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Euripides

Euripides



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EDITED BY

T. E. PAGE, M.A., AND W. H. D. ROUSE, Litt.D.

EURIPIDES

III



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

Alexander Gird

EURIPIDES

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

IN FOUR VOLUMES

III

BACCHANALS
MADNESS OF HERCULES
CHILDREN OF HERCULES
PHOENICIAN MAIDENS
SUPPLIANTS



LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN
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THE BACCHANALS

VOL. III.

B

ARGUMENT

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

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

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΒΑΚΧΩΝ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

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

TEIRESIAS, *a prophet, old and blind.*

CADMUS, *formerly king of Thebes.*

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

SERVANT of *Pentheus.*

HERDMAN.

MESSENGER, *servant of Pentheus.*

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

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

Guards, attendants.

SCENE : before the royal palace of Thebes.

Β Α Κ Χ Α Ι

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

“Ἦκω Διὸς παῖς τήνδε Θηβαίων χθόνα
Διόνυσος, δν τίκτει ποθ' ἢ Κάδμου κόρη
Σεμέλη λοχευθεῖσ' ἀστραπηφόρῳ πυρί·
μορφὴν δ' ἀμίψας ἐκ θεοῦ βροτησίαν
πάρειμι Δίρκης νάματ' Ἴσμηνοῦ θ' ὕδωρ.
ὀρῶ δὲ μητρὸς μνήμα τῆς κεραυνίας
τόδ' ἐγγὺς οἴκων καὶ δόμων ἐρείπια
τυφόμενα Δίου πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαν φλόγα,
ἀθάνατον Ἦρας μητέρ' εἰς ἐμὴν ὕβριν.
10 αἰνῶ δὲ Κάδμον, ἄβατον ὃς πέδον τόδε
τίθησι, θυγατρὸς σηκόν· ἀμπέλου δὲ νιν
πέριξ ἐγὼ ' κάλυφα βοτρυνώδει χλόη.
λιπὼν δὲ Λυδῶν τοὺς πολυχρύσους γύας
Φρυγῶν τε, Περσῶν θ' ἠλιοβλήτους πλάκας
Βάκτριά τε τείχη τήν τε δύσχιμον χθόνα
Μήδων ἐπελθῶν Ἀραβίαν τ' εὐδαίμονα
' Ἀσίαν τε πᾶσαν, ἢ παρ' ἄλμυρὰν ἄλα
κεῖται μιγάσιν Ἑλλησι βαρβάροις θ' ὁμοῦ
20 πλήρεις ἔχουσα καλλιπυργώτους πόλεις,
εἰς τήνδε πρῶτον ἦλθον Ἑλλήνων πόλιν,
τὰκεῖ χορεύσας καὶ καταστήσας ἐμὰς
τελετάς, ἵν' εἶην ἐμφανῆς δαίμων βροτοῖς.
πρώτας δὲ Θήβας τῆσδε γῆς Ἑλληνίδος

THE BACCHANALS

Enter DIONYSUS.

DIONYSUS

I to this land of Thebes have come, Zeus' Son
Dionysus, born erstwhile of Cadmus' child
Semele, brought by levin-brand to travail.
My shape from God to mortal semblance changed,
I stand by Dirce's springs, Ismenus' flood.
I see my thunder-blasted mother's tomb
Here nigh the halls : the ruins of her home
Smoulder with Zeus's flame that liveth yet—
Hera's undying outrage on my mother.
Cadmus doth well, that he ordains this close, 10
His child's grave, hallowed : with the clustering
green
Of vines I, even I, embowered it round.

Leaving the gold-abounding Lydian meads
And Phrygian, o'er the Persian's sun-smit tracts,
By Bactrian strongholds, Media's storm-swept land,
Still pressing on, by Araby the Blest,
And through all Asia, by the briny sea
Lying with stately-towered cities thronged,
Peopled with Hellenes blent with aliens,
To this of Hellene cities first I come, 20
Having established in far lands my dances
And rites, to be God manifest to men.
So, of all Hellas, Thebes with my acclaim

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἀνωλόλυξα, νεβρίδ' ἐξάψας χροὸς
 θύρσον τε δούς εἰς χεῖρα, κίσσινον βέλος·
 ἐπεὶ μ' ἀδελφαὶ μητρός, ἃς ἤκιστ' ἐχρήν,
 Διόνυσον οὐκ ἔφασκον ἐκφύναι Διός,
 Σεμέλην δὲ νυμφευθεῖσαν ἐκ θνητοῦ τινος
 εἰς Ζῆν' ἀναφέρειν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν λέχους,
 30 Κάδμου σοφίσμαθ', ὦν νιν εἵνεκα κτανεῖν
 Ζῆν' ἐξεκαυχῶνθ', ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο.
 τοιγάρ νιν αὐτὰς ἐκ δόμων ψστρησ' ἐγὼ
 μανίαις· ὄρος δ' οἰκοῦσι παράκοποι φρενῶν·
 σκευὴν τ' ἔχειν ἠνάγκασ' ὀργίων ἐμῶν,
 καὶ πᾶν τὸ θῆλυ σπέρμα Καδμείων ὅσαι
 γυναῖκες ἦσαν ἐξέμηνα δωμάτων·
 ὁμοῦ δὲ Κάδμου παισὶν ἀναμεμιγμένοι
 χλωραῖς ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀνορόφοις ἦνται πέτραις.
 δεῖ γὰρ πόλιν τήνδ' ἐκμαθεῖν, κεῖ μὴ θέλει,
 40 ἀτέλεστον οὔσαν τῶν ἐμῶν βακχευμάτων,
 Σεμέλης τε μητρός ἀπολογήσασθαι μ' ὑπερ
 φανέντα θνητοῖς δαίμον', ὃν τίκτει Δίι.
 Κάδμος μὲν οὖν γέρας τε καὶ τυραννίδα
 Πενθεὶ δίδωσι θυγατρὸς ἐκπεφυκότι,
 ὃς θεομαχεῖ τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ καὶ σπονδῶν ἄπο
 ὠθεῖ μ', ἐν εὐχαῖς τ' οὐδαμοῦ μνείαν ἔχει.
 ὦν εἵνεκ' αὐτῷ θεὸς γεγῶς ἐνδείξομαι
 πᾶσιν τε Θηβαίοισιν. εἰς δ' ἄλλην χθόνα,
 τὰνθένδε θέμενος εὖ, μεταστήσω πόδα,
 50 δεικνὺς ἐμαυτόν· ἦν δὲ Θηβαίων πόλις
 ὀργῇ σὺν ὄπλοις ἐξ ὄρους Βάκχας ἄγειν
 ζητῆ, συνάψω μαινάσι στρατηλατῶν.
 ὦν εἵνεκ' εἶδος θνητὸν ἀλλάξας ἔχω
 μορφήν τ' ἐμὴν μετέβαλον εἰς ἀνδρὸς φύσιν.
 ἀλλ', ὦ λιπούσαι Τμῶλον ἔρυμα Λυδίας,

THE BACCHANALS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

60 θίασος ἐμός, γυναῖκες, ἄς ἐκ βαρβάρων
 ἐκόμῳα παρέδρους καὶ ξυνεμπόρους ἐμοί,
 αἴρεσθε τὰπιχώρι' ἐν πόλει Φρυγῶν
 τύμπανα, ῥέας τε μητρὸς ἐμά θ' εὐρήματα,
 βασιλείά τ' ἄμφι δώματ' ἐλθοῦσαι τάδε
 κτυπεῖτε Πευθέως, ὡς ὄρα Κάδμου πόλις.
 ἐγὼ δὲ Βάκχαις, εἰς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχὰς
 ἐλθὼν, ἵν' εἰσί, συµµετασχῆσω χορῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

'Ασίας ἀπὸ γαίας στρ. α'
 ἱερὸν Τμῶλον ἀμείψασα θοάζω
 Βρομίῳ πόνον ἠδὺν κάματόν τ' εὐ-
 κάματον, Βάκχιον εὐαζομένα.

70 τίς ὀδῶ τίς ὀδῶ; τίς ἀντ. α'
 μελάθροις; ἔκτοπος ἔστω, στόμα τ' εὐφη-
 μον ἅπας ἐξοσιούσθω· τὰ νομισθέν-
 τα γὰρ ἀεὶ Διόνυσον ὑμνήσω.

ὦ μάκαρ, ὅστις εὐδαίμων στρ. β'
 τελετὰς θεῶν εἰδὼς
 βιοτὰν ἀγιστεύει
 καὶ θιασεύεται ψυχάν,
 ἐν ὄρεσσι βακχεύων
 ὀσίοις καθαρμοῖσιν·
 τά τε ματρὸς μεγίλας ὄρ-
 για Κυβέλας θεµιτεύων
 80 ἀνὰ θύρσον τε τινάσσων
 κισσῶ τε στεφανωθείς

THE BACCHANALS

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

CHORUS

From Asian soil (Str. 1)
Far over the hallowed ridges of Tmolus fleeting,
To the task that I love do I speed, to my painless
toil [with greeting.
For the Clamour-king, hailing the Bacchanals' God
(Ant. 1)

Who is there in the way? [one, sealing
At his doors who is standing? Avoid!—and let each
His lips from irreverence, hallow them. Now, in
the lay [pealing. 70
Dionysus ordains, will I chant him, his hymn out-

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

Revel goes sweeping!
Made meet by the sacred purifying
For the Bacchanal rout o'er the mountains flying,
For the orgies of Cybele mystery-folden,
Of the Mother olden,
Wreathed with the ivy sprays, 80
The thyrsus on high doth he raise,

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

Διόνυσον θεραπεύει.
 ἴτε Βάκχαι, ἴτε Βάκχαι,
 Βρόμιον παῖδα θεὸν θεοῦ
 Διόνυσον κατάγουσαι
 Φρυγίων ἐξ ὀρέων Ἑλλάδος εἰς
 εὐρυχόρους ἀγυιάς, τὸν Βρόμιον·

90 ὄν ποτ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ὠδίνων
 λοχίαις ἀνάγκαισι
 πταμένας Διὸς βροντᾶς
 νηδύος ἔκβολον μάτηρ
 ἔτεκεν, λιποῦσ' αἰῶ-
 να κεραυνία πλαγᾶ·
 λοχίοις δ' αὐτίκα νιν δέ-
 ξατο θαλάμοις Κρονίδας Ζεὺς·
 κατὰ μηρῶ δὲ καλύψας
 χρυσαίαισιν συνερείδει
 περόναις κρυπτὸν ἀφ' Ἥρας.
 100 ἔτεκεν δ', ἀνίκα Μοῖραι
 τέλεσαν, ταυρόκερων θεὸν
 στεφάνωσέν τε δρακόντων
 στεφάνοις, ἔνθεν ἄγραν θυρσοφόροι
 Μαινάδες ἀμφιβάλλονται πλοκάμοις.

110 ὦ Σεμέλας τροφοὶ Θῆ-
 βαι στεφανοῦσθε κισσῶ·
 βρύετε βρύετε χλοήρει
 μίλακι καλλικάρπῳ
 καὶ καταβακχιοῦσθε
 δρυὸς ἢ ἐλάτας κλάδοισι,
 στικτῶν τ' ἐνδυτὰ νεβρίδων
 στέφετε λευκοτρίχων πλοκάμων

THE BACCHANALS

Singing the Vine-god's praise—

Come, Bacchanals, come !

The Clamour-king, child of a God,
O'er the mountains of Phrygia who trod,
Unto Hellas's highways broad

Bring him home, bring him home !—

(*Ant.* 2)

The God whom his mother,—when anguish tore
her

Of the travail resistless that deathward bore her
On the wings of the thunder of Zeus down-flying,— 90

Brought forth at her dying,

An untimely birth, as her spirit departed
Stricken from life by the flame down-darted :

But in birth-bowers new did Zeus Cronion

Receive his scion ;

For, hid in a cleft of his thigh,
By the gold-clasps knit, did he lie
Safe hidden from Hera's eye

Till the Fates' day came ;

Then a God bull-horned Zeus bare,
And with serpents entwined his hair :
And for this do his Maenads wear

100

In their tresses the same.

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

With the ivy thy brows, and be

All bloom, embowered in the starry-flowered

Lush green of the briony,

While the oak and pine thy tresses entwine

In thy bacchanal-ecstasy.

110

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

Of wool white-glistening

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

μαλλοῖς· ἀμφὶ δὲ νάρθηκας ὑβριστὰς
 ὀσιουῖσθ'· αὐτίκα γὰρ πᾶσα χορεύσει,
 Βρόμιος εὐτ' ἂν ἄγῃ θιάσους
 εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος, ἔνθα μένει
 θηλυγενῆς ὄχλος
 ἀφ' ἰστών παρὰ κερκίδων τ'
 οἰστρηθεὶς Διονύσῳ.

- 120 ὦ θαλάμευμα Κουρή-
 των ζάθεοί τε Κρήτας
 Διογενέτορες ἔναυλοι,
 ἔνθα τρικόρυθες ἄντροις
 βυρσότονον κύκλωμα
 τόδε μοι Κορύβαντες ἠῆρον·
 ἀνὰ δὲ βάκχια συντόνῳ
 κέρασαν ἀδυβόα Φρυγίων
 αὐλῶν πνεύματι, ματρός τε Ἑρέας εἰς
 χέρα θῆκαν, κτύπον εὐάσμασι Βακχᾶν·
 130 παρὰ δὲ μαινόμενοι Σάτυροι
 ματέρος ἐξανύσαντο θεᾶς,
 εἰς δὲ χορεύματα
 συνῆψαν τριετηρίδων,
 αἷς χαίρει Διόνυσος.

ἐπωδ.

- ἠδὺς ἐν οὔρεσιν, εὐτ' ἂν
 ἐκ θιάσων δρομαίων
 πέσῃ πεδόσε, νεβρίδος ἔχων
 ἱερὸν ἐνδυτόν, ἀγρεύων
 140 αἷμα τραγοκτόνον, ὠμοφάγον χάριν,

THE BACCHANALS

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

(*Ant.* 3)

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἰέμενος εἰς ὄρεα Φρύγια, Λύδια,
ὁ δ' ἔξαρχος Βρόμιος, εὐοῖ.

ῥεῖ δὲ γάλακτι πέδον, ῥεῖ δ' οἴνω, ῥεῖ δὲ με-
λισσᾶν

νέκταρι, Συρίας δ' ὡς λιβάνου καπνός·

ὁ Βακχεὺς δ' ἔχων

πυρσώδη φλόγα πεύκας

ἐκ νάρθηκος αἴσσει

δρόμῳ καὶ χοροῖς ἐρεθίζων πλανάτας

ἰαχαῖς τ' ἀναπάλλων,

150 τρυφερὸν πλόκαμον εἰς αἰθέρα ῥίπτων.

ἄμα δ' ἐπ' εὐάσμασιν ἐπιβρέμει

τοιᾶδ' ὧ ἴτε Βάκχαι,

ὧ ἴτε Βάκχαι,

Τμώλου χρυσορόου χλιδά,

μέλπετε τὸν Διόνυσον

βαρυβρόμων ὑπὸ τυμπάνων,

εὔια τὸν εὔιον ἀγαλλόμεναι θεὸν

ἐν Φρυγίῃσι βοαῖς ἐνοπαῖσί τε,

160 λωτὸς ὅταν εὐκέλαδος

ἱερὸς ἱερὰ παίγματα

βρέμη, σύνοχα φοιτάσιν

εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος· ἠδομένα δ' ἄρα,

πῶλος ὅπως ἄμα ματέρι φορβάδι,

κῶλον ἄγει ταχύτουν σκιρτήμασι Βάκχα.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

170 τίς ἐν πύλαισι; Κάδμον ἐκκάλει δόμων

Ἀγήνορος παῖδ', ὃς πόλιν Σιδωνίαν

λιπῶν ἐπύργωσ' ἄστνυ Θηβαίων τόδε.

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

Enter TEIRESIAS.

TEIRESIAS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἴτω τις, εἰσάγγελλε Τειρεσίας ὅτι
 ζητεῖ νιν· οἶδε δ' αὐτὸς ὧν ἦκω πέρι,
 ἃ τε ξυνεθέμην πρέσβυς ὧν γεραιτέρω,
 θύρσους ἀνάπτειν καὶ νεβρῶν δορὰς ἔχειν
 στεφανοῦν τε κρᾶτα κισσίνοις βλαστήμασιν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

180 ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς σὴν γῆρυν ἡσθόμην κλύων
 σοφὴν σοφοῦ παρ' ἀνδρός, ἐν δόμοισιν ὧν
 ἦκω δ' ἔτοιμος τήνδ' ἔχων σκευὴν θεοῦ.
 δεῖ γάρ νιν ὄντα παῖδα θυγατρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς,
 Διόνυσον ὃς πέφηνεν ἀνθρώποις θεός,
 ὅσον καθ' ἡμᾶς δυνατὸν αὔξεσθαι μέγαν.
 ποῖ δεῖ χορεύειν, ποῖ καθιστάναι πόδα
 καὶ κρᾶτα σείσαι πολίων; ἐξηγοῦ σύ μοι
 γέρων γέροντι, Τειρεσία· σὺ γὰρ σοφός.
 ὡς οὐ κάμοιμ' ἂν οὔτε νύκτ' οὔθ' ἡμέραν
 θύρσῳ κροτῶν γῆν· ἐπιλελήσμεθ' ἠδέως
 γέροντες ὄντες.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

190 ταῦτ' ἐμοὶ πάσχεις ἄρα·
 καὶ γὰρ ἠβῶ κάπιχειρήσω χοροῖς.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκοῦν ὄχοισιν εἰς ὄρος περάσομεν;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως ἂν ὁ θεὸς τιμὴν ἔχοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

γέρων γέροντα παιδαγωγήσω σ' ἐγώ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὁ θεὸς ἀμοχθὶ κείσε νῶν ἠγήσεται.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μόνοι δὲ πόλεως Βακχίῳ χορεύσομεν;

THE BACCHANALS

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

Enter CADMUS.

CADMUS

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

TEIRESIAS

Thine heart is even as mine.
I too am young, I will essay the dance. 190

CADMUS

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

TEIRESIAS

Nay, riding should we honour less the God.

CADMUS

Age ushering age, I will escort thee on.

TEIRESIAS

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

CADMUS

Shall we alone of Thebes to Bacchus dance ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

μόνοι γὰρ εὖ φρονούμεν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι κακῶς.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μακρὸν τὸ μέλλειν· ἀλλ' ἐμῆς ἔχου χερός.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἰδού, ξύναπτε καὶ ξυνωρίζου χέρα.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐ καταφρονῶ ἄγ' ὧ τῶν θεῶν θνητὸς γεγώς.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

200 οὐδὲν σοφίζόμεσθα τοῖσι δαίμοσι.
πατρίους παραδοχὰς ἄς θ' ὀμήλικας χρόνῳ
κεκτήμεθ', οὐδεὶς αὐτὰ καταβαλεῖ λόγος,
οὐδ' εἰ δι' ἄκρων τὸ σοφὸν ἠϋρηται φρενῶν.
ἔρεῖ τις ὡς τὸ γῆρας οὐκ αἰσχύνομαι,
μέλλων χορεύειν κράτα κισσώσας ἐμόν.
οὐ γὰρ διήρηχ' ὁ θεὸς εἶτε τὸν νέον
ἐχρῆν χορεύειν εἶτε τὸν γεραίτερον,
ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀπάντων βούλεται τιμὰς ἔχειν
κοινὰς, δι' ἀριθμῶν δ' οὐδὲν αὖξασθαι θέλει.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

210 ἐπεὶ σὺ φέγγος, Τειρεσία, τόδ' οὐχ ὄρας,
ἐγὼ προφήτης σοι λόγων γενήσομαι.
Πενθεὺς πρὸς οἴκους ὄδε διὰ σπουδῆς περᾶ,
Ἐχίονος παῖς, ᾧ κράτος δίδωμι γῆς.
ὡς ἐπτόηται· τί ποτ' ἐρεῖ νεώτερον ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

220 ἔκδημος ὢν μὲν τῆσδ' ἐτύγχανον χθονός,
κλύω δὲ νεοχμὰ τήνδ' ἀνὰ πτόλιν κακά,
γυναῖκας ἡμῖν δώματ' ἐκλελοιπένας
πλασταῖσι βακχεΐαισιν, ἐν δὲ δασκίοις
ὄρεσι θοάζειν, τὸν νεωστὶ δαίμονα
Διόνυσον, ὅστις ἔστι, τιμώσας χοροῖς·

THE BACCHANALS

TEIRESIAS

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

CADMUS

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

TEIRESIAS

Lo there : clasp close the interlinking hand.

CADMUS

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

TEIRESIAS

'Tis not for us to reason touching Gods. 200
Traditions of our fathers, old as time,
We hold : no reasoning shall cast them down,—
No, though of subtlest wit our wisdom spring.
Haply shall one say I respect not eld,
Who ivy-crowned address me to the dance.
Nay, for distinction none the God hath made
Whether the young or stricken in years must dance :
From all alike he claims his due of honour :
By halves he cares not to be magnified.

CADMUS

Since thou, Teiresias, seest not this light, 210
I will for thee be spokesman of thy words.
Lo to these halls comes Pentheus hastily,
Echion's son, to whom I gave the throne. [tell ?
How wild his mood ! What strange thing will he
Enter PENTHEUS.

PENTHEUS

It chanced that, sojourning without this land,
I heard of strange misdeeds in this my town,
How from their homes our women have gone forth
Feigning a Bacchic rapture, and rove wild
O'er wooded hills, in dances honouring
Dionysus, this new God—whoe'er he be. 220

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- πλήρεις δὲ θιάσοις ἐν μέσοισιν ἐστάναι
 κρατῆρας, ἄλλην δ' ἄλλοσ' εἰς ἐρημίαν
 πτώσσουσαν εὐναῖς ἀρσένων ὑπηρετεῖν,
 πρόφασιν μὲν ὡς δὴ Μαινάδας θυοσκοούς,
 τὴν δ' Ἀφροδίτην πρόσθ' ἄγειν τοῦ Βακχίου.
 ὄσας μὲν οὖν εἴληφα, δεσμίους χέρας
 σφίζουσι πανδήμοισι πρόσπολοι στέγαις·
 ὄσαι δ' ἄπεισιν, ἐξ ὄρους θηράσομαι,
 230 Ἴνώ τ' Ἀγαύην θ' ἢ μ' ἔτικτ' Ἐχίονι,
 Ἀκταίουός τε μητέρ', Αὐτονόην λέγω.
 καὶ σφᾶς σιδηραῖς ἀρμόσας ἐν ἄρκυσι
 παύσω κακούργου τῆσδε βακχείας τάχα.
 λέγουσι δ' ὡς τις εἰσελήλυθε ξένος
 γόης ἐπωδὸς Λυδίας ἀπὸ χθονός,
 ξανθοῖσι βοστρύχοισιν εὐοσμῶν κομῶν,
 οἰνωπός, ὄσσοις χάριτας Ἀφροδίτης ἔχων,
 δς ἡμέρας τε κεύφρόνας συγγίγνεται
 τελετὰς προτείνων εὐίους νεάνισιν.
 εἰ δ' αὐτὸν εἴσω τῆσδε λήψομαι στέγης,
 240 παύσω κτυποῦντα θύρσον ἀνασεείοντά τε
 κόμας, τράχηλον σώματος χωρὶς τεμῶν.
 ἐκείνος εἰναί φησι Διόνυσον θεόν,
 ἐκείνος ἐν μηρῷ ποτ' ἐρράφθαι Διός,
 δς ἐκπυροῦται λαμπάσιν κεραυνίαις
 σὺν μητρί, Δίους ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο.
 ταῦτ' οὐχὶ δεινῆς ἀγχόνης ἐπάξια,
 ὕβρεις ὕβρίζειν, ὅστις ἔστιν ὁ ξένος ;
 ἰτὰρ τόδ' ἄλλο θαῦμα, τὸν τερασκόπον
 ἐν ποικίλαισι νεβρίσι Τειρεσίαν ὄρῳ
 250 πατέρα τε μητρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς, πολὺν γέλων,
 νάρθηκι βακχεύοντ' ἀναίνομαι, πατερ,

THE BACCHANALS

And midst each revel-rout the wine-bowls stand
Brimmed : and to lonely nooks, some here, some
there,

They steal, to work with men the deed of
shame,

In pretext Maenad priestesses, forsooth,
But honouring Aphrodite more than Bacchus.

As many as I have seized my servants keep
Safe in the common prison manacled.

But those yet forth, will I hunt from the hills—

Ino, Agave, who bare me to Echion,

Autonoe withal, Actaeon's mother.

230

In toils of iron trapped, full soon shall they
Cease from this pestilent Bacchic revelling.

Men say a stranger to the land hath come,

A juggling sorcerer from Lydia-land,

With essenced hair in golden tresses tossed,

Wine-flushed, Love's witching graces in his eyes,

Who with the damsels day and night consorts,

Making pretence of Evian mysteries.

If I within these walls but prison him,

Farewell to thyrsus-taboring, and to locks

240

Free-tossed ; for neck from shoulders will I hew.

He saith that Dionysus is a God !

Saith, he was once sewn up in Zeus's thigh—

Who, with his mother, was by lightning-flames

Blasted, because she lied of Zeus's love.

Is not this worthy hanging's ruthless doom,

Thus to blaspheme, whoe'er the stranger be ?

But lo, another marvel this—the seer

Teiresias, in dappled fawnskins clad !

Yea, and my mother's sire—O sight for laughter !— 250

Tossing the reed-wand ! Father, I take shame

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

τὸ γῆρας ὑμῶν εἰσορῶν νοῦν οὐκ ἔχον.
 οὐκ ἀποτινάξεις κισσόν; οὐκ ἐλευθέραν
 θύρσου μεθήσεις χεῖρ', ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάτερ;
 σὺ ταῦτ' ἔπεισας, Τειρεσία· τόνδ' αὖ θέλεις
 τὸν δαίμον' ἀνθρώποισιν εἰσφέρων νέον
 σκοπεῖν πτερωτοὺς κάμπύρων μισθοὺς φέρειν·
 εἰ μὴ σε γῆρας πολλὸν ἐξερρύετο,
 καθῆσ' ἂν ἐν Βάκχαισι δέσμιος μέσαις;
 260 τελετὰς ποιηρὰς εἰσάγων γυναιξὶ γὰρ
 ὄπου βότρυς ἐν δαιτὶ γίγνεται γάνος,
 οὐχ ὑγιᾶς οὐδὲν ἔτι λέγω τῶν ὀργίων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῆς δυσσεβείας. ὦ ξέν', οὐκ αἰδεῖ θεοὺς
 Κάδμου τε τὸν σπείραντα γηγενῆ στάχυν;
 Ἐχίονος δ' ὦν παῖς καταισχύνεις γένος;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὅταν λάβῃ τις τῶν λόγων ἀνὴρ σοφὸς
 καλὰς ἀφορμάς, οὐ μέγ' ἔργον εὖ λέγειν·
 σὺ δ' εὐτροχον μὲν γλώσσαν ὡς φρονῶν ἔχεις,
 270 ἐν τοῖς λόγοισι δ' οὐκ ἐνεισί σοι φρένες.
 θρασὺς δέ, δυνατὸς καὶ λέγειν οἶός τ' ἀνὴρ,
 κακὸς πολίτης γίγνεται νοῦν οὐκ ἔχων.
 οὔτος δ' ὁ δαίμων ὁ νέος ὃν σὺ διαγελάς,
 οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην μέγεθος ἐξειπεῖν ὅσος
 καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἔσται. δύο γάρ, ὦ νεανία,
 τὰ πρῶτ' ἐν ἀνθρώποισι· Δημήτηρ θεά·
 γῆ δ' ἐστίν, ὄνομα δ' ὀπότερον βούλει κάλει·
 αὕτη μὲν ἐν ξηροῖσιν ἐκτρέφει βροτούς·
 ὃς δ' ἦλθ' ἔπειτ', ἀντίπαλον ὁ Σεμέλης γόνος
 280 βότρυς ὑγρὸν πῶμ' ἠῦρε κείσηνέγκατο
 θνητοῖς, ὃ παύει τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτούς
 λύπης, ὅταν πλησθῶσιν ἀμπέλου ῥοῆς,

THE BACCHANALS

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

CHORUS

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

TEIRESIAS

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

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ὕπνον τε λήθην τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν κακῶν
 δίδωσιν, οὐδ' ἔστ' ἄλλο φάρμακον πόνων.
 οὗτος θεοῖσι σπένδεται θεὸς γεγώς,
 ὥστε διὰ τοῦτον τὰγάθ' ἀνθρώπους ἔχειν.
 καὶ καταγελαῶς νιν, ὡς ἐνερράφη Διὸς
 μηρῶ; διδάξω σ' ὡς καλῶς ἔχει τόδε.
 ἐπεὶ νιν ἤρπασ' ἐκ πυρὸς κεραυνίου
 290 Ζεὺς, εἰς δ' Ὀλυμπον βρέφος ἀνήγαγεν, θεὸν
 "Ἦρα νιν ἤθελ' ἐκβαλεῖν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ·
 Ζεὺς δ' ἀντεμηχανήσαθ' οἶα δὴ θεός.
 ῥήξας μέρος τι τοῦ χθόν' ἐγκυκλουμένου
 αἰθέρος, ἔθηκε τόνδ' ὄμηρον, ἐκδιδοῦς
 Διόνυσον "Ἦρας νεικέων· χρόνῳ δέ νιν
 βροτοὶ τραφῆναί φασιν ἐν μηρῶ Διός,
 ὄνομα μεταστήσαντες, ὅτι θεᾶ θεὸς
 Ἦρα ποθ' ὠμήρευσε, συνθέντες λόγον.
 μάντις δ' ὁ δαίμων ὅδε· τὸ γὰρ βακχεύσιμον·
 300 καὶ τὸ μανιῶδες μαντικὴν πολλὴν ἔχει·
 ὅταν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸ σῶμ' ἔλθῃ πολὺς,
 λέγειν τὸ μέλλον τοὺς μεμνηότας ποιεῖ.
 "Ἀρεῶς τε μοῖραν μεταλαβὼν ἔχει τινά·
 στρατὸν γὰρ ἐν ὅπλοις ὄντα κάπῃ τάξεσι
 φόβος διεπτόησε πρὶν λόγχης θυγεῖν·
 μανία δέ καὶ τοῦτ' ἐστὶ Διονύσου πάρα.
 ἔτ' αὐτὸν ὄψει κάπῃ Δελφίσι πετραις
 πηδῶντα σὺν πεύκαισι δικόρυφον πλάκα,
 πάλλοντα καὶ σείοντα Βακχεῖον κλάδον,
 μέγαν τ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδ'. ἀλλ' ἐμοί, Πενθεῦ, πιθοῦ·

THE BACCHANALS

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

And dost thou mock him, as in Zeus's thigh
Sewn? I will show thee all the legend's beauty :
When Zeus had snatched him from the levin-fire,
And bare the babe to Olympus, Hera then
Fain would have cast his godhead out of heaven. 290
Zeus with a God's wit framed his counterplot.
A fragment from the earth-enfolding ether
He brake, and wrought to a hostage,¹ setting so
Dionysus safe from Hera's spite. In time
Men told how he was nursed in Zeus's thigh.
Changing the name, they wrought a myth thereof,
Because the God was hostage once to Hera.

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- 310 μὴ τὸ κράτος αὖχει δύναμιν ἀνθρώποις ἔχειν,
 μηδ' ἦν δοκῆς μέν, ἢ δὲ δόξα σου νοσῆ,
 φρονεῖν δόκει τι· τὸν θεὸν δ' εἰς γῆν δέχου
 καὶ σπένδε καὶ βάκχευε καὶ στέφου κάρα.
 οὐχ ὁ Διόνυσος σωφρονεῖν ἀναγκάσει
 γυναῖκας εἰς τὴν Κύπριν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει
 τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἔνεστιν εἰς τὰ πάντ' αἰί.
 τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή· καὶ γὰρ ἐν βακχεύμασιν
 οὐσ' ἢ γε σώφρων οὐ διαφθαρῆσεται.
 ὄρας, σὺ χαίρεις, ὅταν ἐφεστῶσιν πύλαις
 320 πολλοί, τὸ Πενθέως δ' ὄνομα μεγαλύνῃ πόλις·
 κακείνους, οἶμαι, τέρπεται τιμώμενος.
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν καὶ Κάδμος, ὃν σὺ διαγελαῖς,
 κισσῶ τ' ἐρεψόμεσθα καὶ χορεύσομεν,
 πολιά ξυνωρίς, ἀλλ' ὅμως χορευτέον,
 κού θεομαχῆσω σῶν λόγων πεισθεῖς ὕπο.
 μαίνει γὰρ ὡς ἄλγιστα, κοῦτε φαρμάκοις
 ἄκη λάβοις ἄν, οὔτ' ἄνευ τούτων νοσεῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ, Φοῖβόν τ' οὐ καταισχύνεις λόγους,
 τιμῶν τε Βρόμιον σωφρονεῖς μέγαν θεόν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

- 330 ὦ παῖ, καλῶς σοι Τειρεσίας παρήνεσεν·
 οἶκει μεθ' ἡμῶν, μὴ θύραζε τῶν νόμων.
 νῦν γὰρ πέτει τε καὶ φρονῶν οὐδὲν φρονεῖς.
 κεῖ μὴ γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ θεὸς οὗτος, ὡς σὺ φῆς,
 παρὰ σοὶ λεγέσθω· καὶ καταψεύδου καλῶς
 ὡς ἔστι, Σεμέλη θ' ἵνα δοκῆ θεὸν τεκεῖν,
 ἡμῖν τε τιμὴ παντὶ τῷ γένει προσῆ.
 ὄρας τὸν Ἀκταίωνος ἄθλιον μόρον,
 ὃν ὠμόσιτοι σκύλακες ἄς ἐθρέψατο
 διεσπάσαντο, κρεῖσσον' ἐν κυναγίαις

THE BACCHANALS

Boast not that naked force hath power o'er men ; 310
Nor, if it seem so to thy jaundiced eye,
Deem thyself wise. The God into thy land
Welcome: spill wine, be bacchant, wreath thine head.

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

Lo, thou art glad when thousands throng thy gates,
And all Thebes magnifieth Pentheus' name: 320
He too, I wot, in homage taketh joy.
I, then, and Cadmus, whom thou laugh'st to scorn,
Will wreath our heads with ivy, and will dance—
A greybeard pair, yet cannot we but dance.
Not at thy suasion will I war with Gods.
Most grievous is thy madness, and no spell
May medicine thee, though spells have made thee mad.

CHORUS

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

CADMUS

My son, well hath Teiresias counselled thee. 330
Dwell with us, not without the pale of wont.
Thou'rt now in cloudland: naught thy wisdom is:
For, though this God were no God,—as thou sayest,—
God be he called of thee: in glorious fraud
Be Semele famed as mother of a God:
So upon all our house shall honour rest.

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

340 Ἄρτεμιδος εἶναι κομπίασαντ', ἐν ὀργάσιν.
 ὃ μὴ πάθῃς σύ, δευρό σου στέψω κάρα
 κισσῶ· μεθ' ἡμῶν τῷ θεῷ τιμὴν δίδου.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

οὐ μὴ προσοίσεις χεῖρα, βακχεύσεις δ' ἰών,
 μηδ' ἐξομόρξει μωρίαν τὴν σὴν ἐμοί ;
 τῆς σῆς δ' ἀνοίας τόνδε τὸν διδάσκαλον
 δίκην μέτειμι. στειχέτω τις ὡς τάχος,
 ἐλθὼν δὲ θάκουσ τοῦδ' ἕν' οἰωνοσκοπεῖ
 μοχλοῖς τριαίνου κύνάτρεψον ἔμπαλιν,
 350 ἄνω κάτω τὰ πάντα συγχέας ὁμοῦ,
 καὶ στέμματ' ἀνέμοις καὶ θυέλλαισιν μέθες.
 μάλιστα γάρ νιν δῆξομαι δρῆσας τάδε.
 οἱ δ' ἀνὰ πόλιν στείχοντες ἐξιχνεύσατε
 τὸν θηλύμορφον ξένον, ὃς εἰσφέρει νόσον
 καινὴν γυναιξὶ καὶ λέχη λυμαίνεται.
 κἄνπερ λάβητε, δέσμιον πορεύσατε
 δευρ' αὐτόν, ὡς ἂν λευσίμου δίκης τυχῶν
 θάνη πικρὰν βάκχευσιν ἐν Θήβαις ἰδῶν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὦ σχέτλι', ὡς οὐκ οἶσθα ποῦ ποτ' εἰ λόγων.
 μέμνησ ἤδη, καὶ πρὶν ἐξέστης φρενῶν.
 360 στείχωμεν ἡμεῖς, Κάδμε, κάξαιτώμεθα
 ὑπὲρ τε τούτου καίπερ ὄντος ἀγρίου
 ὑπὲρ τε πόλεως, τὸν θεὸν μηδὲν νέον
 δρᾶν. ἀλλ' ἔπου μοι κισσίνου βάκτρον μέτα·
 πειρῶ δ' ἀνορθοῦν σῶμ' ἐμόν, κάγῳ τὸ σόν·
 γέροντε δ' αἰσχρὸν δύο πεσεῖν ἴτω δ' ὅμως·
 τῷ Βακχίῳ γὰρ τῷ Διὸς δουλευτέον.
 Πενθεὺς δ' ὅπως μὴ πένθος εἰσοίσει δόμοις
 τοῖς σοῖσι, Κάδμε· μαντικῇ μὲν οὐ λέγω,
 τοῖς πράγμασιν δέ· μῶρα γὰρ μῶρος λέγει.

THE BACCHANALS

That Artemis in hunting he excelled? 340
Lest such be thy fate, let me crown thine head
With ivy : honour thou with us the God.

PENTHEUS

Hence with thine hand ! Go, play the Bacchant
thou,

Neither besmirch me with thy folly's stain.

This seer, thy monitor in senselessness,

Will I chastise. Let someone go with speed—

(*To an attendant*) Thou, hie thee to his seat of augury ;

Upheave with levers, hurl it to the ground ;

All in confusion turn it upside down ;

His holy fillets fling to wind and storm : 350

For, doing so, I most shall wring his heart

Some—ye, range through the city, and track down

That girl-faced stranger, who upon our wives

Bringeth strange madness, and defiles our beds.

And if ye catch him, hale him bound with chains

Hither, that death by stoning be his meed,

And so he rue his revelry in Thebes.

TEIRESIAS

Ah wretch, thou knowest not what thou hast said !

Thou'rt stark-mad now, who erst wast sense-bereft.

Let us go, Cadmus, and make intercession 360

Both for this man, brute savage though he be,

And Thebes, that no strange vengeance of the God

Smite them. Come with me, ivy-wand in hand,

Essay to upbear my frame, as I do thine.

Shame if two greybeards fell !—nay, what of that ?

For Bacchus, Son of Zeus, we needs must serve.

Cadmus, beware lest *Pentheus* bring his echo,

Repentance, to thine house :—not prophecy here

Speaks, but his deeds. A fool, he speaketh folly.

[*Exeunt.*

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

370

Ἄοσία πότνα θεῶν, στρ. α'
 Ἄοσία δ' ἅ κατὰ γᾶν
 χρυσεῖαν πτέρυγα φέρεις,
 τάδε Πενθέως αἴεις ;
 αἴεις οὐχ ὀσίαν
 ὕβριν εἰς τὸν Βρόμιον,
 τὸν Σεμέλας, τὸν παρὰ καλλιστεφάνοις
 εὐφροσύναις δαίμονα πρῶ-
 τον μακάρων ; ὃς τὰδ' ἔχει,
 θιασεύειν τε χοροῖς
 380 μετὰ τ' αὐλοῦ γελάσαι
 ἀποπαῦσαί τε μερίμνας,
 ὁπότεν βότρυος ἔλθη
 γάνος ἐν δαιτὶ θεῶν,
 κισσοφόροις δ' ἐν θαλίαις
 ἀνδράσι κρατῆρ ὕπνον ἀμφιβάλλη.

380

390

ἀχαλίνων στομάτων ἀντ. α'
 ἀνόμου τ' ἀφροσύνας
 τὸ τέλος δυστυχία·
 ὁ δὲ τᾶς ἡσυχίας
 βίωτος καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν
 ἀσάλευτόν τε μένει
 καὶ συνέχει δώματα· πόρσω γὰρ ὄμως
 αἰθέρα ναίοντες ὀρώ-
 σιν τὰ βροτῶν οὐρανίδαί.
 τὸ σοφὸν δ' οὐ σοφία
 τό τε μὴ θνητὰ φρονεῖν
 βραχὺς αἰὼν· ἐπὶ τούτῳ
 δέ τις ἂν μεγάλα διώκων
 τὰ παρόντ' οὐχὶ φέροι.

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

O Sanctity, thou who dost bear dominion (Str. 1) 370
Over Gods, yet low as this earthly ground,
Unto usward, stoopest thy golden pinion,—
Hear'st thou the words of the king, and the sound
Of his blast of defiance, of Pentheus assailing
The Clamour-king?—hear'st thou his blasphemous
railing
On Semele's son, who is foremost found
Of the Blest in the festival beauty-crowned?—
Who hath for his own prerogative taken
To summon forth feet through his dances to
leap,
When blent with the flutes light laughters awaken, 380
And the children of care have forgotten to weep,
Whensoever revealed is the cluster's splendour
In the banquet that men to the high Gods tender,
And o'er ivy-wreathed revellers drinking deep
The wine-bowl droppeth the mantle of sleep.

Of the reinless lips that will own no master, (Ant. 1)
Of the folly o'er law's pale stubborn to stray—
One is the end of them, even disaster ;
But the calm life, still as a summer day,
But the foot whose faring discretion guideth, 390
Their steadfast state unshaken abideth,
And the home still findeth in such its stay.
Ah, the Heavenly Ones dwell far away,
Yet look they on men from their cloudy portals.
O, not with knowledge is Wisdom bought ;
And the spirit that soareth too high for mortals
Shall see few days : whosoever hath caught
At the things too great for a man's attaining,
Even blessings assured shall he lose in the gaining.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

400 *μαινομενων δ' οἶδε τρόποι
καὶ κακοβούλων παρ' ἔμοιγε φωτῶν.*

*ἰκοίμαν ποτὶ Κύπρον, στρ. β
νᾶσον τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας,
ἐν ᾗ θελξίφρονες νέμον-
ται θνατοῖσιν Ἑρωτες,
χθόνα¹ θ' ἂν ἐκατόστομοι
βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ ῥοαὶ
καρπίζουσιν ἄνομβρον.
ποῦ δ' ἄ καλλιστενομένα*

410 *Πιερία μούσειος ἔδρα,
σεμνὰ κλιτὺς Ὀλύμπου;
ἐκεῖσ' ἄγε με, Βρόμιε Βρόμιε,
πρόβακχ' εὔιε δαίμων.
ἐκεῖ Χάριτες, ἐκεῖ δὲ Πόθος·
ἐκεῖ δὲ Βάκχαις θέμις ὀργιάζειν.*

*ὁ δαίμων ὁ Διὸς παῖς στρ. β
χαίρει μὲν θαλίαισιν,
φιλεῖ δ' ὀλβοδότειραν Εἰ-
ρήναν, κουροτρόφον θεάν.
420 ἴσα δ' εἰς τε τὸν ὄλβιον
τόν τε χείρονα δῶκ' ἔχειν
οἴνου τέρψιν ἄλυπον·
μισεῖ δ' ᾧ μὴ ταῦτα μέλει,
κατὰ φάος νύκτας τε φίλας
εὐαίωνα διαζῆν·
σοφὸν δ' ἀπέχειν πραπίδα φρένα τε*

¹ Meineke and Nauck : for MSS. Πάφον.

THE BACCHANALS

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

(*Str.* 2)

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

Whereon rain never fell!

But O for the land that in beauty is peerless,¹
The Pierian haunt where the Muses sing! 410

On Olympus the hallowed to stand all fearless
Thitherward lead me, O Clamour-king!
O Revel-god, guide where the Graces abide
And Desire,—where danceth, of no man denied,
The Bacchanal ring.

(*Ant.* 2)

Our God, the begotten of Zeus, hath pleasure
In the glee of the feast where his chalices
shine;

And Peace doth he love, who is giver of treasure,
Who of Youth is the nursing-mother divine. 420

On the high, on the low, doth his bounty bestow
The joyance that maketh an end of woe,
The joyance of wine.

But he hateth the man that in scorn refuseth
A life that on pinions of happiness flies
Through its days and its nights, nor the good part
chooseth.

Wisely shalt thou from the over-wise

¹ Macedonia; where Euripides composed this play.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

περισσῶν παρὰ φωτῶν.
 430 τὸ πλήθος ὃ τι τὸ φαυλότερον
 ἐνόμισε χρήταί τε, τὸδ' ἂν δεχοίμαν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

Πενθεῦ, πάρεσμεν τήνδ' ἄγραν ἡγρευκότες
 ἐφ' ἣν ἔπεμψας, οὐδ' ἄκρανθ' ὠρμήσαμεν.
 ὁ θῆρ δ' ὄδ' ἡμῖν πρᾶος οὐδ' ὑπέσπασε
 φυγῆ πόδ', ἀλλ' ἔδωκεν οὐκ ἄκων χέρας,
 οὐδ' ὠχρός, οὐδ' ἤλλαξεν οἰνωπὸν γένυν,
 440 γελῶν δὲ καὶ δεῖν καπάγειν ἐφίετο
 ἔμενέ τε, τοῦμὸν εὐπετὲς ποιούμενος.
 κἀγὼ δι' αἰδοῦς εἶπον· ὦ ξέν', οὐχ ἔκων
 ἄγω σε, Πενθέως δ' ὅς μ' ἔπεμψ' ἐπιστολαῖς.
 ἄς δ' αὖ σὺ Βάκχας εἶρξας, ἄς συνήρπασας
 κᾶδησας ἐν δεσμοῖσι πανδήμου στέγης,
 φροῦδαί γ' ἐκεῖναι λελυμέναι πρὸς ὄργάδας
 σκιρτῶσι Βρόμιον ἀνακαλούμεναι θεόν·
 αὐτόματα δ' αὐταῖς δεσμὰ διελύθη πεδῶν,
 κληῖδες τ' ἀνήκαν θύρετρ' ἄνευ θνητῆς χερός.
 450 πολλῶν δ' ὄδ' ἀνήρ θαυμάτων ἤκει πλέως
 εἰς τάσδε Θήβας. σοὶ δὲ τᾶλλα χρὴ μέλειν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

SERVANT

Pentheus, we come, who have run down this prey
For which thou sentest us, nor sped in vain.
This wild-beast found we tame : he darted not
In flight away, but yielded, nothing loth,
His hands, nor paled, nor changed his cheeks' rose-hue,
But smiling bade us bind and lead him thence,
And tarried, making easy this my task. 440
Then shamed I said, "Not, stranger, of my will,
But by commands of Pentheus, lead I thee."
The captured Bacchanals thou didst put in ward,
And in the common prison bind with chains,
Fled to the meadows are they, loosed from bonds,
And dance and call on Bromius the God.
The fetters from their feet self-sundered fell ;
Doors, without mortal hand, unbarred themselves.
Yea, fraught with many marvels this man came
To Thebes ! To thee the rest doth appertain. 450

PENTHEUS

Ye are mad ! Once in the toils of these mine hands,
He is not so fleet as to escape from me.
Ha ! of thy form thou art not ill-favoured, stranger,
For woman's tempting—even thy quest at Thebes.
No wrestler thou, as show thy flowing locks
Down thy cheeks floating, fraught with all desire ;
And white, from heedful tendance, is thy skin,
Smit by no sun-shafts, but made wan by shade,
While thou dost hunt desire with beauty's lure.
First, tell me of what nation sprung thou art. 460

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

οὐ κόμπος οὐδείς· ῥάδιον δ' εἰπεῖν τόδε.
τὸν ἀνθεμῶδη Γμῶλον οἰσθά που κλύων.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οἶδ', ὃς τὸ Σάρδεων ἄστῳ περιβάλλει κύκλω.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐντεῦθέν εἰμι, Λυδία δέ μοι πατρίς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πόθεν δὲ τελετὰς τάσδ' ἄγεις ἐς Ἑλλάδα ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς εἰσέβησ', ὁ τοῦ Διός.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

οὐκ, ἀλλ' ὁ Σεμέλην ἐνθάδε ζεύξας γάμοις.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πότερα δὲ νύκτωρ σ' ἢ κατ' ὄμμ' ἠνάγκασεν ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

470 ὀρώων ὀρώοντα, καὶ δίδωσιν ὄργια.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὰ δ' ὄργι' ἐστὶ τίν' ἰδέαν ἔχοντά σοι ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἄρρητ' ἀβακχεύτοισιν εἰδέναι βροτῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἔχει δ' ὄνησιν τοῖσι θύουσιν τίνα ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εὐ τοῦτ' ἐκιβδήλευσας, ἴν' ἀκοῦσαι θέλω.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἀσέβειαν ἀσκούντ' ὄργι' ἐχθαίρει θεοῦ.

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

I know : it compasseth the Sardians' town.

DIONYSUS

Thence am I : Lydia is my fatherland.

PENTHEUS

Wherefore to Hellas bringest thou these rites ?

DIONYSUS

Dionysus, Zeus' son, made me initiate.

PENTHEUS

Lives a Zeus there, who doth beget new gods ?

DIONYSUS

Nay, the same Zeus who wedded Semele here.

PENTHEUS

Dreaming or waking wast thou made his thrall ?

DIONYSUS

Nay, eye to eye his mysteries he bestowed. 470

PENTHEUS

Ay, of what fashion be these mysteries ?

DIONYSUS

'Tis secret, save to the initiate.

PENTHEUS

What profit bring they to his votaries ?

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Shrewd counterfeiting, to whet lust to hear !

DIONYSUS

His rites loathe him that worketh godlessness.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὸν θεὸν ὄρᾶν γὰρ φῆς σαφῶς, ποῖός τις ἦν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὁποῖος ἤθελ'· οὐκ ἐγὼ ἴτασσον τόδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τοῦτ' αὖ παρωχέτευσας εὐ κούδεν λέγων.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

480 δόξει τις ἀμαθεὶ σοφὰ λέγων οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἦλθες δὲ πρῶτα δεῦρ' ἄγων τὸν δαίμονα ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πᾶς ἀναχορεύει βαρβάρων τάδ' ὄργια.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

φρονοῦσι γὰρ κάκιον Ἑλλήνων πολὺ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τάδ' εὖ γε μᾶλλον· οἱ νόμοι δὲ διάφοροι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τά δ' ἱερὰ νύκτωρ ἢ μεθ' ἡμέραν τελεῖς ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

νύκτωρ τὰ πολλὰ· σεμνότητ' ἔχει σκότος.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τοῦτ' εἰς γυναῖκας δόλιόν ἐστι καὶ σαθρόν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

κἂν ἡμέρα τό γ' αἰσχρὸν ἐξεύροι τις ἄν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

δίκην σε δοῦναι δεῖ σοφισμάτων κακῶν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ὡς θρασὺς ὁ Βάκχος κούκ ἀγύμναστος λόγων.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

As seemed him good : that did not I enjoin.

PENTHEUS

This too thou hast shrewdly parried, telling naught.

DIONYSUS

Wise answers seem but folly to a fool.

480

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

All Asians through these mystic dances tread.

PENTHEUS

Ay, far less wise be they than Hellene men.

DIONYSUS

Herein far wiser. Diverse wont is theirs.

PENTHEUS

By night or day dost thou perform his rites ?

DIONYSUS

Chiefly by night : gloom lends solemnity.

PENTHEUS

Ay—and for women snares of lewdness too.

DIONYSUS

In the day too may lewdness be devised.

PENTHEUS

Now punished must thy vile evasions be.

DIONYSUS

Ay, and thy folly and impiety.

490

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

What is my doom ? What vengeance wilt thou wreak ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ἀβρὸν βόστρυχον τεμῶ σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ιέρὸς ὁ πλόκαμος· τῷ θεῷ δ' αὐτὸν τρέφω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἔπειτα θύρσον τόνδε παράδος ἐκ χεροῖν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτός μ' ἀφαιροῦ· τόνδε Διονύσου φορῶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εἴρκαίσι τ' ἔνδον σῶμα σὸν φυλάξομεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

λύσει μ' ὁ δαίμων αὐτός, ὅταν ἐγὼ θέλω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ὅταν γε καλέσης αὐτὸν ἐν Βάκχαις σταθείς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

500 καὶ νῦν ἂ πάσχω πλησίον παρὼν ὄρᾱ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ ποῦ ἔστιν; οὐ γὰρ φανερὸς ὄμμασίν γ' ἐμοῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

παρ' ἐμοί· σὺ δ' ἀσεβῆς αὐτὸς ὦν οὐκ εἰσορᾶς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λάζυσθε· καταφρονεῖ με καὶ Θήβας ὄδε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐδῶ με μὴ δεῖν σωφρονῶν οὐ σῶφροσιν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ δεῖν γε κυριώτερος σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅ τι ζῆς, οὐδ' ὅ δρᾶς, οὐδ' ὅστις εἶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

Πενθεὺς Ἀγαύης παῖς, πατὴρ δ' Ἐχίονος.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Thy dainty tresses first will I cut off.

DIONYSUS

Hallowed my locks are, fostered for the God.

PENTHEUS

Next, yield me up this thyrsus from thine hands.

DIONYSUS

Take it thyself. 'Tis Dionysus' wand.

PENTHEUS

Thy body in my dungeon will I ward.

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Yea, he is now near, marking this despite.

500

PENTHEUS

Ay, where?—not unto mine eyes manifest.

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Seize him! This fellow mocketh me and Thebes.

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Pentheus—Agave's and Echion's son.

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐνδυστυχήσαι τούνομ' ἐπιτήδειος εἶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

510 χῶρει· καθείρξατ' αὐτὸν ἵππικαῖς πέλας
 φάτναισιν, ὡς ἂν σκότιον εἰσορᾷ κνέφας.
 ἐκεῖ χόρευε· τάσδε δ' ἄς ἄγων πάρει
 κακῶν συνεργούς ἢ διεμπολήσομεν
 ἢ χεῖρα δούπου τούδε καὶ βύρσης κτύπου
 παύσας, ἐφ' ἴστοις δμῳίδας κεκτῆσομαι.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

στείχοιμ' ἄν· ὃ τι γὰρ μὴ χρεῶν, οὔτοι χρεῶν
 παθεῖν. ἀτάρ τοι τῶνδ' ἄποιν' ὑβρισμάτων
 μέτεισι Διόνυσός σ', ὃν οὐκ εἶναι λέγεις·
 ἡμᾶς γὰρ ἀδικῶν κείνον εἰς δεσμούςσ' ἄγεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

520 Ἄχελῶον θύγατερ, στρ.
 πότνι' εὐπάρθενε Δίρκα,
 σὺ γὰρ ἐν σαῖς ποτε παγαῖς
 τὸ Διὸς βρέφος ἔλαβες,
 ὅτε μηρῷ πυρὸς ἐξ ἄ-
 θανάτου Ζεὺς ὁ τεκῶν ἦρ-
 πασέ νιν, τὰδ' ἀναβοάσας·
 ἴθι, Διθύραμβ', ἐμὰν ἄρ-
 σενα τάνδε βᾶθι νηδύν·
 ἀναφαίνω σε τόδ', ὦ Βάκ-
 χιε, Θήβαις ὀνομάζειν.
 530 σὺ δέ μ', ὦ μίκαιρα Δίρκα,
 στεφανηφόρους ἀπωθεῖ
 θιάσους ἔχουσαν ἐν σοί.
 τί μ' ἀναίνει; τί με φεύγεις;

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

Yea, fitly named to be in misery pent.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

[*Exeunt* DIONYSUS *guarded*, and PENTHEUS.

CHORUS

All hail, Acheloüs' Daughter,¹ (Str.)
Dirce the maiden, majestic and blest!—in thy cool-
welling water 520
Thou receivedst in old time the offspring of Zeus
'neath thy silvery plashing,
When Zeus, who begat him, had snatched from the
levin unquenchably flashing, [the Father cry,
And sealed up the babe in his thigh, and aloud did
“Come! into this, Dithyrambus, the womb of no
mother, pass thou:—
By this name unto Thebes I proclaim thee, O God
of the Bacchanals, now.”
Ah Dirce, thou thrustest me hence, when I bring
thee the glorious vision 530
Of his garlanded revels!—now why am I scouted,
disowned, and abhorred?

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἔτι ναὶ τὰν βοτρυνώδη
 Διονύσου χάριν οἶνας
 ἔτι σοι τοῦ Βρομίου μελήσει.

[οἶαν οἶαν ὄργαν]

ἀντ.

540

ἀναφαίνει χθόνιον
 γένος ἐκφύς τε δράκοντός
 ποτε Πενθεύς, ὃν Ἑχίων
 ἐφύτευσε χθόνιος,
 ἀγριωπὸν τέρας, οὐ φῶ-
 τα βρότειον, φόνιον δ' ὥσ-
 τε γίγαντ' ἀντίπαλον θεοῖς·
 ὃς ἐμὲ βρόχοισι τὰν τοῦ
 Βρομίου τάχα ξυνάψει,
 τὸν ἐμὸν δ' ἐντὸς ἔχει δώ-
 ματος ἤδη θιασώταν

550

σκοτίαισι κρυπτὸν ἐν εἴρκταις.
 ἐσορᾶς τάδ', ὦ Διὸς παῖ
 Διόνυσε, σοὺς προφήτας
 ἐν ἀμίλλαισιν ἀνάγκας;
 μόλε, χρυσῶπα τινάσσων,
 ἄνα, θύρσον κατ' Ὀλυμπον,
 φονίου δ' ἀνδρὸς ὕβριν κατὰσχες.

560

πόθι Νύσας ἄρα τᾶς θη-
 ροτρόφου θυρσοφορεῖς
 θιάσους, ὦ Διόνυσ', ἧ
 κορυφαῖς Κωρυκίαις;
 τάχα δ' ἐν τοῖς πολυδένδρεσ-
 σιν Ὀλύμπου θαλάμαις, ἐν-
 θα ποτ' Ὀρφεὺς κιθαρίζων
 σύναγεν δένδρεα μούσαις,
 σύναγεν θήρας ἀγρώτας.

ἐπωδ.

THE BACCHANALS

Yet there cometh—I swear by the full-clustered
 grace of the vine Dionysian—
An hour when thine heart shall accept Dionysus,
 shall hail him thy lord.

Lo, his earth-born lineage bewrayeth (*Ant.*)
Pentheus; the taint of the blood of the dragon of
 old he betrayeth,
The serpent that came of the seed of the earth-
 born Titan Echion. [mortal's scion, 540
It hath made him a grim-visaged monster, and not as a
 But as that fell giant brood that in strife with
 immortals stood.
He is minded to fetter me, Bromius' handmaid,
 with cords straightway : [revel this day,
He hath prisoned his palace within my companion in
Dungeoned in gloom! Son of Zeus, are his deeds
 of thine eye un beholden, 550
Dionysus?—thy prophets with tyranny wrestling in
 struggle and strain?
Sweep down the slope of Olympus, uptossing thy
 thyrsus golden : [refrain.
Come to us, King, and the murderer's insolent fury
 (*Epode*)
Ah, where dost thou linger on Nysa the mother of
 beasts of the wold,
Waving thy revellers on with thy wand, or where
 heavenward soar [fold
Crests of Corycia, or haply where far forest-solitudes 560
Round the flanks of Olympus, where Orpheus con-
 strained by his minstrelsy-lore
Trees round him adoring to press, and the beasts
 of the wilderness,
 As he harped of yore ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

570 μάκαρ ὦ Πιερία,
 σέβεταιί σ' Εὖιος, ἤξει
 τε χορεύσων ἅμα βακχεύ-
 μασι, τὸν τ' ὠκυρόαν
 διαβὰς Ἄξιόν εἰλισ-
 σομένας Μαινάδας ἄξει,
 Λυδίαν τε, τὸν εὐδαιμονίας
 βροτοῖς ὀλβοδόταν
 πατέρα τε, τὸν ἔκλυον
 εὖιππον χώραν ὕδασι
 καλλίστοισι λιπαίνειν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἰώ,
 κλύετ' ἐμᾶς κλύετ' αὐδάς,
 ἰὼ Βάκχαι, ἰὼ Βάκχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ὄδε, τίς πόθεν ὁ κέλαδος ἀνά μ' ἐκάλεσεν
 Εὐίου ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

580 ἰὼ ἰώ, πάλιν αὐδῶ,
 ὁ Σεμέλας, ὁ Διὸς παῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰὼ δέσποτα δέσποτα,
 μόλε νυν ἡμέτερον εἰς
 θίασον, ὦ Βρόμιε Βρόμιε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σεῖε πέδον χθονὸς ἔνοσι πότνια.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄ ἄ,
 τάχα τὰ Πενθέως
 μέλαθρα διατινάξεται πεσήμασιν.

THE BACCHANALS

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

The feet of his Maenad-band.

570

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

DIONYSUS (*within*).

*What ho! Give heed to my voice, give heed!
Ho, Bacchanal-train, my Bacchanal-train!
(Members of CHORUS answer severally.)*

CHORUS 1

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

DIONYSUS (*within*)

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

580

CHORUS 2

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

DIONYSUS (*within*)

*Earth-floor, sway to and fro in mighty earthquake-throe!
(Earthquake).*

CHORUS 3

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

49

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ὁ Διόνυσος ἀνὰ μέλαθρα·
σέβετε νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἄπτε κεραύνιον αἶθοπα λαμπάδα·
σύμφλεγε σύμφλεγε δώματα Πενθέως.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἂ ἂ,
πῦρ οὐ λεύσσεις οὐδ' ἀνγάζει
Σεμέλας ἱερὸν ἀμφὶ τάφον, ἄν
ποτε κεραυνόβολος ἔλιπε φλόγα
Δίου βροντᾶς ;
600 δίκετε πεδόσε δίκετε τρομερὰ
σώματα, Μαινάδες·
ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἄνω κάτω τιθεὶς ἔπεισι
μέλαθρα τάδε Διὸς γόνος.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

βάρβαροι γυναῖκες, οὕτως ἐκπεπληγμένοι φόβῳ
πρὸς πέδῳ πεπτώκατ' ; ἤσθησθ', ὡς ἔοικε,
Βακχίου
διατινάξαντος τὰ Πενθέως δώματ'.¹ ἀλλ' ἀνί-
στατε
σῶμα καὶ θαρσεῖτε σαρκὸς ἐξαμείψασαι τρόμον.

¹ Musgrave : for MSS. δῶμα Πενθέως.

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS 4

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

CHORUS 5

We bow us before him.

590

(*Earthquake*).

Lo, how the lintels of stone over yonder pillars are
reeling! [the halls go pealing.
Now doth the Clamour-king's triumph-shout through

DIONYSUS (*within*).

*Kindle the torch of the levin lurid-red : [spread.
Let the compassing flames round the palace of Pentheus
(A great blaze of light enraps the palace and the
monument of Semele.)*

CHORUS 6

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

Lo, dost thou mark it not well?—

Which Semele thunder-blasted bequeathed,
Her memorial of doom

By the lightning from Zeus that fell ?

Fling to the earth, ye Maenads, fling

Your bodies that tremble with sore dismay !

For he cometh, our King, Zeus' scion, to bring

Yon halls to confusion and disarray.

600

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

DIONYSUS

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

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

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

51

E 2

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ φάος μέγιστον ἡμῖν εὐίου βακχεύματος,
ὡς ἐσείδον ἀσμένη σε, μονάδ' ἔχουσ' ἐρημίαν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

610 εἰς ἀθυμίαν ἀφίκεσθ', ἥνικ' εἰσεπεμπόμην,
Πενθέως ὡς εἰς σκοτεινὰς ὀρκάνας πεσούμενος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὸς ἐξέσωσ' ἔμαυτὸν ῥαδίως ἄνευ πόνου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδέ σου συνήψε χεῖρε δεσμίοισιν ἐν βρόχοις;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ταῦτα καὶ καθύβρισ' αὐτόν, ὅτι με δεσμεύειν
δοκῶν

οὔτ' ἔθιγεν οὔθ' ἤψαθ' ἡμῶν, ἐλπίσιν δ'
ἐβόσκετο.

πρὸς φάτναις δὲ ταῦρον εὐρών, οὐ καθεῖρξ' ἡμᾶς
ἄγων,

τῷδε περὶ βρόχους ἔβαλλε γόνασι καὶ χηλαῖς
ποδῶν,

620 θυμὸν ἐκπνέων, ἰδρώτα σώματος στάζων ἄπο,
χείλεσίν διδοὺς ὀδόντας· πλησίον δ' ἐγὼ παρῶν
ἦσυχος θάσσων ἔλευσσον. ἐν δὲ τῷδε τῷ

χρόνῳ
ἀνετίναξ' ἐλθὼν ὁ Βάκχος δῶμα, καὶ μητρὸς
τάφῳ

πῦρ ἀνήψ'. ὁ δ' ὡς ἐσείδε, δώματ' αἴθεσθαι
δοκῶν

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

Hail to thee, to us the mightiest light of Evian
revelry! [on thee!
With what rapture, late so lonely and forlorn, I look

DIONYSUS

Ha, and did your hearts for terror fail you when I
passed within, [Pentheus' dungeon-gin? 610.
Deeming I should sink to darkness, caught in

CHORUS

Wherefore not? What shield had I, if thou into
mischance shouldst fall? [tyrant's thrall?
Nay, but how didst thou escape, who wast a godless

DIONYSUS

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

CHORUS

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

DIONYSUS

My derision there I made him, that he deemed he
fettered me, [empty phantasy.
Yet nor touched me, neither grasped me, fed on
Nay, a bull beside the stalls he found where he
would pen me fast:
Round the knees and round the hoofs of this he 'gan
his cords to cast,
Breathing fury out, the while the sweat-gouts poured
from every limb, [watching him 620
While he gnawed upon his lips—and I beside him
Calmly at mine ease was sitting. Even then our
Bacchus came,
And as with an earthquake shook the house, and lit
a sudden flame [he saw his halls
On his mother's tomb. The king beholding thought

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἦσσαν ἐκείσε κατ' ἐκείσε, δμωσὶν Ἀχελῶν φέρειν
 ἐννέπων, ἅπασ δ' ἐν ἔργῳ δούλος ἦν, μάτην
 πονῶν.

διαμεθεὶς δὲ τόνδε μόχθον, ὡς ἐμοῦ πεφευγότος,
 ἴεται ξίφος κελαινὸν ἀρπάσας δόμων ἔσω.

καθ' ὃ Βρόμιος, ὡς ἔμουγε φαίνεται, δόξαν λέγω,
 630 φάσμι' ἐποίησεν κατ' αὐλήν· ὃ δ' ἐπὶ τοῦθ'
 ὠρμημένος

ἦσσε κάκέντει φαεννὸν αἰθέρ', ὡς σφάζων ἐμέ.
 πρὸς δὲ τοῖσδ' αὐτῷ τάδ' ἄλλα Βάκχιος
 λυμαίνεται.

δώματ' ἔρρηξεν χαμάζε· συντεθράνωται δ' ἅπαν
 πικροτάτους ἰδόντι δεσμούς τοὺς ἐμούς· κόπου
 δ' ὕπο

διαμεθεὶς ξίφος παρεῖται. πρὸς θεὸν γὰρ ὦν
 ἀνὴρ

εἰς μάχην ἔλθειν ἐτόλμησ'· ἦσυχος δ' ἐκβὰς ἐγὼ
 δωμάτων ἦκα πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Πενθέως οὐ φροντίσας.
 ὡς δέ μοι δοκεῖ, ψοφεῖ γοῦν ἀρβύλη δόμων ἔσω,
 εἰς προνώπι' αὐτίχ' ἦξει. τί ποτ' ἄρ' ἐκ τούτων
 ἐρεῖ;

640 ῥαδίως γὰρ αὐτὸν οἶσω, κὰν πνέων ἔλθῃ μέγα.
 πρὸς σοφοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἀσκεῖν σῶφρον' εὐοργη-
 σίαν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πέπουθα δεινά· διαπέφευγέ μ' ὁ ξένος,
 ὃς ἄρτι δεσμοῖς ἦν κατηναγκασμένος.
 ἔα ἔα·

ὄδ' ἐστὶν ἀνὴρ· τί τάδε; πῶς προνώπιος
 φαίνει πρὸς οἴκοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἔξω βεβῶς;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

στήσον πόδ', ὀργῇ δ' ὑπόθεσ ἦσυχον πόδα.

THE BACCHANALS

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

Enter PENTHEUS. PENTHEUS

Foul outrage this !—the stranger hath escaped,
 Though bound but now in fetters fast as fate.
 Ha !

There is the man ! What means this ? How hast thou
 Won forth to stand before my very halls ?

DIONYSUS

Stay there, and let thy fury softly tread.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πόθεν σὺ δεσμὰ διαφυγὼν ἔξω περᾶς ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκ εἶπον—ἦ οὐκ ἤκουσας—ὄτι λύσει μέ τις ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

650

τίς ; τοὺς λόγους γὰρ εἰσφέρεις καινοὺς αἰέ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὄς τὴν πολύβοτρυν ἄμπελον φύει βροτοῖς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

* * * * *

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὠνείδισας δὴ τοῦτο Διονύσῳ καλόν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

κλήειν κελεύω πάντα πύργον ἐν κύκλῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δ' ; οὐχ ὑπερβαίνουσι καὶ τείχη θεοί ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἂν δεῖ μάλιστα, ταῦτ' ἔγωγ' ἔφυν σοφός.
κείνου δ' ἀκούσας πρῶτα τοὺς λόγους μάθε,
ὄς ἐξ ὄρουσ παρέστιν ἀγγελῶν τί σοι
ἡμεῖς δέ σοι μενούμεν, οὐ φευξόμεθα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

660

Πενθεὺ κρατύνων τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονός,
ἦκω Κιθαιρῶν' ἐκλιπών, ἴν' οὐποτε
λευκῆς ἀνεΐσαν χιόνος εὐαγεῖς βολαί.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἦκεις δὲ ποῖαν προστιθεῖς σπουδὴν λόγου ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Βάκχας ποτνιαδάς εἰσιδών, αἰ τῆσδε γῆς
οἴστρωσι λευκὸν κῶλον ἐξηκόντισαν,

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

How hast thou 'scaped thy bonds and comest forth ?

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Who? Strange and ever strange thine answers are. 650

DIONYSUS

He who makes grow for men the clustered vine.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

'Tis Dionysus' glory, this thy scoff.

PENTHEUS (*to attendants*)

I bid ye bar all towers round about.

DIONYSUS

Why? Cannot Gods pass even over walls ?

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Where most needs wisdom, therein am I wise.

But listen first to yon man, hear his tale

Who with some tidings from the mountains comes.

I will await thee : fear not lest I fly.

Enter HERDMAN.

HERDMAN

Pentheus, thou ruler of this Theban land,

I from Cithaeron come, whence never fail

The glistening silver arrows of the snow.

660

PENTHEUS

Bringing what weighty tidings comest thou ?

HERDMAN

I have seen wild Bacchanals, who from this land

Have darted forth with white feet, frenzy-stung.

57

ΒΑΚΧΑΪ

ἤκω φράσαι σοὶ καὶ πόλει χρήζων, ἄναξ,
 ὡς δεινὰ δρώσι θαυμάτων τε κρείσσονα.
 θέλω δ' ἀκούσαι, πότερά σοι παρρησία
 φράσω τὰ κεῖθεν ἢ λόγον στειλώμεθα·
 670 τὸ γὰρ τάχος σου τῶν φρενῶν δέδοικ', ἄναξ,
 καὶ τοῦξύθυμον καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν λίαν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λέγ', ὡς ἀθῶος ἐξ ἐμοῦ πάντως ἔσει·
 τοῖς γὰρ δίκαιοις οὐχὶ θυμούσθαι χρεῶν.
 ὄσφ δ' ἂν εἴπῃς δεινότερα Βακχῶν πέρι,
 τοσῶδε μᾶλλον τὸν ὑποθέντα τὰς τέχνας
 γυναιξὶ τόνδε τῇ δίκη προσθήσομεν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀγελαῖα μὲν βοσκήματ' ἄρτι πρὸς λέπας
 μόσχων ὑπεξήκριζον, ἠνίχ' ἥλιος
 ἀκτίνας ἐξίησι θερμαίνων χθόνα.
 680 ὀρῶ δὲ θιάσους τρεῖς γυναικείων χορῶν,
 ὧν ἡρχ' ἐνὸς μὲν Αὐτονόῃ, τοῦ δευτέρου
 μήτηρ Ἀγαίη σή, τρίτου δ' Ἴνῶ χοροῦ.
 ἠῦδον δὲ πᾶσαι σώμασιν παρειμέναι,
 αἱ μὲν πρὸς ἐλάτης νῶτ' ἐρείσασαι φόβην,
 αἱ δ' ἐν δρυὸς φύλλοισι πρὸς πέδῳ κᾶρα
 εἰκῆ βαλοῦσαι σωφρόνως, οὐχ ὡς σὺ φῆς
 ὦνωμένας κρατῆρι καὶ λωτοῦ ψόφῳ
 θηρᾶν καθ' ὕλην Κύπριν ἡρημωμένας.
 ἡ σὴ δὲ μήτηρ ὠλόλυξεν ἐν μέσαις
 690 σταθεῖσα Βάκχαις, ἐξ ὕπνου κινεῖν δέμας,
 μυκήμαθ' ὡς ἤκουσε κεροφόρων βοῶν.
 αἱ δ' ἀποβαλοῦσαι θαλερὸν ὀμμάτων ὕπνου
 ἀνῆξαν ὀρθαί, θαυμ' ἰδεῖν εὐκοσμίας,
 νέαι παλαιαὶ παρθένοι τ' ἔτ' ἄζυγες.
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν καθεῖσαν εἰς ὤμους κόμας

THE BACCHANALS

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

670

PENTHEUS

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

HERDMAN

Thine herds of pasturing kine were even now
Scaling the steep hillside, what time the sun
First darted forth his rays to warm the earth,
When lo, I see three Bacchant women-bands,—
Autonoë chief of one, of one thy mother
Agave, and the third band Ino led.
All sleeping lay, with bodies restful-strown;
Some backward leaned on leafy sprays of pine,
Some, with oak-leaves for pillows, on the ground
Flung careless;—modestly, not, as thou say'st,
Drunken with wine, amid the sighing of flutes
Hunting desire through woodland shades alone.
Then to her feet sprang in the Bacchanals' midst
Thy mother, crying aloud, "Shake from you
sleep!"
When fell our horned kine's lowing on her ear.
They, dashing from their eyelids rosy sleep,
Sprang up,—strange, fair array of ordered ranks,—
Young wives, old matrons, maidens yet unwed.
First down their shoulders let they stream their hair:

680

690

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

νεβρίδας τ' ἀνεστεύλανθ' ὄσαισιν ἀμμάτων
 σύνδεσμ' ἐλέλυτο, καὶ καταστίκτους δορὰς
 ὄφεσι κατεζώσαντο λιχμῶσιν γένυν.
 αἱ δ' ἀγκάλαισι δορκάδ' ἠ σκύμονος λύκων
 700 ἀγρίους ἔχουσαι λευκὸν ἐδίδοσαν γάλα,
 ὄσαις νεοτόκοις μαστὸς ἦν σπαργῶν ἔτι
 βρέφη λιπούσαις· ἐπὶ δ' ἔθεντο κισσίνους
 στεφάνους δρυὸς τε μίλακός τ' ἀνθεςφόρου.
 θύρσον δέ τις λαβοῦσ' ἔπαισεν εἰς πέτραν,
 ὅθεν δροσώδης ὕδατος ἐκπηδᾷ νοτίς·
 ἄλλη δὲ νάρθηκ' εἰς πέδον καθήκε γῆς,
 καὶ τῆδε κρήνην ἐξανῆκ' οἴνου θεός·
 ὄσαις δὲ λευκοῦ πώματος πόθος παρῆν,
 710 ἄκροισι δακτύλοισι διαμῶσαι χθόνα
 γάλακτος ἐσμὸς εἶχον· ἐκ δὲ κισσίνων
 θύρσων γλυκεῖαι μέλιτος ἔσταζον ῥοαί.

ὥστ', εἰ παρήσθα, τὸν θεὸν τὸν νῦν ψέγεις
 εὐχαῖσιν ἂν μετήλθες εἰσιδὼν τάδε.
 ξυνήλθομεν δὲ βουκόλοι καὶ ποιμένες,
 κοινῶν λόγων δώσοντες ἀλλήλοις ἔριν,
 ὡς δεινὰ δρώσι θαυμάτων τ' ἐπάξια·
 καὶ τις πλάνης κατ' ἄστυ καὶ τρίβων λόγων
 ἔλεξεν εἰς ἅπαντας· ὦ σεμνὰς πλάκας
 ναῖοντες ὀρέων, θέλετε θηρασώμεθα
 720 Πενθέως Ἀγαῖνῃ μητέρ' ἐκ βακχευμάτων
 χάριν τ' ἀνακτι θώμεθ' ; εὖ δ' ἡμῖν λέγειν
 ἔδοξε, θάμνων δ' ἐλλοχίζομεν φόβαις
 κρύψαντες αὐτούς· αἱ δὲ τὴν τεταγμένην
 ὄραν ἐκίνουν θύρσον εἰς βακχεύματα,
 Ἰακχὸν ἀθρόφ στόματι τὸν Διὸς γόνον
 Βρόμιον καλοῦσαι· πᾶν δὲ συνεβάκχευ' ὄρος

THE BACCHANALS

Then looped they up their fawnskins,—they whose
bands
Had fallen loose,—and girt the dappled fells [while.
Round them with snakes that licked their cheeks the
Some, cradling fawns or wolf-cubs in their arms,
Gave to the wild things of their own white milk,— 700
Young mothers they, who had left their babes, that
still [heads
Their breasts were full. Then did they wreath their
With ivy, oak, and flower-starred briony.
One grasped her thyrsus-staff, and smote the rock,
And forth upleapt a fountain's showery spray :
One in earth's bosom planted her reed-wand,
And up therethrough the God a wine-fount sent :
And whoso fain would drink white-foaming draughts
Scarred with their finger-tips the breast of earth,
And milk gushed forth unstinted : dripped the while 710
Sweet streams of honey from their ivy-staves.
Hadst thou been there, thou hadst, beholding this,
With prayer approached the God whom now thou
spurnest.
Then we, thine herdmen and thy shepherds, drew
Together, each with each to hold dispute
Touching their awful deeds and marvellous.
And one, a townward truant, ready of speech,
To all cried, "Dwellers on the terraces
Of hallowed mountains, will ye that we chase
From Bacchus' revel Agave, Pentheus' mother, 720
And do our lord a kindness?" Well, thought we,
He spake, and we in ambush hid ourselves
Mid leaves of copses. At the appointed time
They waved the thyrsus for the revel-rites,
With one voice calling Iacchus, Clamour-king,
Zeus' seed. The hills, the wild things all, were thrilled

730 καὶ θήρες, οὐδὲν δ' ἦν ἀκίνητον δρόμῳ.
 κυρεῖ δ' Ἀγαυή πλησίον θρόσκουσά μου·
 καὶ γὰρ ἔξεπήδησ' ὡς συναρπάσαι θέλων,
 λόχμην κενώσας ἔνθ' ἐκρυπτόμην δέμας.
 ἢ δ' ἀνεβόησεν· ὦ δρομάδες ἐμαὶ κύνες,
 θηρώμεθ' ἀνδρῶν τῶνδ' ὑπ'· ἀλλ' ἔπεσθέ μοι,
 ἔπεσθε θύρσοις διὰ χερῶν ὠπλισμένοι.
 ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν φεύγοντες ἐξηλύξαμεν
 Βακχῶν σπαραγμόν, αἱ δὲ νεμομέναις χλόην
 μόσχους ἐπήλθον χειρὸς ἀσιδήρου μέτα.
 καὶ τὴν μὲν ἂν προσεΐδες εὐθηλον πόριν
 μυκωμένην ἔλκουσαν ἐν χεροῖν δίχα,¹
 740 ἄλλαι δὲ δαμάλας διεφόρουں σπαράγμασιν.
 εἶδες δ' ἂν ἢ πλευρ' ἢ δίχηλον ἔμβασιν
 ῥιπτόμεν' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω· κρεμαστὰ δὲ
 ἔσταζ' ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀναπεφυρμέν' αἵματι.
 ταῦροι δ' ὕβρισται κείς κέρας θυμονύμενοι
 τὸ πρόσθεν ἐσφάλλοντο πρὸς γαῖαν δέμας,
 μυριάσι χερῶν ἀγόμενοι νεανίδων.
 θᾶσσον δὲ διεφοροῦντο σαρκὸς ἐνδυτὰ
 ἢ σὲ ξυνάψαι βλέφαρα βασιλείοις κόραις.
 χωροῦσι δ' ὥστ' ὄρνιθες ἀρθεῖσαι δρόμῳ
 750 πεδίων ὑποτάσεις, αἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ῥοαῖς
 εὐκαρπον ἐκβάλλουσι Θηβαίων στάχυν·
 Ἵσιός τ' Ἐρυθράς θ', αἱ Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας
 νέρθεν κατωκῆκασιν, ὥστε πολέμοιοι
 ἐπεισπεσοῦσαι πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω
 διέφερον· ἦρπαζον μὲν ἐκ δόμων τέκνα·
 ὅποσα δ' ἐπ' ὤμοις ἔθεσαν, οὐ δεσμῶν ὑπο
 προσείχετ' οὐδ' ἐπιπτεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον,
 οὐ χαλκός, οὐ σίδηρος· ἐπὶ δὲ βοστρύχοις

¹ Reiske : for MSS ἔχουσαν . . . δίκα.

THE BACCHANALS

With ecstasy : naught but shook as on they rushed.
Now nigh to me Agave chanced to leap,
And forth I sprang as who would seize on her,
Leaving the thicket of mine ambush void. 730
Then shouted she, " What ho, my fleetfoot hounds,
We are chased by these men ! Ho ye, follow me—
Follow, the thyrsus-javelins in your hands !"
O then we fled, and fleeing scantly 'scaped
The Bacchanals' rending grasp. Down swooped they
then

Upon our pasturing kine with swordless hand.
Then hadst thou seen thy mother with her hands
Rend a deep-uddered heifer-bellowing loud :
And others tore the calves in crimson shreds.
Ribs hadst thou seen and cloven hoofs far hurled 740
This way and that, and flakes of flesh that hung
And dripped all blood-bedabbled 'neath the pines.
Bulls chafing, lowering fiercely along the horn
Erewhile, were tripped and hurled unto the earth,
Dragged down by countless-clutching maiden hands.
More swiftly was the flesh that lapped their bones
Stripped, than thou couldst have closed thy kingly
eyes.

On swept they, racing like to soaring birds,
To lowland plains which by Asopus' streams
Bear the rich harvests of the Theban folk : 750
Hysiae, Erythrae, 'neath Cithaeron's scour
Low-nestling,—swooping on them like to foes,
This way and that way hurled they all their goods,
Yea, from the houses caught they up the babes :
These, and all things laid on their shoulders, clung
Unfastened ; nothing to the dark earth fell,
Nor brass nor iron ; and upon their hair

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

760 πῦρ ἔφερον, οὐδ' ἔκαιεν. οἱ δ' ὀργῆς ὑπο
 εἰς ὄπλ' ἐχώρουν φερόμενοι Βακχῶν ὑπο
 οὐπερ τὸ δεινὸν ἦν θέαμ' ἰδεῖν, ἀναξ.
 τοῖς μὲν γὰρ οὐχ ἤμασσε λογχωτὸν βέλος,
 κεῖναι δὲ θύρσους ἐξανιῖσαι χερῶν
 ἐτραυμάτιζον κἀπενώτιζον φυγῇ
 γυναῖκες ἄνδρας, οὐκ ἄνευ θεῶν τινος.
 πάλιν δ' ἐχώρουν ὅθεν ἐκίνησαν πόδα,
 κρήνας ἐπ' αὐτὰς ἄς ἀνήκ' αὐταῖς θεός.
 νύψαντο δ' αἶμα, σταγόνα δ' ἐκ παρηίδων
 γλώσση δράκοντες ἐξεφαίδρυνον χροός.
 770 τὸν δαίμον' οὖν τόνδ' ὅστις ἔστ', ὦ δέσποτα,
 δέχου πόλει τῆδ', ὡς τά τ' ἄλλ' ἐστὶν μέγας,
 κάκεινό φασιν αὐτόν, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω,
 τὴν παυσίλυπον ἄμπελον δοῦναι βροτοῖς.
 οἴνου δὲ μηκέτ' ὄντος οὐκ ἔστιν Κύπρις
 οὐδ' ἄλλο τερπνὸν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔτι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταρβῶ μὲν εἰπεῖν τοὺς λόγους ἐλευθέρους
 εἰς τὸν τύραννον, ἀλλ' ὁμως εἰρήσεται
 Διόνυσος ἥσσω οὐδενὸς θεῶν ἔφυ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

780 ἤδη τόδ' ἐγγὺς ὥστε πῦρ ὑφάπτεται
 ὑβρισμα Βακχῶν, ψόγος ἐς Ἑλληνας μέγας.
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ὀκνεῖν δεῖ· στείχ' ἐπ' Ἥλέκτρας ἰὼν
 πύλας· κέλευε πάντας ἀσπίδηφόρους
 ἵππων τ' ἀπαντᾶν ταχυπόδων ἐπεμβάτας
 πέλτας θ' ὅσοι πάλλουσι καὶ τόξων χερὶ
 ψάλλουσι νευράς, ὡς ἐπιστρατεύσομεν
 Βάκχαισιν· οὐ γὰρ ἀλλ' ὑπερβάλλει τάδε,
 εἰ πρὸς γυναικῶν πεισόμεσθ' ἂ πάσχομεν.

THE BACCHANALS

They carried fire unscorched. The folk, in wrath
To be by Bacchanals pillaged, rushed to arms :
Whereupon, King, was this strange sight to see :— 760
From them the steel-tipt javelin drew not blood,
But they from their hands darting thyrsus-staves
Dealt wound on wound; and they, the women, turned
To flight men, for some God's hand wrought therein.
Then drew they back to whence their feet had come,
To those same founts the God sent up for them,
And washed the gore, while from their cheeks the
snakes
Were licking with their tongues the blood-gouts
clean.

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

CHORUS

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

PENTHEUS

Lo, it is on us, kindling like a flame,
The Bacchanal outrage, our reproach through
Greece !
We may not dally :—to Electra's gate 780
Go thou ; bid all my warriors that bear shield
To meet me, and all riders of fleet steeds,
And all that shake the buckler, all who twang
The bowstring ; for against the Bacchanals
Forth will we march. Yea, this should pass all bounds,
To endure of women that we now endure !

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

790

πείθει μὲν οὐδέν, τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων κλύων,
Πενθεῦ· κακῶς δὲ πρὸς σέθεν πάσχων ὄμως
οὐ φημι χρῆναί σ' ὄπλ' ἐπαίρεσθαι θεῶ,
ἀλλ' ἡσυχάζειν· Βρόμιος οὐκ ἀνέξεται
κινουῦντα Βάκχας εὐίων ὀρών ἄπο.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

θύοιμ' ἂν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον ἢ θυμούμενος
πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζοιμι θνητὸς ὢν θεῶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

θύσω, φόνον γε θῆλυν, ὥσπερ ἄξιοι,
πολὺν ταράξας ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

800

ἀπόρφ γε τῷδε συμπεπλέγμεθα ξένω,
ὃς οὔτε πάσχων οὔτε δρῶν σιγήσεται.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ὦ τᾶν, ἔτ' ἔστιν εὖ καταστήσαι τάδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

τί δρῶντα; δουλεύοντα δουλείαις ἐμαῖς;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐγὼ γυναῖκας δεῦρ' ὄπλων ἄξω δίχα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

οἴμοι τόδ' ἤδη δόλιον εἰς με μηχανᾶ.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ποῖόν τι, σῶσαί σ' εἰ θέλω τέχναις ἐμαῖς;

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Friend, yet this evil may be turned to good.

PENTHEUS

How?—by becoming my bondwomen's thrall?

DIONYSUS

I without arms will bring the women hither.

PENTHEUS

Ha! here for me thou plottest treachery!

DIONYSUS

Treachery?—I would save thee by mine art!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ξυνέθεσθε κοινή τάδ', ἵνα βακχεύητ' αἰεί.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

810

ἄ·

βούλει σφ' ἐν ὄρεσι συγκαθημένας ἰδεῖν;

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

μάλιστα, μυρίον γε δούς χρυσοῦ σταθμόν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

τί δ' εἰς ἔρωτα τοῦδε πέπτωκας μέγαν;

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

λυπρῶς νιν εἰσίδοιμ' ἂν ἐξφωνόμενας.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ὅμως δ' ἴδοις ἂν ἠδέως ἄ σοι πικρά;

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

σάφ' ἴσθι, σιγῇ γ' ὑπ' ἐλάταις καθήμενος.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐξιχνεύσουσίν σε, κὰν ἔλθῃς λάθρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἀλλ' ἐμφανῶς· καλῶς γὰρ ἐξείπας τάδε.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἄγωμεν οὖν σε κάπιχειρήσεις ὁδῷ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

820

ἄγ' ὡς τάχιστα, τοῦ χρόνου δέ σοι φθονῶ.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

στεῖλαι νιν ἀμφὶ χρωτὶ βυσσίνους πέπλους.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Ye have made this covenant, so to revel aye.

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS (*to attendants*)

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

DIONYSUS

Ho thou!

810

Wouldst thou behold them camped upon the hills?

PENTHEUS¹

Ay—though with sumless gold I bought the sight.

DIONYSUS

Why on this mighty longing hast thou fallen?

PENTHEUS

To see them drunk with wine—a bitter sight!

DIONYSUS

Yet wouldst thou gladly see a bitter sight?

PENTHEUS

Yea, sooth, in silence crouched beneath the pines.

DIONYSUS

Yet will they track thee, stealthily though thou come.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Shall I then guide thee? Wilt essay the path?

PENTHEUS

Lead on with speed: I grudge thee all delay!

820

DIONYSUS

Array thee now in robes of linen fine.

