can I do ?  
How turn a deaf ear to the kindly words  
Of one who counsels well and seeks my good ?  
Shall I then yield ? How, having yielded, face  
The public gaze ? Will not all turn from me ?  
Ye eyes, so long the witness of my wrongs,  
How will ye brook to see me once again  
Consorting with my torturers, the sons  
Of Atreus and Odysseus, the arch-fiend ?  
'Tis not resentment for the past that stings,  
But a prevision of the ills to come ;  
For when a mind is warped it takes the ply,  
And evil-doers will be evil still.  
Thee too, my son, I marvel much at thee ;  
Never should'st thou have gone thyself to Troy,

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## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἡμᾶς τ' ἀπείργειν, οἵ γέ σου καθύβρισαν,  
πατρὸς γέρας συλῶντες, εἴτα τοῖσδε σὺ  
εἰ ἔνυμαχήσων,<sup>1</sup> κάμ' ἀναγκάζεις τόδε;  
μὴ δῆτα, τέκνον· ἀλλ' ἡ μοι ἔνυνώμοσας,  
πέμψον πρὸς οἴκους· καύτὸς ἐν Σκύρῳ μένων  
ἔα κακῶς αὐτοὺς ἀπόλλυσθαι κακούς.  
χοῦτω διπλῆν μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ κτήσει χάριν,  
διπλῆν δὲ πατρός, κού κακοὺς ἐπωφελῶν  
δόξεις ὁμοῖος τοῖς κακοῖς πεφυκέναι.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

λέγεις μὲν εἰκότ', ἀλλ' ὅμως σε βούλομαι  
θεοῖς τε πιστεύσαντα τοῖς τ' ἐμοῖς λόγοις  
φίλου μετ' ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε τῆσδ' ἐκπλεῖν χθονός.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἢ πρὸς τὰ Τροίας πεδία καὶ τὸν Ἀτρέως  
ἔχθιστον υἱὸν τῷδε δυστήνῳ ποδί;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πρὸς τοὺς μὲν οὖν σε τήνδε τ' ἔμπυνον βάσιν  
παύσοντας ἄλγους κάποσώσοντας νόσου.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὦ δεινὸν αἰνον αἰνέσας, τί φήσ ποτε;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἄ σοί τε κάμοὶ λῷσθ' ὄρῳ τελούμενα.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

καὶ ταῦτα λέξας οὐ καταισχύνει θεούς;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πῶς γάρ τις αἰσχύνοιτ' ἀν ὠφελῶν φίλους;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> l. 1365 :

[οἱ τὸν ἔθλιον  
Αἴανθ' ὅπλων σοῦ πατρὸς ὕστερον δίκη  
'Οδυσσέως ἔκριναν.]

These lines, clearly an interpolation, have been omitted.

<sup>2</sup> ὠφελούμενος MSS., Buttman corr.

## PHILOCTETES

Nor sought to bring me thither. How could'st thou,  
When they had robbed thee of thy father's meed  
And flouted thee?<sup>1</sup> How can'st thou after that  
Fight at their side thyself, or bid me fight?  
Not so, my son, but do as thou hast sworn,  
Convey me home; thyself in Scyros bide;  
Leave those ill-doers to their evil doom.  
Thus shalt thou win a double thanks from me  
And from my sire; nor will men say of thee:  
Abetting base men he himself is base.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Thy words are reasonable; natheless I  
Would have thee trust my promise and the god's,  
And confidently sail with me, thy friend.

PHILOCTETES

What! to the plains of Troy, to him I loathe,  
The son of Atreus, with this cursed foot?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Nay, but to kind physicians who will treat  
Thy ulcer'd limb and heal thee of thy hurt.

PHILOCTETES

O wondrous weird! What means this mystery?

NEOPTOLEMUS

One fraught with happy issue for us both.

PHILOCTETES

Hast thou no fear of heaven, thus to speak?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Why should a man feel fear who helps his friends?