¹ From this time Pentheus speaks as one hypnotized.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί δὴ τόδ' ; εἰς γυναῖκας ἔξ ἀνδρὸς τελῶ ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μή σε κτάνωσιν, ἦν ἀνὴρ ὀφθῆς ἐκεῖ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ἐξεμούσωσεν τάδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πῶς οὖν γένοιτ' ἂν ἂ σύ με νουθετεῖς καλῶς ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐγὼ στελῶ σε δωμάτων εἴσω μολῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκέτι θεατῆς Μαινάδων πρόθυμος εἶ ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

830

στολήν δὲ τίνα φῆς ἀμφὶ χρωτ' ἐμόν βαλεῖν ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

κόμην μὲν ἐπὶ σφῶ κρατὶ ταναὸν ἐκτενῶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὸ δεύτερον δὲ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τί μοι ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πέπλοι ποδήρεις· ἐπὶ κἀρα δ' ἔσται μίτρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἦ καί τι πρὸς τοῖσδ' ἄλλο προσθήσεις ἐμοί ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

θύρσον γε χειρὶ καὶ νεβροῦ στικτὸν δέρας.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην θῆλυν ἐνδύναι στολήν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀλλ' αἶμα θήσεις συμβαλὼν Βάκχαις μάχην.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Wherefore? From man shall I to woman turn?

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Well said—yea, shrewd hast thou been heretofore.

DIONYSUS

Such science Dionysus taught to me.

PENTHEUS

How then shall thy fair rede become mine act?

DIONYSUS

I will into thine halls, and robe thee there.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Is thy desire to watch the Maenads dead?

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Thine head with flowing tresses will I tire.

PENTHEUS

And the next fashion of my vesture—what?

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Naught else but these wouldst thou add unto me?

DIONYSUS

Thyrsus in hand, and dappled fell of fawn.

PENTHEUS

I cannot drape me in a woman's robe!

DIONYSUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ὀρθῶς· μολεῖν χρῆ πρῶτον εἰς κατασκοπήν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σοφώτερον γοῦν ἢ κακοῖς θηρᾶν κακά.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

840 καὶ πῶς δι' ἄστεως εἶμι Καδμείους λαθῶν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὁδοὺς ἐρήμους ἴμεν· ἐγὼ δ' ἠγήσομαι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πᾶν κρείσσον ὥστε μὴ ἴγγελᾶν Βάκχας ἐμοί.
ἐλθόντ' ἐς οἴκους ἂν δοκῆ βουλευέσμεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἔξεστι· πάντη τό γ' ἐμὸν εὐτρεπές πάρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

στείχοιμ' ἂν ἢ γὰρ ὄπλ' ἔχων πορεύσομαι
ἢ τοῖσι σοῖσι πείθομαι βουλευέμασιν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

850 γυναῖκες, ἀνὴρ εἰς βόλον καθίσταται
ἤξει δὲ Βάκχας, οὐ θανὼν δώσει δίκην.
Διόνυσε, νῦν σὸν ἔργον, οὐ γὰρ εἶ πρόσω·
τισώμεθ' αὐτόν. πρῶτα δ' ἔκστησον φρενῶν,
ἐνείς ἐλαφρὰν λύσσαν· ὡς φρονῶν μὲν εὖ
οὐ μὴ θελήσῃ θῆλυν ἐνδύναϊ στολήν,
ἔξω δ' ἐλαύνων τοῦ φρονεῖν ἐνδύσεται.
χρήζω δέ νιν γέλωτα Θηβαίοις ὀφλεῖν
γυναικόμορφον ἀγόμενον δι' ἄστεως
ἐκ τῶν ἀπειλῶν τῶν πρίν, αἰσι δεινὸς ἦν.
ἀλλ' εἶμι κόσμον ὄνπερ εἰς Ἄιδου λαβῶν
ἄπεισι, μητρὸς ἐκ χεροῖν κατασφαγείς,
860 Πενθεῖ προσάψων γνώσεται δὲ τὸν Διὸς
Διόνυσον, ὃς πέφυκεν ἐν τέλει θεὸς
δεινότατος, ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἠπιώτατος.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Sooth, wiser so than hunt thee ills with ills.

PENTHEUS

Yet, how through Cadmus' city pass unseen ? 840

DIONYSUS

By lone paths will we go. Myself will guide.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

ἀρ' ἐν παννυχίοις χοροῖς
 θήσω ποτὲ λευκὸν
 πόδ' ἀναβακχεύουσα, δέραν
 εἰς αἰθέρα δροσερὸν
 ῥίπτουσ', ὡς νεβρὸς χλοεραῖς
 ἐμπαίζουσα λείμακος ἡδοναῖς,
 ἤνικ' ἂν φοβερὰν φύγη
 θήραν ἔξω φυλακᾶς
 870 εὐπλέκτων ὑπὲρ ἀρκύων,
 θωύσσω δὲ κυναγέτας
 συντείνη δρόμημα κυνῶν·
 μόχθοις τ' ὠκυδρόμοις τ' ἀέλ-
 λαις θρώσκει πεδίου
 παραποτάμιον, ἡδομένα
 βροτῶν ἐρημίαις
 σκιαροκόμου τ' ἐν ἔρνεσιν ὕλας.

τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον
 παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς
 ἢ χεῖρ' ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς
 880 τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρείσσω κατέχειν;
 ὃ τι καλὸν φίλον αἰεί.

ἀντ.

ὀρμᾶται μόλις, ἀλλ' ὅμως
 πιστόν τι τὸ θεῖον
 σθένος· ἀπευθύνει δὲ βροτῶν
 τοὺς τ' ἀγνωμοσύναν
 τιμῶντας καὶ μὴ τὰ θεῶν
 αὐξοντας σὺν μαινομένα δόξα.
 κρυπτεύουσι δὲ ποικίλως
 δαρὸν χρόνου πόδα καὶ

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

Ah, shall my white feet in the dances gleam (Str.)
The livelong night again? Ah, shall I there
Float through the Bacchanal's ecstatic dream,
Tossing my neck into the dewy air?—

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

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

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

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

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

890

θηρῶσιν τὸν ἄσεπτον· οὐ
 γὰρ κρείσσον ποτε τῶν νόμων
 γιγνώσκειν χρή καὶ μελετᾶν.
 κούφα γὰρ δαπάνα νομί-
 ζειν ἰσχὺν τόδ' ἔχειν,
 ὃ τι ποτ' ἄρα τὸ δαιμόνιον,
 τό τ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ
 νόμιμον αἰεὶ φύσει τε πεφυκός.

900

τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον
 παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς
 ἢ χεῖρ' ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς
 τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρείσσω κατέχειν ;
 ὃ τι καλὸν φίλον αἰεὶ.

εὐδαίμων μὲν ὃς ἐκ θαλάσσης
 ἔφυγε χεῖμα, λιμένα δ' ἔκιχεν
 εὐδαίμων δ' ὃς ὑπερθε μόχθων
 ἐγένεθ'· ἕτερα δ' ἕτερος ἕτερον
 ὄλβῳ καὶ δυνάμει παρήλθεν.
 μυρίαὶ δὲ μυρίοισιν
 ἔτ' εἶσ' ἐλπίδες· αἱ μὲν
 τελευτῶσιν ἐν ὄλβῳ
 βροτοῖς, αἱ δ' ἀπέβησαν
 τὸ δὲ κατ' ἡμᾶρ ὄτῳ βίωτος
 εὐδαίμων, μακαρίζω.

ἐπῳδ.

910

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σὲ τὸν πρόθυμον ὄνθ' ἂ μὴ χρεῶν ὄραν
 σπεύδοντά τ' ἀσπούδαστα, Πενθέα λέγω,
 ἔξιθι πάροιθε δωμαίων, ὄφθητί μοι
 σκευὴν γυναικὸς μαινάδος Βάκκης ἔχων,
 μητρός τε τῆς σῆς καὶ λόχου κατάσκοπος·
 πρέπεις δὲ Κάδμου θυγατέρων μορφήν μιᾷ.

THE BACCHANALS

Quests as a sleuth-hound till it shall have tracked 890
The godless down in that relentless hunt.
We may not, in the heart's thought or the act,
Set us above the law of use and wont.

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

What wisdom's crown, what guerdon, shines more
glorious
That Gods can give the sons of men, than this—
O'er crests of foes to stretch the hand victorious? 900
Glory is crown and sum of human bliss!

Blest who from ravening seas (*Epode*)
Hath 'scaped to haven-peace,

Blest who hath triumphed in endeavour's toil and
throe.

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

Enter DIONYSUS.

DIONYSUS

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

Enter PENTHEUS.

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΙΝΘΕΤΣ

920 και μὴν ὄραν μοι δύο μὲν ἡλίους δοκῶ,
 δισσὰς δὲ Θήβας καὶ πόλισμ' ἐπτάστομον·
 καὶ ταῦρος ἡμῖν πρόσθεν ἡγεῖσθαι δοκεῖς
 καὶ σῶ κέρατα κρατὶ προσπεφυκέναι.
 ἄλλ' ἢ ποτ' ἦσθα θήρ; τεταύρωσαι γὰρ οὖν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὁ θεὸς ὁμαρτεῖ, πρόσθεν ὦν οὐκ εὐμενής,
 ἔνσπονδος ἡμῖν· νῦν δ' ὄρᾱς ἂ χρῆ σ' ὄραν.

ΠΙΝΘΕΤΣ

τί φαίνομαι δῆτ' ; οὐχὶ τὴν Ἴνους στάσιν
 ἢ τὴν Ἀγαύης ἐστάναι μητρός γ' ἐμῆς ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὰς ἐκείνας εἰσορᾶν δοκῶ σ' ὄρων.
 ἄλλ' ἐξ ἔδρας σοι πλόκαμος ἐξέστηχ' ὄδε,
 οὐχ ὡς ἐγὼ νιν ὑπὸ μίτρα καθήρμωσα.

ΠΙΝΘΕΤΣ

930 ἔνδον προσείων αὐτὸν ἀνασείων τ' ἐγὼ
 καὶ βακκιάζων ἐξ ἔδρας μεθώρμωσα.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄλλ' αὐτὸν ἡμεῖς, οἷς σε θεραπεύειν μέλει,
 πάλιν καταστελούμεν ἄλλ' ὄρθου κέρα.

ΠΙΝΘΕΤΣ

ἰδοῦ, σὺ κόσμει· σοὶ γὰρ ἀνακείμεσθα δῆ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ζῶναί τέ σοι χαλῶσι κούχ' ἐξῆς πέπλων
 στολίδες ὑπὸ σφυροῖσι τείνουσιν σέθεν.

ΠΙΝΘΕΤΣ

κάμοι δοκοῦσι παρά γε δεξιὸν πόδα·
 τὰνθένδε δ' ὄρθῶς παρὰ τένοντ' ἔχει πέπλος.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

940 ἢ ποῦ με τῶν σῶν πρῶτον ἡγήσει φίλων,
 ὅταν παρὰ λόγον σῶφρονας Βάκχας ἴδης.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πότερα δὲ θύρσον δεξιᾷ λαβὼν χερὶ
ἢ τῆδε, Βάκχῃ μᾶλλον εἰκασθήσομαι ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐν δεξιᾷ χερὶ χᾶμα δεξιῶ ποδὶ
αἴρειν νιν· αἰνῶ δ' ὅτι μεθέστηκας φρενῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἄρ' ἂν δυναίμην τὰς Κιθαιρώνος πτυχὰς
αὐταῖσι Βάκχαις τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὤμοις φέρειν ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

δύναι' ἄν, εἰ βούλοιο· τὰς δὲ πρὶν φρένας
οὐκ εἶχες ὑγιεῖς, νῦν δ' ἔχεις οἴας σε δεῖ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

950 μοχλοὺς φέρωμεν ; ἢ χεροῖν ἀνασπᾶσω
κορυφαῖς ὑποβαλὼν ὤμον ἢ βραχίονα ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μὴ σύ γε τὰ Νυμφῶν διολέσης ἰδρύματα
καὶ Πανὸς ἔδρας, ἐνθ' ἔχει συρίγματα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· οὐ σθένει νικητέον
γυναῖκας, ἐλάττισιν δ' ἐμὸν κρύψω δέμας.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

κρύψει σὺ κρύψιν ἦν σε κρυφθῆναι χρεῶν
ἐλθόντα δόλιον Μαινάδων κατάσκοπον.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ μὴν δοκῶ σφᾶς ἐν λόχμαῖς ὄρνιθας ὡς
λέκτρων ἔχεσθαι φιλτάτοις ἐν ἔρκεσιν.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

950

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

960 οὐκοῦν ἐπ' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀποστέλλει φύλαξ·
λήψει δ' ἴσως σφᾶς, ἦν σὺ μὴ ληφθῆς πάρος.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μόνος σὺ πόλεως τῆσδ' ὑπερκάμνεις, μόνος·
τοιγάρ σ' ἀγῶνες ἀναμένουσιν οὐς ἐχρῆν.
ἔπου δέ πομπὸς δ' εἰμ' ἐγὼ σωτήριος,
κεῖθεν δ' ἀπάξει σ' ἄλλος,—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἡ τεκοῦσά γε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐπίσημον ὄντα πᾶσιν—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐπὶ τόδ' ἔρχομαι.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

φερόμενος ἤξεις—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἀβρότητ' ἐμήν λέγεις.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐν χερσὶ μητρός.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ τρυφᾶν μ' ἀναγκάσεις.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τρυφάς γε τοιάσδ'—

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

970

ἀξίων μὲν ἄπτομαι.

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

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

PENTHEUS

Ay, my mother !

DIONYSUS

To all men manifest—

PENTHEUS

For this I come.

DIONYSUS

High-borne shalt thou return—

PENTHEUS

Soft ease for me ?

DIONYSUS

On a mother's hands,

PENTHEUS

Thou wouldst thrust pomp on me !

DIONYSUS

Nay, 'tis but such pomp—

PENTHEUS

As is my desert. 970

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

Strange, strange man ! Strange shall thine experience
be.

So shalt thou win renown that soars to heaven.

[*Exit* PENTHEUS.

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

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

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

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

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

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

990

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἴτω δίκαια φανερός, ἴτω ξιφηφόρος
 φονεύουσα λαιμῶν διαμπὰξ
 τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος
 τόκον γηγενῆ·

ὃς ἀδίκῳ γνώμα παρανόμῳ τ' ὄργῃ ἀντ.
 περὶ σά, Βάκχι', ὄργια ματρός τε σᾶς
 μανείσα πραπίδι

1000 παρακόπῳ τε λήματι στέλλεται,
 τάνικατον ὡς κρατήσων βία.

γνώμαν σώφρον', ἃ θνατοῖς ἀπροφάσιστος
 εἰς τὰ θεῶν ἔφυ,

βροτείαν τ' ἔχειν, ἄλυπος βίος.

τὸ σοφὸν οὐ φθόνῳ

χαίρω θηρεύουσα,

τὰ δ' ἕτερα μεγάλα φανερά τ' ὄντ' αἰεί,

ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ βίον

ἡμαρ εἰς νύκτα τ' εὐαγοῦντ' εὐσεβεῖν,

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

ἴτω δίκαια φανερός, ἴτω ξιφηφόρος
 φονεύουσα λαιμῶν διαμπὰξ
 τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος
 τόκον γηγενῆ.

THE BACCHANALS

Justice, draw nigh us, draw nigh, with the sword of
avenging appear :

[born, and shear
Slay the unrighteous, the seed of Echion the earth-
Clean through his throat, for he feareth not God,
neither law doth he fear.

(*Ant.*)

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

1000

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

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

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

1010

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

87

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

φάνηθι ταῦρος ἢ πολύκρανος ἰδεῖν ἐπῶδ.
 δράκων ἢ πυριφλέγων
 ὀρᾶσθαι λέων.

1020

ἴθ', ὦ Βάκχε, θηραγρευτᾶ Βακχᾶν
 γελῶντι προσώπῳ περ' ἔβαλε
 βρόχον ἐπὶ θανάσιμον
 ἀγέλαν πεσόντι τὰν Μαινάδων.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ δῶμ' ὃ πρὶν ποτ' ἠτύχεις ἀν' Ἑλλάδα,
 Σιδωνίου γέροντος, ὃς τὸ γηγενὲς
 δράκοντος ἔσπειρ' ὄφεος ἐν γαίᾳ θέρος,
 ὣς σε στενάζω, δούλος ὦν μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως
 χρηστοῖσι δούλοις συμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν ; ἐκ Βακχῶν τι μηνύεις νέον ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1030

Πενθεὺς ὄλωλε, παῖς Ἐχίονος πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦναξ Βρόμιε· θεὸς φαίνει μέγας.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πῶς φῆς ; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας ; ἢ 'πὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς
 χαίρεις κακῶς πράσσουσι δεσπότης, γύναι ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θήβας δ' ἀνάνδρους ὦδ' ἄγεις* * * *

* * * * *

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1040 συγγνωστὰ μὲν σοι, πλὴν ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις
κακοῖσι χαίρειν, ὦ γυναῖκες, οὐ καλόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐννεπέ μοι, φράσον, τίني μόρῳ θνήσκει
ἄδικος ἄδικά τ' ἐκπορίζων ἀνὴρ ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1050 ἐπεὶ θεράπνας τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονὸς
λιπόντες ἐξέβημεν Ἀσωποῦ ῥοάς,
λέπας Κιθαιρώνειον εἰσεβάλλομεν
Πενθεὺς τε κἀγώ, δεσπότη γὰρ εἰπόμην,
ξένος θ' ὃς ἡμῖν πομπὸς ἦν θεωρίας.
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν ποιηρὸν ἴζομεν νάπος,
τά τ' ἐκ ποδῶν σιγηλὰ καὶ γλώσσης ἄπο
σφύζοντες, ὡς ὀρῶμεν οὐχ ὀρώμενοι.
ἦν δ' ἄγκος ἀμφίκρημον, ὕδασι διάβροχον,
πεύκαισι συσκιάζον, ἔνθα Μαινάδες
καθῆντ' ἔχουσαι χεῖρας ἐν τερπνοῖς πόνοις.
αἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν θύρσον ἐκλελοιπότα
κισσῶ κομήτην αὐθις ἐξανέστεφον,
αἱ δ' ἐκλιπούσαι ποικίλ' ὡς πῶλοι ζυγὰ
βακχεῖον ἀντέκλαζον ἀλλήλαις μέλος.
Πενθεὺς δ' ὁ τλήμων θῆλυν οὐχ ὀρῶν ὄχλον
ἔλεξε τοιάδ'· ὦ ξέν', οὐ μὲν ἔσταμεν,
1060 οὐκ ἐξικνούμαι Μαινάδων ὄσσοις νόθων·
ὄχθον δ' ἐπεμβὰς ἢ ἐλάτην ὑψαύχενα
ἴδοιμ' ἂν ὀρθῶς Μαινάδων αἰσχροουργίαν.
τοῦντεῦθεν ἤδη τοῦ ξένου τι θαῦμ' ὀρῶ·
λαβῶν γὰρ ἐλάτης οὐράνιον ἄκρον κλάδου

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

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

MESSENGER

This might be pardoned, save that base it is,
Women, to joy o'er evils past recall. 1040

CHORUS

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

MESSENGER

When, from the homesteads of this Theban land
Departing, we had crossed Asopus' streams,
Then we began to breast Cithaeron's steep,
Pentheus and I,—for to my lord I clave,—
And he who ushered us unto the scene.
First in a grassy dell we sat us down
With footfall hushed and tongues refrained from
speech,
That so we might behold, all unbeheld. 1050

There was a glen crag-walled, with rills o'erstreamed,
Closed in with pine-shade, where the Maenad girls
Sat with hands busied with their gladsome toils.
The faded thyrsus some with ivy-sprays
Twined, till its tendril-tresses waved again :
Some, blithe as colts from carven wain-yokes loosed,
Re-echoed each to each the Bacchic chant.
But hapless Pentheus, seeing not the throng
Of women, spake thus : " Stranger, where we stand,
Are these mock-maenad maids beyond my ken. 1060
Some knoll or pine high-crested let me climb,
And I shall see the Maenads' lewdness well."
A marvel then I saw the stranger do :
A soaring pine-shaft by the top he caught,

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- κατήγευ, ἦγευ, ἦγευ εἰς μέλαν πέδον·
 κυκλοῦτο δ' ὥστε τόξον ἢ κυρτὸς τροχὸς
 τόνῳ γραφόμενος περιφορὰν ἔλκει δρόμον·
 ὡς κλών' ὄρειον ὁ ξένος χεροῖν ἄγων
 ἔκαμπτεν εἰς γῆν, ἔργματ' οὐχὶ θνητὰ δρῶν.
- 1070 Πενθέα δ' ἰδρύσας ἐλατίνων ὄζων ἔπι,
 ὀρθὸν μεθίει διὰ χερῶν βλάστημ' ἄνω
 ἀτρέμα, φυλάσσω μὴ ἀναχαιτίσειέ νιν.
 ὀρθῇ δ' ἐς ὀρθὸν αἰθέρ' ἐστηρίζετο
 ἔχουσα νώτοις δεσπότην ἐφήμενον.
 ὠφθη δὲ μᾶλλον ἢ κατεΐδε Μαινάδας·
 ὅσον γὰρ οὐπω δῆλος ἦν θάσσω ἀνω,
 καὶ τὸν ξένον μὲν οὐκέτ' εἰσορᾶν παρῆν,
 ἐκ δ' αἰθέρος φωνή τις, ὡς μὲν εἰκάσαι ✓
- 1080 Διόνυσος, ἀνεβόησεν· ὦ νεάνιδες,
 ἄγω τὸν ὑμᾶς καμὲ τὰμά τ' ὄργια
 γέλων τιθέμενον· ἀλλὰ τιμωρεῖσθέ νιν.
 καὶ ταῦθ' ἄμ' ἠγόρευε καὶ πρὸς οὐρανὸν
 καὶ γαῖαν ἐστήριξε φῶς σεμνοῦ πυρός.
 σίγησε δ' αἰθήρ, σίγα δ' ὕλιμος νάπη
 φύλλ' εἶχε, θηρῶν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἤκουσας βοήν.
 αἱ δ' ὥσιν ἠχῆν οὐ σαφῶς δεδεγμένοι
 ἔστησαν ὀρθαὶ καὶ διήνεγκαν κόρας.
 ὁ δ' αὐθις ἐπεκέλευσεν· ὡς δ' ἐγνώρισαν
- 1090 σαφῇ κελευσμὸν Βακχίου Κάδμου κόραι,
 ἦξαν πελείας ὠκύτητ' οὐχ ἦσσοι
 ποδῶν ἔχουσαι συντόνοις δρομήμασι,
 μήτηρ Ἀγαθή σύγγονοί θ' ὁμόσποροι
 πᾶσαι τε Βάκχαι· διὰ δὲ χειμάρρου νάπης
 ἀγμῶν τ' ἐπήδων θεοῦ πνοαῖσιν ἐμμανεῖς.
 ὡς δ' εἶδον ἐλάτη δεσπότην ἐφήμενον,
 πρῶτον μὲν αὐτοῦ χερμάδας κραταιβόλους

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- ἔρριπτον, ἀντίπυργον ἐπιβᾶσαι πέτραν,
 ὄξοισί τ' ἐλατίνοισιν ἠκοντίζετο·
 ἀλλαι δὲ θύρσους ἴεσαν δι' αἰθέρος
- 1100 Πενθέως, στόχον δύστηνον· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἦνυτον.
 κρείσσον γὰρ ὕψος τῆς προθυμίας ἔχων
 καθήστο τλήμων, ἀπορία λελημμένος.
 τέλος δὲ δρυίνους συγκεραυνοῦσαι κλάδους,
 ρίζας ἀνεσπάρασσον ἀσιδήροις μοχλοῖς.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθων τέρματ' οὐκ ἐξήνυτον,
 ἔλεξ' Ἀγαύη· φέρε, περιστᾶσαι κύκλω
 πτόρθου λάβεσθε, Μαινάδες, τὸν ἀμβάτην
 θῆρ' ὡς ἔλωμεν, μηδ' ἀπαγγείλη θεοῦ
 χοροὺς κρυφαίους. αἱ δὲ μυρίαν χέρα
- 1110 προσέθεσαν ἐλάτη κάξανέσπασαν χθονός·
 ὑψοῦ δὲ θάσσων ὑψόθεν χαμαιπετῆς
 πίπτει πρὸς οὐδας μυρίοις οἰμώγμασι
 Πενθέως· κακοῦ γὰρ ἐγγύς ὦν ἐμάνθανε.
 πρώτη δὲ μήτηρ ἤρξεν ἱερία φόνου
 καὶ προσπίτνει νιν· ὁ δὲ μίτραν κόμης ἀπο
 ἔρριψεν, ὡς νιν γνωρίσασα μὴ κτάνοι
 τλήμων Ἀγαύη, καὶ λέγει, παρηίδος
 ψαύων· ἐγὼ τοι, μήτηρ, εἰμὶ παῖς σέθεν
 Πενθέως, ὃν ἔτεκες ἐν δόμοις Ἐχίονος·
- 1120 οἴκτειρε δ' ὦ μῆτέρ με, μηδὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς
 ἀμαρτίαισι παῖδα σὸν κατακτάνης.
 ἢ δ' ἀφρὸν ἐξειῖσα καὶ διαστρόφους
 κόρας ἐλίσσουσ', οὐ φρονουῖς' ἂ χρῆ φρονεῖν,
 ἐκ Βακχίου κατείχεται, οὐδ' ἐπειθέ νιν.
 λαβοῦσα δ' ὠλέναις ἀριστερὰν χέρα,
 πλευραῖσιν ἀντιβᾶσα τοῦ δυσδαίμονος
 ἀπεσπάραξεν ὦμον, οὐχ ὑπὸ σθένους,
 ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς εὐμάρειαν ἐπέδιδου χεροῖν.

THE BACCHANALS

Scaling a rock, their counter-bastion,
And javelined him with branches of the pine :
And others shot their thyrsi through the air
At Pentheus—woeful mark !—yet nought availed. 1100
For, 'at a height above their fury's pitch,
Trapped in despair's gin, horror-struck he sat.
Last, oak-limbs from their trunks they thundered
down,

And heaved at the roots with levers—not of iron.
But when they won no end of toil and strain,
Agave cried, " Ho, stand we round the trunk,
Maenads, and grasp, that we may catch the beast
Crouched there, that he may not proclaim abroad
Our God's mysterious rites!" Their countless
hands

Set they unto the pine, tore from the soil :— 1110
And he, high-seated, crashed down from his height ;
And earthward fell with frenzy of shriek on shriek
Pentheus, for now he knew his doom at hand.

His mother first, priest-like, began the slaughter,
And fell on him : but from his hair the coil
He tore, that she might know and slay him not,—
Hapless Agave !—and he touched her cheek,
Crying, "'Tis I, O mother !—thine own son
Pentheus—thou bar'st me in Echion's halls !
Have mercy, O my mother !—for my sin 1120
Murder not thou thy son—thy very son !"
But she, with foaming lips and eyes that rolled
Wildly, and reckless madness-clouded soul,
Possessed of Bacchus, gave no heed to him ;
But his left arm she clutched in both her hands,
And set against the wretch's ribs her foot,
And tore his shoulder out—not by her strength,
But the God made it easy to her hands.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

- 1130 Ἴνῳ δὲ τὰπὶ θάτερ' ἐξειργάζετο
 ῥηγγύσα σάρκας, Ἀυτονόη τ' ὄχλος τε πᾶς
 ἐπέιχε Βακχῶν· ἦν δὲ πᾶσ' ὁμοῦ βοή,
 ὃ μὲν στενάζων ὅσον ἐτύγχανεν πνέων,
 αἱ δ' ἠλάλαζον. ἔφερε δ' ἡ μὲν ὠλένην,
 ἡ δ' ἴχνος αὐταῖς ἀρβύλαις· γυμνοῦντο δὲ
 πλευραὶ σπαραγμοῖς· πᾶσα δ' ἡματωμένη
 χεῖρας διεσφαίριζε σάρκα Πενθέως.
 κεῖται δὲ χωρὶς σῶμα, τὸ μὲν ὑπὸ στύφλοις
 πέτραις, τὸ δ' ὕλης ἐν βαθυξύλῳ φόβῃ,
 οὐ ῥάδιον ζήτημᾶ· κρᾶτα δ' ἄθλιον,
 1140 ὄπερ λαβοῦσα τυγχάνει μήτηρ χεροῖν,
 πῆξασ' ἐπ' ἄκρον θύρσον ὡς ὀρεστέρου
 φέρει λέοντος διὰ Κιθαιρῶνος μέσου,
 λιποῦσ' ἀδελφὰς ἐν χοροῖσι Μαινάδων.
 χωρεῖ δὲ θήρα δυσπότμῳ γαυρουμένη
 τειχέων ἔσω τῶνδ', ἀνακαλοῦσα Βάκχιον
 τὸν ξυγκυναγόν, τὸν ξυνεργάτην ἄγρας
 τὸν καλλίνικον, ἧ δάκρυα νικηφορεῖ.
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τῆδ' ἐκποδῶν τῆ ξυμφορᾷ
 ἄπειμ', Ἀγαύην πρὶν μολεῖν πρὸς δῶματα.
 1150 τὸ σωφρονεῖν δὲ καὶ σέβειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν
 κάλλιστον· οἶμαι δ' αὐτὸ καὶ σοφώτατον
 θνητοῖσιν εἶναι κτῆμα τοῖσι χρωμένοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

Wide-sundered lies his corse : part 'neath rough
rocks,
Part mid the tangled depths of forest-shades :—
Hard were the search. His miserable head,
Which in her hands his mother chanced to seize, 1140
Impaled upon her thyrsus-point she bears,
Like mountain-lion's, through Cithæron's midst,
Leaving her sisters in their Maenad dance ;
And, in her ghastly quarry glorying, comes
Within these walls, to Bacchus crying aloud,
Her fellow-hunter, helper in the chase
Triumphant—all its triumph-prize is tears !
But from this sight of misery will I
Depart, or ever Agave reach the halls.
Ay, self-restraint, and reverence for the Gods 1150
Are best, I ween ; 'tis wisest far for men
To get these in possession, and cleave thereto. [*Exit.*]

CHORUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1160

Βάκχαι Καδμείαι,
τὸν καλλίνικον κλεινὸν ἐξεπρίξατε
εἰς γόον, εἰς δάκρυα.
καλὸς ἀγών, ἐν αἵματι στάζουσαν
χέρα περιβαλεῖν τέκνου.

ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ εἰς δόμους ὀρμωμένην
Πενθέως Ἀγαύην μητέρ' ἐν διαστρόφοις
ὄσσοις, δέχεσθε κῶμον εὐίου θεοῦ.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Ἄσιίδες Βάκχαι.

στρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί μ' ὀροθύνεις, ὦ ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1170

φέρομεν ἐξ ὀρέων
ἔλिका νεότομον ἐπὶ μέλαθρα,
μακάριον θήραν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὀρῶ καί σε δέξομαι σύγκωμον.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἔμαρψα τόνδ' ἄνευ βρόχων
[λέοντος ἀγροτέρου] νέον ἱνιν,
ὡς ὀρᾶν πάρα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πόθεν ἐρημίας ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Κιθαιρῶν—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί Κιθαιρῶν ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

κατεφόνουσέν νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἄ βαλοῦσα πρώτα ;

THE BACCHANALS

O Bacchanal-maids Cadmean, 1160
Ye have gained for you glory—a victory-pæan
To be drowned in lamenting and weeping.
O contest triumphantly won, when a mother in blood
of her son

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

Enter AGAVE, carrying the head of Pentheus.

AGAVE

Asian Bacchanals !

(*Str.*)

CHORUS

Why dost thou challenge me?—say.

AGAVE

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

1170

CHORUS

I see—to our revels I welcome thee.

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

Where in the wilderness, where?

AGAVE

Cithaeron—

CHORUS

What hath Cithaeron wrought ?

AGAVE

Him hath Cithaeron to slaughter brought.

CHORUS

Who was it smote him first ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1180 ΑΓΑΘΗ
ἐμὸν τὸ γέρας.
μίκαιρ' Ἀγαυή κληζόμεθ' ἐν θιάσοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τίς ἄλλα;

ΑΓΑΘΗ
τὰ Κάδμου—

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί Κάδμου;

ΑΓΑΘΗ γένεθλα
μετ' ἐμὲ μετ' ἐμὲ τοῦδ'
ἔθιγε θηρός. εὐτυχίης γ' ἄδ' ἄγρα.
μέτεχέ νυν θοίνας. ἄντ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί μετέχω τλάμων;

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πρέπει γ' ὥστε θῆρ ἄγραυλος φόβη.

1190 ΑΓΑΘΗ
ὁ Βάκχιος κυναγέτας
σοφὸς σοφῶς ἀνέπηλεν ἐπὶ θήρα
τοῦδε Μαινάδας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἀγρεύς.

ΑΓΑΘΗ
ἐπαινεῖς;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί δ'; ἐπαινῶ.

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

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

1180

CHORUS

Who then?

AGAVE

Of Cadmus—

CHORUS

Of Cadmus what wilt thou tell?

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

Alas! wherein shall I share?

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

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

AGAVE

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

1190

CHORUS

Yea, a hunter is Bacchus our King.

AGAVE

Dost thou praise me?

CHORUS

How can I choose but praise?

101

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

τάχα δὲ Καδμείοι—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ παῖς γε Πενθεύς—

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ματέρ' ἐπαινέσεται,
λαβούσαν ἄγραν τάνδε λεοντοφυή.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

περισσάν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

περισσῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀγάλλει;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

γέγηθα

μεγάλα μεγάλα καὶ
φανερὰ τᾶδ' ἄγρα κατειργασμένα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1200 δειξόν νυν, ὦ τάλαινα, σὴν νικηφόρον
ἄστοῖσιν ἄγραν ἣν φέρουσ' ἐλήλυθας.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὦ καλλίπυργον ἄστυ Θηβαίας χθονὸς
ναίοντες, ἔλθεθ' ὡς ἴδητε τήνδ' ἄγραν,
Κάδμου θυγατέρες θηρὸς ἦν ἠγρεύσαμεν
οὐκ ἀγκυλητοῖς Θεσσαλῶν στοχάσμασιν,
οὐ δικτύοισιν, ἀλλὰ λευκοπήχεσι
χειρῶν ἀκμαῖσι. κᾶτα κομπάζειν χρεῶν
καὶ λογχοποιῶν ὄργανα κτᾶσθαι μάτην;
1210 ἡμεῖς δέ γ' αὐτῇ χειρὶ τόνδε θ' εἴλομεν
χωρὶς τε θηρὸς ἄρθρα διεφορήσαμεν.
ποῦ μοι πατὴρ ὁ πρέσβυς; ἐλθέτω πέλας.
Πενθεύς τ' ἐμὸς παῖς ποῦ' στιν; αἰρέσθω λαβῶν

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Ay, and full soon shall Cadmus' race—

CHORUS

And Pentheus thy son—

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

Strange quarry!—

AGAVE

And strangely taken.

CHORUS

Art glad?

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

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

1200

AGAVE

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

1210

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πηκτῶν πρὸς οἴκους κλιμάκων προσαμβύσεις,
ὡς πασσαλεύση κράτα τριγλύφοις τόδε
λέοντος ὄν πάρειμι θηράσασ' ἐγώ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἔπεσθέ μοι, φέροντες ἄθλιον βάρος
Πενθέως, ἔπεσθε, πρόσπολοι, δόμων πάρος,
οὐ σῶμα μοχθῶν μυρίοις ζητήμασι
1220 φέρω τόδ', εὐρῶν ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς
διασπαρακτόν, κούδεν ἐν ταυτῷ πέδῳ
λαβῶν, ἐν ὕλῃ κείμενον δυσευρέτῳ.
ἤκουσα γάρ του θυγατέρων τολμήματα,
ἤδη κατ' ἄστυ τειχέων ἔσω βεβῶς
σὺν τῷ γέροντι Τειρεσία Βακχῶν πάρα·
πάλιν δὲ κάμψας εἰς ὄρος κομίζομαι
τὸν κατθανόντα παῖδα Μαινάδων ὑπο.
καὶ τὴν μὲν Ἀκταίων' Ἀρισταίῳ ποτὲ
τεκούσαν εἶδον Αὐτονόην Ἰνώ θ' ἄμα
1230 ἔτ' ἀμφὶ δρυμοῖς οἰστροπλήγας ἀθλίας,
τὴν δ' εἶπέ τίς μοι δεῦρο βακχείῳ ποδὶ
στείχειν Ἀγαύην, οὐδ' ἄκραντ' ἠκούσαμεν·
λεύσσω γὰρ αὐτήν, ὄψιν οὐκ εὐδαίμονα.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

πάτερ, μέγιστον κομπάσαι πάρεστι σοι,
πάντων ἀρίστας θυγατέρας σπεῖραι μακρῷ
θητῶν ἀπάσας εἶπον, ἐξόχως δ' ἐμέ,
ἢ τὰς παρ' ἰστοῖς ἐκλιπούσα κερκίδας
εἰς μείζον ἤκω, θήρας ἀγρεύειν χεροῖν·
φέρω δ' ἐν ὠλέναισιν, ὡς ὄρᾶς, τάδε
λαβοῦσα τὰριστεῖα, σοῖσι πρὸς δόμοις
1240 ὡς ἀγκρεμασθῆ· σὺ δέ, πάτερ, δέξαι χεροῖν·
γαυρούμενος δὲ τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀγρεύμασι

THE BACCHANALS

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

Enter CADMUS, with attendants carrying a bier.

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

κάλει φίλους εἰς δαῖτα· μακάριος γὰρ εἶ,
μακάριος, ἡμῶν τοιάδ' ἐξειργασμένων.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

1250 ὦ πένθος οὐ μετρητὸν οὐδ' οἶον τ' ἰδεῖν,
φόνον ταλαίναις χερσὶν ἐξειργασμένων.
καλὸν τὸ θῦμα καταβαλοῦσα δαίμοσιν
ἐπὶ δαῖτα Θήβας τάσδε κάμ' παρακαλεῖς.
οἴμοι κακῶν μὲν πρῶτα σὼν, ἔπειτ' ἐμῶν
ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς ἐνδίκως μὲν, ἀλλ' ἄγαν
Βρόμιος ἀναξ ἀπώλεσ' οἰκείος γεγώς.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὡς δύσκολον τὸ γῆρας ἀνθρώποις ἔφν
ἐν τ' ὄμμασι σκυθρωπόν. εἴθε παῖς ἐμὸς
εὖθρος εἴη, μητρὸς εἰκασθεὶς τρόποις,
ὄτ' ἐν νεανίαισι Θηβαίοις ἄμα
θηρῶν ὀριγνῶτ'. ἀλλὰ θεομαχεῖν μόνον
οἴός τ' ἐκείνος. νουθετητέος, πάτερ,
σοῦστίν. τίς αὐτὸν δεῦρ' ἀν ὄψιν εἰς ἐμῆν
καλέσειεν, ὡς ἴδῃ με τὴν εὐδαίμονα;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

1260 φεῦ φεῦ· φρονήσασαι μὲν οἱ' ἐδράσατε,
ἀλγήσεται ἄλγος δεινόν· εἰ δὲ διὰ τέλους
ἐν τῷδ' αἰεὶ μενεῖτ' ἐν ᾧ καθέστατε,
οὐκ εὐτυχοῦσαι δόξετ' οὐχὶ δυστυχεῖν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

πρῶτον μὲν εἰς τόνδ' αἰθέρ' ὄμμα σὸν μέθες.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἰδοῦ· τί μοι τόνδ' ἐξυπείπας εἰσορᾶν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἔθ' αὐτὸς ἢ σοι μεταβολὰς ἔχειν δοκεῖ;

THE BACCHANALS

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

CADMUS

O anguish measureless that blasts the sight !
O murder compassed by those wretched hands !
Fair victim this to cast before the Gods,
And bid to such a banquet Thebes and me !
Woe for our sorrows !—first for thine, then mine !
How hath the God, King Bromius, ruined us !—
Just stroke—yet ruthless—is he not our kin? 1250

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

First cast thou up thine eye to yonder heaven.

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λαμπρότερος ἢ πρὶν καὶ διυπετέστερος.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τὸ δὲ πτοηθὲν τόδ' ἔτι σῆ ψυχῇ πάρα ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1:270

οὐκ οἶδα τοῦπος τοῦτο, γίγνομαι δέ πως
ἔννουσ, μετασταθεῖσα τῶν πάρος φρενῶν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

κλύοις ἂν οὖν τι κάποκρίναι' ἂν σαφῶς ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὡς ἐκλέλησμαι γ' ἂ πάρος εἶπομεν, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

εἰς ποῖον ἦλθες οἶκον ὑμεναίων μέτα ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

σπαρτῶ μ' ἔδωκας, ὡς λέγουσ', Ἐχίονι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις καίς ἐγένετο σῶ πόσει ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Πενθεύς, ἐμῆ τε καὶ πατρὸς κοινωνία.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίνος πρόσωπον δῆτ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις ἔχεις ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λέοντος, ὡς γ' ἔφασκον αἱ θηρώμεναι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σκέψαι νυν ὀρθῶς, βραχὺς ὁ μόχθος εἰσιδεῖν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1:280

ἔα, τί λεύσσω ; τί φέρομαι τόδ' ἐν χερσίν ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἄθρησον αὐτὸ καὶ σαφέστερον μάθε.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὀρῶ μέγιστον ἄλγος ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Brighter—more limpid-lucent than erewhile.

CADMUS

Is this delirium tossing yet thy soul?

AGAVE

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

1270

CADMUS

Canst hearken aught then? Clearly canst reply?

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

To what house camest thou with bridal-hymns?

AGAVE

Echion's—of the Dragon-seed, men say.

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

Pentheus—born of my union with his sire.

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

Gaze, gaze on it, and be thou certified.

AGAVE

I see—mine uttermost anguish! Woe is me!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μῶν σοι λέοντι φαίνεται προσεικέναι;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

οὐκ· ἀλλὰ Πενθέως ἢ τάλαιν' ἔχω κάρα.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ῶμωγμένον γε πρόσθεν ἢ σὲ γνωρίσαι.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

τίς ἔκτανέν νιν; πῶς ἐμὰς ἦλθεν χεράς;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

δύστην' ἀλήθει', ὡς ἐν οὐ καιρῷ πάρει.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

λέγ', ὡς τὸ μέλλον καρδία πήδημ' ἔχει.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σύ νιν κατέκτας καὶ κασίγνηται σέθεν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

1290

ποῦ δ' ὤλετ'; ἢ κατ' οἶκον; ἢ ποίοις τόποις;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὔπερ πρὶν Ἀκταίωνα διέλαχον κύνες.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

τί δ' εἰς Κιθαιρῶν' ἦλθε δυσδαίμων ὄδε;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐκερτόμει θεὸν σὰς τε βακχείας μολών.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἡμεῖς δ' ἐκεῖσε τίνι τρόπῳ κατήραμεν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐμάνητε, πᾶσά τ' ἔξεβακχεύθη πόλις.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ὤλεσ', ἄρτι μανθάνω.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὑβριν γ' ὑβρισθεῖς· θεὸν γὰρ οὐχ ἠγεῖσθέ νιν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

τὸ φίλτατον δὲ σῶμα ποῦ παιδός, πάτερ;

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

Of me bewailed ere recognised of thee.

AGAVE

Who murdered him? How came he to mine hands?

CADMUS

O piteous truth that so untimely dawns!

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

There, where Actaeon erst by hounds was torn.

AGAVE

How to Cithaeron went this hapless one?

CADMUS

To mock the God and thy wild rites he went.

AGAVE

But we—for what cause thither journeyed we?

CADMUS

Ye were distraught: all Thebes went Bacchant-wild.

AGAVE

Dionysus ruined us! I see it now.

CADMUS

Ye flouted him, would not believe him God.

AGAVE

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐγὼ μύλις τόδ' ἐξερευνήσας φέρω.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1300

ἦ πᾶν ἐν ἄρθροισι συγκεκλημένον καλῶς ;

* * * * *

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Πενθεὶ δὲ τί μέρος ἀφροσύνης προσῆκ' ἐμῆς ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὑμῖν ἐγένεθ' ὅμοιος, οὐ σέβων θεόν.

τοιγὰρ συνῆψε πάντας εἰς μίαν βλάβην,

ὑμᾶς τε τόνδε θ', ὥστε-διολέσαι δόμους

κάμ', ὅστις ἄτεκνος ἀρσένων παίδων γεγώς,

τῆς σῆς τόδ' ἔρνος, ὦ τάλαινα, νηδύος

αἰσχιστά καὶ κάκιστα κατθανόνθ' ὀρώ,

ὦ δῶμ' ἀνέβλεφ', ὃς συνεῖχες, ὦ τέκνον,

τοῦμόν μέλαθρον, παιδὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς γεγώς,

1310

πόλει τε τάρβος ἦσθα· τὸν γέροντα δὲ

οὐδεὶς ὑβρίζειν ἤθελ' εἰσορῶν τὰ σὸν

κάρα· δίκην γὰρ ἀξίαν ἐλάμβανες.

νῦν δ' ἐκ δόμων ἄτιμος ἐκβεβλήσομαι

ὁ Κάδμος ὁ μέγας, ὃς τὸ Θηβαίων γένος

ἔσπειρα κάξήμησα κάλλιστον θέρος.

ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, καὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ὦν ὅμως

τῶν φιλτάτων ἔμοιγ' ἀριθμήσει, τέκνον,

οὐκέτι γενείου τοῦδε θιγγάνων χερί,

τὸν μητρὸς αὐδῶν πατέρα προσπτύξει, τέκνον,

1320

λέγων· τίς ἀδικεῖ, τίς σ' ἀτιμάζει, γέρον ;

τίς σὴν ταράσσει καρδίαν λυπηρὸς ὦν ;

λέγ', ὡς κολάζω τὸν ἀδικοῦντά σ', ὦ πάτερ.

νῦν δ' ἄθλιος μέν εἰμ' ἐγώ, τλήμων δὲ σύ,

οἰκτρὰ δὲ μήτηρ, τλήμιονες δὲ σύγγουοι.

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

Here do I bear it, by hard searching found. .

AGAVE

Is it all meetly fitted limb to limb?

1300

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

But—in my folly what was Pentheus' part?

CADMUS

He was as ye, revering not the God,
Who therefore in one mischief whelmed you all,
You, and this prince, so ruining all our house
And me, who had no manchild of mine own,
Who see now, wretched daughter, this the fruit
Of thy womb horribly and foully slain.
To thee our house looked up, O son, the stay
Of mine old halls; my daughter's offspring thou,
Thou wast the city's dread: was none dared mock 1310
The old man, none that turned his eyes on thee,
O gallant head!—thou hadst well requited him.

Now from mine halls shall I in shame be cast—
Cadmus the great, who sowed the seed of Thebes,
And reaped the goodliest harvest of the world.
O best-beloved!—for, though thou be no more,
Thou shalt be counted best-beloved, O child,
Thou who shalt fondle never more my head,
Nor clasp and call me “Mother's father,” child,
Crying, “Who wrongs thee, ancient?—flouts thee
who? 1320

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

113

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ὀρᾶς γὰρ τᾶμ' ὅσῳ μετεστράφη

* * * * *
* * * * *

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

* * * * *
* * * * *

1330

δράκων γενήσῃ μεταβαλῶν, δάμαρ τε σὴ
ἐκθηριωθείσ' ὄφεος ἀλλάξει τύπου,
ἦν Ἄρεος ἔσχεσ' Ἀρμονίαν θνητὸς γεγώς.
ὄχον δὲ μόςχων, χρησμὸς ὡς λέγει Διός,
ἐλᾶς μετ' ἀλόχου, βαρβάρων ἠγούμενος.
πολλὰς δὲ πέρσεισ ἀναρίθμῳ στρατεύματι
πόλεις· ὅταν δὲ Λοξίου χρηστήριον
διαρπάσωσι, νόστου ἄθλιον πάλιν
στήσουσι· σὲ δ' Ἄρης Ἀρμονίαν τε ῥύσεται
μακάρων τ' ἐς αἶαν σὸν καθιδρύσει βίον.

1340

ταῦτ' οὐχὶ θνητοῦ πατρὸς ἐκγεγώς λέγω
Διόνυσος, ἀλλὰ Ζηνός· εἰ δὲ σωφρονεῖν
ἔγνωθ', ὅτ' οὐκ ἠθέλετε, τὸν Διὸς γόνον
ἠὺδαιμονεῖτ' ἂν σύμμαχον κεκτημένοι.

THE BACCHANALS

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

CHORUS

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

AGAVE

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

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

DIONYSUS

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Διόνυσε, λισσόμεσθά σ', ἡδίκηκαμεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὄψ' ἐμίθεθ' ἡμᾶς, ὅτε δ' ἐχρῆν, οὐκ ἤδετε.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἐγνώκαμεν ταῦτ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεξέρχει λίαν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ πρὸς ὑμῶν θεὸς γεγὼς ὑβριζόμεν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὀργὰς πρέπει θεοὺς οὐχ ὁμοιοῦσθαι βροτοῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πάλαι τάδε Ζεὺς οὐμὸς ἐπένευσεν πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

1350 αἰαί, δέδοκται, πρέσβυ, τλήμονες φυγαί.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δῆτα μέλλεθ' ἄπερ ἀναγκαίως ἔχει ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, ὡς εἰς δεινὸν ἦλθομεν κακόν,
[πάντες], σύ θ' ἢ τάλαινα σύγγονοί τε σαί,
ἐγὼ θ' ὁ τλήμων βαρβάρους ἀφίξομαι
γέρων μέτοικος· ἔτι δέ μοι τὸ θέσφατον
εἰς Ἑλλάδ' ἀγαγεῖν μιγάδα βάρβαρον στρατόν.
καὶ τὴν Ἄρεως παιῖδ' Ἄρμονίαν δάμαρτ' ἐμήν,
δράκων δρακαίνης φύσιν ἔχουσαν ἀγρίαν
1360 ἄξω 'πὶ βωμοὺς καὶ τάφους Ἑλληνικούς,
ἠγούμενος λόγχαισιν· οὐδὲ παύσομαι
κακῶν ὁ τλήμων, οὐδὲ τὸν καταϊβάτην
'Αχέροντα πλεύσας ἤσυχος γενήσομαι.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ στερεῖσα φεύξομαι.

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Dionysus, we beseech thee!—we have sinned.

DIONYSUS

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

AGAVE

We know it: but thy vengeance passeth bounds.

DIONYSUS

I am a God: ye did despite to me.

AGAVE

It fits not that in wrath Gods be as men.

DIONYSUS

Long since my father Zeus ordained this so.

AGAVE

Alas! our woeful exile's doom is sealed! 1350

DIONYSUS

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

CADMUS

Daughter, to what dread misery are we come,—
Yea, all, thou and thy sisters—woe is thee?
And I—ah me!—must visit alien men,
A grey-haired sojourner. I am doomed withal
On Greeks to lead a mingled alien host;
And Ares' child, Harmonia my wife,
In serpent form shall I, a serpent, lead
Against our Hellas' altars and her tombs,
Captaining spears. And I shall find no rest 1360
From woes, alas! nor that down-rushing stream
Of Acheron shall I cross and be at peace!

AGAVE

Robbed of thee, father, exiled shall I be!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τί μ' ἀμφιβάλλεις χερσίν, ὦ τάλαινα παῖ,
ὄρνιν ὅπως κηφήνα πολιοῦχρος κύκνος ;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ποῖ γὰρ τράπωμαι πατρίδος ἐκβεβλημένη ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα, τέκνον· μικρὸς ἐπίκουρος πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

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

1370

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

στεῖχέ νυν, ὦ παῖ, τὸν Ἄρισταίου

* * * * *

ΑΓΑΘΗ

στένομαί σε, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

κἀγὼ σέ, τέκνον,
καὶ σὰς ἐδάκρυσα κασιγνήτας.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

χαῖρε, πάτερ μοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

χαῖρ', ὦ μελέα
θύγατερ. χαλεπῶς εἰς τόδ' ἂν ἦκοις.

1380

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

Whither can I turn, outcast from my land?

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

1370

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

I mourn thee, father!

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

Farewell, my father.

CADMUS

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

1380

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ἄγετ' ὦ πομποί με, κασιγνήτας
ἵνα συμφυγάδας ληψόμεθ' οἰκτράς.
ἔλθοιμι δ' ὅπου
μήτε Κιθαιρῶν μιάρως μ' ἐσίδοι,
μήτε Κιθαιρῶν ὄσσοισιν ἐγώ,
μήθ' ὄθι θύρσου μνήμ' ἀνάκειται·
Βάκχαις δ' ἄλλαισι μέλοιεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

1390

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

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

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

CHORUS

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

Manifold things unhopèd-for the Gods to accom-
plishment bring.

And the things that we looked for, the Gods deign
not to fulfil them ;

1390

And the paths undiscernèd of our eyes, the Gods un-
seal them.

So fell this marvellous thing.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.]

APPENDIX TO THE "BACCHANALS."

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

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

A. To find a doom of rending midst the rocks¹

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

For, had mine hands received not mine own curse²

To rend to utter fragments every limb

Kissing the shreds of flesh which once I nursed

Come, ancient, this thrice-hapless sufferer's head
Compose we reverently, and all the frame
Lay we together, far as in us lies.
O best-belovèd face, O youthful cheek
Lo, with this vesture do I veil thine head,
And these thy blood-bedabbled, furrow-scarred
Limbs

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

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

APPENDIX

D. He dared the chain, he dared the scoffing word . . .

They which should have been last to slay him, slew . . .

All this hath yon man suffered righteously.

Yea, and the nation's doom I will not hide—
To leave yon town, a sign to alien men,
To pass to many cities wandering,
Dragging a yoke of thraldom woefully,
War-captives, draining misery's cup to the dregs

Yea, they must leave this city, expiate
The impious pollution of his murder,
And see no more their own land—God forbid
That murderers by their victims' graves should lie!

All woes thou too must suffer will I tell.

**THE
MADNESS OF HERCULES**

ARGUMENT

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

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ ΓΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ΙΡΙΣ

ΛΥΣΣΑ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

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

MEGARA, *wife of Hercules.*

LYCUS, *a usurper, king of Thebes.*

HERCULES, *son of Zeus and Alcmena.*

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

MADNESS, *a demon.*

SERVANT of *Hercules.*

THESEUS, *king of Athens.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Theban Elders.*

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

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

Τίς τὸν Διὸς σύλλεκτρον οὐκ οἶδεν βροτῶν,
'Αργεῖον 'Αμφιτρώων', ὃν 'Αλκαῖός ποτε
ἔτιχθ' ὁ Περσέως, πατέρα τόνδ' 'Ηρακλέους ;
ὃς τάσδε Θήβας ἔσχευ, ἔνθ' ὁ γηγενῆς
σπαρτῶν στάχυς ἔβλασταν, ὧν γένους 'Αρης
ἔσωσ' ἀριθμὸν ὀλίγον, οἱ Κάδμου πόλιν
τεκνοῦσι παίδων παισίν. ἔνθεν ἐξέφυ
Κρέων Μενοικέως παῖς, ἀναξ τῆσδε χθονός.
Κρέων δὲ Μεγάρων τῆσδε γίγνεται πατήρ,
10 ἦν πάντες ὑμεναίοισι Καδμείοί ποτε
λωτῶ συνηλάλαξαν, ἠνίκ' εἰς ἐμοὺς
δόμους ὁ κλεινὸς 'Ηρακλῆς νιν ἤγετο.
λιπῶν δὲ Θήβας, οὐ κατωκίσθην ἐγώ,
Μεγάρων τε τῆνδε πευθερούς τε παῖς ἐμὸς
'Αργεῖα τείχη καὶ Κυκλωπίαν πόλιν
ᾠρέξατ' οἰκεῖν, ἦν ἐγὼ φεύγω κτανῶν
'Ηλεκτρώωνα· συμφορὰς δὲ τὰς ἐμὰς
ἔξενμαρίζων καὶ πάτραν οἰκεῖν θέλων,
20 καθόδου δίδωσι μισθὸν Εὐρυσθεῖ μέγαν,
ἐξημερῶσαι γαῖαν, εἴθ' "Ηρας ὕπο
κέντροις δαμασθεῖς εἴτε τοῦ χρεῶν μέτα.
καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἐξεμόχθησεν πόνους,

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

Who knows not Zeus's couch-mate, who of men,
Argive Amphitryon, sprung from Perseus' son
Alcaeus, father of great Hercules?
Here in Thebes dwelt he, whence the earth-born
 crop
Of Sown Men rose, scant remnant of whose race
The War-god spared to people Cadmus' town
With children of their children. Sprang from these
Creon, Menoeceus' son, king of this land,
Creon, the father of this Megara,
Whose spousals all the sons of Cadmus once 10
Acclaimed with flutes, what time unto mine halls
Glorious Hercules brought home his bride.
But Thebes, wherein I dwelt, and Megara,
And all his marriage-kin, my son forsook,
Yearning for Argos' giant-built burg
Mycenae, whence I am outlawed, since I slew
Electryon : he, to lighten mine affliction,
And fain to dwell in his own fatherland,
Proffered Eurystheus for our home-return—
Or spurred by Hera's goads, or drawn by fate— 20
A great price, even to rid the earth of pests.
And, all the other labours now achieved,

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K 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ Ταινάρου διὰ στόμα
 βέβηκ' ἐς Ἄιδου τὸν τρισώματον κύνα
 εἰς φῶς ἀνάξων, ἔνθεν οὐχ ἤκει πάλιν.
 γέρων δὲ δὴ τις ἔστι Καδμείων λόγος
 ὡς ἦν πάρος Δίρκης τις εὐνήτωρ Λύκος
 τὴν ἐπτάπυργον τήνδε δεσπόζων πόλιν,
 τὼ λευκοπώλω πρὶν τυραννῆσαι χθονὸς
 30 Ἀμφίον' ἠδὲ Ζῆθον, ἐκγόνω Διός.
 οὐ ταῦτ' ὄνομα παῖς πατρὸς κεκλημένος,
 Καδμείος οὐκ ὢν, ἀλλ' ἀπ' Εὐβοίας μολών,
 κτείνει Κρέοντα καὶ κτανῶν ἄρχει χθονός,
 στάσει νοσοῦσαν τήνδ' ἐπεισπεσῶν πόλιν.
 ἡμῖν δὲ κῆδος εἰς Κρέοντ' ἀνημμένον
 κακὸν μέγιστον, ὡς ἔοικε, γίγνεται.
 τοῦμοῦ γὰρ ὄντος παιδὸς ἐν μυχοῖς χθονὸς
 ὁ καινὸς οὗτος τῆσδε γῆς ἄρχων Λύκος
 τοὺς Ἑρακλείους παῖδας ἐξελεῖν θέλει
 40 κτανῶν δάμαρτά θ', ὡς φόνω σβέση φόνον,
 κάμ'—εἴ τι δὴ χρὴ κάμ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν λέγειν
 γέροντ' ἀχρείου—μή ποθ' οἶδ' ἠνδρωμένοι
 μήτρωσιν ἐκπράξωσιν αἵματος δίκην.
 ἐγὼ δέ—λείπει γάρ με τοῖσδ' ἐν δώμασι
 τροφὸν τέκνων οἰκουρόν, ἠνίκα χθονὸς
 μέλαιναν ὄρφνην εἰσέβαινε παῖς ἐμός—
 σὺν μητρὶ, τέκνα μὴ θάνωσ' Ἑρακλέους,
 βωμὸν καθίζω τόνδε σωτήρος Διός,
 ὃν καλλινίκου δορὸς ἄγαλμ' ἰδρύσατο
 50 Μινύας κρατήσας οὐμὸς εὐγενῆς τόκος.
 πάντων δὲ χρεῖοι τάσδ' ἔδρας φυλάσσομεν,
 σίτων ποτῶν ἐσθῆτος, ἀστρώτῳ πέδῳ
 πλευρὰς τιθέντες· ἐκ γὰρ ἐσφραγισμένοι
 δόμων καθήμεθ' ἀπορία σωτηρίας.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

φίλων δὲ τοὺς μὲν οὐ σαφεῖς ὀρῶ φίλους,
οἱ δ' ὄντες ὀρθῶς ἀδύνατοι προσωφελεῖν.
τοιούτου ἀνθρώποισιν ἢ δυσπραξία,
ἧς μήποθ' ὅστις καὶ μέσως εὖνους ἐμοὶ
τύχοι, φίλων ἔλεγχον ἀψευδέστατον.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

- 60 ὦ πρέσβυ, Ταφίων ὅς ποτ' ἐξεῖλες πόλιν
στρατηλατήσας κλεινὰ Καδμείων δορός,
ὡς οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποισι τῶν θείων σαφές.
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐτ' εἰς πατέρ' ἀπηλάθην τύχης,
ὅς εἶνεκ' ὄλβου μέγας ἐκομπάσθη ποτέ,
ἔχων τυραυνίδ', ἧς μακρὰι λόγχοι πέρι
πηδῶσ' ἔρωτι σώματ' εἰς εὐδαιμονα,
ἔχων δὲ τέκνα· καὶ μ' ἔδωκε παιδὶ σὺ
ἐπίσημον εὖνην Ἑρακλεῖ συνοικίσας·
καὶ νῦν ἐκεῖνα μὲν θανόντ' ἀνέπτατο·
- 70 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ σὺ μέλλομεν θήσκειν, γέρον,
οἱ θ' Ἑράκλειοι παῖδες, οὓς ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
σώζω νεοσσοὺς ὄρνις ὡς ὑφειμένους.
οἱ δ' εἰς ἔλεγχον ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν πίτνων,
ὦ μήτερ, αὐδᾶ, ποῖ πατὴρ ἄπεστι γῆς;
τί δρᾶ, πόθ' ἤξει; τῷ νέῳ δ' ἐσφαλμένοι
ζητοῦσι τὸν τεκόντ'. ἐγὼ δὲ διαφέρω
λόγοισι μυθεύουσα· θαυμάζω δ', ὅταν
πύλαι ψοφῶσι, πᾶς τ' ἀνίστησιν πόδα,
ὡς πρὸς πατρῶων προσπεσούμενοι γόνυ.
80 νῦν οὖν τίς ἐλπίδ' ἢ πόρον σωτηρίας
ἐξευμαρίζει, πρέσβυ; πρὸς σὲ γὰρ βλέπω.
ὡς οὔτε γαίας ὄρι' ἂν ἐκβαῖμεν λάθρα·
φυλακαὶ γὰρ ἡμῶν κρείσσονες κατ' ἐξόδους·
οὐτ' ἐν φίλοισιν ἐλπίδες σωτηρίας
ἔτ' εἰσὶν ἡμῖν. ἦντιν' οὖν γνώμην ἔχεις

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

MEGARA

Ancient, who once didst smite the Taphians' burg, 60
Captaining gloriously the Theban spears,
How are God's ways with men past finding out !
Not Fortune's outcast was I through my sire :
So prospered he, all men acclaimed him great :
Kingship he had—that thing for lust whereof
Long lances leap against men fortune-throned :
Children had he ; me to thy son he gave,
In glorious spousal joined with Hercules.

Now is all dead—on vanished pinions flown !
Now, ancient, thou and I are marked for death, 70
With Hercules' children, whom, as 'neath her
wings

A bird her fledglings gathereth, so I keep.
And this one, that one falls to questioning still—
“ Mother, in what land stays our father ?—tell.
What doth he? When comes?” In child-ignorance
They seek their sire : and still I put them by
With fables feigned ; yet wondering start, whene'er
A door sounds ; and all leap unto their feet,
Looking to cling about their father's knees.

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

λέγ' εἰς τὸ κοινόν, μὴ θανεῖν ἔτοιμον ἦ,
χρόνον δὲ μηκύνωμεν ὄντες ἀσθενεῖς.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ θύγατερ, οὔτοι ῥάδιον τὰ τοιάδε
φαύλως περαίνειν σπουδάσαντ' ἄνευ πόνου.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

90 λύπης τι προσδεῖς ἢ φιλεῖς οὔτω φάος ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καὶ τῷδε χαίρω καὶ φιλῶ τὰς ἐλπίδας.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κἀγὼ δοκεῖν δὲ τὰδόκητ' οὐ χρή, γέρον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἐν ταῖς ἀναβολαῖς τῶν κακῶν ἔνεστ' ἄκη.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὁ δ' ἐν μέσῳ με λυπρὸς ὧν δάκνει χρόνος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἔτ' ἂν γένοιτ', ὦ θύγατερ, οὔριος δρόμος
ἐκ τῶν παρόντων τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ κακῶν,
ἔλθοι τ' ἔτ' ἂν παῖς οὐμός, εὐνήτωρ δὲ σός.
ἀλλ' ἡσύχαζε καὶ δακρυρρούους τέκνων
πηγὰς ἀφαίρει καὶ παρευκῆλει λόγοις,
100 κλέπτουσα μύθοις ἀθλίους κλοπὰς ὁμως.
κάμνουσι γάρ τοι καὶ βροτῶν αἰ συμφοραί,
καὶ πνεύματ' ἀνέμων οὐκ αἰεὶ ῥώμην ἔχει,
οἳ τ' εὐτυχοῦντες διὰ τέλους οὐκ εὐτυχεῖς·
ἐξίσταται γὰρ πάντ' ἀπ' ἀλλήλων δίχλα.
οὔτος δ' ἀνὴρ ἄριστος ὅστις ἐλπίσι
πέποιθεν αἰεὶ· τὸ δ' ἀπορεῖν ἀνδρὸς κακοῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὑψόροφα μέλαθρα
καὶ γεραῖα δέμνι', ἀμφὶ βάκτροις

στρ.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

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

MEGARA

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

AMPHITRYON

In this life I rejoice : I love its hopes.

MEGARA

And I : yet for things hopeless none may look.

AMPHITRYON

Even in delay is salve for evils found.

MEGARA

But ah the gnawing anguish of suspense !

AMPHITRYON

Daughter, a fair-wind course may yet befall
From storms of present ills for thee and me.
Yet may he come—my son, thy lord, may come.
Nay, calm thee : stop the fountains welling tears
Of these thy sons, and soothe them with thy words,
Cheating them with a fable—piteous cheat ! 100
Sooth, men's afflictions weary of their work,
And tempest-blasts not alway keep their force ;
Nor prosperous to the end the prosperous are ;
For all things fleet and yield each other place.
He is the hero, who in steadfast hope
Trusts on : despair is but the coward's part.

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

CHORUS

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

110 ἔρεισμα θέμενος, ἐστάλην ἱαλέμων
 γόων ἀοιδὸς ὥστε πολλὸς ὄρνις,
 ἔπεια μόνον καὶ δόκημα νυκτερωπὸν
 ἐννύχων ὀνείρων,
 τρομερὰ μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως πρόθυμα.

ὦ τέκεα πατρὸς ἀπάτορ', ὦ
 γεραιὲ σύ τε τάλαινα μᾶ-
 τερ, ἃ τὸν Ἀίδα δόμοις
 πόσιν ἀναστενάξεις.

120 μὴ πόδα προκάμητε ἀντ.
 βαρὺ τε κῶλον, ὥστε πρὸς πετραῖον
 †λέπας ζυγοφόρος ἄρματος βάρους φέρων
 τροχηλάτοιο πῶλος.¹
 λαβοῦ χερῶν καὶ πέπλων, ὅτου λέλοιπε
 ποδὸς ἀμαυρὸν ἴχνος·
 γέρων γέροντα παρακόμιζε,
 ᾧ ξύνοπλα δόρατα νέα νέω
 τὸ πάρος ἐν ἡλίκων πόνοις
 ξυνήν ποτ', εὐκλεεστάτας
 πατρίδος οὐκ ὀνειδίη.

130 ἴδετε, πατρὸς ὡς ἐπφδ.
 γόργῶπες αἶδε προσφερεῖς
 ὀμμάτων αὐγαί,
 τὸ δὲ δὴ κακοτυχὲς οὐ λέλοιπεν ἐκ τέκνων,
 οὐδ' ἀποίχεται χάρις.

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Bowed o'er my propping staff—a chanter I
Whose song rings sorrow round— 110

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

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

Let feet not faint, nor let the tired limbs trail (*Ant.*)
Heavy, as when uphillward strain, 120
Trampling the stones, a young steed's feet that hale
The massy four-wheel wain.

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

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

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Ἐλλάς ὦ ξυμμάχους
οἴους οἴους ὀλέσασα
τούσδ' ἀποστερήσει.

ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ τῆσδε κοίρανον χθονὸς
Λύκον περῶντα τῶνδε δωμάτων πάρος.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

- 140 τὸν Ἡράκλειον πατέρα καὶ ξυνύορον,
εἰ χρή μ', ἐρωτῶ· χρή δ', ἐπεὶ γε δεσπότης
ὑμῶν καθέστηχ', ἱστορεῖν ἂ βούλομαι·
τίν' εἰς χρόνον ζητεῖτε μηκῦναι βίον ;
τίν' ἐλπίδ' ἀλκῆν τ' εἰσορᾶτε μὴ θανεῖν ;
ἢ τὸν παρ' Αἰδη πατέρα τῶνδε κείμενον
πιστεύεθ' ἤξειν ; ὡς ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀξίαν
τὸ πένθος αἶρεσθ', εἰ θανεῖν ὑμᾶς χρεῶν,
σὺ μὲν καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἐκβαλὼν κόμπους κενοὺς
ὡς σύγγαμός σοι Ζεὺς τέκνου τε κοινέων,²
150 σὺ δ' ὡς ἀρίστου φωτὸς ἐκλήθης δάμαρ.
τί δὴ τὸ σεμνὸν σῶ κατείργασται πόσει,
ὔδραν ἔλειον εἰ διώλεσε κτανῶν
ἢ τὸν Νέμειον θῆρ' ; ὃν ἐν βρόχοις ἐλῶν
βραχίονός φησ' ἀγχόνοισιν ἐξελεῖν.
τοῖσδ' ἐξαγωνίζεσθε ; τῶνδ' ἄρ' εἴνεκεν
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας οὐ θνήσκειν χρεῶν ;
ὃς ἔσχε δόξαν οὐδὲν ὦν εὐψυχίας
θηρῶν ἐν αἰχμῇ, τᾶλλα δ' οὐδὲν ἀλκιμος,
ὃς οὔποτ' ἀσπίδ' ἔσχε πρὸς λαϊᾷ χειρὶ
160 οὐδ' ἦλθε λόγχης ἐγγύς, ἀλλὰ τόξ' ἔχων,
κάκιστον ὄπλον, τῇ φυγῇ πρόχειρος ἦν.
ἀνδρὸς δ' ἔλεγχος οὐχὶ τόξ' εὐψυχίας,

² Heath : for MSS. τέκοι νέον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

Enter LYCUS.

LYCUS

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

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἀλλ' ὄς μένων βλέπει τε κἀντιδέρεται
 δορὸς ταχεῖαν ἄλοκα τίξιν ἐμβεβώς.
 ἔχει δὲ τοῦμόν οὐκ ἀναδειαυ, γέρον,
 ἀλλ' εὐλάβειαν· οἶδα γὰρ κατακτανὼν
 Κρέοντα πατέρα τῆσδε καὶ θρόνους ἔχων.
 οὐκουν τραφέντων τῶνδε τιμωροὺς ἐμοὶ
 χρήζω λιπέσθαι τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

- 170 τὸ τοῦ Διὸς μὲν Ζεὺς ἀμυνέτω μέρει
 παιδός· τὸ δ' εἰς ἔμ', Ἡράκλεις, ἐμοὶ μέλει
 λόγιοισι τὴν τοῦδ' ἀμαθίαν ὑπὲρ σέθεν
 δεῖξαι· κακῶς γάρ σ' οὐκ ἑατέον κλύειν.
 πρῶτον μὲν οὖν τᾶρρητ', ἐν ἀρρήτοισι γὰρ
 τὴν σὴν νομίζω δειλίαν, Ἡράκλεες,
 σὺν μάρτυσιν θεοῖς δεῖ μ' ἀπαλλάξαι σέθεν.
 Διὸς κεραυνὸν δ' ἠρόμην τέθριππά τε,
 ἐν οἷς βεβηκῶς τοῖσι γῆς βλαστήμασι
 Γίγασι, πλευροῖς πτήν' ἐναρμόσας βέλη,
 180 τὸν καλλίνικον μετὰ θεῶν ἐκώμασε·
 τετρασκελές θ' ὕβρισμα Κενταύρων γένος,
 Φολόην ἐπελθῶν, ᾧ κάκιστε βασιλέων,
 ἐροῦ τίς ἄνδρ' ἄριστον ἐγκρίνειαν ἄν,
 ἢ οὐ παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν, ὃν σὺ φῆς εἶναι δοκεῖν.
 Δίρφυν δ' ἐρωτῶν ἢ σ' ἔθρεψ' Ἀβαντίδα,
 οὐκ ἄν σ' ἐπαινέσειεν· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπου
 ἔσθλόν τι δράσας μάρτυρ' ἄν λάβοις πάτραν.
 τὸ πάνσοφον δ' εὖρημα, τοξήρη σάγην,
 μέμφει· κλύων νῦν τὰπ' ἐμοῦ σοφὸς γενοῦ.
 190 ἀνὴρ ὀπλίτης δουλὸς ἐστί τῶν ὄπλων,
 κἀν τοῖσι συνταχθεῖσιν οὐσι μὴ ἀγαθοῖς
 αὐτὸς τέθνηκε δειλία τῇ τῶν πέλας,
 θραύσας τε λόγχην οὐκ ἔχει τῷ σώματι

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

For Zeus's part—his own son's birth let Zeus 170
Defend : but, Hercules, to me it falls
Pleading thy cause to show this fellow's folly :
I may not suffer thee to be defamed.

First; of that slander—for a slanderous lie,
Hercules, count I cowardice charged on thee,—
By the Gods' witness thee I clear of this :
To Zeus's thunder I appeal, to the car
That bare the Hero against the earth-born brood,
The Giants, planting winged shafts in their ribs,
When with the Gods he sang the victory-chant. 180

Or thou to Pholoë go, most base of kings,
The four-foot monsters ask, the Centaur tribe,
Ask them whom they would count the bravest man.
Whom but my son?—by thee named “hollow
show” !

Ask Dirphys, Abas' land, which fostered thee ;
It should not praise thee :—place is none wherein
Thy land could witness to brave deed of thine !

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

θάνατον ἀμύναι, μίαν ἔχων ἀλκὴν μόνον·
 ὅσοι δὲ τόξοις χεῖρ' ἔχουσιν εὖστοχον,
 ἐν μὲν τὸ λῶστον, μυρίους οἰστοὺς ἀφείς
 ἄλλοις τὸ σῶμα ῥύεται μὴ κατθανεῖν,
 ἐκάς δ' ἀφεστῶς πολεμίους ἀμύνεται
 τυφλοῖς ὀρώντας οὐτάσας τοξεύμασι,
 200 τὸ σῶμά τ' οὐ δίδωσι τοῖς ἐναντίοις,
 ἐν εὐφυλάκτῳ δ' ἐστί· τοῦτο δ' ἐν μάχῃ
 σοφὸν μάλιστα, δρώντα πολεμίους κακῶς
 σῶζειν τὸ σῶμα, μὴ ἐκ τύχης ὠρμισμένους.
 λόγοι μὲν οἶδε τοῖσι σοῖς ἐναντίαν
 γνώμην ἔχουσι τῶν καθεστώτων πέρι.
 παῖδας δὲ δὴ τί τοῦσδ' ἀποκτεῖναι θέλεις ;
 τί σ' οἶδ' ἔδρασαν ; ἐν τί σ' ἠγοῦμαι σοφόν,
 εἰ τῶν ἀρίστων τᾶκγον' αὐτὸς ὢν κακὸς
 δέδοικας. ἀλλὰ τοῦθ' ὅμως ἡμῖν βαρῦ,
 210 εἰ δειλίας σῆς κατθανούμεθ' εἵνεκα,
 ὃ χρῆν σ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν τῶν ἀμεινόνων παθεῖν,
 εἰ Ζεὺς δικαίας εἶχεν εἰς ἡμᾶς φρένας.
 εἰ δ' οὖν ἔχειν γῆς σκῆπτρα τῆσδ' αὐτὸς θέλεις,
 ἕασον ἡμᾶς φυγάδας ἐξελθεῖν χθονός·
 βία δὲ δράσης μηδέν, ἢ πείσει βίαν,
 ὅταν θεὸς σοι πνεῦμα μεταβαλὼν τύχη·
 φεῦ·
 ὦ γαῖα Κάδμου, καὶ γὰρ εἰς σ' ἀφίξομαι
 λόγους ὄνειδιστήρας ἐνδατούμενος,
 τοιαῦτ' ἀμύνεθ' Ἡρακλεῖ τέκνοισί τε ;
 220 ὃς εἰς Μινύαισι πᾶσι διὰ μάχης μολῶν
 Θήβαις ἔθηκεν ὄμμ' ἐλεύθερον βλέπειν.
 οὐδ' Ἑλλάδ' ἦνεσ', οὐδ' ἀνέξομαί ποτε
 σιγῶν, κακίστην λαμβάνων εἰς παῖδ' ἐμόν,
 ἦν χρῆν νεοσσοῖς τοῖσδε πῦρ λόγχασ ὅπλα

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

φέρουσαν ἔλθειν, ποντίων καθαρμάτων
 χέρσου τ' ἀμοιβίας, ὧν ἐμόχθησεν χάριν.
 τὰ δ', ὦ τέκν', ὑμῖν οὔτε Θηβαίων πόλις
 οὔθ' Ἑλλάς ἀρκεῖ· πρὸς δ' ἔμ' ἀσθενῆ φίλον
 230 δεδόρκατ', οὐδὲν ὄντα πλὴν γλώσσης ψόφου.
 ῥώμη γὰρ ἐκλέλοιπεν ἦν πρὶν εἶχομεν
 γήρα δὲ τρομερὰ γυῖα κάμαυρον σθένος.
 εἰ δ' ἦ νέος τε κάτι σώματος κρατῶν,
 λαβὼν ἂν ἔγχος τοῦδε τοὺς ξανθοὺς πλόκους
 καθημάτων' ἄν, ὥστ' Ἀτλαντικῶν πέραν
 φεύγειν ὄρων ἂν δειλία τοῦμόν δόρυ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄρ' οὐκ ἀφορμὰς τοῖς λόγοισιν ἀγαθοὶ
 θνητῶν ἔχουσι, κἂν βραδύς τις ἦ λέγειν ;

ΛΤΚΟΣ

σὺ μὲν λέγ' ἡμᾶς οἷς πεπύργωσαι λόγοις,
 ἐγὼ δὲ δράσω σ' ἀντὶ τῶν λόγων κακῶς.
 240 ἄγ', οἱ μὲν Ἑλικῶν, οἱ δὲ Παρνασοῦ πτυχὰς
 τέμνειν ἄνωχθ' ἔλθόντες ὑλουργοὺς δρυὸς
 κορμούς· ἐπειδὰν δ' εἰσκομισθῶσιν πόλει,
 βωμὸν πέριξ νήσαντες ἀμφήρη ξύλα
 ἐμπίπρατ' αὐτῶν καὶ πυροῦτε σώματα
 πάντων, ἵν' εἰδῶσ' οὔνεκ' οὐχ ὁ καθθανὼν
 κρατεῖ χθονὸς τῆσδ', ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὰ νῦν τάδε.
 ὑμεῖς δὲ πρέσβεις ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἐναντίοι
 γνώμαισιν ὄντες, οὐ μόνον στενάξετε
 250 τοὺς Ἑρακλείους παῖδας, ἀλλὰ καὶ δόμου
 τύχας, ὅταν πάσχη τι, μεμνήσεσθε δὲ
 δοῦλοι γεγῶτες τῆς ἐμῆς τυραννίδος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ γῆς λοχεύμαθ', οὗς Ἄρης σπείρει ποτὲ
 λάβρον δράκοντος ἐξερημώσας γένυν,

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

Repayment for his purging seas and lands.

Ah boys, such aid to you the Thebans' town

Nor Hellas brings ! To me, a strengthless friend,

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

For vanished is the might I had of old,

230

Palsied with eld my limbs are, gone my strength.

Were I but young yet, master of my thews,

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

I had dashed with blood, and so before my spear

Far beyond Atlas' bounds the craven had fled !

CHORUS

Lo, cannot brave men find occasion still

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

LYCUS

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

I will for words requite on thee ill deeds.

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

240

Those to Parnassus' folds, and hew them logs

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

On either side the altar billets pile,

And kindle ; so the bodies of all these

Roast ye, that they may know that not the dead

Ruleth the land, but now am I king here.

And ye old men which set yourselves against

My purpose, not for Hercules' sons alone

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

Fast as blows fall, and so shall not forget

250

That ye are bondslaves of my princely power.

CHORUS

O brood of Earth, whom Ares sowed of yore,

What time he stripped the dragon's ravening jaws,

147

L 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

οὐ σκῆπτρα, χειρὸς δεξιᾶς ἐρείσματα,
 ἀρείτε καὶ τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἀνόσιον κῆρα
 καθαιματώσεθ', ὅστις οὐ Καδμείος ὢν
 ἄρχει κάκιστος τῶν νέων ἔπηλυς ὢν ;
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐμοῦ γε δεσπόμεναι χαίρων ποτε,
 οὐδ' ἀπόνησα πόλλ' ἐγὼ καμῶν χειρὶ
 280 ἔξει· ἀπέρρων δ' ἔνθεν ἤλθες ἐνθάδε,
 ὕβριζ'. ἐμοῦ γὰρ ζῶντος οὐ κτενεῖς ποτε
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας· οὐ τοσόνδε γῆς
 ἔνερθ' ἐκείνος κρύπτεται λιπῶν τέκνα.
 ἐπεὶ σὺ μὲν γῆν τήνδε διολέσας ἔχεις,
 ὁ δ' ὠφελήσας ἀξίων οὐ τυγχάνει·
 κᾶπειτα πράσσω πόλλ' ἐγὼ, φίλους ἐμούς
 θανόντας εὐ δρών οὐ φίλων μάλιστα δεῖ ;
 ὦ δεξιὰ χεῖρ, ὡς ποθείς λαβεῖν δόρυ,
 ἐν δ' ἀσθενείᾳ τὸν πόθον διώλεσας.
 270 ἐπεὶ σ' ἔπαυσ' ἂν δούλον ἐννέποντά με
 καὶ τάσδε Θήβας εὐκλεῶς ὠκήσαμεν,
 ἐν αἷς σὺ χαίρεις. οὐ γὰρ εὐ φρονεῖ πόλις
 στάσει νοσοῦσα καὶ κακοῖς βουλευμασιν·
 οὐ γὰρ ποτ' ἂν σὲ δεσπότην ἐκτίησατο.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

γέροντες, αἰνῶ· τῶν φίλων γὰρ εἵνεκα
 ὀργὰς δικαίας τοὺς φίλους ἔχειν χρεῶν·
 ἡμῶν δ' ἕκατι δεσπότην θυμούμενοι
 πάθητε μηδέν. τῆς δ' ἐμῆς, Ἀμφιτρύων,
 γνώμης ἄκουσον, ἣν τί σοι δοκῶ λέγειν.
 280 ἐγὼ φιλῶ μὲν τέκνα· πῶς γὰρ οὐ φιλῶ
 ἀτικτον, ἀμόχθησα ; καὶ τὸ κατθανεῖν
 δεινὸν νομίζω· τῷ δ' ἀναγκαίῳ τρόπῳ

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

260

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

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

270

MEGARA

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

280

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

290 δς ἀντιτείνει, σκαιὸν ἠγοῦμαι βροτόν.
 ἡμᾶς δ' ἐπειδὴ δεῖ θανεῖν, θνήσκειν χρεῶν
 μὴ πυρὶ καταξανθέντας, ἐχθροῖσιν γέλων
 διδόντας, οὐμοὶ τοῦ θανεῖν μείζον κακόν.
 ὀφείλομεν γὰρ πολλὰ δώμασιν καλά.
 σέ μὲν δόκησις ἔλαβεν εὐκλεῆς δορός,
 ὥστ' οὐκ ἀνεκτὸν δειλίας θανεῖν σ' ὑπο-
 οὔμῳ δ' ἁμαρτύρητος εὐκλεῆς πόσις,
 ὡς τούσδε παῖδας οὐκ ἂν ἐκσῶσαι θέλοι
 δόξαν κακὴν λαβόντας· οἱ γὰρ εὐγενεῖς
 κάμνουσι τοῖς αἰσχροῖσι τῶν τέκνων ὑπερ,
 ἐμοί τε μίμημ' ἀνδρὸς οὐκ ἀπωστέον.
 σκέψαι δὲ τὴν σὴν ἐλπίδ', ἧ λογιζομαι
 ἤξειν νομίζεις παῖδα σὸν γαίας ὑπο-
 καὶ τίς θανόντων ἦλθεν ἐξ "Αἰδου πάλιν ;
 ἀλλ' ὡς λόγοισι τόνδε μαλθάξαιμεν ἄν ;
 300 ἦκιστα· φεύγειν σκαιὸν ἄνδρ' ἐχθρὸν χρεῶν,
 σοφοῖσι δ' εἰκὴν καὶ τεθραμμένοις καλῶς·
 ῥᾶον γὰρ αἰδοῦς ὑποβαλὼν φίλ' ἂν τύχοις.
 ἤδη δ' ἐσῆλθέ μ' εἰ παραιτησαίμεθα
 φυγὰς τέκνων τῶνδ'· ἀλλὰ καὶ τόδ' ἄθλιον,
 πενία σὺν οἰκτρᾷ περιβαλεῖν σωτηρίαν·
 ὡς τὰ ξένων πρόσωπα φεύγουσιν φίλοις
 ἐν ἡμαρ ἠδὺ βλέμμ' ἔχειν φασὶν μόνον.
 τόλμα μεθ' ἡμῶν θάνατον, ὃς μένει σ' ὄμως.
 προκαλούμεθ' εὐγένειαν, ὃ γέρον, σέθεν·
 310 τὰς τῶν θεῶν γὰρ ὅστις ἐκμοχθεῖ τύχας,
 πρόθυμός ἐστιν, ἢ προθυμία δ' ἄφρων·
 ὃ χρὴ γὰρ οὐδεὶς μὴ χρεῶν θήσει ποτέ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰ μὲν σθενόντων τῶν ἐμῶν βραχιόνων
 ἦν τίς σ' ὑβρίζων, ῥαδίως ἐπαύσατ' ἄν·

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

CHORUS

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὔτοι τὸ δειλὸν οὐδὲ τοῦ βίου πόθος
θανεῖν ἐρύκει μ', ἀλλὰ παιδὶ βούλομαι
σῶσαι τέκν'. ἄλλως δ' ἀδυνάτων ἔοικ' ἐρᾶν.
ἰδοὺ πάρεστιν ἦδε φασγάνῳ δέρη
320 κεντεῖν φονεύειν, ἰέναι πέτρας ἄπο.
μίαν δὲ νῶν δὸς χάριν, ἄναξ, ἰκνούμεθα·
κτείνόν με καὶ τήνδ' ἀθλίαν παίδων πάρος,
ὡς μὴ τέκν' εἰσίδωμεν, ἀνόσιον θέαν,
ψυχορραγούντα καὶ καλοῦντα μητέρα
πατρός τε πατέρα. τᾶλλα δ' ἤ πρόθυμος εἶ
πρᾶσσ'· οὐ γὰρ ἀλκὴν ἔχομεν ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κἀγὼ σ' ἰκνούμαι χάριτι προσθεῖναι χάριν,
ἡμῖν ἴν' ἀμφοῖν εἰς ἰπουργήσης διπλᾶ·
κόσμον πάρες μοι παισὶ προσθεῖναι νεκρῶν,
330 δόμους ἀνοίξας—νῦν γὰρ ἐκκεκλήμεθα—
ὡς ἀλλὰ ταυτὰ γ' ἀπολάβωσ' οἴκων πατρός.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἔσται τάδ'· οἶγειν κληῖθρα προσπόλοις λέγω.
κοσμεῖσθ' ἔσω μολόντες· οὐ φθονῶ πέπλων.
ὅταν δὲ κόσμον περιβάλησθε σώμασιν,
ἦξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς νερτέρα δώσων χθονί.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὦ τέκν', ὀμαρτεῖτ' ἀθλίῳ μητρὸς ποδὶ
πατρῶον εἰς μέλαθρον, οὐ τῆς οὐσίας
ἄλλοι κρατοῦσι, τὸ δ' ὄνομ' ἔσθ' ἡμῶν ἔτι.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

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

MEGARA

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

LYCUS

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

MEGARA

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

340 ὦ Ζεῦ, μάτην ἄρ' ὀμόγαμόν σ' ἔκτησάμην,
 μάτην δὲ παιδὸς κοινεῶν¹ σ' ἐκλήζομεν·
 σὺ δ' ἦσθ' ἄρ' ἦσσον ἢ ἴδοικαι εἶναι φίλος.
 ἀρετῇ σε νικῶ θνητὸς ὦν θεὸν μέγαν·
 παῖδας γὰρ οὐ προὔδωκα τοὺς Ἡρακλέους.
 σὺ δ' εἰς μὲν εὐνάς κρύφιος ἠπίστω μολεῖν,
 τὰλλότρια λέκτρα δόντος οὐδενὸς λαβών,
 σφίξειν δὲ τοὺς σοὺς οὐκ ἐπίστασαι φίλους.
 ἀμαθῆς τις εἶ θεός, ἢ δίκαιος οὐκ ἔφυς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἴλινον μὲν ἐπ' εὐτυχεῖ στρ. α'
 μολπᾷ Φοῖβος ἰαχεῖ,
 350 τὰν καλλίφθογγον κιθάραν
 ἐλαύνων πλήκτρῳ χρυσεῷ·
 ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν γᾶς ἐνέρων τ' ἐς ὄρφναν
 μολόντα, παῖδ' εἶτε Διὸς νιν εἶπω
 εἶτ' Ἀμφιτρώωνος ἱνιν,
 ὑμνήσαι στεφάνωμα μό-
 χθων δι' εὐλογίας θέλω.
 γενναίων δ' ἀρεταὶ πόνων
 τοῖς θανούσιν ἄγαλμα.