<sup>1</sup> The omitted lines are:

Who judged Odysseus of thy father's arms  
More worthy than the hapless Ajax.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

λέγεις δ' Ἀτρείδαις ὅφελος η 'π' ἐμοὶ τόδε;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σοί που, φίλος γ' ὦν, χώ λόγος τοιόσδε μου.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πῶς, δις γε τοῖς ἔχθροῖσί μ' ἐκδοῦναι θέλεις;

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὦ τᾶν, διδάσκου μὴ θρασύνεσθαι κακοῖς.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὸλεῖς με, γιγνώσκω σε, τοῖσδε τοῖς λόγοις.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὔκουν ἔγωγε· φημὶ δ' οὐ σε μανθάνειν.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἔγὼ οὐκ Ἀτρείδας ἐκβαλόντας οἰδά με;

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### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐκβαλόντες εἰ πάλιν σώσουσ' ὄρα.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐδέποθ' ἐκόντα γ' ὥστε τὴν Τροίαν ἰδεῖν.

### ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί δῆτ' ἀν ἡμεῖς δρῶμεν, εἰ σέ γ' ἐν λόγοις  
πείσειν δυνησόμεσθα μηδὲν ὡν λέγω;  
ώς ῥᾶστ' ἐμοὶ μὲν τῶν λόγων λῆξαι, σὲ δὲ  
ζῆν, ὥσπερ ἥδη ζῆς, ἄνευ σωτηρίας.

### ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἔα με πάσχειν ταῦθ' ἄπερ παθεῖν με δεῖ.

ἄ δ' ἥνεσάς μοι δεξιᾶς ἐμῆς θιγών,  
πέμπειν πρὸς οἴκους, ταῦτά μοι πρᾶξον, τέκνον,  
καὶ μὴ βράδυνε μηδ' ἐπιμυησθῆς ἔτι  
Τροίας· ἄλις γάρ μοι τεθρήνηται γόοις.

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## PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

Help for the sons of Atreus, or for me?

NEOPTOLEMUS

For thee, as these my words attest, thy friend.

PHILOCTETES

A friend, when thou would'st hand me to my foes?

NEOPTOLEMUS

O let not suffering make thee truculent.

PHILOCTETES

I know thou would'st undo me pleading thus.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Not I, but thou thyself, who wilt not learn.

PHILOCTETES

Do I not know the Atridae cast me forth?

NEOPTOLEMUS

'Tis true, but now they would deliver thee.

PHILOCTETES

Not with my will, if first I must to Troy.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What must I do, if all persuasion fails  
To make thee budge an inch? 'Twere easier  
To cease from words and leave thee here to live,  
As thou hast lived, a hopeless castaway.

PHILOCTETES

Well, let me dree my weird; but thou, my son,  
Perform the promise made with clasp of hands,  
Take me straight home, and talk no more of Troy.  
My cup of lamentations I have drained.

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

*εἰ δοκεῖ, στείχωμεν.*

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

*ώ γενναῖον εἰρηκὼς ἔπος.*

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

*ἀντέρειδε νῦν βάσιν σήν.*

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

*εἰς ὅσον γ' ἐγὼ σθένω.*

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

*αἰτίαν δὲ πῶς Ἀχαιῶν φεύξομαι;*

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

*μὴ φροντίσῃς.*

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

*τί γάρ, ἐὰν πορθῶσι χώραν τὴν ἐμήν;*

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

*ἐγὼ παρὼν*

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

*τίνα προσωφέλησιν ἔρξεις;*

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

*βέλεσι τοῖς Ἡρακλέους*

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

*πῶς λέγεις;*

**ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ**

*εἴρξω πελάζειν.*

**ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ**

*στεῖχε προσκύσας χθόνα.*

**ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ**

*μήπω γε, πρὸν ἀν τῶν ἡμετέρων*

*ἀῆγος μύθων, παῖ Ποίαντος·*

*φάσκειν δ' αὐδὴν τὴν Ἡρακλέους*

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## PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS

As thou wilt then ; let us forward.

PHILOCTETES

Nobly spoken, let us go.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Forward ! plant thy footsteps firmly.

PHILOCTETES

To my utmost will I so.

NEOPTOLEMUS

But the wrath of the Achaeans will pursue me.

PHILOCTETES

Never care.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What if they lay waste my borders ?