 360 πρῶτον μὲν Διὸς ἄλσος
 ἠρήμωσσε λέοντος,
 πυρσῷ δ' ἀμφεκαλύφθη
 ξανθὸν κρᾶτ' ἐπινωτίσας
 δεινῷ χάσματι θηρός·

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

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

CHORUS

*The Lay of the Labours of Hercules*¹

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

I. *The Nemean Lion*

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

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τάν τ' ὀρεινόμον ἀγρίων ἀντ. α'
 Κενταύρων ποτὲ γένναν
 ἔστρωσεν τόξοις φονίσι,
 ἐναίρων πτανοῖς βέλεσιν.
 ξύνοιδε Πηνεῖος ὁ καλλιδίνας
 μακραί τ' ἄρουραι πεδίων ἄκαρποι
 370 καὶ Πηλιάδες θεράπναι
 σύγχορτοί θ' Ὀμόλας ἔναυ-
 λοι, πρέυκαισιν ὄθεν χέρας
 πληροῦντες χθόνα Θεσσαλῶν
 ἱππείαις ἐδάμαζον·

τάν τε χρυσοκάρανον
 δόρκαν ποικιλόνωτον
 συλήτειραν ἀγρωστᾶν
 κτείνας, θηροφόνον θεᾶν
 Οἰνωᾶτιν ἀγάλλει·

380 τεθριππων τ' ἐπέβα στρ. β'
 καὶ ψαλίσις ἐδάμασσε πώλους
 Διομήδεος, αἰ φονίαισι φάτναις
 ἀχάλιν' ἐθόαζον
 κάθαιμα σῖτα γένυσι, χαρμοναῖσιν
 ἀνδροβρῶσι δυστρέπεζοι· περῶν δ'

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

II. *The Centaurs*

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

III. *The Golden-horned Hind*

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

IV. *The Horses of Diomede*

(*Str.* 2)
And on Diomede's chariot he rode, for he reined
them, 380
By his bits overmastered, the stallions four
That had ravined at mangers of murder, and
stained them
With revel of banquets of horror, when gore
From men's limbs dripped that their fierce
teeth tore.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἀργυρορρύταν Εβρον
 ἐξέπρασε μόχθον,¹
 Μυκηναίῳ πονῶν τυράννῳ·

390 τάν τε Μηλιάδ' ἀκτάν
 Ἄναύρου παρὰ πηγάς·
 Κύκνον δὲ ξενοδαίικταν
 τόξοις ὤλεσεν, Ἄμφαναί-
 ας οἰκήτορ' ἄμικτον·

ὑμνωδούς τε κόρας ἀντ. β
 ἤλυθεν, Ἐσπερίαν ἐς αὐλάν,
 χρύσειον πετάλων ἀπὸ μηλοφόρων
 χερὶ καρπὸν ἀμέρξων,
 δράκοντα πυρσόνωντον, ὅς σφ' ἄπλατον
 ἀμφελικτὸς ἔλικ' ἐφρούρει, κτανῶν·

400 ποντίας θ' ἄλὸς μυχοῦς
 εἰσέβαινε, θνατοῖς
 γαλανείας τιθεὶς ἐρετμοῖς·

οὐρανοῦ θ' ὑπὸ μέσσαν
 ἐλαύνει χέρας ἔδραν,
 Ἄτλαντος δόμον ἐλθῶν·
 ἀστρωπούς τε κατέσχευ οἴ-
 κους εὐανορία θεῶν·

¹ Dindorf: for MSS. πέραν . . . διεπέρασ' ὄχθον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

V. *Cycnus the Robber*

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

VI. *The Golden Apples*

(*Ant. 2*)
To the Song-maids he came, to the Garden
enfolden
In glory of sunset, to pluck, where they grew
Mid the fruit-laden frondage the apples golden ;
And the flame-hued dragon, the warder that
drew
All round it his terrible spires, he slew.

VII. *Extirpation of Pirates*

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

VIII. *The Pillars of Heaven*

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τὸν ἰππευτὰν τ' Ἀμαζόνων στρατὸν στρ. γ'
 Μαιῶτιν ἀμφὶ πολυπόταμον
 410 ἔβα δι' Εὐξείνου οἶδμα λίμνας,
 τίν' οὐκ ἀφ' Ἑλλανίας
 ἄγορον ἀλίσας φίλων,
 †κόρας Ἀρείας πλέων¹
 χρυσέου στόλον φάρους, †
 ζωστήρος ὀλεθρίους ἄγρας ;
 τὰ κλεινὰ δ' Ἑλλὰς ἔλαβε βαρβάρου κόρας
 λίφυρα, καὶ σῶζεται Μυκῆναις.

τάν τε μυριόκρανον
 420 πολύφονον κύνα Λέρνας
 ὕδραν ἐξεπύρωσεν,

βέλεσί τ' ἀμφέβαλ' ἰόν,²
 τὸν τρισώματον οἷσιν ἔ-
 κτα βοτῆρ' Ἐρυθθείας.

δρόμων τ' ἄλλων ἀγάλματ' εὐτυχῆ ἀντ. γ'
 διήλθε· τὸν τε πολυδάκρυον
 ἔπλευσ' ἐς Ἄϊδαν, πόνων τελευτάν,
 ἵν' ἐκπεραίνει τάλας

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

² Wecklein: for MSS. ἀμφέβαλε τὸν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

IX. *The Amazon's Girdle*

(*Str.* 3)

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

X. *The Hydra*

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

XI. *The Three-bodied Giant Geryon*

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

XII. *Cerberus*

(*Ant.* 3)

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

430 βίοτον οὐδ' ἔβα πάλιν.
 στέγαι δ' ἔρημοι φίλων,
 τὰν δ' ἀνόστιμον τέκνων
 Χάρωνος ἐπιμένει πλάτα
 βίου κέλευθον ἄθεον ἄδικον· εἰς δὲ σὰς
 χέρας βλέπει δώματ' οὐ παρόντος.
 εἰ δ' ἐγὼ σθένος ἦβων
 δόρυ τ' ἔπαλλον ἐν αἰχμᾷ,
 Καδμείων τε σύνηβοι,
 τέκεσιν ἂν παρέσταν
 440 ἀλκᾷ· νῦν δ' ἀπολείπομαι
 τᾶς εὐδαίμονος ἦβας.

ἀλλ' ἐσορῶ γὰρ τούσδε φθιμένων
 ἔνδυτ' ἔχοντας, τοὺς τοῦ μεγάλου
 δήποτε παιῖδας τὸ πρὶν Ἡρακλέους,
 ἄλοχον τε φίλην ὑποσειραίους
 ποσὶν ἔλκουσαν τέκνα, καὶ γεραιὸν
 πατέρ' Ἡρακλέους. δύστηνος ἐγὼ,
 450 δακρύων ὡς οὐ δύναμαι κατέχειν
 γραίας ὄσσων ἔτι πηγᾶς.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

εἶεν τίς ἱερεὺς, τίς σφαγεὺς τῶν δυσπότημων
 ἢ τῆς ταλαίνης τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς φονεὺς ;
 ἔτοιμ' ἄγειν τὰ θύματ' εἰς "Αἶδου τάδε.
 ὦ τέκν', ἀγόμεθα ζευγος οὐ καλὸν νεκρῶν,
 ὁμοῦ γέροντες καὶ νέοι καὶ μητέρες.
 ὦ μοῖρα δυστάλαιν' ἐμή τε καὶ τέκνων
 τῶνδ', οὓς πανύστατ' ὄμμασιν προσδέρκομαι.
 ἔτεκον μὲν ὑμᾶς, πολεμίοις δ' ἐθρεψάμην

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

Enter MEGARA, AMPHITRYON, and children.

MEGARA

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

- ὑβρισμα καπίχαρμα καὶ διαφθοράν.
 φεύ·
- 460 ἢ πολὺ με δόξης ἐξέπαισαν ἐλπίδες,
 ἦν πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἐκ λόγων ποτ' ἤλπισα.
 σοὶ μὲν γὰρ Ἄργος ἔνεμ' ὁ κατθανὼν πατήρ,
 Εὐρυσθέως δ' ἔμελλες οἰκήσειν δόμους
 τῆς καλλικάρπου κράτος ἔχων Πελασγίας,
 στολήν τε θηρὸς ἀμφέβαλλε σφ' κἀρα
 λέοντος, ἥπερ αὐτὸς ἐξωπλίζετο·
 σὺ δ' ἦσθα Θεβῶν τῶν φιλαρμάτων ἀναξ,
 ἔγκληρα πεδία τὰμὰ γῆς κεκτημένος,
 ὡς ἐξέπειθες τὸν κατασπείραντά σε·
- 470 εἰς δεξιὰν δὲ σὴν ἀλεξητήριον
 ξύλον καθίει δαίδαλον, ψευδῆ δόσιν.
 σοὶ δ' ἦν ἔπερσε τοῖς ἐκηβόλοις ποτὲ
 τόξοισι δώσειν Οἰχαλίαν ὑπέσχετο.
 τρεῖς δ' ὄντας ὑμᾶς τριπτύχοις τυραννίσι
 πατήρ ἐπύργου, μέγα φρονῶν εὐανδρία·
 ἐγὼ δὲ νύμφας ἠκροθινιαζόμεν,
 κήδη συνάψουσ', ἔκ τ' Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς
 Σπάρτης τε Θεβῶν θ', ὡς ἀνημμένοι κάλῃς
 πρυμνησίοισι βίον ἔχοιτ' εὐδαίμονα.
- 480 καὶ ταῦτα φροῦδα· μεταβαλοῦσα δ' ἡ τύχη
 νύμφας μὲν ὑμῖν Κῆρας ἀντέδωκ' ἔχειν,
 ἐμοὶ δὲ δάκρυα λουτρά· δύστηνος φρενῶν.
 πατήρ δὲ πατὴρ ἔστι γάμους ὄδε,
 "Αἰδην νομίζων πενθερόν, κῆδος πικρόν.
 ὦμοι, τίν' ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἢ τίν' ὕστατον
 πρὸς στέρνα θῶμαι; τῷ προσαρμόσω στόμα;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

Woe and alas !

Ah for my shattered dreams, my broken hopes, 460
Hopes that I once built on your father's words !

Argos to thee ¹ thy dead sire would allot :

Thou in Eurystheus' palace wast to dwell

In fair and rich Pelasgia's sceptred sway :

That beast's fell o'er thine head he wont to throw,

The lion's skin wherein himself went clad.

Thou ² shouldst be king of chariot-loving Thebes,

And hold the champagns of mine heritage ;

Thy prayer, won this of him that gave thee life ;

And to thy right hand would he yield the club, 470

A feignèd gift, his carven battle-stay.

To thee ³ the land, by his far-smiting bow

Once wasted, promised he, Oechalia.

So with three princedoms would your sire exalt

His three sons, in the pride of his great heart.

And I chose out the choice of Hellas' brides,

Linking to ours by marriage Athens' land,

And Thebes, and Sparta, that ye might, as ships

Moored by sheet-anchors, ride the storms of life.

All that is past : the wind of fate hath veered, 480

And given to you the Maids of Doom for brides,

Tears for my bride-baths. Woe for those my dreams !

And now your grandsire makes the spousal-feast

With Hades for brides' sire, grim marriage-kin.

Ah me ! whom first of you, or whom the last,

To mine heart shall I press ?—whom to my lips ?

¹ The eldest son, Therimachus.

² The second son, Creontidas.

³ The third son, Deïcoön.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

490 τίνος λάβωμαι; πῶς ἂν ὡς ξουθόπτερος
 μέλισσα συνενέγκαιμ' ἂν ἐκ πάντων γόους,
 εἰς ἓν δ' ἐνεγκούσ' ἀθρόον ἀποδοίην δάκρυ.
 ὦ φίλτατ', εἴ τις φθόγγος εἰσακούεται
 θνητῶν παρ' Ἄϊδη, σοὶ τάδ', Ἡράκλεις, λέγω·
 θνήσκει πατήρ σός καὶ τέκν', ὄλλυμαι δ' ἐγώ,
 ἢ πρὶν μακαρία διὰ σ' ἐκληζόμεν βροτοῖς.
 ἄρηξον, ἐλθέ· καὶ σκιά φάνηθί μοι·
 ἄλλις γὰρ ἐλθὼν κἂν ὄναρ¹ γένοιο σὺ·
 κακοὶ γάρ εἰσιν οἳ τέκνα κτείνουσι σά.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

500 σὺ μὲν τὰ νέρθεν εὐτρεπῆ ποιοῦ, γύναι·
 ἐγὼ δὲ σ', ὦ Ζεῦ, χεῖρ' ἐς οὐρανὸν δικῶν
 αὐδῶ, τέκνοισιν εἴ τι τοισίδ' ὠφελεῖν
 510 μέλλεις, ἀμύνειν, ὡς τάχ' οὐδὲν ἀρκέσεις.
 καίτοι κέκλησαι πολλάκις· μάτην πονῶ·
 θανεῖν γάρ, ὡς ἔοικ', ἀναγκαίως ἔχει.
 ἀλλ', ὦ γέροντες, μικρὰ μὲν τὰ τοῦ βίου·
 τοῦτον δ' ὅπως ἤδιστα διαπεράσετε,
 ἐξ ἡμέρας εἰς νύκτα μὴ λυπούμενοι.
 ὡς ἐλπίδας μὲν ὁ χρόνος οὐκ ἐπίσταται
 σφῆξιν, τὸ δ' αὐτοῦ σπουδάσας διέπτατο.
 ὁρᾶτέ μ' ὅσπερ ἢ περίβλεπτος βροτοῖς
 ὀνομαστὰ πράσσω, καὶ μ' ἀφείλεθ' ἡ τύχη
 510 ὅσπερ πτερὸν πρὸς αἰθέρ' ἡμέρα μιᾶ.
 ὁ δ' ὄλβος ὁ μέγας ἢ τε δόξ' οὐκ οἶδ' ὅτῳ
 βέβαιός ἐστι. χαίρετ'· ἄνδρα γὰρ φίλον
 πανύστατον νῦν, ἡλικες, δεδόρκατε.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἔα·

ὦ πρέσβυ, λεύσσω τὰμὰ φίλτατ'; ἢ τί φῶ;

¹ Wilamowitz: for MSS. ἱκανὸν ἂν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Whom shall I clasp? Oh but to gather store
Of moan, like brown-winged bee, from grief's wide
field,

And blend together in tribute of one tear!
Dear love,—if any in Hades of the dead 490
Can hear,—I cry this to thee, Hercules:
Thy sire, thy sons, are dying; doomed am I,
I, once through thee called blest in all men's eyes.
Help!—come!—though as a shadow, yet appear!
Thy coming as a dream-shape should suffice
To daunt the cravens who would slay thy sons!

AMPHITRYON

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

HERCULES *appears in the distance.*

MEGARA

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα, θύγατερ· ἀφασία δὲ καὶ ἔχει.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὄδ' ἐστὶν ὃν γῆς νέρθεν εἰσηκούομεν,
εἰ μή γ' ὄνειρον ἐν φάει τι λεύσσομεν.
τί φημί; ποῖ' ὄνειρα κηραίνουσ' ὀρώ;
οὐκ ἔσθ' ὄδ' ἄλλος ἀντὶ σοῦ παιδός, γέρον.

520 δεῦρ', ὦ τέκν', ἐκκρήμνασθε πατρώων πέπλων,
ἴτ' ἐγκονεῖτε, μὴ μεθῆτ', ἐπεὶ Διὸς
σωτήρος ὑμῖν οὐδέν ἐσθ' ὄδ' ὕστερος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ χαῖρε, μέλαθρον πρόπυλά θ' ἐστίας ἐμῆς,
ὡς ἄσμενός σ' ἐσείδον ἐς φάος μολών.

ἔα· τί χρῆμα; τέκν' ὀρώ πρὸ δωμαίων
στολμοῖσι νεκρῶν κρατᾶς ἔξεστεμμένα,
ὄχλω τ' ἐν ἀνδρῶν τὴν ἐμὴν ξυνάορον
πατέρα τε δακρύνοντα συμφορᾶς τίνας;
φέρ' ἐκπύθωμαι τῶνδε πλησίον σταθείς,
530 τί καινὸν ἦλθε, γύναι, δώμασιν χρέος;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ φάος μολών πατρί—

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἦκεις, ἐσώθης εἰς ἀκμὴν ἐλθὼν φίλοις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς; τίνας εἰς ταραγμὸν ἦκομεν, πάτερ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

διολλύμεσθα· σὺ δέ, γέρον, σύγγνωθί μοι,
εἰ πρόσθεν ἦρπασ' ἃ σέ λέγειν πρὸς τόνδ' ἐχρῆν·
τὸ θῆλυ· γάρ πως μᾶλλον οἰκτρὸν ἀρσένων,
καὶ τὰ μ' ἔθνησκε τέκν', ἀπωλλύμην δ' ἐγώ.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

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

MEGARA

'Tis he who lay, we heard, beneath the earth,
Except in broad day we behold a dream!
What say I?—see they dreams, these yearning eyes?
This is none other, ancient, than thy son.
Boys, hither!—hang upon your father's cloak. 520
Speed ye, unhand him not; for this is he,
Your helper he, no worse than Saviour Zeus.

Enter HERCULES.

HERCULES

All hail, mine house, hail, portals of mine hearth!
How blithe, returned to life, I look on you!
Ha! what is this?—my sons before the halls
In death's attire and with heads chapleted!—
And, mid a throng of men, my very wife!—
My father weeping over some mischance!
Come, let me draw nigh these and question them.
Wife, what strange stroke hath fallen on mine house? 530

MEGARA

O best-beloved!—

AMPHITRYON

To thy sire light of life!—

MEGARA

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

HERCULES

How?—father, what confusion find I here?

MEGARA

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Ἄπολλον, οἷοις φροιμίοις ἄρχει λόγου.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

τεθνᾶσ' ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατήρ οὐμὸς γέρων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

540 πῶς φῆς ; τί δράσας ἢ δορὸς ποίου τυχῶν ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

Λύκος σφ' ὁ καινὸς γῆς ἄναξ διώλεσέν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὄπλοις ἀπαντῶν ἢ νοσησάσης χθονός ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

στάσει· τὸ Κάδμου δ' ἐπτάπυλον ἔχει κράτος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα πρὸς σὲ καὶ γέροντ' ἦλθεν φόβος ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κτείνειν ἔμελλε πατέρα καμὲ καὶ τέκνα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς ; τί ταρβῶν ὀρφάνεμ' ἐμῶν τέκνων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

μή ποτε Κρέοντος θάνατον ἐκτισαίαιτο.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κόσμος δὲ παίδων τίς ὄδε νερτέροις πρέπων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

θανάτου τὰδ' ἤδη περιβόλαι' ἐνήμμεθα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

550 καὶ πρὸς βίαν ἐθνήσκειτ' ; ὦ τλήμων ἐγώ.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

φίλων ἔρημοι, σὲ δὲ θανόντ' ἠκούομεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πόθεν δ' ἐς ὑμᾶς ἢδ' ἐσῆλθ' ἀθυμία ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

Εὐρυσθέως κήρυκες ἠγγελλον τάδε.

'THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Apollo!—what strange prelude to thy speech!

MEGARA

Dead are my brethren and my grey-haired sire.

HERCULES

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

MEGARA

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

HERCULES

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

MEGARA

By faction stricken. He rules seven-gated Thebes.

HERCULES

Why fell on thee and on the old man dread?

MEGARA

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

HERCULES

How?—of my fatherless children what feared he?

MEGARA

Lest Creon's death one day they might avenge.

HERCULES

This vesture meet for dead folk, what means it?

MEGARA

In this attire we shrouded us for death.

HERCULES

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

MEGARA

Forlorn of friends, we heard that thou hadst died.

HERCULES

Wherefore came on you this despair of me?

MEGARA

The heralds of Eurystheus published this.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἐξελείπετ' οἶκον ἐστίαν τ' ἐμήν ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

βία, πατήρ μὲν ἐκπεσὼν στρωτοῦ λέχους.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κοῦκ ἔσχευ αἰδῶ τὸν γέροντ' ἀτιμάσαι ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

αἰδῶ γ' ; ἀποικεῖ τῆσδε τῆς θεοῦ πρόσω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὔτω δ' ἀπόντες ἐσπανίζομεν φίλων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

φίλοι γάρ εἰσιν ἀνδρὶ δυστυχεῖ τίνες ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

560 μάχας δὲ Μινυῶν ἄς ἔτλην, ἀπέπτυσαν ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἄφιλον, ἴν' αὐθίς σοι λέγω, τὸ δυστυχές.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ ρίψεθ' " Αἰδου τάσδε περιβολὰς κόμησ
καὶ φῶς ἀναβλέψεσθε τοῦ κάτω σκότου
φίλας ἀμοιβὰς ὄμμασιν δεδορκότες ;
ἐγὼ δέ, νῦν γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς ἔργον χερσ,
πρῶτον μὲν εἶμι καὶ κατασκάψω δόμους
καινῶν τυράννων, κρῦτα δ' ἀνόσιον τεμῶν
ρίψω κυνῶν ἔλκημα· Καδμείων δ' ὄσους
κακοὺς ἐφηῦρον εὖ παθόντας ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
570 τῷ καλλινίκῳ τῷδ' ὄπλῳ χειρώσομαι·
τοὺς δὲ πτερωτοῖς διαφορῶν τοξεύμασι
νεκρῶν ἅπαντ' Ἴσμηγὸν ἐμπλήσω φόνου,
Δίρκης τε νᾶμα λευκὸν αἶμαχθήσεται.
τῷ γάρ μ' ἀμύνειν μᾶλλον ἢ δάμαρτι χρῆ
καὶ παισὶ καὶ γέροντι ; χαιρόντων πόνου·
μάτην γὰρ αὐτοὺς τῶνδε μᾶλλον ἦνυσα.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

But why did ye forsake mine home and hearth?

MEGARA

By force : thy father from his bed was flung.

HERCULES

Had he no shame to outrage these grey hairs?

MEGARA

Shame?—from that Goddess far his dwelling is!

HERCULES

So poor of friends was I when far away!

MEGARA

Friends!—what friends hath a man unfortunate?

HERCULES

Scorned they the fights with Minyans I endured? 560

MEGARA

Friendless, I tell thee again, misfortune is.

HERCULES

Fling from your hair these cerements of the grave :

Look up to the light, beholding with your eyes

Exchange right welcome from the nether-gloom.

And I—for now work lieth to mine hand—

Will first go, and will raze to earth the house

Of this new king, his impious head smite off

And cast to dogs to rend. Of Thebans, all

Found traitors after my good deeds to them,

Some will I slay with this victorious mace,

And the rest scatter with my feathered shafts,

With slaughter of corpses all Ismenus fill,

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

For whom should I defend above my wife

And sons and aged sire? Great toils, farewell!

Vainly I wrought them, leaving these unhelped!

570

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

580 καὶ δεῖ μ' ὑπὲρ τῶνδ', εἶπερ οἷδ' ὑπὲρ πατρός,
 θηήσκειν ἀμύνοντ'· ἢ τί φήσομεν καλὸν
 ὕδρα μὲν ἔλθειν εἰς μάχην λέοντί τε
 Εὐρυσθέως πομπαῖσι, τῶν δ' ἐμῶν τέκνων
 οὐκ ἐκπονήσω θάνατον ; οὐκ ἄρ' Ἑρακλῆς
 ὁ καλλίνικος ὡς πάροιθε λέξομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

πρὸς σοῦ μὲν, ὦ παῖ, τοῖς φίλοις εἶναι φίλον
 τά τ' ἐχθρὰ μισεῖν· ἀλλὰ μὴ 'πείγου λίαν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἐστὶ τῶνδε θᾶσσον ἢ χρεῶν, πάτερ ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

590 πολλοὺς πένητας, ὀλβίους δὲ τῷ λόγῳ
 δοκοῦντας εἶναι συμμάχους ἄναξ ἔχει,
 οἷ στάσιν ἔθηκαν καὶ διώλεσαν πόλιν
 ἐφ' ἀρπαγαῖσι τῶν πέλας, τὰ δ' ἐν δόμοις
 δαπάναισι φροῦδα διαφυγόνθ' ὑπ' ἀργίας.
 ὠφθῆς ἐσελθὼν πόλιν· ἐπεὶ δ' ὠφθῆς, ὄρα
 ἐχθροὺς ἀθροίσας μὴ παρὰ γνώμην πέσῃς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μέλει μὲν οὐδὲν εἴ με πᾶσ' εἶδεν πόλις·
 ὄρνιν δ' ἰδὼν τιν' οὐκ ἐν αἰσίοις ἔδραις,
 ἐγνωὼν πόνον τιν' εἰς δόμους πεπτωκότα·
 ὥστ' ἐκ προνοίας κρύφιος εἰσηλθὼν χθόνα.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

600 καλῶς προσελθὼν νῦν πρόσειπέ θ' ἐστῖαν
 καὶ δὸς πατρώοις δώμασιν σὸν ὄμμ' ἰδεῖν.
 ἤξει γὰρ αὐτὸς σὴν δάμαρτα καὶ τέκνα
 ἔλξων φονεύσων καμ' ἐπισφάξων ἄναξ·

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

580

CHORUS

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

AMPHITRYON

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

HERCULES

Father, what haste unmeet is found in this?

AMPHITRYON

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

590

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

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

600

175

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

δράσω τάδ'· εὖ γὰρ εἶπας· εἰμ' εἴσω δόμων.
χρόνῳ δ' ἀνελθὼν ἐξ ἀνηλίῳν μυχῶν
Ἄιδου Κόρης τ' ἔνερθεν, οὐκ ἀτιμάσω
θεοὺς προσειπεῖν πρῶτα τοὺς κατὰ στέγας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

610 ἦλθες γὰρ ὄντως δῶματ' εἰς Ἄιδου, τέκνον ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ θῆρά γ' εἰς φῶς τὸν τρίκρανον ἤγαγον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μάχη κρατήσας ἢ θεᾶς δωρήμασιν ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μάχη· τὰ μυστῶν δ' ὄργι' ἠτύχησ' ἰδῶν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἦ καὶ κατ' οἴκους ἐστὶν Εὐρυσθέως ὁ θῆρ ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Χθονίας νιν ἄλσος Ἑρμιῶν τ' ἔχει πόλις.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐδ' οἶδεν Εὐρυσθεύς σε γῆς ἤκουτ' ἄνω ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ οἶδεν· ἦλθον τάνθάδ' εἰδέναι πάρος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

χρόνον δὲ πῶς τοσοῦτον ἦσθ' ὑπὸ χθονί ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησέα κομίζων ἐχρόνισ' ἐξ Ἄιδου, πάτερ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

620 καὶ ποῦ ἔστιν ; ἢ γῆς πατρίδος οἴχεται πέδον ;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

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

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

Vanquished in fight, or by the Goddess given?

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

How? is the monster in Eurystheus' halls?

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

Nor knows Eurystheus thou art risen to day?

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

How wast thou so long time beneath the earth?

HERCULES

From Hades rescuing Theseus, tarried I.

AMPHITRYON

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

¹ Persephone, whose name it was perilous to utter.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

βέβηκ' Ἀθήνας, νέρθεν ἄσμενος φυγών.
 ἀλλ' εἶ, ὀμαρτεῖτ', ὦ τέκν', εἰς δόμους πατρί·
 καλλιονές τ' ἄρ' εἴσοδοι τῶν ἐξόδων
 πάρεισιν ὑμῖν. ἀλλὰ θάρσος ἴσχετε
 καὶ νάματ' ὄσσων μηκέτ' ἐξανίετε,
 σύ τ', ὦ γύναι μοι, σύλλογον ψυχῆς λαβέ
 τρόμου τε παῦσαι, καὶ μέθεσθ' ἐμῶν πέπλων·
 οὐ γὰρ πτερωτὸς οὐδὲ φευξείω φίλους.
 ἄ,

οἶδ' οὐκ ἀφίᾱσ', ἀλλ' ἀνάπτονται πέπλων
 630 τοσφῶδε μᾶλλον ὧδ' ἔβητ' ἐπὶ ξυροῦ;
 ἄξω λαβὼν γε τούσδ' ἐφορκίδας χεροῖν,
 ναῦς δ' ὡς ἐφέλω· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀναίνομαι
 θεράπευμα τέκνων. πάντα τ' ἀνθρώπων ἴσα.
 φιλοῦσι παῖδας οἳ τ' ἀμείνονες βροτῶν
 οἳ τ' οὐδὲν ὄντες· χρήμασιν δὲ διάφοροι·
 ἔχουσιν, οἳ δ' οὐ· πᾶν δὲ φιλότεκνον γένος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀ νεότας μοι φίλον· ἄχθος δὲ τὸ γῆρας αἰεὶ στρ. α'
 βαρύτερον Αἴτνας σκοπέλων
 640 ἐπὶ κρατὶ κείται,
 βλεφάρων σκοτεινὸν
 φάρος ἐπικαλύψαν.
 μή μοι μήτ' Ἀσιήτιδος
 τυραννίδος ὄλβος εἴη,
 μὴ χρυσοῦ δώματα πλήρη
 τᾶς ἥβας ἀντιλαβεῖν,
 ἄ καλλίστα μὲν ἐν ὄλβῳ,
 καλλίστα δ' ἐν πενίᾳ.
 τὸ δὲ λυγρὸν φόνιον τε γῆ-

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

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

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

630

[*Exeunt* HERCULES, AMPHITRYON, MEGARA, and children.

CHORUS

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

640

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

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

179

N 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

650 ρας μισῶ· κατὰ κυμάτων δ'
ἔρροι, μηδέ ποτ' ὄφελεν
θνατῶν δώματα καὶ πόλεις
ἔλθειν, ἀλλὰ κατ' αἰθέρ' ἄ-
εὶ πτεροῖσι φορεῖσθω.

εἰ δὲ θεοῖς ἦν ξύνεσις καὶ σοφία κατ' ἄνδρας, ἀντ. α
δίδυμον ἂν ἤβαν ἔφερον
φανερὸν χαρακτῆρ'
ἀρετᾶς ὅσοισιν

660 μέτα, κατθανόντες τ'
εἰς αὐγὰς πάλιν ἁλίου
δισσοὺς ἂν ἔβαν διαύλους,
ἃ δυσγένεια δ' ὑπλᾶν ἂν
εἶχε ζωᾶς βιοτάν,
καὶ τῷδ' ἦν τοὺς τε κακοὺς ἂν
γνώναι καὶ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς,
ἴσον ἄτ' ἐν νεφέλαισιν ἄ-
στρων ναύταις ἀριθμὸς πέλει.
νῦν δ' οὐδεὶς ὄρος ἐκ θεῶν

670 χρηστοῖς οὐδὲ κακοῖς σαφής,
ἀλλ' εἰλισσόμενός τις αἰ-
ῶν πλοῦτον μόνον αὔξει.

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

στρ. β'

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

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

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

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

(Str. 2)

The Muses shall for me be twined for ever with the
Graces :

For evermore my song shall pour that sweetest
union's praises.

No life be mine of songless clown,

But, where for singers shines the crown,

Mine old lips still shall hymn renown of Memory's
fair creation.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

680 ἔτι τὰν Ἡρακλέους
καλλίνικον ἀεῖδω
παρά τε Βρόμιον οἰνοδόταν
παρά τε χέλυος ἑπτατόνου
μολπὰν καὶ Λίβυν αὐλόν·
οὐπω καταπαύσομεν
Μούσας, αἶ μ' ἐχόρευσαν.

690 παιᾶνα μὲν Δηλιάδες
ὑμνοῦσ' ἀμφὶ πύλας τὸν
Λατοῦς εὐπαιδα γόνον
εἰλίσσουσαι καλλίχορον·
παιᾶνας δ' ἐπὶ σοῖς μελάθροις
κύκνος ὧς γέρων ἀοιδὸς
πολιᾶν ἐκ γενύων
κελαδήσω· τὸ γὰρ εὖ
τοῖς ὑμνοῖσιν ὑπάρχει,
Διὸς ὁ παῖς· τὸ δ' εὐγενίας
κλέος ὑπερβάλλων [ἀρεταῖς]
μοχθήσας τὸν ἄκυμον
θῆκεν βίοτον βροτοῖς
700 πέρσας δείματα θηρῶν.

ἀντ. β'

ΛΥΚΟΣ

εἰς καιρὸν οἴκων, Ἀμφιτρύων, ἔξω περᾶς·
χρόνος γὰρ ἤδη δαρὸς ἐξ ὄτου πέπλοις
κοσμεῖσθε σῶμα καὶ νεκρῶν ἀγάλμασιν.
ἀλλ' εἶα, παῖδας καὶ δάμαρθ' Ἡρακλέους
ἔξω κέλευε τῶνδε φαίνεσθαι δόμων,
ἐφ' οἷς ὑπέστητ' αὐτεπάγγελτοι θανεῖν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἄναξ, διώκεις μ' ἀθλίως πεπραγότα
ὑβριν θ' ὑβρίζεις ἐπὶ θανούσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς·

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

(*Ant.* 2)

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

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

Enter LYCUS, *attended.* *Re-enter* AMPHITRYON.

LYCUS

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

AMPHITRYON

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

710 ἂ χρῆν σε μετρίως, κεί κρατεῖς, σπουδῆν ἔχειν.
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνάγκην προστίθης ἡμῖν θανεῖν,
 στέργειν ἀνάγκη, δραστέον θ' ἂ σοὶ δοκεῖ.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτα Μεγάρα ; ποῦ τέκν' Ἀλκμήνης γόνου ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

δοκῶ μὲν αὐτήν, ὡς θύραθεν εἰκάσαι,

ΛΥΚΟΣ

τί χρῆμα δόξης ; τοῦ δ'¹ ἔχεις τεκμήριον ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἰκέτιν πρὸς ἀγνοῖς Ἑστίας θάσσειν βάθροις,

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἀνόνητά γ' ἰκετεύουσαν ἐκσῶσαι βίον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

καὶ τὸν θανόντα γ' ἀνακαλεῖν μάτην πόσιν.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ὁ δ' οὐ πάρεστιν οὐδὲ μὴ μόλη ποτέ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

οὐκ, εἴ γε μὴ τις θεῶν ἀναστήσειέ νιν.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

720 χώρει πρὸς αὐτήν κάκκόμιζ' ἐκ δωμάτων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

μέτοχος ἂν εἶην τοῦ φόνου δράσας τόδε.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

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

¹ Murray : for MSS. δόξης τῆσδ'.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

710

LYCUS

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

AMPHITRYON

I think that she—if one without may guess—

LYCUS

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

AMPHITRYON

At the Hearth-goddess' altar suppliant sits,—

LYCUS

With bootless prayer to heaven to save her life!

AMPHITRYON

And vainly calleth on a husband dead.

LYCUS

Not here is he; nor shall he ever come.

AMPHITRYON

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

LYCUS

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

720

AMPHITRYON

So doing were I partaker in her blood!

LYCUS

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

[*Exit*]

185

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

730 σὺ δ' οὖν ἴθ', ἔρχει δ' οἱ χρεῶν· τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἴσως
ἄλλω μελήσει. προσδόκα δὲ δρῶν κακῶς
κακὸν τι πράξειν. ὦ γέροντες, εἰς καλὸν
στείχει, βρόχοισι δ' ἀρκύων γενήσεται
ξίφηφόροισι, τοὺς πέλας δοκῶν κτενεῖν
ὁ παγκάκιστος. εἶμι δ' ὡς ἴδω νεκρὸν
πίπτουτ'· ἔχει γὰρ ἠδονὰς θνήσκων ἀνήρ
ἐχθρὸς τίνων τε τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- α . μεταβολὰ κακῶν· μέγας ὁ πρόσθ' ἀναξ στρ. α
πάλιν ὑποστρέφει βίοτον εἰς Ἄιδαν.
- β . ἰὼ δίκαια καὶ θεῶν παλίνρρους πότμος.
- 740 γ . ἠλθες χρόνῳ μὲν οὐ δίκην δώσεις θανῶν,
- δ . ὕβρεις ὑβρίζων εἰς ἀμείνονας σέθεν.
- ε' . χαρμοναὶ δακρύων ἔδοσαν ἐκβολάς·
- στ' . πάλιν ἔμολεν ἂ πάρος οὐποτε διὰ φρενὸς
ἠλπισεν παθεῖν γὰρ ἀναξ.
- ζ' . ἄλλ', ὦ γεραιοί, καὶ τὰ δωμάτων ἔσω
σκοπῶμεν, εἰ πράσσει τις ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

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

CHORUS 1

Ho for requital of wrong! the king who was great
heretofore (Str. 1)
Backward is turning the path of his life unto Hades' [door!

CHORUS 2

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

CHORUS 3

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

CHORUS 4

For outrage done to better men than thee.

CHORUS 5

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

CHORUS 6

Come is the hour which the land's king never ere
this in his heart
Foresaw,—retribution's vengeance-smart!

CHORUS 7

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἰὼ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

θ'. βοᾷ φόνου φροίμιον στενάζων ἄναξ.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ὦ πᾶσα Κάδμου γαῖ', ἀπόλλυμαι δόλφ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ί. καὶ γὰρ διώλλυς· ἀντίποινα δ' ἐκτίνων
τόλμα, διδούς γε τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ια'. τίς ὁ θεὸς ἀνομία χραίνων, θνητὸς ὢν,
ἄφρονα λόγον οὐρανίων μακάρων κατέβαλ',
ὡς ἄρ' οὐ σθένουσιν θεοί;

760 ιβ'. γέροντες, οὐκέτ' ἔστι δυσσεβῆς ἀνήρ.
σιγᾷ μέλαθρα· πρὸς χοροὺς τραπώμεθα.
φίλοι γὰρ εὐτυχούσιν οὓς ἐγὼ θέλω.

χοροὶ χοροὶ καὶ θαλῖαι
μέλουσι Θήβας ἱερὸν κατ' ἄστν.
μεταλλαγαὶ γὰρ δακρύνων,
μεταλλαγαὶ συντυχίας
[νέας] ἔτεκον ἀοιδάς.

στρ. β'

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

LYCUS (*within*)

Ah me ! Woe's me !

CHORUS 8

(*Ant. 1*)

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

CHORUS 9

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

LYCUS (*within*)

Oh Cadmus' land, by treachery am I slain !

CHORUS 10

As thou wouldst slay. Flinch not from vengeance-
pain :
Thine own deeds' retribution dost thou gain.

CHORUS 11

Who was it, in lawlessness flouting the Gods, that
mortal wight
Who in folly blasphemed the Blessèd that reign in
the heaven's height,
Saying that Gods be void of might ?

CHORUS 12

Our foe is not :—such doom the impious earn. 760
Hushed are the halls. Now unto dances turn :
Blest are the dear ones over whom I yearn.

CHORUS

(*Str. 2*)

The dances, the dances are reeling, the shout of the
banqueters pealing
Through Thebes, through the city divine.
Now from affliction of tears cometh severance ;
Now from the thralldom of woe is deliverance,
And song is their heir.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

βέβακ' ἀναξ ὁ καινός,
 ὁ δὲ παλαιότερος
 770 κρατεῖ, λιμένα λιπῶν γε τὸν Ἀχερόντιον.
 δοκημάτων ἐκτὸς ἦλθεν ἐλπίς.

θεοὶ θεοὶ τῶν ἀδίκων ἀντ. β
 μέλουσι καὶ τῶν ὀσίων ἐπάειν.
 ὁ χρυσὸς ἅ τ' εὐτυχία
 φρενῶν βροτοὺς ἐξάγεται,
 δύνασιν ἄδικον ἐφέλκων.
 χρόνου γὰρ οὐτις ἔτλα
 τὸ πάλιν εἰσορᾶν
 νόμον παρέμενος, ἀνομία χάριν διδούς,
 780 ἔθραυσεν ὄλβου κελαινὸν ἄρμα.

Ἴσμήν' ὦ στεφαναφόρει, στρ. γ
 ξεσταί θ' ἐπταπύλου πόλεως
 ἀναχορεύσατ' ἀγυιαί,
 Δίρκα θ' ἅ καλλιρρέεθρος,
 σὺν τ' Ἀσωπιάδες κόραι,
 πατρὸς ὕδωρ βᾶτε λιποῦ-
 σαι συναοιδοί,
 Νύμφαι, τὸν Ἡρακλέους
 790 καλλίνικον ἀγῶν' ὦ
 Πυθίου δεινδρῶτι πέτρα
 Μουσῶν θ' Ἐλικωνιάδων δώματα,
 ἦξεν εὐγαθεί κελάδω
 ἐμὰν πόλιν ἐμά τε τείχη,

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

(*Ant.* 2)

The Gods, O the Gods now are sealing unrighteous-
ness' doom, and revealing

The right, their eternal design. [victorious
But Gold and Fair-fortune, with Power the
Harnessed beside them, in folly vainglorious

Hurry man to his doom :—

Law he outpaceth, and Lawlessness lasheth
To speed ; nor his heart doth incline

To take heed to the end—lo, his car sudden-
crasheth

Shattered in gloom !¹ 780

Deck thee with garlands, Ismenus, and ye (*Str.* 3)

Break forth into dancing,

Streets stately with Thebes' fair masonry,

And Dirce bright-glancing :

Come, Maids of Asopus, to us, from the spring

Come ye of your father ;

Of Hercules' glorious triumph to sing,

Nymph-chorus, O gather

Pythian forest-peak, Helicon's steep 790

Of the Song-queens haunted,

To my town, to my walls, let the song-echoes leap

Of the strains loud-chanted—

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Σπαρτῶν ἴνα γένος ἐφάνη,
χαλκασπίδων λόχος, ὃς γὰν
τέκνων τέκνοις μεταμείβει,
Θήβαις ἱερὸν φῶς.

ὦ λέκτρων δύο συγγενεῖς ἀντ. γ'
εὐναί, θνατογενοῦς τε καὶ
800 Διός, ὃς ἦλθεν ἐς εὐνάς
Νύμφας τὰς Περσηίδος· ὡς
πιστόν μοι τὸ παλαιὸν ἤ-
δη λέχος, ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸ σὸν οὐκ
ἐπ' ἐλπίδι φάνθη,
λαμπρὰν δ' ἔδειξ' ὁ χρόνος
τὰν Ἡρακλέος ἀλκάν·
ὃς γὰς ἐξέβα θαλάμων,
Πλούτωνος δῶμα λιπῶν νέρτερον.
810 κρείσσω μοι τύραννος ἔφυσ
ἢ δυσγένει' ἀνάκτων·
ἂ νῦν ἐσορᾶν φαίνει
ξιφηφόρων ἐς ἀγώνων
ἄμιλλαν, εἰ τὸ δίκαιον
θεοῖς ἔτ' ἀρέσκει.

ἔα ἔα·
ἄρ' εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν πίτυλον ἤκομεν φόβου,
γέροντες, οἷον φάσμ' ὑπὲρ δόμων ὀρώ ;
φυγῆ φυγῆ
νωθὲς πέδαιρε κῶλον, ἐκποδὼν ἔλα.
820 ὦναξ Παιάν,
ἀπότροπος γένοιό μοι πημάτων.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To my town, whence the Dragon-seed rose to the
day,

The warrior nation,
Whose sons guard the fathers' inheritance aye,
Thebes' light of salvation.

Hail to the couch where the spousals divine (*Ant. 3*)
With the mortal were blended,
Where for love of the Lady of Perseus' line 800
Zeus' glory descended !

For thy bridal of old is my faith, Zeus, won,
Though I held it a story
Past credence : by time is the might of thy son
Revealed in its glory :

He hath burst from earth's dungeons, hath rifted
the chain
Of Pluto's deep prison !
Thou art worthier to rule than the churl-king
slain,
O my King re-arisen ! 810

For now the usurper hath proved, when in fight
The sword-wielders have striven,
Whether yet, as in old time, the cause of the right
Is well-pleasing to heaven.

The forms of IRIS and MADNESS appear above the palace.

Ha see ! ha see !
On you, on me, doth this same panic fall ?
Old friends, what phantom hovereth o'er the hall ?
Ah flee ! ah flee
With haste of laggard feet !—speed thou away !
Healer, to thee, 820
O King, to avert from me yon bane I pray !

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΙΡΙΣ

830 θαρσεείτε Νυκτὸς τήνδ' ὀρώντες ἔκγονον
 Λύσσαν, γέροντες, κάμῃ τήν θεῶν λάτριν
 Ἴριν πόλει γὰρ οὐδὲν ἤκομεν βλάβος,
 ἑνὸς δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὸς δώματα στρατεύομεν,
 ὃν φασιν εἶναι Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τ' ἄπο.
 πρὶν μὲν γὰρ ἄθλους ἐκτελευτήσαι πικρούς,
 τὸ χρῆνιν ἐξέσωζεν, οὐδ' εἶα πατῆρ
 Ζεὺς νιν κακῶς δρᾶν οὔτ' ἐμ' οὔθ' Ἦραν ποτέ.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθους διεπέρασ' Εὐρυσθέως,
 Ἦρα προσάψαι κοινὸν αἷμ' αὐτῷ θέλει
 παῖδας κατακτείναντι, συνθέλω δ' ἐγώ.
 ἀλλ' εἴ, ἄτεγκτον συλλαβοῦσα καρδίαν,
 Νυκτὸς κελαινῆς ἀνυμέναιε παρθένε,
 μανίας τ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδε καὶ παιδοκτόνους
 φρενῶν ταραγμούς καὶ ποδῶν σκιριτήματα
 ἔλαυνε, κίνει, φόμιον ἐξίει κάλων,
 ὡς ἂν πορεύσας δι' Ἀχερούσιου πόρον
 840 τὸν καλλίπαιδα στέφανον αὐθέντη φόνῳ
 γνῶ μὲν τὸν Ἦρας οἶός ἐστ' αὐτῷ χόλος,
 μάθῃ δὲ τὸν ἑμὸν· ἦ θεοὶ μὲν οὐδαμοῦ,
 τὰ θνητὰ δ' ἔσται μεγάλα, μὴ δόντος δίκην.

ΛΥΣΣΑ

ἐξ εὐγενοῦς μὲν πατρός ἕκ τε μητέρος
 πέφυκα, Νυκτὸς Οὐρανοῦ τ' ἀφ' αἵματος·
 τιμὰς δ' ἔχω τάσδ', οὐκ ἀγασθῆναι φίλοις,
 οὐδ' ἡδομαι φοιτῶσ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων φόνους.¹
 παραινέσαι δέ, πρὶν σφαλῆισαν εἰσιδεῖν,
 Ἦρα θέλω σοὶ τ', ἦν πίθησθ' ἐμοῖς λόγοις.
 ἀνὴρ ὄδ' οὐκ ἄσημος οὔτ' ἐπὶ χθονὶ

¹ Dobree: for MSS. φίλους. Adopted by Dindorf, Paley, and Gray and Hutchinson.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

IRIS:

Fear not : this is the child of Night ye see,
Madness, grey sires : I, handmaid of the Gods,
Iris. We come not for your city's hurt ;
Only on one man's house do we make war—
His, whom Zeus' and Alcmena's son they call.
For, till he had ended all his bitter toils,
Fate shielded him, and Father Zeus would not
That I, or Hera, wrought him ever harm.
But, now he hath toiled Eurystheus' labours through, 830
Hera will stain him with the blood of kin,
That he shall slay his sons : her will is mine.

On then, close up thine heart from touch of ruth,
O thou unwedded child of murky Night :
With madness thrill this man, with soul-turmoil
Child-murdering, with wild boundings of the feet :
Goad him ; the sheets of murder's sails let out,
That, when o'er Acheron's ferry his own hand
In blood hath sped his crown of goodly sons,
Then may he learn how dread is Hera's wrath, 840
And mine, against him : else the Gods must wane
And mortals wax, if he taste not her vengeance.

MADNESS

Of noble sire and mother was I born,
Even of the blood of Uranus and Night,
But not to do despite to friends I hold
My powers, nor love to haunt for murder's sake.
Fain would I plead with Hera and with thee,
Ere she have erred, if ye will heed my words.
This man, against whose house ye thrust me on,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

850 οὐτ' ἐν θεοῖσιν, οὐ γέ μ' εἰσπέμπεις δόμους·
 ἄβατον δὲ χώραν καὶ θάλασσαν ἀγρίαν
 ἐξημερώσας, θεῶν ἀνέστησεν μόνος
 τιμὰς πιτνούσας ἀνοσίων ἀνδρῶν ὑπο·
 ὥστ' ¹ οὐ παραινῶ μέγала βούλεσθαι κακά.

ΙΡΙΣ

μη σὺ νουθέτει τά θ' Ἡρας κάμὰ μηχανήματα.

ΛΥΣΣΑ

εἰς τὸ λῶστον ἐμβιβάζω σ' ἴχνος ἀντὶ τοῦ
 κακοῦ.

ΙΡΙΣ

οὐχὶ σωφρονεῖν γ' ἔπεμψε δευρό σ' ἠ Διὸς δάμαρ.

ΛΥΣΣΑ

Ἦλιον μαρτυρόμεσθα δρῶσ' ἅ δρᾶν οὐ βούλομαι.
 εἰ δὲ δὴ μ' Ἡρα θ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τ' ἀναγκαίως
 ἔχει

860 τάχος ἐπιρροίβδην θ' ὁμαρτεῖν ὡς κυνηγέτη κύνας,
 εἰμί γ' οὔτε πόντος οὔτω κύμασι στένων λάβρος
 οὔτε γῆς σεισμὸς κεραυνοῦ τ' οἷστρος ὠδίνας
 πνέων,

οἷ ἐγὼ στάδια δραμοῦμαι στέρνον εἰς Ἡρα-
 κλέους·

καὶ καταρρήξω μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐπεμβαλῶ,
 τέκν' ἀποκτείνασα πρῶτον· ὁ δὲ κανὼν οὐκ
 εἴσεται

παῖδας οὓς ἔτικτ' ἐναίρων, πρὶν ἂν ἐμὰς λύσσας
 ἀφῆ.

ἦν ἰδοῦ· καὶ δὴ τινάσσει κρᾶτα βαλβίδων ἄπο,
 καὶ διαστρόφους ἐλίσσει σῖγα γοργωποὺς κόρας.
 ἀμπνοὰς δ' οὐ σωφρονίζει, ταῦρος ὡς ἐς ἐμβολήν·

¹ Musgrave : for MSS. σοί τ'.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

850

Nor on the earth is fameless, nor in heaven.
The pathless land, the wild sea, hath he tamed,
And the God's honours hath alone restored,
When these by impious men were overthrown.
Therefore I plead, devise no monstrous wrong.

IRIS

Dare not with thine admonitions trammel Hera's
schemes and mine!

MADNESS

Nay, I do but point a pathway meeter far to tread
than thine.

IRIS

Not to flaunt thy temperance hath she sent thee,
Zeus's bride divine.

MADNESS

Witness, Sun, that I am doing that which I would
fain refuse : [not choose,
Yet, if I must work thy will and Hera's—if I may
But with skirr of rushing footfalls follow you like 860
huntsman's pack, [ruin-wrack,
On will I; nor sea nor moaning surges hurl such
No, nor earthquake, no, nor madding thunder's gasp-
ing agonies,
As the fury of mine onrush to the breast of Hercules.
I will rive his roofs, will swoop adown his halls :—his
children first [his murder-thirst
I will slay; nor shall the murderer know he slakes
On the children of his body, till my madness' course
is run. [begun!
See him—lo, his head he tosses in the fearful race
See his gorgon-glaring eyeballs all in silence wildly
rolled! [controlled
Like a bull in act to charge, with fiery pantings un-

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ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

870 δεινὰ μυκᾶται δὲ Κήρας ἀνακαλῶν τὰς Ταρ-
τάρου. [φόβω.

τάχα σ' ἐγὼ μᾶλλον χορεύσω καὶ καταυλήσω
στεῖχ' ἐς Οὐλυμπον πεδαίρουσ', Ἴρι, γενναῖον
πόδα. [κλέους.

εἰς δόμους δ' ἡμεῖς ἄφαντοι δυσόμεσθ' Ἑρα-

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄτοτοτοί, στέναξον ἀποκείρεται
σὸν ἄνθος πόλεος, ὁ Διὸς ἔκγονος.
μέλεος Ἑλλάς, ἃ τὸν εὐεργέταν
ἀποβαλεῖς, ὀλεῖς μανιάσιν λύσσαις
χορευθέντ' ἀναύλοις.

880 βέβακεν ἐν δίφροισιν ἃ πολύστονος,
ἄρμασι δ' ἐνδίδωσι
κέντρον ὡς ἐπὶ λῶβα
Νυκτὸς Γοργῶν ἑκατογκεφάλαις
ὄφρων ἰαχήμασι, Λύσσα μαρμαρωπός.

ταχὺ τὸν εὐτυχῆ μετέβαλεν δαίμων,
ταχὺ δὲ πρὸς πατρὸς τέκν' ἐκπνεύσεται.
ἰὼ μοι μέλεος,
ἰὼ Ζεῦ, τὸ σὸν γένος ἄγονον αὐτίκα
λυσσάδες ὠμοβρῶτες ἀποινώδικοι δίκαι

890 κακῶσιν ἐκπετάσουσιν. ἰὼ στέγαι,
κατάρχεται χόρευμα τυμπάνων ἄτερ,
οὐ βρομίῳ κεχαρισμένα θύρσῳ,

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Awfully he bellows, howling to the fateful fiends of 870
hell! [appalling knell!

Wilder yet shall be thy dance, as peals my pipe's
—Ay, unto Olympus soaring, Iris, tread thy path
serene! [unseen.

Mine the task into the halls of Hercules to plunge
[IRIS ascends, and MADNESS enters the palace.

CHORUS

Alas and alas! cry out, O town,
For thy goodliest flower, Zeus' son, mown down!
Thy champion shall slip from thine hands, to thy
bitter cost,
Hellas; in frenzied dances of madness tossed
Where the flute sounds not, he is lost to thee,
lost!

She hath mounted her car, groans throng in her
train;

She is goading her horses on mission of bane; 880
Night's daughter, a Gorgon with hundred-headed hiss
Of her serpents, Madness the glittering-eyed is this.

Swiftly hath fortune o'erthrown him who sat on high:
Swiftly the sons by the father's hand shall die.

Ah misery! Zeus, mad vengeance ravenous-wild
Straightway, athirst for requital, with evils on evils
piled, [not thy child.
Shall trample thy son unto dust, as though he were

Woe for the palace-dome!

Her dance is beginning, but not with the cymbals
clashing, 890
Not with the pine-wand uptossed amid loud accla-
mation,—

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἰὼ δόμοι,
πρὸς αἵματ', οὐχὶ τῆς Διονυσιάδος
βοτρυῶν ἐπὶ χεύμασι λειβᾶς.

φυγῆ, τέκν', ἐξορμᾶτε· δάιον τόδε
δάιον μέλος ἐπαυλείται.
κυναγετεῖ τέκνων διωγμὸν·
οὐποτ' ἄκραντα δόμοισι Λύσσα βακχεύσει.

900 αἰαῖ κακῶν

αἰαῖ δῆτα τὸν γεραιὸν ὡς στένω
πατέρα, τὰν τε παιδοτρόφον, ἃ μάταν
τέκεα γεννᾶται.

ἰδοὺ ἰδού,
θύελλα σείει δῶμα, συμπίπτει στέγη·
ἦ ἦ, τί δρᾶς, ὦ Διὸς παῖ ; μελάθρων
τάραγμα ταρτάρειον, ὡς
ἐπ' Ἐγκελάδῳ ποτὲ Παλλάς, εἰς δόμους πέμπεις.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ λευκὰ γήρα σώματ',

ΧΟΡΟΣ

910 ἀνακαλεῖς τίνα με τίνα βοάν ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄλαστα τὰν δόμοισι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μάντιν οὐχ ἕτερον ἄξομαι.

200

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Woe for a hero's home!—

But for shedding of blood, not the blood of the grape
glad-plashing [oblation.
As the banqueters pour it forth for the Wine-god's

Away, O ye children, in flight, for death,
Death shrieks through her pipe by the blast of
her breath!

[*Cries and sound of rushing within.*]

Like a hound is he holding the children in chase!—
Never shall Madness keep revel for naught through
his dwelling-place.

Woe, anguish and pain!

Woe and alas for the silver hair

900

Of his father!—woe for the mother who bare
His babes in vain!

[*Sound of battering and rending within.*]

Lo you, lo you!

A whirlwind is shaking the house—its roofs fall
crashing—

Ah what, ah what, Zeus' Son, wouldst thou do?

Down on thy palace the turmoil of hell art thou
dashing, [Enceladus flashing.

As the levin from Pallas's hand to the heart of

Enter SERVANT from within.

SERVANT

O reverend presences hoary-white—

CHORUS

What meaneth thy cry unto me—thy cry of fear? 910

SERVANT

Within yon halls is a fearful sight!

CHORUS

No need, to attest thy talé, that we seek to a seer.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τεθνῶσι παῖδες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

στενάζεθ', ὡς στενακτά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δαίοι φόνοι,

δαίοι δὲ τοκέων χεῖρες.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἄν τις εἴποι μᾶλλον ἢ πεπόνθαμεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς παισὶ στενακτὰν ἄταν ἄταν

πατέρος ἀμφαίνεις;

λέγε τίνα τρόπον ἔστυο θεόθεν ἐπὶ

920 μέλαθρα κακὰ τάδε

τλήμονάς τε παίδων τύχας.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἱερὰ μὲν ἦν πάροιθεν ἐσχάρας Διὸς

καθάρσι' οἴκων, γῆς ἄνακτ' ἐπεὶ κτανῶν

ἐξέβαλε τῶνδε δωμάτων Ἡρακλῆς·

χορὸς δὲ καλλίμορφος εἰστήκει τέκνων

πατὴρ τε Μεγάρα τ' ἐν κύκλῳ δ' ἤδη κανοῦν

εἴλικτο βωμοῦ, φθέγμα δ' ὄσιον εἶχομεν.

μέλλων δὲ δαλὸν χειρὶ δεξιᾷ φέρειν,

εἰς χέρνιβ' ὡς βάψειεν, Ἀλκμήνης τόκος

930 ἔστυο σιωπῇ. καὶ χρονίζοντος πατρὸς

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

SERVANT

Dead are the children !

CHORUS

Woe is me !

SERVANT

Wail ! well may ye wail !

CHORUS

Slain ruthlessly !

Oh that the hands of a father their murder should
wreak !

SERVANT

Things have we suffered more awful than tongue may
speak.

CHORUS

How ? of the woeful doom by a father wrought

On his sons, canst thou tell ?

Say, say in what fashion the malice of Gods hath
brought [fraught

These ills on the house, and the fate with misery 920
On the children that fell.

SERVANT

Victims were set before the hearth of Zeus

To cleanse the house, since, having slain the king,

Forth of these halls had Hercules flung the corpse.

And there his children stood in fair array,

His sire, and Megara. Round the altar now [hush.

The maund¹ had passed ; and we kept hallowed

Then, even in act to bear the torch in hand²

And plunge in lustral water, silent stood

Alcmena's son : and, as their sire delayed, 930

¹ A basket containing the sacrificial knife and barley was carried round the altar before the slaying of the victim.

² A brand from the altar was quenched in water, with which the bystanders were then sprinkled.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

- παῖδες προσέσχον ὄμμ'· ὁ δ' οὐκέθ' αὐτὸς ἦν,
 ἀλλ' ἐν στροφαῖσιν ὀμμάτων ἐφθαρμένος
 ῥίζας τ' ἐν ὄσσοις αἱματῶπας ἐκβαλῶν,
 ἀφρὸν κατέσταζ' εὐτρίχου γενειάδος.
 ἔλεξε δ' ἅμα γέλῳτι παραπεπληγμένῳ
 πάτερ, τί θύω πρὶν κτανεῖν Εὐρυσθέα
 καθάρσιον πῦρ, καὶ πόνους διπλοῦς ἔχω
 ἐξὸν μιᾶς μ' ἐκ χειρὸς εὖ θέσθαι τάδε;
 940 ὅταν δ' ἐνέγκω δεῦρο κρᾶτ' Εὐρυσθέως,
 ἐπὶ τοῖσι νῦν θανοῦσιν ἀγνῶ χέρας.
 ἐκχεῖτε πηγᾶς, ῥίπτειτ' ἐκ χειρῶν κανᾶ.
 τίς μοι δίδωσι τόξα; τίς δ' ὄπλον χερὸς;
 πρὸς τὰς Μυκῆνας εἶμι· λάζυσθαι χρεῶν
 μοχλοῦς δικέλλας θ', ὡς τὰ Κυκλώπων βάθρα
 φοῖνικι κανόνι καὶ τύκοις ἠρμοσμένα
 στρεπτῷ σιδήρῳ συντριαινῶσω πάλιν.
 ἐκ τοῦδε βαίνων ἄρματ' οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν
 ἔφασκε, δίφρου δ' εἰσέβαινεν ἄντυγα
 κᾶθινε, κέντρον δῆθεν ὡς ἔχων χερί.
 950 διπλοῦς δ' ὄπαδοῖς ἦν γέλωσ φόβος θ' ὁμοῦ·
 καὶ τις τόδ' εἶπεν, ἄλλος εἰς ἄλλον δρακῶν·
 παίζει πρὸς ἡμᾶς δεσπότης ἢ μαίνεται;
 ὁ δ' εἶρπ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω κατὰ στέγας,
 μέσον δ' ἐς ἀνδρῶν' εἰσπεσῶν Νίσου πόλιν
 ἤκειν ἔφασκε, δωμάτων εἴσω βεβῶς.
 κλιθεὶς δ' ἐς οὐδας ὡς ἔχει σκευάζεται
 θοῖνην. διελθὼν δ' ὡς βραχὺν χρόνον μονῆς,
 Ἴσθμοῦ ναπαίας ἔλεγε προσβαίνειν πλάκας.
 960 κἀνταῦθα γυμνὸν σῶμα θεὸς πορπαμάτων,
 πρὸς οὐδέν' ἠμιλλᾶτο κάκηρυσσέτο

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

His sons looked—lo, he seemed no more the same,
But wholly marred, with rolling eyes distraught,
With bloodshot eye-roots starting from his head,
While dripped the slaver down his bearded cheek.

Suddenly with a maniac laugh he spake :

“ Why, ere I slay Eurystheus, sacrifice,
Father—have cleansing fire and toil twice o'er,
When all in one act I may compass well?
When hither I have brought Eurystheus' head,
For him, with these now slain, I'll purge my hands. 940
Spill ye the water, cast the maunds away!
Ho there—my bow!—the mace of my right hand!
I march against Mycenae :—I must take
Crowbars and mattocks, that you Cyclop town,
Yon walls with red line and with gavil squared,
May by my bended lever be upheaved.”
Then set forth, speaking of his car the while,
Who car had none, sprang to the chariot-rail,
And thrust, as who held in his hand a goad.

His henchmen, half in mirth and half in fear, 950

Were glancing each at other, and one spake :
“ Doth our lord make us sport, or is he mad ? ”
Still was he pacing up and down the house ;
Then, to the men's hall rushing, cried, “ I have
come

To Nisus' town ! ”¹—who stood in his own halls.
He casts him on the bare floor, and prepares
To feast : yet, tarrying there but little space,
He cried, “ I go to Isthmus' woodland plains ! ”
Then from his body cast his mantle's folds,
And wrestled with—*no man* !—proclaimed himself 960

¹ Megara, half way on his imaginary journey, on the Isthmus of Corinth ; this suggested the Isthmian games.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

αὐτὸς πρὸς αὐτοῦ καλλίμκος, οὐδενὸς
 ἀκοὴν ὑπειπὼν. δεινὰ δ' Εὐρυσθεὶ βρέμων
 ἦν ἐν Μυκῆναις τῷ λόγῳ. πατὴρ δέ νιν
 θυγῶν κραταιᾶς χειρὸς ἐννέπει τάδε·
 ὦ παῖ, τί πάσχεις; τίς ὁ τρόπος ξενώσεως
 τῆσδ'; οὐ τί που φόνος σ' ἐβάκχευσεν νεκρῶν,
 οὐδ' ἄρτι καίνεις; ὁ δέ νιν Εὐρυσθέως δοκῶν
 πατέρα προταρβοῦνθ' ἰκέσιον ψαύειν χερός,
 ὠθεῖ, φαρέτραν δ' εὐτρεπῆ σκευάζεται
 970 καὶ τόξ' ἑαυτοῦ παισί, τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως
 δοκῶν φονεύειν. οἱ δὲ ταρβοῦντες φόβῳ
 ὄρουον ἄλλος ἄλλοσ', εἰς πέπλους ὁ μὲν
 μητρὸς ταλαίνης, ὁ δ' ὑπὸ κίονος σκιάν,
 ἄλλος δὲ βωμὸν ὄρνις ὡς ἔπτηξ' ὑπο.
 βοᾷ δὲ μήτηρ· ὦ τεκῶν, τί δρᾶς; τέκνα
 κτείνεις; βοᾷ δὲ πρέσβυς οἰκετῶν τ' ὄχλος.
 ὁ δ' ἐξελίσσων παῖδα κίονος κύκλω
 τόρευμα δεινὸν ποδός, ἐναντίον σταθεῖς
 980 βάλλει πρὸς ἦπαρ· ὑπτίος δὲ λαίνους
 ὀρθοστάτας ἔδευσεν ἐκπνέων βίον·
 ὁ δ' ἠλάλαξε κάπεκόμπασεν τάδε·
 εἰς μὲν νεοσσὸς ὄδε θανὼν Εὐρυσθέως
 ἔχθραν πατρῶαν ἐκτίνων πέπτωκέ μοι.
 ἄλλῳ δ' ἐπέιχε τόξ', ὃς ἀμφὶ βωμίαν
 ἔπτηξε κρηπίδ' ὡς λεληθῆναι δοκῶν.
 φθάνει δ' ὁ τλήμων γόνασι προσπεσὼν πατρὸς
 καὶ πρὸς γένειον χεῖρα καὶ δέρην βαλῶν·
 ὦ φίλτατ', αὐδᾶ, μή μ' ἀποκτείνης, πάτερ·
 σὸς εἰμι, σὸς παῖς· οὐ τὸν Εὐρυσθέως ὀλεῖς.
 990 ὁ δ' ἀγριωπὸν ὄμμα Γοργόνης στρέφων,
 ὡς ἐντὸς ἔστη παῖς λυγροῦ τοξεύματος,
 μυδροκτύπου μίμημ' ὑπὲρ κᾶρα βαλῶν

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To himself the victor, cried, "Ye people, hear!"—
To none! In fancy at Mycenæ then
He stormed against Eurystheus. But his sire
Clung to his brawny hand, and cried to him,
"What ails thee? What mad change of mood is this?
Surely thou art not driven distraught by blood
Of these late slain!" He deemed Eurystheus' sire,
A trembling suppliant, hung upon his hand,
And spurned him back; prepared his quiver and bow
Against his own sons then, thinking to slay 970
Eurystheus' sons. They, quaking with affright,
Rushed hither, thither: his hapless mother's skirts
This sought, that to a pillar's shadow fled;
A third cowered 'neath the altar like a bird

Then shrieked the mother, "Father, what dost thou?
Wouldst slay thy sons?" The thralls, the ancient,
cried.

He, winding round the pillar as wound his son
In fearful circlings; met him face to face
And shot him to the heart. Back as he fell,
His death-gasps dashed the column with red spray. 980
Then shouted Hercules, and vaunted thus.
"One of Eurystheus' fledglings here is slain,
Dead at my feet, hath paid for his sire's hate!"
Against the next then aimed his bow, who crouched
At the altar's base, in hope to be unseen.
But, ere he shot, the poor child clasped his knees,
And stretching to his beard and neck a hand,
"Ah, dearest father," cried he, "slay not me!
I am thy boy—thine!—'Tis not Eurystheus' son!"
He rolling savage gorgon-glaring eyes, 990
Since the boy stood too near for that fell bow,
Swung back overhead his club, like forging-sledge,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ξύλον καθῆκε παιδὸς εἰς ξανθὸν κέρα,
 ἔρρηξε δ' ὄστα. δεύτερον δὲ παῖδ' ἑλών,
 χωρεῖ τρίτου θῦμ' ὡς ἐπισφάξων δυοῖν.
 ἀλλὰ φθάνει νιν ἢ τάλαιν' εἴσω δόμων
 μήτηρ ὑπεκλαβοῦσα, καὶ κλῆει πύλας.
 ὁ δ' ὡς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δὴ Κυκλωπίοισιν ὦν
 σκάπτει μοχλευεῖ θύρετρα, κάκβαλὼν σταθμὰ
 1000 δάμαρτα καὶ παῖδ' ἐνὶ κατέστρωσεν βέλει.
 κἀνθένδε πρὸς γέροντος ἱππευεῖ φόνον·
 ἀλλ' ἦλθεν εἰκῶν, ὡς ὄραν ἐφαίνετο
 Παλλὰς κραδαίνουσ' ἔγχος ἐπιλόφω κέρα¹
 κᾶρριψε πέτρον στέρνον εἰς Ἑρακλέους,
 ὃς νιν φόνου μαργώντος ἔσχε, κεῖς ὕπνου
 καθῆκε· πίτνει δ' εἰς πέδον, πρὸς κίονα
 νῶτον πατάξας, ὃς πεσήμασι στέγης
 διχορραγῆς ἔκειτο κρηπίδων ἐπι·
 1010 ἡμεῖς δ' ἐλευθεροῦντες ἐκ δρασμῶν πόδα
 σὺν τῷ γέροντι δεσμὰ σειραίων βρόχων
 ἀνήπτομεν πρὸς κίον', ὡς λήξας ὕπνου
 μηδὲν προσεργάσαιτο τοῖς δεδραμένοις.
 εὔδει δ' ὁ τλήμων ὕπνου οὐκ εὐδαίμονα,
 παῖδας φονεύσας καὶ δάμαρτ'· ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν
 οὐκ οἶδα θνητῶν ὅστις ἀθλιώτερος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ φόνος ἦν δν Ἀργολὶς ἔχει πέτρα
 τότε μὲν περισαμότατος καὶ ἄπιστος
 Ἑλλάδι τῶν Δαναοῦ παίδων·
 1020 τὰ δ' ὑπερέβαλε, παρέδραμε τὰ τότε κακά.
 τάλαιν διογενεῖ κόρφω.²

¹ Wakefield : for MSS. ἐπι λόφω κέρα.

² Tyrwhitt's punctuation : no stop in MS.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Down dashed it on his own son's golden head,
And shattered all the bones. This second slain,
He speeds to add to victims twain a third.
But first the wretched mother snatched the child,
And bare within, and barred the chamber-door.
But he, as though at siege of Cyclop walls,¹
Mines, heaves up doors, and hurls the door-posts down,
And with one arrow laid low wife and child : 1000
Then charges down to spill his own sire's blood.
But a Shape came,—as seemed unto our eyes,
Pallas with plumed helm, brandishing a spear ;—
And against Hercules' breast she hurled a rock
Which stayed him from his murder-frenzy, and cast
Into deep sleep. To earth he fell, and dashed
His back against a pillar, cleft in twain
By the roof's ruin, on the pavement thrown.
Then we, from flight of panic breathing free,
Wrought with the old man, binding him with cords 1010
Unto the pillar, that, awaked from sleep,
He might not add ill deeds to ill deeds done.
There sleeps he, wretched man, a sleep unblest,
Who hath slaughtered sons and wife. For me, I know
not
Of mortals any man more fortune-crost.

CHORUS

That murder which Argos remembereth
Was aforetime through Hellas most famous, the
strange tale told
Of Danaus' daughters, the workers of death :—
But this hath surpassed, hath outrun, that horror of 1020
old— [the sacrifice done
This horror that blasts Zeus' Son! I might tell of

¹ *i.e.* Eurystheus' city, Mycenae.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

μονοτέκνου Πρόκνης
 φόνον ἔχω λέξαι θυόμενον Μούσαις·
 σὺ δὲ τέκνα τρίγωνα τεκόμενος, ὦ δάϊε,
 λυσσαδί συγκατειργάσω μοίρα.
 τίνα στεναγμὸν
 ἢ γόον ἢ φθιτῶν
 ᾠδάν, ἢ τίν' "Αἶδα χορὸν ἀχήσω ;
 φεῦ φεῦ·
 ἴδεσθε, διάνδιχα κλῆθρα
 1030 κλίνεται ὑψιπύλων δόμων.

ἰὼ μοι·
 ἴδεσθε τάδε τέκνα πρὸ πατρὸς
 ἄθλια κείμενα δυστάνου,
 εὐδοντος ὕπνου δεινὸν ἐκ παίδων φόνου.
 περὶ δὲ δεσμὰ καὶ πολύβροχ' ἀμμάτων
 ἐρείσμαθ' Ἡράκλειον
 ἀμφὶ δέμας τάδε λαίνοις
 ἀνημμένα κίοσιν οἴκων.
 ὁ δ' ὥς τις ὄρνις ἄπτερον καταστένων
 1040 ᾠδίνα τέκνων, πρέσβυς ὑστέρω ποδὶ
 πικρὰν διώκων ἤλυσιν πάρεσθ' ὄδε.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

Καδμείοι γέροντες, οὐ σίγα σί-
 γα τὸν ὕπνω παρειμένον ἐάσετ' ἐκ-
 λαθέσθαι κακῶν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κατὰ σὲ δακρύοις στένω, πρέσβυ, καὶ
 τέκεα καὶ τὸ καλλίνικον κᾶρα.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To the Muses,¹ of Procne who slaughtered the only child of her womb :—

But thou, who art father of children three, O unhappiest one, [madness's doom!
Together hast murdered them all, driven on by thy
With what cry shall I wail thee, what sighing,
What chant as for dead that are lying in Hades, what dirge of the tomb?

Alas! O see

How the bolts slide back, and asunder fall

The stately doors of the palace-hall.

1030

The palace is thrown open, and the scene within disclosed.

Ah me! ah me!

Lo there the children—ah misery!

At the feet of their wretched father they lie:
And from murder of sons he is resting in awful sleep;
And around him the bonds with manifold fastenings
keep

The body of Hercules in ward,
And lashed to the palace's pillars of stone are the
coils of the cord.

And that old sire, as bird that maketh moan
O'er fledgling brood, with footsteps eld-fordone
Treading a bitter pathway, cometh on.

1040

AMPHITRYON

Ah peace, Cadmean fathers, peace!

Let his woes in oblivion a moment cease
By slumber's release.

CHORUS

With tears I bemoan thee, and these babes dead,
O ancient, and that victorious head.

¹ The legend of Procne's murder of Itys has, in becoming a theme of song, been consecrated to the Muses.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1050 ἐκαστέρω πρόβατε, μὴ
κτυπεῖτε, μὴ βοᾶτε, μὴ
τὸν εὖ τ' ἰαύονθ'
ὑπνώδεά τ' εὐνᾶς ἐγείρετε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμοι.
φόνος ὅσος ὄδ'—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ᾶ ᾶ,

διά μ' ὀλεῖτε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κεχυμένος ἐπαντέλλει.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ ἀτρεμαῖα θρήνον αἰύξεν', ὦ γέροντες;
ἢ δέσμ' ἀνεγειρόμενος χαλάσας ἀπολεῖ πόλιν,
ἀπὸ δὲ πατέρα, μέλαθρά τε καταρρήξει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀδύνατ' ἀδύνατά μοι.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

σίγα, πνοὰς μάθω· φέρε πρὸς οὖς βάλω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὔδει;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1060 ναί, εὔδει
ὑπνον ὑπνον ὀλόμενον,
ὃς ἔκαν' ἄλοχον, ἔκανε δὲ τέκεα, τοξήρει
ψαλμῶ τοξεύσας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στέναζέ νυν

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

στενάζω.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Withdraw you farther, beat not the breast,
Neither cry, neither break ye his slumbrous rest
Of calm-drawn breath.

CHORUS

Woe's me for the river of blood he hath spilt!—

AMPHITRYON

Ah, your words be my death!

CHORUS

It is rising against him, a witness of guilt!

AMPHITRYON

Let the wail of your dirge, ye ancients, softlier fall,
Else will he wake, will rend his bonds, and in ruin lay
Thebes, will slay his father, and shatter his palace-hall.

CHORUS

I cannot—my crying I cannot forbear!

AMPHITRYON

Hush! let me hearken his breathing—bend low mine
ear—

CHORUS

Sleepeth he?

AMPHITRYON

Yea—in a slumber of bane,
Who hath slain his wife, hath his children slain
With the string that sang them the bow's death-
strain!

CHORUS

Wail therefore—

AMPHITRYON

I wail with thee.

1050

1060

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τέκνων ὄλεθρου—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ᾠμοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σέθεν τε παιδός.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

αἰαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

σίγα σίγα·

1070

παλίντροπος ἐξεγειρόμενος στρέφεται· φέρ'
ὑπόκρυφον δέμας ὑπὸ μέλαθρον κρύνψω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει· νύξ ἔχει βλέφαρα παιδι σῶ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ὄρᾱθ' ὄρᾱτε.

τὸ φάος ἐκλιπεῖν ἐπὶ κακοῖσιν οὐ
φεύγω τάλας, ἀλλ' εἴ με κανεῖ πατέρ' ὄντα,
πρὸς δὲ κακοῖς κακὰ μῆσεται
πρὸς Ἐρινύσι θ' αἶμα σύγγονον ἔξει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τότε θανεῖν σ' ἐχρήν, ὅτε δάμαρτι σᾶ
φόνον ὁμοσπόρων
ἔμολες ἐκπράξειν
1080 Ταφίῳν περίκλυστον ἄστυ πέρσας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

φυγᾶ φυγᾶ, γέροντες, ἀποπρὸ δωμάτων
διώκετε· φεύγετε μάργον
ἄνδρ' ἐπεγειρόμενον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

CHORUS

His babes' death,—

AMPHITRYON

Woe is me !

CHORUS

And thy son's doom !

AMPHITRYON

Well-a-day !

CHORUS

Ah ancient—

AMPHITRYON

O hush ye ! stay !

He is writhing—is turning—is waking ! Away !

Under yon roof let me hide me out of his sight !

1070

CHORUS

Fear not : on the eyes of thy son yet broodeth the
night.

AMPHITRYON

Beware—O beware !

Not death do I shun, for a crown of the ills that I bear—
Wretch that I am !—but if me, if his father, he kill,

To his load of ill shall he add fresh ill,
And to heap up his debt to the Furies the blood of a
kinsman shall spill.

CHORUS

Then shouldst thou have died, when thou wentest
forth to requite [smite

The blood of the kin of thy wife on the Taphians, to
Their city enringed with the surf-crests white.

1080

AMPHITRYON

Flee, ancients ! Afar from the dwelling flee !
From his frenzy of fury O hasten ye,
For he waketh from sleep !

215

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τάχα φόνον ἕτερον ἐπὶ φόνῳ βαλὼν
 ἀν' αὐτὸν βακχεύσει Καδμείων πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί παιδ' ἤχθηρας ὠδ' ὑπερκότως
 τὸν σόν, κακῶν δὲ πέλαγος εἰς τόδ' ἤγαγες ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔα·

1080 ἔμπνους μὲν εἰμι καὶ δέδορχ' ἄπερ με δεῖ,
 αἰθέρα τε καὶ γῆν τόξα θ' Ἡλίου τάδε·
 ὡς δ' ἐν κλύδωνι καὶ φρενῶν ταράγματι
 πέπτωκα δεινῶ καὶ πνοᾶς θερμᾶς πνέω
 μεταρσί', οὐ βέβαια, πνευμόνων ἄπο.
 ἰδοῦ, τί δεσμοῖς ναῦς ὅπως ὠρμισμένος
 νεανίαν θώρακα καὶ βραχίονα,
 πρὸς ἡμιθραύστῳ λαΐνῳ τυκίσματι
 ἡμῶν νεκροῖσι γείτονας θάκους ἔχων ;
 πτερωτά τ' ἔγχη τόξα τ' ἔσπαρται πέδῳ,
 ἅ πρην παρασπίζοντ' ἐμοῖς βραχίονα
 1100 ἔσφριξε πλευρὰς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τ' ἔσφριξετο.
 οὐ ποῦ κατήλθον αὐθις εἰς "Αἶδου πάλιν,
 Εὐρυσθέως διάυλον ἐξ "Αἶδου μολῶν ;
 ἀλλ' οὔτι Σισύφειον εἰσορῶ πέτρον
 Πλούτωνά τ', οὐδὲ σκῆπτρα Δήμητρος κόρης.
 ἔκ τοι πέπληγμαί· ποῦ ποτ' ὦν ἀμνημονῶ ;
 ὦή, τίς ἐγγὺς ἢ πρόσω φίλων ἐμῶν,
 δύσγνωσιαν ὅστις τὴν ἐμὴν ἰάσεται ;
 σαφῶς γὰρ οὐδὲν οἶδα τῶν εἰωθότων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

γέροντες, ἔλθω τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν πέλας ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1110 κάγωγε σὺν σοί, μὴ προδοὺς τὰς συμφοράς.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Full soon on the deaths he hath wrought fresh deaths
shall he heap,
Through the city of Cadmus storming in awful revelry.

CHORUS

Ah Zeus, why this stern hate against thy son?
Why hast thou brought him to this sea of ills?

HERCULES (*waking and stirring*)

Ha!

Breathing I am—all I should see I see,
The sky, the earth, the shafts of yonder sun: 1090
Yet as in surge and storm of turmoiled soul
Am whelmed, and fiery-fervent breath I breathe
Hard-panted from my lungs, not tempered calm.
Ha!—wherefore like a ship by hawsers moored,
Ropes compassing my strong chest and mine arms,
Bound to half-shattered masonry of stone
Sit I?—lo, corpses neighbours to my seat!
Winged shafts and bow are strawn about the floor,
Which once, like armour-bearers to mine arms, 1100
Warded my side, were kept of me in ward:
Sure, not to Hades have I again gone down,
Who have passed, repassed, Eurystheus' Hades-course?
Nay, I see not the stone of Sisyphus,
Pluto, nor sceptre of Demeter's Child.
I am distraught. Know I not where I am?
Ho there! who of my friends is near or far
To be physician to my 'wilderment?
For strange to me seem all familiar things.

AMPHITRYON

Old friends, shall I draw near unto my grief?

CHORUS

I too with thee, forsaking not thy woe. 1110

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πάτερ, τί κλαίεις καὶ συναμπίσχει κόρας,
τοῦ φιλτάτου σοι τηλόθεν παιδὸς βεβώς ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ὦ τέκνον· εἴ γὰρ καὶ κακῶς πράσσω ἐμός.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πράσσω δ' ἐγὼ τί λυπρὸν, οὐ δακρυρροεῖς ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἂ καὶ θεῶν τις, εἰ πάθοι, καταστένοι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μέγας γ' ὁ κόμπος, τὴν τύχην δ' οὔπω λέγεις.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ὀρᾶς γὰρ αὐτός, εἰ φρονῶν ἤδη κυρεῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἶπ' εἴ τι καινὸν ὑπογράφει τῷμῳ βίῳ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

εἰ μηκέθ' "Αἰδου βᾶκχος εἶ, φράσαιμεν ἄν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1120

παπαί, τόδ' ὡς ὑποπτον ἠνίξω πάλιν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

καί σ' εἰ βεβαίως εὖ φρονεῖς ἤδη σκοπῶ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ γάρ τι βακχεύσας γε μέμνημαι φρένας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

λύσω, γέροντες, δεσμὰ παιδὸς ἢ τί δρῶ ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ τὸν γε δήσαντ' εἶπ'· ἀναινόμεσθα γάρ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

τοσοῦτον ἴσθι τῶν κακῶν· τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄρκει σιωπὴ γὰρ μαθεῖν δ' βούλομαι ;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Father, why dost thou weep and veil thine eyes,
Shrinking afar from thy beloved son?

AMPHITRYON

Oh my son!—mine, though ne'er so ill thy plight!

HERCULES

Am I in grievous plight, that thou shouldst weep?

AMPHITRYON

Plight whereat Gods might groan, were God so
stricken!

HERCULES

Great words!—but what hath chanced thou say'st
not yet.

AMPHITRYON

Thyself mayst see, if now thy wit be sound.

HERCULES

Speak, if thou shadowest forth strange ills for me.

AMPHITRYON

I will say—so thy frenzy of hell be past.

HERCULES

Again that word!—ha, what dark riddle this?

1120

AMPHITRYON

Yea, if thy mind be sober yet I doubt—

HERCULES

Naught I remember of a frenzied mind.

AMPHITRYON

Fathers, shall I unbind my son, or no?

HERCULES

Who bound me? Him I account no friend of mine!

AMPHITRYON

Know thou so far thine ills:—the rest let be.

HERCULES

Is silence all? With *that* must I content me?

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ὦ Ζεῦ, παρ' Ἡρας ἄρ' ὄρας θρόνων τάδε ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ τι κείθεν πολέμον πεπόνθαμεν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

τὴν θεὸν ἔασας τὰ σὰ περιστέλλου κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1130 ἀπωλόμεσθα· συμφορὰν λέξεις τίνα ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἰδουὺ θέασαι τάδε τέκνων πεσήματα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἴμοι· τίν' ὄψιν τήνδε δέρκομαι τάλας ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἀπόλεμον, ὦ παῖ, πόλεμον ἔσπευσας τέκνοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί πόλεμον εἶπας ; τοῦσδε τίς διώλεσεν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

σὺ καὶ σὰ τόξα καὶ θεῶν ὄς αἴτιος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς ; τί δράσας ; ὦ κάκ' ἀγγέλλων πάτερ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

μανεῖς· ἐρωτᾶς δ' ἄθλι' ἐρμηνεύματα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἦ καὶ δάμαρτός· εἰμ' ἐγὼ φονεὺς ἐμῆς ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

μῖᾶς ἅπαντα χειρὸς ἔργα σῆς τάδε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1140 αἰαῖ· στεναγμῶν γάρ με περιβάλλει νέφος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

τούτων ἕκατι σὰς καταστένω τύχας.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON (*unbinding him*)

Zeus, seest thou this bolt from Hera's throne ?

HERCULES

Ha ! have I suffered mischief of her hate ?

AMPHITRYON

Let be the Goddess : thine own miseries heed.

HERCULES

I am undone ! What ruin wilt thou tell ?

1130

AMPHITRYON

Lo, mark these fallen wrecks,—wrecks of thy sons !

HERCULES

Woe's me ! ah wretch, what sight do I behold ?

AMPHITRYON

Unnatural war, son, waged against thy babes.

HERCULES

What war mean'st thou ? Who hath done these to death ?

AMPHITRYON

Thou, and thy bow—and whatso God was cause.

HERCULES

How?—what did I?—O ill-reporting sire !

AMPHITRYON

In madness. Heavy enlightening cravest thou !

HERCULES

Ha ! am I murderer of my wife withal ?

AMPHITRYON

Yea : all these deeds are work of one hand—thine.

HERCULES

Alas ! a cloud of groaning shrouds me round !

1140

AMPHITRYON

For this cause heavily mourn I thy mischance.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἦ γὰρ συνήραξ' οἶκον, ἦ 'βάκχευσ', ἐμόν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν' πάντα δυστυχῆ τὰ σά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ποῦ δ' οἴστρος ἡμᾶς ἔλαβε ; ποῦ διώλεσεν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὄτ' ἀμφὶ βωμὸν χεῖρας ἠγνίζου πυρί.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἶμοι· τί δῆτα φείδομαι ψυχῆς ἐμῆς
τῶν φιλτάτων μοι γενόμενος παίδων φονεύς,

κούκ εἶμι πέτρας λισσάδος πρὸς ἄλματα

ἦ φάσγανον πρὸς ἠπαρ ἑξακουτίσας

1150

τέκνοις δικαστῆς αἵματος γενήσομαι ;

ἦ σάρκα τήνδε τὴν ἐμὴν πρήσας πυρί,

δύσκλειαν ἦ μένει μ' ἀπώσομαι βίου ;

ἀλλ' ἐμποδῶν μοι θανασίμων βουλευμάτων

Θησεὺς ὄδ' ἔρπει συγγενῆς φίλος τ' ἐμός.

ὀφθησόμεσθα, καὶ τεκνοκτόνον μύσος

εἰς ὄμμαθ' ἤξει φιλτάτῳ ξένων ἐμῶν.

οἶμοι, τί δράσω ; ποῖ κακῶν ἐρημίαν

εὖρω, πτερωτός, ἦ κατὰ χθονὸς μολῶν ;

φέρ' [ὦ μέλαν] τι¹ κρατὶ περιβάλω σκότος.

1160

αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ τοῖς δεδραμένοις κακοῖς,

καὶ τῷδε προστρόπαιον αἶμα προσβαλὼν

οὐδὲν κακῶσαι τοὺς ἀναιτίους θέλω.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦκω σὺν ἄλλοις οἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ῥοὰς

μένουσιν, ἔνοπλοι γῆς Ἀθηναίων κόροι,

σῶ παιδί, πρέσβυ, σύμμαχον φέρων δόρυ.

κληδῶν γὰρ ἦλθεν εἰς Ἐρεχθειδῶν πόλιν

¹ Translator's suggestion : for MSS. φερ' ἔν τι. Cf. l. 1216.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I wrecked mine house, or loosed wild rioters there ?

AMPHITRYON

One thing I know—thy state is ruin all.

HERCULES

Where did my frenzy seize me ?—where destroy ?

AMPHITRYON

As thine hand touched the altar's cleansing fire.

HERCULES

Woe's me ! Ah wherefore spare I mine own life,
Who am found the murderer of my dear, dear sons,
And rush not to plunge headlong from a cliff,
Or dash a dagger down into mine heart,
And make me avenger of my children's blood, 1150
Or with consuming fire burn this my flesh,
To avert the imminent life-long infamy ?
But lo, to thwart my purposes of death,
Theseus draws nigh, my kinsman and my friend.
I shall be seen !—this curse of children's blood
Shall meet a friend's eyes, dearest of my friends !
Woe ! What shall I do ?—where find solitude
In ill's ?—take wings, or plunge beneath the ground ?
Oh let me in black darkness pall mine head ;
For I take shame for evils wrought of me, 1160
Nor would I taint him with bloodguiltiness—¹
Nay, nowise would I harm the innocent.

Enter THESEUS, with attendants.

THESEUS

I come, with them that by Asopus' stream
In arms are tarrying, Athens' warrior sons,
Ancient, to bring thy son my battle-aid.
For rumour came to the Erechtheids' town

¹ The mere sight of a murderer conveyed contamination.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ὡς σκῆπτρα χώρας τῆσδ' ἀναρπάσας Λύκος
 εἰς πόλεμον ὑμῖν καὶ μάχην καθίσταται.
 1170 τίνων δ' ἀμοιβὰς ὧν ὑπήρξεν Ἡρακλῆς
 σώσας με νέρθεν, ἦλθον, εἴ τι δεῖ, γέρον,
 ἢ χειρὸς ὑμᾶς τῆς ἐμῆς ἢ συμμάχων.
 ἔα· τί νεκρῶν τῶνδε πληθύνει πέδον;
 οὐ που λέλειμμαι καὶ νεωτέρων κακῶν
 ὕστερος ἀφύγμαι; τίς τὰδ' ἔκτεινεν τέκνα;
 τίνος γεγῶσαν τήνδ' ὀρῶ συνάορον;
 οὐ γὰρ δορός γε παῖδες ἴστανται πέλας,
 ἀλλ' ἄλλο τοί που καινὸν εὐρίσκω κακόν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ τὸν ἐλαιοφόρον ὄχθον ἔχων ἀναξ—

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί χρῆμά μ' οἰκτροῖς ἐκύλεσας προοιμίους;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1180 ἐπάθομεν πάθεα μέλεα πρὸς θεῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἱ παῖδες οἶδε τίνες, ἐφ' οἷς δακρυρροεῖς;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἔτεκε μὲν νιν οὐμὸς Ἰνις τάλας·
 τεκόμενος δ' ἔκτανε, φόνιον αἶμα τλᾶς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εὐφῆμα φώνει.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

βουλομένοισιν ἐπαγγέλλει.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ δεινὰ λέξας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οἰχόμεθ' οἰχομεθα πτανοί.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί φῆς; τί δράσας;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

That Lycus, this land's sceptered sway usurped,
For war had risen against you, and for fight.
And to requite the service done of him
Who out of Hades saved me, come I, ancient, 1170
If aught ye need mine hand or mine allies.
—Ha! wherefore bears the earth this load of dead?
Have I been laggard?—have I come too late
To stay fell mischief? Who could slay these boys?
Whose wife is she, this woman that I see?
Not boys, good sooth, are ranged to face the spear!
Sure, some unheard-of outrage here I find!

AMPHITRYON

King, lord of the mount with the olives crowned—

THESEUS

Why in thy first words wails a voice of woe?

AMPHITRYON

Sore ills at the hands of the Gods have we found. 1180

THESEUS

What lads be these, o'er whom thou weepest so?

AMPHITRYON

My son was their father—alas and alas for him—
Their father—and slew them!—who dared that
murder grim!

THESEUS

Hush! Speak not horrors thou!

AMPHITRYON

Ah, would that I could but obey thy word!

THESEUS

Dread things thou sayest now!

AMPHITRYON

Fled is our bliss, as on wings of a bird.

THESEUS

What sayest thou?—how wrought he deed so dread?

225

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

1190 *μαινομένῳ πιτύλῳ πλαγχθεῖς
ἐκατογκεφάλου βαφαῖς ὕδρας.*

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

Ἦρας ὄδ' ἀγών· τίς δ' ὄδ' οὖν νεκροῖς, γέρον·

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

*ἐμὸς ἐμὸς ὅδε γόνος ὁ πολύπονος, δς ἐπὶ
δόρῳ γιγαντοφόνον ἦλθεν σὺν θεοῖ-
σι Φλεγραῖον εἰς πεδίον ἀσπιστάς.*

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τίς ἀνδρῶν ὧδε δυσδαίμων ἔφυ·

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

*οὐκ ἂν εἰδείης ἕτερον
πολυμοχθότερον πολυπλαγκτότερόν τε θνατῶν.*

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί γὰρ πέπλοισιν ἄθλιον κρύπτει κίρα·

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

1200 *αἰδόμενος τὸ σὸν ὄμμα
καὶ φιλίαν ὁμόφυλον
αἱμᾶ τε παιδοφόνον.*

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἄλλ' ὡς συναλγῶν γ' ἦλθον· ἐκκάλυπτέ μιν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

*ὦ τέκνον,
πάρες ἀπ' ὀμμάτων
πέπλον, ἀπόδικε, ῥέθος ἀελίῳ δεῖξον·
βάρος ἀντίπαλον δακρύοισιν ἀμιλλᾶται.
ἰκετεύομεν ἀμφὶ σὰν
γενειάδα καὶ γόνυ καὶ χέρα προσπίτνων
πολιόν τε δάκρυν ἐκβαλῶν.*

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Upon madness's surge was his soul tossed wide,
And his shafts in the blood of the hydra of hundred
heads were dyed.

1190

THESEUS

Lo, Hera's work! Who croucheth midst yon dead?

AMPHITRYON

My son is it—mine—of the thousand toils, who stood
In the ranks of the Gods, stood slaying the giant-brood
On the Plain of Phlegra, a warrior good.

THESEUS

Woe! when was man by fate so ill-bestead!

AMPHITRYON

None other of mortal men shalt thou see
Who hath burden of heavier griefs, was more dreadly
misguided than he.

THESEUS

Why doth he overpall his hapless head?

AMPHITRYON

For shame that thine eyes such sight should win,
Shame for the pitying love of kin,
For his sons' blood shame—for the madness, the sin!

1200

THESEUS

Unveil him—me hath sympathy hither led.

AMPHITRYON

Son, cast from thine eyes thy mantle's veil;
Fling it hence; thy face to the sun forth show.
Lo, a weight that outweigheth thy tears bears down
grief's scale!¹

I bow me in suppliance low [hear :
At thy beard, at thy knee, at thine hand, till thou
And mine old eyes drop the tear.

¹ The claims of friendship outweigh those of grief.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

1210

ἰὼ παῖ, κατὰ-
 σχεθε λέοντος ἀγρίον θυμόν, ὡς
 δρόμον¹ ἐπὶ φόνιον ἀνόσιον ἐξάγει,
 κακὰ θέλων κακοῖς συνάψαι, τέκνον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1220

εἶεν σὲ τὸν θάσσοντα δυστήνους ἔδρας
 αὐδῶ, φίλοισιν ὄμμα δεικνύναι τὸ σόν.
 οὐδεὶς σκότος γὰρ ὧδ' ἔχει μέλαν νέφος,
 ὅστις κακῶν σῶν συμφορὰν κρύψειεν ἄν.
 τί μοι προσείων χεῖρα σημαίνεις φόνον;
 ὡς μὴ μύσος με σῶν βάλῃ προσφθεγμάτων;
 οὐδὲν μέλει μοι σὺν γε σοὶ πράσσειν κακῶς·
 καὶ γὰρ ποτ' ἠτύχησ'· ἐκεῖσ' ἀνοιστέον,
 ὅτ' ἐξέσωσάς μ' εἰς φάος νεκρῶν πάρα.
 χάριν δὲ γηράσκουσαν ἐχθαίρω φίλων,
 καὶ τῶν καλῶν μὲν ὅστις ἀπολαύειν θέλει,
 συμπλεῖν δὲ τοῖς φίλοισι δυστυχοῦσιν οὐ.
 ἀνίστασ', ἐκκάλυψον ἄθλιον κἄρα.
 βλέψον πρὸς ἡμᾶς. ὅστις εὐγενῆς βροτῶν,
 φέρει τὰ θεῶν γε πτώματ' οὐδ' ἀναίνεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησεῦ, δέδορκας τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ἐμῶν τέκνων;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1230

ἤκουσα, καὶ βλέποντι σημαίνεις κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δητὰ μου κρᾶτ' ἀνεκάλυψας ἡλίω;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί δ'; οὐ μαίνεις θνητὸς ὢν τὰ τῶν θεῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦγ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἀνόσιον μίασμ' ἐμόν.

¹ Reiske: for MSS. βρόμον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O son, refrain thou the furious lion's mood ! 1210
Thou wouldst speed on a race unhallowed, a path of
blood,
Who art bent on self-slaughter, on swelling with evil
evil's flood.

THESEUS

Ho ! thee in spirit-broken session crouched
I hail—reveal unto thy friends thy face.
There is no darkness hath a pall so black
That it should hide the misery of thy woes.
Why wave me back with hand that warns of blood ?
Lest some pollution of thy speech taint me ?
Naught reck I of misfortune, shared with thee. 1220
Fair lot hath found me—I date it from that hour
When safe to day thou brought'st me from the dead.
Friends' gratitude that waxeth old I hate,
Hate him who would enjoy friends' sunshine-tide,
But will not in misfortune sail with them.
Stand up, unmuffle thou thine hapless head :
Look on me : who of men is royal-souled
Beareth the blows of heaven, and flincheth not.

[*Unveils* HERCULES.

HERCULES

Theseus, hast seen mine onslaught on mine babes ?

THESEUS

I have heard : the ills thou namest I behold. 1230

HERCULES

Why then unveil mine head unto the sun ?

THESEUS

Why ?—mortal, thou canst not pollute the heavens.

HERCULES

Flee, hapless, my pollution god-accurst !

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐδείς ἀλάστωρ τοῖς φίλοις ἐκ τῶν φίλων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐπήνεσ'· εὐ δράσας δέ σ' οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ πάσχων εὐ τὸτ' οἰκτείρω σε νῦν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἰκτρὸς γάρ εἰμι τᾶμ' ἀποκτείνας τέκνα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κλαίω χάριν σὴν ἐφ' ἑτέραισι συμφοραῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἡῦρες δ' ἔτ' ἄλλους ἐν κακοῖσι μείζουσιν;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1240

ἄπτει κάτωθεν οὐρανοῦ δυσπραξία.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τοιγὰρ παρεσκευάσμεθ' ὥστε κατθανεῖν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δοκεῖς ἀπειλῶν σῶν μέλειν τι δαίμοσιν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αὐθαδὲς ὁ θεός, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς ἐγώ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἴσχε στόμ', ὡς μὴ μέγα λέγων μείζον πάθης.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γέμω κακῶν δὴ, κούκέτ' ἔσθ' ὄπη τεθῆ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δράσεις δὲ δὴ τί; ποῖ φέρει θυμούμενος;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θανών, ὅθενπερ ἦλθον, εἰμι γῆς ὑπο.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εἴρηκας ἐπιτυχόντος ἀνθρώπου λόγους.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

THESEUS

No haunting curse can pass from friend to friend.

HERCULES

Now nay!—yet thanks. I helped thee, nor repent.

THESEUS

I for that kindness now compassionate thee.

HERCULES

Compassion-worthy am I, who slew my sons!

THESEUS

I weep for thy sake, for thy fortune changed.

HERCULES

Hast thou known any whelmed in deeper woes?

THESEUS

From earth to heaven reach thy calamities.

1240

HERCULES

Therefore have I prepared my soul to die.

THESEUS

Deem'st thou that Heaven recks aught of threats of
thine?

HERCULES

For me God cares not, nor care I for God!

THESEUS

Refrain lips, lest high words bring deeper woes!

HERCULES

Full-fraught am I with woes—no space for more.

THESEUS

What wilt thou do?—whither art passion-hurled?

HERCULES

To death. I pass to Hades, whence I came.

THESEUS

No hero's words be these that thou hast said.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ δ' ἐκτὸς ὧν γε συμφορᾶς με νουθετεῖς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1250 ὁ πολλὰ δὴ τλᾶς Ἡρακλῆς λέγει τάδε ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκουν τοσαῦτά γ' ἐν μέτρῳ¹ μοχθητέον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εὐεργέτης βροτοῖσι καὶ μέγας φίλος ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἶδ' οὐδὲν ὠφελούσί μ', ἀλλ' Ἡρα κρατεῖ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἄν σ' ἀνάσχοιθ' Ἑλλὰς ἀμαθία θανεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν, ὡς ἀμιλληθῶ λόγοις
πρὸς νουθετήσεις σάς· ἀναπτύξω δέ σοι
ἀβίωτον ἡμῖν νῦν τε καὶ πάροιθεν ὄν.
πρῶτον μὲν ἐκ τοῦδ' ἐγενόμην ὅστις κτανῶν
μητρὸς γεραιὸν πατέρα προστρόπαιος ὧν
1260 ἔγημε τὴν τεκούσαν Ἀλκμήνην ἐμέ.

ὅταν δὲ κρηπὶς μὴ καταβληθῆ γένους
ὀρθῶς, ἀνάγκη δυστυχεῖν τοὺς ἐγγόνους.

Ζεὺς δ'—ὅστις ὁ Ζεὺς—πολέμιόν μ' ἐγείνατο

Ἡρα· σὺ μέντοι μηδὲν ἀχθεσθῆς, γέρον·
πατέρα γὰρ ἀντὶ Ζηνὸς ἡγοῦμαί σ' ἐγώ.

ἔτ' ἐν γάλακτί τ' ὄντι γοργωποὺς ὄφεις
ἐπεισέφρησε σπαργάνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς
ἢ τοῦ Διὸς σύλλεκτρος, ὡς ὑλοίμεθα.

1270 ἐπεὶ δὲ σαρκὸς περιβόλαι' ἐκτησάμην
ἡβῶντα, μόχθους οὖς ἔτλην τί δεῖ λέγειν ;
ποίους ποτ' ἢ λέοντας ἢ τρισωμάτους

¹ Hermann : for MSS. γ', εἰ μέτρῳ.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Thou dost rebuke me—clear of misery thou !

THESEUS

Speaks Hercules, who hath endured so much,— 1250

HERCULES

Never so much !—its bounds endurance hath.

THESEUS

Men's benefactor and their mighty friend ?

HERCULES

They cannot help, for Hera's might prevails.

THESEUS

Hellas will brook not this fool's death for thee.

HERCULES

Hearken, that I may wrestle in argument
With thine admonishings. I will unfold
Why now, as heretofore, boots not to live.
First, I am his son, who, with blood-guilt stained
From murder of my mother's aged sire,
Wedded Alcmena who gave birth to me. 1260
When the foundation of the race is laid
In sin, needs must the issue be ill-starred.

And Zeus—whoe'er Zeus be—begat me foe
To Hera,—nay but, ancient, be not chafed,
For truer father thee I count than Zeus.
When I was yet a suckling, Zeus's bride
Sent gorgon-glaring serpents secretly
Against my cradle, that I might be slain.
Soon as I gathered vesture of brawny flesh,
What boots to tell what labours I endured ? 1270
What lions, what three-bodied Geryon-fiends,

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

Γηρύονας¹ ἢ Γίγαντας ἢ τετρασκελῆ
 κενταυροπληθῆ πόλεμον οὐκ ἐξήνυσα ;
 τήν τ' ἀμφίκρανον καὶ παλιμβλαστή κύνα
 ὕδραν φονεύσας, μυρίων τ' ἄλλων πόνων
 διήλθον ἀγέλας κείς νεκρούς ἀφικόμην,
 Αἰδου πυλωρὸν κύνα τρίκρανον εἰς φάος
 ὅπως πορεύσαιμ' ἐντολαῖς Εὐρυσθέως.
 τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ τόνδ' ἔτλην τάλας φόνον,
 1280 παιδοκτονήσας δῶμα θριγκῶσαι κακοῖς.
 ἦκω δ' ἀνάγκης εἰς τόδ'· οὐτ' ἐμαῖς φίλαις
 Θήβαις ἐνοικεῖν ὄσιον· ἦν δὲ καὶ μένω,
 εἰς ποῖον ἱερὸν ἢ πανήγυριν φίλων
 εἶμ' ; οὐ γὰρ ἄτας εὐπροσηγόρους ἔχω.
 ἀλλ' Ἄργος ἔλθω ; πῶς, ἐπεὶ φεύγω πάτραν ;
 φέρ' ἀλλ' ἐς ἄλλην δὴ τιν' ὀρμήσω πόλιν·
 κἄπειθ' ὑποβλεπώμεθ' ὡς ἐγνωσμένοι,
 γλώσσης πικροῖς κέντροισι κληδουχούμενοι·
 οὐχ οὗτος ὁ Διός, ὃς τέκν' ἔκτεινέν ποτε
 1290 δάμαρτά τ' ; οὐ γῆς τῆςδ' ἀποφθαρῆσεται ;
 κεκλημένω δὲ φωτὶ μακαρίω ποτὲ
 αἰ μεταβολαὶ λυπηρόν· ᾧ δ' αἰεὶ κακῶς
 ἔστ', οὐδὲν ἀλγεί συγγενῶς δύστηνος ὢν.
 εἰς τοῦτο δ' ἦξειν συμφορᾶς οἰμαί ποτε·
 φωνὴν γὰρ ἦσει χθῶν ἀπεννέπουσά με
 μὴ θιγγάνειν γῆς καὶ θάλασσα μὴ περᾶν
 πηγαί τε ποταμῶν, καὶ τὸν ἀρματήλατον
 Ἴξιον ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἐκμιμήσομαι.
 πρὸς ταῦτ' ἄριστα μηδέν' Ἑλλήνων μ' ὀρᾶν,
 1300 ἐν οἷσιν εὐτυχοῦντες ἦμεν ὄλβιοι.
 τί δῆτά με ζῆν δεῖ ; τί κέρδος ἔξομεν
 βίοτον ἀχρεῖον ἀνόσιον κεκτημένοι ;

¹ Elmsley : for MSS. Τυφῶνας.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Or giants, slew I not?—or with what host
Of fourfoot Centaurs fought not out the war?
The hound o'erswarmed with heads that severed grew,
The Hydra, killed I: throngs of toils beside
Untold I wrought: I passed unto the dead
To bring forth at Eurystheus' hest to light
The hound three-headed, warder of Hell-gate.
And this—woe's me!—my latest desperate deed,
Murder of sons—mine home's topstone of ills! 1280

I am come to this strait—in my dear-loved Thebes
I cannot dwell uncursed. Though I should stay,
To what fane can I go?—what gathering
Of friends?—the Accurst, to whom no man may
• speak!

Shall I to Argos?—I, an outlawed man!
Nay then, to another city let me go—
And there be eyed askance, a branded man,
My jailers there the scorpions of the tongue—
“Lo there Zeus' son, who murdered babes and wife!
Shall he not hence?—perdition go with him!” 1290
Now to the man called happy in time past
Reverse is torture: he whose days were dark
Always, grieves not, being cradled in distress.

To this curse shall I come at last, I ween,
That earth shall find a voice forbidding me
To touch her, and the sea, that I cross not,
And river-springs: so, like Ixion whirled
In chains upon his wheel shall I become.
Best so—that none set eyes on me in Greece,
The land where once I prospered and was blest. 1300
Why need I live? What profit shall I have
Owning a useless life, a life accurst?

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

χορευέτω δὴ Ζηνὸς ἢ κλεινὴ δάμαρ
 κρούουσ' Ὀλύμπου διὸν ἀρβύλη πέδον·
 ἔπραξε γὰρ βούλησιν ἦν ἐβούλετο,
 ἄνδρ' Ἑλλάδος τὸν πρῶτον αὐτοῖσιν βάθροις
 ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα. τοιαύτη θεῶ
 τίς ἂν προσεύχοιθ'; ἢ γυναικὸς εἵνεκα
 λέκτρων φθονούσα Ζηνὶ τοὺς εὐεργέτας
 1310 Ἑλλάδος ἀπώλεσ' οὐδὲν ὄντας αἰτίους.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου δαιμόνων ἀγῶν ὄδε
 ἢ τῆς Διὸς δάμαρτος· [οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν]¹
 παραινέσαιμ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ πάσχειν κακῶς.
 οὐδεὶς δὲ θνητῶν ταῖς τύχαις ἀκήρατος,
 οὐ θεῶν, ἀοιδῶν εἶπερ οὐ ψευδεῖς λόγοι.
 οὐ λέκτρα τ' ἀλλήλοισιν, ὧν οὐδεὶς νόμος,
 συνῆψαν; οὐ δεσμοῖσι διὰ τυραννίδας
 πατέρας ἐκηλίδωσαν; ἀλλ' οἴκουσ' ὄμως
 Ὀλυμπον ἠνέσχοντό θ' ἡμαρτηκότες.
 1320 καίτοι τί φήσεις, εἰ σὺ μὲν θνητὸς γεγῶς
 φέρεις ὑπέρφευ τὰς τύχας, θεοὶ δὲ μῆ;
 Θήβας μὲν οὖν ἔκλειπε τοῦ νόμου χάριν,
 ἔπου δ' ἄμ' ἡμῖν πρὸς πόλισμα Παλλάδος.
 ἐκεῖ χέρας σὰς ἀγνίστας μιάσματος,
 δόμους τε δώσω χρημάτων τ' ἐμῶν μέρος.
 ἂ δ' ἐκ πολιτῶν δῶρ' ἔχω σώσας κόρους
 δις ἐπτά, ταῦρον Κνώσιον κατακτανῶν,
 σοὶ ταῦτα δώσω. πανταχοῦ δέ μοι χθονὸς
 1330 τεμένη δέδασται· ταῦτ' ἐπωνομασμένα
 σέθεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκλήσεται

¹ Following MSS. in assigning 1311-2 to Theseus, and reading (translator's conjecture) οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν for εἰ τὸδ' αἰσθάνει.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Now let her dance, that glorious bride of Zeus,
Beating with sandalled foot Olympus' floor!
She hath compassed her desire that she desired,
Down with his pedestal hurling in utter wreck
The foremost man of Greece! To such a Goddess
Who shall pray now?—who, for a woman's sake
Jealous of Zeus, from Hellas hath cut off
Her benefactors, guiltless though they were! 1310

THESEUS

This is the assault of none of deities
Save Zeus's Queen; yet thee I counsel not
Rather to die than suffer and be strong.
No mortal hath escaped misfortune's taint,
Nor God—if minstrel-legends be not false.
Have they not linked them in unlawful bonds
Of wedlock, and with chains, to win them thrones,
Outraged their fathers? In Olympus still
They dwell, by their transgressions unabashed.
What wilt thou plead, if, mortal as thou art, 1320
Thou chafe against thy fate, and Gods do not?

Nay then, leave Thebes, submissive to the law,
And unto Pallas' fortress come with me.
There will I cleanse thine hands from taint of blood,
Give thee a home, and of my substance half.
The gifts my people gave for children saved
Twice seven, when I slew the Cnossian bull,
These will I give thee. All throughout the land
Have I demesnes assigned me: these shall bear
Thy name henceforth with men while thou shalt live. 1330

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ζώντος· θανόντα δ', εὐτ' ἂν εἰς Ἄιδου μόλης,
 θυσίαισι λαίνοισι τ' ἐξογκώμασιν
 τίμιον ἀνάξει πᾶσ' Ἀθηναίων πόλις.
 καλὸς γὰρ ἀστοῖς στέφανος Ἑλλήνων ὑπο
 ἄνδρ' ἐσθλὸν ὠφελούντας εὐκλείας τυχεῖν.
 καὶ γὰρ χάριν σοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας
 τήνδ' ἀντιδώσω· νῦν γὰρ εἰ χρεῖος φίλων.
 θεοὶ δ' ὅταν τιμῶσιν, οὐδὲν δεῖ φίλων
 ἄλλης γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ὠφελῶν, ὅταν θέλη.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

- 1340 οἴμοι· πάρεργά τοι τάδ' ἔστ' ἐμῶν κακῶν.
 ἐγὼ δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς οὔτε λέκτρ' ἂ μὴ θέμις
 στέργειν νομίζω, δεσμά τ' ἐξάπτειν χεροῖν
 οὔτ' ἠξίωσα πώποτ' οὔτε πείσομαι,
 οὐδ' ἄλλον ἄλλου δεσπότην πεφυκέναι.
 δεῖται γὰρ ὁ θεός, εἴπερ ἔστ' ὀρθῶς θεός,
 οὐδενός· ἀοιδῶν οἶδε δύστηνοι λόγοι.
 ἐσκεψάμην δὲ καίπερ ἐν κακοῖσιν ὦν,
 μὴ δειλίαν ὄφλω τιν' ἐκλιπὼν φάος.
 ταῖς συμφοραῖς γὰρ ὅστις οὐχ ὑφίσταται,
 1350 οὐδ' ἀνδρὸς ἂν δύναιθ' ὑποστήναι βέλος.
 ἐγκαρτερήσω θάνατον· εἴμι δ' εἰς πόλιν
 τὴν σὴν χάριν τε μυρίαν δῶρων ἔχω.
 ἀτὰρ πόνων δὴ μυρίων ἐγευσάμην·
 ὦν οὔτ' ἀπείπον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων
 ἔσταξα πηγᾶς, οὐδ' ἂν ὠόμην ποτέ
 εἰς τοῦθ' ἰκέσθαι, δάκρυ ἀπ' ὀμμάτων βαλεῖν.
 νῦν δ', ὡς ἔοικε, τῇ τύχῃ δουλευτέον,
 εἶεν· γεραιέ, τὰς ἐμὰς φυγὰς ὀρᾶς,
 ὀρᾶς δὲ παίδων ὄντα μ' αὐθέντην ἐμῶν.
 1360 δὸς τοῦσδε τύμβῳ καὶ περιστείλον νεκροῦς
 δακρυόισι τιμῶν—ἐμὲ γὰρ οὐκ εἶ νόμος—

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

And, when in death thou goest to Hades' halls,
With sacrifice and monuments of stone
Shall all the Athenians' Town exalt thy name :
For a fair crown to win from Greeks is this
For us, the glory of a hero helped.
Yea, this requital will I render thee
For saving me ; for now thou lackest friends.
When the Gods honour us, we need not friends :
God's help sufficeth, when he wills it so.

HERCULES

Ah, all this hath no pertinence to mine ills ! 1340
I deem not that the Gods for spouses crave
Unhallowed : tales of Gods' hands manacled
Ever I scorned, nor ever will believe,
Nor that one God is born another's lord.
For God hath need, if God indeed he be,
Of naught : these be the minstrels' sorry tales.

Yet thus I have mused—how deep soe'er in ills—
“ *Shall I quit life, and haply prove me craven ?* ”
For he who flincheth from misfortune's blows,
He even from a mere man's spear would flinch. 1350
I will be strong to await death. To thy town
I go. For thy gifts thanks a thousandfold.
Ah, I have tasted travail measureless,
Nor ever shrank from any, never shed
Tear from mine eyes, no, nor had ever thought
That I should come to this, to weep the tear !
But now, meseems, I must be thrall to fate.

Ay so !—thou seëst, O ancient, mine exile ;
Thou seëst me a murderer of my sons.
Give these a tomb, and shroud the dead, with tears 1360
For honour,—me the law withholdeth therefrom,—

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

- πρὸς στέρν' ἐρείσας μητρὶ δούς τ' ἐς ἀγκάλας,
 κοινωνίαν δύστηνον, ἣν ἐγὼ τάλας
 διώλεσ' ἄκων. γῆ δ' ἐπὴν κρύψῃς νεκρούς,
 οἶκει πόλιν τήνδ', ἀθλίως μὲν, ἀλλ' ὁμως
 ψυχὴν βιάζου τὰμὰ συμφέρειν κακά.
 ὦ τέκν', ὁ φύσας χῶ τεκῶν ὑμᾶς πατήρ
 ἀπώλεσ', οὐδ' ὤνασθε τῶν ἐμῶν καλῶν,
 ἀγὼ παρεσκευάζον ἐκμοχθῶν βία
 1370 εὐκλειαν ὑμῖν, πατρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν καλήν.
 σέ τ' οὐχ ὁμοίως, ὦ τάλαιν', ἀπώλεσα
 ὥσπερ σὺ τὰμὰ λέκτρ' ἔσφζες ἀσφαλῶς,
 μακρὰς διαντλοῦσ' ἐν δόμοις οἰκουρίας.
 οἴμοι δάμαρτος καὶ τέκνων, οἴμοι δ' ἐμοῦ·
 ὡς ἀθλίως πέπραγα κάποζεύγνυμαι
 τέκνων γυναικὸς τ'. ὦ λυγραὶ φιλημάτων
 τέρψεις, λυγραὶ δὲ τῶνδ' ὄπλων κοινωνίαι.
 ἀμηχανῶ γὰρ πότερ' ἔχω τὰδ' ἢ μεθῶ,
 ἀ πλευρὰ τὰμὰ προσπίτνοντ' ἐρεῖ τὰδε·
 1380 ἡμῖν τέκν' εἶλες καὶ δάμαρθ'. ἡμᾶς ἔχεις
 παιδοκτόνους σούς. εἶτ' ἐγὼ τὰδ' ὠλέναις
 οἴσω; τί φάσκων; ἀλλὰ γυμνωθεὶς ὄπλων,
 ξὺν οἷς τὰ κάλλιστ' ἐξέπραξ' ἐν Ἑλλάδι,
 ἐχθροῖς ἐμαντὸν ὑποβαλῶν αἰσχρῶς θάνω;
 οὐ λειπτέον τὰδ', ἀθλίως δὲ σωστέον.
 ἔν μοί τι, Θεσεῦ, σύγκαμ' ἀθλίφ' κυνὸς
 κόμιστρ' ἐς Ἄργος συγκατάστησον μολῶν,
 λύπη τι παίδων μὴ πάθω μονούμενος.
 ὦ γαῖα Κάδμου πᾶς τε Θεβαῖος λεώς,
 1390 κείρασθε, συμπευθήσατ', ἔλθετ' εἰς τάφον

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Laid on the mother's breast, clasped in her arms,
Sad fellowship, which I—O wretch!—destroyed
Unknowing. When thou hast hid them in the
tomb,

Live on in Thebes,—in misery, yet still
Constrain thy soul to share my load of woe.

Ah children, your begetter and your sire
Slew you!—ye had no profit of my glory,
Of all my travail and strenuous toil to win
Renown for you—a sire's best legacy.

1370

And thee, lost love, not in such wise I slew
As thou didst save, didst keep mine honour safe
Through all that weary warding of mine house!

Woe for my wife and children! woe for me!
How mournful is my plight, who am disyoked
From babes, from bride! Ah bitter joy of kisses!
Ah bitter fellowship of these mine arms!

Keep—cast them from me—I know not which to do.
Hanging athwart my side thus will they say:

*“With us thou slewest babes and wife—yet keep'st
Thy children's slayers!”* Shall mine hand bear
these?

1380

What can I plead? Yet, naked of mine arms¹
Wherewith I wrought most glorious deeds in Greece,
'Neath foes' feet shall I cast me?—foully die?

Leave them I may not, to my grief must keep.
In one thing help me, Theseus: come to Argos
To back my claim of hire for Cerberus brought,
Lest grief for children slay me faring lone.

O Land of Cadmus, all ye Theban folk,
With shorn hair grieve with me: to my sons' tomb

1390

¹ He could not replace them by others as good; for they were gifts of Gods—the bow of Apollo, and the club of Hephaestus.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

παίδων, ἅπαντας δ' ἐνὶ λόγῳ πευθήσατε
νεκρούς τε καὶ μέγαντες ἐξολώλαμεν
Ἦρας μὲν πληγέντες ἄθλιοι τύχη.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἀνίστασ', ὦ δύστηνε· δακρύων δ' ἄλις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην· ἄρθρα γὰρ πέπηγέ μου.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

καὶ τοὺς σθένοντας γὰρ καθαιροῦσιν τύχαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦ·
αὐτοῦ γενοίμην πέτρος ἀμνήμων κακῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

παῦσαι· δίδου δὲ χεῖρ' ὑπηρέτη φίλῳ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄλλ' αἶμα μὴ σοῖς ἐξομόρξωμαι πέπλοις.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1400

ἔκμασσε, φείδου μηδέν· οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

παίδων στερηθεὶς παῖδ' ὅπως ἔχω σ' ἐμόν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δίδου· δέρη σὴν χεῖρ', ὀδηγήσω δ' ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ζευγὸς γε φίλιον· ἄτερος δὲ δυστυχῆς.
ὦ πρέσβυ, τοιούδ' ἄνδρα χρὴ κτᾶσθαι φίλον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἦ γὰρ τεκοῦσα τόνδε πατρὶς εὐτεκνος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησεῦ, πάλιν με στρέψον, ὡς ἴδω τέκνα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὡς δὴ τί; φίλτρον τοῦτ' ἔχων ῥάων ἔσει;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Pass, and in one wail make ye moan for all—
The dead and me : we have wholly perished all,
Smitten by one sore doom from Hera's hand.

THESEUS

Rise, sorrow-stricken : let these tears suffice.

HERCULES

I cannot : lo, my limbs are palsy-chained.

THESEUS

O yea, misfortune breaketh down the strong.

HERCULES

Woe worth the day !

Ah to be turned to stone, my woes forgot !

THESEUS

No more ! To a friend, a helper, reach thine hand.

HERCULES

With this blood let me not besmirch thy robes !

THESEUS

On me wipe all off ! Spare not : I refuse not !

1400

HERCULES

Of sons bereaved, thee have I, like a son.

THESEUS

Cast o'er my neck thine arm ; I lead thee on.

HERCULES

A yoke of love !—but one, a stricken man.

Father, well may one gain such friend as this.

AMPHITRYON

The land that bare him breedeth noble sons !

HERCULES

Theseus, let me turn back, to see my babes.

THESEUS

What spell to ease thy pain hath this for thee ?

243

R 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ποθῶ, πατρός τε στέρνα προσθέσθαι θέλω.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἰδού τάδ', ὦ παῖ· τὰ μὰ γὰρ σπεύδεις φίλα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1410

οὕτω πόνων σῶν οὐκέτι μνήμην ἔχεις ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἅπαντ' ἐλάσσω κείνα τῶνδ' ἔτλην κακά.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εἴ σ' ὄψεταιί τις θῆλυν ὄντ', οὐκ αἰνέσει.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ζῶ σοὶ ταπεινός ; ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν οὐ δοκῶ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἄγαν γ'· ὁ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς ποῦ κείνος ὢν ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ ποῖος ἦσθα νέρθεν ἐν κακοῖσιν ὢν ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὡς εἰς τὸ λῆμα παντὸς ἦν ἦσων ἀνὴρ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἂν εἴποις ὅτι συνέσταλμαι κακοῖς ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πρόβαινε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χαῖρ', ὦ πρέσβυ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

καὶ σύ μοι, τέκνον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θάφθ' ὡσπερ εἶπον παῖδας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

ἐμέ δὲ τίς, τέκνον ;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I yearn—and on my father's breast would fall:

AMPHITRYON

Lo here, my son : mine heart as thine is fain.

THESEUS

Art thou so all-forgetful of thy toils ? ¹

1410

HERCULES

All toils endured of old were light by these.

THESEUS

Who sees thee play the woman thus shall scorn.

HERCULES

Live I, thy scorn ? Once was I not, I trow !

THESEUS

Alas, yes ! Where is glorious Hercules ?

HERCULES

What manner of man wast thou mid Hades' woes ?

THESEUS

My strength of soul was utter weakness then.

HERCULES

Shouldst *thou*, then, name me a man by suffering
cowed ?

THESEUS

On then !

HERCULES

Farewell, old sire.

AMPHITRYON

Farewell thou, son.

HERCULES

Bury the lads.

AMPHITRYON

Who burieth me, my child ?

¹ The Twelve Labours, of which this weakness is unworthy.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐγώ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

πότ' ἐλθών;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1420

ἤνικ' ἂν θάψῃς τέκνα.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

πῶς;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰς Ἀθήνας πέμψομαι Θεβῶν ἄπο.
ἀλλ' εἰσκόμιζε τέκνα δυσκόμιστα γῆ·
ἡμεῖς δ' ἀναλώσαντες αἰσχύναις δόμον,
Θησεὶ πανώλεις ἐψόμεσθ' ἐφολκίδες.
ὅστις δὲ πλούτον ἢ σθένος μᾶλλον φίλων
ἀγαθῶν πεπᾶσθαι βούλεται, κακῶς φρονεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχομεν οἰκτροὶ καὶ πολύκλαυτοι,
τὰ μέγιστα φίλων ὀλέσαντες.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I.

AMPHITRYON

When com'st thou ?

HERCULES

When thou hast buried them.

1420

AMPHITRYON

How ?

HERCULES

I from Thebes to Athens will bring thee.
Bear in my babes—earth groans to bear such burden !
I, who have wasted by my shame mine house,
Like wreck in tow will trail in Theseus' wake.
Whoso would fain possess or wealth or strength
Rather than loyal friends, is sense-bereft.

CHORUS

With mourning and weeping sore do we pass away,
Who have lost the chiefest of all our friends this day.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.]

THE
CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ARGUMENT

EURYSTHEUS, king of Argos, hated Hercules all his life through, and sought to destroy him by thrusting on him many and desperate labours. And when Hercules had been caught up to Olympus from the pyre whereon he was consumed on Mount Oeta, Eurystheus persecuted the hero's children, and sought to slay them. Wherefore Iolauus, their father's friend and helper, fled with them. But in whatsoever city they sought refuge, thence were they driven; for Eurystheus ever made search for them, and demanded them with threats of war. So fleeing from land to land, they came at last to Marathon which belongeth to Athens, and there took sanctuary at the temple of Zeus. Thither came the folk of the land compassionating them, and Eurystheus' herald requiring their surrender, and the king of Athens, Theseus' son, to hear their cause. And herein is told the tale of the war that came of his refusal to yield them up, of the sacrifice of a noble maiden which the Gods required as the price of victory, of an old warrior by miracle made young, and of the vengeance of Alcmena.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΤΡΥΣΘΕΤΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

IOLAUS, *an old man, formerly friend of Hercules.*

COPREUS, *herald of Eurystheus.*

DEMOPHON, *king of Athens, son of Theseus.*

MACARIA, *daughter of Hercules.*

HENCHMAN *of Hyllus, Hercules' eldest son.*

ALCMENA, *mother of Hercules.*

SERVANT *of Alcmena.*

MESSENGER, *a captain from the army.*

EURYSTHEUS, *king of Argos.*

CHORUS *of old men of Marathon.*

Young sons of Hercules, guards, and attendants.

SCENE: At Marathon, in the forecourt of the temple of Zeus. The great altar stands in the midst.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

- Πάλαι ποτ' ἐστὶ τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ δεδογμένον
ὁ μὲν δίκαιος τοῖς πέλας πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ,
ὁ δ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος λῆμ' ἔχων ἀνειμένον
πόλει τ' ἄχρηστος καὶ συναλλάσσειν βαρύς,
αὐτῷ δ' ἄριστος· οἶδα δ' οὐ λόγῳ μαθῶν.
ἐγὼ γὰρ αἰδοῖ καὶ τὸ συγγενὲς σέβων,
ἐξὸν κατ' Ἄργος ἡσύχως ναίειν, πόνων
πλείστων μετέσχον εἰς ἀνὴρ Ἡρακλῆει,
ὅτ' ἦν μεθ' ἡμῶν· νῦν δ', ἐπεὶ κατ' οὐρανὸν
10 ναίει, τὰ κείνου τέκν' ἔχων ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
σφῶζω τάδ' αὐτὸς δεόμενος σωτηρίας.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ αὐτῶν γῆς ἀπηλλάχθη πατήρ,
πρῶτον μὲν ἡμᾶς ἤθελ' Εὐρύσθευς κτανεῖν·
ἀλλ' ἐξέδραμεν· καὶ πόλις μὲν οἴχεται,
ψυχὴ δ' ἐσώθη. φεύγομεν δ' ἀλώμενοι
ἄλλην ἀπ' ἄλλης ἐξορίζοντες πόλιν.
πρὸς τοῖς γὰρ ἄλλοις καὶ τόδ' Εὐρύσθευς κακοῖς
ὑβρισμ' ἐς ἡμᾶς ἠξίωσεν ὑβρίσαι·
πέμπων ὅπου γῆς πυνθάνοιθ' ἰδρυμένους
20 κήρυκας ἐξαιτεῖ τε κάξειργει χθονός,
πόλιν προτείνων Ἄργος οὐ σμικρὰν φίλην
ἐχθράν τε θέσθαι, χαυτὸν εὐτυχοῦνθ' ἅμα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS *with* HERCULES' CHILDREN, *discovered sitting on the altar-steps.*

IOLAUS

I HOLD it truth, and long have held :—the just
Lives for his brother men ; but he whose soul
Uncurbed hunts gain alone, unto the state
Useless, in dealings hard, is but to himself
A friend—nor know this by report alone ;
Since I, who might in Argos peacefully
Have dwelt, for honour's sake and kinship's bond
Bore chief share in the toils of Hercules
When he was with us : now, when in the heaven
He dwells, his babes I shelter 'neath my wings 10
Defending, who myself sore need defence.

For, soon as from the earth their sire had passed,
Us would Eurystheus at the first have slain,
But we fled. Now our city, our home is lost,
Life only saved. We are exiled wanderers
From city unto city moving on.
For on our other wrongs this coping-stone
Of outrage hath Eurystheus dared to set,—
Heralds to each land where we bide he sends,
Demandeth us, and biddeth drive us forth, 20
Warning them that no weakling friend or foe
Is Argos, and himself a mighty king.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

οἱ δ' ἀσθενῆ μὲν τὰπ' ἐμοῦ δεδορκότες,
 σμικροὺς δὲ τούσδε καὶ πατρὸς τητωμένους,
 τοὺς κρείσσονας σέβοντες ἐξεύργουσι γῆς.
 ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν φεύγουσι συμφεύγω τέκνοις
 καὶ σὺν κακῶς πράσσουσι συμπράσσω κακῶς,
 ὀκνῶν προδοῦναι, μή τις ᾧδ' εἴπη βροτῶν
 ἴδεσθ', ἐπειδὴ παισὶν οὐκ ἔστιν πατήρ,
 30 Ἴόλαος οὐκ ἤμυνε συγγενῆς γεγώς.
 πάσης δὲ χώρας Ἑλλάδος τητῶμενοι,
 Μαραθῶνα καὶ σύγκληρον ἐλθόντες χθόνα
 ἰκέται καθεζόμεσθα βώμιοι θεῶν,
 προσωφελῆσαι· πεδία γὰρ τῆσδε χθονὸς
 δισσοὺς κατοικεῖν Θησέως παῖδας λόγος
 κλήρῳ λαχόντας, ἐκ γένους Πανδίουτος,
 τοῖσδ' ἐγγὺς ὄντας· ὧν ἕκατι τέρμονας
 κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν τήνδ' ἀφικόμεσθ' ὁδόν.
 δυοῖν γερόντοιν δὲ στρατηγεῖται φυγή·
 40 ἐγὼ μὲν ἀμφὶ τοῖσδε καλχαίνων τέκνοις,
 ἢ δ' αὖ τὸ θῆλυ παιδὸς Ἀλκμήνη γένος
 ἔσωθε ναοῦ τοῦδ' ὑπηγκαλισμένη
 σῶζει· νέας γὰρ παρθένους αἰδούμεθα
 ὄχλῳ πελάζειν κἀπιβωμισστατεῖν.
 ἄλλος δ' ἀδελφοί θ' οἷσι πρεσβεύει γένος
 ζητοῦσ' ὅπου γῆς πύργον οἰκιοῦμεθα,
 ἣν τῆσδ' ἀπωθώμεσθα πρὸς βίαν χθονός.
 ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦρο, λαμβάνεσθ' ἐμῶν
 πέπλων· ὀρῶ κήρυκα τόνδ' Εὐρυσθέως
 50 στείχοντ' ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, οὐ διωκόμεσθ' ὑπο
 πάσης ἀλῆται γῆς ἀπεστερημένοι.
 ὦ μῖσος, εἴθ' ὄλοιο χῶ πέμψας σ' ἀνὴρ·
 ὃς πολλὰ δὴ καὶ τῶνδε γενναίῳ πατρὶ
 ἐκ τοῦδε ταύτου στόματος ἤγγειλας κακά.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And they, discerning that my cause is weak,
These but young children orphaned of their sire,
Bow to the strong, and drive us from their land.
I with his banished babes share banishment,
And with their ill plight am in evil plight.
Forsake them I dare not, lest men should say :
“ See, now the children’s father is no more,
Iolaus wards them not,—their kinsman he ! ” 30
And so, from all the soil of Hellas banned,
To Marathon and the federate land we come,
At the Gods’ altars sitting suppliant,
That they may help ; for Theseus’ scions twain,
Saith rumour, in the plains of this land dwell,
By lot their heritage, Pandion’s seed,
And kin to these ; for which cause have we come
This journey unto glorious Athens’ bounds,
Old captains we that lead this exile-march,—
I, for these lads heart-full of troubled thought ; 40
And she, Alcmena, in yon temple folds
Her arms about the daughters of her son,
And guards : for we think shame to let young girls
Stand, a crowd’s gazing-stock, on altar-steps.
Now Hyllus and his brethren elder-born
Seek some land for our refuge and our home,
If from this soil we be with violence thrust.
O children, children, hither !—seize my robes !
Yonder I see Eurystheus’ herald come
Against us, him of whom we are pursued, 50
The homeless wanderers barred from every land.

Enter COPREUS.

Loathed wretch ! Now ruin seize thee and him that
sent,
Who ofttimes to the noble sire of these
From that same mouth hast published evil hests.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

ἢ που καθῆσθαι τήνδ' ἔδραν καλὴν δοκεῖς
πόλιν τ' ἀφίχθαι σύμμαχον; κακῶς φρονῶν
οὐ γάρ τις ἔστιν ὃς πάροισ' αἰρήσεται
τὴν σὴν ἀχρεῖον δύναμιν ἀντ' Εὐρυσθέως·
χώρει τί μοχθεῖς ταῦτ'; ἀνίστασθαί σε χρὴ
εἰς Ἄργος, οὐ σε λεύσιμος μένει δίκη.

60

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ μοι βωμὸς ἀρκέσει θεοῦ
ἐλευθέρα τε γαῖ' ἐν ἧ βεβήκαμεν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

βούλει πόνον μοι τῆδε προσθεῖναι χερί;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὔτοι βία γέ μ' οὐδὲ τούσδ' ἄξεις λαβῶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

γνώσει σύ· μάντις δ' ἦσθ' ἄρ' οὐ καλὸς τάδε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο τοῦτ' ἐμοῦ ζῶντός ποτε.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

ἄπαιρ' ἐγὼ δὲ τούσδε, κἂν σὺ μὴ θέλῃς,
ἄξω κομίζων, οὐπὲρ εἰς', Εὐρυσθέως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τὰς Ἀθήνας δαρὸν οἰκοῦντες χρόνον,
ἀμύνεθ'· ἰκέται δ' ὄντες ἀγοραίου Διὸς
βιαζόμεσθα καὶ στέφη μαινεται,
πόλει τ' ὄνειδος καὶ θεῶν ἀτιμία.

70

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔα ἔα· τίς ἢ βοή βωμοῦ πέλας
ἔστηκε; ποίαν συμφορὰν δείξει τάχα;

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THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS

Ha, deem'st thou this thy session bravely chosen,
This state thou hast reached thine ally? O thou fool!
There is no man shall choose that impotence
Of thy poor strength before Eurystheus' power.
Away! Why make this coil? Thou must depart
To Argos, where the doom of stoning waits thee. 60

IOLAUS

Never: for the God's altar shall avail,
And the free land whereunto we have come.

COPREUS

Ha! wouldst thou find some work for this mine hand?

IOLAUS

Nor me nor these by force shalt thou hale hence.

COPREUS

That shalt thou prove: ill seer thou art in this.

[*Seizes CHILDREN.*]

IOLAUS (*resisting*)

This shall not be! no, never while I live!

COPREUS

Hands off! these will I hale, though thou say nay,
Accounting them Eurystheus': his they are.

[*Hurls IOLAUS to the ground.*]

IOLAUS

O ye, in Athens dwellers from of old,
Help! Suppliants we of Zeus of the Market-stead 70
Are evil-entreated, holy wreaths defiled,
To Athens' shame and to your God's dishonour!

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS

What ho! what outcry by the altar wakes?
Now what calamity shall this reveal?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἴδετε τὸν γέροντ' ἀμαλὸν ἐπὶ πέδῳ
 χύμενον· ὦ τάλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς τοῦ ποτ' ἐν γῆ πτώμα δύστηνον πίτνεις ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὄδ', ὦ ξένοι, με σοὺς ἀτιμάζων θεοὺς
 ἔλκει βιαίως Ζητὸς ἐκ προβωμίων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

80 σὺ δ' ἐκ τίνος γῆς, ὦ γέρον, τετράπτολι
 ξύνοικον ἦλθες λαόν; ἢ πέρα-
 θεν ἀλίῳ πλάτα
 κατέχετ' ἐκλιπόντες Εὐβοῖδ' ἰκτάν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ νησιώτην, ὦ ξένοι, τρίβω βίον,
 ἀλλ' ἐκ Μυκηνῶν σὴν ἀφίγμεθα χθόνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄνομα τί σε, γέρον,
 Μυκηναῖος ὠνόμαζεν λεώς ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τὸν Ἡράκλειον ἴστε που παραστάτην
 Ἴόλαον· οὐ γὰρ ὄνομ' ἀκήρυκτον τόδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

90 οἶδ' εἰσακούσας καὶ πρὶν· ἀλλὰ τοῦ
 ποτ' ἐν χειρὶ σᾶ κομίζεις κόρους
 νεοτρεφεῖς ; φράσον.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

Ἡρακλέους οἶδ' εἰσὶ παῖδες, ὦ ξένοι,
 ἰκέται σέθεν τε καὶ πόλεως ἀφιγμένοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί χρέας ; ἢ λόγων πόλεος, ἔνεπέ μοι,
 μελόμενοι τυχεῖν ;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

Behold ye !—the eld-stricken see
In his feebleness hurled to the ground, woe's me !

CHORUS

Of whom thus pitiably wast thou dashed down ?

IOLAUS

This man, O strangers, sets thy Gods at naught,
And drags me from the altar-floor of Zeus.

CHORUS

But from what land, O ancient, hast thou come 80
To the folk of the Four Burgs' federal home ?
Were ye sped overseas by the brine-dipt oar
To our land from Euboea's craggy shore ?

IOLAUS

Strangers, no island-dweller's life is mine ;
From proud Mycenae come we to thy land.

CHORUS

And by what name, ancient of days, did they call
Thee, they which be fenced with Mycenae's wall ?

IOLAUS

Hercules' helper haply do ye know,
Iolaus, for not fameless was my name.

CHORUS

I know ; long since I heard : but whose are they, 90
The fosterling lads that thine hand leadeth hither-
ward ?—say.

IOLAUS

Strangers, the sons they are of Hercules,
Which have to thee and Athens suppliant come.

CHORUS

Say, what is your need that here ye are ?
Would ye plead your cause at the nation's bar ?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μήτ' ἐκδοθῆναι μήτε πρὸς βίαν θεῶν
τῶν σῶν ἀποσπασθέντες εἰς Ἄργος μολεῖν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

100

ἀλλ' οὔτι τοῖς σοῖς δεσπόταις τάδ' ἀρκέσει,
οἳ σοῦ κρατοῦντες ἐνθάδ' εὐρίσκουσί σε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰκὸς θεῶν ἰκτῆρας αἰδεῖσθαι, ξένε,
καὶ μὴ βιαίῳ χειρὶ δαιμόνων
ἀπολιπεῖν ἔδη·
πότνια γὰρ Δίκη τάδ' οὐ πείσεται.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἔκπεμπέ νυν γῆς τούσδε τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως,
κούδεν βιαίῳ τῆδε χρῆσομαι χερί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄθεον ἰκεσίαν
μεθεῖναι πόλει ξένων προστροπᾶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

110

καλὸν δέ γ' ἔξω πραγμάτων ἔχειν πόδα,
εὐβουλίας τυχόντα τῆς ἀμείνονος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκουν τυράννῳ τῆσδε γῆς φράσαντά σε
χρῆν ταῦτα τολμᾶν, ἀλλὰ μὴ βία ξένους
θεῶν ἀφέλκειν, γῆν σέβοντ' ἐλευθέραν ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

τίς δ' ἐστὶ χώρας τῆσδε καὶ πόλεως ἄναξ ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ·

ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖς Δημοφῶν ὁ Θεσέως.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

πρὸς ταῦτον ἀγῶν ἄρα τοῦδε τοῦ λόγου
μάλιστ' ἂν εἴη· τᾶλλα δ' εἴρηται μάτην.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

Given up we would not be, nor torn away
Hence, in thy Gods' despite, and sent to Argos.

COPREUS

Ay, but this shall not satisfy thy masters
Whose lordship o'er thee holds, who find thee here. 100

CHORUS

God's suppliants, stranger, must we reverence,
And not with hands of violence tear them hence
From this place where the Holy Presence is:
The majesty of Justice shall not suffer this.

COPREUS

Then from your land send these, Eurystheus' thralls,
And this mine hand shall do no violence.

CHORUS

Now nay, 'twere an impious thing
To cast off suppliant hands to the knees of our city
that cling!

COPREUS

'Tis well to keep thy foot from trouble's snare,
And in good counsel find the better part. 110

CHORUS

Thou shouldst have shown respect to this free land,
And told her King, ere thy presumption tore
Therefrom the strangers in her Gods' despite.

COPREUS

And who is of this land and city king?

CHORUS

Demophon, Theseus' child, a brave sire's son.

COPREUS

With him then must all strife of this dispute
Be held alone: all else is idle talk.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὄδ' αὐτὸς ἔρχεται σπουδὴν ἔχων
 Ἀκάμας τ' ἀδελφός, τῶνδ' ἐπήκοοι λόγων.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

120 ἐπεὶπερ ἔφθης πρέσβυς ὦν νεωτέρους
 βοηδρομήσας τήνδ' ἐπ' ἐσχάραν Διός,
 λέξον, τίς ὄχλον τόνδ' ἀθροίζεται τύχη ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ικέται κάθηνται παῖδες οἷδ' Ἡρακλέους
 βωμὸν καταστέψαντες ὡς ὄρας, ἀναξ,
 πατρός τε πιστὸς Ἴόλεως παραστάτης.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

τί δῆτ' ἰνυγμῶν ἦδ' ἐδεῖτο συμφορά ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βία νιν οὗτος τῆσδ' ἀπ' ἐσχάρας ἄγειν
 ζητῶν βοήν ἔστησε κᾶσφηλεν γόνυ
 γέροντος, ὥστε μ' ἐκβαλεῖν οἴκῳ δάκρυ.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

130 καὶ μὴν στολήν γ' Ἑλληνα καὶ ῥυθμὸν πέπλων
 ἔχει, τὰ δ' ἔργα βαρβάρου χερὸς τάδε.
 σὸν δὴ τὸ φράζειν ἐστί, μὴ μέλλειν τ', ἐμοί
 ποίας ἀφίξαι δεῦρο γῆς ὄρους λιπῶν ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

Ἀργεῖός εἰμι, τοῦτο γὰρ θέλεις μαθεῖν·
 ἐφ' οἷσι δ' ἦκω καὶ παρ' οὐ λέγειν θέλω.
 πέμπει Μυκηνῶν δευρό μ' Εὐρύσθευς ἀναξ
 ἄξοντα τούσδε· πολλὰ δ' ἦλθον, ὦ ξένε,
 δίκαι' ὀμαρτῆ δρᾶν τε καὶ λέγειν ἔχων.
 140 Ἀργεῖός ὦν γὰρ αὐτὸς Ἀργεῖους ἄγω
 ἐκ τῆς ἐμαντοῦ τούσδε δραπέτας ἐλών,
 νόμοισι τοῖς ἐκεῖθεν ἐψηφισμένους
 θανεῖν· δίκαιοι δ' ἐσμέν οἰκοῦντες πόλιν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

Lo, hitherward himself in haste draws nigh,
And Acamas his brother, to hear thy claim.

Enter DEMOPHON, ACAMAS, and attendants.

DEMOPHON

Since thou, the old, preventedst younger men 120
In rescue-rush to Zeus's altar-hearth,
Tell thou what chance hath gathered all this throng.

CHORUS

Here suppliant sit the sons of Hercules,
Who have wreathed the altar, as thou seest, O king,
And Iolaus, leal helper of their sire.

DEMOPHON

What need herein for lamentable cries ?

CHORUS

Yon man essayed to drag them from the hearth
By force ; raised outcry so, and earthward hurled
The ancient, that for ruth burst forth my tears.

DEMOPHON

Yet is the fashion of his vesture Greek ; 130
But deeds of a barbarian hand are these.
Man, thine it is to tell me, tarrying not,
From what land's marches hither thou hast come.

COPREUS

An Argive I, since this thou wouldest know.
Wherefore I come, and from whom, will I tell :
Mycenae's king Eurystheus sends me hither
To lead these hence. Stranger, I bring with me
Just pleas in plenty, both for act and speech.
Myself an Argive would lead Argives hence, 140
Who find them runaways from mine own land,
By statutes of that land condemned to die ;
For, dwellers in a state subject to none,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

αὐτοὶ καθ' αὐτῶν κυρίουσ κραίνειν δίκας.
 πολλῶν δὲ κᾶλλον ἐστίας ἀφιγμένων,
 ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖσ τοισίδ' ἔσταμεν λόγοις,
 κούδεις ἐτόλμησ' ἴδια προσθέσθαι κακά.
 ἀλλ' ἢ τιν' εἰς σὲ μωρίαν ἐσκεμμένοι
 δεῦρ' ἦλθον ἢ κίνδυνον ἐξ ἀμηχάνων
 ρίπτοντες, εἴτ' οὖν εἴτε μὴ γενήσεται·
 150 οὐ γὰρ φρενήρη γ' ὄντα σ' ἐλπίζουσί που
 μόνον τσαύτης ἦν ἐπήλθον Ἑλλάδος
 τὰς τῶνδ' ἀβούλους συμφορὰς κατοικτιεῖν·
 φέρ' ἀντίθεσ γάρ, τούσδε τ' εἰς γαῖαν παρεῖς
 ἡμᾶσ τ' εὔσασ ἐξάγειν, τί κερδανεῖς ;
 τὰ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν τοιάδ' ἔστι σοι λαβεῖν,
 Ἄργουσ τοσήνδε χεῖρα τήν τ' Εὐρυσθέωσ
 ἰσχύν ἅπασαν τῆδε προσθέσθαι πόλει.
 ἦν δ' εἰς λόγουσ τε καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' οἰκτίσματα
 160 βλέψασ πεπαυθῆσ, εἰσ πάλην καθίσταται
 δορὸσ τὸ πρᾶγμα· μὴ γὰρ ὡσ μεθήσομεν
 δόξησ ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἄτερ χαλυβδικού.
 τί δῆτα φήσεισ, ποῖα πεδί' ἀφαιρεθεῖσ,
 Τιρυνθίοισ θεῖσ πόλεμον Ἀργείοισ ἔχειν ;
 ποίοισ δ' ἀμύνων συμμάχοισ ; τίνοσ δ' ὕπερ
 θάψεισ νεκρούσ πεσόντασ ; ἢ κακὸν λόγου
 κτήσει πρὸσ ἀστῶν, εἰ γέροντοσ εἶνεκα,
 τύμβου, τὸ μηδὲν ὄντοσ, ὡσ εἰπέιν ἔποσ,
 παίδων τε τῶνδ', εἰσ ἄντλον ἐμβήσει πόδα.
 ἐρεῖσ τὸ λῶστου ἐλπίδ' εὐρήσειν μόνου.
 170 καὶ τοῦτο πολλῶ του παρόντοσ ἐνδεέσ·
 κακῶσ γὰρ Ἀργείοισιν οἶδ' ὠπλισμένοι
 μάχοιντ' ἂν ἠβήσαντεσ, εἴ τι τοῦτό σε
 ψυχὴν ἐπαίρει, χούν μέσφ πολὺσ χρόνοσ,
 ἐν ᾧ διεργασθεῖτ' ἂν. ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πιθού·

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

The right is ours to ratify her decrees.
And, though they have come to hearths of many folk,
Still on the same plea did we take our stand,
And ruin on his own head none dared bring.
But these came hither, haply spying folly
In thee, or staking on one desperate throw
Their venture, or to win or lose it all :—
For sure they deem not thou, if sound of wit, 150
Alone in all this Hellas they have traversed,
Wilt have compassion on their hopeless plight.

Weigh this and that :—if thou grant these a home,
Or if thou let us hale them hence—what gain
Were thine? From us these boons thou mayest win :
Argos' strong hand and all Eurystheus' might
Thou mayest range upon this city's side.
If thou regard their pleadings, by their whinings
Be softened, to the grapple of the spear 160
The matter cometh. Never think that we
Will yield this strife but by the sword's award.
What canst thou plead? Of what lands art thou
robbed,

That with Tirynthian Argives thou wouldst war?
What allies art defending? In whose cause
Shall those thou buriest fall? Ill fame were thine
With thine Athenians, if for yon old man,
That sepulchre,—mere naught, as men might say,—
And these boys, in deep waters thou wilt sink.

Thy plea at best is hope for days to come.
Scant satisfaction for the present this ! 170
For against Argos these, armed, grown to man,
Should make but feeble stand,—if haply this
Uplift thine heart :—and long years lie between,
Wherein ye may be ruined. Nay heed me :

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

δους μηδέν, ἀλλὰ τὰμ' ἐὼν ἄγειν ἐμέ
κτῆσαι Μυκήνας, μηδ' ὄπερ φιλεῖτε δρᾶν
πάθης σὺ τοῦτο, τοὺς ἀμείνονας παρὸν
φίλους ἐλέσθαι, τοὺς κακίονας λάβης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ'

180 τίς ἂν δίκην κρίνειεν ἢ γνοιή λόγον,
πρὶν ἂν παρ' ἀμφοῖν μῦθον ἐκμάθῃ σαφῶς ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἄναξ, ὑπάρχει μὲν τόδ' ἐν τῇ σῆ χθονί,
εἰπεῖν ἀκοῦσαί τ' ἐν μέρει πάρεστί μοι,
κούδεις μ' ἀπώσει πρόσθεν, ὥσπερ ἄλλοθεν.
ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τῶδ' οὐδέν ἐστιν ἐν μέσῳ.¹
ἐπεὶ γὰρ Ἄργους οὐ μέτεσθ' ἡμῖν ἔτι,
ψήφῳ δοκῆσαν, ἀλλὰ φεύγομεν πάτραν,
πῶς ἂν δικαίως ὡς Μυκηναίους ἄγοι
ὦδ' ὄντας ἡμᾶς, οὓς ἀπήλασαν χθονός ;
190 ξένοι γὰρ ἐσμεν. ἢ τὸν Ἑλλήνων ὄρον
φεύγειν δικαιοῦθ' ὅστις ἂν τᾶργος φύγῃ ;
οὐκουν Ἀθήνας γ' οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων φόβῳ
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας ἐξελώσι γῆς.
οὐ γάρ τι Τραχίς ἐστιν οὐδ' Ἀχαιικὸν
πόλισμ', ὅθεν σὺ τοῦσδε τῇ δίκῃ μὲν οὐ,
τὸ δ' Ἄργος ὀγκῶν, οἷάπερ καὶ νῦν λέγεις,
ἤλαυνες ἰκέτας βωμίους καθημένους.
εἰ γὰρ τόδ' ἔσται καὶ λόγους κρανοῦσι² σοῦς,
οὐ φῆμ' Ἀθήνας τάσδ' ἐλευθέρας ἔτι.
ἀλλ' οἶδ' ἐγὼ τὸ τῶνδε λῆμα καὶ φύσιν·
200 θνήσκειν θελήσουσ' ἢ γὰρ αἰσχύνη πάρος
τοῦ ζῆν παρ' ἐσθλοῖς ἀνδράσιν νομίζεται.
πόλιν μὲν ἀρκεῖ· καὶ γὰρ οὖν ἐπίφθονον

¹ Valckenaer : for MSS. ἐν μέρει.

² Elmsley : for MSS. κρινοῦσι.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Give naught, but suffer me to take mine own ;
So gain Mycenæ's friendship. Do not err,
As oft ye do, taking the weaker side
When ye might choose for friend the stronger cause.

CHORUS

Who can give judgment, who grasp arguments,
Ere from both sides he clearly learn their pleas? 180

IOLAUS

King, this advantage have I in your land,
I am free to speak and in my turn to hear ;
None, as from other lands, will first expel me.
We and this man have naught in common now ;
We have naught to do with Argos any more
Since that decree : we are exiled from her soil.
What right hath he to hale us, whom they banished,
As we were burghers of Mycenæ yet ?
Aliens we are :—or from all Hellas banned
Are men whom Argos exiles?—claim ye this ? 190
Sooth, not from Athens : she shall drive not forth,
For fear of Argives, sons of Hercules.
She is no Trachis, no Achaean burg,
As that whence thou didst drive these—not of
right,

But, even as now, by vaunting Argos' power,—
These, suppliant at the altar as they sat !
If this shall be, if she but ratify
Thine hests, free Athens then no more I know.
Nay, her sons' nature know I, know their mood :
They will die sooner ; for in brave men's eyes 200
The honour that fears shame is more than life.
Suffice for Athens this ; for over-praise

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

- λίαν ἐπαινεῖν ἐστι, πολλάκις δὲ δὴ
 καυτὸς βαρυνθεὶς οἶδ' ἄγαν αἰνούμενος·
 σοὶ δ' ὡς ἀνάγκη τούσδε βούλομαι φράσαι
 σώζειν, ἐπεὶ περ τῆσδε προστατεῖς χθονός.
 Πιτθεὺς μὲν ἐστὶ Πέλοπος, ἐκ δὲ Πιτθέως
 Αἴθρα, πατὴρ δ' ἐκ τῆσδε γεννᾶται σέθεν
 Θησεύς. πάλιν δὲ τῶνδ' ἀνειμί σοι γένος.
 210 Ἑρακλῆς ἦν Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τε παῖς,
 κείνη δὲ Πέλοπος θυγατρός· αὐτανεψίων
 πατὴρ ἂν εἴη σὸς τε χῶ τούτων γεγώς.
 γένους μὲν ἦκεις ὧδε τοῖσδε, Δημοφῶν·
 ἂ δ' ἐκτὸς ἤδη τοῦ προσήκοντός σε δεῖ
 τίσαι λέγω σοι παισί· φημί γάρ ποτε
 σύμπλους γενέσθαι τῶνδ' ὑπασπίζων πατρὶ
 ζωστήρα Θησεῖ τὸν πολυκτόνον μετὰ,
 Ἄιδου τ' ἐρεμνῶν ἐξανήγαγεν μυχῶν
 πατέρα σόν· Ἑλλὰς πᾶσα τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ.
- 220 [ὧν ἀντιδοῦναί σ' οἶδ' ἀπαιτοῦσιν χάριν,
 μῆτ' ἐκδοθῆναι μῆτε πρὸς βίαν θεῶν
 τῶν σῶν ἀποσπασθέντες ἐκπεσεῖν χθονός.
 σοὶ γὰρ τόδ' αἰσχρόν† χωρίς, ἔν τε πόλει κακόν,†
 ἰκέτας ἀλήτας συγγενεῖς, οἴμοι κακῶν,
 βλέψον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέψον, ἔλκεσθαι βία.]
 ἀλλ' ἄντομαί σε καὶ καταστέφω χεροῖν,
 μὴ πρὸς γενείου, μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσης
 τοὺς Ἑρακλείους παῖδας εἰς χέρας λαβῶν.
 γενοῦ δὲ τοῖσδε συγγενής, γενοῦ φίλος
 230 πατὴρ ἀδελφὸς δεσπότης· ἅπαντα γὰρ
 ταῦτ' ἐστὶ κρείσσω πλὴν ὑπ' Ἀργεῖοις πεσεῖν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Is odious : yea, myself have oftentimes,
Praised above measure, been but galled thereby.
But that thou canst not choose but save these boys
I would show thee, who rulest o'er this land.

Pittheus was Pelops' son : of Pittheus sprang
Aethra ; of her was thy sire Theseus born.

Again, the lineage of these lads I trace :

Zeus' and Alcmena's son was Hercules :

210

She, child of Pelops' daughter : cousins' sons

Shall be thy father and the sire of these.

So their near kinsman art thou, Demophon ;

But what requital—ties of blood apart—

Thou owest to these lads, I tell thee :—once

Shield-bearer to their sire, I sailed with him

To win for Theseus that Belt slaughter-fraught ;¹

And from black gulfs of Hades he brought up

Thy sire : all Hellas witnesseth to this.

This to requite, one boon they crave of thee,—

220

Not to be given up, nor torn by force

From thy Gods' fanes, and banished from thy land :

This were thine own shame, Athens' bane withal,

That homeless suppliants, kinsmen,—ah, their woes !

Look on them, look !—be dragged away by force.

I pray thee—these clasped hands are suppliant-
boughs,—

By thy beard I implore, set not at naught

Hercules' sons, who hast them in thine hands.

Prove thee to these true kinsman, prove thee
friend,

Their father, brother, master—better that

230

Than into hands of Argive men to fall !

¹ The belt of Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, the winning of which cost many lives.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄκτειρ' ἀκούσας τούσδε συμφορᾶς, ἀναξ.
τὴν δ' εὐγένειαν τῆς τύχης νικωμένην
νῦν δὴ μάλιστ' εἰσείδον· οἶδε γὰρ πατρὸς
ἔσθλου γεγῶτες δυστυχοῦσ' ἀναξίως.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

τρισσαί μ' ἀναγκάζουσι συμφορᾶς ὁδοί,
Ἴόλαε, τοὺς σοὺς μὴ παρώσασθαι λόγους·
τὸ μὲν μέγιστον Ζεὺς ἐφ' οὐ σὺ βώμιος
θακεῖς νεοσσῶν τήνδ' ἔχων ὀμήγουριν,
240 τὸ συγγενές τε καὶ τὸ προὔφειλιν καλῶς
πράσσειν παρ' ἡμῶν τούσδε πατρώαν χάριν·
τό τ' αἰσχρόν, οὐπερ δεῖ μάλιστα φροντίσαι·
εἰ γὰρ παρήσω τόνδε συλᾶσθαι βία
ξένου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς βωμόν, οὐκ ἐλευθέραν
οἰκεῖν δοκήσω γαῖαν, Ἀργείοις δ' ὄκνη
ικέτας προδοῦναι· καὶ τὰδ' ἀγχόνης πέλας.
ἀλλ' ὄφελος μὲν εὐτυχέστερος μολεῖν·
ὄμως δὲ καὶ νῦν μὴ τρέσης ὅπως σέ τις
σὺν παισὶ βωμοῦ τοῦδ' ἀποσπάσει βία.
250 σὺ δ' Ἄργος ἐλθὼν ταῦτά τ' Εὐρύσθει φράσον,
πρὸς τοῖσδέ τ', εἴ τι τοισίδ' ἐγκαλεῖ ξένους,
δίκης κυρήσειν· τούσδε δ' οὐκ ἄξεις ποτέ.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐδ' ἦν δίκαιον ἢ τι καὶ νικῶ λόγῳ ;

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

καὶ πῶς δίκαιον τὸν ἰκέτην ἄγειν βία ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐκοῦν ἐμοὶ τὸδ' αἰσχρόν, ἀλλ' οὐ σοὶ βλάβος.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ἐμοί γ', ἐάν σοι τούσδ' ἐφέλκεσθαι μεθῶ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

I pity these in their affliction, king.
High birth by fortune crushed I now behold
As ne'er before : born of a noble sire
Are these, yet suffer woes unmerited.

DEMOPHON

Three influences, that meet in one, constrain me,
Iolaus, not to thrust hence these my guests :
The chiefest, Zeus, upon whose altar thou
Art sitting with these nestlings compassed round ;
Then, kinship, and the debt of old, that these 240
Should for their sire's sake fare well at mine hands ;
Third, dread of shame,—this most I must regard :
For if I let this altar be despoiled
By alien force, I shall be held to dwell
In no free land, but cowed by fear of Argos
To yield up suppliants :—hanging were not worse !
I would that thou hadst come in happier plight ;
Yet, even so, fear not that any man
Shall from this altar tear thee with these boys.
Thou (*to the* HERALD), go to Argos ; tell Eurystheus
this ; 250
And, if he implead these strangers in our courts,
He shall have right. These shalt thou hale hence
never.

COPREUS

Not if my cause be just, my plea prevail ?

DEMOPHON

Just ?—to hale hence by force the suppliant ?

COPREUS

Then mine the shame : no harm befalleth thee.

DEMOPHON

My shame too, if I let thee drag these hence.

273

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

σὺ δ' ἐξόριζε, κᾶτ' ἐκείθεν ἄχομεν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σκαίος πέφυκας τοῦ θεοῦ πλείω φρονῶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

δεῦρ', ὡς ἔοικε, τοῖς κακοῖσι φευκτέον.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

260 ἅπασι κοινὸν ῥῦμα δαιμόνων ἔδρα.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

ταῦτ' οὐ δοκῆσει τοῖς Μυκηναίοις ἴσως.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

οὐκουν ἐγὼ τῶν ἐνθάδ' εἰμὶ κύριος ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

βλάπτων γ' ἐκείνους μηδέν, ἦν σὺ σωφρονῆς.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

βλάπτεσθ', ἐμοῦ γε μὴ μαιίνοντος θεοῦς.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

οὐ βούλομαί σε πόλεμον Ἄργείοις ἔχειν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

κἀγὼ τοιοῦτος· τῶνδε δ' οὐ μεθήσομαι.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

ἄξω γε μέντοι τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐγὼ λαβῶν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

οὐκ ἄρ' ἐς Ἄργος ῥαδίως ἄπει πάλιν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

πειρώμενος δὴ τοῦτό γ' αὐτίκ' εἴσομαι.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

270 κλαίων ἄρ' ἄψει τῶνδε κοῦκ ἐς ἀμβολίης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν κήρυκα τολμήσης θενεῖν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS

Banish them thou : then I will lead them thence.

DEMOPHON

O born a fool, who wouldst outwit the God !

COPREUS

So hither felons must for refuge flee !

DEMOPHON

The God's house gives to all men sanctuary.

260

COPREUS

Haply not so shall think Mycenae's folk.

DEMOPHON

Am I not master then in mine own land ?

COPREUS

Not unto Argos' hurt,—so thou be wise.

DEMOPHON

The hurt be yours, so I flout not the Gods.

COPREUS

I would not thou with Argos shouldst have war.

DEMOPHON

I too : yet will I not abandon these.

COPREUS

Yet will I take mine own and hale them hence.

DEMOPHON

Not lightly shalt thou win to Argos back.

COPREUS

That will I now try, and be certified.

[Attempts to seize them.]

DEMOPHON (*raising his staff*)

Touch these, and thou shalt rue, and that right soon. 270

CHORUS

Dare not to strike a herald, for heaven's sake !

275

T 2

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

εἰ μὴ γ' ὁ κήρυξ σωφρονεῖν μαθήσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄπελθε· καὶ σὺ τοῦδε μὴ θίγῃς, ἄναξ.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

στείχω· μίᾳ γὰρ χειρὸς ἀσθενῆς μάχη.
ἤξω δὲ πολλὴν Ἄρεος Ἀργείου λαβῶν
πάγγαλκον αἰχμὴν δεῦρο. μυριοὶ δέ με
μένουσιν ἀσπιστῆρες Εὐρυσθεύς τ' ἄναξ
αὐτὸς στρατηγῶν· Ἀλκάρου δ' ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις
καραδοκῶν τάνθενδε τέρμασιν μένει.

280

λαμπρὸς δ' ἀκούσας σὴν ὕβριν φανήσεται
σοὶ καὶ πολίταις γῆ τε τῆδε καὶ φυτοῖς·
μάτην γὰρ ἤβην ὧδέ γ' ἂν κεκτώμεθα
πολλὴν ἐν Ἀργεῖ, μὴ σε τιμωρούμενοι.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

φθείρου· τὸ σὸν γὰρ Ἄργος οὐ δέδοικ' ἐγώ.
ἐνθένδε δ' οὐκ ἔμελλες αἰσχύνας ἐμὲ
ἄξειν βία τοῦσδ'· οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων πόλει
ὑπήκοον τήνδ', ἀλλ' ἐλευθέραν ἔχω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ᾧρα προνοεῖν, πρὶν ὄροισ πελάσαι
στρατὸν Ἀργείων·

290

μάλα δ' ὄξυς Ἄρης ὁ Μυκηναίων,
ἐπὶ τοῖσι δὲ δὴ μᾶλλον ἔτ' ἢ πρὶν.
πᾶσι γὰρ οὗτος κήρυξι νόμος,
δὶς τόσα πυργοῦν τῶν γιγνομένων.
πόσα νιν λέξειν βασιλεῦσι δοκεῖς,
ὡς δεῖν' ἔπαθεν καὶ παρὰ μικρὸν
ψυχὴν ἤλθεν διακναῖσαι ;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

DEMOPHON

That will I, if the herald learn not wisdom.

CHORUS

[*To* HERALD] Depart thou :—touch thou not this man,
O king.

COPREUS

I go ; for feeble fight one hand may make.
But I will hither come with brazen mail
And spears of Argos' war : warriors untold
Await me ; and Eurystheus' self, our king,
Their chief, expecting what shall come from hence,
Waits on the marches of Alcathous.¹
He shall flash forth, being told thine insolence, 280
On thee, thy folk, this land, and all her fruits.
For all this warrior youth were ours for naught
In Argos, if we avenge us not on thee.

DEMOPHON

Begone ! I fear not that thine Argos, I !
'Twas not for thee to shame me and to drag
These hence by force. This city which I hold
Is not to Argives subject : she is free.

[*Exit* COPREUS.]

CHORUS

It is time to prepare, ere the Argive array
Over our marches on-sweepeth ;
For Mycenae's war-spirit is keen for the fray, 290
And more hot for these tidings uleapeth.
Yea, and after his kind will yon herald be swelling
His wrongs—such aye double a tale in the telling :—
In the ears of his lords, think ye, how will he cry
On the foulness of outrage “ that brought him this day
Unto death well nigh ! ”

¹ *i.e.* in Megara, of which Alcathous had shortly before been king.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τοῦδε παισὶ κάλλιον γέρας
 ἢ πατρός ἐσθλοῦ κάγαθοῦ πεφυκέναι
 [γαμῆν τ' ἀπ' ἐσθλῶν· ὃς δὲ νικηθεὶς πόθῳ
 300 κακοῖς ἐκοινώνησεν, οὐκ ἐπαινέσω,
 τέκνοις ὄνειδος εἶνεχ' ἡδονῆς λιπεῖν.]¹
 τὸ δυστυχῆς γὰρ ἠύγενεϊ' ἀμύνεται
 τῆς δυσγενείας μᾶλλον· ἡμεῖς γὰρ κακῶν
 εἰς τοῦσχατον πεσόντες ἠϋρομεν φίλους
 καὶ ξυγγενεῖς τούσδ', οἱ τοσῆσδ' οἰκουμένης
 Ἑλληνίδος γῆς τῶνδε προὔστησαν μόνοι.
 δότ', ὦ τέκν', αὐτοῖς χεῖρα δεξιάν, δότε·
 ὑμεῖς τε παισί, καὶ πέλας προσέλθετε.
 ὦ παῖδες, εἰς μὲν πείραν ἦλθομεν φίλων
 310 ἦν δ' οὖν ποθ' ὑμῖν νόστος εἰς πάτραν φανῆ,
 καὶ δώματ' οἰκήσητε καὶ τιμὰς πατρός,
 σωτήρας αἰεὶ καὶ φίλους νομίζετε,
 καὶ μήποτ' εἰς γῆν ἐχθρὸν αἶρεσθαι δόρυ,
 μεμνημένοι τῶνδ', ἀλλὰ φιλτάτην πόλιν
 πασῶν νομίζετ'. ἄξιοι δ' ὑμῖν σέβειν
 οἱ γῆν τοσῆνδε καὶ Πελασγικὸν λεῶν
 ἡμῶν ἀπηλλάξαντο πολεμίους ἔχειν,
 πτωχοὺς ἀλήτας εἰσορῶντες· ἀλλ' ὅμως
 οὐκ ἐξέδωκαν οὐδ' ἀπήλασαν χθονός.
 320 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ζῶν καὶ θανών, ὅταν θάνω,
 πολλῶ σ' ἐπαίνῳ Θησέως, ὦ τᾶν, πέλας
 ὑψηλὸν ἀρῶ καὶ λέγων τὰδ' εὐφρανῶ,
 ὡς εὖ τ' ἐδέξω καὶ τέκνοισιν ἤρκεσας
 τοῖς Ἑρακλείοις, εὐγενῆς δ' ἂν Ἑλλάδα
 σῶξεις πατρῶαν δόξαν, ἐξ ἐσθλῶν δὲ φύς
 οὐδὲν κακίων τυγχάνεις γεγῶς πατρός,

¹ 299-301 are of doubtful genuineness.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

No fairer honour-guerdon may sons win
Than this, to spring from noble sires and good,
[And so wed noble wives. Who, passion's thrall,
Links him with base folk, ne'er shall have my
praise,

300

Who, for his lust's sake, stamps his seed with shame.]
For noble birth stands in the evil day
Better than base blood. We, to deepest depths
Of evil fallen, yet have found us friends
And kin in these : in all the peopled breadth
Of Hellas these alone have championed us.
Give, children, unto these the right hand give,
And to the children ye ; draw near to them.

Boys, we have put our friends unto the test :—
If home-return shall ever dawn for you,
And your sires' halls and honours ye inherit,
Saviours and friends account them evermore,
And never against their land lift hostile spear,
Remembering this, but hold them of all states
Most dear. They are worthy of your reverence,
Who have ta'en our burden on them, enmity
Of that great land, that folk Pelasgian.

310

Beggars they saw us, homeless : for all this
They gave not up nor chased us from their land.
And I, in life,—in death, when death shall come,
With high laud will extol thee, good my lord,
At Theseus' side ; and this shall make him glad,
My tale how thou didst welcome, didst defend
Hercules' sons, how nobly Hellas through
Thou guard'st thy sire's renown : thy father's son
Shames not the noble line wherefrom he sprang.

320

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

παύρων μετ' ἄλλων· ἕνα γὰρ ἐν πολλοῖς ἴσως
εὖροις ἂν ὅστις ἐστὶ μὴ χείρων πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

330 ἀεὶ ποθ' ἦδε γαῖα τοῖς ἀμηχάνοις
σὺν τῷ δικαίῳ βούλεται προσωφελεῖν.
τοιγὰρ πόνους δὴ μυρίους ὑπὲρ φίλων
ἤνεγκε, καὶ νῦν τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ὀρῶ πέλας.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σοί τ' εὐ λέλεκται, καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' αὐχῶ, γέρον,
τοιαῦτ' ἔσεσθαι· μνημονεύσεται χάρις.
κἀγὼ μὲν ἀστῶν σύλλογον ποιήσομαι,
τάξω δ', ὅπως ἂν τὸν Μυκηναίων στρατὸν
πολλῇ δέχωμαι χειρί· πρῶτα μὲν σκοποὺς
πέμφω πρὸς αὐτόν, μὴ λάθῃ με προσπεσών·
340 ταχύς γὰρ Ἄργει πᾶς ἀνὴρ βοηδρόμος·
μάντεις δ' ἀθροίσας θύσομαι· σὺ δ' εἰς δόμους
σὺν παισὶ χῶρει, Ζηνὸς ἐσχάραν λιπών.
εἰσὶν γὰρ οἱ σου, κὰν ἐγὼ θυραῖος ὦ,
μέριμναν ἔξουσ'. ἀλλ' ἴθ' εἰς δόμους, γέρον.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν λίποιμι βωμόν, ἐζώμεσθα δὲ
ικέται μένοντες ἐνθάδ' εὐ πρᾶξαι πόλιν·
ὅταν δ' ἀγῶνος τοῦδ' ἀπαλλαχθῆς καλῶς,
ἔμεν πρὸς οἴκουσ. θεοῖσι δ' οὐ κακίοσι
χρώμεσθα συμμάχοισιν Ἄργείων, ἀναξ·
350 τῶν μὲν γὰρ Ἥρα προστατεῖ, Διὸς δάμαρ,
ἡμῶν δ' Ἀθάνα. φημὶ δ' εἰς εὐπραξίαν
καὶ τοῦθ' ὑπάρχειν, θεῶν ἀμεινόνων τυχεῖν·
νικωμένη γὰρ Παλλὰς οὐκ ἀνέξεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰ σὺ μέγ' αὐχεῖς, ἕτεροι
σου πλέον οὐ μέλονται, στρ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Few such there be : amid a thousand, one
Thou shouldst find undegenerate from his sire.

CHORUS

Ever of old she chooseth, this our land,
To help the helpless ones in justice' cause. 330
So hath she borne for friends unnumbered toils.
Now see I this new struggle looming nigh.

DEMOPHON

Well said of thee ; and sure am I that these
Shall so prove ; unforgot shall be our boon.
Now will I muster for the war my folk,
And marshal, that a goodly band may greet
Mycenae's host. Scouts first will I send forth
To meet it, lest unwares it fall on me ;
For swift the Argives throng to the gathering-cry.
Seers will I bring, and sacrifice. Thou, leave 340
Zeus' hearth, and enter with the boys mine halls :
Therein be they which, though I be afar,
Shall care for thee. Pass, ancient, to mine halls.

IOLAUS

I will not leave the altar. Let us sit,
Abiding Athens' triumph, suppliant here.
And, when thou hast brought this strife to glorious end,
Then will we enter. Champion-gods have we
Not weaker than the Argive Gods, O king.
Though Hera, bride of Zeus, before them go,
Ours is Athena ; and this tells, say I, 350
For triumph, to have gotten mightier Gods ;
For Pallas never shall brook overthrow.

[*Exit* DEMOPHON.]

CHORUS

Ay, vaunt as thou wilt, yet uncaring (Str.)
Will we swerve none the more from the right,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ὦ ξεῖν' Ἀργόθεν ἔλθῶν·
 μεγαληγορίαισι δ' ἐμὰς
 φρένας οὐ φοβήσεις.
 μήπω ταῖς μεγάλαισιν οὔτω
 καὶ καλλιχόροις Ἀθάναις
 εἴη. σὺ δ' ἄφρων ὅ τ' Ἀργεῖ
 360 Σθενέλου τύραννος·

ὅς πόλιν ἔλθων ἑτέραν
 οὐδὲν ἐλάσσον' Ἀργούς,
 θεῶν ἰκτῆρας ἀλάτας
 καὶ ἐμὰς χθονὸς ἀντομένους
 ξένος ὦν βιαίως
 ἔλκεις, οὐ βασιλεύσιν εἶξας,
 οὐκ ἄλλο δίκαιον εἰπών·
 ποῦ ταῦτα καλῶς ἂν εἴη
 370 παρά γ' εὐφρονούσιν ;

εἰρήνην μὲν ἔμοιγ' ἀρέσκει·
 σοὶ δ', ὦ κακόφρων ἄναξ,
 λέγω· εἰ πόλιν ἤξεις,
 οὐχ οὔτως ἂν δοκεῖς κυρήσεις·
 οὐ σοὶ μόνῳ ἔγχος οὐδ'
 ἰτέα κατάχαλκος ἐστίν.
 ἀλλ' οὐ, πολέμων ἐραστά,
 μή μοι δορὶ συνταράξῃς
 τὰν εὐχαρίτων ἔχουσιν
 380 πόλιν, ἀλλ' ἀνάσχου.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, τί μοι σύννοιαν ὄμμασιν φέρων
 ἤκεις ; νέον τι πολεμίων λέγεις πέρι ;
 μέλλουσιν ἢ πάρεισιν ἢ τί πυνθάνει ;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

O thou stranger from Argolis faring
To Athens, thou shalt not affright
Our souls by thy bluster high-swelling.
Not yet such dishonour be done
To the land great and fair beyond telling !
Fools—thou and thy despot-lord dwelling 360
In Argos, this Sthenelus' son !

Thou who com'st to a city no lesser (Ant.)
Than Argos, essaying to seize--
And thou alien, O violent oppressor !—
The suppliants that cling to her knees,
The homeless that cry from her altars !
Thou hast not respect to our king,
And with justice thy false tongue palters :—
Who, except from truth's pathway he falters,
But shall count it an infamous thing ? 370

Peace love I well, but I warn thee, (Epode)
O tyrant, O treacherous-souled,
Though thou march to the gates of our hold,
Not the crown of thy hopes shall adorn thee.
Not for thine hand the war-spear alone
Nor the brass on the buckler hath shone !
O thou that in battle delightest,
Trouble not, trouble not with thy spear
The burg that the Graces make brightest
Of cities :—dread thou and forbear. 380

Re-enter DEMOPHON.

IOLAUS

My son, why com'st thou with care-clouded eyes ?
Tellest thou evil tidings of the foe ?
Tarry they ?—are they on us ?—what hast heard ?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

οὐ γάρ τι μὴ ψεύσῃ γε κήρυκος λόγος·
 ὁ γὰρ στρατηγὸς εὐτυχῆς τὰ πρόσθεν ὦν¹
 εἶσιν, σάφ' οἶδα, καὶ μάλ' οὐ σμικρὸν φρονῶν
 εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας. ἀλλὰ τῶν φρονημάτων
 ὁ Ζεὺς κολαστῆς τῶν ἄγαν ὑπερφρόνων.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

390 ἦκει στράτευμ' Ἀργεῖον Εὐρυσθεὺς τ' ἀναξ·
 ἐγὼ νιν αὐτὸς εἶδον. ἄνδρα γὰρ χρεῶν,
 ὅστις στρατηγεῖν φησ' ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς,
 οὐκ ἀγγέλοισι τοὺς ἐναντίους ὄραν.
 πεδία μὲν οὖν γῆς εἰς τὰδ' οὐκ ἐφήκέ πω
 στρατόν, λεπαίαν δ' ὀφρύην καθήμενος
 σκοπεῖ, δόκησιν δὴ τόδ' ἂν λέγοιμί σοι,
 ποῖα προσάξει στρατόπεδόν τ' ἄνευ δορὸς
 ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ τε τῆσδ' ἰδρύσεται χθονός.
 καὶ τὰμὰ μέντοι πάντ' ἄραρ' ἤδη καλῶς·
 400 πόλις τ' ἐν ὄπλοις, σφάγιά θ' ἠτοιμασμένα
 ἔστηκεν οἷς χρῆ ταῦτα τέμνεσθαι θεῶν,
 θνηπολεῖται δ' ἄστου μάντεων ὑπο,
 τροπαῖά τ' ἐχθρῶν καὶ πόλει σωτήρια.
 χρησμῶν δ' ἀοιδούς πάντας εἰς ἐν ἀλίσας
 ἤλεγξα καὶ βέβηλα καὶ κεκρυμμένα
 λόγια παλαιά, τῆδε γῆ σωτήρια.
 καὶ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων διάφορ' ἐστὶ θεσφάτων
 πόλλ'. ἐν δὲ πᾶσι γινῶμα ταῦτόν ἐμπρέπει·
 σφάξαι κελεύουσίν με παρθένον κόρη
 410 Δήμητρος, ἣτις ἐστὶ πατὴρ εὐγενοῦς.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔχω μὲν, ὡς ὄρας, προθυμίαν
 τοσήνδ' ἐς ὑμᾶς· παῖδα δ' οὐτ' ἐμὴν κτενῶ
 οὐτ' ἄλλον ἀστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ἀναγκάσω

¹ Tyrwhitt: for MSS. πρὸς θεῶν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

No empty promise was yon herald's threat.
Their captain, aye triumphant heretofore,
Shall march, I know, with heart uplifted high,
Against our Athens. Notwithstanding Zeus
Chastiseth overweening arrogance.