PHILOCTETES

Never fear, I shall be there—

NEOPTOLEMUS

What assistance canst thou render ?

PHILOCTETES

Heracles, his mighty bow—

NEOPTOLEMUS

Say'st thou ?

PHILOCTETES

Will prevent their landing.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Kiss the earth and let us go.

*Apparition of HERACLES behind the stage.*

HERACLES

Go not yet till thou hast heard,  
Son of Poeas, first my word :  
Heracles to thee appears,

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀκοῇ τε κλύειν λεύσσειν τ' ὅψιν.  
τὴν σὴν δ' ἡκω χάριν οὐρανίας  
ἔδρας προλιπών,  
τὰ Διός τε φράσων βουλεύματά σοι  
κατερητύσων θ' ὁδὸν ἦν στέλλει·  
σὺ δ' ἐμῶν μύθων ἐπάκουσον.

καὶ πρῶτα μέν σοι τὰς ἐμὰς λέξω τύχας,  
ὅσους πονήσας καὶ διεξελθὼν πόνους  
ἀθάνατον ἀρετὴν ἔσχον, ὡς πάρεσθ' ὄρâν. 142  
καὶ σοί, σάφ' ἵσθι, τοῦτ' ὀφεῖλεται παθεῖν,  
ἐκ τῶν πόνων τῶνδ' εὐκλεᾶ θέσθαι βίον.  
ἐλθὼν δὲ σὺν τῷδ' ἀνδρὶ πρὸς τὸ Τρωικὸν  
πόλισμα, πρῶτον μὲν νόσου παύσει λυγρᾶς,  
ἀρετῆ τε πρῶτος ἐκκριθεὶς στρατεύματος,  
Πάριν μέν, δις τῶνδ' αἴτιος κακῶν ἔφυ,  
τόξοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι νοσφιεῦς βίον,  
πέρσεις τε Τροίαν, σκῦλά τ' εἰς μέλαθρα σὰ  
πέμψεις, ἀριστεῖ' ἐκλαβὼν στρατεύματος,  
Ποίαντι πατρὶ πρὸς πάτρας Οἴτης πλάκα. 143  
Διὸς δὲ ἀν λάβης σὺ σκῦλα τοῦτο τοῦ στρατοῦ,  
τόξων ἐμῶν μυημεῖα πρὸς πυρὰν ἐμὴν  
κόμιζε. καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ', Ἀχιλλέως τέκνου,  
παρήνεστο· οὕτε γὰρ σὺ τοῦδ' ἄτερ σθένεις  
ἔλειν τὸ Τροίας πεδίον οὐθ' οὐτος σέθεν.  
ἄλλ' ὡς λέοντε συννόμω φυλάσσετον  
οὗτος σὲ καὶ σὺ τόνδος· ἐγὼ δὲ Ἀσκληπιὸν  
παυστῆρα πέμψω σῆς νόσου πρὸς Ἰλιον.  
τὸ δεύτερον γὰρ τοῖς ἐμοῖσι αὐτὴν χρεών

## PHILOCTETES

His the voice that thrills thine ears.  
'Tis for thy sake I have come,  
Leaving my Olympian home.  
Mandate from high Zeus I bring  
To forbid thy journeying :  
Hear the will of heaven's King.

But first I'll mind thee of my own career,  
How, having laboured hugely and endured,  
I won immortal glory, as thou seest.  
Know that thy fortune like to mine shall be,  
Through suffering to glorify thy life.  
Go with yon man to Ilium. There first  
Thou shalt be healèd of thy grievous sore ;  
Then, chosen as the champion of the host,  
With these my arrows thou shalt pierce to the heart  
Paris, the guilty cause of all that woe.  
Troy shalt thou sack, and, winning from the host  
The meed of bravest, carry home rich spoils  
To glad old Poeas and the Oetaean halls.  
But of the spoils, whate'er the host assigns thee,  
Bring to my pyre, as tribute to my bow,  
A tithe.

I have a message too for thee,  
Son of Achilles. Thou without his aid  
Can't not take Troy, nor he apart from thine ;  
But like two lions together on the prowl,  
Either the other guards.