DEMOPHON

They are come, the Argive host and king Eurystheus.
Myself beheld them; for behoves the man, 390
Whoso makes claim to know good generalship,
To see—nor that with eyes of scouts—his foes.
But to the plains not yet hath he marched down
His bands, but, couched upon the rocky brow,
Watcheth—I but make guess of that I tell thee—
Where without conflict to push on his host,
And in the land's heart camp him safety-girt.

Yet all my preparations well are laid :
Athens is all in arms, the victims ready
Stand for the Gods to whom they must be slain : 400
By seers the city is filled with sacrifice
For the foes' rout and saving of the state.
All prophecy-chanters have I caused to meet,
Into old public oracles have searched,
And secret, for salvation of this land.
And, mid their manifold diversities,
In one thing glares the sense of all the same :—
They bid me to Demeter's Daughter slay
A maiden of a high-born father sprung.

Full am I, as thou seest, of good will 410
To you; yet neither will I slay my child,
Nor force thereto another of my folk;

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ἄκουθ'· ἐκὼν δὲ τίς κακῶς οὕτω φρονεῖ,
 ὅστις τὰ φίλτατ' ἐκ χερῶν δώσει τέκνα ;
 καὶ νὺν πικρὰς ἂν συστάσεις ἂν εἰσίδοις,
 τῶν μὲν λεγόντων ὡς δίκαιον ἦν ξένοις
 ἰκέταις ἀρήγειν, τῶν δὲ μωρίαν ἐμοῦ
 κατηγορούντων· εἰ δὲ δὴ δράσω τόδε,
 οἰκείος ἤδη πόλεμος ἐξαρτύεται.
 420 ταῦτ' οὖν ὄρα σὺ καὶ συνεξεύρισχ' ὅπως
 αὐτοί τε σωθήσεσθε καὶ πέδον τόδε,
 κάγω πολίταις μὴ διαβληθήσομαι.
 οὐ γὰρ τυραννίδ' ὥστε βαρβάρων ἔχω
 ἄλλ' ἦν δίκαια δρῶ, δίκαια πείσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄλλ' ἦ πρόθυμον οὖσαν οὐκ ἔᾶ θεὸς
 ξένοις ἀρήγειν τήνδε χρήζουσαν πόλιν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τέκν', ἔοιγμεν ναυτίλοισιν, οἵτινες
 χειμῶνος ἐκφυγόντες ἄγριον μένος
 εἰς χεῖρα γῆ συνῆψαν, εἶτα χερσόθεν
 430 πνοαῖσιν ἠλάθησαν εἰς πόντον πάλιν.
 οὕτω δὲ χῆμεις τῆσδ' ἀπωθούμεσθα γῆς
 ἤδη πρὸς ἄκταις ὄντες ὡς σεσωσμένοι.
 οἴμοι· τί δῆτ' ἕτερψας ὦ τάλαινά με
 ἐλπίς τότ', οὐ μέλλουσα διατελεῖν χάριν ;
 συγγνωστὰ γάρ τοι καὶ τὰ τοῦδ', εἰ μὴ θέλει
 κτείνειν πολιτῶν παιῖδας, αἰνέσαι δ' ἔχω
 καὶ τὰνθάδ'. εἰ θεοῖσι δὴ δοκεῖ τάδε
 πράσσειν ἔμ', οὗτοι σοί γ' ἀπόλλυται χάρις.
 440 ὦ παιδες, ὑμῖν δ' οὐκ ἔχω τί χρήσομαι.
 ποῖ τρεψόμεσθα ; τίς γὰρ ἄστεπτος θεῶν ;
 ποῖον δὲ γαίας ἔρκος οὐκ ἀφίγμεθα ;
 ὀλούμεθ', ὦ τέκν', ἐκδοθησόμεσθα δῆ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And of his own will who hath heart so hard
As from his hands to yield a most dear child ?
Now gatherings mayst thou see of angry mood,
Where some say, right it is to render help
To suppliant strangers, some cry out upon
My folly :—yea, and if I do this thing,
Even this day is civil war afoot.

See thou to this then : help me find a way 420
Whereby yourselves and Athens shall be saved,
And I shall not be of my folk reproached.
For mine is no barbarian despot's sway,
But by just dealing my just dues I win.

CHORUS

How ? do the Gods forbid that Athens help
The stranger, though she yearn with eager will ?

IOLAUS

O children, we are like to shipmen, who,
Escaped the madding fury of the storm,
And now in act to grasp the land, have yet
By blasts been driven from shore to sea again. 430
Even so are we from this land thrust away,
When, as men saved, even now we touched the
strand.

Ah, me why didst thou cheer me, cruel hope,
Erst, when thy mind was not to crown thy boon ?
The king I cannot blame, who will not slay
His people's daughters : yea, I am content
With Athens' dealings with us : if my plight
Please Heaven, my gratitude to thee dies not.
Ah boys, for you I know not what to do !
Whitherward flee ?—what Gods rest unimplored ? 440
What refuge upon earth have we not sought ?
Die shall we, children, yielded up to foes.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

κάμου μὲν οὐδὲν εἶ με χρὴ θανεῖν μέλει,
 πλὴν εἴ τι τέρψω τοὺς ἔμοις ἐχθροὺς θανών·
 ὑμᾶς δὲ κλαίω καὶ κατοικτεῖρω, τέκνα,
 καὶ τὴν γεραιὰν μητέρ' Ἀλκμήνην πατρός.
 ὦ δυστάλαινα τοῦ μακροῦ βίου σέθεν,
 τλήμων δὲ καγὼ πολλὰ μοχθήσας μάτην.
 450 χρὴν χρὴν ἄρ' ἡμᾶς ἀνδρὸς εἰς ἐχθροῦ χέρας
 πεσόντας αἰσχροῦς καὶ κακῶς λιπεῖν βίον.
 ἀλλ' οἴσθ' ὅ μοι σύμπραξον; οὐχ ἅπανα γὰρ
 πέφευγεν ἐλπίς τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ σωτηρίας.
 ἔμ' ἔκδος Ἀργείοισιν ἀντὶ τῶνδ', ἄναξ,
 καὶ μήτε κινδύνευε, σωθήτω τέ μοι
 τέκν'. οὐ φιλεῖν δεῖ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν· ἴτω.
 μάλιστα δ' Εὐρυσθεὺς με βούλοισ' ἂν λαβὼν
 τὸν Ἡράκλειον σύμμαχον καθυβρίσαι·
 σκαιὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ· τοῖς σοφοῖς δ' εὐκτὸν σοφῶ
 460 ἔχθραν συνάπτειν, μὴ ἀμαθεῖ φρονήματι.
 πολλῆς γὰρ αἰδοῦς καὶ δίκης τις ἂν τύχοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ, μή νυν τήνδ' ἐπαιτιῶ πόλιν·
 τάχ' ἂν γὰρ ἡμῖν ψευδὲς ἀλλ' ὅμως κακὸν
 γένοιτ' ὄνειδος ὡς ξένους προῦδώκαμεν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

γενναῖα μὲν τὰδ' εἶπας, ἀλλ' ἀμήχανα.
 οὐ σοῦ χατίζων δεῦρ' ἄναξ στρατηλατεῖ.
 τί γὰρ γέροντος ἀνδρὸς Εὐρυσθεῖ πλέον
 θανόντος; ἀλλὰ τοῦσδε βούλεται κτανεῖν.
 δεινὸν γὰρ ἐχθροῖς βλαστάνοντες εὐγενεῖς,
 νεανῖαι τε καὶ πατρὸς μεμνημένοι
 470 λύμης· ἃ κείνον πάντα προσκοπεῖν χρεών.
 ἀλλ' εἴ τιν' ἄλλην οἴσθα καιριωτέραν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

I reckon not of myself, if I must die,—
Except that o'er my death you foes shall gloat ;
But for you, babes, I weep in utter ruth,
And for your sire's grey mother, even Alcmena.
O lady, hapless in thy length of days !
And hapless I, who have greatly toiled in vain !
Doomed were we, doomed into a foeman's hands
To fall, and die in shame and agony ! 450
King, help me!—wouldst know how?—not every
hope

Of their deliverance hath fled my soul :—
Me to the Argives yield up in their stead.
So be unperilled thou, the lads be saved.
No right have I to love life : let it go !
Me would Eurystheus most rejoice to seize,—
Hercules' ally, me,—and evil-entreat ;
For churl he is. Let wise men pray to strive
With wise men, not with graceless arrogance.
So, if one fall, he stoops to chivalrous foe. 460

CHORUS

O ancient, upon Athens cast not blame !
Haply 'twere false, yet foul reproach were this
That we abandoned stranger-suppliants.

DEMOPHON

Noble thine offer ; yet it cannot be.
Not craving thee doth this king hither march ;
For of what profit to Eurystheus were
An old man's death ? Nay, these he lusts to slay.
For dangerous to foes are high-born youths
Growing to man, and brooding on sires' wrongs ;
And all this he foresees, he needs must so. 470
If any rede thou knowest more than this

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

βουλήν, ἑτοίμαζ', ὡς ἔγωγ' ἀμήχανος
 χρησμών ἀκούσας εἰμὶ καὶ φόβου πλέως.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ξένοι, θράσος μοι μηδὲν ἐξόδοις ἐμαῖς
 προσθήτε· πρῶτον γὰρ τόδ' ἐξαιτήσομαι·
 γυναικὶ γὰρ σιγὴ τε καὶ τὸ σωφρονεῖν
 κάλλιστον, εἴσω θ' ἥσυχον μένειν δόμων.
 τῶν σῶν δ' ἀκούσας, Ἴολεως, στεναγμάτων
 ἐξῆλθον, οὐ ταχθείσα πρεσβεύειν γένους.
 480 ἄλλ' εἰμὶ γάρ πως πρόσφορος, μέλει δέ μοι
 μάλιστα ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε, κάμαυτῆς πέρι
 θέλω πυθέσθαι, μὴ ἔπι τοῖς πάλαι κακοῖς
 προσκείμενόν τι πῆμα σὴν δάκνει φρένα.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, μάλιστα σ' οὐ νεωστὶ δὴ τέκνων
 τῶν Ἡρακλείων ἐνδίκως αἰνεῖν ἔχω.
 ἡμῖν δὲ δόξας εὖ προχωρήσαι δόμος
 πάλιν μεθέστηκε· αὐθις εἰς τ' ἀμήχανον
 χρησμών γὰρ ὠδούς φησι σημαίνειν ὄδε,
 οὐ ταῦρον οὐδὲ μόσχον, ἀλλὰ παρθένου
 490 σφάξαι κόρη Δήμητρος ἣτις εὐγενής,
 εἰ χρὴ μὲν ἡμᾶς, χρὴ δὲ τήνδ' εἶναι πόλιν.
 ταῦτ' οὖν ἀμηχανοῦμεν· οὔτε γὰρ τέκνα
 σφάξειν ὄδ' αὐτοῦ φησιν οὔτ' ἄλλου τινός,
 κάμοι λέγει μὲν οὐ σαφῶς, λέγει δέ πως,
 εἰ μὴ τι τούτων ἐξαμηχανήσομεν,
 ἡμᾶς μὲν ἄλλην γαῖαν εὐρίσκειν τινά,
 αὐτὸς δὲ σῶσαι τήνδε βούλεται χθόνα.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ἐν τῷδε καχόμεσθα σωθῆναι λόγῳ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἐν τῷδε, τᾶλλα γ' εὐτυχῶς πεπραγότες.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

In season, set it forth : I am desperate,
Hearing these oracles, and full of fear.

Enter MACARIA from the temple.

MACARIA

Strangers, impute not for my coming forth
Boldness to me : this is my first request ;
Since for a woman silence and discretion
Be fairest, and still tarrying in the home.
But, Iolaus, I heard thy moans, and came,—
Though I be not ordained mine house's head :
Yet in some sort it fits me, for I love 480
These brethren more than all : yea, mine own fate
Fain would I learn,—lest to the former ills
Some new pang added now torments thy soul.

IOLAUS

Daughter, long since have I had righteous cause
To praise thee chieftiest of Hercules' seed.
Our house, that seemed but now to prosper well,
Once more hath fallen into desperate case.
For oracle-chanters, saith this king, proclaim
That he must bid to slay nor bull nor calf,
But a maid, daughter of a high-born sire, 490
If we, if Athens, must not cease to be.
This then is our despair : the king refuseth
To slay his own or any other's child,
And saith to me,—albeit not in words,—
Except we find for this some remedy,
We must needs forth and seek another land ;
But his own land he cannot chose but save.

MACARIA

On these terms hangeth our deliverance ?

IOLAUS

On these,—if in all else our fortune speed.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

- 500 μή νυν τρέσης ἔτ' ἐχθρὸν Ἀργεῖον δόρυ·
 ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτὴ πρὶν κελευσθῆναι, γέρον,
 θνήσκειν ἐτοίμη καὶ παρίστασθαι σφαγῆ.
 τί φήσομεν γάρ, εἰ πόλις μὲν ἀξιοῖ
 κίνδυνον ἡμῶν εἴνεκ' αἵρεσθαι μέγαν,
 αὐτοὶ δὲ προστιθέντες ἄλλοισιν πόνους,
 παρόν σφε σῶσαι, φευξόμεσθα μὴ θανεῖν;
 οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια,
 στένειν μὲν ἰκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους,
 πατρός δ' ἐκείνου φύντας οὐ πεφύκαμεν,
 510 κακοὺς ὀράσθαι· ποῦ τὰδ' ἐν χρηστοῖς πρέπει;
 κάλλιον, οἶμαι, τῆσδ', ἂ μὴ τύχοι ποτέ,
 πόλεως ἀλούσης, χεῖρας εἰς ἐχθρῶν πεσεῖν,
 κᾶπειτα δεινά, πατρός οὔσαν εὐγενοῦς,
 παθοῦσαν "Αἰδην μηδὲν ἦσσον εἰσιδεῖν.
 ἀλλ' ἐκπεσοῦσα τῆσδ' ἀλητεύσω χθονός,
 κοῦκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι δῆτ', ἔαν δῆ τις λέγῃ·
 τί δεῦρ' ἀφίκεσθ' ἰκεσίοισι σὺν κλάδοις
 αὐτοὶ φιλοψυχοῦντες; ἔξιτε χθονός·
 κακοὺς γὰρ ἡμεῖς οὐ προσωφελήσομεν.
 520 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μέντοι, τῶνδε μὲν τεθνηκότων,
 αὐτὴ δὲ σωθεῖσ', ἐλπίδ' εὐπράξειν ἔχω·
 πολλοὶ γὰρ ἤδη τῆδε προὔδοσαν φίλους·
 τίς γὰρ κόρην ἔρημον ἢ δάμαρτ' ἔχειν
 ἢ παιδοποιεῖν ἐξ ἐμοῦ βουλήσεται;
 οὐκουν θανεῖν ἄμεινον ἢ τούτων τυχεῖν
 ἀναξίαν; ἄλλη δὲ καὶ πρέπει τινὶ
 μᾶλλον τὰδ', ἣτις μὴ ἴπισημος ὡς ἐγώ.
 ἠγείσθ' ὅπου δεῖ σῶμα καταθανεῖν τόδε,
 καὶ στεμματοῦτε καὶ κατάρχεσθ', εἰ δοκεῖ·
 530 νικᾶτε δ' ἐχθρούς· ἦδε γὰρ ψυχὴ πάρα

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

MACARIA

Then dread no more the Argive foeman's spear. 500
Myself—I wait no bidding, ancient—am
Ready to die, and yield me to be slain.
What can we say, if Athens count it meet
To brave a mighty peril for our sake,
And we to others pass the struggle on,
And flee death, when that way deliverance lies ?
Never!—a scoffing to us this should be,
To sit and moan on, suppliant to their Gods,
And—born of that sire of whose loins we sprang—
To show us craven ! Is this like the brave ? 510
Better, forsooth, this town—which God forbid !—
Were ta'en, that into hands of foes I fell,
And suffered—I, from hero-father sprung—
Horrors, and looked on Hades none the less !
Or, banished, shall I wander from this land,
And not be utterly shamed, if one should say,
“ Wherefore come hither with your suppliant boughs,
O ye that so love life ?—hence from our land !
For we to cravens will not render help ? ”

Nay, and not even if all these were slain 520
And I saved, have I hope of happy days ;—
Many, so tempted, have betrayed their friends ;—
For who would stoop to take a friendless girl
To wife, or care to raise up seed of me ?
Better to die than light on such a doom
Unworthy ! Haply this might well beseem
Another maid who hath not my renown.

Lead on to where this body needs must die :
Wreathe me, begin the rite, if this seem good.
Vanquish your foes ; for ready is this life, 530

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

έκούσα κούκ ἄκουσα· κάξαγγέλλομαι
 θνήσκειν ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε κάμαντῆς ὕπερ.
 εὔρημα γάρ τοι μὴ φιλοψυχοῦς' ἐγὼ
 κάλλιστον ἠῦρηκ', εὐκλεῶς λιπεῖν βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, τί λέξω παρθένου μέγαν λόγον
 κλύων, ἀδελφῶν ἢ πάρος θέλει θανεῖν ;
 τούτων τίς ἂν λέξειε γενναίους λόγους
 μᾶλλον, τίς ἂν δράσειεν ἀνθρώπων ἔτι ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

540 ὦ τέκνον, οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλλοθεν τὸ σὸν κάρα,
 ἀλλ' ἐξ ἐκείνου σπέρμα τῆς θείας φρενὸς
 πέφυκας Ἡράκλειος· οὐδ' αἰσχύνομαι
 τοῖς σοῖς λογοῖσι, τῇ τύχῃ δ' ἀλγύνομαι.
 ἀλλ' ἢ γένοιτ' ἂν ἐνδικωτέρως φράσω·
 πάσας ἀδελφὰς τῆσδε δεῦρο χρῆ καλεῖν,
 κᾶθ' ἢ λαχοῦσα θνησκέτω γένους ὕπερ·
 σέ δ' οὐ δίκαιον κατθανεῖν ἄνευ πάλου.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

οὐκ ἂν θάνοιμι τῇ τύχῃ λαχοῦς' ἐγὼ·
 χάρις γὰρ οὐ πρόσεστι μὴ λέξης, γέρον.
 550 ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἐνδέχεσθε καὶ βούλεσθέ μοι
 χρῆσθαι προθύμῳ, τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἐγὼ
 δίδωμ' ἐκούσα τοῖσδ', ἀναγκασθεῖσα δ' οὔ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ.
 ὄδ' αὖ λόγος σοι τοῦ πρὶν εὐγενέστερος·
 κάκείνος ἦν ἄριστος, ἀλλ' ὑπερφέρεις
 τόλμη τε τόλμαν καὶ λόγῳ χρηστῷ λόγον.
 οὐ μὴν κελεύω γ' οὐδ' ἀπεννέπω, τέκνον,
 θνήσκειν σ'· ἀδελφούς δ' ὠφελεῖς θανοῦσα σοῦς.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Willing, ungrudging. Yea, I pledge me now
For these my brothers' sake, and mine, to die.
For treasure-trove most fair, by loving not
Life, have I found,—with glory to quit life.

CHORUS

What shall I say, who hear this maid's high words
Consenting for her brethren's sake to die?
What man could utter nobler words than these,
Or who do nobler deed henceforth for ever?

IOLAUS

O child, thine heart is of none other sire—
Thou art his own seed, of that godlike soul, 540
Hercules, sprung! Exceeding proud am I
For these thy words, but grieve for this hard fate.
Yet how 'twere done more justly will I tell:
Hither be all this maiden's sisters called;
Then for her house let whom the lot dooms die;
But that thou die without lot is not just.

MACARIA

I will not perish by the lot's doom, I;
For then is no free grace: thou, name it not.
But if ye will accept me, and consent
To take an eager victim, willingly 550
I give my life for these, nowise constrained.

IOLAUS

Ah, marvellous one!
Nobler thy latter speech is than thy first.
Perfect was that, but thou o'erpasses now
Courage with courage, word with noble word!
Yet, daughter, thee I bid not, nor forbid
To die:—thy brethren dost thou, dying, help.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

560 σοφῶς κελεύεις· μὴ τρέσης μιάσματος
τούμου μετασχεῖν, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρως θάνω.
ἔπου δέ, πρέσβυ· σῆ γὰρ ἐνθανεῖν χερὶ
θέλω· πέπλοις δὲ σώμ' ἐμὸν κρύψου παρών·
ἐπεὶ σφαγῆς γε πρὸς τὸ δεινὸν εἰμ' ἐγώ,
εἶπερ πέφυκα πατρὸς οὐπερ εὐχομαι.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην σῶ παρεστάναι μόρφ.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ τοῦδε χρῆζε, μὴ μ' ἐν ἀρσένων,
ἀλλ' ἐν γυναικῶν χερσὶν ἐκπνεῦσαι βίον.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

570 ἔσται τάδ', ὧ τάλαινα παρθένων· ἐπεὶ
κάμοι τόδ' αἰσχρόν, μὴ σε κοσμεῖσθαι καλῶς,
πολλῶν ἕκατι, τῆς τε σῆς εὐψυχίας
καὶ τοῦ δικαίου· τλημονεστάτην δὲ σὲ
πασῶν γυναικῶν εἶδον ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐγώ.
ἀλλ' εἴ τι βούλει τούσδε τὸν γέροντά τε,
χώρει προσειποῦσ' ὑστάτοις προσφθέγμασιν.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

580 ὦ χαῖρε, πρέσβυ· χαῖρε καὶ δίδασκέ μοι
τοιούσδε τούσδε παῖδας εἰς τὸ πᾶν σοφούς
ὥσπερ σύ, μηδὲν μᾶλλον· ἀρκέσουσι γάρ.
πειρῶ δὲ σώσαι μὴ θανεῖν, πρόθυμος ὢν·
σοὶ παῖδές ἐσμεν· σαῖν χεροῖν τεθράμμεθα.
ὀρᾶς δὲ κάμῃ τὴν ἐμὴν ὥραν γάμου
διδούσαν ἀντὶ τῶνδε κατθανοῦμένην.
ὑμεῖς δ' ἀδελφῶν ἢ παροῦσ' ὀμιλία,
εὐδαιμονοῦτε, καὶ γένοιθ' ὑμῖν ὅσων
ἤμῃ πάροιθε καρδία σφαγήσεται.
καὶ τὸν γέροντα τὴν τ' ἔσω γραῖαν δόμων

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

MACARIA

Thou dost bid—wisely. Fear not thou to take
Guilt-stain of me ; but let me die—die free.
Come with me, ancient : in thine arms to die
I ask. Be near me ; veil my corse with robes,
Since to the horror of the knife I pass—
If I be of the sire that I boast mine. 560

IOLAUS

I cannot stand and look upon thy doom.

MACARIA

At least ask thou the king that I may breathe
My last breath not in men's but women's hands.

DEMOPHON

This shall be, hapless among maidens : shame
Were mine to grace thee not with honour meet,
For causes manifold ; for thy great heart,
For justice' sake, and for that thou art brave
Above all women that mine eyes have seen.
Wouldst thou say aught to these, or this grey sire,
Speak thy last word, or ever thou depart. [Exit. 570

MACARIA

Farewell, old sire, farewell, and teach, O teach
These boys to be like thee, in all things wise
As thou art—no whit more : that shall suffice.
And strive from death to save them, loyal soul :
Thy children are we, fostered by thine hands.
Thou seest how my bloom of spousal-tide
I yield up in the stead of these to die. 580
And ye, O band of brethren at my side,
Blessings on you ! May all be yours, for which
The cleaving of mine heart shall pay the price.
This old man, and the grey queen therewithin,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τιμᾶτε πατρός μητέρ' Ἀλκμήνην ἐμοῦ
 ξένους τε τούσδε. κἄν ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων
 καὶ νόστος ὑμῖν εὐρεθῆ ποτ' ἐκ θεῶν,
 μέμνησθε τὴν σώτειραν ὡς θάψαι χρεῶν
 κάλλιστά τοι δίκαιον· οὐ γὰρ ἐνδεῆς
 590 ὑμῖν παρέστην, ἀλλὰ προὔθανον γένους.
 τὰδ' ἀντὶ παίδων ἐστὶ μοι κειμήλια
 καὶ παρθενείας, εἴ τι δὴ κάτω χθονός·
 εἴη γε μέντοι μηδέν· εἰ γὰρ ἔξομεν
 κἀκεῖ μερίμνας οἱ θανούμενοι βροτῶν,
 οὐκ οἶδ' ὅποι τις τρέψεται· τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν
 κακῶν μέγιστον φάρμακον νομίζεται.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλ', ὦ μέγιστον ἐκπρέπούς' εὐψυχία
 πασῶν γυναικῶν, ἴσθι, τιμιωτάτη
 καὶ ζῶς' ὑφ' ἡμῶν καὶ θανούσ' ἔσει πολύ·
 600 καὶ χαῖρε· δυσφημεῖν γὰρ ἄζομαι θεάν,
 ἧ σὸν κατῆρκται σῶμα, Δήμητρος κόρην.
 ὦ παῖδες, οἰχόμεσθα· λύεται μέλη
 λύπη· λάβεσθε κεῖς ἔδραν μ' ἐρείσατε
 αὐτοῦ πέπλοισι τοῖσδε κρύψαντες, τέκνα.
 ὡς οὔτε τούτοις ἤδομαι πεπραγμένοις,
 χρησμοῦ τε μὴ κρανθέντος οὐ βιώσιμον·
 μείζων γὰρ ἄτη, συμφορὰ δὲ καὶ τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

οὔτινά φημι θεῶν ἄτερ ὄλβιον, οὐ βαρύποτμον,
 ἄνδρα γενέσθαι,
 610 οὐδὲ τὸν αὐτὸν ἀεὶ βεβάναι δόμον
 εὐτυχία· παρὰ δ' ἄλλαν ἄλλα
 μοῖρα διώκει·

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Alcmena, my sire's mother, honour ye,
 And these our hosts. If there be found of heaven
 For you release from toils, and home-return,
 Remember then your saviour's burial due,—
 Fair burial, as is just. I have failed you naught,
 Have stood your champion, for mine house have died. 590
 My treasure this shall be, for babes unborn,
 Spousals forgone ;—if in the grave aught be :
 But ah that naught might be !—for if there too
 We mortals who must die shall yet have cares,
 I know not whither one shall turn ; since death
 For sorrows is accounted chiefest balm.

IOLAUS

O thou who for high courage hast no peer,
 Above all women, know, in life, in death,
 Most chiefest honour shalt thou have of us.
 Farewell ; for awe I dare not curse the Goddess, 600
 Demeter's child, to whom thy life is sealed.

[*Exit MACARIA. IOLAUS sinks to the ground.*]

O boys, we are undone !—faint fail my limbs
 For anguish ! Take, upbear me to a seat
 Hereby, and muffle with these robes, my sons.
 For neither can I joy in these deeds done,
 Nor might we live, the oracle unfulfilled.
 This is calamity; that were deeper ruin.

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

Never man hath been blessed save by God's dispen-
 sation, nor bowed under sorrow :—
 Lo, this do I cry :— [ways ;
 Nor the same house treads evermore in prosperity's 610
 But the fate of to-day is dogged by the feet of the
 fate of to-morrow
 Ever treading anigh ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τὸν μὲν ἀφ' ὑψηλῶν βραχὺν ᾤκισε,
 τὸν δ' ἀτίταν¹ εὐδαίμονα τεύχει.
 μόρσιμα δ' οὔτι φυγεῖν θέμις,
 οὐ σοφία τις ἀπώσεται·
 ἀλλὰ μάταν ὁ πρόθυμος αἰεὶ πόνον ἔξει.

ἀντ.

ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ προπίτνων τὰ θεῶν φέρε μηδ' ὑπερ-
 ἄλγει

- 620 φροντίδα λύπα·
 εὐδόκιμον γὰρ ἔχει θανάτου μέρος
 ἂ μελέα πρό τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γᾶς·
 οὐδ' ἀκλεῆς νιν
 δόξα πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ὑποδέξεται·
 ἂ δ' ἀρετὰ βαίνει διὰ μόχθων.
 ἄξια μὲν πατρός, ἄξια δ'
 εὐγενίας τάδε γίγνεται·
 εἰ δὲ σέβεις θανάτους ἀγαθῶν, μετέχω σοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- 630 ὦ τέκνα, χαίρετ'· Ἴόλεως δὲ ποῦ γέρων
 μήτηρ τε πατρὸς τῆσδ' ἔδρας ἀποστατεῖ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πίρεσμεν, οἶα δὴ γ' ἐμοῦ παρουσία.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί χρῆμα κείσαι καὶ κατηγῆς ὄμμ' ἔχεις;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φροντίς τις ἦλθ' οἰκείος, ἧ συνειχόμεν.

¹ Lobeck : for MSS. ἀλήταν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And him that was highly exalted it comes to abase,
And him that was nothing accounted it setteth on
high.

Ye may flee not your doom, nor repel, though the
buckler of wisdom ye borrow,
And whoso essayeth hath vain toil endlessly.

(*Ant.*)

Ah, cast thee not down, but endure heaven's stroke,
nor thy spirit surrender

Unto anguished despair.

620

She hath won her a portion in death that the world
shall praise, [Athens' defender ;
Who hath out of her agony risen, her brethren's, our
And a crown shall she wear

Of renown that the worship of men on her brows
shall place ; [ing fare.

For through tangle of trouble doth virtue unfalter-
Of her sire is it worthily done, of her line's heroic
splendour. [share.

In thine homage to noble death mine heart hath

Enter HENCHMAN OF HYLLUS.

HENCHMAN

Hail, children ! Where stay ancient Iolaus
And your sire's mother from their session here ?

630

IOLAUS

Here am I—such as my poor presence is.

HENCHMAN

Why dost thou lie thus ? Why these down-drooped
eyes ?

IOLAUS

A sorrow of this house is come to oppress me.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἔπαιρέ νυν σεαυτὸν, ὄρθωσον κίρα.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

γέροντές ἐσμεν κοῦδαμῶς ἐρρώμεθα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἦκω γε μέντοι χάρμα σοι φέρων μέγα.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τίς δ' εἶ σύ ; ποῦ σοι συντυχῶν ἀμνημονῶ ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

Ἕλληου πενέστης· οὐ με γιγνώσκεις ὄρων ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

640 ὦ φίλταθ', ἦκεις ἄρα νῦν σωτὴρ βλάβης ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μίλιστα· καὶ πρὸς γ' εὐτυχεῖς τὰ νῦν τάδε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ μήτηρ ἐσθλοῦ παιδός, Ἄλκμηνην λέγω,
ἔξελθ', ἄκουσον τούσδε φιλτάτους λόγους.
πάλαι γὰρ ὠδίνουσα τῶν ἀφιγμένων
ψυχὴν ἐτήκου νόστος εἰ γενήσεται.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

650 τί χρῆμ' αὐτῆς πᾶν τόδ' ἐπλήσθη στέγος ;
Ἰόλαε, μὼν τίς σ' αὐ βιάζεται παρῶν
κῆρυξ ἀπ' Ἄργους ; ἀσθενὴς μὲν ἦ γ' ἐμῆ-
ρώμη, τοσόνδε δ' εἰδέναι σε χρῆ, ξένε,
οὐκ ἔστ' ἄγειν σε τούσδ' ἐμοῦ ζώσης ποτέ.
ἦ τᾶρ' ἐκείνου μὴ νομιζοίμην ἐγὼ
μήτηρ ἔτ'· εἰ δὲ τῶνδε προσθίξει χερί,
δυοῖν γερόντων οὐ καλῶς ἀγωνιεῖ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

θάρσει, γεραιά, μὴ τρέσης· οὐκ Ἄργόθεν
κῆρυξ ἀφίκται πολεμίους λόγους ἔχων.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Yet now upraise thyself: uplift thine head.

IOLAUS

Old am I, and my strength is utter naught.

HENCHMAN

But bringing tidings of great joy I come.

IOLAUS

Who art thou?—where have I met thee unremembered?

HENCHMAN

I am Hyllus' vassal. Look, dost know me not?

IOLAUS

Friend, com'st thou our deliverer from bane?

640

HENCHMAN

Yea: therewithal thou art fortunate this day.

IOLAUS

Alcmena, mother of a hero-son,
Come forth, give ear to these most welcome words;
For travailing long in spirit hast thou fainted
Lest those which now are come should ne'er return.

Enter ALCMENA from the temple.

ALCMENA

What means this outcry filling all the house?
How, hath a herald from their Argos come
Again to outrage thee? My strength is weakness;
Yet of this thing, O stranger, be assured,
Never, while I live, shalt thou hale these hence;
Else be I counted mother of Hercules
No more; for thou, if thou lay hand on these,
With two old foes shalt have inglorious strife.

650

IOLAUS

Fear not, grey queen, nor quake: no herald he
From Argos cometh bearing hests of foes.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί γὰρ βοήν ἔστησας ἄγγελον φόβου ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

σὺ πρόσθε ναοῦ τοῦδ' ὅπως βαίης πέλας.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

οὐκ ἦσμεν ἡμεῖς ταῦτα· τίς γὰρ ἐσθ' ὄδε ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἦκοντα παῖδα παιδὸς ἀγγέλλει σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

660

ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σὺ τοῖσδε τοῖς ἀγγέλμασιν.
ἀτὰρ τί χώρα τῆδε προσβαλὼν πόδα
ποῦ νῦν ἄπεστι ; τίς νιν εἶργε συμφορὰ
σὺν σοὶ φανέντα δεῦρ' ἐμὴν τέρψαι φρένα ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

στρατὸν καθίζει τάσσεταί θ' ὃν ἦλθ' ἔχων.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τοῦδ' οὐκέθ' ἡμῖν τοῦ λόγου μέτεστι δῆ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μέτεστιν' ἡμῶν δ' ἔργον ἱστορεῖν τάδε.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δῆτα βούλει τῶν πεπραγμένων μαθεῖν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πόσον τι πλήθος συμμάχων πάρεστ' ἔχων ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πολλούς· ἀριθμὸν δ' ἄλλον οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

670 ἴσασιν, οἶμαι, ταῦτ' Ἀθηναίων πρόμοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἴσασι καὶ δὴ λαιὸν ἔστηκεν κέρας.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἤδη γὰρ ὡς εἰς ἔργον ὤπλισται στρατός ;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

Why then didst raise a cry in-ushering fear ?

IOLAUS

That thou before this temple might'st draw nigh.

ALCMENA

This was not in my thought :—now who is this ?

IOLAUS

He bringeth tidings. Thy son's son is here.

ALCMENA

Hail also thou for this thine heralding ! 660
But wherefore absent, if he hath set foot
In this land ?—where ?—what hap hath hindered him
From coming with thee to make glad mine heart ?

HENCHMAN

The host he hath brought he camps, and marshals it.

ALCMENA

Such matter appertaineth not to me.

IOLAUS

It doth—though my part be to inquire thereof.

HENCHMAN

What wouldst thou know concerning things achieved ?

IOLAUS

How great a host of allies hath he brought ?

HENCHMAN

Many : their tale I cannot tell save thus.

IOLAUS

All this, I trow, the chiefs Athenian know ? 670

HENCHMAN

They know : yea, on their left he stands arrayed.

IOLAUS

Ha, is the host already armed for fight ?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

καὶ δὴ παρήκται σφάγια τάξεων ἑκάς.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πόσον τι δ' ἔστ' ἄπωθεν Ἀργείου δόρυ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὥστ' ἐξορᾶσθαι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἐμφανῶς.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τί δρῶντα; μῶν τάσσοντα πολεμίων στίχας;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἠκάζομεν ταῦτ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐξηκούομεν.
ἀλλ' εἴμ' ἐρήμους δεσπότης τοῦμὸν μέρος
οὐκ ἂν θέλοιμι πολεμίοισι συμβαλεῖν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

680

κᾶγωγε σὺν σοί· ταῦτὰ γὰρ φροντίζομεν,
φίλοις παρόντες, ὡς ἔοιγμεν, ὠφελεῖν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἠκιστα πρὸς σοῦ μῶρον ἦν εἰπεῖν ἔπος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καὶ μὴ μετασχεῖν γ' ἀλκίμου μάχης φίλοις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἐν ὄψει τραῦμα μὴ δρώσης χερός.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τί δ'; οὐ θένοιμι κἂν ἐγὼ δι' ἀσπίδος;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

θένοις ἄν, ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν αὐτὸς ἂν πέσοις.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐδεὶς ἔμ' ἐχθρῶν προσβλέπων ἀνέξεται.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦ τᾶν, ἢ ποτ' ἦν ῥώμη σέθεν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὖν μαχοῦμαί γ' ἀριθμὸν οὐκ ἐλάσσοσι.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Yea, and the victims brought without the ranks.

IOLAUS

And distant how far is the Argive spear?

HENCHMAN

So that thou plainly mayst discern their chief.

IOLAUS

What doth he?—marshals he the foemen's lines?

HENCHMAN

So made we guess: not plainly could we hear.
But I must go: I would not that without me,
Through fault of mine, my lords should clash with
foes.

IOLAUS

And I with thee: my purpose is as thine,—
As meet is,—to be there and help my friends.

680

HENCHMAN

Nay, nowise worthy thee were idle talk!

IOLAUS

Nor worthy of me to help not friends in fight!

HENCHMAN

The glance can deal no wound, if hand strike not.

IOLAUS

How? Cannot I withal smite through a shield?

HENCHMAN

Smite?—yea, but thou thyself ere then mightst fall.

IOLAUS

There is no foe shall dare to meet mine eyes.

HENCHMAN

Thou hast not, good my lord, thine olden strength.

IOLAUS

Yet foes by tale not fewer will I fight.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

690

σμικρὸν τὸ σὸν σήκωμα προστίθης φίλοις.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μή τοί μ' ἔρυκε δρᾶν παρεσκευασμένον.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

δρᾶν μὲν σύ γ' οὐχ οἴός τε, βούλεσθαι δ' ἴσως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὡς μὴ μενούντα τᾶλλα σοι λέγειν πάρα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πῶς οὖν ὀπλίτης τευχέων ἄτερ φανεῖ ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἔστ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἔνδον αἰχμύλωθ' ὄπλα
τοῖσδ', οἷσι χρησόμεσθα κάποδώσομεν
ζῶντες· θανόντας δ' οὐκ ἀπαιτήσει θεός.
ἀλλ' εἴσιθ' εἴσω κάπο πασσάλων ἐλὼν
ἔνεγχ' ὀπλίτην κόσμον ὡς τάχιστα μοι.
700 αἰσχροὺν γὰρ οἰκούρημα γίγνεται τόδε,
τοὺς μὲν μάχεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ δειλιά μένειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

λήμα μὲν οὐπω στόρνυσι χρόνος
τὸ σόν, ἀλλ' ἠβᾶ· σῶμα δὲ φρουδόν.
τί πονεῖς ἄλλως ἢ σέ μὲν βλάψει,
σμικρὰ δ' ὀνήσει πόλιν ἡμετέραν ;
χρῆν γνωσιμαχεῖν σὴν ἡλικίαν,
τὰ δ' ἀμήχαν' εἶαν· οὐκ ἔστιν ὄπως
ἦβην κτήσει πάλιν αὖθις.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

710

τί χρήμα μέλλεις σῶν φρενῶν οὐκ ἔνδον ὦν
λιπεῖν μ' ἔρημον σὺν τέκνοισι τοῖς ἔμοις ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀνδρῶν γὰρ ἀλκή· σοὶ δὲ χρῆ τούτων μέλειν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Scant weight into thy friends' scale wilt thou cast. 690

IOLAUS

Hinder me not. I am wrought up for the deed.

HENCHMAN

For deeds no power thou hast ;—hast will, perchance.

IOLAUS

Talk as thou wilt, so I bide not behind.

HENCHMAN

With mailed men how shalt thou unarmed appear ?

IOLAUS

There hang within yon fane arms battle-won.

These will I use, and, if I live, restore ;—

The God will not require them of the slain.

Pass thou within, and from the nails take down,

And bring with speed to me, that warrior-gear.

[*Exit* HENCHMAN.]

Shameful it is—this loitering at home, 700

That some should fight, some, craven souls, hang back!

CHORUS

Not yet may the years quell thy spirit,

Young in heart, though thy strength be no more !

Why toil to thine hurt but in vain ?

Small help of thee Athens should gain.

Let thine eld yet be wise, and refrain

From things hopeless : thou canst not inherit

Yet again the lost prowess of yore.

ALCMENA

Art thou beside thyself?—what, meanest thou

To leave me and my children thus forlorn ? 710

IOLAUS

Yea, men must fight. For these must thou take
thought.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ' ; ἦν θάνης σύ, πῶς ἐγὼ σωθήσομαι ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

παιδὸς μελήσει παισὶ τοῖς λελειμμένοις.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἦν δ' οὖν, ὃ μὴ γένοιτο, χρήσονται τύχη ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οἶδ' οὐ προδώσουσίν σε, μὴ τρέσης, ξένοι.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τοσόνδε γάρ τοι θάρσος, οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἔχω.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καὶ Ζηνὶ τῶν σῶν, οἶδ' ἐγὼ, μέλει πόνων.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

φεῦ.

Ζεὺς ἐξ ἐμοῦ μὲν οὐκ ἀκούσεται κακῶς·
εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ὅσιος αὐτὸς οἶδεν εἰς ἐμέ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

720 πλων μὲν ἤδη τήνδ' ὄρας παντευχίαν.
φθάνοις δ' ἂν οὐκ ἂν τοῖσδε συγκρύπτων δέμας·
ὡς ἐγγὺς ἀγών, καὶ μάλιστ' Ἄρης στυγεῖ
μέλλοντας· εἰ δὲ τευχέων φοβεῖ βάρος,
νῦν μὲν πορεύου γυμνός, ἐν δὲ τάξειςιν
κόσμῳ πυκάζου τῷδ'· ἐγὼ δ' οἶσω τέως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἄλλ' ἐμοὶ πρόχειρ' ἔχων
τεύχη κόμιζε, χειρὶ δ' ἔνθεσ ὀξύην,
λαιὸν τ' ἔπαιρε πῆχυν, εὐθύνων πόδα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἦ παιδαγωγεῖν γὰρ τὸν ὀπλίτην χρεῶν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

730 ὄρνιθος εἶνεκ' ἀσφαλῶς πορευτέου.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

But, if thou perish, how shall I be saved ?

IOLAUS

Thy son's sons which are left shall care for thee.

ALCMENA

But if—which God forbid—ought hap to them ?

IOLAUS

Our hosts shall not forsake thee. Fear not thou.

ALCMENA

Mine heart's last stay are these : none else have I.

IOLAUS

Nay, Zeus, I know, remembereth thy griefs:

ALCMENA

Ah ! (*sighs heavily.*)

Never of me shall ill be said of Zeus ;

But is he just to me-ward ? Himself knows !

[*Retires within temple.*]

Re-enter HENCHMAN.

HENCHMAN

Lo, here thou seest a warrior's gear complete :
Make all speed to encase in these thy frame.
The fight is nigh, and most the War-god loathes
Loiterers. If thou fear the armour's weight,
Go mailless now, and lap thee mid the ranks
In this array : till then will I bear all.

720

IOLAUS

Well hast thou said : yet ready to mine hand
Bring on the arms : set in mine hand a spear :
Bear up my left arm, ordering my steps.

HENCHMAN

How, lead as a little child the man-at-arms !

IOLAUS

For the omen's sake un stumbling must I go.

780

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἴθ' ἦσθα δυνατὸς δρᾶν ὅσον πρόθυμος εἶ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἔπειγε· λειφθεὶς δεινὰ πείσομαι μάχης.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

σύ τοι βραδύνεις, οὐκ ἐγώ, δοκῶν τι δρᾶν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκουν ἀρᾶς μου κῶλον ὡς ἐπείγεται ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὀρῶ δοκοῦντα μᾶλλον ἢ σπεύδοντά σε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ ταῦτα λέξεις, ἡνίκ' ἂν λεύσσης μ' ἐκεῖ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δρῶντα ; βουλοίμην δ' ἂν εὐτυχοῦντά γε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

δι' ἀσπίδος θείνοντα πολεμίων τινά.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἰ δὴ ποθ' ἤξομέν γε· τοῦτο γὰρ φόβος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ·

740

εἴθ', ὦ βραχίων, οἶον ἠβήσαντά σε
 μεμνήμεθ' ἡμεῖς, ἡνίκα ξὺν Ἡρακλεῖ
 Σπάρτην ἐπόρθεις, σύμμαχος γένοιό μοι
 τοιοῦτος· οἶος ἂν τροπήν Εὐρυσθέως
 θείμην· ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ κακὸς μένειν δόρυ.
 ἔστιν δ' ἐν ὄλβῳ καὶ τόδ' οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἔχον,
 εὐψυχίας δόκησις· οἴομεσθα γὰρ
 τὸν εὐτυχοῦντα πάντ' ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γᾶ καὶ παννύχιος σελάνα

στρ. α'

καὶ λαμπρόταται θεοῦ

750

φαεσίμβροτοι ἀγαί,
 ἀγγελίαν μοι ἐνέγκαιτ'.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Would thou wert strong to do, as thou art fain!

IOLAUS

On!—woe, if I be laggard for the fray!

HENCHMAN

Not I, but thou art slow, who dream'st performance.

IOLAUS

Seest thou not how onward speed my limbs?

HENCHMAN

More thine imagining see I than thy speed.

IOLAUS

Thou shalt not say so when thou seest me there—

HENCHMAN

Achieving what?—I fain would see thy triumph!

IOLAUS

Smiting some foeman, yea, clear through the shield.

HENCHMAN

If we win ever thither,—this I doubt.

IOLAUS

Would, O mine arm, that, as I call to mind 740

Thy young strength, when thou didst with Hercules

Smite Sparta, such a helper unto me

Thou wouldst become! How mightily would I rout

Eurystheus—craven he to abide the spear!

With high estate is this delusion linked,

Repute for courage high: for still we deem

That he who prospereth knoweth all things well.

[*Exeunt.*]

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

Earth!—Moon, which reign'st the livelong night!—

O glorious radiancy

Of Him who giveth mortals light, 750

Flash tidings unto me!

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ἰαχήσατε δ' οὐρανῷ
 καὶ παρὰ θρόνον ἀρχέταν,
 γλαυκᾶς τ' ἐν Ἀθήνας.
 μέλλω τᾶς πατριώτιδος γᾶς,
 μέλλω καὶ ὑπὲρ δόμων,
 ἰκέτας ὑποδεχθεῖς,
 κίνδυνον πολιῷ τεμείν σιδάρφ.

- 760 δεινὸν μὲν πόλιν ὡς Μυκῆνας ἀντ. α'
 εὐδαίμονα καὶ δορὸς
 πολυαῖνετον ἀλκᾶ
 μῆνιν ἐμᾶ χθονὶ κεύθειν·
 κακὸν δ', ὦ πόλις, εἰ ξένους
 ἰκτῆρας παραδώσομεν
 κελεύσμασιν Ἄργους.
 Ζεὺς μοι σύμμαχος, οὐ φοβοῦμαι,
 Ζεὺς μοι χάριν ἐνδίκως
 ἔχει· οὐποτε θνατῶν
 ἦσσορες παρ' ἐμοὶ θεοὶ¹ φανοῦνται.
- 770 ἀλλ', ὦ πότνια, σὸν γὰρ οὐδας στρ. β
 γᾶς, σὸν καὶ πόλις, ἅς σὺ μάτηρ
 δέσποινά τε καὶ φύλαξ,
 πόρευσον ἄλλα τὸν οὐ δικαίως
 τᾶδ' ἐπάγοντα δορυσσοῦν
 στρατὸν Ἀργόθεν· οὐ γὰρ ἐμᾶ γ' ἀρετᾶ
 δίκαιός εἰμ' ἐκπεσεῖν μελάθρων.
- 780 ἐπεὶ σοι πολύθυστος αἰεὶ ἀντ. β
 τιμὰ κραίνεται, οὐδὲ λάθει
 μηνῶν φθινὰς ἀμέρα,
 νέων τ' αἰοδαὶ χορῶν τε μολπαί.

¹ Dindorf: for MSS. ποτ' ἂν εἴτ' ἐμοῦ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Shout triumph up through heaven's expansion,
Up to the throne of all men's Lord,
Up to grey-eyed Athena's mansion!
I for my land am battle-dight,
Arrayed for hearth and home to fight,
To shear through danger with the sword,
For right of sanctuary.

Dread peril, that Mycenae-town— (Ant. 1)
The mighty burg, whose hand 760
The wide world through hath spear-renown,—
Nurse wrath against my land!
Yet shame, O shame, were thine, my city,
If we must yield to Argos' hest
Suppliants,—if fear must cast out pity!
Zeus champions me; I tread fear down:
Zeus' favour is my right, my crown:
In mine esteem above the Blest
Never shall mortals stand.

(Str. 2)
But, O Queen,—for our soil, for our city is thine, 770
And to thee be we given—
O our Mother, our Mistress, O Warder Divine,
Yon despiser of heaven,
Who from Argos brings storm-rush of spearmen
upon me, [won me
Chase afar!—no such guerdon hath righteousness
As from home to be driven!

(Ant. 2)
For the sacrifice-homage is rendered thee aye
When the month waneth, bringing
The day when young voices to thee chant the lay,
When the dancers are singing, 780

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ἀνεμόεντι δ' ἐπ' ὄχθῳ
ὀλολύγματα παννυχίοις ὑπὸ παρ-
θένων ἰαχεῖ ποδῶν κρότοισιν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

δέσποινα, μύθους σοί τε συντομωτάτους
κλύειν ἐμοί τε τῷδε καλλίστους φέρω.
νικῶμεν ἐχθρούς καὶ τροπαῖ' ἰδρύνεται
παντευχίαν ἔχοντα πολεμίων σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

790 ὦ φίλταθ', ἦδε σ' ἡμέρα διήλασεν
ἠλευθερῶσθαι τοῖσδε τοῖς ἀγγελμασιν.
μῆς δέ μ' οὐπω συμφορᾶς ἐλευθεροῖς·
φόβος γὰρ εἴ μοι ζῶσιν οὐς ἐγὼ θέλω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ζῶσιν μέγιστόν γ' εὐκλεεῖς κατὰ στρατόν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὁ μὲν γέρων οὖν ἔστιν Ἴόλεως ἔτι ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μάλιστα· πράξας δ' ἐκ θεῶν κάλλιστα δή.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ' ἔστι ; μῶν τι κεδνὸν ἠγωνίζετο ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

νέος μεθέστηκ' ἐκ γέροντος αὐθις αὐ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

θαυμάστ' ἔλεξας· ἀλλά σ' εὐτυχῆ φίλων
μάχης ἀγῶνα πρῶτον ἀγγεῖλαι θέλω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

800 εἰς μου λόγος σοι πάντα σημανεῖ τάδε.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἀλλήλοισιν ὀπλίτην στρατόν
κατὰ στόμ' ἐκτείνοντες ἀντετάξαμεν,
ἐκβὰς τεθρίππων Ἔλλος ἀρμάτων πόδα

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

When the wind-haunted hill with the beat of the
glancing [dancing
White feet of fair girls through the night-season
And with glad cries, is ringing.

ALCMENA *comes again out of the temple.* Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT

Mistress, I bring thee tidings passing brief-
To hear, and passing fair for me to tell. . .
Our foes are smitten : trophies now are reared
Hung with war-harness of thine enemies.

ALCMENA

Dear friend, this day hath wrought thy severance
From bondage, for the tidings thou hast brought.
Yet from one ill not yet thou freest me—
Fear touching those I love, if yet they live.

790

SERVANT

They live, in all the host most high-renowned.

ALCMENA

The old man Iolaus—lives he yet?

SERVANT

Yea, and by Heaven's help hath done gloriously.

ALCMENA

What is it?—hath he wrought some knightly deed?

SERVANT

He from an old man hath become a youth.

ALCMENA

Marvels thou speakest : yet I pray thee tell
First how the fight was victory for our friends.

SERVANT

One speech of mine shall set forth all to thee.
When host against host we had ranged the array
Of men-at-arms far-stretching face to face,
Then from his chariot Hyllus lighted down,

800

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἔστη μέσοισιν ἐν μεταιχμίοις δορός.
 κᾶπειτ' ἔλεξεν· ὦ στρατῆγ' ὃς Ἄργόθεν
 ἦκεις, τί τήνδε γαίαν οὐκ εἰάσαμεν ;
 καὶ τὰς Μυκήνας οὐδὲν ἐργάσει κακὸν
 ἀνδρὸς στερήσας· ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ μόνος μόνῳ
 μάχην συνάψας, ἧ κτανὼν ἄγου λαβῶν
 τοὺς Ἑρακλείους παῖδας, ἧ θανῶν ἐμοὶ
 810 τιμὰς πατρώους καὶ δόμους ἔχειν ἄφες.
 στρατὸς δ' ἐπήνεσ', εἷς τ' ἀπαλλαγὰς πόνων
 καλῶς λελέχθαι μῦθον εἷς τ' εὐψυχίαν.
 ὁ δ' οὔτε τοὺς κλύοντας αἰδεσθεὶς λόγων
 οὔτ' αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ δειλίαν στρατηγὸς ὢν,
 ἐλθεῖν ἐτόλμησ' ἐγγὺς ἀλκίμου δορός,
 ἀλλ' ἦν κάκιστος· εἶτα τοιοῦτος γεγῶς
 τοὺς Ἑρακλείους ἦλθε δουλώσων γόνους.
 "Ἐλλος μὲν οὖν ἀπώχεται εἰς ταξιν πάλιν·
 μάντις δ', ἐπειδὴ μονομάχου δι' ἀσπίδος
 820 διαλλαγὰς ἔγνωσαν οὐ τελουμένας,
 ἔσφαζον, οὐκ ἔμελλον, ἀλλ' ἀφίεσαν
 λαιμῶν † βροτείων¹ εὐθύς οὔριον φόνον·
 οἱ δ' ἄρματ' εἰσέβαινον, οἱ δ' ὑπ' ἀσπίδων
 πλευροῖς ἔκρυπτον πλευρ'· Ἀθηναίων δ' ἀναξ
 στρατῶ παρήγγειλ' οἶα χρῆ τὸν εὐγενῆ·
 ὦ ξυμπολίται, τῇ τε βοσκοῦση χθονὶ
 καὶ τῇ τεκούση νῦν τιν' ἀρκέσαι χρεῶν.
 ὁ δ' αὖ τό τ' Ἄργος μὴ καταισχύναί θέλει
 καὶ τὰς Μυκήνας συμμάχους ἐλίσσετο.
 830 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐσήμην' ὄρθιον Τυρσηνικῇ
 σάλπιγγι καὶ συνῆψαν ἀλλήλοισι μάχην,
 πόσον τιν' αὐχεῖς πάταγον ἀσπίδων βρέμειν,

¹ An unlikely word here. Paley suggests *βοτείων*.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And midway stood between the spearmen-lines,
And cried, "O captain of the host, who hast come
From Argos, wherefore spare we not this land?
Lo, if thou rob Mycenæ of one man,
Naught shalt thou hurt her:—come now, man to man
Fight thou with me: so, slaying, lead away
Hercules' sons; or, falling, leave to me
My father's honour and halls to have and hold." 810

"Yea!" the host shouted, counting this well said
For valour and for rest from battle-toil:
Yet he, unshamed for them that heard the challenge,
And his own cowardice, war-chief though he were,
Dared not draw nigh the essay of valour's spear,
But was sheer craven. And this dastard wretch
Came to enslave the sons of Hercules!
So to the ranks again went Hyllus back:
And the priests, knowing now that end of strife, 820
Should not by clash of champion shields be attained,
Did sacrifice, nor tarried, but straightway
Spilled from the victims' throats the auspicious blood.

Then mounted these their cars: their shield-rims
those
Before their bodies cast. But Athens' king
Cried to his host, as high-born chieftain should:
"Countrymen, now must each one play the man
For this land that hath borne and nurtured him!"
The while that other prayed his battle-aid
To brook not shame to Argos and Mycenæ.
But when the Tuscan trumpet gave the sign 830
High-shrilling, and the war-hosts clashed in fight,
How mighty a crash of bucklers thundered then—

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

πόσον τινὰ στέναγμὸν οἰμωγὴν θ' ὁμοῦ ;
 τὰ πρῶτα μὲν νυν πίτυλος Ἀργείου δορὸς
 ἐρρήξαθ' ἡμᾶς· εἴτ' ἐχώρησαν πάλιν.
 τὸ δεύτερον δὲ πούς ἐπαλλαχθεὶς ποδί,
 ἀνὴρ δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ στὰς ἐκαρτέρει μάχῃ·
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιπτον, ἦν δὲ δύο κελεύσματα.¹
 ὦ τὰς Ἀθήνας—ὦ τὸν Ἀργείων γύην
 840 σπείρουτες—οὐκ ἀρήξετ' αἰσχύνῃν πόλει ;
 μόλις δὲ πάντα δρώντες οὐκ ἄτερ πόνων
 ἐτρεψάμεσθ' Ἀργείου εἰς φυγὴν δόρυ.
 κἀνταῦθ' ὁ πρέσβυς Ἕλληνας ἐξορμώμενον
 ἰδὼν, ὀρέξας ἰκέτευσε δεξιᾶν
 Ἴόλαος ἐμβῆσαί νιν ἵππειον δίφρον.
 λαβὼν δὲ χερσὶν ἠνίας Εὐρυσθέως
 πώλοισ ἐπέειχε. τὰπὸ τοῦδ' ἤδη κλύων
 λέγοιμ' ἂν ἄλλων, δεῦρο δ' αὐτὸς εἰσιδὼν.
 Παλληνίδος γὰρ σεμνὸν ἐκπερῶν πάγον
 850 δίας Ἀθάνας, ἄρμ' ἰδὼν Εὐρυσθέως,
 ἠράσαθ' Ἕβην Ζηνὶ θ', ἡμέραν μίαν
 νέος γενέσθαι κάποτίσασθαι δίκην
 ἐχθρούς· κλύειν δὲ θαύματος πάρεστί σοι.
 δισσὴ γὰρ ἄστέρ' ἵππικοῖς ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς
 σταθέντ' ἔκρυψαν ἄρμα λυγαίῳ νέφει·
 σὸν δὲ λέγουσι παῖδά γ' οἱ σοφώτεροι
 Ἕβην θ'· ὁ δ' ὄρφνης ἐκ δυσαιθρίου νέων
 βραχιόνων ἔδειξεν ἠβητὴν τύπον.
 αἰρεῖ δ' ὁ κλεινὸς Ἴόλεως Εὐρυσθέως
 860 τέτρωρον ἄρμα πρὸς πέτραις Σκειρωνίσι.
 δεσμοῖς τε δήσας χεῖρας ἀκροθίνιον
 κάλλιστον ἤκει τὸν στρατηλάτην ἄγων

¹ Dindorf: for MSS. τοῦ κελεύματος.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Think'st thou?—what multitudinous groan and shriek!

At first the onset of the Argive spear
Burst through our ranks : then gave they back again.
Anon foot stood in grapple locked with foot,
Man fronting man, hard-wrestling in the fray :
Fast, fast they fell. Cheers ever answered cheers—
“ Dwellers in Athens ! ”—“ Tillers of the land
Of Argos ! ”—“ from dishonour save your town ! ” 840
With uttermost endeavour and strong strain
Scarce turned we unto flight the Argive spear.

Thereat old Iolaus, marking where
Hyllus charged on, with outstretched hand besought
That he would set him on a courser-car.
Then the reins grasped he, then the steeds he sped
After Eurystheus. All the rest I tell
From others' lips : the former things I saw.
For, as he passed beyond Pallene's Hill
Sacred to Pallas, spying Eurystheus' car 850
He prayed to Zeus and Hebe, for one day
To be made young, and wreak the vengeance due
On foes :—now shalt thou hear a miracle.
For two stars rested on the chariot-yoke,
And into gloom of shadow threw the car ;
And these, diviners say, were thy great son
And Hebe. Then from out that murky gloom
He flashed—a youth, with mighty-moulded arms !

And glorious Iolaus overtook
By the Scironian Rocks Eurystheus' car. 860
He hath bound his hands with gyves, and hath returned
Bringing the crown of victory, that chief

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τὸν ὄλβιον πάροιθε· τῇ δὲ νῦν τύχη
βροτοῖς ἅπασι λαμπρὰ κηρύσσει μαθεῖν,
τὸν εὐτυχεῖν δοκοῦντα μὴ ζηλοῦν, πρὶν ἂν
θανόντ' ἴδῃ τις· ὡς ἐφήμεροι τύχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ τροπαίε, νῦν ἐμοὶ δεινοῦ φόβου
ἐλεύθερον πάρεστιν ἡμαρ εἰσιδεῖν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

870 ὦ Ζεῦ, χρόνῳ μὲν τᾶμ' ἐπεσκέψω κακά,
χάριν δ' ὅμως σοι τῶν πεπραγμένων ἔχω·
καὶ παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν πρόσθεν οὐ δοκοῦσ' ἐγὼ
θεοῖς ὀμιλεῖν νῦν ἐπίσταμαι σαφῶς.
ὦ τέκνα, νῦν δὴ νῦν ἐλεύθεροι πόνων,
ἐλεύθεροι δὲ τοῦ κακῶς ὄλουμένου
Εὐρυσθέως ἔσεσθε καὶ πόλιν πατρὸς
ὄψεσθε, κλήρους δ' ἐμβατεύσετε χθονός,
καὶ θεοῖς πατρώοις θύσεθ', ὧν ἀπειργαμένοι
ξένοι πλανήτην εἶχετ' ἄθλιον βίον.
880 ἀτὰρ τί κεύθων Ἴόλεως σοφὸν ποτε
Εὐρυσθέως ἐφείσαθ' ὥστε μὴ κτανεῖν ;
λέξον· παρ' ἡμῖν μὲν γὰρ οὐ σοφὸν τόδε,
ἐχθροὺς λαβόντα μὴ ἀποτίσασθαι δίκην.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τὸ σὸν προτιμῶν, ὡς νιν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἴδοις
ἀλόντα¹ καὶ σῆ δεσποτούμενον χερί.
οὐ μὴν ἐκόντα γ' αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς βίαν
ἔξευξ' ἀνάγκη· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐβούλετο
ζῶν εἰς σὸν ἐλθεῖν ὄμμα καὶ δοῦναι δίκην.
ἀλλ', ὦ γεραία, χαίρε καὶ μέμνησό μοι
ὃ πρῶτον εἶπας, ἠνίκ' ἤρχόμην λόγου,

¹ Heimsoeth : for MSS. κρατοῦντα. Reiske, κρατοῦσα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

So prosperous once ; but by his fate this day
Clear warning to all men he publisheth
To envy not the seeming-fortunate, ere
He die, since fortune dureth but a day.

CHORUS

O Victory-wafter Zeus, now is it mine
To see a day from dark fear disenthralled !

ALCMENA

Zeus, late on mine affliction hast thou looked ;
Yet thank I thee for all that thou hast wrought. 870
Now know I of a surety that my son
Dwelleth with Gods :—ere this I thought not so.
O children, now, yea now from trouble free,
And from Eurystheus, doomed to a dastard's death,
Free shall ye be, shall see your father's city,
And tread the lot of your inheritance,
And sacrifice to your fathers' Gods, from whom
Banned ye have known a wretched homeless life.
But for what veiled wise purpose Iolaus
Hath spared Eurystheus, that he slew him not, 880
Tell ; for in our sight nothing wise is this
To capture foes and not requite their wrong.

SERVANT

Of thought for thee, that him thine eyes might see
Held in thy power, and subject to thine hand.
He bowed him 'neath the yoke of strong constraint
Sore loth to come, for nowise he desired
Living to meet thine eye and taste thy vengeance.
Farewell, grey queen : forget not that which erst
Thou saidst to me when I began my tale.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Make me free man ; for, touching suchlike boons, 890
The lips that lie not best beseem the noble. [*Exit.*]

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)
Sweet to me is the dance, when clear-pealing
Ring the flutes o'er the wine,
And when Love cometh sweetly in-stealing ·
Yea, and gladness is mine
To look on my dear ones well-faring
Which aforetime were whelmed in despairing.
Many blessings fate cometh on-bearing,
With whom Time paceth on, bringing healing,
Cronos' offspring divine. 900

In justice, my land, thy path lieth : (*Ant.* 1)
This thy crown yield to none,
That thou fearest the Gods : who denieth,
Into madness hath run.
Lo, what sign is revealed for a token,
How the pride of wrong-doers is broken
Evermore; how to-day hath God spoken,
How the voice of Omnipotence crieth
In the deeds he hath done !

He hath died not !—to heaven hath risen (*Str.* 2) 910
Thy scion, grey queen.
Tell me never that Hades' dim prison
His long home hath been !
Nay, he soared through the flames leaping round
him ;
And with honour the Spousal-god crowned him,
And to Hebe with love-links he bound him,—
Zeus' son to Zeus' daughter,—where glisten
Heaven's halls with gold-sheen.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

920 συμφέρεται τὰ πολλὰ πολλοῖς· ἀντ. β'
καὶ γὰρ πατρὶ τῶνδ' Ἀθάναν
λέγουσ' ἐπίκουρον εἶναι,
καὶ τούσδε θεᾶς πόλις
καὶ λαὸς ἔσωσέ κείνας,
ἔσχευ δ' ὕβριν ἀνδρός, ᾧ θυ-
μὸς ἦν πρὸ δίκας βίαιος.
μήποτ' ἐμοὶ φρόνημα
ψυχὰ τ' ἀκόρεστος εἶη.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

930 δέσποιν', ὀρᾶς μὲν, ἀλλ' ὁμως εἰρήσεται,
Εὐρυσθέα σοι τόνδ' ἄγοντες ἤκομεν,
ἄελπτον ὄψιν, τῷδέ τ' οὐχ ἤσσον τύχην·
οὐ γὰρ ποτ' ἠὔχει χεῖρας ἵξεσθαι σέθεν,
ὄτ' ἐκ Μυκηνῶν πολυπόνῳ σὺν ἀσπίδι
ἔστειχε μείζον τῆς δίκης φρονῶν, πόλιν
πέρσων Ἀθάνας. ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐναντίαν
δαίμων ἔθηκε καὶ μετέστησεν τύχην.
"Ἄλλος μὲν οὖν ὃ τ' ἐσθλὸς Ἰόλεως βρέτας
Διὸς τροπαίου καλλίνικον ἴστασαν
ἐμοὶ δὲ πρὸς σέ τόνδ' ἐπιστέλλουσ' ἄγειν,
τέρψαι θέλοντες σὴν φρέν'. ἐκ γὰρ εὐτυχοῦς
940 ἠδιστον ἐχθρὸν ἄνδρα δυστυχοῦνθ' ὀρᾶν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὦ μῖσος, ἤκεις; εἰλέ σ' ἡ Δίκη χρόνῳ;
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι δεῦρ' ἐπίστρεψον κᾶρα
καὶ τλήθι τοὺς σοὺς προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον
ἐχθρούς· κρατεῖ γὰρ νῦν γε κοῦ κρατεῖς ἔτι.
ἐκείνος εἰ σύ, βούλομαι γὰρ εἰδέναι,
ὅς πολλὰ μὲν τὸν ὄνθ' ὅπου 'στὶ νῦν ἐμὸν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

How oft be life's strands interwisted ! (Ant. 2)
Of Athena, men say, 920
Was their sire in hard emprise assisted ;
And the city this day,
And the folk of that Goddess hath saved them,
And hath curbed him whose blood-lust had craved
them,
Whose tyranny fain had enslaved them.
In my cause never pride be enlisted
Insatiate for prey.

Enter MESSENGER with guards leading EURYSTHEUS in chains.

MESSENGER

O queen, thou seest,—yet shall it be told,—
Leading Eurystheus unto thee we come,
A sight unhop'd, which ne'er he looked should hap, 930
Who ne'er had thought to fall into thine hands,
When from Mycenæ with vast shield-essay
He marched, his pride o'er justice soaring high,
To smite our Athens. But our destinies
Fortune reversed, and changed them, his for ours.
Hyllus I left and valiant Iolaus
Raising the victory-trophy unto Zeus ;
But me they charge to bring this man to thee,
Being fain to glad thine heart ; for 'tis most sweet
To see a foe triumphant once brought low. 940

ALCMENA

Loathed wretch, art come? Justice at last hath
trapped thee !
Nay then, first turn thou hitherward thine head,
And dare to look thine enemies in the face.
No more art thou the master, but the thrall !
Art thou he—for I would be certified—
Who didst presume to load thine outrages,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

950 παῖδ' ἤξιώσας, ὦ πανούργ', ἐφυβρίσαι;
 τί γὰρ σὺ κείνον οὐκ ἔτλης καθυβρίσαι;
 ὃς καὶ παρ' Ἄιδην ζῶντά νιν κατήγαγες,
 ὕδρας λέοντάς τ' ἐξαπολλύναι λέγων
 ἔπεμπες. ἄλλα δ' οἷ' ἐμηχανῶ κακὰ
 σιγῶ· μακρὸς γὰρ μῦθος ἂν γένοιτό μοι.
 κούκ ἤρκεσέν σοι ταῦτα τολμῆσαι μόνον,
 ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀπάσης καμὲ καὶ τέκν' Ἑλλάδος
 ἤλαυνες ἰκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους,
 τοὺς μὲν γέροντας, τοὺς δὲ νηπίους ἔτι.
 ἀλλ' ἠῦρες ἄνδρας καὶ πόλισμ' ἐλεύθερον,
 οἷ σ' οὐκ ἔδεισαν. δεῖ σε καθθανεῖν κακῶς,
 960 καὶ κερδανεῖς ἅπαντα· χρῆν γὰρ οὐχ ἅπαξ
 θνήσκειν σέ πολλα πῆματ' ἐξειργασμένον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἄνυστὸν τόνδε σοι κατακτανεῖν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄλλως ἄρ' αὐτὸν αἰχμάλωτον εἴλομεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

εἵργει δὲ δὴ τίς τόνδε μὴ θανεῖν νόμος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῖς τῆσδε χώρας προστάταισιν οὐ δοκεῖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δὴ τόδ'; ἐχθροὺς τοισίδ' οὐ καλὸν κτανεῖν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐχ ὄντιν' ἂν γε ζῶνθ' ἔλωσιν ἐν μάχῃ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

καὶ ταῦτα δόξανθ' Ἰλλος ἐξηνέσχετο;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χρῆν δ' αὐτόν, οἶμαι, τῆδ' ἀπιστήσαι χθονί;

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

χρῆν τόνδε μὴ ζῆν μῆδ' ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν φάιος.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Caitiff, on my son—whereso now he be ?
For wherein didst thou fear to outrage him,
Who didst to Hades speed him living down,
Didst send him, bidding him destroy thee Hydras 950
And lions ? All the ills thou didst devise
I name not, for the tale were all too long.
Nor yet sufficed thee this alone to dare ;
But from all Hellas me and mine didst thou
Still hunt, though suppliant to the Gods we sat,
These stricken in years, those little children yet.
But men, and a free city, hast thou found,
Which feared thee not. Now die the dastard's death.
Yet is thy death all gain : thou ought'st to die
Not one death, who hast wrought ills manifold. 960

CHORUS

It may not be that thou shouldst slay this man !

MESSENGER

Captive in vain then have we taken him !

ALCMENA

Prithee what law withholdeth him from death ?

CHORUS

It pleaseth not the rulers of this land.

ALCMENA

How ?—do these count it shame to slay their foes ?

CHORUS

Yea, such as they have ta'en in fight unslain.

ALCMENA

Ay so ?—and this their doom hath Hyllus brooked ?

CHORUS

Should he, forsooth, defy this nation's will ?

ALCMENA

He should no more have lived, nor seen the light.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

- 970 **ΧΟΡΟΣ**
 τότ' ἠδικήθη πρῶτον οὐ θανῶν ὄδε.
- ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ**
 οὐκουν ἔτ' ἔστιν ἐν καλῷ δοῦναι δίκην;
- ΧΟΡΟΣ**
 οὐκ ἔστι τοῦτον ὅστις ἂν κατακτάνοι.
- ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ**
 ἔγωγε· καίτοι φημί κάμ' εἶναί τινα.
- ΧΟΡΟΣ**
 πολλὴν ἄρ' ἔξεις μέμψιν, εἰ δράσεις τόδε.
- ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ**
 φιλῶ πόλιν τήνδ'· οὐδέν· ἀντιλεκτέον.
 τοῦτον δ', ἐπείπερ χεῖρας ἦλθεν εἰς ἐμάς,
 οὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἐξαιρήσεται.
 πρὸς ταῦτα τὴν θρασεῖαν ὅστις ἂν θέλη
 καὶ τὴν φρονούσαν μείζον ἢ γυναῖκα χρῆ
 λέξει· τὸ δ' ἔργον τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ πεπράξεται.
- 980 **ΧΟΡΟΣ**
 δεινόν τι καὶ συγγνωστόν, ὦ γυναῖ, σ' ἔχει
 μῖσος πρὸς ἄνδρα τόνδε, γιγνώσκω καλῶς.
- ΕΥΡΥΣΘΕΥΣ**
 γυναῖ, σάφ' ἴσθι μή με θωπεύσουντά σε,
 μηδ' ἄλλο μηδέν τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πέρι
 λέξουθ' ὅθεν χρῆ δειλίαν ὀφλεῖν τινα.
 ἐγὼ δὲ νεῖκος οὐχ ἐκῶν τόδ' ἠράμην
 ἤδη γε σοὶ μὲν αὐτανέψιος γεγώς,
 τῷ σῷ δὲ παιδί συγγενῆς Ἡρακλῆει.
 ἀλλ' εἴτ' ἔχρηζον εἴτε μή, θεὸς γὰρ ἦν,
 990 "Ἡρα με κάμνειν τήνδ' ἔθηκε τὴν νόσον.
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐκείνῳ δυσμένειαν ἠράμην
 κάγων ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἀγωνιούμενος,
 πολλῶν σοφιστῆς πημάτων ἐγγυρόμη

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

Then was he wronged—to die not at the first. 970

ALCMENA

So then 'twere just he suffered vengeance yet.

CHORUS

None is there, none, would put him now to death.

ALCMENA

That will I—some one I account myself.

CHORUS

Thou shalt have bitter blame, if this thou do.

ALCMENA

I love this city; let no man gainsay :—
But, since this wretch hath come into mine hands,
There is of mortals none shall pluck him thence.
Wherefore who will shall rail on the overbold,
On her that nursed for woman thoughts too high;
Yet shall this deed by me be brought to pass. 980

CHORUS

A fearful hatred, yet a righteous, queen,
Thou hast against this man, I know full well.

EURYSTHEUS

Woman, be sure I will not cringe to thee,
Nor utter any word beside, to save
My life, whence cowardice might stain my name.
Yet of my will this feud I took not up.
I knew myself born cousin unto thee,
And kinsman unto Hercules thy son.
But, would I or no, 'twas Heaven that thrust me on :
Hera with this affliction burdened me. 990
But when I had made him once mine enemy,
And knew that I must wrestle out this strife,
Deviser I became of many pains,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

και πόλλ' ἔτικτον, νυκτὶ συνθακῶν αἰεί,
 ὅπως διώσας καὶ κατακτείνοντας ἐμούς
 ἐχθρούς τὸ λοιπὸν μὴ συνοικοίην φόβῳ,
 εἰδὼς μὲν οὐκ ἀριθμὸν ἀλλ' ἔτητύμως
 1000 ἄνδρ' ὄντα τὸν σὸν παῖδα· καὶ γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ὢν
 ἀκούσεται τά γ' ἐσθλὰ χρηστὸς ὢν ἀνὴρ.
 κείνου δ' ἀπαλλαχθέντος οὐκ ἐχρῆν μ' ἄρα
 μισοῦμενον πρὸς τῶνδε καὶ ξυνειδότα
 ἐχθραν πατρώαν, πάντα κινήσαι πέτρον,
 κτείνοντα κάκβάλλοντα καὶ τεχνώμενον;
 τοιαῦτα δρῶντι τᾶμ' ἐγίγνετ' ἀσφαλῆ.
 οὐκουν σύ γ' ἂν λαχοῦσα¹ τὰς ἐμὰς τύχας
 ἐχθροῦ λέοντος δυσμενῆ βλαστήματα
 ἤλαινες ἂν κακοῖσιν, ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως
 εἷσας οἰκεῖν Ἄργος; οὔτιν' ἂν πίθοις.
 1010 νῦν οὖν ἐπειδὴ μ' οὐ διώλεσαν τότε
 πρόθυμον ὄντα, τοῖσιν Ἑλλήνων νόμοις
 οὐχ ἀγνός εἰμι τῷ κτανόντι κατθανών·
 πόλις δ' ἀφήκε σωφρονούσα, τὸν θεὸν
 μείζον τίουσα τῆς ἐμῆς ἐχθρας πολὺ.
 ἃ γ' εἶπας ἀντήκουσας· ἐντεῦθεν δὲ χρῆ
 τὸν προστρόπαιον τόν τε γενναῖον καλεῖν.
 οὔτω γε μέντοι τᾶμ' ἔχει· θανεῖν μὲν οὐ
 χρήζω, λιπὼν δ' ἂν οὐδὲν ἀχθοίμην βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παραινέσαι σοι σμικρόν, Ἄλκμηνη, θέλω,
 τὸν ἄνδρ' ἀφεῖναι τόνδ', ἐπεὶ πόλει δοκεῖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

1020 τί δ', ἦν θάνη τε καὶ πόλει πιθώμεθα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ λῆστ' ἂν εἴη· πῶς τὰδ' οὖν γενήσεται;

¹ Wecklein: for MSS. ἀναλαβοῦσα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Aye scheming—Night sat by, and counselled me—
How I might scatter and destroy my foes,
And have thenceforth for housemate fear no more,
Knowing thy son no cipher, but a man
In very deed ; for, though he be my foe,
Praise shall he have, a very hero he.

But, rid of him, was I not even constrained— 1000
Abhorred of these, ware of that heritage
Of hate—to move each scorpion-hiding stone,
By slaying, banishing, and plotting still ?
While this I did, my safety was assured.
But thou, forsooth, had but my lot been thine,
Hadst spared to persecute the infuriate whelps
Left of thy foe the lion,—wisely rather
Hadst let them dwell in Argos ? I trow not

Now therefore since, when I was fain to die,
They slew me not, by all the Hellene laws 1010
My death pollution brings on whoso slays.
Wisely did Athens spare me, honouring more
God, far above all enmity of me.
Thou art answered. I must be hereafter named
The Haunting Vengeance, and the Heroic Dead.
Thus is it with me—I long not for death,
Yet to forsake life nowise shall I grieve.

CHORUS

Suffer one word of exhortation, queen.
Let this man go ; for so the city wills.

ALCMENA

But—if he die, and I obey her still ? 1020

CHORUS

This should be best ; yet how can this thing be ?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἐγὼ διδάξω ῥαδίως· κτανούσα γὰρ
τόνδ' εἶτα νεκρὸν τοῖς μετελθοῦσιν φίλων
δώσω· τὸ γὰρ σῶμ' οὐκ ἀπιστήσω χθονί,
οὔτος δὲ δώσει τὴν δίκην θανῶν ἐμοί.

ΕΥΡΥΣΘΕΥΣ

1030 κτεῖν', οὐ παραιτοῦμαί σε· τήνδε δὲ πτόλιν,
ἐπεὶ μ' ἀφήκε καὶ κατηδέσθη κτανεῖν,
χρησμῶ παλαιῶ Λοξίου δωρήσομαι,
ὃς ὠφελήσει μείζον' ἢ δοκεῖν χρόνῳ.
θανόντα γὰρ με θάψεθ' οὐ τὸ μύρσιμον,
1040 δίας πάροιθε παρθένου Παλληνίδος·
καὶ σοὶ μὲν εὔνοος καὶ πόλει σωτήριος
μέτοικος αἰεὶ κείσομαι κατὰ χθονός,
τοῖς τῶνδε δ' ἐκγόνοισι πολεμιώτατος,
ὅταν μὀλωσι δεῦρο σὺν πολλῇ χειρὶ
χάριν προδόντες τήνδε· τοιούτων ξένων
προὔσσητε. πῶς οὖν ταῦτ' ἐγὼ πεπυσμένος
δεῦρ' ἦλθον, ἀλλ' οὐ χρησμὸν ἠδούμην¹ θεοῦ;
Ἦραν νομίζων θεσφάτων κρείσσω πολὺ,
1040 κούκ ἂν προδοῦναί μ'. ἀλλὰ μήτε μοι χοὰς
μήθ' αἰμ' ἐάσης εἰς ἐμὸν στάξαι τάφον.
κακὸν γὰρ αὐτοῖς νόστον ἀντὶ τῶνδ' ἐγὼ
δώσω· διπλοῦν δὲ κέρδος ἔξετ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
ὑμᾶς τ' ὀνήσω τοῦσδε τε βλάβῳ θανῶν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δῆτα μέλλετ', εἰ πόλει σωτηρίαν
κατεργάσασθαι τοῖσί τ' ἐξ ὑμῶν χρεῶν,
κτείνειν τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδ', ἀκούοντες τάδε;
δείκνυσι γὰρ κέλευθον ἀσφαλεστάτην.
ἐχθρὸς μὲν ἀνὴρ, ὠφελεῖ δὲ κατθανῶν.

¹ Musgrave: for MSS. ἠρόμην.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

This will I lightly teach thee :—I will slay,
Then yield him dead to friends that come for him.
Touching his corpse I will not cheat the state ;
But die he shall, and do me right for wrong.

EURYSTHEUS

Slay : I ask not thy grace. But I bestow
On Athens, who hath spared, who shamed to
slay me,
An ancient oracle of Loxias,
Which in far days shall bless her more than seems.
Me shall ye bury where 'tis fate-ordained, 1030
Before the Virgin's shrine Pallenian ;
So I, thy friend and Athens' saviour aye,
A sojourner shall lie beneath your soil,
But to these and their children sternest foe
What time they march with war-hosts hitherward,
Traitors to this your kindness :—such the guests
Ye championed ! Wherefore then, if this I knew,
Came I, and feared not the God's oracles ?
Hera, methought, was mightier far than these,
And would not so forsake me. Shed not thou 1040
Drink-offerings nor blood upon my tomb !
Ill home-return will I give thy sons' sons
For this ! Of me shall ye have double gain,—
My death shall be your blessing and their curse.

ALCMENA

Why linger then—if so ye must achieve
Your city's safety and your children's weal—
To slay this man, who hear this prophecy ?
Himself the path of perfect safety points.
Your foe he is, yet is his death your gain.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

1050

κομίζετ' αὐτόν, δμῶες, εἶτα χρὴ κυσὶ
δοῦναι κτανόντας· μὴ γὰρ ἐλπίσης ὅπως
αὐθις πατρώας ζῶν ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖς χθονός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταῦτὰ δοκεῖ μοι. στείχετ', ὄπαδοί.
τὰ γὰρ ἐξ ἡμῶν
καθαρῶς ἔσται βασιλεῦσιν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Hence with him, thralls. When ye have slain him,
then
To dogs 'twere good to cast him. Hope not thou
To live, and drive me again from fatherland. 1050

[*Exeunt* GUARDS *with* EURYSTHEUS.

CHORUS

I also consent. On, henchman-train,
March on with the doomed. No blood-guilt
stain,
Proceeding of us, on our kings shall remain.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.

THE
PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

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ARGUMENT

WHEN Oedipus, king of Thebes, was ware that he had fulfilled the oracle uttered ere he was born, in that he had slain his father, king Laius, and wedded his mother Jocasta, he plucked out his own eyes in his shame and misery. So he ceased to be king; but, inasmuch as his two sons rendered to him neither love nor worship, he cursed them with this curse, "that they should divide their inheritance with the sword." But they essayed to escape this doom by covenanting to rule in turn, year by year. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polyneices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year's space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes.

And herein is told how the brothers met in useless parley; by what strange sacrifice Thebes was saved; of the Argives' vain assault; and how the brothers slew each other in single combat.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

**ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ ·
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
ΚΡΕΩΝ
ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ**

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JOCASTA, *wife of Oedipus.*

OLD SERVANT, *attendant on Antigone.*

ANTIGONE, *daughter of Oedipus.*

POLYNEICES, *exiled son of Oedipus.*

ETEOCLES, *son of Oedipus, and king of Thebes.*

CREON, *brother of Jocasta.*

TEIRESIAS, *a blind prophet.*

MENOECEUS, *son of Creon.*

MESSENGER, *armour-bearer of Eteocles.*

OEDIPUS, *father of Eteocles and Polyneices.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Phoenician Maidens, dedicated by the Tyrians to the service of Apollo at Delphi, who, resting at Thebes on their journey, have been detained there by the siege.*

Daughter of Teiresias, guards of Eteocles, attendants of Jocasta and of Creon.

SCENE : In front of the Royal Palace at Thebes.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τὴν ἐν ἄστροις οὐρανοῦ τέμνων ὁδὸν
 καὶ χρυσοκολλήτοισιν ἐμβεβῶς δίφροις
 Ἥλιε, θοαῖς ἵπποισιν εἰλίσσων φλόγα,
 ὡς δυστυχῆ Θήβαισι τῇ τόθ' ἡμέρα
 ἀκτὴν ἐφήκας, Κάδμος ἠνίκ' ἦλθε γῆν
 τήνδ', ἐκλιπὼν Φοίνισσαν ἐναλίαν χθόνα·
 ὃς παῖδα γήμας Κύπριδος Ἀρμονίαν ποτὲ
 Πολύδωρον ἐξέφυσε, τοῦ δὲ Λάβδακον
 φῦναι λέγουσιν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦδε Λάϊον,
 10 ἐγὼ δὲ παῖς μὲν κληζομαι Μεινοικέως,
 Κρέων τ' ἀδελφὸς μητρὸς ἐκ μιᾶς ἔφν·
 καλοῦσι δ' Ἰοκάστην με, τοῦτο γὰρ πατὴρ
 ἔθετο, γαμεῖ δὲ Λαίος μ'. ἐπεὶ δ' ἄπαις
 ἦν χρόνια λέκτρα τᾶμ' ἔχων ἐν δώμασιν,
 ἐλθὼν ἐρωτᾷ Φοῖβον ἐξαιτεῖ θ' ἅμα
 παίδων ἐς οἶκους ἀρσένων κοινωνίαν.
 ὁ δ' εἶπεν ὦ Θήβαισιν εὐίπποις ἄναξ,
 μὴ σπεῖρε τέκνων ἄλοκα δαιμόνων βία·
 εἰ γὰρ τεκνώσεις παῖδ', ἀποκτενεῖ σ' ὁ φύς,
 20 καὶ πᾶς σὸς οἶκος βήσεται δι' αἵματος.
 ὁ δ' ἠδονῇ δούς εἰς τε βακχεῖον πεσὼν
 ἔσπειρεν ἡμῖν παῖδα, καὶ σπεύρας βρέφος,¹

¹ Probably corrupt: scholars propose φρενός, ἄφνω, ἄφαρ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Enter JOCASTA.

JOCASTA

O THOU who cleav'st thy path mid heaven's stars,
Who ridest on thy chariot golden-clamped,
Sun, whirling on with flying steeds thy fire,
What beams accurst on that day sheddest thou
O'er Thebes, when Cadmus came to this our land,
Leaving Phoenicia's sea-fringed realm afar !
He took to wife Harmonia, Cypris' child,
And begat Polydore, of whom, men say,
Sprang Labdacus, and Laïus of him.

I, daughter of Menoeceus am I named ; 10
My brother Creon the selfsame mother bare.
Jocasta men call me : this name my sire
Gave ; Laïus wedded me. But when long years
Of wedlock brought no child our halls within,
He went and questioned Phoebus, craved withal
For me, for him, male heirs unto his house.
The God spake : " King of chariot-glorious Thebes,
Beget not seed of sons in Heaven's despite.
If so thou do, thee shall thine issue slay,
And all thine house shall wade through seas of
blood." 20

Yet he, to passion yielding, flushed with wine,
Begot a son ; and when our babe was born,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

γνούς τὰμπλάκημα τοῦ θεοῦ τε τὴν φάτιν,
 λειμῶν' ἐς Ἥρας καὶ Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας
 δίδωσι βουκόλοισιν ἐκθεῖναι βρέφος,
 σφυρῶν σιδηρὰ κέντρα διαπείρας μέσον·
 ὄθεν νιν Ἑλλάς ὠνόμαζεν Οἰδίπουν.
 Πολύβου δέ νιν λαβόντες ἵπποβουκόλοι
 30 φέρουσ' ἐς οἴκους εἰς τε δεσποίνης χέρας
 ἔθηκαν. ἡ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν ὠδίνων πόνον
 μαστοῖς ὑφείτο καὶ πόσιν πείθει τεκεῖν.
 ἤδη δὲ πυρσαῖς γένυσιν ἐξανδρούμενος
 παῖς οὐμός, ἡ γνούς ἡ τιнос μαθὼν πύρα,
 ἔστειχε τοὺς φύσαντας ἐκμαθεῖν θέλων
 πρὸς δῶμα Φοῖβον, Λαίός θ', οὐμός πόσις,
 τὸν ἐκτεθέντα παῖδα μαστεύων μαθεῖν,
 εἰ μηκέτ' εἶη. καὶ ξυνάπτετον πόδα
 εἰς ταῦτὸν ἄμφω Φωκίδος σχιστῆς ὁδοῦ.
 καὶ νιν κελεύει Λαῖου τροχηλάτης·
 40 ὦ ξένε, τυράννοις ἐκποδὼν μεθίστασο.
 ὁ δ' εἰρπ' ἄναυδος, μέγα φρονῶν πῶλοι δέ νιν
 χηλαῖς τένοντας ἐξεφοίνισσον ποδῶν.
 ὄθεν—τί τὰκτὸς τῶν κακῶν με δεῖ λέγειν ;—
 παῖς πατέρα καίνει καὶ λαβῶν ὀχήματα
 Πολύβω τροφεί δίδωσιν. ὡς δ' ἐπεζάρει
 Σφιγξ ἀρπαγαῖσι πόλιν, ἐμός τ' οὐκ ἦν πόσις,
 Κρέων ἀδελφὸς τὰμὰ κηρύσσει λέχη,
 ὅστις σοφῆς αἰνιγμα παρθένου μάθοι,
 50 τούτῳ ξυνάψειν λέκτρα. τυγχάνει δέ πως
 μούσας ἐμός παῖς Οἰδίπους Σφιγγὸς μαθῶν,
 ὄθεν τύραννος τῆσδε γῆς καθίσταται
 καὶ σκῆπτρ' ἔπαθλα τῆσδε λαμβάνει χθονός·
 γαμεί δὲ τὴν τεκοῦσαν οὐκ εἰδὼς τάλας
 οὐδ' ἡ τεκοῦσα παιδὶ συγκοιμωμένη.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Ware of his sin, remembering the God's word,
He gave the babe to herdmen to cast forth.
In Hera's Mead upon Cithaeron's ridge,
His ankles pierced clear through with iron spikes,
Whence Hellas named him *Swell-foot*—Oedipus.

But Polybus' horse-tenders found him there,
And bare him home, and in their mistress' hands
Laid. To my travail's fruit she gave her breast, 30
Telling her lord herself had borne the babe.
Now, grown to man with golden-bearded cheeks,
My son, divining, or of some one told,
Journeyed, resolved to find his parents forth,
To Phoebus' fane. Now Laïus my lord,
Seeking assurance of the babe exposed,
If dead he were, fared thither. And they met,
These twain, where parts the highway Phocis-ward.
Then Laïus' charioteer commanded him—
"Stand clear, man, from the pathway of a prince!" 40
Proudly he strode on, answering not. The steeds
Spurned with their hoofs his ankles, drawing blood.

Then—why tell aught beyond the sad event?—
Son slayeth father, takes the car, and gives
To Polybus, his fosterer. While the Sphinx
Was ravaging Thebes, when now my lord was not,
Creon my brother published that the man,
Whoso should read the riddle of that witch-maid,
Even he should wed me. Strangely it befell—
Oedipus, my son, read the Sphinx's song, 50
Whence he became the ruler of this land:
Yea, for his guerdon wins the throne of Thebes,
And weds his mother,—wretch!—unwitting he,
Unwitting she that she was her son's bride.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

τίκτω δὲ παῖδας παιδὶ δύο μὲν ἄρσενας,
 Ἐτεοκλέα κλεινὴν τε Πολυνείκους βίαν,
 κόρας δὲ δισσάς· τὴν μὲν Ἴσμήνην πατὴρ
 ὠνόμασε, τὴν δὲ πρόσθεν Ἀντιγόνην ἐγώ.
 60 μαθὼν δὲ τὰ μὰ λέκτρα μητρῶν γάμων
 ὁ πάντ' ἀνατλὰς Οἰδίπους παθήματα
 εἰς ὄμμαθ' αὐτοῦ δεινὸν ἐμβάλλει φόνον,
 χρυσηλάτοις πόρπαισιν αἰμάξας κόρας.

ἐπεὶ δὲ τέκνων γένυς ἐμῶν σκιάζεται,
 κλήθροισ ἐκρυψαν πατέρ', ἵν' ἀμνήμων τύχη
 γένοιτο πολλῶν δεομένη σοφισμάτων.
 ζῶν δ' ἔστ' ἐν οἴκοις. πρὸς δὲ τῆς τύχης νοσῶν
 ἀρὰς ἀρᾶται παισὶν ἀνοσιωτάτας,
 θηκτῷ σιδήρῳ δῶμα διαλαχεῖν τόδε.
 70 τὼ δ' εἰς φόβον πεσόντε, μὴ τελεσφόρους
 εὐχὰς θεοὶ κραίνωσιν οἰκούντων ὁμοῦ,
 ξυμβάντ' ἔταξαν τὸν νεώτερον πάρος
 φεύγειν ἐκόντα τήνδε Πολυνείκην χθόνα,
 Ἐτεοκλέα δὲ σκῆπτρ' ἔχειν μένοντα γῆς
 ἐνιαυτὸν ἀλλάσσουντ'. ἐπεὶ δ' ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς
 καθέζετ' ἀρχῆς, οὐ μεθίσταται θρόνων,
 φυγάδα δ' ἀπωθεῖ τῆσδε Πολυνείκη χθονός.

ὁ δ' Ἄργος ἐλθὼν, κῆδος Ἀδράστου λαβῶν,
 πολλὴν ἀθροίσας ἀσπίδ' Ἀργείων ἄγει·
 ἐπ' αὐτὰ δ' ἐλθὼν ἐπτάπυλα τείχη τάδε,
 80 πατρῷ ἀπαιτεῖ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη χθονός.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔριν λύουσ' ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν
 ἔπεισα παιδὶ παῖδα πρὶν ψαῦσαι δορός.
 ἤξειν δ' ὁ πεμφθεὶς φησιν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος.
 ἀλλ' ὦ φαεννὰς οὐρμνοῦ ναίων πτυχὰς
 Ζεῦ, σῶσον ἡμᾶς, δὸς δὲ σύμβασιν τέκνοισ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And children to my son I bare, two sons,
Eteocles and famed Polyneices' might,
And daughters twain : the one the father named
Ismene, the elder I, Antigone.

But, when he knew me mother both and wife,
Oedipus, crushed 'neath utterest sufferings, 60
On his own eyes wrought ruin horrible,
Yea, with gold brooch-pin drenched their orbs with
blood.

Now, being to bearded manhood grown, my sons
Close-warded kept their sire, that his dark fate,
By manifold shifts scarce veiled, might be forgot.
Within he lives ; but, by his fate distraught,
A curse most impious hurled he at his sons,
That they may share their heritage with the sword.
They, terror-stricken lest, if they should dwell
Together, Gods might bring the curse to pass, 70
Made covenant that Polyneices first,
The younger, self-exiled, should leave the land,
That Eteocles tarrying wear the crown
One year—then change. But, once in sovranly
Firm-seated, he would step not from the throne,
And thrust Polyneices banished forth the land.

To Argos fares he, weds Adrastus' child,
And bringeth huge war-muster of Argive shields.
To our very walls seven-gated hath he come,
Claiming his father's sceptre and his right. 80
And I, to allay their strife, persuaded son
In truce to meet son, ere they touch the spear :
And, saith the messenger I sent, he comes.
O dweller Zeus in heaven's veiling light,
Save us, grant reconciling to my sons !

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

χρὴ δ', εἰ σοφὸς πέφυκας, οὐκ ἔαν βροτὸν
τὸν αὐτὸν αἰεὶ δυστυχῆ καθεστάναι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

90 ὦ κλεινὸν οἴκοις Ἀντιγόνη θάλος πατρί,
ἐπεὶ σε μήτηρ παρθενώνας ἐκλιπεῖν
μεθῆκε μελάθρων ἐς διήρες ἔσχατον
στράτευμ' ἰδεῖν Ἀργεῖον ἱκεσίαισι σαῖς,
ἐπίσχες, ὡς ἂν προὔξερευνήσω στίβον,
μή τις πολιτῶν ἐν τρίβῳ φαντάζεται,
κάμοι μὲν ἔλθη φαῦλος ὡς δούλῳ ψόγος,
σοὶ δ' ὡς ἀνάσση· πάντα δ' ἐξειδὼς φράσω
ἅ τ' εἶδον εἰσήκουσά τ' Ἀργείων πάρα,
σπονδὰς ὅτ' ἦλθον σῶ κασιγνήτῳ φέρων
ἐνθένδ' ἐκείσε δευρό τ' αὐ κείνου πάρα.
100 ἀλλ' οὔτις ἀστῶν τοῖσδε χρίμπτεται δόμοις,
κέδρου παλαιὰν κλίμακ' ἐκπέρα ποδί·
σκόπει δὲ πεδία καὶ παρ' Ἴσμηνοῦ ῥοὰς
Δίρκης τε νᾶμα, πολεμίων στράτευμ' ὄσον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὄρεγέ νυν ὄρεγε γεραιὰν νέαν
χεῖρ', ἀπὸ κλιμάκων ποδὸς
ἵχνος ἐπαντέλλων.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἰδοὺ ξύναψον, παρθέν'· εἰς καιρὸν δ' ἔβης·
κινούμενον γὰρ τυγχάνει Πελασγικὸν
στράτευμα, χωρίζουσι δ' ἀλλήλων λόχους.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

110 ἰὼ πότνια παῖ Λατοῦς
Ἑκάτα, κατάχαλκον ἅπαν
πεδῖον ἀστράπτει.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Thou oughtest not, so thou be wise, to leave
The same man evermore to be unblest. [Exit.

Enter, above, OLD SERVANT and ANTIGONE.

OLD SERVANT

Fair flower of thy sire's house, Antigone,
Albeit thy mother suffered thee to leave
Thy maiden-bower at thine entreaty, and mount 90
The palace-roof to view the Argive host,
Yet stay, that I may scan the highway first,
Lest on the path some citizen appear,
And scandal light—for me, the thrall, 'twere naught,—
On thee, the princess. This known, will I tell
All that I saw, and heard from Argive men,
When, to thy brother on truce-mission sent,
I passed hence thither, and then back from him . . . ,
Nay, not a citizen draws nigh the halls.
Climb with thy feet the ancient cedar-stair ; 100
Gaze o'er the plain, along Ismenus' stream
And Dirce's flow, on yon great host of foes.

ANTIGONE

Stretch it forth, stretch it forth, the old man's hand,
unto me
The child, from the stair, and my feet upbear,
As upward I strain.

OLD SERVANT

Lo, maiden, grasp it : in good time thou com'st,
For yon Pelasgian host is moving now,
Battalion from battalion sundering.

ANTIGONE

O Queen, O Child of Latona, Hecate !
Lo, how the glare of the brass flashes there 110
Over all the plain !

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐ γάρ τι φαύλως ἦλθε Πολυνεΐκης χθόνα,
πολλοῖς μὲν ἵπποις, μυρίοις δ' ὄπλοις βρέμων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄρα πύλαι κλήθροισι χαλκόδετ' ἄρ' ἔμβολα
λαϊνέοισιν Ἀμφίωνος ὀργάνοις
τείχεος ἤρμοσται ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θάρσει· τά γ' ἔνδον ἀσφαλῶς ἔχει πόλις.
ἀλλ' εἰσώρα τὸν πρῶτον, εἰ βούλει μαθεῖν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

120 τίς οὗτος ὁ λευκολόφας,
πρόπαρ ὃς ἀγεῖται στρατοῦ
πάγχαλκον ἀσπίδ' ἀμφὶ βρα-
χίονι κουφίζων ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

λοχαγός, ὦ δέσποινα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς πόθεν γεγώς ;
αὐδασον, ὦ γεραιέ, τίς ὀνομάζεται ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὗτος Μυκηναῖος μὲν αὐδάται γένος,
Λερναῖα δ' οἰκεῖ νόμαθ', Ἴππομέδων ἄναξ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

130 ἔῃ ὡς γαῦρος, ὡς φοβερὸς εἰσιδεῖν,
γίγαντι γηγενέτα προσόμοιος
ἀστερωπὸς ἐν γραφαῖσιν, οὐχὶ πρόσφορος
ἀμερίφ γεννα.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τὸν δ' ἔξαμείβοντ' οὐχ ὀρᾶς Δίρκης ὕδωρ ;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OLD SERVANT

Ay, for not feebly Polyneices comes
With thunder of many a steed, with countless shields.

ANTIGONE

Ah, be the gates secure, be the brass-clamped bolts
made sure

In the walls that Amphion in days bygone
Fashioned of stone ?

OLD SERVANT

Fear not ; the city wards all safe within. [him.
Mark yonder foremost chief, if thou wouldst know.

ANTIGONE

Who is he with the white helm-crest
Who marcheth in front of their war-array, 120
And a brazen buckler fencing his breast
Lightly his arm doth sway ?

OLD SERVANT

A captain, princess.

ANTIGONE

What his land, his birth ?
Make answer, ancient. What name beareth he ?

OLD SERVANT

Yon chief proclaims him Mycenean-born :
By streams of Lerna King Hippomedon dwells.

ANTIGONE

Ah me, how haughty, how fearful he is to see,
Like to a Giant, a child of Earth !
Star-blazonry gleams on his shield : not like is he
Unto one of mortal birth. 130

OLD SERVANT

See'st thou not him who crosseth Dirce's flood ?

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄλλος ἄλλος ὅδε τευχέων τρόπος.
τίς δ' ἐστὶν οὗτος ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

παῖς μὲν Οἰνέως ἔφν
Τυδεύς, Ἄρη δ' Αἰτωλὸν ἐν στέρνοις ἔχει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὗτος ὁ τᾶς Πολυνείκεος, ὦ γέρον,
αὐτοκασιγνήτας νύμφας
ὁμόγαμος κυρεῖ ;
ὡς ἀλλόχρως ὄπλοισι μιξοβάρβαρος.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

140

σακεσφόροι γὰρ πάντες Αἰτωλοί, τέκνον,
λόγχαις τ' ἀκοντιστήρες εὐστοχώτατοι.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

σὺ δ', ὦ γέρον, πῶς αἰσθάνει σαφῶς τάδε ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σημεῖ' ἰδὼν τότ' ἀσπίδων ἐγνώρισα,
σπονδὰς ὅτ' ἦλθον σῶ κασιγνήτῳ φέρων
ἂ προσδεδορκῶς οἶδα τοὺς ὠπλισμένους.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς δ' οὗτος ἀμφὶ μνήμα τὸ Ζήθου περᾶ
καταβόστρυχος, ὄμμασι γοργὸς εἰσ-
ιδεῖν νεανίας,
λοχαγός, ὡς ὄχλος νιν ὑστέρω ποδὶ
πάνοπλος ἀμφέπει ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

150

ὄδ' ἐστὶ Παρθενοπαῖος, Ἀταλάντης γόνος.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλά νιν ἂ κατ' ὄρη μετὰ ματέρος
Ἄρτεμις ἰεμένα τόξοις δαμάσασ' ὀλέσειεν,
ὅς ἐπ' ἐμὰν πόλιν ἔβα πέρσων.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Of other, of stranger fashion his armour shows !
Who is he ?

OLD SERVANT

Tydeus he, of Oeneus' blood.
Aetolia's battle-fire in the breast of him glows.

ANTIGONE

Is this he, ancient, by spousal-ties
Unto mine own Polyneices allied,
Whose wife's fair sister he won for his bride ?
How half-barbaric his harness, of no Greek guise ?

OLD SERVANT

Nay, child, shield-bearers all Aetolians are,
And most unerring hurlers of the lance.

140

ANTIGONE

And thou, how know'st thou, ancient, all so well ?

OLD SERVANT

Even then I noted their shield-blazonry,
When to thy brother with truce-pact I fared :
I marked them, and I know their bearers well.

ANTIGONE

Who is this by Zethus' sepulchre going, [flowing ?
With the keen, stern eyes and the curls long-
A warrior young,
Yet a chief—for in armour brazen-glowing
See his followers throng !

OLD SERVANT

Parthenopaeus, Atalanta's son.

150

ANTIGONE

Now may Artemis, over the mountains hasting
With his mother, smite with her bow, and in death
lay yon man low,
Who is hitherward come for my city's wasting !

355

AA 2

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

εἶη τάδ', ὦ παιῖ· σὺν δίκη δ' ἤκουσι γῆν,
ὃ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ σκοπῶσ' ὀρθῶς θεοί.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῦ δ' ὃς ἐμοὶ μιᾶς ἐγένετ' ἐκ ματρὸς
πολυπόνῳ μοίρα ;
ὦ φίλτατ', εἶπέ, ποῦ 'στι Πολυνεΐκης, γέρον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

160 ἐκεῖνος ἐπτά παρθένων τάφου πέλας
Νιόβης Ἄδράστῳ πλησίον παραστατεῖ.
ὀρᾶς ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὀρῶ δῆτ' οὐ σαφῶς, ὀρῶ δέ πως
μορφῆς τύπωμα στέρνα τ' ἐξηκασμένα.
ἀνεμώκεος εἶθε δρόμον νεφέλας
ποσὶν ἐξανύσαιμι δι' αἰθέρος
πρὸς ἐμὸν ὁμογενέτορα, περὶ δ' ὠλένας
δέρα φιλτάτα βάλοιμι χρόνῳ
φυγάδα μέλεον. ὥς
ὄπλοισι χρυσείοισιν ἐκπρεπῆς, γέρον,
ἐώοις ὅμοια φλεγέθων βολαῖς ἀλίου.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

170 ἤξει δόμους τούσδ', ὥστε σ' ἐμπλήσαι χαρᾶς,
ἔνσπονδος.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὗτος δ', ὦ γεραιέ, τίς κυρεῖ,
ὃς ἄρμα λευκὸν ἠνιοστροφεῖ βεβῶς ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὁ μάντις Ἀμφιάραιος, ὦ δέσποιν', ὅδε·
σφάγια δ' ἄμ' αὐτῷ, γῆς φιλαίματοι ῥοαί.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OLD SERVANT

So be it, child : yet for the right they come ;
Wherefore I dread lest God defend the right.

ANTIGONE

And where is he whom the selfsame mother bore
With me, to a doom of travail sore ?
Dear ancient, where is Polyneices, tell.

OLD SERVANT

He standeth near Adrastus, near the tomb
Of Niobe's unwedded daughters seven. 160
See'st thou ?

ANTIGONE

I see—not clearly—yet, half-guessed,
Discern the outline of his frame and chest.
O that as wind-driven clouds swift-racing
I might speed with my feet through the air,
and light [embracing
By my brother, mine own, and with arms
Might hold but his dear neck close-enfolden—
So long an exile in dolorous plight !
Lo, how he flasheth in armour golden,
Like the morning shafts of the sun bright-
blazing !

OLD SERVANT

Hither with joy to fill thee shall he come 170
By truce.

ANTIGONE

But yon chief, ancient, who is he,
Car-borne, who sways the reins of horses white ?

OLD SERVANT

The prophet Amphiaraus, Lady, is this.
With him are victims, Earth's blood-offerings.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ λιπαροζώνου θύγατερ Ἀελίου
Σελαναία, χρυσεόκυκλον φέγγος,
ὡς ἀτρεμαία κέντρα καὶ σώφρονα
180 πώλοις μεταφέρων ἰθύνει.
ποῦ δ' ὄς τὰ δεινὰ τῆδ' ἐφυβρίζει πόλει
Καπανεύς ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἐκείνος προσβάσεις τεκμαίρεται
πύργων ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω τείχη μετρῶν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰώ,
Νέμεσι καὶ Διὸς βαρύβρομοι βρονταί,
κεραυνῶν τε φῶς αἰθαλόεν, σύ τοι
μεγαλαγορίαν ὑπεράνορα κοιμίζεις·
ὄδ' ἐστίν, αἰχμαλωτίδας
ὄς δορὶ Θηβαίας Μυκηνητῶν
Λερναία τε δώσειν τριάντα,
Ποσειδανίοις Ἀμυμωνίοις
190 ὕδασι, δουλείαν περιβαλὼν, [λέγει] ;
μήποτε μήποτε τάνδ', ὦ πότνια,
χρυσεοβόστρυχον ὦ Διὸς ἔρνος
Ἄρτεμι, δουλοσύναν τλαίην.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, εἴσβα δῶμα καὶ κατὰ στέγας
ἐν παρθενῶσι μίμνε σοῖς, ἐπεὶ πόθου
εἰς τέρψιν ἦλθες ὧν ἔχρηζες εἰσιδεῖν.
ὄχλος γάρ, ὡς ταραγμὸς εἰσῆλθεν πόλιν,
χωρεῖ γυναικῶν πρὸς δόμους τυραννικούς·
φιλόψογον δὲ χρῆμα θηλειῶν ἔφυ,
σμικράς τ' ἀφορμὰς ἦν λάβωσι τῶν λόγων,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

O Child of the Sun-god, the Lord of the radiant zone,
O Moon, thou golden-rounded gleam,
How calmly, how soberly ever he driveth on,
One after other goading his team !
And where is Capaneus—he who hurls at Thebes 180
Insult of threats ?

OLD SERVANT

There :—he counts up and down
The wall-stones, gauging our towers' scaling-height.

ANTIGONE

O Nemesis, O ye thunders rolling deep
Of Zeus, thou flaming light of his levin,
Overweening vaunts dost thou hush into endless
sleep !
And is this the hero by whom shall be given
Into bondage to dames of Mycenae the spear-won
daughters [waters
Of Thebes,—to the Trident of Lerna, the fountain-
Amymonian, at stroke of Poseidon that leapt,—
When his net of thraldom around them is swept ?
Never, ah never, O Artemis Queen, 190
Zeus' child, with the tresses of golden sheen,
Bowed under bondage may I be seen !

OLD SERVANT

Daughter, pass in, and 'neath the roofs abide
Thy maiden bowers within ; for thy desire
Hast thou attained, even all thou fain wouldst see.
Lo, to the royal halls a woman-throng
Comes, now confusion through the town hath passed.
And scandal-loving still is womankind ;
For, so they find slight cause for idle talk,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

200 πλείους ἐπεισφέρουσιν· ἡδονὴ δέ τις
 γυναιξὶ μηδὲν ὑγιῆς ἀλλήλας λέγειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Τύριον οἶδμα λιποῦσ' ἔβαν στρ. α'
 ἀκροθίνια Λοξία
 Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου
 Φοίβῳ δούλα μελάθρων,
 ἴν' ὑπὸ δειράσι νιφοβόλοις
 Παρνασοῦ κατενάσθη,
 Ἴόνιον κατὰ πόντον ἐλά-
 τα πλεύσασα περιρρύτων
 210 ὑπὲρ ἀκαρπίστων πεδίῳ
 Σικελίας Ζεφύρου πνοαῖς
 ἰππεύσαντος ἐν οὐρανῷ
 κάλλιστον κελάδημα.

πόλεος ἐκπροκριθεῖσ' ἐμᾶς ἀντ. α'
 καλλιστεύματα Λοξία
 Καδμείων ἔμολον γᾶν,
 κλεινῶν Ἀγηνοριδᾶν
 ὁμογενεῖς ἐπὶ Λαῖου
 πεμφθεῖσ' ἐνθάδε πύργους.
 220 ἴσα δ' ἀγάλμασι χρυσοτεύ-
 κτοῖς Φοίβῳ γενόμεν λατρῖς.
 ἔτι δὲ Κασταλίας ὕδωρ
 περιμένει με κόμας ἐμᾶς
 δεῦσαι παρθένιον χλιδᾶν
 Φοιβεΐαισι λατρεῖαις.

ὦ λάμπουσα πέτρα πυρὸς μεσφδ.
 δικόρυφον σέλας ὑπὲρ ἄκρων
 Βακχείων Διονύσου,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

More they invent. Strange pleasure women take 200
To speak of sister-women nothing good.

[*Exeunt* OLD SERVANT *and* ANTIGONE.]

Enter CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

Afar from the tides against Tyre's walls swelling,
For Loxias chosen an offering,
From the Isle of Phoenicia I came, to be thrall
Unto Phoebus, to serve in his palace-hall,
Where 'neath crags of Parnassus, with arrowy fall
Of the snow oversprent, he hath made him a dwelling.
O'er Ionian seas did it waft me, the wing
Of the oar, while the West-wind's chariot sped
Over the furrows unharvested 210
That from Sicily roughened ;—before him fled
Music, till all the heavens were telling
The glory of beauty his breathings bring.

The choice of my city's virgin-flowers, (*Ant.* 1)
A gift of beauty to Loxias made,
To the land of the children of Cadmus we came,
To the sons of Agenor of ancient fame,
Hither brought to a people by lineage the same
With my fathers, even to Laius' towers.

But as gold-wrought statues to stand arrayed 220
For the service of Phoebus appointed we were ;
And Castaly's fount yet waiteth us there,
That my maiden glory of shining hair
May be oversprayed by its hallowing showers,
Ere for Phoebus's service its tresses I braid.

Hail, rock that flashest a splendour of light (*Mesode*)
From the cloven tongue of thy flame o'er the height
Of the Bacchic peak Dionysus haunteth !

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

230 οἶνα θ', ἃ καθαμέριον
 στάξεις τὸν πολύκαρπον
 οἰνάνθας ἰεῖσα βότρυν,
 ζάθεά τ' ἄντρα δράκοντος οὐ-
 ρεαί τε σκοπιαὶ θεῶν
 νιφόβολόν τ' ὄρος ἱερόν, εἰ-
 λίσσων ἀθανάτας θεοῦ
 χορὸς γενοίμαν ἄφοβος
 παρὰ μεσόμφαλα γύαλα Φοί-
 βου Δίρκαν προλιποῦσα.

240 ἔνν δέ μοι πρὸ τειχέων στρ. β'
 θούριος μολῶν Ἄρης
 αἶμα δάιον φλέγει
 τᾶδ', ὃ μὴ τύχοι, πόλει·
 κοινὰ γὰρ φίλων ἄχη·
 κοινὰ δ', εἴ τι πείσεται
 καλλίπυργος ἄδε γὰ
 Φοινίσσα χώρα. φεῦ φεῦ.
 κοινὸν αἶμα, κοινὰ τέκεα
 τὰς κερασφόρου πέφυκεν Ἴουδς·
 ὧν μέτεστί μοι πόνων.

250 ἀμφὶ δὲ πτόλιν νέφος ἀντ. β'
 ἀσπίδων πυκνὸν φλέγει
 σῆμα φοινίου μάχης,
 ἂν Ἄρης τάχ' εἴσεται
 παισὶν Οἰδίπου φέρων
 πημονὰν Ἐρινύων.
 Ἄργος ὦ Πελασγικόν,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Hail, vine that with each morn offerest up
Thy giant cluster to brim the cup 230
That never the mystic ritual wanteth!¹
Hail, cavern revered where the Dragon abode!
Hail, watchtower scour of the Archer-god!
Hail, snow-smitten ridges by mortal untrod!
O that the wreaths of the dance I were weaving,
With soul unafraid, to the Goddess undying,
These fear-stricken waters of Dirce leaving
For Apollo's dells by the world's heart lying!

But this day before the wall (Str. 2) 240
Furious Ares comes; his hand
Lights for Thebes the slaughter-brand—
God forbend his will befall!
Friend with friend is one in pain;
And Phoenicia with all bane
Of the stately-towered land
Shall condole, a mourning nation,
One our lineage, one our blood;
All be hornèd Io's brood:
Mine is all your tribulation.

Round the town a shield-array • (Ant. 2) 250
Cloudlike flashes levin-light—
Grim presentment of red fight!
Yet shall Ares rue the day
If the Avengers' curse he bring
On the sons of that blind king:
Argos, thy Pelasgian might

¹ In the temple of Dionysus on Parnassus was a vine yielding one ripe cluster daily, to furnish the libation for the God.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

260 δειμαίνω τὰν σὰν ἀλκὰν
καὶ τὸ θεόθεν· οὐ γὰρ ἄδικον
εἰς ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἔνοπλος ὄρμᾶ
παῖς μετέρχεται δόμους.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

270 τὰ μὲν πυλωρῶν κλήθρᾶ μ' εἰσεδέξατο
δι' εὐπετείας τειχέων εἴσω μολεῖν.
ὃ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ με δικτύων ἔσω
λαβόντες οὐκ ἐκφρῶσ' ἀναίμακτον χροά.
ὦν εἶνεκ' ὄμμα πανταχῇ διωιστέον
κᾶκείσε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο, μὴ δόλος τις ἦ.
ἄπλισμένος δὲ χεῖρα τῷδε φασγάνῳ
τὰ πίστ' ἐμαυτῷ τοῦ θράσους παρέξομαι.
ὦ ἦ τίς οὗτος ; ἦ κτύπον φοβούμεθα ;
ἅπαντα γὰρ τολμῶσι δεινὰ φαίνεται,
ὅταν δι' ἐχθρᾶς πούς ἀμείβηται χθονός.
πέποιθα μέντοι μητρί, κοῦ πέποιθ' ἄμα,
ἦ τις μ' ἔπεισε δεῦρ' ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν.
ἀλλ' ἐγγὺς ἀλκή· βῶμιοι γὰρ ἐσχάροι
πέλας πάρεισι, κοῦκ ἔρημα δώματα.
φέρ' ἐς σκοτεινὰς περιβολὰς μεθῶ ξίφος
καὶ τάσδ' ἔρωμαι, τίνες ἐφεστᾶσιν δομοῖς.
ξέναι γυναῖκες, εἶπατ', ἐκ ποίας πάτρας
Ἑλληνικοῖσι δώμασιν πελάζετε ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

280 Φοῖνισσα μὲν γῆ πατρίς ἡ θρέψασά με,
'Αγήνορος δὲ παῖδες ἐκ παίδων δορὸς
Φοῖβῳ μ' ἔπεμψαν ἐνθάδ' ἀκροθίνιον.
μέλλων δὲ πέμπειν μ' Οἰδίπου κλεινὸς γόνος
μαντεῖα σεμνὰ Λοξίου τ' ἐπ' ἐσχάρας,
ἐν τῷδ' ἐπεστράτευσαν Ἄργεῖοι πόλιν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Dread I, and the hand of Heaven !
For the strife of him who comes
Mail-clad to the ancient homes
Will with Justice' help be striven.

260

Enter POLYNEICES.

POLYNEICES

Lightly, too lightly, have the warders' bolts
Made way for me to pass within the walls.
Wherefore I fear lest, once within their net,
They shall not let me 'scape but with my blood.
Needs must I then turn every way mine eye
Hither and thither, lest some treachery lurk.
Mine hand with this blade armed shall give to me
The assurance of a desperate courage born.
Ha ! who goes there ?—or fear I but a sound ?
All perilous seems to them that venture all,
Soon as their feet are set on hostile soil.
Yet do I trust my mother—and mistrust,—
Who drew me to come hither under truce.
But help is nigh ; for lo, the altar-hearth
At hand ; nor void the palace is of folk.
Into its dark sheath let me plunge my sword,
And ask these by the palace who they be.
Ye alien women, say, from what far land
Unto the homes of Hellas are ye come ?

270

CHORUS

Phoenician was the land that fostered me.
Agenor's sons' sons sent me hitherward
To Phoebus, firstfruits of their battle-spoil.
When Oedipus' famed son would speed me on
To Loxias' awful oracle and hearths,
Even then the Argives marched against the town.

280

365

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

σὺ δ' ἀντάμειψαί μ', ὅστις ὦν ἐλήλυθας
ἐπτάστομον πύργωμα Θηβαίας πόλεως.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πατὴρ μὲν ἡμῖν Οἰδίπους ὁ Λαίου,
ἔτικτε δ' Ἰοκάστη με, παῖς Μενοικέως·
290 καλεῖ δὲ Πολυνεΐκη μὲ Θηβαῖος λεώς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ συγγένεια τῶν Ἀγήνορος τέκνων,
ἐμῶν τυράννων, ὧν ἀπεστάλην ὑπο—
γουνυπετεῖς ἔδρας προσπίτνω σ', ἄναξ,
τὸν οἴκοθεν νόμον σέβουσα—
ἔβας ὦ χρόνῳ γὰρ πατρώαν.
ἰὼ ἰὼ πότνια, μόλε πρόδομος,
ἀμπέτασον πύλας.
κλύεις, ὦ τεκοῦσα τόνδε μᾶτερ;
τί μέλλεις ὑπώροφα μέλαθρα περᾶν,
300 θιγεῖν τ' ὠλέναις τέκνου;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

Φοίνισσαν βοᾶν
κλύουσ', ὦ νεάνιδες, γηραιὸν
πόδ' ἔλκω, τρομερὰν βάσιν.¹

ἰὼ τέκνον,
χρόνῳ σὸν ὄμμα μυρίαις ἐν ἀμέραις
προσεῖδον· ἀμφίβαλλε μα—
στὸν ὠλέναισι ματέρος,

¹ Murray: for MSS. γηραιῶ ποδὶ τρομερὰν ἔλκω (παιδί) ποδὸς βάσιν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But thou, make answer, who art thou that com'st
Into this fortress of seven-gated Thebes ?

POLYNEICES

Oedipus, son of Laïus, was my sire ;
Menoceus' child Jocasta gave me birth ;
And me the Theban folk Polyneices name.

290

CHORUS

O kinsmen thou of old Agenor's race,
My rulers, who forth sent me to this place !—
Low on my knees in obeisance I fall,
After the wont of my people, O king !—
Thou art come at the last, to the land of thy fathers
comest thou !
What ho, Queen, ho ! fare forth of the hall !
Wide let the palace-portals swing.
Mother that barest him, hear'st thou my call ?
Why dost thou linger to pass from thine high-roofed
bowers now,
And around thy son with thine arms to cling ?

300

Enter JOCASTA.

JOCASTA

Your Tyrian accents ringing clear
Smote, O ye maidens, on mine ear, [near.
And lo, my tottering feet, for eld slow-trailed, draw
Catches sight of POLYNEICES.

O my son, I behold
Thy face at the last,
After days untold,
O my son !—now cast
Thine arms round thy mother, and bosom to bosom
enfold me fast.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

παρηίδων τ' ὄρεγμα βο-
στρύχων τε κυανόχρωτα χαι-
τας πλόκαμον, σκιάζων δέραν ἄμάν.

310 ἰὼ ἰώ, μόλις φανεῖς
ἄελπτα κἀδόκητα ματρὸς ὠλέναις.
τί φῶ σε; πῶς ἄπαντα
καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λόγοισι
πολυέλικτον ἄδονάν
ἐκείσε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο
περιχορεύουσα τέρψιν παλαιᾶν λάβω
χαρμονᾶν; ἰὼ τέκος,
ἔρημον πατρῶον ἔλιπες δόμον
φυγὰς ἀποσταλεις ὀμαίμου λώβα,
320 ἦ ποθεινὸς φίλοις,
ἦ ποθεινὸς Θήβαις.

ὄθεν ἔμάν τε λευκόχροα κείρομαι
δακρυνέσσ' ἀνεῖσα πένθει κόμαν,
ἄπεπλος φαρέων λευκῶν, τέκνον,
δυσόρφναιά δ' ἀμφὶ τρύχη τάδε
σκότι' ἀμείβομαι.

ὁ δ' ἐν δόμοισι πρέσβυς ὀμματοστερῆς
ἀπήνας ὀμοπτέρου τᾶς ἀπο-
ζυγείσας δόμων
330 πόθον ἀμφιδάκρυτον αἰεὶ κατέχων

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Stoop to me, stoop,
Dear face, from above !
Let the dark head droop
The tresses thereof,

Overshadowing my neck with its clustering curls,
with the banner of love.

Hopes, dreams, they were past 310

As a tale that is told ;

Yet thou comest at last

For mine arms to enfold !

What shall I say to thee ?—how shall I grasp it, the
rapture of old ?

By assurance of word,

Or by hands that embrace,

Or by feet that are stirred,

Or by body that sways,

Hitherward, thitherward, tossed as the dance inter-
twineth its maze ?

Ah son, thy father's desolate home forsaking,
Wast thou by thine own brother's tyrannous wrong
Exiled !—for thee thy lovers' hearts were aching, 320
Thebes' heart for thee ached long.

Therefore my white hair have I shorn for mourning,
With weeping let it fall for thee, my son :
Of white robes disarrayed, for all adorning
These night-hued rags I don ;

While in our halls the sightless ancient, ever
Yearning and weeping o'er that noble twain
Whom from home's yoke of love did hatred sever,
Rushed, eager to be slain 330

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀνήξε μὲν ξίφους
 ἐπ' αὐτόχειρί τε σφαγάν,
 ὑπὲρ τέραμνά τ' ἀγχόνας,
 στενάζων ἄρας τέκνοισ·
 σὺν ἀλαλαίσι δ' αἰὲν αἰαγμάτων
 σκότια κρύπτεται.

340 σέ δ', ὦ τέκνον, καὶ γάμοισι δὴ
 κλύω ζυγέντα παιδοποιὸν ἰδονὰν
 ξένοισιν ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν
 ξένον τε κῆδος ἀμφέπειν,
 ἄλαστα ματρὶ τᾶδε Λα-
 ῖῳ τε τῷ παλαυγενεῖ,
 γάμων ἐπακτὸν ἄταν.
 ἐγὼ δ' οὔτε σοι πυρὸς ἀνήψα φῶς
 νόμιμον ἐν γάμοις
 [ὡς πρέπει] ματέρι μακαρία·
 ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἴσμηνὸς ἐκηδέυθη
 λουτροφόρου χλιδᾶς· ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίαν
 πόλιν ἐσιγάθη σᾶς ἔσοδοι νύμφας.

350 ὄλοιτο τὰδ', εἴτε σίδαρος
 εἴτ' ἔρις εἴτε πατήρ ὁ σὸς αἴτιος,
 εἴτε τὸ δαιμόνιον κατεκώμασε
 δώμασιν Οἰδιπόδα·
 πρὸς ἐμὲ γὰρ κακῶν ἔμολε τῶνδ' ἄχη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεινὸν γυναιξιν αἰ δι' ὠδίνων γοναί,
 καὶ φιλότεκνόν πως πᾶν γυναικεῖον γένος.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

By his own hand, with sword, with noose down-trailing
From rafters dim,—now groaning o'er the doom
His malison brought on you, and ever wailing
With anguish, hides in gloom.

But thou, my son, men say, hast made affiance
With strangers: children gotten in thine halls
Gladden thee, yea, thou soughtest strange alliance! 340
Son, on thy mother falls

Thine alien bridal curse to haunt her ever.
Thee shall a voice from Læius' grave accuse.
The spousal torch for thee I kindled never,
As happy mothers use;

Nor for thy bridal did Ismenus bring thee
Joy of the bath; nor at the entering-in
Of this thy bride did Theban maidens sing thee.
A curse be on that sin,

Whether from spell of steel born,¹ from thy father, 350
Or lust of strife, or whether revel rose
Of demons in yon halls!—on mine head gather
All tortures of these woes.

CHORUS

Mighty with women is their travail's fruit;
Yea, dear the child is to all womankind.

¹ "The spell of the steel itself draws men on to fight."—
Od. xix. 13.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

360 μῆτερ, φρονῶν εὖ κού φρονῶν ἀφικόμην
 ἐχθροὺς ἐς ἄνδρας· ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει
 πατρίδος ἐρᾶν ἅπαντας· ὅς δ' ἄλλως λέγει,
 λόγοισι χαίρει, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἐκείσ' ἔχει.
 οὕτω δὲ τάρβους εἰς φόβον τ' ἀφικόμην,
 μή τις δόλος με πρὸς κασιγνήτου κτάνη,
 ὥστε ξιφήρη χεῖρ' ἔχων δι' ἄστεως
 κυκλῶν πρόσωπον ἦλθον. ἐν δέ μ' ὠφελεί,
 σπουδαί τε καὶ σὴ πίστις, ἧ μ' ἐσήγαγε
 τείχη πατρῶα· πολύδακρυς δ' ἀφικόμην,
 χρόνιος ἰδὼν μέλαθρα καὶ βωμούς θεῶν
 γυμνάσιά θ' οἷσιν ἐνετράφην, Δίρκης θ' ὕδωρ·
 370 ὦν οὐ δικαίως ἀπελαθεὶς ξένην πόλιν
 ναίω, δι' ὅσων ὄμμ' ἔχων δακρυρροοῦν.

ἀλλ' ἐκ γὰρ ἄλγους ἄλγος αὖ σέ δέρκομαι
 [κάρα ξυρήκες καὶ πέπλους μελαγχίμους]
 ἔχουσαν, οἴμοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐγὼ κακῶν.
 ὡς δεινὸν ἔχθρα, μῆτερ, οἰκείων φίλων
 καὶ δυσλύτους ἔχουσα τὰς διαλλαγάς.
 τί γὰρ πατήρ μοι πρέσβυς ἐν δόμοισι δρᾶ,
 σκότον δεδορκώς; τί δὲ κασίγνηται δύο;
 ἧ που στένουσι τλήμονας φυγὰς ἐμάς;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

380 κακῶς θεῶν τις Οἰδίπου φθείρει γένος·
 οὕτω γὰρ ἤρξατ', ἄνομα μὲν τεκεῖν ἐμέ,
 κακῶς δὲ γῆμαι πατέρα σὸν φῦναί τε σέ.
 ἀτὰρ τί ταῦτα; δεῖ φέρειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν.
 ὅπως δ' ἔρωμαι, μή τι σὴν δάκω φρένα,
 δέδοιχ', ἃ χρήζω· διὰ πόθου δ' ἐλήλυθα.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Wisely, and yet not wisely, have I come,
Mother, mid foes : yet all men are constrained
To love their fatherland ; who saith not so,
Sporteth with words, his heart is elsewhere. 360
In such misgiving came I, in such dread
Lest treachery slay me, of my brother framed,
That through the city sword in hand I passed,
Aye keenly glancing round. One stay I had :—
The truce and thy fair faith drew me within
These walls ancestral. Full of tears I came,
So late to see home, altars of the Gods,
The athlete-stead that trained me, Dirce's spring,
Whence banished wrongfully, in a strange town
dwell, mine eyes a fountain ever of tears. 370

Thee too, for sorrow's crown of sorrow, I see
With shaven head, and in dark mourning robes
Clad—woe is me for my calamities !
Mother, how dire is strife betwixt near kin,
How hopeless reconciliation is !
What doth mine ancient father in his halls,
Whose light is darkness ? And my sisters twain—
Do these bemoan mine exile's misery ?

JOCASTA

Fouly doth some God ruin Oedipus' line.
Thus it began—I bare forfended issue ; 380
Wed under curse thy sire,—and thou wast born !
Yet wherefore this ? The Gods' will must we bear.
But how to ask the thing I would I fear,
Lest I should gall thy soul, yet long for this.

373.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἐξερῶτα, μηδὲν ἐνδεὲς λίπης·
ἂ γὰρ σὺ βούλει, ταῦτ' ἐμοί, μήτηρ, φίλα.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ δὴ σ' ἐρωτῶ πρῶτον ὧν χρήζω τυχεῖν,
τί τὸ στέρεσθαι πατρίδος; ἢ κακὸν μέγα;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μέγιστον ἔργω δ' ἐστὶ μείζον ἢ λόγῳ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

390 τίς ὁ τρόπος αὐτοῦ; τί φυγάσιν τὸ δυσχερές;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἐν μὲν μέγιστον, οὐκ ἔχει παρρησίαν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

δούλου τὸδ' εἶπας, μὴ λέγειν ἅ τις φρονεῖ.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τὰς τῶν κρατούντων ἀμαθίας φέρειν χρεῶν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τοῦτο λυπρὸν, συνασοφεῖν τοῖς μὴ σοφοῖς.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος παρὰ φύσιν δουλευτέον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καλοῖς βλέπουσαι γ' ὄμμασιν, μέλλουσι δέ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐδ' ὁ χρόνος αὐτὰς διεσάφησ' οὔσας κενάς;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔχουσιν ἀφροδίτην τιν' ἠδέϊαν κακῶν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

400 πόθεν δ' ἐβόσκου πρὶν γάμοις εὐρεῖν βίον;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Nay, ask ; leave no desire unsatisfied ;
For, mother, that thou wouldst is dear to me.

JOCASTA

First, then, I ask thee that I fain would learn.
What meaneth exile ? Is it a sore ill ?

POLYNEICES

The sorest. In deed sorer than in word.

JOCASTA

In what wise ? Where for exiles lies its sting ? 390

POLYNEICES

This most of all—a curb is on the tongue.

JOCASTA

That is the slave's lot, not to speak one's thought !

POLYNEICES

The unwisdom of his rulers must one bear.

JOCASTA

Hard this, that one partake in folly of fools !

POLYNEICES

Yokes nature loathes must be for profit borne.

JOCASTA

Yet hopes be exiles' meat, so runs the saw.

POLYNEICES

Hopes look with kind eyes, yet they long delay.

JOCASTA

But doth not time lay bare their emptiness ?

POLYNEICES

Ah, but sweet witchery mid ills have they !

JOCASTA

Whence wast thou fed, ere marriage brought thee
substance ? 400

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποτέ μὲν ἐπ' ἡμᾶρ εἶχον, εἶτ' οὐκ εἶχον ἄν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

φίλοι δὲ πατρὸς καὶ ξένοι σ' οὐκ ὠφέλουν ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εὐ πράσσει· τὰ φίλων δ' οὐδέν, ἦν τι δυστυχήῃς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐδ' ἠυγένειά σ' ἦρεν εἰς ὕψος μέγα ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κακὸν τὸ μὴ ἔχειν· τὸ γένος οὐκ ἔβοσκέ με.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἡ πατρίς, ὡς ἔοικε, φίλτατον βροτοῖς.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐδ' ὀνομάσαι δύναί' ἂν ὡς ἐστὶν φίλον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πῶς δ' ἦλθες Ἄργος ; τίν' ἐπίνοιαν ἔσχεθες ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐκ οἶδ'· ὁ δαίμων μ' ἐκάλεσεν πρὸς τὴν τύχην.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

σοφὸς γὰρ ὁ θεός· τίνι τρόπῳ δ' ἔσχες λέχος ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔχρησ' Ἀδράστῳ Λοξίας χρησμόν τινα.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

410 ποῖον ; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας ; οὐκ ἔχω μαθεῖν.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κάπρῳ λέοντί θ' ἀρμόσαι παίδων γάμους.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ σοὶ τί θηρῶν ὀνόματος μετήν, τέκνον ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

νύξ ἦν, Ἀδράστου δ' ἦλθον εἰς παραστάδας.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Whiles had I daily bread, and whiles had not.

JOCASTA

Helped they not thee, thy father's friends and guests?

POLYNEICES

Prosper :—friends vanish if thou prosper not.

JOCASTA

Did high birth bring thee not to high estate?

POLYNEICES

A curse is penury. Birth fed me not.

JOCASTA

Most dear, meseems, to men is fatherland.

POLYNEICES

How dear, thou couldst not even utter it.

JOCASTA

To Argos how can'st thou? With what intent?

POLYNEICES

I know not. Heaven to my fate summoned me.

JOCASTA

Wise is the God. How didst thou win thy bride?

POLYNEICES

To Adrastus Loxias spake an oracle.

JOCASTA

What was it? How mean'st thou? I cannot guess. 410

POLYNEICES

"Thy daughters wed to a lion and a boar."

JOCASTA

Son, with a brute's name what hadst thou to do?

POLYNEICES

'Twas night: to Adrastus' palace-porch I came.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κοίτας ματεύων ἢ φυγὰς πλανώμενος ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἦν ταῦτα· κᾶτά γ' ἦλθεν ἄλλος αὐ φυγὰς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τίς οὗτος ; ὡς ἄρ' ἄθλιος κάκεινος ἦν.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

Τυδεύς, ὃν Οἰνέως φασὶν ἐκφῦναι πατρός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

420 τί θηρσὶν ὑμᾶς δῆτ' Ἄδραστος ἤκασεν ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

στρωμνῆς ἐς ἀλκὴν οὐνεκ' ἤλθομεν πέρι.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐνταῦθα Ταλαοῦ παῖς συνήκε θέσφατα ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κᾶδωκεν ἡμῖν δύο δυοῖν νεάνιδας.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἄρ' εὐτυχεῖς οὖν τοῖς γάμοις ἢ δυστυχεῖς ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐ μεμπτὸς ἡμῖν ὁ γάμος εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πῶς δ' ἐξέπεισας δευρό σοι σπέσθαι στρατόν ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

430 δισσοῖς Ἄδραστος ᾤμοσεν γαμβροῖς τόδε,
[Τυδεῖ τε κάμοι· σύγγαμος γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός,]
ἄμφω κατάξειν εἰς πάτραν, πρόσθεν δ' ἐμέ.
πολλοὶ δὲ Δαναῶν καὶ Μυκηναίων ἄκροι
πάρεισι, λυπρὰν χάριν, ἀναγκαίαν δ' ἐμοὶ
διδόντες· ἐπὶ γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν στρατεύομαι
πόλιν. θεοὺς δ' ἐπώμοσ' ὡς ἀκουσίως
τοῖς φιλτάτοις τοκεῦσιν ἡράμην δόρυ.
ἀλλ' εἰς σὲ τείνει τῶνδε διάλυσις κακῶν,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

JOCASTA

Seeking a couch, as homeless exiles roam ?

POLYNEICES

Even that. Another exile thither came.

JOCASTA

Who ? In what hapless plight was he withal !

POLYNEICES

Tydeus, who sprang, men say, of Oeneus' loins.

JOCASTA

Why to Adrastus seemed ye as wild beasts ?

420

POLYNEICES

For that we fell to fighting for our couch.

JOCASTA

Then Talaus' son read right the oracle ?

POLYNEICES

Yea—to us twain gave his young daughters twain.

JOCASTA

Blest or unblest, then, art thou in thy bride ?

POLYNEICES

Unto this day I find no fault in her.

JOCASTA

How didst thou win yon host to follow thee ?

POLYNEICES

To his two daughters' husbands swore Adrastus,

Tydeus and me,—my marriage-kinsman he,—

To bring both home from exile, me the first.

Danaan and Mycenaean chiefs be here

430

Many—a needful, yet a mournful grace

To me, for I against my country march.

And, by the Gods I swear, unwillingly

I lift the spear against my father's house.

But with thee rests the assuaging of these ills,

379

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

440 μῆτερ, διαλλάξασαν ὁμογενεῖς φίλους
 παῦσαι πόνων με καὶ σέ καὶ πᾶσαν πόλιν.
 πάλαι μὲν οὖν ὑμνηθέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἐρῶ
 τὰ χρήματ' ἀνθρώποισι τιμιώτατα
 δύναμίν τε πλειστην τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἔχει.
 ἀγῶ μεθήκω δεῦρο μυρίαν ἄγων
 λόγγην· πένης γὰρ οὐδὲν εὐγενῆς ἀνὴρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν Ἴετοκλῆς εἰς διαλλαγὰς ὄδε
 χωρεῖ· σὸν ἔργον, μῆτερ Ἰοκάστη, λέγειν
 τοιούσδε μύθους οἷς διαλλάξεις τέκνα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

450 μῆτερ, πᾶρειμι· τήνδε σοὶ χάριν διδοὺς
 ἦλθον. τί χρὴ δρᾶν ; ἀρχέτω δέ τις λόγου.
 ὡς ἀμφὶ τείχη καὶ ξυνωρίδας λόχων
 τάσσων ἐπέσχον πόλιν, ὅπως κλύοιμί σου
 κοινὰς βραβείας, αἷς ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν
 τόνδ' εἰσεδέξω τειχέων πείσασά με.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

460 ἐπίσχεσ· οὔτοι τὸ ταχὺ τὴν δίκην ἔχει·
 βραδεῖς δὲ μῦθοι πλείστον ἀνύουσιν σοφόν.
 σχάσον δὲ δεινὸν ὄμμα καὶ θυμοῦ πνοάς·
 οὐ γὰρ τὸ λαιμότμητον εἰσορᾶς κᾶρα
 Γοργόνος, ἀδελφὸν δ' εἰσορᾶς ἤκουτα σόν.
 σύ τ' αὐτὸ πρόσωπον πρὸς κασίγνητον στρέφε,
 Πολύνεικες· εἰς γὰρ ταῦτόν ὄμμασι βλέπων
 λέξεις τ' ἄμεινον τοῦδέ τ' ἐνδέξει λόγους.
 παραινέσαι δὲ σφῶν τι βούλομαι σοφόν·
 ὅταν φίλος τις ἀνδρὶ θυμωθεὶς φίλῳ
 εἰς ἐν συνελθὼν ὄμματ' ὄμμασιν διδῶ,
 ἐφ' οἷσιν ἤκει, ταῦτα χρὴ μόνον σκοπεῖν,
 κακῶν δὲ τῶν πρὶν μηδενὸς μνείαν ἔχειν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Mother, to set at one those one in blood,
And end mine, thine, and all the city's toils.
Old is the saw,—yet will I utter it :—
*Wealth in men's eyes is honoured most of all,
And of all things on earth hath chiefest power.*
Captaining countless spears for this I come ;
For the high-born in poverty is naught.

440

CHORUS

Lo, unto parley Eteocles comes.
Mother Jocasta, thine the task to speak
Words whereby thou shalt set thy sons at one.

Enter ETEOCLES.

ETEOCLES

Here am I, mother—all for grace to thee
I come. What needs to do? Be speech begun.
For I have stayed from marshalling round the walls
The close-linked cordon of defence, to hear
Thy mediation for the which thou hast wrought
On me to admit this man within our walls.

450

JOCASTA

Forbear : haste brings not justice in its train :
But slow speech winneth oftenest wisdom's end.
Refrain fierce look and passion's stormy breath :
The Gorgon's severed head thou seest not ;
Thou seest thine own brother hither come.
And thou, unto thy brother turn thy face,
Polyneices ; for, if thou but meet his eye,
Thou shalt the better speak, and hear his words.
Fain would I wisely counsel thee, and thee.
When he whose wrath is hot against his friend
Cometh to meet him, standeth eye to eye,
Let him look only at that for which he came,
And cherish no remembrance of old wrongs.

460

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

λόγος μὲν οὖν σὸς πρόσθε, Πολύνεικες τέκνον·
 σὺ γὰρ στράτευμα Δαναϊδῶν ἤκεις ἄγων,
 ἄδικα πεπονθώς, ὡς σὺ φής· κριτῆς δέ τις
 θεῶν γένοιτο καὶ διαλλακτῆς κακῶν.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

470 ἄπλους ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφν,
 κοῦ ποικίλων δεῖ τᾶνδιχ' ἐρμηνευμάτων.
 ἔχει γὰρ αὐτὰ καιρόν· ὁ δ' ἄδικος λόγος
 νοσῶν ἐν αὐτῷ φαρμάκων δεῖται σοφῶν.
 ἐγὼ δὲ πατὴρ δωμάτων προῦσκεψάμην
 τοῦμόν τε καὶ τοῦδ', ἐκφυγεῖν χρήζων ἄρὰς
 ἅς Οἰδίπους ἐφθέγγεατ' εἰς ἡμᾶς ποτε,
 ἐξῆλθον ἔξω τῆσδ' ἐκὼν αὐτὸς χθονός,
 δούς τῷδ' ἀνάσσειν πατρίδος ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον,
 ὥστ' αὐτὸς ἄρχειν αὐθις ἀνὰ μέρος λαβῶν
 480 καὶ μὴ δι' ἔχθρας τῷδε καὶ φόνου μολῶν
 κακόν τι δρᾶσαι καὶ παθεῖν, ἃ γίγνεται.
 ὁ δ' αἰνέσας ταῦθ' ὀρκίους τε δούς θεούς,
 ἔδρασεν οὐδὲν ὧν ὑπέσχετ', ἀλλ' ἔχει
 τυραννίδ' αὐτὸς καὶ δόμων ἐμὸν μέρος.
 καὶ νῦν ἔτοιμός εἰμι τάμαντοῦ λαβῶν
 στρατὸν μὲν ἔξω τῆσδ' ἀποστεῖλαι χθονός,
 οἰκεῖν δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν οἶκον ἀνὰ μέρος λαβῶν
 καὶ τῷδ' ἀφείναι τὸν ἴσον αὐθις αὐ χρόνον,
 καὶ μῆτε πορθεῖν πατρίδα μῆτε προσφέρειν
 490 πύργοισι πηκτῶν κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις,
 ἃ μὴ κυρήσας τῆς δίκης πειράσομαι
 δρᾶν. μάρτυρας δὲ τῶνδε δαίμονας καλῶ,
 ὡς πάντα πράσσωσιν σὺν δίκῃ, δίκης ἄτερ
 ἀποστεροῦμαι πατρίδος ἀνοσιώτατα.
 ταῦτ' αὐθ' ἕκαστα, μῆτερ, οὐχὶ περιπλοκὰς

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Son Polyneices, be the first word thine,
For thou hast brought yon host of Danaus' sons,
Wronged, as thou pleadest. Now be some God judge
Hereof, and reconciler of these ills.

POLYNEICES

Plain and unvarnished is the tale of truth,
And justice needs no subtle sophistries : 470
Itself hath fitness ; but the unrighteous plea,
Having no soundness, needeth cunning salves.

I had regard unto my father's house,
My weal, and this man's : fain to 'scape the curse
Uttered of Oedipus against us once,
Of mine own will I went from this realm forth,
Left him for one year's round to rule our land,
Myself in turn to take the sovereignty,
And not in hate and bloodshed clash with him,
And do and suffer ill—as now befalls. 480
And he consented, in the Gods' sight swore,
Yet no whit keepeth troth, but holdeth still
The kingship and mine half the heritage.

Now ready am I, so I receive mine own,
Forth from this land to send my war-array,
To take mine house, in turn therein to dwell,
And for like space to yield it him again,
And not to waste my fatherland, nor bring
Assault of scaling-ladders to her towers,
Which, save I win my right, will I essay 490
To do. I call the Gods to witness this—
That, wholly dealing justly, robbed am I
Of fatherland, unjustly, impiously.
These things have I said, mother, point by point,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

λόγων ἀθραΐσας εἶπον, ἀλλὰ καὶ σοφοῖς
καὶ τοῖσι φαύλοις ἔνδιχ', ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμοὶ μὲν, εἰ καὶ μὴ καθ' Ἑλλήνων χθόνα
τεθράμμεθ', ἀλλ' οὖν ξυνετά μοι δοκεῖς λέγειν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

500 εἰ πᾶσι ταῦτὸ καλὸν ἔφν σοφὸν θ' ἄμα,
οὐκ ἦν ἂν ἀμφίλεκτος ἀνθρώποις ἔρις·
νῦν δ' οὐθ' ὅμοιον οὐδὲν οὐτ' ἴσον βροτοῖς,
πλὴν ὀνόμασιν, τὸ δ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε.
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐδέν, μήτηρ, ἀποκρίψας ἐρώ·
ἄστρον ἂν ἔλθοιμ' ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολὰς
καὶ γῆς ἔνερθε δυνατὸς ἂν δρᾶσαι τάδε,
τὴν θεῶν μεγίστην ὥστ' ἔχειν Τυραννίδα.
τοῦτ' οὖν τὸ χρηστόν, μήτηρ, οὐχὶ βούλομαι
ἄλλω παρεῖναι μᾶλλον ἢ σῶζειν ἐμοί·
510 ἀνανδρία γάρ, τὸ πλεόν ὅστις ἀπολέσας
τοῦλασσον ἔλαβε. πρὸς δὲ τοῖσδ' αἰσχύνομαι,
ἐλθόντα σὺν ὄπλοις τόνδε καὶ πορθούντα γῆν
τυχεῖν ἂν χρήζει· καὶ γὰρ ἂν Θήβαις τόδε
γένοιτ' ὄνειδος, εἰ Μυκηναίου δορὸς
φόβω παρείην σκῆπτρα τὰμὰ τῶδ' ἔχειν.
χρῆν δ' αὐτὸν οὐχ ὄπλοισι τὰς διαλλαγάς,
μήτηρ, ποιεῖσθαι· πᾶν γὰρ ἐξαιρεῖ λόγος
ὃ καὶ σίδηρος πολεμίων δράσειεν ἂν.
ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἄλλως τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν θέλει,
ἔξεστ'· ἐκείνο δ' οὐχ ἐκὼν μεθήσομαι,
520 ἄρχειν παρόν μοι, τῶδε δουλεύσαί ποτε.
πρὸς ταῦτ' ἴτω μὲν πῦρ, ἴτω δὲ φάσγανα,
ζεῦγνυσθε δ' ἵππους, πεδία πίμπλαθ' ἀρμάτων,
ὡς οὐ παρήσω τῶδ' ἐμὴν τυραννίδα.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Not wrapped in webs of words, but, in the eyes
Of wise or simple, naked right, meseems.

CHORUS

To me—albeit Hellas nursed me not,
Yet to me soundly seemest thou to plead.

ETEOCLES

Were wisdom gauged alike of all,—and honour,
No strife of warring words were known to men. 500
But “fairness,” “equal rights”—men know them not.
They name their names : no being they have as things.

Now, mother, nothing feigning will I speak :—
I would mount to the risings of the stars
Or sun, would plunge 'neath earth, if this I could,
So to win Power, diviner than all gods.
This precious thing, my mother, will I not
Yield to another, when myself might keep.
No man's part this, to let the better slip
And grasp the worse ! Nay more—I think foul shame 510
That *he* should come with arms, lay waste the land,
And win his heart's desire. This were reproach
To Thebes, if I, by spears of Argos cowed,
Should yield my sceptre up for him to hold.
With arms should he not come in quest of peace,
Mother ; for parley can accomplish all
That even steel of foes can bring to pass.
If he on other terms will dwell in Thebes,
That may he. *This* consent I not to yield.
I, who may rule, shall I be thrall to him ? 520

Wherefore let fire and sword have free course now !
Yoke ye the steeds, with chariots fill the plains :—
I will not render him my sovereignty.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

εἵπερ γὰρ ἄδικεῖν χρή, τυραννίδος πέρι
 κάλλιστον ἄδικεῖν, τᾶλλα δ' εὐσεβεῖν χρεῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εὖ λέγειν χρή μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς ἔργοις καλοῖς,
 οὐ γὰρ καλὸν τοῦτ', ἀλλὰ τῇ δίκῃ πικρόν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

530 ὦ τέκνον, οὐχ ἅπαντα τῷ γήρα κακά,
 Ἐτεόκλεες, πρόσσεστιν· ἄλλ' ἡμπερία
 ἔχει τι λέξαι τῶν νέων σοφώτερον.
 τί τῆς κακίστης δαιμόνων ἐφίεσαι
 Φιλοτιμίας, παῖ ; μὴ σύ γ'· ἄδικος ἢ θεός·
 πολλοὺς δ' ἐς οἴκους καὶ πόλεις εὐδαίμονας
 εἰσῆλθε καὶ ἔηλθ' ἐπ' ὀλέθρῳ τῶν χρωμένων·
 ἐφ' ἧ σὺ μαίνει. κείνο κάλλιον, τέκνον,
 Ἴσότητα τιμᾶν, ἢ φίλους αἰεὶ φίλους
 πόλεις τε πόλεσι συμμάχους τε συμμάχους
 συνδεῖ· τὸ γὰρ ἴσον νόμιμον ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ,
 540 τῷ πλέονι δ' αἰεὶ πολέμιον καθίσταται
 τοῦλασσον ἐχθρᾶς θ' ἡμέρας κατάρχεται.
 καὶ γὰρ μέτρ' ἀνθρώποισι καὶ μέρη σταθμῶν
 Ἴσότης ἔταξε κἀριθμὸν διώρισε,
 νυκτός τ' ἀφεγγές βλέφαρον ἡλίου τε φῶς
 ἴσον βαδίζει τὸν ἐνιαύσιον κύκλον,
 κούδέτερον αὐτῶν φθόνον ἔχει νικώμενον.
 εἶθ' ἡλιος μὲν νύξ τε δουλεῦει βροτοῖς,
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέξει δωμάτων ἔχων ἴσον
 καὶ τῶδ' ἀπονέμειν ; κᾶτα ποῦ 'στιν ἡ δίκη ;
 550 τί τὴν τυραννίδ', ἀδικίαν εὐδαίμονα,
 τιμᾶς ὑπέρφευ, καὶ μέγ' ἠγῆσαι τόδε ;
 περιβλέπεσθαι τίμιον ; κενὸν μὲν οὖν.
 ἢ πολλὰ μοχθεῖν πόλλ' ἔχων εὐδαίμονα
 βούλει ; τί δ' ἔστι τὸ πλέον ; ὄνομ' ἔχει μόνον

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

If wrong may e'er be right, for a throne's sake
Were wrong most right :—be God in all else feared !

CHORUS

Befits not fair speech glozing deeds unfair :
Not fair it is, but an offence to justice.

JOCASTA

My son Eteocles, evil unalloyed
Cleaves not to old age : nay, experience
Can plead more wisely than the lips of youth. 530
Why at Ambition, worst of deities,
Son, graspest thou ? Do not : she is Queen of
Wrong.

Homes many and happy cities enters she,
Nor leaves till ruined are her votaries.
Thou art mad for her !—better to honour, son,
Equality, which knitteth friends to friends,
Cities to cities, allies unto allies.
Nature gave men the law of equal rights,
And the less, ever marshalled foe against
The greater, ushers in the dawn of hate. 540

Measures for men Equality ordained,
Meting of weights and number she assigned.
The sightless face of night, and the sun's beam
Equally pace along their yearly round,
Nor either envieth that it must give place.
Sun, then, and night are servants unto men :
Shalt thou not brook to halve your heritage
And share with him ? . . . Ah, where is justice then
Why overmuch dost thou prize Sovranty—
Injustice throned !—and count it some great thing ? 550
Is worship precious ? Nay, 'tis vanity.
Wouldst have, with great wealth in thine halls, great
travail ?
What is thy profit ?—profit but in name ; 387

ἐπεὶ τὰ γ' ἀρκοῦνθ' ἱκανὰ τοῖς γε σώφροσιν.
 οὔτοι τὰ χρήματ' ἴδια κέκτηνται βροτοί,
 τὰ τῶν θεῶν δ' ἔχοντες ἐπιμελούμεθα·
 ὅταν δὲ χρήζωσ', αὐτ' ἀφαιροῦνται πάλιν.
 [ὁ δ' ὄλβος οὐ βέβαιος, ἀλλ' ἐφήμερος.]
 560 ἄγ', ἦν σ' ἔρωμαι δύο λόγῳ προθεῖς' ἅμα,
 πότῃρα τυραννεῖν ἢ πόλιν σῶσαι θέλεις,
 ἐρεῖς τυραννεῖν; ἦν δὲ νικῆσῃ σ' ὄδε
 Ἄργεῖά τ' ἔγχη δόρυ τὸ Κασμείων ἔλη,
 ὄφει δαμασθὲν ἄστῳ Θηβαίων τότε,
 ὄφει δὲ πολλὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας κόρας
 βία πρὸς ἀνδρῶν πολεμίων πορθουμένας.
 ὀδυνηρὸς ἂρ' ὁ πλοῦτος, ὃν ζητεῖς ἔχειν,
 γενήσεται Θήβαισι, φιλότιμος δὲ σύ.
 σοὶ μὲν τὰδ' αὐδῶ. σοὶ δὲ Πολύνεικες λέγω·
 570 ἄμαθεῖς Ἄδραστος χάριτας εἰς σ' ἀνήψατο,
 ἰσύνετα δ' ἦλθες καὶ σὺ πορθήσων πόλιν.
 φέρ', ἦν ἔλης γῆν τήνδ', ὃ μὴ τύχοι ποτέ,
 πρὸς θεῶν, τρόπαια πῶς ἀναστήσεις Δί;
 πῶς δ' αὐ κατάρξει θυμάτων, ἐλὼν πάτραν,
 καὶ σκύλα γράψεις πῶς ἐπ' Ἰνάχου ῥοαῖς;
 Θήβας πυρώσας τάσδε Πολυνεΐκης θεοῖς
 ἀσπίδας ἔθηκε; μήποτ', ὦ τέκνον, κλέος
 τοιόνδε σοὶ γένοιθ' ὑφ' Ἑλλήνων λαβεῖν.
 ἦν δ' αὐ κρατηθῆς καὶ τὰ τοῦδ' ὑπερδράμη,
 πῶς Ἄργος ἤξεις μυρίους λιπῶν νεκρούς;
 580 ἐρεῖ δὲ δῆ τις· ὦ κακὰ μνηστεύματα
 Ἄδραστε προσθεῖς, διὰ μιᾶς νύμφης γάμον
 ἀπωλόμεσθα. δύο κακῶ σπεύδεις, τέκνον,
 κείνων στέρεσθαι, τῶνδὲ τ' ἐν μέσῳ πεσεῖν.
 μέθετον τὸ λίαν, μέθετον· ἀμαθίαι δυοῖν,
 εἰς ταῦθ' ὅταν μόλητον, ἔχθιστον κακόν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Seeing enough sufficeth for the wise.
Mortals hold their possessions not in fee :
We are but stewards of the gifts of God :
Whene'er he will, he claims his own again.
And wealth abides not, 'tis but for a day.

Come, if I set two things before thee, and ask,
" Wouldst thou be lord or saviour of thy Thebes ? " 560
Wilt thou say, " Lord ? " But if this man prevail,
And Argos' spears bear down Cadmean might,
Then conquered shalt thou see this city of Thebes,
And many captive maidens shalt thou see
Dishonoured with foul outrage by the foe.
Yea, all this wealth thou covetest shall become
Thebes' curse, and thou shalt be ambition's fool.

This to thee ; and to thee, Polyneices, this :—
A foolish grace Adrastus did to thee ;
Madly thou too hast marched to ravage Thebes. 570
Come, if thou smite this land,—which God forbid,—
'Fore heaven, how wilt thou set Zeus' trophies up ?
How sacrifice for fatherland o'ercome ?
And how at Inachus' streams inscribe the spoils ?—
" *Polyneices hath burnt Thebes, and to the Gods
Offers these shields* "—thus ? Never, son, be it thine
To win from lips of Hellenes such renown !
But, he triumphant, vanquished thou, to Argos
How canst thou come, here leaving myriads dead ?
And one shall say, " O cursed betrothal made 580
By thee, Adrastus ! For one bridal's sake
We are ruined ! " Evils twain thou draw'st on
thee,—

There, to lose all, here, fail mid thine emprise.
Forbear, forbear your vehemence ! When meet
Two headstrong fools, the issue is foulest ill.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ θεοί, γένοισθε τῶνδ' ἀπότροποι κακῶν
καὶ ξύμβασιν τιν' Οἰδίου τέκνοις δότε.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μητέρα, οὐ λόγων ἔθ' ἀγών, ἀλλ' ἀνήλωται χρόνος
οὐν μέσῳ μάτην, περαίνει δ' οὐδὲν ἢ προθυμία·
590 οὐ γὰρ ἂν ξυμβαίμεν ἄλλως ἢ πῖ τοῖς εἰρη-
μένοις,
ὥστ' ἐμὲ σκήπτρων κρατοῦντα τῆσδ' ἄνακτ' εἶναι
χθονός.
τῶν μακρῶν δ' ἀπαλλαγείσα νουθετημάτων μ' ἔα.
καὶ σὺ τῶνδ' ἔξω κομίζου τειχέων, ἢ κατθανεῖ.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πρὸς τίνος ; τίς ὦδ' ἄτρωτος, ὅστις εἰς ἡμᾶς ξίφος
φόνιον ἐμβαλὼν τὸν αὐτὸν οὐκ ἀποίσεται μόρον ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγγύς, οὐ πρόσω βέβηκεν· εἰς χέρας λεύσσεις
ἐμᾶς ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἰσορῶ· δειλὸν δ' ὁ πλοῦτος καὶ φιλόψυχον
κακόν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κᾶτα σὺν πολλοῖσιν ἦλθες πρὸς τὸν οὐδὲν ἐς
μάχην ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀσφαλῆς γάρ ἐστ' ἀμείνων ἢ θρασὺς στρατη-
λάτης.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

600 κομπὸς εἰ σπονδαῖς πεποιθώς, αἶ σε σφύζουσιν
θανεῖν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS

Ah Gods, be ye averters of these ills,
And set at one the sons of Oedipus !

ETEOCLES

Mother, 'tis too late for parley ; nay, the time in
dallying spent [good intent.
Doth but run to waste, nor aught availeth this thy
Never shall we be at one, except as I have laid it 590
down, [wear the crown.
That in lordship over Thebes I sway the sceptre,
Have thou done with tedious admonitions then, and
let me be ; [death shall light on thee.
And, for thee, thou get thee forth these walls, ere

POLYNEICES

Death?—of whom?—what man so woundless, as to
plunge his murderous sword [reward?
Into this my body, and not win himself the like

ETEOCLES

Nigh he is : not far he standeth : lo, these hands—
hast eyes to see ?

POLYNEICES

Yea—and know how shrinks from death that craven
curse, prosperity !

ETEOCLES

Yet against a battle-blencher thou must lead yon
huge array !

POLYNEICES

Yea, for better than the reckless is the prudent
captain aye.

ETEOCLES

Safe behind the truce, from death that screens thee,
vaunting dost thou stand ! 600

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σέ· δεύτερον δ' ἀπαιτῶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη
χθονός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἀπαιτούμεσθ'· ἐγὼ γὰρ τὸν ἐμὸν οἰκήσω
δόμον.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τοῦ μέρους ἔχων τὸ πλεῖον ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

φήμ'· ἀπαλλάσσου δὲ γῆς.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ θεῶν βωμοὶ πατρῶν—

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὓς σὺ πορθήσων πάρει.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κλύετε μου—

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τίς δ' ἂν κλύοι σου πατρίδ' ἐπεστρατευμένου ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ θεῶν τῶν λευκοπάλων δώμαθ',

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οἱ στυγοῦσί σε.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἐξελαυνόμεσθα πατρίδος,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἦλθες ἐξελῶν.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀδικία γ', ὦ θεοί.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

Μυκήναις, μὴ 'νθάδ' ἀνακάλει θεούς.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Ay, and screens thee!—once again my crown, mine heritage I claim.

ETEOCLES

Naught to me are claims; for I will dwell in this mine house—mine own.

POLYNEICES

Grasping more than thine is?

ETEOCLES

Ay!—now get thee forth the land—begone!

POLYNEICES

Altars of our Gods ancestral,—

ETEOCLES

Whom to ravage thou art come!

POLYNEICES

Hear ye me!—

ETEOCLES

And who shall hear thee, bringer of war against thine home?

POLYNEICES

And ye temples of the Gods of Stainless Steeds!—

ETEOCLES

Who loathe thy name!

POLYNEICES

I am banished from my country!—

ETEOCLES

He that to destroy it came.

POLYNEICES

Wrongfully, ye Gods! •

ETEOCLES

To Gods not here, but at Mycenæ, cry.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀνόσιος πέφυκας,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ πατρίδος, ὡς σύ, πολέμιος·

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὅς μ' ἄμοιρον ἐξελαύνεις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

610

καὶ κατακτενῶ γε πρὸς.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ πάτερ, κλύεις ἅ πάσχω ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ οἶα δρᾶς κλύει.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σύ, μήτηρ ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀθέμιτόν σοι μητρὸς ὀνομάζειν κᾶρα.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ πόλις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μολὼν ἐς Ἄργος ἀνακάλει Λέρνης ὕδωρ.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἶμι, μὴ πόνει· σέ δ' αἰνῶ, μήτηρ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔξιθι χθονός.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔξιμεν· πατέρα δέ μοι δὸς εἰσιδεῖν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν τύχοις.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλὰ παρθένους ἀδελφάς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐδὲ τάσδ' ὄψει ποτέ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Impious art thou—

ETEOCLES

Yea?—but not my country's foe, as thou, am I.

POLYNEICES

Who dost drive me forth defrauded!

ETEOCLES

Death withal I'll deal to thee. 610

POLYNEICES

Father, hear'st thou what I suffer?

ETEOCLES

Nay, thy *doings* heareth he.

POLYNEICES

And thou, mother?

ETEOCLES

That thou name our mother, sacrilege it were.

POLYNEICES

O my city!

ETEOCLES

Hence to Argos: call on Lerna's water there.

POLYNEICES

Fret thee not—I go. I thank thee, mother.

ETEOCLES

Forth the city! Go!

POLYNEICES

Forth I go: yet on my father let me look!

ETEOCLES

Thou see him! No!

POLYNEICES

Nay then, but my maiden sisters.

ETEOCLES

These thou never more shalt see.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ κασίγνηται.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί ταύτας ἀνακαλείς ἔχθιστος ὢν ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μητέρα, ἀλλά μοι σὺ χαίρε.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

χαρτὰ γοῦν πάσχω, τέκνον.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐκέτ' εἰμὶ παῖς σός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

εἰς πόλλ' ἀθλία πέφυκ' ἐγώ.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὄδε γὰρ εἰς ἡμᾶς ὑβρίζει.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

620

καὶ γὰρ ἀνθυβρίζομαι.

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποῦ ποτε στήσει πρὸ πύργων ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ὡς τί μ' ἱστορεῖς τόδε ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀντιτάξομαι κτενῶν σε.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κάμὲ τοῦδ' ἔρωσ ἔχει.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ. τί δράσετ', ὦ τέκν' ;

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

αὐτὸ σημανεῖ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πατρὸς οὐ φεύξεσθ' Ἐρινύς ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔρρέτω πρόπας δόμος.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

O my sisters !

ETEOCLES

Why dost call on these, their bitterest enemy ?

POLYNEICES

Farewell, O my mother ?

JOCASTA

Sooth, my son, I *fare well*, thus forlorn !

POLYNEICES

Son of thine no more !—

JOCASTA

To many a sorrow was thy mother born !

POLYNEICES

Since he doth me foul despite !

ETEOCLES

For foul despite received, I wis ! 620

POLYNEICES

Where before the towers wilt plant thee ?

ETEOCLES

Wherefore dost thou question this ?

POLYNEICES

I will face thee there to slay thee.

ETEOCLES

Ha ! I long to have it so !

JOCASTA

Woe is me ! what will ye do, my sons ?

POLYNEICES

The issue's self shall show.

JOCASTA

Flee, O flee your father's curses !

ETEOCLES

All our house let ruin seize !

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΠΟΛΤΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὡς τάχ' οὐκέθ' αἵματηρὸν τοῦμόν ἀργήσει-ξίφος.
 τὴν δὲ θρέψασάν με γαῖαν καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρομαι
 ὡς ἄτιμος οἰκτρὰ πάσχων ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός,
 δούλος ὡς, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ταύτου πατρὸς Οἰδίπου
 γεγώς·

630 κἂν τί σοι, πόλις, γένηται; μὴ 'μέ, τόνδε δ' αἰτιῶ.
 οὐχ ἔκων γὰρ ἦλθον, ἄκων δ' ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.
 καὶ σύ, Φοῖβ' ἀναξ' Ἀγνιεῦ, καὶ μέλαθρα χαίρετε,
 ἦλικές θ' οὐμοί, θεῶν τε δεξίμηλ' ἀγάλματα.
 οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' εἴ μοι προσειπεῖν αὐθις ἔσθ' ὑμᾶς
 ποτε·

ἐλπίδες δ' οὐπω καθεύδουσ', αἷς πέποιθα σὺν
 θεοῖς
 τόνδ' ἀποκτεῖνας κρατήσειν τῆσδε Θηβαίας
 χθονός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔξιθ' ἐκ χώρας· ἀληθῶς δ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκη
 πατήρ
 ἔθετό σοι θείᾳ προνοίᾳ νεικέων ἐπώνυμον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Κάδμος ἔμωλε τάνδε γᾶν στρ.
 Τύριος, ᾧ τετρασκελῆς
 640 μόςχος ἀδάματος πέσημα
 δίκη τελεσφόρον διδοῦσα
 χρῆσμόν, οὗ κατοικίσει
 πεδία νιν τὸ θέσφατον
 πυροφόρ' Ἀόνων¹ ἔχρη,
 καλλιπόταμος ὕδατος ἵνα τε
 νοτὶς ἐπέρχεται ῥυτᾶς
 Δίρκας χλοηφόρους

¹ Valckenaer : for MSS. δόμων.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

POLYNEICES

Soon my sword, blood-reddened, shall abide no more
in deedless ease. [Gods in heaven,
But I call to witness earth that nursed me, witness
How with shame and piteous usage from the home-
land I am driven, [Oedipus, came.
Like a bondman, not a son that of one father,
City, whatso'er befall thee, blame not me: yon
tyrant blame. [willingly.
Willingly I came not, from the land am cast un- 630
Farewell, Phoebus, Highway-king, O palace-bowers,
farewell ye! [where sheep are slain!
Friends of youth, farewell, and statues of the Gods
For I know not if to me 'tis given to speak to you
again. [with Gods to aid,
But my hope not yet doth sleep, wherein I trust,
Him to slay, and hold the land of Thebes beneath
my sceptre swayed.

ETEOCLES

Get thee forth! Ha, truly Polyneices, "Man of
many a feud," [thy feuds ended!
Named thy father thee, with heavenly prescience of
[Exit POLYNEICES.

CHORUS

To this land from Phoenicia Cadmus speeding (Str.)
Came, till the heifer unbroken, leading 640
The wanderer, cast her to earthward, telling
That so was accomplished the oracle spoken
When the God for the place of his rest gave token,
Bidding take the Aonian plains for his dwelling,
Where the golden spears of the wheat-ranks quiver,
Where the outgushing flood of the lovely river
Forth flashes from fountains of Dirce welling

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

650 καὶ βαθυσπόρους γύας,
 Βρόμιον ἔνθα τέκετο μά-
 τηρ Διὸς γάμοισι,
 κισσὸς δὲν περιστεφῆς
 ἑλικτὸς εὐθύς ἔτι βρέφος
 χλοηφόροισιν ἔρνεσιν
 κατασκίοισιν ὀλβίσας ἐνώτισεν,
 Βάκχιον χόρευμα παρθένοισι Θηβαίαισι
 καὶ γυναιξὶν εὐίοις.

ἔνθα φόνιος ἦν δράκων ἀντ.
 Ἄρεος, ὠμόφρων φύλαξ
 νάματ' ἔνυδρα καὶ ῥέεθρα
 660 χλοερά δεργμάτων κόραισι
 πολυπλάνοις ἐπισκοπῶν
 δὲν ἐπὶ χέρνιβας μολῶν
 Κάδμος ὄλεσε μαρμάρῳ,
 κρᾶτα φόνιον ὄλεσίθηρος
 ὠλένας δικὼν βολαῖς,
 δίας ἀμάτορος δ'
 669 εἰς βαθυσπόρους γύας
 668 γαπετεῖς δικῶν ὀδόν-
 667 τας Παλλάδος φραδαῖσιν.¹
 670 ἔνθεν ἐξανῆκε γᾶ
 πάνοπλον ὄψιν ὑπὲρ ἄκρων
 ὄρων χθονός· σιδαρόφρων
 δέ νιν φόνος πάλιν ξυνῆψε γᾶ φίλα.
 αἵματος δ' ἔδευσε γαῖαν, ἃ νιν εὐηλίοισι
 δείξεν αἰθέρος πνοαῖς.

καὶ σὲ τὸν προμάτορος ἐπωδ.
 Ἰοῦς ποτ' ἔκγονον

¹ Murray's arrangement, securing metrical correspondence.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Over meadows and tilth-lands harvest-teeming,
Where sprang, from the spousals levin-gleaming
Of Zeus, the God of the shout wild-ringing ; 650
And the ivy arching its bowers around him,
With the fairy chains of its greenness bound him,
To the babe with its sudden tendrils clinging,
Overmantling with shadow the Blessing-laden,
For a theme of the Bacchanal dance unto maiden
Of Thebes, and to matron evoë-singing.

There on the hallowed fountain's border (Ant.)
Was the dragon of Ares, a ruthless warder ;
And the glare of his eyeballs fearful-flashing
Wandered in restless-roving keenness
O'er the brimming runnels, the mirrored greenness : 660
Then came to the spring for the lustral washing
Cadmus, and hurled at the monster, and slew it ;
For he snatched a boulder, his strong arm threw it
Down on the head of the slaughterer crashing.
Then, of Pallas, the motherless Goddess, bidden,
O'er the deep-furrowed earth, in her breast to be
hidden,
He scattered the teeth from the grim jaws parted.
And the travailing glebe flung up bright blossom 670
Of mail-clad warriors over the bosom
Of the earth ; but slaughter the iron-hearted
Again with the earth their mother blent them,
And drenched with their blood the breast which had
sent them
Forth, when to sun-quickened air they upstarted.

Unto thee too, Epaphus, scion (Epode.)
Of our first mother lo, I moan,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

680 Ἔπαφον, ὦ Διὸς γένεθλον,
 ἐκάλεσ' ἐκάλεσα βαρβάρῳ βοᾷ,
 ἰώ, βαρβάρους λιταῖς,
 βᾶθι βᾶθι τάνδε γᾶν·
 σοί νιν ἔκγονοι κτίσαν,
 ἄν διώνυμοι θεαί,
 Περσέφασσα καὶ φίλα
 Δαμάτηρ θεά,
 πάντων ἄνασσα, πάντων δὲ Γᾶ τροφός,
 ἐκτήσαντο· πέμπε πυρφόρους
 θεάς, ἄμυνε τᾶδε γᾶ·
 πάντα δ' εὐπετῆ θεοῖς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

690 χώρει σὺ καὶ κόμιζε τὸν Μειοικέως
 Κρέοντ', ἀδελφὸν μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης ἐμῆς,
 λέγων τάδ', ὡς οἰκεία καὶ κοινὰ χθονὸς
 θέλω πρὸς αὐτὸν συμβαλεῖν βουλευμάτα,
 πρὶν εἰς μάχην τε καὶ δорὸς τάξιν μολεῖν.
 καίτοι ποδῶν σῶν μόχθον ἐκλύει παρών·
 ὀρῶ γὰρ αὐτὸν πρὸς δόμους στείχοντ' ἐμούς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἢ πόλλ' ἐπήλθον εἰσιδεῖν χρήζων σ', ἀναξ
 Ἐτεόκλεες, πέριξ δὲ Καδμείων πύλας
 φύλακας τ' ἐπήλθον σὸν δέμας θηρώμενος.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

700 καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σ' ἔχρηζον εἰσιδεῖν, Κρέον·
 πολλῶ γὰρ ἠὔρον ἐνδεεῖς διαλλαγάς,
 ὡς εἰς λόγους συνῆψα Πολυνεΐκει μολῶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἤκουσα μείζον αὐτὸν ἢ Θήβας φρονεῖν,
 κήδει τ' Ἀδράστου καὶ στρατῶ πεποιθότα.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Unto thee, of our lord Zeus sprung,
With my alien chant upflung
And with prayers of an alien tongue ! 680
Thy sons, who reared Thebes to thee, cry on
Their father—O come to thine own !
For Demeter, Persephone, wearing
Twin names, have our land in ward—
Even gracious Demeter All-queen,
Who is Earth, nurse of all that hath been,—
O send them, thy people to screen
From the evil, the Queens Torch-bearing !—
Is there aught for the Gods too hard ?

ETEOCLES (*to attendant*)

Go thou, and Creon bring, Menoeceus' son, 690
Who is my mother's, even Jocasta's brother.
This tell him, that I would commune with him
Touching our own advantage and the land's,
Ere we go batteward and range the spears.
But lo, he cometh, sparing thy foot's toil.
Myself behold him drawing nigh mine halls.

Enter CREON.

CREON

Seeking to see thee, far I have wended, King
Eteocles ; round to all Cadmean gates
And guards, still searching for thy face, I passed.

ETEOCLES

Sooth, Creon, fain was I to look on thee : 700
For little worth I found his terms of peace,
When I for parley Polyneices met.

CREON

Beyond Thebes his ambition soars, I hear,
By Adrastus' kinship, and his host, puffed up.

403

DD 2

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀλλ' εἰς θεοὺς χρῆ ταυτ' ἀναρτήσαντ' ἔχειν
 ἅ δ' ἐμποδὼν μάλιστα, ταυθ' ἤκω φράσων.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα ; τὸν λόγον γὰρ ἀγνοῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἤκει τις αἰχμάλωτος Ἀργείων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λέγει δὲ δὴ τί τῶν ἐκεῖ νεώτερον ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

710

μέλλειν [πέριξ πύργοισι Καδμείων πόλιν
 ὄπλοις] ἐλίξειν αὐτίκ' Ἀργείων στρατόν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐξοιστέον τάρ' ὄπλα Καδμείων πόλει.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποῖ ; μῶν νεάζων οὐχ ὀράς ἅ χρῆν σ' ὀρᾶν ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐκτὸς τάφρων τῶνδ', ὡς μαχουμένους τάχα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σμικρὸν τὸ πλῆθος τῆσδε γῆς, οἱ δ' ἄφθονοι.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγῶδα κείνους τοῖς λόγοις ὄντας θρασεῖς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔχει τιν' ὄγκον Ἄργος Ἑλλήνων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει τάχ' αὐτῶν πεδίον ἐμπλήσω φόνου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

θέλοιμ' ἄν· ἀλλὰ τοῦθ' ὀρῶ πολλοῦ πόνου.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

720

ὡς οὐ καθέξω τειχέων εἴσω στρατόν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ μὴν τὸ νικᾶν ἔστι πᾶν εὐβουλία.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But these things in the Gods' hands must we leave.
Of our main stumblingblock I came to tell.

ETEOCLES

What shall this be? Thy drift is dark to me.

CREON

A captive from the Argive host is come.

ETEOCLES

What tidings bringeth he of dealings there?

CREON

That Argos' host will straightway wind the net
Of arms round Cadmus' burg and all her towers.

710

ETEOCLES

Then Cadmus' burg must lead forth her array,—

CREON

Whither? Sees not thy rash youth what it should?

ETEOCLES

Across yon trenches, as to fight forthwith.

CREON

Small is the host of this land, countless theirs.

ETEOCLES

I know them for tongue-valiant warriors.

CREON

Argos hath high repute mid Hellas' sons.

ETEOCLES

Fear not : their slaughter soon shall load the plain.

CREON

That would I : yet herein I see grim toil.

ETEOCLES

Not I will pen mine host within the walls !

720

CREON

Yet wholly in good counsel victory lies.

405

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

βούλει τράπωμαι δῆθ' ὁδοὺς ἄλλας τινάς ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πάσας γε, πρὶν κίνδυνον εἰς ἅπαξ μολεῖν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

εἰ νυκτὸς αὐτοῖς προσβάλοιμεν ἐκ λόχου ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἴπερ σφαλεῖς γε δεῦρο σωθήσαι πάλιν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἴσον φέρει νύξ, τοῖς δὲ τολμῶσιν πλέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐνδυστυχῆσαι δεινὸν εὐφρόνης κνέφας.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ δεῖπνον οὖσι προσβάλω δόρυ ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔκπληξις ἂν γένοιτο· νικῆσαι δὲ δεῖ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

730 βαθύς γέ τοι Διρκαῖος ἀναχωρεῖν πόρος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἅπαν κάκιον τοῦ φυλάσσεσθαι καλῶς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί δ', εἰ καθιππεύσαιμεν Ἀργείων στρατόν ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

κἀκεῖ πέφρακται λαὸς ἄρμασιν πέριξ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα δράσω ; πολεμίοισι δῶ πόλιν ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μὴ δῆτα· βουλευού δ', ἐπεὶπερ εἰ σοφός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τίς οὖν πρόνοια γίγνεται σοφωτέρα ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔπτ' ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς φασιν, ὡς ἤκουσ' ἐγώ, —

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ETEOCLES

Wouldst thou I turned me unto other paths ?

CREON

Any path, ere on one cast all be staked.

ETEOCLES

How if by night we fall on them from ambush ?

CREON

Yea,—if, miscarrying, safe thou mayst return.

ETEOCLES

Night equals all, yet helps the venturous most.

CREON

Yet, for ill-speed, night's gloom is terrible.

ETEOCLES

Shall I make onset even as they sup ?

CREON

A brief alarm :—'tis victory we need.

ETEOCLES

Dirce's deep ford should hamper their retreat.

730

CREON

Naught were so good as ward us warily.

ETEOCLES

How, if our horse charge down on Argos' host ?

CREON

There too their lines be fenced with chariots round.

ETEOCLES

What shall I do then ?—yield our town to foes ?