To cure thy wounds  
Asclepius, the healer, will I send  
To Troas ; for a second time Troy towers

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τόξοις ἀλῶναι. τοῦτο δ' ἐννοεῖθ', ὅταν  
πορθῆτε γαῖαν, εὐσεβεῖν τὰ πρὸς θεούς·  
ώς τāλλα πάντα δεύτερ' ἡγεῖται πατὴρ  
Ζεύς· οὐ γὰρ εὐσέβεια συνθυήσκει βροτοῖς·  
καν ξῶσι καν θάνωσιν, οὐκ ἀπόλλυται.

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## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ῳ φθέγμα ποθεινὸν ἐμοὶ πέμψας  
χρόνιός τε φανείσ,  
οὐκ ἀπιθήσω τοῖς σοῖς μύθοις.

## ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

κάγῳ γνώμην ταύτη τίθεμαι.

## ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μή νυν χρόνιοι μέλλετε πράσσειν·  
καιρὸς καὶ πλοῦς  
οδὸς ἐπείγει γὰρ κατὰ πρύμνην.

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## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

φέρε νυν στείχων χώραν καλέσω.  
χαῖρ', ὡ μέλαθρον ἔνυμφουρον ἐμοὶ,  
νύμφαι τ' ἔνυδροι λειμωνιάδες,  
καὶ κτύπος ἄρσην πόντου προβολῆς,<sup>1</sup>  
οὐ πολλάκι δὴ τούμὸν ἐτέγχθη  
κρᾶτ' ἐνδόμυχον πληγαῖσι νότου,  
πολλὰ δὲ φωνῆς τῆς ἡμετέρας  
Ἐρμαῖον ὄρος παρέπεμψεν ἐμοὶ  
στόνον ἀντίτυπον χειμαζομένῳ.  
νῦν δ', ὡ κρῆναι Λύκιόν τε ποτόν,  
λείπομεν ὑμᾶς, λείπομεν ἥδη  
δόξης οὐ ποτε τῆσδ' ἐπιβάντες.

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<sup>1</sup> προβλής MSS., Hermann corr.

## PHILOCTETES

Must fall before my shafts. Only take heed,  
In laying waste the land to reverence  
Its gods ; all else by Zeus my sire is less  
Regarded. Piety can never die ;  
It lives on earth and blossoms in the grave.

## PHILOCTETES

Voice for which I long have yearned,  
Form, long visioned, now discerned !  
Thee I cannot disobey.

## NEOPTOLEMUS

I too obey.

## HERACLES

Then to work ! No time to spare ;  
Seize the hour ; the wind sets fair.

## PHILOCTETES

Yet ere I part I fain would bid farewell.  
Home of my vigils, rocky cell,  
Nymphs of the streams and grass-fringed shore,  
Caves where the deep-voiced breakers roar,  
When through the cavern's open mouth,  
Borne on the wings of the wild South,  
E'en to my dwelling's inmost lair,  
The rain and spray oft drenched my hair ;  
And oft responsive to my groan  
Mount Hermaeum made his moan ;  
O Lycian fount, O limpid well,  
I thought with you all time to dwell ;  
And now I take my last farewell.

## ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

χαῖρ', ὁ Λήμνου πέδον ἀμφίαλον,  
καὶ μ' εὐπλοίᾳ πέμψον ἀμέμπτως,  
ἔνθ' ἡ μεγάλη Μοῖρα κομίζει  
γνώμη τε φίλων χῶ πανδαμάτωρ  
δαίμων, δις ταῦτ' ἐπέκρανεν.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

χωρῶμεν δὴ πάντες ἀολλεῖς,  
νύμφαις ἀλίαισιν ἐπευξάμενοι  
νόστου σωτῆρας ἵκέσθαι.

1470

## PHILOCTETES

Sea-girt Lemnos, hear my prayer,  
Bid thy guest a voyage fair  
Speed him to the land where he,  
Borne by mighty Destiny,  
And the god at whose decree  
All was ordered, fain would be.

### CHORUS

Let us to the Sea Nymphs pray  
To waft us on our Troy-ward way.  
Mariners, attend my call ;  
Let us voyage, one and all.

END OF VOL. II.

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