CREON

Never. Take thought, if prudent chief thou art.

ETEOCLES

What counsel is more prudent, then, than mine ?

CREON

Seven champions are there with them, have I heard,—

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί προστετάχθαι δρᾶν; τὸ γὰρ σθένος βραχύ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόχων ἀνάσσειν ἐπὶ προσκείσθαι πύλαις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

740 τί δῆτα δρῶμεν; ἀπορίαν γὰρ οὐ μενῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔπ' ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ πρὸς πύλαις ἐλοῦ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λόχων ἀνάσσειν ἢ μονοστόλου δορός;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόχων, προκρίνας οὔπερ ἀλκιμώτατοι,

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ξυνήκ'· ἀμύνειν τειχέων προσαμβάσεις.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ ξυστρατήγους· εἰς δ' ἀνὴρ οὐ πάνθ' ὄρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει προκρίνας ἢ φρενῶν εὐβουλία;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἀμφότερον· ἀπολειφθὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν θάτερον.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔσται τάδ'· ἐλθὼν δ' ἐπτάπυργον ἐς πόλιν
τάξω λοχαγούς πρὸς πύλαισιν, ὡς λέγεις,
ἴσους ἴσοισι πολεμίοισιν ἀντιθείς.

750

ὄνομα δ' ἐκάστου διατριβὴ πολλὴ λέγειν,
ἐχθρῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῖς τείχεσιν καθημένων.
ἀλλ' εἰμ', ὅπως ἂν μὴ καταργῶμεν χέρα.
καί μοι γένοιτ' ἀδελφὸν ἀντήρη λαβεῖν
καὶ ξυσταθέντα διὰ μάχης ἐλεῖν δορί,
κτανεῖν θ' ὅς ἦλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν.
γάμους δ' ἀδελφῆς Ἀντιγόνης παιδός τε σοῦ
Αἴμονος, εἴαν τι τῆς τύχης ἐγὼ σφαλῶ,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ETEOCLES

Whereto appointed? Seven men's might were small!

CREON

To lead their bands to assail our seven gates.

ETEOCLES

What then? I wait not counsels of despair. 740

CREON

Seven choose thou too to front them at the gates.

ETEOCLES

To lead our bands, or fight with single spear?

CREON

To lead our bands: choose thou our mightiest;—

ETEOCLES

Ay so—to avert the scaling of the walls.

CREON

And under-captains: one man sees not all.

ETEOCLES

For valour chosen, or for prudent wit?

CREON

Nay, both: without its fellow, each is naught.

ETEOCLES

This shall be. Now to the seven towers will I,
And plant chiefs, as thou biddest, at the gates,
Champion for champion, ranged against the foe. 750

To tell each o'er, were costly waste of time,
When foes be camped beneath our very walls.

But I will go, that mine hands loiter not.

God grant I meet my brother face to face,
Clash in the grapple, and slay him with the spear—

Slay him, who came to lay my country waste!

But, for Antigone's marriage with thy son
Haemon,—if aught untoward hap to me,—

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- σοὶ χρὴ μέλεσθαι τὴν δόσιν δ' ἐχέγγυον
 760 τὴν πρόσθε ποιῶ νῦν ἐπ' ἐξόδοις ἐμαῖς.
 μητέρος ἀδελφὸς εἶ· τί δεῖ μακρηγορεῖν ;
 τρέφ' ἀξίως νιν σοῦ τε τὴν τ' ἐμὴν χάριν.
 πατὴρ δ' ἐς αὐτὸν ἀμαθίαν ὀφλισκάνει,
 ὄψιν τυφλώσας· οὐκ ἄγαν σφ' ἐπήνεσα·
 ἡμᾶς τ' ἀραίσις, ἣν τύχη, κατακτενεῖ.
 ἐν δ' ἐστὶν ἡμῖν ἀργόν, εἴ τι θέσφατον
 οἰωνόμαντις Τειρεσίας ἔχει φράσαι,
 τοῦδ' ἐκπυθέσθαι ταῦτ'· ἐγὼ δὲ παῖδα σὸν
 Μειοικέα, σοῦ πατρὸς αὐτεπώνυμον,
 770 ἄξοντα πέμψω δεῦρο Τειρεσίαν, Κρέον·
 σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἡδὺς εἰς λόγους ἀφίξεται·
 ἐγὼ δὲ τέχνην μαντικὴν ἐμεμψάμην
 ἤδη πρὸς αὐτόν, ὥστε μοι μομφὰς ἔχειν.
 πόλει δὲ καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ' ἐπισκῆπτω, Κρέον·
 ἦνπερ κρατήση τὰμά, Πολυνείκους νέκυν
 μήποτε ταφῆναι τῆδε Θηβαία χθονί·
 θνήσκειν δὲ τὸν θάψαντα, κἂν φίλων τις ἦ.
 σοὶ μὲν τὰδ' αὐδῶ· προσπόλοις δ' ἐμοῖς λέγω.
 ἐκφέρετε τεύχη πάνοπλά τ' ἀμφιβλήματα,
 780 ὡς εἰς ἀγῶνα τὸν προκείμενον δορὸς
 ὀρμώμεθ' ἤδη ξὺν δίκῃ νικηφόρῳ.
 τῇ δ' Εὐλαβείᾳ χρησιμωτάτῃ θεῶν
 προσευχόμεσθα τήνδε διασφύζειν πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πολύμοχθος Ἄρης, τί ποθ' αἵματι στρ.
 καὶ θανάτῳ κατέχει Βρομίον παράμουσος ἑορταῖς ;
 οὐκ ἐπὶ καλλιχόροις στεφάνοισι νεάνιδος ὥρας
 βόστρυχον ἀμπετάσας, λωτοῦ κατὰ πνεύματα
 μέλπει

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

See thou to this. Their late betrothal- plight
 Now, as I go forth, do I ratify. 760
 Thou art my mother's brother : why waste words ?
 Give her fair nurture, for thy sake and mine.
 My father hath wrought folly against himself,
 Blinding his eyes ;—scant praise of mine he hath ;—
 And us his curse shall slay, if so it hap.

One thing abides undone, to ask the seer
 Teiresias touching this, if aught he hath
 Of oracles to tell ; and I will send
 Thy son Menoeceus, of thy father named,
 Creon, to bring Teiresias hitherward. 770
 With a good will shall he commune with thee :
 But the seer's art in time past have I mocked
 Unto his face ; so he may bear me grudge.

This, Creon, is mine hest to Thebes and thee :—
 If my cause conquer, never bury ye
 Polyneices' corpse upon this Theban soil.
 Who buries him—though near and dear—must die.
 This to thee :—to mine henchmen now I speak.
 Bring forth my arms, mine harness-panoply,
 That to the imminent conflict of the spear 780
 I may set forth, with Right to crown mine arms.
 To Heedfulness, of all Gods helpfullest,
 That she will save this city, now we pray. [Exit.

CHORUS

Ares the troublous, O whence is thy passion *(Str.)*
 For blood and for death, unattuned to the feasts of
 the Revelry-king ? [ginal fashion
 Not for the dances, the circlings of beauty, in vir-
 Tossed are thy tresses abroad, nor to breathings of
 flutes dost thou sing

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

μούσαν, ἐν ᾗ χάριτες χοροποιοί,
ἀλλὰ σὺν ὄπλοφόροις στρατὸν Ἄργείων ἐπι-
πνεύσας

790 αἵματι Θήβαις

κῶμον ἀναυλότατον προχορεύεις.
οὐδ' ὑπὸ θυρσομανεῖ νεβρίδων μέτα δῖνα,
ἄρμασι καὶ ψαλλίοις τετραβάμοσι μώνυχα πῶλον,
ἰππείαις ἐπὶ χεύμασι βαίνων
Ἴσμηνοῖο θοάζεις, Ἄργείοις ἐπιπνεύσας
Σπαρτῶν γένναν,
ἀσπιδοφέρμονα θίασον ἔνοπλον,
ἀντίπαλον κατὰ λάινα τείχεα
χαλκῷ κοσμήσας.

ἦ δεινά τις Ἔρις θεός, ἃ τάδε
μήσατο πῆματα γῆς βασιλεῦσιν,

800 Λαβδακίδαις πολυμόχθοις.

ὦ ζαθέων πετάλων πολυθηρότα- ἀντ.
τον νάπος, Ἄρτέμιδος χιονοτρόφον ὄμμα Κιθαι-
ρών,

μήποτε τὸν θανάτῳ προτεθέντα, λόχευμ' Ἰοκά-
στας,

ὄφελος Οἰδιπόδαν θρέψαι βρέφος ἔκβολον οἴκων,
χρυσοδέτοις περόναις ἐπίσαμον

μηδὲ τὸ παρθένιον πτερόν, οὔρειον τέρας, ἐλθεῖν
πένθεα γαίας,

Σφίγγ', ἀπομουσοτάταισι σὺν ὠδαῖς,

ἃ ποτε Καδμογενῆ τετραβάμοσι χαλαῖς

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

A strain to whose witchery dances are wreathing :
But with clangour of harness of fight through the
Argive array art thou breathing
War-lust for the blood of our Thebes athirst, 790
As thou ledest the dance of a revel accurst
Where no flutes ring.

Thou art found not where fawnskin and thyrsus in
mad reel mingle and sunder,
But with chariots and clashing of bits and with war-
horses' footfall of thunder

By Ismenus' brimming marge
With the rushing of steeds dost thou charge,
Into Argives breathing the battle-hate
Against the sons of the Dragon-state ;
And with harness of brass and with targe,
Fronting our ramparts of stone, dost array
A host for the fray.

A fearful Goddess in sooth is Strife,
By whose devising the troublous life
Of the Labdacid kings of the land is anguish-rife. 800

Gorges mysterious of frondage, Cithaeron (*Ant.*)
Beast-haunted, O birth-bed of snows, O thou apple
of Artemis' eye, [Jocasta, to rear on
Ah that thou ne'er hadst received him, the babe of
Thy lap such a fosterling, Oedipus, thrust from his
home as to die,

Life-marked with the brooch-pin golden-looping !
And O that the portent, the wings of the Sphinx
from the mountain swooping,
Down on the land for its woe had not come,
The maiden that sang us a chant of doom,
An untuneable cry,
When with talons of feet and of hands on the ram-
parts of Cadmus she darted,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

τείχεσι χριμπτομένα φέρεν αἰθέρος εἰς ἄβατον
 φῶς
 810 γένναν, ἂν ὁ κατὰ χθονὸς Ἄιδας
 Καδμείοις ἐπιπέμπει· δυσδαίμων δ' ἔρις ἄλλα
 θάλλει παίδων
 Οἰδιπόδα κατὰ δώματα καὶ πόλιν.
 οὐ γὰρ ὃ μὴ καλὸν οὐποτ' ἔφν καλόν,
 οὐδ' οἱ μὴ νόμιμοι† παῖδες
 ματρὶ λόχευμα, μίασμα πατρὸς δὲ συν-
 αίμονος· εἰς λέχος ἦλθεν.†

ἔτεκες, ὦ γᾶ, ἔτεκές ποτε, ἐπωδ.
 βάρβαρον ὡς ἀκοὰν ἐδάην ἐδάην ποτ' ἐν οἴκοις,
 820 τὰν ἀπὸ θηροτρόφου φοινικολόφοιο δράκοντος
 γένναν ὀδοντοφυῆ, Θήβαις κάλλιστον ὄνειδος·
 Ἄρμονίας δέ ποτ' εἰς ὑμεναίους
 ἦλυθον οὐρανίδαί, φόρμιγγί τε τείχεα Θήβας
 τᾶς Ἄμφιονίας τε λύρας ὑπο πύργος ἀνέστα
 διδύμων ποταμῶν πόρον ἀμφὶ μέσον
 Δίρκας, χλοεροτρόφον ἀ πεδίον
 πρόπαρ Ἴσμηνοῦ καταδεύει·
 Ἴώ θ' ἅ κερόεσσα προμάτωρ
 Καδμείων βασιλῆας ἐγείνατο,
 830 μυριάδας δ' ἀγαθῶν ἐτέροις ἐτέ-
 ρας μεταμειβομένα πόλις ἄδ' ἐπ' ἄ-
 κροῖς ἔστακεν Ἀρή-
 οῖς στεφάνοισιν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And bearing his offspring to sun-litten cloudland un-
 trodden departed,
 She whom Hades from dens of the dead 810
 Against Cadmus' children sped!
 But a new curse lights upon Thebes and her halls;
 For 'twixt Oedipus' sons the hell-seed falls
 Of strife, and it blossometh red.
 O, never may aught that is utter shame
 Bear honour's name;
 Nay, nor the unblest spousal's fruit
 Are sons true-born, but with stain they pollute
 Their begetter, the stock that sprang from the self-
 same root.

(*Epode*)

Thou didst bear, O land, thou didst bear of old—
 For I heard, yea, I heard in mine home, in an alien
 tongue, the story—
 From the dragon of crimson crest that battered on 820
 beasts of the wold [and her glory.
 A race of the seed of his teeth, to be Thebes' reproach
 To Harmonia's bridal descended of yore¹
 The Children of Heaven; and Thebes' walls rose to the
 harp's voice singing, [her brows' enringing,
 When the spell of Amphion's lyre fashioned towers for
 In the space 'twixt the rivers twain that pour
 Out of Dirce, whose dew's drift greenness, shedding
 Life o'er the plain by Ismenus spreading.
 And our ancestress Io of hornèd brows
 Was mother of kings unto Cadmus' house.
 Lo, how hath this city, through line on line 830
 Of blessings unnumbered, attained to the height
 Where the War-god's crowns of victory-might
 Shine!

¹ Cadmus wedded Harmonia, Ares' daughter.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

840 ἡγοῦ πάροιθε, θύγατερ· ὡς τυφλῷ ποδι
ὄφθαλμός εἰ σύ, ναυβάταισιν ἄστρον ὡς·
δεῦρ' εἰς τὸ λευρὸν πέδον ἴχνος τιθεῖς' ἐμόν,
πρόβαινε, μὴ σφαλῶμεν· ἀσθενῆς πατήρ·
κλήρους τέ μοι φύλασσε παρθένῳ χερί,
οὐδ' ἔλαβον οἰωνίσματ' ὀρνίθων μαθὼν
θάκοισιν ἐν ἱεροῖσιν, οὐ μαντεύομαι.
τέκνον Μενοικεῦ, παῖ Κρέοντος, εἶπέ μοι
πόση τις ἢ ἴπλοιπος ἄστεως ὁδὸς
πρὸς πατέρα τὸν σόν· ὡς ἐμόν κάμνει γόνυ,
πυκνὴν δὲ βαίνων ἤλυσιν μόλις περῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

θύρσει. πέλας γάρ, Τειρεσία, φίλοισι σοῖς
ἐξωρμίσει σὸν πόδα· λαβοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ, τέκνον·
ὡς πᾶσ' ἀπήνη πούς τε πρεσβύτου φιλεῖ
χειρὸς θυραίας ἀναμένειν κουφίσματα.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

εἰεν, πάρεσμεν· τί με καλεῖς σπουδῆ, Κρέον ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

850 οὐπω λελήσμεθ'· ἀλλὰ σύλληξαι σθένος
καὶ πνεῦμ' ἄθροισον, αἶπος ἐκβαλὼν ὁδοῦ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

κόπῳ παρεῖμαι γόνυ Ἐρεχθιδῶν ἀπο
δεῦρ' ἐκκομισθεὶς τῆς πάροιθεν ἡμέρας·
κάκεϊ γὰρ ἦν τις πόλεμος Εὐμόλπου δορός,
οὐ καλλινίκους Κεκροπίδας ἔθηκ' ἐγώ·
καὶ τόνδε χρυσοῦν στέφανον, ὡς ὀρίης, ἔχω
λαβῶν ἀπαρχὰς πολεμίων σκυλευμάτων.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἰωνὸν ἐθέμην καλλίνικα σὰ στέφη·
ἐν γὰρ κλύδωνι κείμεθ', ὥσπερ οἴσθα σύ,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Enter TEIRESIAS led by his DAUGHTER, with MENOECEUS.

TEIRESIAS

Lead on, my daughter : to my sightless feet
As eyes art thou, as star to mariners.
Hither, on even ground, plant thou my steps.
Guide, lest I stumble : strengthless is thy sire.
Guard in thy maiden hand the augury-lots
Which, when I marked the bodings of the birds,
In the holy seat I took, where I divine. 840
Thou child Menoeceus, son of Creon, tell
How much remaineth of the townward way
To where thy father waits. Faint wax my knees :
Journeying so long, scarce have I strength to go.

CREON

Take heart, Teiresias, thou art nigh thy friends,
And thy foot's anchorage. Grasp his hand, my child.
Mule-car and aged foot alike are wont
To await the upbearing of another's hand.

TEIRESIAS

Here am I. Why this instant summons, Creon ?

CREON

We have not forgotten. Gather strength, regain 850
Thy breath, cast off thy journey's toil and strain.

TEIRESIAS

Sooth am I spent with toil, brought hitherward
But yesterday from King Erechtheus' folk.
There too was war, against Eumolpus' spear,
Where I to Cecrops' sons gave victory.
This crown of gold, as thou mayst see, have I
As firstfruits of the foemen's spoils received.

CREON

I take thy triumph-crown for omen fair ;
For we are, as thou knowest, in mid-surge

417

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

860 *δορὸς Δαναϊδῶν, καὶ μέγας Θήβαις ἀγών.
 βασιλεὺς μὲν οὖν βέβηκε κοσμηθεὶς ὄπλοις
 ἤδη πρὸς ἄλκην Ἐτεοκλῆς Μυκηνίδα·
 ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπέσταλκ' ἐκμαθεῖν σέθεν πάρα,
 τί δρῶντες ἂν μάλιστα σώσαιομεν πόλιν.*

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

*Ἐτεοκλέους μὲν εἵνεκ' ἂν κλήσας στόμα
 χρησμούς ἐπέσχον· σοὶ δ', ἐπεὶ χρήξεις μαθεῖν,
 λέξω. νοσεῖ γὰρ ἦδε γῆ πάλαι, Κρέον,
 ἐξ οὗ ἔτεκνώθη Λάιος βία θεῶν
 πόσιν τ' ἔφυσε μητρὶ μέλεον Οἰδίπουν·
 870 αἱ θ' αἱματωποὶ δεργμάτων διαφθοραὶ
 θεῶν σόφισμα κἀπίδειξις Ἑλλάδι.
 ἂ συγκαλύψαι παῖδες Οἰδίπου χρόνῳ
 χρήζοντες, ὡς δὴ θεοὺς ὑπεκδραμούμενοι,
 ἡμαρτον ἀμαθῶς· οὔτε γὰρ γέρα πατρὶ
 οὔτ' ἔξοδον διδόντες ἄνδρα δυστυχή
 ἐξηγρίωσαν· ἐκ δ' ἔπνευσ' αὐτοῖς ἀρὰς
 δεινὰς, νοσῶν τε καὶ πρὸς ἠτιμασμένους.
 ἀγῶ τί οὐ δρῶν, ποῖα δ' οὐ λέγων ἔπη,
 εἰς ἔχθος ἦλθον παισὶ τοῖσιν Οἰδίπου.
 880 ἐγγὺς δὲ θάνατος αὐτόχειρ αὐτοῖς, Κρέον·
 πολλοὶ δὲ νεκροὶ περὶ νεκροῖς πεπτωκότες
 Ἄργεῖα καὶ Καδμεῖα μίξαντες βέλη
 πικροὺς γόους δώσουσι Θηβαίᾳ χθονί.
 σύ τ' ὦ τάλαινα συγκατασκάπτει πόλι,
 εἰ μὴ λόγοις τις τοῖς ἐμοῖσι πείσεται.
 ἐκεῖνο μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον ἦν, τῶν Οἰδίπου
 μηδένα πολίτην μηδ' ἄνακτ' εἶναι χθονός,
 ὡς δαιμονῶντας κἀνατρέφοντας πόλιν.
 890 ἐπεὶ δὲ κρεῖσσον τὸ κακὸν ἐστὶ τὰγαθοῦ,
 μί' ἐστὶν ἄλλη μηχανὴ σωτηρίας.*

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Of Danaïd war, and Thebes must wrestle hard. 860
King Eteocles, clad in war-array,
Even now is gone to face Mycenæ's might ;
But to me gave in charge to inquire of thee
What deeds of ours shall best deliver Thebes.

TEIRESIAS

For Eteocles sealed my lips had been,
The oracles withheld :—since *thou* wouldst know,
I tell thee. Creon, long this land hath ailed
Since Laius in heaven's despite begat
Oedipus, his own mother's wretched spouse.
Yea, and the gory ruin of his eyes 870
Was heaven's device, for warning unto Greece.

And Oedipus' sons, who fain had cloaked it o'er
With time, as though they could outrun the Gods,
In folly erred : vouchsafing to their sire
Nor honour nor free air, they stung to fury
His misery : dread malison he breathed
Against them, suffering and shamed withal.
What did I not ? What warnings spake I not ?—
And had for guerdon hate of Oedipus' sons.
But nigh them, Creon, mutual slaughter looms ; 880
And corpses many upon corpses piled,
Transfixed with Argive and Cadmean shafts,
With bitter wails shall dower the Theban land.

Thou, hapless town, art made a ruin-heap—
Except unto my bodings one give heed !
This had been best, that none of Oedipus' line
Remained in Thebes, nor citizen nor king :
They are fiend-possessed and doomed to wreck the
state.

But, seeing the evil hath o'erborne the good,
One other way of safety yet remains ; 890

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀλλ'—οὐ γὰρ εἰπεῖν οὐτ' ἔμοι τόδ' ἀσφαλὲς
 πικρὸν τε τοῖσι τὴν τύχην κεκτημένοις
 πόλει παρασχεῖν φάρμακον σωτηρίας—
 ἄπειμι, χαίρεθ'· εἰς γὰρ ὧν πολλῶν μετὰ
 τὸ μέλλον, εἰ χρῆ, πείσομαι· τί γὰρ πάθω ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐπίσχεσ ἀντοῦ, πρέσβυ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

μῆ' πιλαμβάνου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μείνον, τί φεύγεις ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἢ τύχη σ', ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

φράσον πολίταις καὶ πόλει σωτηρίαν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

βούλει σὺ μέντοι κούχι βουλήσει τάχα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

900 καὶ πῶς πατρώαν γαῖαν οὐ σῶσαι θέλω ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

θέλεις ἀκούσαι δῆτα καὶ σπουδὴν ἔχεις ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἰς γὰρ τί μᾶλλον δεῖ προθυμίαν ἔχειν ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

κλύοις ἂν ἤδη τῶν ἐμῶν θεσπισμάτων.
 πρῶτον δ' ἐκεῖνο βούλομαι σαφῶς μαθεῖν,
 ποῦ 'στιν Μενοικεύς, ὃς με δεῦρ' ἐπήγαγεν ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὄδ' οὐ μακρὰν ἄπεστι, πλησίον δέ σου.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀπελθέτω νυν θεσφάτων ἐμῶν ἐκάς.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

But this to tell, for me were all unsafe,
And bitter unto those whom fate endows
With power to give their city safety's balm.
I go. Farewell! What must befall will I—
One midst a multitude—endure. What help?

[*Turns to go.*]

CREON

Abide here, ancient!

TEIRESIAS

Lay not hold on me.

CREON

Tarry: why flee?

TEIRESIAS

Thy fortune flees, not I.

CREON

Tell citizens and city safety's path.

TEIRESIAS

Ay, fain art thou!—but loth thou soon shalt be.

CREON

How?—not desire to save my fatherland?

900

TEIRESIAS

Wouldst thou indeed hear? Art thou set thereon?

CREON

Yea: whereunto more earnest should I be?

TEIRESIAS

Then straightway shalt thou hear mine oracles.

But of this first would I be certified—

Where is Menoeceus, who hath led me hither?

CREON

He stands not far, but even at thy side.

TEIRESIAS

Let him withdraw then from my bodings far.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐμὸς πεφυκὼς παῖς ἂ δεῖ σιγήσεται.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

βούλει παρόντος δῆτά σοι τούτου φράσω ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

910 κλύων γὰρ ἂν τέρποιτο τῆς σωτηρίας.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν θεσφάτων ἐμῶν ὁδόν·
[ἂ δρῶντες ἂν σώσαιτε Καδμείων πόλιν.]
σφάξαι Μενοικῆ τόνδε δεῖ σ' ὑπὲρ πάτρας
σὸν παῖδ', ἐπειδὴ τὴν τύχην αὐτὸς καλεῖς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί φῆς ; τί ν' εἶπας τόνδε μῦθον, ὦ γέρον ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄπερ πέφυκε, ταῦτα κἀνάγκη σε δρᾶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ πολλὰ λέξας ἐν βραχεῖ χρόνῳ κακά.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

σοί γ', ἀλλὰ πατρίδι μεγάλα καὶ σωτήρια.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐκ ἔκλυον, οὐκ ἤκουσα· χαιρέτω πόλις.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

920 ἀνὴρ ὄδ' οὐκέθ' αὐτός, ἐκνεύει πάλιν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

χαίρων ἴθ'· οὐ γὰρ σὼν με δεῖ μαντευμάτων.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀπόλωλεν ἀλήθει', ἐπεὶ σὺ δυστυχεῖς ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ πρὸς σε γονάτων καὶ γερασμίου τριχός,

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

τί προσπίτνεις με ; δυσφύλακτ' αἰτεῖ κακά.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

He is my son, will keep what must be secret.

TEIRESIAS

Wilt thou indeed I speak before his face?

CREON

Yea; of this safety gladly shall he hear. 910

TEIRESIAS

Hear then the tenor of mine oracle,
What deed of yours shall save the Thebans' town.
Menoceus must thou slay for fatherland,
Thy son—since thou thyself demandest fate.

CREON

How say'st thou? Ancient, what was this thy word?

TEIRESIAS

As hath been doomed, even this thou needs must do.

CREON

Oh countless ills in one short moment told!

TEIRESIAS

Thine ills—but great salvation for thy land.

CREON

I heard not!—hearkened not!—away, thou Thebes!

TEIRESIAS

Not the same man is this: he flincheth now. 920

CREON

Depart in peace: thy bodings need I not.

TEIRESIAS

Is truth dead, for that thou art fortune-crost?

CREON

Oh, by thy knees, and by thy reverend hair!—

TEIRESIAS

Why kneel? Thou prayest for ruin inevitable.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σίγα· πόλει δὲ τούσδε μὴ λέξης λόγους.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀδικεῖν κελεύεις μ'· οὐ σιωπήσαιμεν ἄν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δὴ με δράσεις ; παῖδά μου κατακτενεῖς ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄλλοις μελήσει ταῦτ', ἐμοὶ δ' εἰρήσεται.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐμοὶ τόδ' ἦλθε καὶ τέκνω κακόν ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

930

ὀρθῶς μ' ἐρωτᾷς κεῖς ἀγῶν' ἔρχει λόγων.
 δεῖ τόνδε θαλάμαις, οὐ δράκων ὁ γηγευῆς
 ἐγένετο Δίρκης ναμάτων ἐπίσκοπος,
 σφαγέντα φόνιον αἷμα γῆ δοῦναι χοάς,
 Κάδμου παλαιῶν Ἄρεος ἐκ μηνιμάτων,
 ὃς γηγευεῖ δράκοντι τιμωρεῖ φόνον.

καὶ ταῦτα δρώντες σύμμαχον κτήσεσθ' Ἄρη.
 χθῶν δ' ἀντὶ καρποῦ καρπὸν ἀντὶ θ' αἵματος
 αἷμ' ἦν λάβη βρότειον, ἔξετ' εὐμενῆ
 γῆν, ἣ ποθ' ἡμῖν χρυσοπήληκα στάχυν

940

σπαρτῶν ἀνήκεν· ἐκ γένους δὲ δεῖ θανεῖν
 τοῦδ', ὃς δράκοντος γένουος ἐκπέφυκε παῖς.
 σὺ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἡμῖν λοιπὸς εἰ σπαρτῶν γένουος
 ἀκέραιος, ἐκ τε μητρὸς ἀρσένων τ' ἄπο,
 οἱ σοί τε παῖδες. Αἷμονός μὲν οὖν γάμοι
 σφαγὰς ἀπείργουσ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἦθεος·
 κεῖ μὴ γὰρ εὐνής ἦψατ', ἀλλ' ἔχει λέχος·
 οὗτος δὲ πῶλος τῆδ' ἀνειμένος πόλει
 θανὼν πατρώαν γαῖαν ἐκσώσειεν ἄν.

950

πικρὸν δ' Ἀδράστῳ νόστον Ἀργείοισι τε
 θήσει, μέλαιναν κῆρ' ἐπ' ὄμμασιν βαλῶν,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Keep silence : to the city tell not this.

TEIRESIAS

Thou bidd'st me sin : I will not hold my peace.

CREON

What wilt thou do to me ?—wilt slay my son ?

TEIRESIAS

Others shall see to that. 'Tis mine to speak.

CREON

Whence came on me this curse, and on my son ?

TEIRESIAS

Fair question and demand that I show cause. 930
In that den where the earth-born dragon lay
Watching the streams of Dirce, must he yield,
Slaughtered, a blood-oblation to the earth ;
For Ares, nursing wrath 'gainst Cadmus long,
Now would avenge his earth-born dragon's death.
Do this, and Ares for your champion win.

If earth for seed gain seed, and human blood
For blood, then kindly shall ye prove the earth
Which once sent up a harvest golden-helmed
Of Sown-men. And it needeth that one die 940
Born of the lineage of the Dragon's Teeth ;
And sole survivor art thou of the Sown
Of pure blood both on sire's and mother's side,
Thou and thy two sons. Haemon's spousals bar
His slaughter, for he is not virgin man.
Though sealed the rite be not, betrothed is he.

But this lad, to his city consecrate,
Dying, should yet redeem his fatherland,
And for Adrastus and the Argives make
Bitter return, their eyes with black death palled, 950

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

κλεινάς τε Θήβας. τοῖνδ' ἑλοῦ δυοῖν πότμου
 τὸν ἕτερον· ἢ γὰρ παῖδα σώσον ἢ πόλιν.
 τὰ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν πάντ' ἔχεις· ἡγοῦ, τέκνον,
 πρὸς οἶκον. ὅστις δ' ἐμπύρω χρήται τέχνη,
 μάταιος· ἦν μὲν ἐχθρὰ σημήνας τύχη,
 πικρὸς καθέστηχ' οἷς ἂν οἴωνοσκοπῆ·
 ψευδῆ δ' ὑπ' οἴκτου τοῖσι χρωμένοις λέγων
 ἀδικεῖ τὰ τῶν θεῶν. Φοῖβον ἀνθρώποις μόνον
 χρήν θεσπιωδεῖν, ὃς δέδοικεν οὐδένα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

960 Κρέον, τί σιγᾶς γῆρυν ἄφθογγον σχάσας ;
 καί μοι γὰρ οὐδὲν ἦσσον ἔκπληξι πάρα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' ἂν τις εἴποι ; δῆλον' οἷ γ' ἐμοὶ λόγοι.
 ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐποτ' εἰς τόδ' εἶμι συμφορᾶς,
 ὥστε σφαγέντα παῖδα προσθεῖναι πόλει.
 πᾶσιν γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι φιλότεκνος βίος,
 οὐδ' ἂν τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδά τις δοίη κτανεῖν.
 μή μ' εὐλογείτω τὰ μὰ τις κτείνων τέκνα.
 αὐτὸς δ', ἐν ωραίῳ γὰρ ἔσταμεν βίου,
 θνήσκειν ἕτοιμος πατρίδος ἐκλυτήριον.

970 ἀλλ' εἶα, τέκνον, πρὶν μαθεῖν πᾶσαν πόλιν,
 ἀκόλαστ' ἑάσας μάντεων θεσπίσματα,
 φεύγ' ὡς τάχιστα τῆσδ' ἀπαλλαχθεὶς χθονός·
 λέξει γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ στρατηλάταις τάδε,
 πύλας ἐφ' ἑπτὰ καὶ λοχαγέτας μολῶν·
 κὰν μὲν φθάσωμεν, ἔστι σοι σωτηρία·
 ἦν δ' ὑστερήσης, οἰχόμεσθα, κατθανεῖ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

ποῖ δῆτα φεύγω ; τίνα πόλιν ; τίνα ξένων ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὅπου χθονὸς τῆσδ' ἐκποδῶν μάλιστ' ἔσει.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And make Thebes glorious. One of these two fates
Choose : either save the city, or thy son.
Now hast thou all my tale. Lead on, my child,
Homeward. Who useth the diviner's art
Is foolish. If he heraldeth ill things,
He is loathed of those to whom he prophesies.
If, pitying them that seek to him, he lie,
He wrongs the Gods. Sole prophet unto men
Ought Phoebus to have been, who feareth none.

[*Exit.*

CHORUS

Why silent, Creon, with lips held from speech? 960
On me, too, consternation weighs no less.

CREON

What should one say? But clear mine answer is :
Never such depth of misery will I seek,
As offer for my city a slaughtered son !
For love of children filleth all men's life,
And none to death would yield up his own child.
Let no man praise me while he slays my sons !
Myself—who have reached the ripeness of my
years—

For death stand ready, to redeem my land.
But up, my child, ere all the city hear : 970
Heed not the reckless words of soothsayers,
But fly—with all speed get thee from the land !
To the seven gates, the captains, will he go,
And tell the rulers and the chieftains this.
Yet, may we but forestall him, thou art saved ;
But if thou lag, undone we are—thou diest.

MENOECEUS

But whither flee?—what city seek?—what friend?

CREON

Where thou from this land's reach shalt farthest be.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

οὔκουν σὲ φράζειν εἰκός, ἐκπονεῖν δ' ἐμέ ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Δελφούς περάσας—

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

980

ποῖ με χρή, πάτερ, μολεῖν ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Αἰτωλίδ' εἰς γῆν.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

ἐκ δὲ τῆσδε ποῖ περῶ ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Θεσπρωτὸν οὔδας.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

σεμνὰ Δωδώνης βάθρα ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔγνωσ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

τί δὴ τόδ' ἔρυμά μοι γενήσεται ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πόμπιμος ὁ δαίμων.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

χρημάτων δὲ τίς πόρος ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐγὼ πορεύσω χρυσόν.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ

εὖ λέγεις, πάτερ.

χώρει νυν ὡς σὴν πρὸς κασιγνήτην μολῶν,

ἧς πρῶτα μαστὸν εἴλκυσ', Ἰοκάστην λέγω,

μητρὸς στερηθεὶς ὄρφανός τ' ἀποζυγείς,

προσηγορήσων εἶμι καὶ σώσων βίον.

990

ἀλλ' εἶα, χώρει. μὴ τὸ σὸν κωλυέτω,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

MENOECEUS

It best beseems that thou tell, I perform.

CREON

Pass Delphi—

MENOECEUS

Whither, father, must I go?

980

CREON

Unto Aetolia.

MENOECEUS

Whither journey thence?

CREON

Thesprotia's soil.

MENOECEUS

Dodona's hallowed floor?

CREON

Thou say'st.

MENOECEUS

What shall be my protection there?

CREON

The God shall speed thee.

MENOECEUS

How supply my need?

CREON

I will find gold.

MENOECEUS

Father, thou sayest well:

Haste then. Unto thy sister will I go,—

Jocasta, on whose bosom first I lay,

Reft of my mother, left an orphan lone,—

To bid her farewell, ere I flee for life.

On then: pass in, be hindrance not in thee.

990

[*Exit* CREON.]

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

γυναῖκες, ὡς εὖ πατρός ἐξείλον φόβον
 κλέψας λόγοισιν, ὥσθ' ἂ βούλομαι τυχεῖν·
 ὅς μ' ἐκκομίζει, πόλιν ἀποστερῶν τύχης,
 καὶ δειλία δίδωσι. καὶ συγγνωστὰ μὲν
 γέροντι· τοῦμόν δ' οὐχὶ συγγνώμην ἔχει,
 προδότην γενέσθαι πατρίδος ἧ μ' ἐγείνατο.
 ὡς οὖν ἂν εἰδῆτ', εἴμι καὶ σώσω πόλιν
 ψυχὴν τε δώσω τῆσδ' ὑπερθανεῖν χθονός.
 αἰσχροὺν γάρ, οἱ μὲν θεσφάτων ἐλευθεροὶ
 1000 κοῦκ εἰς ἀνάγκην δαιμόνων ἀφιγμένοι
 στάντες παρ' ἀσπίδ' οὐκ ὀκνήσουσιν θανεῖν,
 πύργων πάροιθε μαχόμενοι πάτρας ὑπερ·
 ἐγὼ δέ, πατέρα καὶ κασίγνητον προδοὺς
 πόλιν τ' ἔμαυτοῦ, δειλὸς ὡς ἔξω χθονός
 ἄπειμ'· ὅπου δ' ἂν ζῶ, κακὸς φανήσομαι.
 μὰ τὸν μετ' ἄστρον Ζῆν' Ἄρη τε φοῖνιον,
 ὃς τοὺς ὑπερτείλαντας ἐκ γαίας ποτὲ
 Σπαρτοὺς ἀνακτας τῆσδε γῆς ἰδρύσατο.
 ἀλλ' εἴμι καὶ στὰς ἐξ ἐπάλλξεων ἄκρων
 1010 σφάξας ἔμαυτὸν σηκὸν ἐς μελαμβαθῆ
 δράκοντος, ἔνθ' ὁ μάντις ἐξηγήσατο,
 ἐλευθερώσω γαῖαν· εἰρηται λόγος.
 στείχω δέ, θανάτου δῶρον οὐκ αἰσχροὺν πόλει
 δώσω, νόσου δὲ τήνδ' ἀπαλλάξω χθονά.
 εἰ γὰρ λαβὼν ἕκαστος ὃ τι δύναϊτό τις
 χρηστὸν διέλθοι τοῦτο κείς κοινὸν φέροι
 πατρίδι, κακῶν ἂν αἱ πόλεις ἐλασσόνων
 πειρῶμεναι τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχοῖεν ἄν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1020 ἔβας ἔβας,
 ὦ πτερούσσα, γᾶς λόχευμα

στρ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Maidens, how well I have stilled my father's fear
By guileful words, to attain the end I would !
Me would he steal hence, robbing Thebes of hope,
Branding me coward ! This might one forgive
In age ; but no forgiveness should be mine
If I betray the city of my birth.
Doubt not but I will go and save the town,
And give my soul to death for this land's sake.
'Twere shame that men no oracles constrain,
Who have not fall'n into the net of fate, 1010
Shoulder to shoulder stand, blench not from death,
Fighting before the towers for fatherland,
And I, betraying father, brother, yea,
My city, craven-like flee forth the land—
A dastard manifest, where'er I dwell !

By Zeus star-throned, by Ares, slaughter's lord,
Who set on high in kingship over Thebes
The Dragon-brood that cleft the womb of earth,
Go will I, on the ramparts' height will stand,
And o'er the Dragon's gloomy chasm-cave, 1010
Whereof the seer spake, will I slay myself,
And make my country free. The word is said.

I go, to give my country no mean gift,
My life, from ruin so to save the land :
For, if each man would take his all of good,
Lavish it, lay it at his country's feet,
Then fewer evils should the nations prove,
And should through days to come be prosperous.

[*Exit.*

CHORUS

Thou camest, camest, O thou winged doom, (Str.)
Fruit of Earth's travailing, 1020

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

νερτέρου τ' Ἐχίδνας,
 Καδμείων ἄρπαγά,
 πολύφθορος πολύστονος,
 μιξοπάρθενος,
 δάιον τέρας,
 φοιτάσι πτεροῖς
 χαλαῖσί τ' ὠμοσίτοις·
 Διρκαίων ἄ ποτ' ἐκ
 τόπων νέους πεδαίρουσ'
 ἄλυρον ἀμφὶ μούσαν
 ὀλομέναν τ' Ἐρινὺν
 1030 ἔφερες ἔφερες ἄχεα πατρίδι
 φόνια· φόνιος ἐκ θεῶν
 ὃς τάδ' ἦν ὁ πράξας.
 ἰάλεμοι δὲ ματέρων,
 ἰάλεμοι δὲ παρθένων
 ἐστέναζον οἴκοις·
 ἰήιον βοᾶν βοάν,
 ἰήιον μέλος μέλος
 ἄλλος ἄλλ' ἐπωτότυζε
 διαδοχαῖς ἀνὰ πτόλιν.
 βροντᾶ δὲ στεναγμὸς
 1040 ἀχά τ' ἦν ὅμοιος,
 ὅποτε πόλεος ἀφανίσειεν
 ἂ πτεροῦσσα παρθένος τιν' ἀνδρῶν.

χρόνῳ δ' ἔβα
 Πυθίαις ἀποστολαῖσιν
 Οἰδίπους ὁ τλάμων
 Θηβαίαν τάνδε γᾶν
 τότε ἀσμένοις, πάλιν δ' ἄχη·
 ματρὶ γὰρ γάμους

ἀντ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Begotten of the Worm of Nether-gloom,
On Cadmus' sons to spring
Death-fraught, and fraught with moanings for the
dead,
Half maiden, half brute-beast,
Monster of roving pinions, talons red
From that raw-ravening feast,
Snatching from Dirce's meads her young men,
shrieking
O'er them thy dissonant knell,
Anguish of slaughter on our country wreaking,
Wreaking a curse-doom fell! 1030
Ah, murderous God, these ills for us who fashioned!
Moanings of mothers filled
The shuddering homes, and maidens' moanings pas-
sioned :
And wail to wail aye thrilled,
And dirge to death-dirge, each to each replying
The stricken city through—
A nation's pang—as thunder pealed their crying, 1040
When the winged maid with each new victim flying
From earth, was lost to view.

(Ant.)

At last was Oedipus, woe-fated, bound
From Pytho, hither led,—
Our joy, but soon our grief,—who, triumph-crowned
From that dark riddle read,
Wretch, in foul bridal made his mother wife,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

1050 δυσγάμους τάλας
 καλλίνικος ὦν
 αἰνιγμάτων συνάπτει,
 μαιίνει δὲ πτόλιν·
 δι' αἱμάτων δ' ἀμείβει
 μυσαρὸν εἰς ἀγῶνα
 καταβαλὼν ἀραῖσι
 τέκεα μέλεος. ἀγάμεθ' ἀγάμεθ',
 ὃς ἐπὶ θάνατον οἴχεται
 γᾶς ὑπὲρ πατρώας,
 Κρέοντι μὲν λιπῶν γόους,
 τὰ δ' ἐπτάπυργα κληῖθρα γᾶς
 καλλνίκα θήσων.
 1060 γενοίμεθ' ὦδε ματέρες
 γενοίμεθ' εὐτεκνοί, φίλα
 Παλλάς, ἃ δράκοντος αἶμα
 λιθόβολον κατειργάσω,
 Καδμείαν μέριμναν
 ὀρμήσασ' ἐπ' ἔργον,
 ὅθεν ἐπέσυτο τάνδε γαῖαν
 ἀρπαγαῖσι δαιμόνων τις ἄτα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1070 ὦή, τίς ἐν πύλαισι δωμαίων κυρεῖ;
 ἀνοίγεται, ἐκπορεύεται Ἰοκάστην δόμων.
 ὦή μάλ' αὖθις· διὰ μακροῦ μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως
 ἔξελεθ', ἄκουσον, Οἰδίπου κλεινὴ δάμαρ,
 λήξασ' ὄδυρμῶν πενθίμων τε δακρῶν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ φίλτατ', ἣ που ξυμφορὰν ἤκεις φέρων
 Ἐτεοκλέους θανόντος, οὐ παρ' ἄσπίδα
 βέβηκας αἰὲ πολεμίων εἴργων βέλη;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Polluted Thebes, and banned 1050
His sons to stain in this accursèd strife
With brother-blood the hand.
Praise to him, praise, who unto death is faring,
Yea, for his land to die,
Leaving to Creon moans of love's despairing,
But setting victory
For crown upon the city seven-gated !
Ah, may such noble son
To bless mine happy motherhood be fated,
O Pallas, gracious one !— 1060
Pallas, of whom the sudden stone leapt, spilling
The dragon-warder's blood :
Thou gav'st the thought the heart of Cadmus thrilling
To dare the deed whence rushed, with ravin filling
The land, a God's curse-flood.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Ho there ! Who standeth at the palace-gate ?
Open ye, bring Jocasta forth her bowers.
Ho there, again ! Though late, yet come thou forth :
Hearken, renownèd wife of Oedipus ; 1070
Cease from thy wailings and thy tears of grief.

Enter JOCASTA.

JOCASTA

Friend—friend !—thou com'st not sure with ill news
fraught
Of Eteocles' death, by whose shield aye
Thou marchest, warding him from foemen's darts ?

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

[τί μοί ποθ' ἤκεις καινὸν ἀγγελῶν ἔπος ;]
τέθνηκεν ἢ ζῆ παῖς ἐμός ; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ζῆ, μὴ τρέσης τόδ' ; ὡς σ' ἀπαλλάξω φόβου.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τί δ' , ἐπτάπυργοι πῶς ἔχουσι περιβολαί ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐστᾶσ' ἄθραυστοι, κοῦκ ἀνήρπασται πόλις.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1080 ἦλθον δὲ πρὸς κίνδυνον Ἀργείου δορός ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀκμήν γ' ἐπ' αὐτήν· ἀλλ' ὁ Καδμείων Ἄρης
κρείσσων κατέστη τοῦ Μυκηναίου δορός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐν εἰπέ πρὸς θεῶν, εἴ τι Πολυνείκους πέρι
οἶσθ' , ὡς μέλει μοι καὶ τόδ' , εἰ λεύσσει φάος.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ζῆ σοι ξυνωρὶς εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας τέκνων.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

εὐδαιμονοίης. πῶς γὰρ Ἀργείων δόρυ
πυλῶν ἀπεστήσασθε πυργηρούμενοι ;
λέξον, γέροντα τυφλὸν ὡς κατὰ στέγας
ἐλθοῦσα τέρψω, τῆσδε γῆς σεσωσμένης.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1090 ἐπεὶ Κρέοντος παῖς ὁ γῆς ὑπερθανῶν
πύργων ἐπ' ἄκρων στάς μελάνδετον ξίφος
λαιμῶν διῆκε τῆδε γῆ σωτήριον,
λόχους ἔνειμεν ἐπτά καὶ λοχαγέτας
πύλας ἐφ' ἐπτά, φύλακας Ἀργείου δορός,
σὸς παῖς, ἐφέδρους δ' ἰππότας μὲν ἰππόταις
ἔταξ', ὀπλίτας δ' ἀσπιδηφόροις ἔπι,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

What word of tidings bringest thou to me?
Dead is my son, or liveth he?—declare.

MESSENGER

He lives. Fear not! I rid thee so of dread.

JOCASTA

And the seven towers, how fares the fence thereof?

MESSENGER

They stand unshattered: Thebes not yet is spoiled.

JOCASTA

Were they sore perilled of the Argive spear?

1080

MESSENGER

At ruin's brink: but stronger proved the might
Of Cadmus' people than Mycenae's spear.

JOCASTA

One thing, by heaven!—of Polyneices aught
Canst tell? I yearn for this? Doth he see light?

MESSENGER

Liveth thus far thy chariot-yoke of sons.

JOCASTA

Blessings on thee! How did ye thrust the spear
Of Argos back from your beleaguered gates?
Tell, that I may rejoice the blind old man
The halls within, with news of this land saved.

MESSENGER

When Creon's son, who for his country died,
Climbing a tower's height, had thrust the sword
Black-hafted through his throat to save the land,
Seven bands with captains to the seven gates,
For watch and ward against the Argive spear,
Thy son set, horsemen covering horsemen ranged,
And men-at-arms behind the shield-bearers,

1090

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ὡς τῷ νοσοῦντι τειχέων εἴη δορὸς
 ἀλκῆ δι' ὀλίγου. περγάμων δ' ἀπ' ὀρθίων
 1100 Τευμησὸν ἐκλιπόντα· καὶ τάφρου πέλας
 δρόμῳ συνήψεν ἄστρῳ Καδμείας χθονός.
 παιὰν δὲ καὶ σάλπιγγες ἐκελάδουν ὁμοῦ
 ἐκεῖθεν ἕκ τε τειχέων ἡμῶν πάρα.
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν προσῆγε Νηίσταις πύλαις
 λόχον πυκναῖσιν ἀσπίσιν πεφρικότα
 ὁ τῆς κυναγοῦ Παρθενοπαῖος ἔκγονος,
 ἐπίσημ' ἔχων οἰκεῖον ἐν μέσῳ σάκει,
 ἐκηβόλοις τόξοισιν Ἀταλάντην κάπρον
 1110 χειρουμένην Αἰτωλῶν. εἰς δὲ Προϊτίδας
 πύλας ἐχώρει σφάγι' ἔχων ἐφ' ἄρματι
 ὁ μάντις Ἀμφιάραος, οὐ σημεί' ἔχων
 ὑβρισμέν', ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως ἄσημ' ὄπλα.
 Ὀγύγια δ' εἰς πυλώμαθ' Ἴππομέδων ἀναξ
 ἔστειχ' ἔχων σημείον ἐν μέσῳ σάκει
 στίκτοῖς Πανόπτην ὄμμασιν δεδορκότα,
 τὰ μὲν σὺν ἄστρων ἐπιτολαῖσιν ὄμματα
 βλέποντα, τὰ δὲ κρύπτοντα δυνόντων μέτα,
 ὡς ὕστερον θανόντος εἰσορᾶν παρῆν.
 Ὀμολωῖσιν δὲ τάξιν εἶχε πρὸς πύλαις
 1120 Τυδεύς, λέοντος δέρος ἔχων ἐπ' ἀσπίδι
 χαίτη πεφρικός· δεξιᾷ δὲ λαμπάδα
 Τίταν Προμηθεὺς ἔφερεν ὡς πρήσων πόλιν.
 ὁ σὸς δὲ Κρηναίαισι Πολυνεΐκης πύλαις
 Ἄρη προσῆγε· Ποτνιαδες δ' ἐπ' ἀσπίδι
 ἐπίσημα πῶλοι δρομάδες ἐσκίρτων φόβῳ,
 εὐ πῶς στρόφιγξιν ἐνδοθεν κυκλούμεναι
 πόρπαχ' ὑπ' αὐτόν, ὥστε μαίνεσθαι δοκεῖν.
 ὁ δ' οὐκ ἔλασσον Ἄρεος εἰς μάχην φρονῶν

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

That, where the wall's defence failed, succour of
spears

Might be hard by. Then from the soaring towers
We marked the white shields of the Argive host
Leaving Teumessus. Having neared the foss, 1100
Suddenly charging closed they on Cadmus' burg.
Then paean swelled, and shattering trumpet shrilled,
All blended, from the foe and from the walls.

Parthenopæus, that famed huntress' son,
First led against the Gate Neïstian
A squadron horrent all with serried shields,
On his mid-targe the blazon of his house,
Atalanta slaying the Aetolian boar
With shafts far-smiting. Against Proetus' Gate,
Slain victims on his chariot, marched the seer 1110
Amphiaraus, with no proud device,
But sober weapons void of blazonry.
The gates Ogygian King Hippomedon
Assailed, in mid-targe bearing for device
Argus, with gemmy eyes for aye at gaze,
Some with the rising of the stars aglare,
While, as the stars set, some were slumber-veiled,
As might be seen thereafter, he being slain.
Against the Gate of Homole Tydeus took
His stand, his shield draped with a lion's hide 1120
All shaggy-haired : Titan Prometheus bore
A torch in hand there, as to burn the town.

Thy son Polyneices at the Fountain Gate
Led on the war. Upon his shield the steeds
Of Potniae racing in fear-frenzy sprang,
Wheeled round within by pivots cunningly
Hard by the hand-grip; that they seemed distraught.
High-stomached for the fight as Ares' self,

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- Καπανεύς προσήγε λόχον ἐπ' Ἡλέκτραις πύλαις·
 1130 σιδηρονώτοις δ' ἀσπίδος τύποις ἐπῆν
 γίγας ἐπ' ὤμοις γηγενῆς ὄλην πόλιν
 φέρων μοχλοῖσιν ἐξανασπάσας βάθρων,
 ὑπόνοιαν ἡμῖν οἶα πείσεται πόλις.
 ταῖς δ' ἐβδόμαις Ἄδραστος ἐν πύλαισιν ἦν,
 ἑκατὸν ἐχίδναις ἀσπίδ' ἐκπληρῶν γραφῇ
 ὕδρας ἔχων λαιοῖσιν ἐν βραχίοσιν
 Ἄργεῖον αὐχημ'. ἐκ δὲ τειχέων μέσων
 δράκοντες ἔφερον τέκνα Καδμείων γνάθοις.
 παρῆν δ' ἐκάστον τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ θεάματα
 1140 ξύνθημα παραφέρουσι ποιμέσιν λόχων.
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν τόξοισι καὶ μεσαγκύλοις
 ἐμαρνάμεσθα σφενδόναις θ' ἐκηβόλοις
 πετρῶν τ' ἀραγμοῖς· ὡς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ,
 ἔκλαυξε Τυδεὺς χῶ σὸς ἐξαίφνης γόνος·
 ὦ τέκνα Δαναῶν, πρὶν κατεξάνθαι βολαῖς,
 τί μέλλετ' ἄρδην πάντες ἐμπίπτειν πύλαις,
 γυμνήτες ἱππῆς ἀρμάτων τ' ἐπιστάται;
 ἡχῆς δ' ὅπως ἤκουσαν, οὔτις ἀργὸς ἦν·
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιπτον κρᾶτας αἱματούμενοι,
 1150 ἡμῶν τ' ἐς οὐδας εἶδες ἂν πρὸ τειχέων
 πυκνοὺς κυβιστητήρας ἐκπεπνευκότας,
 ξηρὰν δ' ἔδενον γαίαν αἵματος ῥοαῖς.
 ὁ δ' Ἄρκας, οὐκ Ἄργεῖος, Ἀταλάντης γόνος
 τυφῶς πύλαισιν ὡς τις ἐμπεσῶν βοᾷ
 πῦρ καὶ δικέλλας, ὡς κατασκάψων πόλιν·
 ἀλλ' ἔσχε μαργῶντ' αὐτὸν ἐναλίου θεοῦ
 Περικλύμενος παῖς λᾶαν ἐμβαλὼν κᾶρα
 ἀμαξοπληθῆ, γεῖσ' ἐπάλξεων ἄπο·
 ξανθὸν δὲ κρᾶτα διεπάλυνε καὶ ῥαφὰς
 1160 ἔρρηξεν ὀστέων, ἄρτι δ' οἰνωπὸν γένυν

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Led Capaneus his troop to Electra's Gate ;
And, for his iron-faced buckler's blazonry, 1130
An earth-born giant on his shoulders bore
A whole town from its basement lever-wrenched,
As token for us of our city's fate.

And at the seventh gate Adrastus was,
His graven shield with five-score vipers thronged
Swung on his left arm, even the Argive vaunt,
The Hydra ; and its serpents from our walls
Were snatching Cadmus' children in their jaws.
Each chief's device I well might mark, who bare
The watchword to the leaders of our bands. 1140

Then first with bows and thong-sped javelins
We battled, and with slings that smote from far,
And crashing stones. But when we 'gan prevail,
Suddenly shouted Tydeus and thy son :
" Sons of the Danaans, ere their bolts quell you,
Why do ye tarry, onward-hurling all,
To assault their gates—light-armed, horse, chariot-
lords? "

Soon as they heard that cry, was none hung back.
Many, with heads blood-dashed, were falling fast ;
And of us many earthward flung thou hadst seen 1150
Before the walls, like divers plunging, dead,
Drenching the thirsty soil with streams of gore.

But Atalanta's son—no Argive he—
Hurls like a whirlwind at the gates, and shouts
For fire and mattocks, as to raze the town.
But his mid-fury Periclymenus stayed,
The Sea-god's son, who hurled a wain-load crag,
A battlement-coping, down upon his shield,
Spattered abroad the golden head, and rent
The knittings of its bones : the cheeks dark-flushed 1160

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- καθημάτωσεν· οὐδ' ἀποίσεται βίον
 τῇ καλλιτόξῳ μητρὶ Μαινάλου κόρη.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ τάσδ' εἰσείδεν εὐτυχεῖς πύλας,
 ἄλλας ἐπῆει παῖς σός, εἰπόμην δ' ἐγώ.
 ὁρῶ δὲ Τυδῆ καὶ παρασπιστὰς πυκνοὺς
 Αἰτωλίσιν λόγχαισιν εἰς ἄκρον στόμα
 πύργων ἀκοντίζοντας, ὥστ' ἐπάλξεων
 λιπεῖν ἐρίπνας φυγάδας· ἀλλὰ νιν πάλιν,
 1170 κυναγὸς ὡσεὶ, παῖς σὸς ἐξαθροίζεται,
 πύργοις δ' ἐπέστησ' αὐθις. εἰς δ' ἄλλας πύλας
 ἠπειγόμεσθα, τοῦτο παύσαντες νοσοῦν.
 Καπανεὺς δὲ πῶς εἶποιμ' ἂν ὡς ἐμαίνετο ;
 μακραύχενος γὰρ κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις
 ἔχων ἐχώρει, καὶ τοσόνδ' ἐκόμπασε,
 μηδ' ἂν τὸ σεμνὸν πῦρ νιν εἰργαθεῖν Διὸς
 τὸ μὴ οὐ κατ' ἄκρων περγάμων ἐλεῖν πόλιν.
 καὶ ταῦθ' ἄμ' ἠγόρευε καὶ πετρούμενος
 ἀνεῖρφ' ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἀσπίδ' εἰλίξας δέμας,
 κλίμακος ἀμείβων ξέστ' ἐνηλάτων βάρβα.
 1180 ἦδη δ' ὑπερβαίνοντα γεῖσα τειχέων
 βάλλει κεραυνῷ Ζεὺς νιν. ἐκτύπησε δὲ
 χθῶν, ὥστε δεῖσαι πάντας· ἐκ δὲ κλιμάκων
 ἐσφενδονᾶτο χωρὶς ἀλλήλων μέλη,
 κόμαι μὲν εἰς Ὀλύμπου, αἶμα δ' εἰς χθόνα,
 χεῖρες δὲ καὶ κῶλ' ὡς κύκλωμ' Ἰξίονος
 εἰλίσσεται· εἰς γῆν δ' ἔμπυρος πίπτει νεκρός.
 ὡς δ' εἶδ' Ἄδραστος Ζῆνα πολέμου στρατῶ,
 ἔξω τάφρου καθίσεν Ἀργείων στρατόν.
 οἱ δ' αὖ παρ' ἡμῶν δεξιὸν Διὸς τέρας
 1190 ἰδόντες ἐξήλαυνον ἰρμάτων ὄχους
 ἰππηῆς· ὀπλίται τ' εἰς μέσ' Ἀργείων ὄπλα
 συνῆψαν ἔγχη, πάντα δ' ἦν ὁμοῦ κακά·

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Dashed he with blood. No life shall he bear back
To his archer-mother, Maid of Maenalus.
Then, marking how at this gate all went well,
Passed to the next thy son, I following still.
There saw I Tydeus with his serried shields,
With spears Aetolian javelining the height
Of the roofless towers, that from the rampart's crest
Ours fled in panic. But thy son again
Rallies them, as the hunter cheers his hounds ;
So manned the walls anew. To other gates
On pressed we, having stayed the mischief there.

1170

But how the madness tell of Capaneus ?
For, grasping the long ladder's scaling rounds,
On came he, and thus haughtily vaunted he,
That not Zeus' awful fire should hold him back
From razing from her topmost towers the town.
Thus crying, ever as hailed the stones on him,
He climbed, with body gathered 'neath his targe,
Aye stepping from smooth ladder-rung to rung.
But, even as o'er the ramparts rose his head,
Zeus smiteth him with lightning : rang again
The earth, that all quailed. From the ladder flew
His limbs abroad wide-whirling slingstone-like :
Heavenward his hair streamed, earthward rained his
blood :

1180

Hands, feet—Ixion on his wheel seemed he—
Whirled round. To earth he fell, a corpse flame-
blasted.

Adrastus, seeing Zeus his army's foe,
Without the trench drew off the Argive host.
Then, marking Zeus's portent fair for us,
Forth of the gates our horse their chariots drive :
Our footmen crashed through Argos' mid-array
With levelled spears ;—'twas turmoiled ruin all—

1190

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἔθνησκον ἐξέπιπτον ἀντύγων ἄπο,
τροχοὶ τ' ἐπήδων ἄξονές τ' ἐπ' ἄξοσι,
νεκροὶ δὲ νεκροῖς ἐξεσωρεύονθ' ὁμοῦ.
πύργων μὲν οὖν γῆς ἔσχομεν κατασκαφὰς
εἰς τὴν παρούσαν ἡμέραν· εἰ δ' εὐτυχῆς
ἔσται τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδε γῆ, θεοῖς μέλει·
καὶ νῦν γὰρ αὐτὴν δαιμόνων ἔσωσέ τις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1200 καλὸν τὸ νικᾶν· εἰ δ' ἀμείνον' οἱ θεοὶ
γνώμην ἔχουσιν—εὐτυχῆς εἶην ἐγώ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καλῶς τὰ τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὰ τῆς τύχης ἔχει·
παῖδές τε γάρ μοι ζῶσι κάκπέφευγε γῆ.
Κρέων δ' ἔοικε τῶν ἐμῶν νυμφευμάτων
τῶν τ' Οἰδίπου δύστηνος ἀπολαῦσαι κακῶν,
παιδὸς στερηθεὶς, τῇ πόλει μὲν εὐτυχῶς,
ιδίᾳ δὲ λυπρῶς. ἀλλ' ἀνελθέ μοι πάλιν,
τί τὰπὶ τουτοῖς παιδ' ἐμῶ δρασεῖετον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἔα τὰ λοιπά· δεῦρ' αἰεὶ γὰρ εὐτυχεῖς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1210 τοῦτ' εἰς ὑποπτον εἶπας· οὐκ ἐατέον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μείζον τι χρήξεις παῖδας ἢ σεσωσμένους ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τὰπίλοιπά γ' εἰ καλῶς πράσσω κλύειν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μέθες μ'· ἔρημος παῖς ὑπασπιστοῦ σέθεν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κακόν τι κεύθεις καὶ στέγεις ὑπὸ σκότῳ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἄν γε λέξαιμ' ἐπ' ἀγαθοῖσί σοι κακά.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Men dying—falling o'er the chariot-rails—
Wheels leaping—axles upon axles dashed,
And corpses heaped on corpses all confused.

So then for this day have we barred the fall
Of our land's towers ; but if good fortune waits
On Thebes henceforth, this resteth with the Gods :
Only a God's hand rescued her to-day.

CHORUS

Glorious is victory : if more favours yet 1200
The Gods intend—ah, may I so be blest !

JOCASTA

Fair are the dealings of the Gods and Fate :
For lo, my sons live, and the land hath 'scaped.
But Creon hath, meseems, reaped evil fruit
Of mine and Oedipus' marriage—hapless sire,
Reft of his son, for blessing unto Thebes,
But grief to him ! Take up the tale again,
And tell what now my sons are bent to do.

MESSENGER

Forbear the rest. Thus far 'tis well with thee.

JOCASTA

Thou stirr'st surmisings ! I can not forbear ! 1210

MESSENGER

How, wouldst thou more than know thy sons are safe ?

JOCASTA

Yea, know if things to come be well for me.

MESSENGER

Now let me go : thy son his henchman lacks.

JOCASTA

Some ill thou hid'st—in darkness veilest it !

MESSENGER

I would not tell thee evil blent with good.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἦν μή γε φεύγων ἐκφύγῃς πρὸς αἰθέρα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

- 1220 αἰαί· τί μ' οὐκ εἶσας ἐξ εὐαγγέλου
 φήμης ἀπελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ μνηῦσαι κακά ;
 τὼ παῖδε τὼ σὼ μέλλετον, τολμήματα
 αἰσχιστα, χωρὶς μονομαχεῖν παντὸς στρατοῦ,
 λέξαντες Ἀργεῖοισι Καδμείοισί τε
 εἰς κοινὸν οἶον μήποτ' ὄφελον λόγον.
 Ἔτεοκλῆς δ' ὑπῆρξ' ἀπ' ὀρθίου σταθεῖς
 πύργου, κελεύσας σίγα κηρῦξαι στρατῶ·
 [ἔλεξε δ' ὦ γῆς Ἑλλάδος στρατηλάται]
 Δαναῶν ἀριστῆς, οὔπερ ἦλθετ' ἐνθάδε,
 Κάδμου τε λαός, μήτε Πολυνείκους χάριν
 ψυχὰς ἀπεμπολᾶτε μήθ' ἡμῶν ὑπερ.
 1230 ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτὸς τόνδε κίνδυνον μεθεῖς
 μόνος συνάψω συγγόνῳ τῷμῳ μάχην·
 κὰν μὲν κτάνω τόνδ', οἶκον οἰκήσω μόνος,
 ἡσσωμένος δὲ τῷδε παραδώσω μόνῳ.
 ὑμεῖς δ' ἀγῶν' ἀφέντες, Ἀργεῖοι, χθόνα
 νίσσεσθε, βίοτον μὴ λιπόντες ἐνθάδε,
 Σπαρτῶν τε λαὸς ἅλις ὅσος κείται νεκρός.
 τοσαῦτ' ἔλεξε· σὸς δὲ Πολυνείκης γόνος
 ἐκ τάξεων ὤρουσε κἀπήνει λόγους.
 πάντες δ' ἐπερρόθησαν Ἀργεῖοι τάδε
 Κάδμου τε λαὸς ὡς δίκαι' ἠγοούμενοι.
 1240 ἐπὶ τοῖσδε δ' ἐσπείσαντο, κὰν μεταιχμίους
 ὄρκους συνῆψαν ἐμμενεῖν στρατηλάται.
 ἦδη δ' ἔκρυπτον σῶμα παγχάλκοις ὄπλοις
 δισσοὶ γέροντος Οἰδίπου νεανία·
 φίλοι δ' ἐκόσμου, τῆσδε μὲν πρόμον χθονὸς
 Σπαρτῶν ἀριστῆς, τὸν δὲ Δαναϊδῶν ἄκροι.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

JOCASTA

That shalt thou—except to heaven thou wing thy flight.

MESSENGER

Alas ! why couldst thou let me not go hence
After good tidings, but wouldst have the ill ?
Thy two sons purpose single fight, apart
From all the host—a desperate deed of shame ! 1220
To Argives and Cadmeans one and all
They spake that which would God they had left
unsaid !

Eteocles from a lofty tower began—
Having bid publish silence to the host—
And said : “ O battle-chiefs of Hellas-land,
Lords of the Danaans who have hither come,
And Cadmus' folk—for Polyneices' sake
Sell not your lives, nor sell them in my cause.
For I myself will free you of this risk,
And with my brother grapple alone in fight. 1230
If I slay him, mine halls I hold alone :
O'erthrown, I yield them up to him alone.
Argives, forbear the struggle, and return
Unto your land, not leaving here your lives ;
And of the Sown suffice the already dead.”
Thus spake he ; Polyneices then, thy son,
Leapt from the ranks, and hailed the challenge-word ;
And all the Argives shouted yea to this,
And Cadmus' folk, as righteous in their eyes.
On these terms made they truce, and in mid-space 1240
The chiefs took oaths whereby they should abide.
Then ancient Oedipus' two sons straightway
'Gan case their bodies in all-brazen mail,
Holpen of friends ; by Theban lords the king
Of this land, and by Danaan chiefs his brother.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἔσταν δὲ λαμπρῶ, χρῶμά τ' οὐκ ἠλλαξάτην
 μαργῶντ' ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἰέναι δόρυ.
 παρεξιώντες δ' ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν φίλων
 λόγοισι θαρσύνοντες ἐξηύδων τάδε·
 1250 Πολύνεικες, ἐν σοὶ Ζηγὸς ὀρθῶσαι βρέτας
 τρόπαιον Ἄργει τ' εὐκλεᾶ δοῦναι λόγον
 Ἐτεοκλέα δ' αὖ· νῦν πόλεως ὑπερμαχεῖς,
 σὺ καλλίνικος γενόμενος σκήπτρων κρατεῖς.
 τὰδ' ἠγόρευον παρακαλοῦντες εἰς μάχην.
 μάντις δὲ μῆλ' ἔσφαζον, ἐμπύρους τ' ἄκμας
 ῥήξεις τ' ἐνώμων, ὑγρότητ' ἐναντίαν,
 ἄκραν τε λαμπάδ', ἢ δυοῖν ὄρους ἔχει,
 νίκης τε σῆμα καὶ τὸ τῶν ἠσσωμένων.
 ἀλλ' εἴ τιν' ἀλκὴν ἢ σοφὸν ἔχεις λόγους
 1260 ἢ φίλτρ' ἐπωδῶν, στεῖχ', ἐρήτυσον τέκνα
 δεινῆς ἀμίλλης, ὡς ὁ κίνδυνος μέγας·
 κάπαθλα δεινὰ δάκρυά σοι γενήσεται
 δισσοῖν στερεῖση τῆδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τέκνοιον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τέκνον, ἔξελθ', Ἀντιγόνη, δόμων πάρος
 οὐκ ἐν χορείαις οὐδὲ παρθενεύμασι
 νῦν σοι προχωρεῖ δαιμόνων κατάστασις,
 ἀλλ' ἄνδρ' ἀρίστω καὶ κασιγνήτῳ σέθεν
 εἰς θάνατον ἐκνεύοντε κωλύσαί σε δεῖ
 ξὺν μητρὶ τῇ σῆ μὴ πρὸς ἀλλήλοιν θανεῖν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1270 τίν', ὦ τεκοῦσα μήτηρ, ἔκπληξιν νέαν
 φίλοις αὐτεῖς τῶνδε δωμάτων πάρος;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ θύγατερ, ἔρρει σῶν κασιγνήτων βίος.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

There stood they gleaming,—never paled their
cheeks,—
Each panting at his foe to dart the spear.
On this side and on that their friends drew nigh,
With heartening words thus speaking unto them ;
“ Thine, Polyneices, is it to set up 1250
Zeus’ trophy-statue, and give Argos fame ” ;
To Eteocles—“ Thou for Thebes dost fight :
Now triumph, and thou hold’st her sceptre fast.”
So did they hail them, cheering them to fight.
And the priests slew the sheep : flame-tongue they
marked,
And flame-cleft, steamy reek that bodeth ill,
The pointed flame, which hath decisions twain,
Betokening victory or overthrow.
If any power thou hast or cunning words,
Or spell of charms, go, pluck thou back thy sons 1260
From that dread strife ; for grim the peril is ;
And, for dread guerdon, tears shall be thy portion,
If thou of two sons be this day bereaved. [*Exit.*]

JOCASTA

Daughter Antigone, come forth the house !
No dances, neither toils of maiden hands,
Beseem thee in this hour of heaven’s doom ;
But heroes twain, yea, brethren unto thee,
Now deathward reeling, with thy mother thou
Must hold from dying, each by other slain.

Enter ANTIGONE.

ANTIGONE

Mother that bare me, what strange terror-cry 1270
Before these halls to thy friends utterest thou ?

JOCASTA

Daughter, thy brethren’s life is come to naught.

449

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

πῶς εἶπας;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

αἰχμὴν ἐς μίαν καθέστατον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οἱ ἄγω, τί λέξεις, μήτηρ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐ φίλ', ἀλλ' ἔπου.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῖ, παρθενῶνας ἐκλιποῦσ' ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἀνὰ στρατόν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

αἰδούμεθ' ὄχλον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐκ ἐν αἰσχύνῃ τὰ σά.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δράσω δὲ δὴ τί;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

συγγόνων λύσεις ἔριν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί δρώσα, μήτηρ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

προσπίτνουσ' ἐμοῦ μέτα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἡγοῦ σὺ πρὸς μεταίχμι', οὐ μελλητέον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἔπειγ' ἔπειγε, θύγατερ· ὡς ἦν μὲν φθάσω
παῖδας πρὸ λόγχης, οὐμὸς ἐν φάει βίος·
θανοῦσι δ' αὐτοῖς συνθανοῦσα κείσομαι.

1280

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

How say'st thou?

JOCASTA

Met they are for single fight.

ANTIGONE

Woe! what wilt say?

JOCASTA

Naught welcome. Follow me.

ANTIGONE

Whither, from maiden-bowers?

JOCASTA

Through the host.

ANTIGONE

I shrink from throngs!

JOCASTA

No time for modesty this!

ANTIGONE

I—what can I do?

JOCASTA

Part thy brethren's strife.

ANTIGONE

Mother, whereby?

JOCASTA

Fall at their feet with me.

ANTIGONE

Lead to the mid-space! We may tarry not.

JOCASTA

Haste, daughter, haste: for, may I but forestall 1280
My sons ere fighting, light of life is mine:
If they be dead, dead with them will I lie. [*Exeunt.*]

451

G G 2

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ, στρ.
 τρομερὰν φρίκα τρομερὰν φρέν' ἔχω·
 διὰ σάρκα δ' ἔμην
 ἔλεος ἔλεος ἔμολε ματέρος δειλαίας.
 δίδυμα τέκεα πότερος ἄρα πότερον αἰμάξει—
 ἰὼ μοι πόνων,
 1290 ἰὼ Ζεῦ, ἰὼ γᾶ—
 ὁμογενῆ δέραν, ὁμογενῆ ψυχὰν
 δι' ἀσπίδων, δι' αἱμάτων;
 τάλαιν' ἐγὼ τάλαινα,
 πότερον ἄρα νέκυν ὀλόμενον ἀχήσω;

φεῦ δᾶ φεῦ δᾶ, ἀντ.
 δίδυμοι θῆρες, φόνιαι ψυχαὶ
 δορὶ παλλόμεναι
 πέσεα πέσεα δάι' αὐτίχ' αἰμάξετον.
 1300 τάλανες, ὅ τι ποτὲ μονομάχον ἐπὶ φρέν' ἠλθέτην,
 βοᾶ βαρβάρῳ
 ἰαχὰν στενακτὰν
 μελομέναν νεκροῖς δάκρυσι θρηνήσω.
 σχεδὸν τύχα πέλας φόνου·
 κρινεῖ ξίφος¹ τὸ μέλλον.
 ἄποτμος ἄποτμος ὁ φόνος ἔνεκ' Ἑρινύων.

ἀλλὰ γὰρ Κρέοντα λεύσσω τόνδε δεῦρο συννεφῆ
 πρὸς δόμους στείχοντα, παύσω τοὺς παρεστῶτας
 γόους.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1310 οἴμοι, τί δράσω; πότερ' ἔμαντὸν ἢ πόλιν
 στένω δακρύσας, ἣν πέριξ ἔχει νέφος

¹ Hermann: for φᾶος of MSS.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS

Alas and alas ! (Str.)

Shuddering, shuddering horror of soul have I :

Through the very flesh of me pass

Compassion-thrills for a mother in misery. [lie—

Two sons—who, slain of the other, in blood shall

Woe, anguish, and dismay !

Zeus !—Earth !—to you I pray !—

1290

With his throat pierced, his life by a brother sped,

His shield cleft, and his blood by a brother shed ?

Woe's me and well-a-day !

For whom shall I uplift my voice to wail him dead ?

O land, O land ! (Ant.)

Two ravening beasts, two spirits of murderous mood,

With the battle-lust quivering they stand ;

But brother shall soon lay brother low in his blood !

Wretches, that ever on duel bent they stood !

1300

With wail of alien tongue

Shall my wild dirge be sung,

Tears for the dead, and lamentation's cry.

Fate presseth nearer, murder is hard by,

In the sword's balance hung :—

Curst slaughter, curst, the work of Vengeance-destiny !

Ha, 'tis Creon I behold, that hitherward with clouded
brow [but now.

Hasteth to the palace. I will hush the wail begun

Enter CREON, *with* ATTENDANTS *bearing the body of*

MENOECEUS

CREON

What shall I do ? Weeping shall I bemoan

1310

Myself, or Thebes whom such a cloud o'erpalls

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

1320 τοιοῦτον ὥστε δι' Ἀχέροντος ἰέναι ;
 ἐμός τε γὰρ παῖς γῆς ὄλωλ' ὑπερθανών,
 τοῦνομα λαβὼν γενναῖον, ἀνιαρόν δ' ἐμοί·
 ὃν ἄρτι κρημνῶν ἐκ δρακοντείων ἐλὼν
 αὐτοσφαγῆ δύστηνος ἐκόμισ' ἐν χεροῖν,
 βοᾷ δὲ δῶμα πᾶν· ἐγὼ δ' ἦκω μετὰ
 γέρον ἀδελφῆν γραῖαν Ἰοκάστην, ὅπως
 λούση προθήται τ' οὐκέτ' ὄντα παῖδ' ἐμόν.
 τοῖς γὰρ θανούσι χρῆ τὸν οὐ τεθηκότα
 τιμὰς διδόντα χθόνιον εὐσεβεῖν θεόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βέβηκ' ἀδελφῆ σή, Κρέων, ἔξω δόμων
 κόρη τε μητρὸς Ἀντιγόνη κοινῶ ποδί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποῖ κάπὶ ποίαν συμφοράν ; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἤκουσε τέκνα μονομάχῳ μέλλειν δορὶ
 εἰς ἀσπίδ' ἤξειν βασιλικῶν δόμων ὑπερ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶς φῆς ; νέκυν τοι παιδὸς ἀγαπάζων ἐμοῦ
 οὐκ εἰς τόδ' ἦλθον ὥστε καὶ τάδ' εἰδέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1330 ἀλλ' οἴχεται μὲν σὴ κασιγνήτη πάλαι
 δοκῶ δ' ἀγῶνα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς, Κρέων,
 ἤδη πεπράχθαι παισὶ τοῖσιν Οἰδίπου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴμοι, τὸ μὲν σημεῖον εἰσορῶ τόδε,
 σκυθρωπὸν ὄμμα καὶ πρόσωπον ἀγγέλου
 στείχοντος, ὃς πᾶν ἀγγελεῖ τὸ δρώμενον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, τίν' εἶπω μῦθον ἢ τίνας γόους ;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

As through the gloom of Acheron drifts her now ?
Dead is my son ! He died for fatherland,
Winning a glorious name, but woe for me.
Him from the Dragon's crags but now I caught
Self-slain, and woefully bare him in mine arms.
My whole house wails. I for my sister come,
Jocasta,—come, the old to seek the old,—
To bathe and lay out this no more my son.
For he who hath not died must reverence
The Nether-gods by honouring the dead.

1320

CHORUS

Gone is thy sister, Creon, forth the house ;
And with her went her child Antigone.

CREON

Whither ?—for what mischance ? Declare to me.

CHORUS

The purpose of her sons she heard, to fight
In single combat for the royal halls.

CREON

How sayest thou ? Lo, tending my son's corse,
I came not to the knowledge of this deed.

CHORUS

Yea, hence thy sister parted long ago :
And that death-struggle, Creon, now, meseems,
Is ended 'twixt the sons of Oedipus.

1330

CREON

Ah me ! a token yonder do I see,
The joyless eye and face of one who comes
A messenger, to tell all horrors done.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Woe is me ! what story can I tell, or utter forth what
wail ?

455

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἰχόμεσθ'· οὐκ εὐπροσώποις φροιμίους ἄρχει
λόγου.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ τάλας, δισσῶς ἀντῶ· μεγάλα γὰρ φέρω κακά.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πρὸς πεπραγμένοισιν ἄλλοις πῆμασιν; λέγεις
δὲ τί;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκέτ' εἰσὶ σῆς ἀδελφῆς παῖδες ἐν φάει, Κρέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1340 αἰαῖ.

μεγάλα μοι θροεῖς πάθεα καὶ πόλει.
ὦ δώματ' εἰσηκούσατ' Οἰδίπου τάδε
παίδων ὁμοίαις συμφοραῖς ὀλωλότων;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὥστ' ἂν δακρῦσαί γ', εἰ φρονούντ' ἐτύγχανεν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴμοι ξυμφορᾶς βαρυποτμωτάτας,
οἴμοι κακῶν δύστηνος· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

εἰ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοισί γ' εἰδείης κακά.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ πῶς γένοιτ' ἂν τῶνδε δυσποτμώτερα;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τέθνηκ' ἀδελφῆ σῆ δυοῖν παῖδων μέτα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1350 ἀνάγετ' ἀνάγετε κωκυτόν,
ἐπὶ κᾶρα τε λευκοπήχεις κτύπους χεροῖν.

456

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Ah, undone! With no fair-seeming prelude thou be-
ginn'st thy tale.

MESSENGER

Woe! Again I cry it, for I bring a burden of
dismay—

CREON

Heaped upon calamities already wrought? What
wouldst thou say?

MESSENGER

Creon, those thy sister's sons behold no more the light
of day.

CREON

Alas!

Terrible ills for me and for Thebes dost thou tell—
O halls of Oedipus, have ye heard this?—
Dost tell of sons that by one doom have died!

1340

CHORUS

Their very walls might weep, could they but know.

CREON

Woe's me, the disaster, when fate's stroke heavily fell!
Woe for my sorrows! Ah unhappy I!

MESSENGER

Ah, didst thou know the evils more than these!

CREON

What can be more calamitous than these?

MESSENGER

Dead is thy sister—dead with her two sons.

CHORUS

Upraise, upraise the lamentation-strain,
Down on the head let blows of white hands rain!

1350

457

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ τλήμων, οἶον τέρμον', Ἰοκάστη, βίου
γάμων τε τῶν σῶν Σφίγγος αἰνιγμοῖς ἔτλης.
πῶς καὶ πέπρακται διπτύχων παίδων φόνος
ἀρᾶς τ' ἀγώνισμ' Οἰδίπου; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

- τὰ μὲν πρὸ πύργων εὐτυχήματα χθονὸς
οἶσθ'· οὐ μακρὰν γὰρ τειχέων περιπτυχαί.
[ὥστ' οὐχ ἅπαντ' ἄσ' εἰδέναι τὰ δρώμενα.]
1360 ἐπεὶ δὲ χαλκίοις σῶμ' ἔκοσμήσανθ' ὄπλοις
οἱ τοῦ γέροντος Οἰδίπου νεανίαι,
ἔστησαν ἐλθόντ' εἰς μέσον μεταίχμιον
[δισσῶ στρατηγῶ καὶ διπλῶ στρατηλάτα]
ὡς εἰς ἀγῶνα μονομάχου τ' ἀλκὴν δορός.
βλέψας δ' ἐς Ἄργος ἦκε Πολυνείκης ἀράς·
ὦ πότνι' Ἥρα, σὸς γὰρ εἰμ', ἐπεὶ γάμοις
ἔξευξ' Ἀδράστου παῖδα καὶ ναίω χθόνα,
δός μοι κτανεῖν ἀδελφόν, ἀντήρη δ' ἐμήν
καθαιματῶσαι δεξιὰν νικηφόρον·
1370 [αἴσχιστον αἰτῶν στέφανον, ὁμογενῆ κτανεῖν.
πολλοῖς δ' ἐπήει δάκρυα τῆς τύχης ὄση,
κάβλεψαν ἀλλήλοισι διαδόντες κόρας.]
Ἐτεοκλῆς δὲ Παλλάδος χρυσάσπιδος
βλέψας πρὸς οἶκον ἠῤῥατ'· ὦ Διὸς κόρη,
δὸς ἐγχοῦς ἡμῖν καλλίνικον ἐκ χειρὸς
εἰς στέρν' ἀδελφοῦ τῆσδ' ἀπ' ὠλένης βαλεῖν,
κτανεῖν θ' ὃς ἦλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἀφείθη πυρσὸς ὡς Τυρσηνικῆς
σάλπιγγος ἠχή, σῆμα φοινίου μάχης,
1380 ἦξαν δρόμημα δεινὸν ἀλλήλοισι ἐπι·
κάπροι δ' ὅπως θήγοντες ἀγρίαθ γένυν
ξυνῆψαν, ἀφρῶ διάβροχοι γενειάδας·

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CREON

Hapless Jocasta, what an end of life
And marriage hast thou proved the Sphinx's riddle !
How came to pass the death of her two sons,
The strife, of Oedipus' curse that came ?—declare.

MESSENGER

The land's fair fortune in her towers' defence
Thou know'st : the girdling walls be not so far
But that thou mayest know whate'er is done.
Now when in brazen mail they had clad their limbs,
Those princes, sons of ancient Oedipus, 1360
Into the mid-space went they forth and stood,
Those chieftains two, those battle-leaders twain,
As for the grapple and strife of single fight.

Then, gazing Argos-ward, Polyneices prayed :
“ Queen Hera,—for thine am I since I wed
Adrastus' child, and dwell within thy land,—
Grant me to slay my brother, and to stain
My warring hand with blood of victory ! ”—
Asking a crown of shame, to slay a brother.
Tears sprang from many an eye at that dread fate, 1370
And each on other did men look askance.
But unto golden-shielded Pallas' fane
Eteocles looked, and prayed : “ Daughter of Zeus,
Grant that the conquering spear, of mine hand sped,
Yea; from this arm, may smite my brother's breast,
And slay him who hath come to waste my land ! ”

Then, when the Tuscan trump, like signal-torch,
Rang forth the token of the bloody fray,
Forth darted each at other in terrible rush ;
And, like wild boars that whet the tameless tusk, 1380
Clashed they, foam-flakes beslaving their beards.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ἦσσαν δὲ λόγχαις· ἀλλ' ὑφίζανον κύκλοις,
 ὅπως σίδηρος ἐξολισθάνοι μάτην.
 εἰ δ' ὄμμ' ὑπερσχὸν ἴτυος ἄτερος μάθοι,
 λόγχην ἐνώμα, στόματι προφθῆναι θέλων.
 ἀλλ' εὖ προσῆγον ἀσπίδων κεγχρώμασιν
 ὀφθαλμόν, ἀργὸν ὥστε γίγνεσθαι δόρυ.
 πᾶσιν δὲ τοῖς ὀρώσιν ἐστάλασσ' ἰδρῶς
 ἢ τοῖσι δρώσι, διὰ φίλων ὄρρωδιαν.
- 1390 Ἔτεοκλῆς δὲ ποδὶ μεταφθαίρων πέτρον
 ἴχνους ὑπόδρομον, κῶλον ἐκτὸς ἀσπίδος
 τίθησι. Πολυνεΐκης δ' ἀπήντησεν δορί,
 πληγὴν σιδήρῳ παραδοθεῖσαν εἰσιδῶν,
 κνήμης τε διεπέρασεν Ἄργεϊον δόρυ·
 στρατὸς δ' ἀνηλάλαξε Δαναϊδῶν ἅπας.
 κὰν τῷδε μόχθῳ γυμνὸν ὤμον εἰσιδῶν
 ὁ πρόσθε τρωθεὶς στέρνα Πολυνεΐκου βία
 διῆκε λόγχην, κἀπέδωκεν ἡδονὰς
- 1400 Κάδμου πολίταις, ἀπὸ δ' ἔθραυσ' ἄκρον δόρυ.
 εἰς δ' ἄπορον ἤκων δορὸς ἐπὶ σκέλος πάλιν
 χωρεῖ, λαβὼν δ' ἀφήκε μάρμαρον πέτρον,
 μέσον δ' ἄκοντ' ἔθραυσεν· ἐξ ἴσου δ' Ἄρης
 ἦν, κάμακος ἀμφοῖν χεῖρ' ἀπεστερημένοι.
 ἔνθεν δὲ κώπας ἀρπάσαντε φασιγάνων
 ἐς ταῦτόν ἤκον, συμβαλόντε δ' ἀσπίδας
 πολλὴν ταραγμὸν ἀμφιβάντ' εἶχον μάχης.
 καὶ πῶς νοήσας Ἔτεοκλῆς τὸ Θεσσαλὸν
 εἰσήγαγεν σόφισμ' ὀμιλία χθονός·
- 1410 ἐξαλλαγεῖς γὰρ τοῦ παρεστῶτος πόνου,
 λαιὸν μὲν εἰς τοῦπισθεν ἀμφέρει πόδα,
 πρόσω τὰ κοῖλα γαστρὸς εὐλαβούμενος·
 προβὰς δὲ κῶλον δεξιὸν δι' ὀμφαλοῦ
 καθῆκεν ἔγχος σφουδύλοις τ' ἐνήρμοσεν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

With spears they lunged : yet crouched behind their shields,

That so the steel might bootless glance aside.

And, if one saw foe's eye peer o'er the targe,

Aye thrust he, fain to overreach his fence.

Yet cunningly through eyelets of their shields

They glanced, that naught awhile the spear achieved,

While more from all beholders trickled sweat,

Of fear for friends, than from the champions' selves.

But Eteocles, spurning aside a stone

1390

That rolled beneath his tread, without his shield

Showed glimpse of fenceless limb. Polyneices lunged,

Marking the stroke so offered to the steel ;

And through the shank clear passed the Argive lance.

Loud cheered the whole array of Danaus' sons.

But his foe's shoulder by that effort bared

The stricken marked, and Polyneices' breast

Pierced with a strong spear-thrust, and gave back joy

To Cadmus' folk ; yet brake his spear-head short.

So, his lance lost, back fell he step by step,

1400

Caught up a rugged rock, and sped its flight,

Snapping his foe's spear thwart. Now was the fray

Equal, since either's hand was spear-bereft.

Thereupon snatched they at their falchion-hilts,

Closed, clashing shields, and, traversing to and fro,

Made rage the stormy clangour of the fight.

But, having learnt it visiting Thessaly,

Eteocles used the northern warriors' feint :

For, from the instant grapple springing clear,

Back on his left foot, backward still, he sinks,

1410

Watching the while his foe's waist : leaping then,

The right foot foremost, through the navel plunged

His sword, and 'twixt the spine-bones wedged the

point.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

1420 ὁμοῦ δὲ κάμψας πλευρὰ καὶ νηδὺν τάλας
 σὺν αἵματηραῖς σταγόσι Πολυνεΐκης πίτνει.
 ὁ δ', ὡς κρατῶν δὴ καὶ νενικηκῶς μάχη,
 ξίφος δικῶν εἰς γαίαν ἐσκύλευέ νιν,
 τὸν νοῦν πρὸς αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔχων, ἐκείσε δέ·
 ὃ καὶ νιν ἐσφηλ'. ἔτι γὰρ ἐμπνέων βραχύ,
 σῶζων σίδηρον ἐν λυγρῷ πεσῆματι,
 μόλις μὲν, ἐξέτεινε δ' εἰς ἦπαρ ξίφος
 Ἐτεοκλέους ὁ πρόσθε Πολυνεΐκης πεσῶν.
 γαίαν δ' ὀδᾶξ ἐλόντες ἀλλήλων πέλας
 πίπτουσιν ἄμφω κοῦ διώρισαν κράτος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, κακῶν σῶν, Οἰδίπου, σ' ὅσων στένω·
 τὰς σὰς δ' ἀρὰς ἔοικεν ἐκπλήσαι θεός.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1430 ἄκουε δὴ νυν καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοις κακά.
 ὡς γὰρ τέκνω πεσόντ' ἐλειπέτην βίον,
 ἐν τῷδε μήτηρ ἢ τάλαινα προσπίτνει
 σὺν παρθένῳ τε καὶ προθυμίᾳ ποδός.
 τετρωμένους δ' ἰδοῦσα καιρίους σφαγὰς
 ᾤμωξεν· ὦ τέκν', ὑστέρα βοηδρόμος
 πάρειμι. προσπίτνουσα δ' ἐν μέρει τέκνα
 ἔκλαι', ἐθρήνει τὸν πολὺν μάτην πόνον
 στένουσ', ἀδελφή θ' ἢ παρασπίζουσ' ὁμοῦ·
 ὦ γηροβοσκῶ μητρός, ὦ γάμους ἐμούς
 προδόντ' ἀδελφῶ φίλτάτω. στέρνων δ' ἄπο
 φύσημ' ἀνεῖς δύσθνητον Ἐτεοκλῆς ἀναξ
 1440 ἤκουσε μητρός, κάπιθεις ὑγράν χέρα
 φωνὴν μὲν οὐκ ἀφήκεν, ὀμμάτων δ' ἄπο
 προσεΐπε δακρύοις, ὥστε σημήναι φίλα.
 ὁ δ' ἦν ἔτ' ἐμπνους, πρὸς κασιγνήτην δ' ἰδὼν
 γραϊάν τε μητέρ' εἶπε Πολυνεΐκης τάδε·

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Then, ribs and belly inarched in anguish-throe,
Down-raining blood-gouts, Polyneices falls.
Our king, as victor, winner of the fight,
Casting his sword down, fell to spoiling him,
Heeding but that, nor recking his own risk ;
Which thing undid him. Faintly breathing yet,
Still grasping in his grievous fall his sword,
First-fallen Polyneices with hard strain
Plunged into Eteocles' heart the blade.
Gnashing in dust their teeth, there side by side
They lie, those twain, the victory doubtful still.

20

CHORUS

Alas ! I wail thy sore griefs, Oedipus !
Thy malisons, I wot, hath God fulfilled.

MESSENGER

Ah, but hear now what woes remain to tell.
Even as her fallen sons were leaving life,
Their wretched mother rusheth on the scene,—
She and the maid, with haste of eager feet ;
And, seeing them stricken with their mortal wounds,
She wailed, " Ah sons, too late for help I come ! "

1430

Then, falling on her sons, on each in turn,
She wept, she wailed, her long vain nursing-toil
Bemoaning : and their sister at her side—
" Props of your mother's age, dear brethren, who
Leave me a bride unwed ! " One dying gasp
Hard-heaving from his breast, King Eteocles
His mother heard, touched her with clammy hand,
Uttered no word, but from his eyes he spake
With tears, as giving token of his love.
But Polyneices breathing yet, and gazing
On sister and on aged mother, spake :

1440

463

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ἀπωλόμεσθα, μήτερ· οἰκτείρω δὲ σὲ
 καὶ τήνδ' ἀδελφήν καὶ κασίγνητον νεκρόν.
 φίλος γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ἐγένετ', ἀλλ' ὅμως φίλος.
 θάψον δέ μ', ὦ τεκοῦσα, καὶ σύ, σύγγονε,
 ἐν γῆ πατρώα, καὶ πόλιν θυμουμένην
 παρηγορεῖτον, ὡς τοσούδε γοῦν τύχῳ
 1450 χθονὸς πατρώας, κεῖ δόμους ἀπώλεσα.
 ξυνάρμοσον δὲ βλέφαρά μου τῇ σῇ χερί,
 μήτερ — τίθησι δ' αὐτὸς ὀμμάτων ἐπι —
 καὶ χαίрет'· ἤδη γὰρ με περιβάλλει σκότος.
 ἄμφω δ' ἄμ' ἐξέπνευσαν ἄθλιον βίον.
 μήτηρ δ', ὅπως ἐσεῖδε τήνδε συμφοράν,
 ὑπερπαθήσασ' ἤρπασ' ἐκ νεκρῶν ξίφος
 κᾶπραξε δεινά· διὰ μέσου γὰρ αὐχένος
 ὠθεῖ σίδηρον, ἐν δὲ τοῖσι φιλτάτοις
 1460 θανούσα κείται περιβαλοῦσ' ἀμφοῖν χέρας.
 ἀνῆξε δ' ὀρθὸς λαὸς εἰς ἔριν λόγων,
 ἡμεῖς μὲν ὡς νικῶντα δεσπότην ἐμόν,
 οἱ δ' ὡς ἐκείνον. ἦν δ' ἔρις στρατηλάταις,
 οἱ μὲν πατάξαι πρόσθε Πολυνεΐκην δορί,
 οἱ δ' ὡς θανόντων οὐδαμοῦ νίκη πέλοι.
 κὰν τῶδ' ὑπεξῆλθ' Ἀντιγόνη στρατοῦ δίχα.
 οἱ δ' εἰς ὄπλ' ἦσσαν· εὐ δὲ πῶς προμηθία
 καθῆστο Κάδμου λαὸς ἀσπίδων ἐπι·
 κᾶφθημεν οὐπω τεύχεσιν πεφραγμένον
 1470 Ἀργεῖον εἰσπεσόντες ἐξαίφνης στρατόν.
 κούδεις ὑπέστη, πεδία δ' ἐξεπίμπλασαν
 φεύγοντες, ἔρρει δ' αἷμα μυρίων νεκρῶν
 λόγχαις πιτνόντων. ὡς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ,
 οἱ μὲν Διὸς τροπαῖον ἴστασαν βρέτας,
 οἱ δ' ἀσπίδας συλῶντες Ἀργείων νεκρῶν
 σκυλεύματ' εἴσω τειχέων ἐπέμπομεν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

“Mother, our death is this. I pity thee,
And thee, my sister, and my brother dead.
Loved, he became my foe : but loved—yet loved !
Bury me, mother, and thou, sister mine,
In native soil, and our chafed city’s wrath
Appease ye, that I win thus much at least
Of fatherland, though I have lost mine home. 1450
And close thou up mine eyelids with thine hand,
Mother ;”—himself on his eyes layeth it—
“And fare ye well : the darkness wraps me round.”
So both together breathed their sad life forth.

And when the mother saw this woeful chance,
Grief-frenzied, from the dead she snatched a sword,
And wrought a horror : for through her mid-neck
She drives the steel, and with her best-beloved
Lies dead, embracing with her arms the twain.
Leapt to their feet the hosts with wrangling cries,— 1460
We shouting that our lord was conqueror,
They, theirs. And strife there was between the
chiefs,
These crying, “First smote Polyneices’ spear !”
Those, “Both be dead : with none the victory rests !”
Antigone from the field had stol’n the while.

Then rushed the foe to arms : but Cadmus’ folk
By happy forethought under shield had halted ;
So we forestalled the Argive host, and fell
Suddenly on them yet unfenced for fight.
Was none withstood us : huddled o’er the plain 1470
Fled they, and streamed the blood from slain untold
By spears laid low. So, victors in the fight,
Our triumph-trophy some ’gan rear to Zeus ;
And, some from Argive corpses stripping shields,
Within our battlements the spoils we sent.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἄλλοι δὲ τοὺς θανόντας Ἀντιγόνης μέτα
νεκρούς φέρουσιν ἐνθάδ' οἰκτίσαι φίλοις.
πόλει δ' ἀγῶνες οἱ μὲν εὐτυχέστατοι
τῆδ' ἐξέβησαν, οἱ δὲ δυστυχέστατοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1480 οὐκ εἰς ἀκοὰς ἔτι δυστυχία
δώματος ἤκει· πάρα γὰρ λεύσσειν
πτώματ' ἀνεκρῶν τρισσῶν ἤδη
τάδε πρὸς μελάρθοις κοινῶ θανάτῳ
σκοτίαν αἰῶνα λαχόντων.

ἈΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ προκαλυπτομένα βοτρυχώδεις
ἄβρ' ἀπαρηίδος οὐδ' ὑπὸ
παρθενίας τὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάροις
φοίνικ', ἐρύθημα προσώπου,
1490 αἰδομένα φέρομαι βάκχα νεκῶν,
κράδεμνα δικούσα κόμας ἀπ' ἐμᾶς,
στολίδος κροκόεσσαν ἀνείσα τρυφάν,
ἀγεμόνευμα νεκροῖσι πολύστονον. αἰαῖ, ἰὼ μοι.
ὦ Πολύνεικες, ἔφυς ἄρ' ἐπώνυμος, ὦ μοι, Θῆβαι·
σὰ δ' ἔρις οὐκ ἔρις, ἀλλὰ φόνῳ φόνος
Οἰδιπόδα δόμον ὤλεσε κρανηεῖς
αἵματι δεινῶ, αἵματι λυγρῶ.
τίνα προσφθόν
ἦ τίνα μουσπόλον στοναχὰν ἐπὶ
1500 δάκρυσσι δάκρυσιν, ὦ δόμος ὦ δόμος,
ἀγκαλέσωμαι,
τρισσὰ φέρουσα τάδε σώματα σύγγονα,
ματέρα καὶ τέκνα, χάρματ' Ἐρινύος ;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

And others with Antigone bear on
 The dead twain hither for their friends to mourn.
 So hath the strife had end for Thebes in part
 Most happily, in part most haplessly.

CHORUS

Not a grief for the hearing alone 1480
 Is the bale of the house: ye may see
 Here, now, yon corpses three
 By the palace, in death as one
 To the life that is darkness gone.

Enter procession bearing corpses, with CREON *and*
 ANTIGONE.

ANTIGONE

Never a veil o'er the tresses I threw
 O'er my soft cheek sweeping,
 Nor for maidenhood's shrinking I hid from view
 The hot blood leaping
 'Neath mine eyes, when I rushed in the bacchanal
 dance for the dead, [head,
 When I cast on the earth the tiring that bound mine 1490
 Loose flinging my bright robe saffron of hue—
 I, by whom corpses with wailing are graveward led.
 Polyneices, "the man of much strife"—well named!
 Woe's me!—

No strife was thy strife: it was murder by murder
 brought [fraught
 To accomplishment, ruin to Oedipus' house, and
 With bloodshed of horror, with bloodshed of misery.
 On what bard shall I call?

What harper of dirges shall I bid come
 To wail the lament,—O home, mine home!— 1500
 While the tears, the tears fall,
 As I bear three bodies of kindred slain,
 Mother and sons, while the Fiend gloats over our woe

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ἂ δόμον Οἰδιπόδα πρόπαν ὤλεσε,
 τᾶς ἀγρίας ὄτε
 δυσξύνετον ξυνετὸς μέλος ἔγνω
 Σφυγγὸς ἀοιδοῦ σῶμα φονεύσας.
 ἰὼ μοι, πάτερ,
 τίς Ἑλλὰς ἢ βάρβαρος ἢ
 1510 τῶν προπάροιθ' εὐγενετᾶν ἕτερος
 ἔτλα κακῶν τοσῶνδ'
 αἵματος ἀμερίου
 τοιάδ' ἄχεα φανερά ;

 τάλαιν', ὡς ἐλελίζει.
 τίς ἄρ' ὄρνις ἢ δρυὸς ἢ ἐλάτας
 ἀκροκόμοις ἀμφὶ κλάδοις
 ἐξομένα μονομάτορος ὄδουρμοῖς
 ἐμοῖς ἄχεσι συνψῶδος ;
 αἴλινον αἰάγμασιν ἂ
 1520 τοῖσδε προκλαίω μονάδ' αἰῶνα
 διάξουσα τὸν αἰεὶ χρόνον ἐν
 λειβομένοισιν δακρῦοισιν.

 τίν' ἰαχήσω ;
 τίν' ἐπὶ πρῶτον ἀπὸ χαίτας
 σπαραγμοῖς ἀπαρχὰς βάλω ;
 ματρὸς ἐμᾶς διδυ-
 μοισι γάλακτος παρὰ μαστοῖς,
 ἢ πρὸς ἀδελφῶν
 οὐλόμεν' αἰκίσματα νεκρῶν ;

 1530 ὅτοτοτοῖ· λείπε σοὺς δόμους,
 ἀλαδὸν ὄμμα φέρων,
 πάτερ γεραιέ, δείξον,
 Οἰδιπόδα, σὸν αἰῶνα μέλεον, ὃς ἐπὶ

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Who brought in ruin the house of Oedipus low,
In the day when the Songstress Sphinx's strain,
So hard to read, by his wisdom was read,
And the fierce shape down unto death was sped?
Woe for me, father mine!
Who hath borne griefs like unto thine?
What Hellene, or alien, or who that sprang 1510
Of the ancient blood of a high-born line,
Whose race in a day is run, hath endured in the sight
of the sun
Such bitter pang?

Woe's me for my dirge wild-ringing!
What song-bird that rocketeth on high,
Mid the boughs of the oak-tree swinging,
Or the pine-tree, will echo my cry,
The moans of the motherless maiden,
Who wail for the life without friend 1520
I must know, who shall weep sorrow-laden
Tears without end?

Over whom shall I make lamentation?
Unto whom with rendings of hair
Shall I first give sorrow's oblation?
Shall I cast them, mine offerings, there
Where the twin breasts are of my mother,
Where a suckling babe I have lain,
Or on ghatliest wounds of a brother
Cruelly slain?

Come forth of thy chambers, blind father; 1530
Ancient, thy sorrows lay bare,
Who didst cause mist-darkness to gather
On thine own eyes, thou who dost wear

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

δώμασιν ἀέριον σκότον ὄμμασι
 σοῖσι βαλὼν ἔλκει μακρόπνου ζωάν.
 κλύεις, ὦ κατ' αὐλὰν ἀλαίνων γεραιὸν
 πόδα δεμνίους
 δύστανος ἰαύων ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

1540 τί μ', ὦ παρθένε, βακτρεύμασι τυ-
 φλοῦ ποδὸς ἐξάγαγες εἰς φῶς
 λεχήρη σκοτίων ἐκ θαλάμων
 οἰκτροτάτοισιν δακρύοισιν,
 πολὺν αἰθέρος ἀφανὲς εἶδωλον ἧ
 νέκυν ἔνερθεὺν ἧ
 πτανὸν ὄνειρον ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1550 δυστυχὲς ἀγγελίας ἔπος οἴσει·
 πάτερ, οὐκέτι σοι τέκνα λεύσσει
 φάος οὐδ' ἄλοχος, παραβάκτροις
 ἅ πόδα σὸν τυφλόπουν θεραπεύμασιν αἰὲν ἐμόχθει,
 ὦ πάτερ, ὦμοι.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ὦμοι ἐμῶν παθέων· πάρα γὰρ στενάχειν τάδ',
 αὐτεῖν.
 τρισσαὶ ψυχαὶ ποία μοίρα
 πῶς ἔλιπον φάος ; ὦ τέκνον, αὐδα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ ἐπ' ὀνειδέσιν οὐδ' ἐπιχάρμασιν,
 ἀλλ' ὀδύναισι λέγω· σὸς ἀλάστωρ
 ξίφεσιν βρίθων
 καὶ πυρὶ καὶ σχετλῖαῖσι μάχαις ἐπὶ παῖδας ἔβα
 σούς,
 ὦ πάτερ, ὦμοι.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Weariful days out. O hearken,
Whose old feet grope through the hall,
Who in gloom that no night-tide can darken
On thy pallet dost fall.

Enter OEDIPUS.

OEDIPUS

Why hast thou drawn me, my child, to the light,
Whose sightless hand to thine hand's prop clings, 1540
Who was bowed on my bed amid chambers of night,—
Hast drawn by a wail through tears that rings,—
A white-haired shape, like a phantom that fades
On the sight, or a ghost from the underworld shades,
Or a dream that hath wings?

ANTIGONE

Woe is the word of my tidings to thee!
Father, thy sons behold no more
The light, nor thy wife, who aye upbore
Thy blind limbs tirelessly, tenderly,
O father, ah me! 1550

OEDIPUS

Ah me for my woes! Full well may I shriek, full
well may I moan!
By what doom have the spirits of these three
flown
From the light of life? O child, make known.

ANTIGONE

Not as reproaching, nor mocking, I tell,
But in anguish. Thy curse, with its vengeance of
hell,
With swords laden, and fire,
And ruthless contention, on thy sons fell:
Woe's me, my sire!

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

αἰαῖ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1560 τί τάδε καταστένεις ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

τέκνα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας·
εἰ δὲ τὰ τέθριππά γ' ἐς ἄρματα λεύσσω
ἀελίου τάδε σώματα νεκρῶν
ὄμματος ἀνγαῖς σαῖς ἐπενώμας.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

τῶν μὲν ἐμῶν τεκέων φανερόν κακόν·
ἂ δὲ τάλαιν' ἄλοχος τίνι μοι, τέκνον, ὤλετο
μοίρα ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δάκρυα γοερὰ φανερὰ πᾶσι τιθεμένα,
τέκεσι μαστὸν
ἔφερον ἔφερον ἰκέτις ἰκέτιν ὀρομένα.
1570 ἦῦρε δ' ἐν Ἡλέκτραισι πύλαις τέκνα
λωτοτρόφον κατὰ λείμακα
λόγχαις κοινὸν ἐνυάλιον
μάτηρ, ὥστε λέοντας ἐναύλους,
μαρναμένους ἐπὶ τραύμασιν, αἵματος
ἤδη ψυχρὰν λειβὰν φονίαν,
ἂν ἔλαχ' Ἄιδας, ὥπασε δ' Ἄρης·
χαλκόκροτον δὲ λαβοῦσα νεκρῶν πάρα φάσγανον
εἶσω
σαρκὸς ἔβαψεν, ἄχει δὲ τέκνων ἔπεσ' ἀμφὶ
τέκνοισιν.
πάντα δ' ἐν ἄματι τῷδε συνάγαγεν,
1580 ὦ πάτερ, ἀμετέροισι δόμοισιν ἄχη θεὸς
ὃς τάδε τελευτᾷ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Alas for me!

ANTIGONE

Wherefore thy deep-drawn sigh? 1560

OEDIPUS

For my children!

ANTIGONE

Thine hath been agony :—
But oh, to the Sun-god's car couldst thou raise
Thine eyes, couldst thou on these bodies gaze,
Dead where they lie!

OEDIPUS

For the evil fate of my sons, it is all too plain!
But ah, mine unhappiest wife!—by what doom, O
my child, was she slain?

ANTIGONE

Weeping and wailing, that all of her coming were ware,
Hasted she. Unto her children she bare, O she bare
Sacreddest breasts of a mother with suppliant prayer.

And she found her sons at Electra's portal, 1570

In the mead with the clover fair,
Closing with spears in the combat mortal :

As lions that strive in their lair

They grappled, with falchions ruthless-gashing :
Yea, now the oblation of death fell plashing

Which Ares giveth when Hades the spoil will share.
And she snatched from the dead, and the bronze-
hammered blade through her bosom she thrust ;
And in grief for her children, enclasping her child-
ren, she fell in the dust.

Lo, all the griefs of our line, one marshalled array,
Have been gathered, O father, against our house 1580
this day [ment lay.

Of the God in whose hands their accomplish-

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλῶν κακῶν κατήρξεν Οἰδίπου δόμοις
τόδ' ἤμαρ· εἶη δ' εὐτυχέστερος βίος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴκτων μὲν ἤδη λήγεθ', ὡς ὥρα τάφου
μνήμην τίθεσθαι· τῶνδε δ', Οἰδίπου, λόγων
ἄκουσον· ἀρχὰς τῆσδε γῆς ἔδωκέ μοι
Ἔτεοκλῆς παῖς σός, γάμων φερνάς διδούς
Αἴμονι κόρης τε λέκτρον Ἀντιγόνης σέθεν.
οὐκ οὖν σ' εἰάσω τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν ἔτι·
σαφῶς γὰρ εἶπε Τειρεσίας οὐ μὴ ποτε
σου τήνδε γῆν οἰκοῦντος εὖ πράξειν πόλιν.
ἀλλ' ἐκκομίζου. καὶ τὰδ' οὐχ ὕβρει λέγω
οὐδ' ἐχθρὸς ὢν σός, διὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀλύστορας
τοὺς σοὺς δεδοικῶς μὴ τι γῆ πάθῃ κακόν.

1590

ΟΙΑΙΠΟΤΣ

ὦ μοῖρ', ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὡς μ' ἔφυσας ἄθλιον
καὶ τλήμον', εἴ τις ἄλλος ἀνθρώπων ἔφυ·
ὄν καὶ πρὶν εἰς φῶς μητρὸς ἐκ γονῆς μολεῖν,
ἄγονον Ἀπόλλων Λαίφ μ' ἐθέσπισε
φονέα γενέσθαι πατρός· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγενόμην, αὐτὸς ὁ σπείρας πατῆρ
κτείνει με νομίσας πολέμιον πεφυκέναι·
χρῆν γὰρ θανεῖν νιν ἐξ ἐμοῦ· πέμπει δέ με
μαστὸν ποθοῦντα θηρσὶν ἄθλιον βοράν
οὐ σφζόμεσθα. Ταρτάρου γὰρ ὄφελεν
ἐλθεῖν Κιθαιρῶν εἰς ἄβυσσα χάσματα,
ὅς μ' οὐ διώλεσ', ἀλλὰ δουλεύσαί γέ μοι
δαίμων ἔδωκε Πόλυβον ἀμφὶ δεσπότην.
κτανῶν δ' ἐμαντοῦ πατέρ' ὁ δυσδαίμων ἐγὼ
εἰς μητρὸς ἦλθον τῆς ταλαιπώρου λέχος,
παιδὰς τ' ἀδελφοὺς ἔτεκον, οὓς ἀπώλεσα,

1600

1610

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

CHORUS

Many an ill to Oedipus' house this day
Brings forth. May happier life be yet in store!

CREON

Refrain laments : time is it we gave heed
To burial. Unto these words, Oedipus,
Hearken : thy son Eteocles gave me rule
O'er this land, making it a marriage-dower
To Haemon with thy child Antigone.
Therefore thou mayest dwell therein no more ;
For plainly spake Teiresias—never Thebes
Shall prosper while thou dwellest in the land. 1590
Then get thee forth : this not despiteously
I speak, nor as thy foe, but fearing hurt
To Thebes by reason of thy vengeance-fiends.

OEDIPUS

Fate, from the first to grief thou barest me,
And pain, beyond all men that ever were.
Ere from my mother's womb I came to light,
Phoebus to Laïus spake me, yet unborn,
My father's murderer—ah, woe is me!
When I was born, my father, my begetter,— 1600
Doomed by mine hand to die,—accounting me
From birth his foe, would slay me, sent me forth,
A suckling yet, a wretched prey to beasts.

Yet was I saved. Oh had Cithaeron sunk
Down to the bottomless chasms of Tartarus,
For that it slew me not!—but Fate gave me
To be a bondman, Polybus my lord.
So mine own father did I slay, and came,—
Ah wretch!—unto mine hapless mother's couch.
Sons I begat, my brethren, and destroyed, 1610

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ἀρὰς παραλαβὼν Λαίτου καὶ παισὶ δούς.
οὐ γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἀσύνητος πέφυκ' ἐγὼ
ὥστ' εἰς ἔμ' ὄμματ' εἰς τ' ἐμῶν παίδων βίον
ἄνευ θεῶν του ταῦτ' ἐμηχανησάμην.
εἶεν· τί δράσω δῆθ' ὁ δυσδαίμων ἐγώ ;
τίς ἠγεμῶν μοι ποδὸς ὀμαρτήσῃ τυφλοῦ ;
ἦδ' ἡ θανούσα ; ζῶσά γ' ἂν σάφ' οἶδ' ὅτι.
ἀλλ' εὐτεκνος ξυνωρίς ; ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστι μοι.
ἀλλ' ἔτι νεάζων αὐτὸς εὐροιμ' ἂν βίον ;
1620 πόθεν ; τί μ' ἄρδην ὦδ' ἀποκτείνεις, Κρέον ;
ἀποκτενεῖς γάρ, εἰ με γῆς ἔξω βαλεῖς.
οὐ μὴν ἐλίξας γ' ἀμφὶ σὸν χεῖρας γόνυ
κακὸς φανούμαι· τὸ γὰρ ἐμόν ποτ' εὐγενὲς
οὐκ ἂν προδοίην, οὐδέ περ πρᾶστων κακῶς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σοὶ τ' εὐ λέλεκται γόνατα μὴ χρώξῃεν ἐμά,
ἐγὼ τε ναίειν σ' οὐκ ἐάσαιμ' ἂν χθόνα.
νεκρῶν δὲ τῶνδε τὸν μὲν εἰς δόμους χρεῶν
ἦδη κομίζεις, τόνδε δ', ὃς πέρσων πόλιν
1630 πατρίδα σὺν ἄλλοις ἦλθε, Πολυνείκους νέκυν
ἐκβάλετ' ἄθαπτον τῆσδ' ὄρων ἔξω χθονός.
κηρύσσεται δὲ πᾶσι Καδμείοις τάδε,
ὃς ἂν νεκρὸν τόνδ' ἢ καταστέφω ἀλῶ
ἢ γῆ καλύπτω, θάνατον ἀνταλλάσσεται.
εἴαν δ' ἄκλαυστον, ἄταφον, οἰωνοῖς βοράν.
σὺ δ' ἐκλιπούσα τριπτύχων θρήνους νεκρῶν
κόμιζε σαυτήν, Ἀντιγόνη, δόμων ἔσω,
καὶ παρθενεύου τὴν ἰούσαν ἡμέραν
μένουσ' ἐν ἧ σε λέκτρον Αἴμονος μένει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1640 ὦ πάτερ, ἐν οἷοις κείμεθ' ἄθλιοι κακοῖς.
ὥς σε στενάζω τῶν τεθνηκότων πλέον·

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Passing to them the curse of Læius.
For not so witless am I from the birth,
As to devise these things against mine eyes
And my sons' life, but by the finger of God.
Let be :—what shall I do, the fortune-crost?
Who shall companion me, my blind steps guide?
She who is dead? O yea, were she alive!
My sons, a goodly pair? Nay, I have none.
Am I yet young, to win me livelihood?
Whence? Wherefore, Creon, slay me utterly? 1620
For thou wilt slay, if forth the land thou cast.
Yet never twining round thy knee mine hands
A coward will I show me, to betray
My noble birth, how ill soe'er I fare.

CREON

Well hast thou said thou wilt not clasp my knees :
I cannot let thee dwell within the land.
Of these dead twain, be this within the halls
Borne straightway : that—the corpse of him who
came
With aliens to smite his father's city—
Forth of the land's bounds tombless shall be cast. 1630
To all Cadmeans shall this be proclaimed :—
“ Whoso on this corpse laying wreaths is found,
Or with earth hiding, death shall be his meed.
Unwept, unburied, leave him meat for birds.”
But thou thy mourning for the corpses three,
Antigone, leave, and get thee within doors.
Thy maiden state until the morrow keep,
Whereon the couch of Haemon waiteth thee.

ANTIGONE

Father, in what ills is our misery whelmed !
For thee I make moan more than for the dead. 1640

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

οὐ γὰρ τὸ μέν σοι βαρὺ κακῶν, τὸ δ' οὐ βαρὺ,
 ἀλλ' εἰς ἅπαντα δυστυχῆς ἔφυς, πάτερ.
 ἀτὰρ σ' ἐρωτῶ τὸν νεωστὶ κοίρανον
 [τί τόνδ' ὑβρίζεις πατέρ' ἀποστέλλων χθονός;]
 τί θεσμοποιεῖς ἐπὶ ταλαιπώρῳ νεκρῷ ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Ἔτεοκλέους βουλευμάτων, οὐχ ἡμῶν τάδε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄφρονά γε, καὶ σὺ μῶρος ὃς ἐπίθου τάδε.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶς ; τάντεταλμέν' οὐ δίκαιον ἐκπονεῖν ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ, ἦν πονηρά γ' ἦ κακῶς τ' εἰρημένα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1650 τί δ' ; οὐ δικαίως ὄδε κυσὶν δοθήσεται ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκ ἔννομον γὰρ τὴν δίκην πράσσεσθέ νιν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἶπερ γε πόλεως ἐχθρὸς ἦν, οὐκ ἐχθρὸς ὦν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκουν ἔδωκε τῇ τύχῃ τὸν δαίμονα ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ τῷ τάφῳ νυν τὴν δίκην παρασχέτω.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί πλημμελήσας, τὸ μέρος εἰ μετήλθε γῆς ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἄταφος ὄδ' ἀνὴρ, ὡς μάθης, γενήσεται.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἐγὼ σφε θάψω, κὰν ἀπεννέπη πόλις.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σαυτὴν ἄρ' ἐγγὺς τῷδε συνθάψεις νεκρῷ.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

Thine ills are not part heavy and part light,
But in all things art thou in woeful case.
But thee I question, new-created king,
[Why outrage thus my sire with banishment?]
Wherefore make laws touching a hapless corse?

CREON

Eteocles' ordinance, not mine, is this.

ANTIGONE

'Tis senseless—witless thou who giv'st it force.

CREON

How, were't not just to carry out his hests?

ANTIGONE

If they be wrong, in malice spoken—no!

CREON

How, were't not just to cast yon man to dogs?

1650

ANTIGONE

Nay: so ye wreak on him no lawful vengeance.

CREON

Yea, if to Thebes a foe, no foe by birth.

ANTIGONE

Hath he not unto fate paid forfeit life?

CREON

Forfeit of burial now too let him pay.

ANTIGONE

Wherein sinned he, who came to claim his own?

CREON

This man shall have no burial, be thou sure.

ANTIGONE

I, though the state forbid, will bury him.

CREON

Thyself then shalt thou bury with thy dead.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΪ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' εὐκλέες τοι δύο φίλω κείσθαι πέλας.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1660 λάζυσθε τήνδε κείς δόμους κομίζετε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ τοῦδ' οὐ μεθήσομαι νεκροῦ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔκριν' ὁ δαίμων, παρθέν', οὐχ ἅ σοι δοκεῖ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

κάκεινο κέκριται, μὴ ἐφυβρίζεσθαι νεκρούς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὡς οὔτις ἀμφὶ τῷδ' ὑγρὰν θήσει κόνιν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ναὶ πρὸς σε τῆσδε μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης, Κρέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μάταια μοχθεῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἂν τύχοις τάδε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ νεκρῷ λουτρὰ περιβαλεῖν μ' ἔα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐν τοῦτ' ἂν εἶη τῶν ἀπορρήτων πόλει.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ τραύματ' ἄγρια τελαμῶνας βαλεῖν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1670 οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως σὺ τόνδε τιμήσεις νέκυν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ φίλτατ', ἀλλὰ στόμα γε σὸν προσπτύξομαι.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐ μὴ ἐς γάμους σοὺς συμφορὰν κτήση γόοις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἦ γὰρ γαμοῦμαι ζῶσα παιδί σῷ ποτε ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πολλή γ' ἀνάγκη· ποῖ γὰρ ἐκφεύξει λέχος ;

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

'Tis glorious that two friends lie side by side.

CREON

Seize ye this girl, and hale her within doors ! 1660

ANTIGONE

Never ! for I will not unclasp this corpse.

CREON

God hath decreed, girl, not as seems thee good.

ANTIGONE

Yea—hath decreed this, *Outrage not the dead !*

CREON

Know, none shall spread the damp dust over him.

ANTIGONE

Nay !—for Jocasta's, for his mother's sake !

CREON

Vain is thy labour: this thou shalt not win.

ANTIGONE

Suffer at least that I may bathe the corpse.

CREON

This shall be of the things the state forbids.

ANTIGONE

Let me at least bind up his cruel wounds.

CREON

Thou shalt in no wise honour this dead man. 1670

ANTIGONE

Belovèd ! on thy lips this kiss at least—

CREON

Mar not thy bridal's fortune by laments.

ANTIGONE

How ! living shall I e'er wed son of thine ?

CREON

Needs must thou. Whither from the couch wilt flee ?

481

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

νύξ ἄρ' ἐκείνη Δαναίδων μ' ἔξει μίαν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἶδες τὸ τόλμημ' οἶον ἐξωνείδισεν ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἴστω σίδηρος ὄρκιόν τέ μοι ξίφος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' ἐκπροθυμεί τῶνδ' ἀπηλλάχθαι γάμων ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

συμφεύζομαι τῶδ' ἀθλιωτάτῳ πατρί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1680

γενναιότης σοι, μωρία δ' ἔνεστί τις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ ξυνθανοῦμαί γ', ὡς μύθης περαιτέρῳ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἴθ, οὐ φονεύσεις παῖδ' ἐμόν, λίπε χθόνα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, αἰνῶ μέν σε τῆς προθυμίας.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' εἰ γαμοίμην, σὺ δὲ μόνος φεύγοις, πάτερ ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

μέν' εὐτυχοῦσα, τᾶμ' ἐγὼ στέρξω κακά.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ τίς σε τυφλὸν ὄντα θεραπεύσει, πάτερ ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

πεσῶν ὅπου μοι μοῖρα κείσομαι πέδῳ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὁ δ' Οἰδίπους ποῦ καὶ τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματα ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ὄλωλ'· ἐν ἡμάρ μ' ὤλβισ', ἐν δ' ἀπώλεσεν.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

That night shall prove me one of Danaus' Daughters¹!

CREON (*to OEDIPUS*)

Dost mark how rails she in her recklessness?

ANTIGONE (*raising POLYNEICES' sword*)

Witness the steel—this sword whereby I swear.

CREON

Wherefore so eager to avoid this bridal?

ANTIGONE

I will share exile with mine hapless sire.

CREON

Noble thy spirit, yet lurks folly there.

1680

ANTIGONE

Yea, and with him will die. Know this withal.

CREON

Thou shalt not slay my son. Hence, leave the land!
[*Exit.*]

OEDIPUS

Daughter, for thy devotion thank I thee.

ANTIGONE

I marry, father,—thou in exile lone!

OEDIPUS

Ah stay: be happy. I will bear mine ills.

ANTIGONE

Who then will minister to thy blindness, father?

OEDIPUS

Where my weird is, there shall I fall, there lie.

ANTIGONE

Ah, where is Oedipus?—where that riddle famed?

OEDIPUS

Lost. One day blessed me, one hath ruined me

¹ Who slew the husbands whom they wedded perforce.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

- 1690 οὔκουν μετασχεῖν κίμῃ δέϊ τῶν σῶν κακῶν ;
 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 αἰσχρὰ φυγῇ θυγατρὶ σὺν τυφλῷ πατρὶ.
 ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 οὔ, σωφρονούσῃ γ, ἄλλὰ γενναία, πάτερ.
 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 προσάγαγέ νῦν με, μητρὸς ὡς ψαῦσω σέθεν.
 ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 ἰδού, γεραιᾶς φιλάτης ψαῦσον χερί.
 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 ὦ μῆτερ, ὦ ξυνάορ' ἀθλιωτάτη.
 ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 οἰκτρὰ πρόκειται, πάντ' ἔχουσ' ὁμοῦ κακά.
 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 Ἔτεοκλέους δὲ πτώμα Πολυνείκους τε ποῦ ;
 ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 τῷδ' ἐκτάδην σοι κείσθον ἀλλήλοιν πέλας.
 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 πρόσθες τυφλὴν χεῖρ' ἐπὶ πρόσωπα δυστυχή.
 1700 ἰδού, θανόντων σῶν τέκνων ἄπτου χερί.
 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 ὦ φίλα πεσήματ' ἄθλι' ἀθλίου πατρός.
 ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 ὦ φίλτατον δῆτ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκους ἐμοί.
 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 νῦν χρησμός, ὦ παῖ, Λοξίου περαίνεται.
 ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 ὁ ποῖος ; ἀλλ' ἦ πρὸς κακοῖς ἐρεῖς κακά ;
 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις κατθανεῖν μ' ἀλώμενον.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Is it not then my due to share thine ills ?

1690

OEDIPUS

'Twere a maid's shame,—exile with her blind sire !

ANTIGONE

Nay, but—so she be wise—her glory, father.

OEDIPUS

That I may touch thy mother, guide me now.

ANTIGONE

Lo, touch her with thine hand—so old, so dear !

OEDIPUS

Ah mother ! Ah, most hapless helpmeet mine !

ANTIGONE

Piteous she lies, with all ills crowned at once.

OEDIPUS

Eteocles' corse, and Polyneices'—where ?

ANTIGONE

Here lie they, each by other's side outstretched.

OEDIPUS

Lay my blind hand upon their ill-starred brows.

ANTIGONE

Lo there : touch with thine hand thy children slain. 1700

OEDIPUS

Dear hapless dead sons of a hapless sire !

ANTIGONE

Ah Polyneices, name most dear to me !

OEDIPUS

Now, child, doth Loxias' oracle come to pass,—

ANTIGONE

What ? Wilt thou tell new ills beside the old ?

OEDIPUS

That I, a wanderer, should in Athens die.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῦ ; τίς σε πύργος Ἀτθίδος προσδέξεται ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ιερός Κολωνός, δώμαθ' ἱππίου θεοῦ.
ἀλλ' εἶα, τυφλῷ τῷδ' ὑπηρέτει πατρί,
ἐπεὶ προθυμεῖ τῆσδε κοινοῦσθαι φυγῆς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1710

ἴθ' εἰς φυγὰν τάλαιναν ὄρεγε χέρα φίλαν,
πάτερ γεραιέ, πομπίμαν
ἔχων ἔμ' ὥστε ναυσίπομπον αὔραν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ἰδού πορεύομαι, τέκνον·
σύ μοι ποδαγὸς ἀθλία γενοῦ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

γενόμεθα γενόμεθ' ἀθλιαί
γε δῆτα Θηβαιῶν μάλιστα παρθένων.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

πόθι γεραιὸν ἵχνος τίθημι ;
βάκτρα πρόσφερ', ὦ τέκνον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1720

τᾶδε τᾶδε βᾶθί μοι,
τᾶδε τᾶδε πόδα τίθει
ὥστ' ὄνειρον ἰσχύν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰώ, δυστυχεστάτας φυγὰς
ἐλαύνων τὸν γέροντά μ' ἐκ πάτρας.
ἰὼ ἰώ, δεινὰ δειν' ἐγὼ τλάς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί τλάς ; τί τλάς ; οὐχ ὄρα Δίκα κακούς,
οὐδ' ἀμείβεται βροτῶν ἀσυνεσίας.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

ANTIGONE

Where? What Athenian burg shall harbour thee?

OEDIPUS

Hallowed Colonus, Chariot-father's¹ home.
On then : to this thy blind sire minister,
Since thou art fixed to share my banishment.

ANTIGONE

To woeful exile pass away. 1710
Stretch forth, O father hoary-grey,
Thy dear hand : grasp me. Thee I lead,
As breeze wafts on the galley's speed.

OEDIPUS

Lo, daughter, I pass on :
Thou guide me, hapless one.

ANTIGONE

Hapless I am—thou sayest well—
Above all maids in Thebes that dwell.

OEDIPUS

Where shall I plant mine old feet now?
Reach me my staff, O daughter, thou.

ANTIGONE

Hitherward, hitherward, tread : 1720
Let thy feet follow hither mine hand,
O strengthless as dream of the night!

OEDIPUS

Ah thou who on wretchedest exile hast sped
The old man forth of his fatherland!
Ah woes I have borne! Ah horror's height!

ANTIGONE

*Thou hast borne?—thou hast borne?—doth Justice
regard not then*
The sinner? Requiteth she not the follies of men?

¹ Poseidon, the Sea-god, who created the first war-horse.

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

1730 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 ὄδ' εἰμὶ μούσαν ὃς ἐπὶ καλ-
 λίνικον οὐράνιον ἔβαν
 παρθένου κόρας αἵ-
 νυγμ' ἀσύνετον εὐρών.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 Σφυγγὸς ἀναφέρεις ὄνειδος.
 ἄπαγε τὰ πάρος εὐτυχήματ' αὐδῶν.
 τάδε σ' ἐπέμενε μέλεα πάθρα
 φυγάδα πατρίδος ἀπο γενόμενον,
 ὦ πάτερ, θανεῖν που.
 ποθεινὰ δάκρυα παρὰ φίλαισι παρθένοις
 λιποῦσ' ἄπειμι πατρίδος ἀποπρὸ γαίας
 ἀπαρθένευτ' ἀλωμένα.

1740 ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 φεῦ τὸ χρήσιμον φρενῶν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 εἰς πατρός γε συμφορὰς
 εὐκλεᾶ με θήσει·
 τάλαιν' ἐγὼ [σῶν] συγγόνου θ' ὕβρισμάτων,
 ὃς ἐκ δόμων νέκυς ἄθαπτος οἴχεται
 μέλεος, ὄν, εἴ με καὶ θανεῖν, πάτερ, χρεῶν,
 σκότια γᾶ καλύψω.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 πρὸς ἡλικας φάνηθι σάς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 ἄλις ὄδυρμάτων ἐμῶν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ
 σὺ δ' ἀμφὶ βωμίους λιτάς—

1750 ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
 κόρον ἔχουσ' ἐμῶν κακῶν,

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Lo, I am he on breath
Of song upraised to heaven,
When that dark riddle of the Maid of Death 1730
To me to read was given.

ANTIGONE

Why raise the ghost of shame, the Sphinx's story?
Forbear to vaunt too late that faded glory.
For thee this anguish lay the while in wait,
Far from thy land to know the exile's fate,
And, father, in some place unknown to die.
To maids who love me leaving tears of yearning,
From fatherland an exile unreturning
I wander far in plight unmaidenly.

OEDIPUS

Woe for the heart where duty's fire is burning! 1740

ANTIGONE

Twined with my father's sad renown
This shall be mine unfading crown.
Woe for thy wrongs! Brother, alas for thine,
Who from thine home a tombless corse art thrust,
Hapless! Though death, my sire, for this be mine,
Yet will I veil him secretly with dust.

OEDIPUS

Show thee again to thy companions' eyes.

ANTIGONE

Why should they weep? Mine own laments suffice.

OEDIPUS

At the Gods' altars then with suppliant cry—

ANTIGONE

They weary of my tale of misery. 1750

489

ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ἴθ' ἄλλὰ Βρόμιος ἵνα τε ση-
κὸς ἄβατος ὄρεσι μαινάδων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

Καδμείαν ὦ
νεβρίδα στολιδωσαμένα ποτ' ἐγὼ
Σεμέλας θίασον
ιερὸν ὄρεσιν ἀνεχόρευσα,
χάριν ἀχάριτον εἰς θεοὺς διδοῦσα ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΣ

ὦ πάτρας κλεινῆς πολίται, λεύσσειτ', Οἰδίπους
ὄδε,
ὃς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἔγνω καὶ μέγιστος ἦν
ἀνὴρ,
1760 ὃς μόνος Σφυγγὸς κατέσχον τῆς μαιφόνου κράτη,
νῦν ἄτιμος αὐτὸς οἰκτρὸς ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.
ἀλλὰ γὰρ τί ταῦτα θρηνώ καὶ μάτην ὀδύρομαι;
τὰς γὰρ ἐκ θεῶν ἀνάγκας θνητὸν ὄντα δεῖ φέρειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ μέγα σεμνὴ Νίκη, τὸν ἐμὸν
βίοτον κατέχοις,
καὶ μὴ λήγοις στεφανοῦσα.

THE PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

OEDIPUS

Seek at the least the haunt of the Clamour-god
Mid hills of the Maenads by foot profane untrod.

ANTIGONE

How !—render homage without heart
To Him, for whom erstwhile arrayed
In Theban fawnskins, I had part
In Semele's holy dance that swayed
By hill, by glade ?

OEDIPUS

People of a glorious nation, mark me—Oedipus am I,
He who read the riddle world-renowned, the man
once set on high,
He whose single prowess quelled the Sphinx's blood- 1760
polluted might.
Now dishonoured am I banished from the land in
piteous plight.
Yet what boots it thus to wail ? What profits vainly
to lament ?
Whoso is but mortal needs must bear the fate of
heaven sent. [*Exeunt* OEDIPUS and ANTIGONE.

CHORUS

Hail, reverèd Victory !
Rest upon my life ; and me
Crown, and crown eternally !

[*Exeunt* OMNES,

SUPPLIANTS

ARGUMENT

IN the days when Theseus ruled in Athens, there was war between Argos and Thebes. For the two sons of Oedipus, being mindful of their father's curse, that they should divide their inheritance with the sword, covenanted to rule in turn, year by year, over Thebes. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polyneices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year's space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes. But, forasmuch as in going he set at naught oracles and seers, his array was utterly broken in battle, and of those seven captains none returned, but Adrastus only. Thereafter, according to the sacred custom of Hellas, and the law of war, the Argives sent to require the Thebans to suffer them to bear away their slain that they might bury them. For, among the Greeks, if a man being dead obtained not burial, this was accounted a calamity worse than death, forasmuch as he was thereby made homeless and accursed in Hades. Yet did the Thebans impiously and despitefully reject that claim, being minded to wreak vengeance on their enemies after death. Then king Adrastus, with the mothers of the slain chiefs, came to Eleusis in Attica, and made supplication at the altar of Demeter to Aethra the mother of Theseus, and to the king's self. So Theseus consented to their prayer, and led the array of Athens against Thebes, and there fought and prevailed, and so brought back the bodies of those chiefs, and rendered to them the death-rites at Eleusis.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ.

ΛΙΘΡΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ΚΗΡΤΕ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΥΑΔΝΗ

ΙΦΙΣ

ΠΑΙΔΕΣ

ΑΘΗΝΑ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

AETHRA, *mother of Theseus.*

THESEUS, *son of Aegeus, king of Athens.*

ADRASTUS, *king of Argos.*

HERALD, *from Creon king of Thebes.*

MESSENGER *from the army of Theseus before Thebes.*

EVADNE, *wife of Capaneus one of the seven chiefs.*

IPHIS, *father of Evadne.*

SONS *of the slain chiefs.*

ATHENA, *Patron-goddess of Athens.*

CHORUS, *consisting of the mothers of the slain chiefs, with their
Handmaids*

Athenian heralds, guards, attendants, Athenian soldiers

SCENE: In the forecourt of the temple of Demeter and
Persephone at Eleusis. The great altar stands in the
midst.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΙΘΡΑ

Δήμητερ ἐστιοῦχ' Ἐλευσίνος χθονὸς
τῆσδ', οἳ τε ναοὺς ἔχετε πρόσπολοι θεᾶς,
εὐδαιμονεῖν με Θησέα τε παῖδ' ἐμὸν
πόλιω τ' Ἀθηνῶν τήν τε Πιθθέως χθόνα,
ἐν ἧ με θρέψας ὀλβίοις ἐν δώμασιν
Αἴθραν πατὴρ δίδωσι τῷ Πανδίοιο
Αἰγεί δάμαρτα, Λοξίου μαντεύμασιν.
εἰς τάσδε γὰρ βλέψασ' ἐπηυξάμην τάδε
γραῦς, αἰ λιποῦσαι δώματ' Ἀργείας χθονὸς
10 ἰκτῆρι θαλλῶ προσπίτνουσ' ἐμὸν γόνυ
πάθος παθοῦσαι δεινόν· ἀμφὶ γὰρ πύλας
Κάδμου θανόντων ἐπτὰ γενναίων τέκνων
ἄπαιδές εἰσιν, οὓς ποτ' Ἀργείων ἄναξ
Ἄδραστος ἤγαγ', Οἰδίπου παγκληρίας
μέρος κατασχεῖν φυγάδι Πολυνεΐκει θέλων
γαμβρῷ· νεκροὺς δὲ τοὺς ὀλωλότας δορὶ
θάψαι θέλουσι τῶνδε μητέρες χθονί·
εἴργουσι δ' οἱ κρατοῦντες οὐδ' ἀναίρεσιν
δοῦναι θέλουσι, νόμιμ' ἀτίζοντες θεῶν.

SUPLIANTS

On the steps of the altar AETHRA is seated ; and around her sit the members of the CHORUS. The olive-boughs of supplicance lie upon the altar, and from these are stretched woollen fillets, attaching them to AETHRA and the CHORUS. ADRASTUS lies prostrate on the earth, apart from these.

AETHRA

DEMETER, warder of Eleusis-land,
And ye which keep and serve the Goddess' fanes,
Grant me and my son Theseus prosperous days,
Grant them to Athens and to Pittheus' land,
Where in a happy home my sire nursed me,
Aethra, and gave me to Pandion's son
Aegeus, to wife, by Loxias' oracles.

Thus pray I as on these grey dames I look,
These which have left their homes in Argos-land,
And fall with suppliant bough before my knee, 10
Stricken with grievous stroke : for round the gates
Of Cadmus lying are their seven sons dead,
Sons of the childless, they whom Argos' king
Adrastus led, in Oedipus' heritage
To win his share for exiled Polyneices,
His daughter's lord. The mothers now of these,
The spear-slain, fain would lay them in the grave,
Wherefrom the victors let them, and refuse
The corpses, setting the Gods' laws at naught.

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

- 20 κοινὸν δὲ φόρτον ταῖσδ' ἔχων χρείας ἐμῆς
 Ἐδραστος ὄμμα δάκρυσιν τέγγων ὄδε
 κείται, τό τ' ἔγχος τήν τε δυστυχεστάτην
 στένων στρατείαν ἦν ἔπεμψεν ἐκ δόμων·
 ὅς μ' ἐξοτρύνει παῖδ' ἐμὸν πείσαι λιταῖς
 νεκρῶν κομιστὴν ἢ λόγοισιν ἢ δωρὸς
 ῥώμῃ γενέσθαι καὶ τάφου μεταίτιον,
 μόνον τόδ' ἔργον προστιθεὶς ἐμῶ τέκνῳ
 πόλει τ' Ἀθηνῶν. τυγχάνω δ' ὑπὲρ χθονὸς
 ἀρότου προθύουσ' ἐκ δόμων ἐλθοῦσ' ἐμῶν
 30 πρὸς τόνδε σηκόν, ἔνθα πρῶτα φαίνεται
 φρίξας ὑπὲρ γῆς τῆσδε κάρπιμος στάχυν.
 δεσμὸν δ' ἄδεσμον τόνδ' ἔχουσα φυλλάδος
 μένω πρὸς ἀγναῖς ἐσχάrais δυοῖν θεαῖν
 Κόρης τε καὶ Δήμητρος, οἰκτείρουσα μὲν
 πολιὰς ἄπαιδας τάσδε μητέρας τέκνων,
 σέβουσα δ' ἱερὰ στέμματ'. οἷχεται δέ μοι
 κῆρυξ πρὸς ἄστυ δεῦρο Θησέα καλῶν,
 ὡς ἢ τὸ τούτων λυπρὸν ἐξέλη χθονός,
 ἢ τάσδ' ἀνάγκας ἱκεσίους λύση, θεοὺς
 40 ὄσιόν τι δράσας· πάντα γὰρ δι' ἀρσένων
 γυναιξὶ πράσσειν εἰκός, αἴτινες σοφαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἱκετεύω σε, γεραιά,
 γεραιῶν ἐκ στομάτων,
 πρὸς γόνυ πίπτουσα τὸ σόν·
 ἄνα μοι τέκνα λῦσαι φθιμένων

στρ. α'

SUPPLIANTS

Sharing the burden of their need of me, 20
Adrastus lieth here, his eyes with tears
Drowned, mourning for the battle-shivered spear
And that ill-starred array led forth of him.
Sore pleadeth he with me to bend by prayers
My son to be redeemer of the dead
By speech or spear, and helper to the grave,
Laying this charge alone upon my son
And Athens. Now it chanceth that I come
For the land's harvest's sake from forth mine halls
To this god's-acre, where first rose to light
Above the earth's face bristling ears of corn. 30

And, bound in this strong gossamer-chain of leaves,¹
At the two Goddesses' holy hearths I stay,
Demeter's and her Daughter's, both for ruth
Of these unchilded mothers silver-haired,
And awe of the holy bands. To Athens sped
Mine herald is, to summon Theseus hither,
That he may banish from the land these mourners,²
Or loose this strong constraint of suppliciance
By rendering heaven its due. Seemly it is 40
That women, which be wise, still act through men.

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

Reverend Queen, with agèd lips do I implore thee ;
In my suppliciance at thy knee I fall before thee.
O redeem thou unto me from that assemblage of the
dead

¹ The woollen fillets and boughs could not be removed without sacrilege.

² The presence of such, especially at the temple of Demeter, was ominous of evil, which the king only could avert, either by granting their request, or by refusing it and ordering them to depart.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

νεκύων, οἱ καταλείπουσι μέλη
θανάτῳ λυσιμελεῖ θηρσὶν ὀρείοισι βοράν·

ἔσιδούσ' οἰκτρὰ μὲν ὄσσων ἀντ. α
δάκρυ' ἀμφ' βλεφάροις,
50 ῥυσὰ δὲ σαρκῶν πολιᾶν
καταδρύμματα χειρῶν' τί γάρ; ἅ
φθιμένους παῖδας ἐμοὺς οὔτε δόμοις
προθέμαν, οὔτε τάφων χώματα γαίας ἐσορῶ.

ἔτεκες καὶ σύ ποτ', ὦ πότνια, κούρου στρ. β'
φίλα ποιησάμενα
λέκτρα πόσει σῶ· μέτα νυν
δὸς ἐμοὶ σᾶς διανοίας,
μετάδος δ', ὄσσον ἐπαλγῶ μελέα
τῶν φθιμένων οὓς ἔτεκον·
60 παράπεισον δὲ τὸ σόν, λισσόμεθ', ἐλθεῖν
τέκνον Ἴσμηνὸν ἐμάν τ' εἰς χέρα θεῖναι
νεκύων θαλερῶν σώματ' ἀλαίνοντ' ἄταφα.¹

ὀσίως οὔχ, ὑπ' ἀνάγκας δὲ προπίπτου- ἀντ. β
σα προσαιτούσ' ἔμολον
δεξιπύρους θεῶν θυμέλας·
ἔχομεν δ' ἔνδικα· καὶ σοί
τι πάρεστι σθένος ὥστ' εὐτεκνία
δυστυχίαν τὰν παρ' ἐμοὶ
καθελεῖν· οἰκτρὰ δὲ πάσχουσ' ἰκετεῦω

¹ Murray : for λάϊνον τάφον.

SUPPLIANTS

My belovèd, from the harvest that the hand of death
 hath spread [my womb!
 For the mountain-beasts to ravin on the children of

(*Ant.* 1)

Look upon me :—from mine eyes in my despairing
 Tears are streaming, and my frenzied hands are 50
 tearing [should I do but mourn,
 Crimson furrows on my wrinkled cheeks. What
 Who have laid not out my dead unto their burial to
 be borne, [for their tomb?
 And who see not any heaping of the earth-mound

(*Str.* 2)

Thou hast borne a little one, thou hast given a
 princely son [joy in thee :
 To thy lord, that marriage-treasure made his heart to
 Let the full soul deal its bread to the sad ones
 famishèd :

Give according to the measure of my childless agony.
 Bend the spirit of thy son, that he may go, whose 60
 help we crave, [our dead—
 To Ismenus, that our hands may lay the bodies of
 Who are outcasts now in Hades, being tombless—
 in the grave.

(*Ant.* 2)

Not according unto rite,¹ but as overmastering might
 Of Necessity constraineth, at the altars do I bend
 Whence to heaven leaps the flame ; and the right
 is that I claim.
 Thou art strong, thy son remaineth ;—thou canst
 make my sorrows end. [wild
 Out of depths of sorest anguish rings my supplication

¹ There was no place in the temple-ritual for mourning.

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

70 τὸν ἐμὸν παῖδα τάλαιν' ἐν χειρὶ θεῖναι
νέκυν, ἀμφιβαλεῖν λυγρὰ μέλη παιδὸς ἐμοῦ.

ἀγὼν ὄδ' ἄλλος ἔρχεται γόων γόοις στρ. γ'
 διάδοχος· ἀχοῦσιν προπόλων χέρες.
 ἴτ' ὦ ξυνφδοὶ κακοῖς,
 ἴτ' ὦ ξυναλγηδόνες,
 χορὸν τὸν Ἴαιδας σέβει,
 διὰ παρῆδος ὄνυχα λευκὸν
 αἵματούτε χρωτὰ τε φόνιον·
 τὰ γὰρ φθιτῶν τοῖς ὀρώσι κόσμος.

80 ἄπληστος ἄδε μ' ἐξάγει χάρις γόων ἀντ. γ'
 πολύπονος, ὡς ἐξ ἀλιβάτου πέτρας
 ὑγρὰ ρέουσα σταγῶν,
 ἄπαυστος αἰεὶ γόων·
 τὸ γὰρ θανόντων τέκνων
 ἐπίπονόν τι κατὰ γυναῖκας
 εἰς γόους πέφυκε πάθος. ἔῃ·
 θανούσα τῶνδ' ἀλγέων λαθοίμαν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

90 τίνων γόων ἤκουσα καὶ στέρνων κτύπον
 νεκρῶν τε θρήνους, τῶνδ' ἀνακτόρων ἄπο
 ἤχους ἰούσης; ὡς φόβος μ' ἀναπτεροῖ
 μή μοί τι μήτηρ, ἣν μεταστείχω ποδὶ
 χρονίαν ἀποῦσαν ἐκ δόμων, ἔχη νέον.
 εἶα·
 τί χρῆμα; καινὰς εἰσβολὰς ὀρῶ λόγων·
 μητέρα γεραιὰν βωμίαν ἐφημένην
 ξένας θ' ὀμοῦ γυναῖκας, οὐχ ἓνα ῥυθμὸν

SUPPLIANTS

That thou give me but a corpse, in mine embrace
to hold the same, [my child.
And to fling mine arms around the piteous body of 70

*The attendant HANDMAIDS, beating their breasts and
marring their faces, wail in unison with the MOTHERS.*

O hearken yon wails to our wailing replying, (*Str.* 3)
To the hands of our handmaidens smiting hard
On their bosoms! Come, ye that re-echo our crying
With a burden of mourning, who sigh with our
sighing—

Come ye to the one dance Death doth regard;
Rend, rend ye the cheek, till the red stains streak
White fingers:—the dues that our dear dead seek
Shall be all our reward.

Unsatisfied mourning my soul is enthralling (*Ant.* 3)
Sorrow-burdened, as forth from a precipice flows 80
A spring with its rain ever flashing and falling.
Unrestingly wailing to wailing is calling;

For the heart's love of woman but one path knows,
Nor can choose but to moan for the dear dead son:—
And oh that the days of my life were done,
And forgotten my woes!

Enter THESEUS.

THESEUS

What wailings heard I, smittings upon breasts,
And dirges for the dead, as rang the sound [fear
From the holy place? How throbs mine heart with
Lest to my mother, who hath drawn me hither 90
By her long absence, some mischance betide.
Ha!

What see I here? What strange tale is to tell?
At the altar sitting my grey mother is,
And alien dames with her in diverse guise

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κακῶν ἐχούσας· ἕκ τε γὰρ γερασμίων
 ὄσσων ἐλαύνουσ' οἰκτρὸν εἰς γαίαν δάκρυ,
 κουραὶ δὲ καὶ πεπλώματ' οὐ θεωρικά.
 τί ταῦτα, μήτηρ; σὸν τὸ μνηύειν ἐμοί,
 ἡμῶν δ' ἀκούειν προσδοκῶ τι γὰρ νέον.

ΛΙΘΡΑ

100

ὦ παῖ, γυναῖκες αἶδε μητέρες τέκνων
 τῶν καθανόντων ἀμφὶ Καδμείας πύλας
 ἐπτά στρατηγῶν· ἰκεσίοις δὲ σὺν κλάδοις
 φρουρούσι μ', ὡς δέδορκας, ἐν κύκλῳ, τέκνον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τίς δ' ὁ στενάζων οἰκτρὸν ἐν πύλαις ὄδε;

ΛΙΘΡΑ

Ἄδραστος, ὡς λέγουσιν, Ἀργείων ἄναξ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἱ δ' ἀμφὶ τόνδε παῖδες ἦ τούτου τέκνα;

ΛΙΘΡΑ

οὐκ, ἀλλὰ νεκρῶν τῶν ὀλωλότων κόροι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί γὰρ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἦλθον ἰκεσία χερί;

ΛΙΘΡΑ

οἶδ'· ἀλλὰ τῶνδε μῦθος οὖν τεύθεν, τέκνον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

110

σὲ τὸν κατήρη χλανιδίοις ἀνιστορῶ.
 λέγ' ἐκκαλύψας κρᾶτα καὶ πάρες γόον·
 πέρας γὰρ οὐδὲν μὴ διὰ γλώσσης ἰόν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ καλλίνικε γῆς Ἀθηναίων ἄναξ,
 Θησεῦ, σὸς ἰκέτης καὶ πόλεως ἦκω σέθεν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί χρῆμα θηρῶν καὶ τίνος χρεῖαν ἔχων;

SUPPLIANTS

Of sore affliction ; for the piteous tear
Unto the ground from agèd eyes they drop.
Shorn hair and garb unmeet for worshippers !
What means it, mother ? 'Tis thy part to tell,
And mine to hear. I look for some strange thing.

AETHRA

My son, these dames the mothers are of those, 100
The chieftains seven, that in battle fell
By gates Cadmean. And with suppliant boughs
Compassed they hold me, captive, as thou seest.

THESEUS

Who yonder at the gates makes piteous moan ?

AETHRA

Adrastus, as they tell, the Argive king.

THESEUS

And yon lads at his side, his boys are they ?

AETHRA

Nay, but the sons of those dead which have died.

THESEUS

Wherefore to us came they with suppliant hand ?

AETHRA

I know :—but these must tell the rest, my son.

THESEUS

Thee, in thy mantle muffled close, I ask— 110
Unshroud thine head, speak, let thy mourning be ;
Naught shalt thou profit, if naught pass thy tongue.

ADRASTUS

O triumph-glorious king of Athens' land,
Theseus, I come thy suppliant and thy city's.

THESEUS

What seekest thou, and whereof hast thou need ?

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἶσθ' ἦν στρατείαν ἐστράτευσ' ὀλεθρίαν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐ γάρ τι σιγῇ διεπέρασας Ἑλλάδα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐνταῦθ' ὑπώλεσ' ἄνδρας Ἀργείων ἄκρους.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τοιαῦθ' ὁ τλήμων πόλεμος ἐξεργάζεται.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

120 τούτους θανόντας ἦλθον ἐξαιτῶν πόλιν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κήρυξιν Ἑρμοῦ πίσυνος, ὡς θάψης νεκρούς ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

κᾶπειτά γ' οἱ κτανόντες οὐκ ἐώσῃ με.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί γὰρ λέγουσιν, ὅσια χρήζοντος σέθεν ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τί δ' ; εὐτυχοῦντες οὐκ ἐπίστανται φέρειν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ξύμβουλον οὖν μ' ἐπήλθες ; ἢ τίνος χάριν ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

κομίσαι σε, Θεσεύ, παῖδας Ἀργείων θέλων.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τὸ δ' Ἄργος ὑμῖν ποῦ' στιν ; ἢ κόμποι μάτην ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

σφαλέντες οἰχόμεσθα. πρὸς σὲ δ' ἤκομεν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ιδία δοκῆσάν σοι τόδ' ἢ πάση πόλει ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

130 πάντες σ' ἰκνοῦνται Δαναΐδαι θάψαι νεκρούς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐλαύνεις ἐπτά πρὸς Θήβας λόχους ;

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Thou know'st what host I to destruction led.

THESEUS

Yea, not in silence passedst thou through Greece.

ADRASTUS

The chiefest men of Argos lost I there.

THESEUS

Such desolation worketh woeful war.

ADRASTUS

And these my dead I went to ask of Thebes.

120

THESEUS

Did heralds sanctify thy burial-claim ?

ADRASTUS

Yea : even so the slayers grant them not.

THESEUS

What say they to thy plea of holy right ?

ADRASTUS

Ay, what ?—prosperity hath puffed them up.

THESEUS

For counsel com'st thou then, or what wouldst thou ?

ADRASTUS

That thou shouldst rescue, Theseus, Argos' sons.

THESEUS

Where is your Argos ? Is her vaunting vain ?

ADRASTUS

We are fallen and undone. To thee we come.

THESEUS

Dost thou alone will this, or all thy state ?

ADRASTUS

All Danaus' sons beseech thee entomb their dead.

130

THESEUS

Why didst thou march those seven hosts to Thebes ?

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δισσοῖσι γαμβροῖς τήνδε πορσύνων χάριν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τῷ δ' ἐξέδωκας παῖδας Ἀργείων σέθεν ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἐγγενῆ συνήψα κηδείαν δόμοις.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἀλλὰ ξένοις ἔδωκας Ἀργείας κόρας ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεῖ γε Πολυνεΐκει τε τῷ Θηβαγενεῖ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τίν' εἰς ἔρωτα τῆσδε κηδείας μολών ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Φοῖβον μ' ὑπῆλθε δυστόπαστ' αἰνίγματα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί δ' εἶπ' Ἀπόλλων παρθένοις κραίνων γάμον ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

140 κίπρω με δοῦναι καὶ λέοντι παῖδ' ἐμῷ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

σὺ δ' ἐξελίσσεις πῶς θεοῦ θεσπίσματα ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐλθόντε φυγάδε νυκτὸς εἰς ἐμὰς πύλας,

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τίς καὶ τίς ; εἶπέ· δύο γὰρ ἐξαυδάς ἄμα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεὺς μάχην ξυνήψε Πολυνεΐκης θ' ἄμα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦ τοῖσδ' ἔδωκας θηρσὶν ὡς κόρας σέθεν ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

μάχην γε δισσοῖν κνωδάλοιν ἀπεικάσας.

SUPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

To my two daughters' lords this grace I showed.

THESEUS

Thy daughters? To what Argives gav'st thou them?

ADRASTUS

With no man native-born I linked mine house.

THESEUS

Ha! gavest thou to aliens Argive maids?

ADRASTUS

To Tydeus, and to Thebes' son Polyneices.

THESEUS

Whence thy strong love for such affinity?

ADRASTUS

Phoebus' dark saying wrought upon my mind.

THESEUS

What spake Apollo to control their marriage?

ADRASTUS

"*Thy daughters give to a lion and a boar.*"

140

THESEUS

And the God's precept how unfoldest thou?

ADRASTUS

There came by night two exiles to my gates.

THESEUS

Who this, who that?—for thou dost speak of twain

ADRASTUS

Tydeus and Polyneices: there they fought.

THESEUS

To these, as those wild beasts, gav'st thou thy daughters?

ADRASTUS

Yea: like those monsters twain, methought, they strove.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦλθον δὲ δὴ πῶς πατρίδος ἐκλιπόνθ' ὄρους ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Τυδεὺς μὲν αἷμα συγγενὲς φεύγων χθονός.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὁ δ' Οἰδίπου παῖς τίνοι τρόπῳ Θήβας λιπών ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

150 ἀραῖς πατρώαις, μὴ κασίγνητον κτάνοι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

σοφὴν γ' ἔλεξας τήνδ' ἐκούσιον φυγὴν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' οἱ μένοντες τοὺς ἀπόντας ἠδίκουν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦ πού σφ' ἀδελφὸς χρημάτων νοσφίζεται ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ταῦτ' ἐκδικάζων ἦλθον· εἶτ' ἀπωλόμην.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

μάντεις δ' ἐπήλθες ἐμπύρων τ' εἶδες φλόγα ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἴμοι· διώκεις μ' ἢ μάλιστ' ἐγὼ σφάλην.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἦλθες, ὡς ἔοικεν, εὐνοία θεῶν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τὸ δὲ πλέον, ἦλθον Ἀμφιάρεω γε πρὸς βίαν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὕτω τὸ θεῖον ῥαδίως ἀπεστράφης ;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

160 νέων γὰρ ἀνδρῶν θόρυβος ἐξέπλησέ με.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εὐψυχίαν ἔσπευσας ἀντ' εὐβουλίας.

SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

How left they home-land's bounds, and came to thee ?

ADRASTUS

Tydeus, for shedding blood of kin exiled.

THESEUS

And Oedipus' son, for what cause left he Thebes ?

ADRASTUS

His father's curse, lest he should slay his brother. 150

THESEUS

Wise was that self-sought exile, named of thee.

ADRASTUS

But they that tarried wrought the absent wrong.

THESEUS

Ha ! did his brother take his heritage ?

ADRASTUS

To claim his right I came—and found my ruin.

THESEUS

Didst seek to seers, and gaze on altar-flames ?

ADRASTUS

Ah me ! thou pressest me where most I erred !

THESEUS

Not with heaven's blessing didst thou go, methinks.

ADRASTUS

Nay, worse ; in Amphiaras' despite I went.

THESEUS

Didst thou thus lightly flout the will divine ?

ADRASTUS

The clamour of the young men daunted me. 160

THESEUS

Valour instead of wisdom favouredst thou.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὁ δὴ γε πολλοὺς ὤλεσε στρατηλάτας.
 ἀλλ' ὦ καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἀλκιμώτατον κάρᾱ,
 ἄναξ Ἀθηνῶν, ἐν μὲν αἰσχύναις ἔχω
 πίτνων πρὸς οὐδας γόνυ σὸν ἀμπίσχειν χερί,
 πολὺς ἀνὴρ τύραννος εὐδαίμων πάρος·
 ὁμῶς δ' ἀνάγκη συμφοραῖς εἴκειν ἐμαῖς.

170 σῶσον νεκροὺς μοι τὰμά τ' οἰκτείρας κακὰ
 καὶ τῶν θανόντων τάσδε μητέρας τέκνων,
 αἷς γῆρας ἤκει πολὺν εἰς ἀπαιδίαν,
 ἐλθεῖν δ' ἔτλησαν δεῦρο καὶ ξένον πόδα
 θεῖναι μόλις γεραῖα κινουῦσαι μέλη,
 πρεσβεύματ' οὐ Δήμητρος εἰς μυστήρια,
 ἀλλ' ὡς νεκροὺς θάψωσιν, ἅς αὐτὰς ἐχρῆν
 κείνων ταφείσας χερσὶν ὠραίων τυχεῖν.
 σοφὸν δὲ πεύϊαν τ' εἴσορᾶν τὸν ὄλβιον,
 πένητά τ' εἰς τοὺς πλουσίους ἀποβλέπειν
 180 [τόν θ' ὑμνοποιὸν αὐτὸς ἂν τίκτη μῆλη
 χαίροντα τίκτειν· ἦν δὲ μὴ πάσχη τόδε,
 οὔτοι δύναιτ' ἂν οἴκοθέν γ' ἀτώμενος
 τέρπειν ἂν ἄλλους· οὐδὲ γὰρ δίκην ἔχει.]¹

190 τὰχ' οὖν ἂν εἴποις, Πελοπίαν παρεῖς χθόνα
 πῶς ταῖς Ἀθήναις τόνδε προστάσσεις πόνου ;
 ἐγὼ δίκαιός εἰμ' ἀφηγεῖσθαι τάδε.
 Σπάρτη μὲν ὠμὴ καὶ πεποίκιλται τρόπους,
 τὰ δ' ἄλλα μικρὰ κάσθενῆ· πόλις δὲ σὴ
 μόνη δύναιτ' ἂν τόνδ' ὑποστῆναι πόνου.
 τὰ τ' οἰκτρὰ γὰρ δέδορκε καὶ νεαῖαν

¹ By most editors regarded as an irrelevant interpolation.

SUPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Even that hath ruined many a battle-chief.
O thou in prowess first all Hellas through,
O king of Athens, sore ashamed am I
To fall to earth, and to embrace thy knee,
A grey-haired king in time past prosperous.
Yet to mine evil plight I needs must bow.

Save thou my dead, compassionate my woes,
And these the mothers of the slaughtered sons
Whom hoary age hath found in childlessness, 170
Who have endured to come, on alien soil
To set their feet, who scarce for eld may creep ;
No mission to Demeter's mysteries,
But seeking burial for their dead, a boon
Themselves should have obtained of young strong
hands.

Wisely doth wealth consider poverty :
Wisely to wealth the poor uplifts his eyes
Aspiring, that desire of good may spur him : .
So ought the prosperous to look on woe.
[The poet's self in gladness should bring forth 180
His offspring, song ; if he attain not this,
He cannot from a heart distraught with pain
Gladden his fellows : reason sayeth nay.]

Perchance thou askest, " Why pass by the land
Of Pelops, and on Athens lay this charge ? "
Sooth, right it is that I should answer this :—
Sparta is heartless, never at one stay ;
The rest be small and weak : but this thy burg
Alone can stand beneath the mighty strain.
'Twas ever pitiful, and hath in thee 190

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ἔχει σὲ ποιμέν' ἐσθλόν· οὐ χρεία πόλεις
πολλαὶ διώλонт' ἐνδεεῖς στρατηλάτου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κἀγὼ τὸν αὐτὸν τῷδέ σοι λόγον λέγω,
Θησεύ, δι' οἴκτου τὰς ἐμὰς λαβεῖν τύχας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

- ἄλλοισι δὴ 'πόνησ' ἀμιλληθεὶς λόγῳ
τοιῶδ'· ἔλεξε γάρ τις ὡς τὰ χείρονα
πλείω βροτοῖσιν ἐστὶ τῶν ἀμεινόνων·
ἐγὼ δὲ τούτοις ἀντίαν γνώμην ἔχω
πλείω τὰ χρηστὰ τῶν κακῶν εἶναι βροτοῖς·
200 εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἦν τόδ', οὐκ ἂν ἤμεν ἐν φύει.
αἰνῶ δ' ὅς ἡμῖν βίοντον ἐκ πεφυρμένου
καὶ θηριώδους θεῶν διεσταθμήσατο,
πρῶτον μὲν ἐνθεῖς σύνεσιν, εἶτα δ' ἄγγελον
γλῶσσαν λόγων δούς, ὡς γεγωνίσκειν ὄπα,
τροφὴν τε καρποῦ τῇ τροφῇ τ' ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ
σταγόνας ὑδρηλίας, ὡς τὰ γ' ἐκ γαίας τρέφῃ
ἄρρη τε νηδύν· πρὸς δὲ τοῖσι χείματος
προβλήματ', αἶθρον ἐξαμύνασθαι θεοῦ,
210 πόντου τε ναυστολήμαθ', ὡς διαλλαγὰς
ἔχοιμεν ἀλλήλοισιν ὧν πένοιτο γῆ.
ἂ δ' ἔστ' ἄσημα κοῦ σαφῶς γιγνώσκομεν,
εἰς πῦρ βλέποντες καὶ κατὰ σπλάγχμων πτυχὰς
μάντεις προσημαίνουσιν οἰωνῶν τ' ἄπο.
ἄρ' οὐ τρυφῶμεν θεοῦ κατασκευὴν βίῳ
δόντος τοιαύτην, οἷσιν οὐκ ἄρκεί τάδε ;
ἀλλ' ἢ φρόνησις τοῦ θεοῦ μείζον σθένειν
ζητεῖ, τὸ γαῦρον δ' ἐν φρεσὶν κεκτημένοι
δοκοῦμεν εἶναι δαιμόνων σοφώτεροι.
220 ἦς καὶ σὺ φαίνει δεκάδος οὐ σοφὸς γεγώς,
ὅστις κόρας μὲν θεσφάτοις Φοίβου ζυγεῖς

SUPPLIANTS

A young and valorous chief, for lack of whom
To lead their hosts, have many cities fallen.

CHORUS

I too put up to thee the selfsame prayer,
Theseus, to have compassion on my lot.

THESEUS

With others oft in wrestle of argument
I have grappled touching this :—there be that say
That evil more abounds with men than good.
Opinion adverse unto these I hold,
That more than evil good abounds with men :
Were this not so, we were not of the light. 200

Praise to the God who shaped in order's mould
Our lives redeemed from chaos and the brute,
First, by implanting reason, giving then
The tongue, word-herald, to interpret speech ;
Earth's fruit for food, for nurturing thereof
Raindrops from heaven, to feed earth's fosterlings,
And water her green bosom ; therewithal
Shelter from storm, and shadow from the heat,
Sea-tracking ships, that traffic might be ours
With fellow-men of that which each land lacks ; 210
And, for invisible things or dimly seen,
Soothsayers watch the flame, the liver's folds,
Or from the birds divine the things to be.

Are we not arrogant then, when all life's needs
God giveth, therewith not to be content ?
But our presumption stronger fain would be
Than God : we have gotten overweening hearts,
And dream that we be wiser than the Gods.
And thou art of this fellowship of folly,
Who didst by Phoebus' hest thy daughters wed, 220

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

ξένοισιν ὦδ' ἔδωκας ὡς ζώντων θεῶν,
 λαμπρὸν δὲ θολερῷ δῶμα συμμίξας τὸ σὸν
 ἤλκωσας οἴκους· χρῆν γὰρ οὐδὲ σώματα
 ἄδικα δικαίοις τὸν σοφὸν συμμιγνύναι,
 εὐδαιμονοῦντας δ' εἰς δόμους κτᾶσθαι φίλους.
 κοινὰς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰς τύχας ἡγούμενος
 τοῖς τοῦ νοσοῦντος πήμασιν διώλεσε
 τὸν συννοσοῦντα κοῦδὲν ἡδίκηκότα.
 εἰς δὲ στρατείαν πάντας Ἀργείους ἄγων,
 230 μάντεων λεγόντων θέσφατ', εἰτ' ἀτιμάσας
 βία παρελθὼν θεοὺς ἀπώλεσας πόλιν,
 νέοις παραχθείς, οἵτινες τιμώμενοι
 χαίρουσι πολέμους τ' αὐξάνουσι ἄνευ δίκης,
 φθείροντες ἀστούς, ὁ μὲν ὅπως στρατηλατῆ,
 ὁ δ' ὡς ὑβρίζη δύναμιν εἰς χεῖρας λαβών,
 ἄλλος δὲ κέρδους εἶνεκ', οὐκ ἀποσκοπῶν
 τὸ πλήθος εἴ τι βλάπτεται πάσχον τάδε.
 τρεῖς γὰρ πολιτῶν μερίδες· οἱ μὲν ὄλβιοι
 ἀνωφελεῖς τε πλειόνων τ' ἐρῶσι αἰεὶ·
 240 οἱ δ' οὐκ ἔχοντες καὶ σπανίζοντες βίου,
 δεινοὶ, νέμοντες τῷ φθόνῳ πλέον μέρος,
 εἰς τοὺς ἔχοντας κέντρ' ὑφιάσιν κακά,
 γλώσσαις πονηρῶν προστατῶν φηλούμενοι
 τριῶν δὲ μοιρῶν ἢ ἕν μὲσφ' σφάζει πόλεις,
 κόσμον φυλάσσουσι ὄντιν' ἂν τάξῃ πόλις.
 κάπειτ' ἐγὼ σοι σύμμαχος γενήσομαι;
 τί πρὸς πολίτας τοὺς ἐμούς λέγων καλόν;
 χαίρων ἴθ'· εἰ γὰρ μὴ βεβούλευσαι καλῶς,
 αὐτὸς πιέζειν τὴν τύχην, ἡμᾶς δ' ἔαν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

250 ἡμαρτεν· ἐν νέοισι δ' ἀνθρώπων τόδε
 ἔνεστι· συγγνώμην δὲ τῷδ' ἔχειν χρεῶν.

SUPPLIANTS

To aliens—thus far recognising Gods ;—
Yet mingling thy clear blood with turbid, so
Didst mar thine house : thou oughtest ne'er to have
 blent,

So thou wert wise, just lives with lives unjust,
But for thine house to have gotten heaven-blest
 friends :

For God, adjudging fates joined hand in hand,
Destroyeth by the sinner's stroke whoe'er
Partaketh with him, though he have not sinned.
Thou leddest forth the Argives all to war, [naught
Though seers spake heaven's warning, setting at 230
These, flouting Gods, didst ruin so thy state,
By young men led astray, which love the praise
Of men, and multiply wars wrongfully,
Corrupting others, one, to lead the host,
One, to win power, and use it for his lust,
And one for lucre's sake, who recketh naught
Of mischief to a people thus misused.

For in a nation there be orders three :—
The highest, useless rich, aye craving more ;
The lowest, poor, aye on starvation's brink, 240
A dangerous folk, of envy overfull,
Which shoot out baleful stings at prosperous folk,
Beguiled by tongues of evil men, their "champions" :
But of the three the midmost saveth states,
Who keep the order which the state ordains.
Shall I then make me ally unto thee ?
How to my nation should I make defence ?
Depart in peace : if thou hast ill devised,
Face fortune's blows thyself ; drag us not down.

CHORUS

He erred ; yet on the young men rests the blame : 250
But meet it is that he find grace with thee.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὔτοι δικαστήν σ' εἰλόμην ἐμῶν κακῶν,
 ἀλλ' ὡς ἰατρὸν τῶνδ', ἀναξ, ἀφίγμεθα,¹
 οὐδ', εἴ τι πράξας μὴ καλῶς εὐρίσκομαι,
 τούτων κολαστήν κάπιτιμητήν, ἀναξ,
 ἀλλ' ὡς ὀναίμην. εἰ δὲ μὴ βούλει τάδε,
 στέργειν ἀνάγκη τοῖσι σοῖς· τί γὰρ πάθω;
 ἄγ', ὦ γεραιαί, στείχετε, γλαυκὴν χλόην
 260 αὐτοῦ λιποῦσαι φυλλάδος καταστεφῆ,
 θεοὺς τε καὶ γῆν τήν τε πυρφόρον θεῶν
 Δήμητρα θέμεναι μάρτυρ' ἡλίου τε φῶς,
 ὡς οὐδὲν ἡμῖν ἤρκεσαν λιταὶ θεῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

* * * * *
 ὃς Πέλοπος ἦν παῖς, Πελοπίας δ' ἡμεῖς χθονὸς
 ταυτὸν πατρῶον αἷμα σοὶ κεκτῆμεθα.

ΑΙΘΡΑ²

τί δρᾶς; προδώσεις ταῦτα κάκβαλεῖς χθονὸς
 γραῦς οὐ τυχούσας οὐδὲν ὦν αὐτὰς ἐχρήν;
 μὴ δῆτ'· ἔχει γὰρ καταφυγὴν θῆρ μὲν πέτραν,
 δούλος δὲ βωμοὺς θεῶν, πόλις δὲ πρὸς πόλιν
 ἔπηξε χειμασθεῖσα· τῶν γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖς
 270 οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν διὰ τέλους εὐδαιμονοῦν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.
 βᾶθι, τάλαιν', ἱερῶν δαπέδων ἄπο Περσεφονείας,
 βᾶθι καὶ ἀντίασον γονάτων ἐπι χεῖρα βαλοῦσα,
 τέκνων τεθνεώτων κομίσαι δέμας, ὦ μελέα ἴω,
 οὓς ὑπὸ τείχεσι Καδμείοισιν ἀπώλεσα κούρους.

¹ Placed by Barnes here, instead of after 251, as in MSS.

² So assigned by Paley, by other editors to Chorus,

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Not for a judge I chose thee of mine ills,
But as to a healer of them, king, we come ;
Nor, if I have calamitously sped,
Need I thy chastisement and chiding, king,
No, but thine aid. And if thou wilt not this,
I must content me with thy choice :—what help ?
Come, aged dames, depart :—yet leave ye here
The grey-green boughs to roof the altar o'er,¹
Calling to witness heaven and earth, Demeter,
Fire-bearing Goddess, and the Sun-god's light,
That naught our prayers unto the Gods availed.

260

CHORUS

[On thine head be it, grandson thou of Pittheus]
Old Pelops' son ! Lo, we of Pelops' land
The selfsame blood ancestral share with thee.

AETHRA

How ?—wilt thou flout these prayers, cast forth the
land
Grey mothers, which have gained of their dues naught ?
Nay, nay !—the beast finds refuge in the rock,
The slave at the Gods' altars ; and a state
Storm-tossed must cower beneath another's lee ;
For in man's lot naught prospereth to the end.

270

CHORUS

O thou afflicted, arise from Persephone's hallowèd
floor ; [thine hands, and implore
Rise thou, and bow at his knees, flinging round them
That he rescue the clay of my dead, my beloved—ah,
woe is me, woe !— [in dust lying low.
Of the sons I have lost, under ramparts of Cadmus

¹ If the petitioner's prayer was granted, he carried away with him his suppliant-bough ; if not, he left it on the altar.

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

ἰὼ μοι· λάβετε φέρετε πέμπετε αἰέρετε¹ μεσφδ.
ταλαίνας χέρας γεραιάς.

πρὸς σε γενειάδος, ὦ φίλος, ὦ δοκιμώτατος
Ἑλλάδι,

ἄντομαι ἀμφιπίτνουσα τὸ σὸν γόνυ καὶ χέρα
δειλαία·

280 οἴκτισαι ἀμφὶ τέκνων μ' ἰκέταν τιν' ἀλάταν
οἴκτρὸν ἰάλεμον οἴκτρὸν ἰεῖσαν,

ἄντ.

μηδ' ἀτάφους, τέκνον, ἐν χθονὶ Κάδμου χάρματα
θηρῶν

παῖδας ἐν ἀλικίᾳ τῇ σῇ κατίδης, ἰκετεύω.

βλέψον ἐμῶν βλεφάρων ἔπι δάκρυον, ἃ περι
σοῖσι

γούνασιν ὧδε πίτνω, τέκνοις τάφον ἐξανύσασθαι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

μητερ, τί κλαίεις λέπτ' ἐπ' ὀμμάτων φάρη

βαλοῦσα τῶν σῶν; ἄρα δυστήνους γόους

κλύουσα τῶνδε; κἀμὲ γὰρ διῆλθέ τι.

ἔπαιρε λευκὸν κρᾶτα, μὴ δακρυρροεῖ

290 σεμναῖσι Δηοῦς ἐσχάrais παρημένῃ.

ΛΙΘΡΑ

αἰαί.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τὰ τούτων οὐχὶ σοὶ στενακτέον.

ΛΙΘΡΑ

ὦ τλήμονες γυναῖκες.

¹ Hermann; for MSS. κρίνετε.

SUPPLIANTS

(*Mesode*)

Woe for me!—clasp me, uplift me, help onward,
upholding

The palsied hand of the woe-forspent !

By thy beard, O thou chiefest of champions of
Hellas, O friend, I beseech thee,

In the clasp of the wretched thy knees and thy
fingers enfolding !

Pity me ; for my children in supplicance bent 280
Like a beggar I bow : let my pitiful, pitiful out-
cryings reach thee !

(*Ant.*)

Ah, not unburied on Cadmus's soil, for a ravin and glee
Unto beasts of the wold do thou leave them, the
young men like unto thee !

O look on the tears from mine eyes that are stream-
ing!—and all that I crave

Falling low at thy knees, is a grave—that thou win
for my sons but a grave !

THESEUS

Mother, why weepest thou, before thine eyes
Casting thy fine-spun veil ? Dost weep to hear
Their mournful wails ? Sooth, mine own heart was
thrilled.

Raise thy white head ; be not a fount of tears,
There sitting at Demeter's holy hearth.

290

AETHRA

Ah me !

THESEUS

'Tis not for thee to wail their woes.

AETHRA

Oh hapless dames !

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐ σὺ τῶνδ' ἔφυς.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

εἵπω τι, τέκνον, σοί τε καὶ πόλει καλόν ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὡς πολλά γ' ἐστὶ κατὰ θηλειῶν σοφά.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

ἀλλ' εἰς ὄκνον μοι μῦθος ὃν κεύθω φέρει.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

αἰσχρόν γ' ἔλεξας, χρήστ' ἔπη κρύπτειν φίλους.

ΑΙΘΡΑ

οὔτοι σιωπῶσ' εἶτα μέμψομαί ποτε
τὴν νῦν σιωπὴν ὡς ἐσιγήθη κακῶς,
οὐδ' ὡς ἀχρεῖον τὰς γυναῖκας εὖ λέγειν.
300 δείσασ' ἀφήσω τῷ φόβῳ τοῦμόν καλόν.
ἐγὼ δέ σ', ὦ παῖ, πρῶτα μὲν τὰ τῶν θεῶν
σκοπεῖν κελεύω μὴ σφαλῆς ἀτιμάσας·
τᾶλλ' εὖ φρονῶν γάρ, ἐν μόνῳ τούτῳ ἴσφάλης.
πρὸς τοῖσδε δ', εἰ μὲν μὴ ἀδικουμένοις ἐχρῆν
τολμηρὸν εἶναι, κάρτ' ἂν εἶχον ἠσύχως·
νυνὶ δὲ σοί τε τοῦτο τὴν τιμὴν φέρει
κάμοι παραινεῖν οὐ φόβον φέρει, τέκνον,
ἄνδρας βιαίους καὶ κατείργοντας νεκροὺς
τάφου τε μοίρας καὶ κτερισμάτων λαχεῖν
310 εἰς τήνδ' ἀνάγκην σῆ καταστῆναι χερί,
νόμιμά τε πάσης συγχέοντάς Ἑλλάδος
παῦσαι· τὸ γάρ τοι συνέχον ἀνθρώπων πόλεις
τοῦτ' ἔσθ', ὅταν τις τοὺς νόμους σφίξῃ καλῶς.
ἐρεῖ δὲ δὴ τις ὡς ἀνανδρία χερῶν,
πόλει παρόν σοι στέφανον εὐκλείας λαβεῖν,
δείσας ἀπέστης, καὶ συὸς μὲν ἀγρίου

SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

Thou art not of their blood.

AETHRA

Son, may I speak for thine and Athens' honour?

THESEUS

Yea, even from women's lips much wisdom flows.

AETHRA

Yet—yet, it gives me pause, the word I hide.

THESEUS

Nay, this were shame, to hide good rede from friends.

AETHRA

I will not hold my peace, to blame hereafter
Myself for coward silence of this day ;
Nor, cowed by that taunt, " Woman's best advice
Is worthless," will refrain my lips from good. 300
My son, I bid thee look to this first, lest
Thou err, despising their appeal to heaven.
In this alone thou err'st, in all else wise.

Nay more—I had endured, and murmured not,
Wert thou not *bound* to champion the oppressed.
Lo, this is the foundation of thy fame ;
Therefore I fear not to exhort thee, son,
That thou wouldst lay thy strong constraining hand
On men of violence which refuse the dead 310
The dues of burial and of funeral-rites,
And quell the folk that would confound all wont
Of Hellas : for the bond of all men's states
Is this, when they with honour hold by law.

Ay, some will say faint heart made feeble hand ;
That to win Athens glory's crown was thine,
Yet didst thou flinch for fear ; that thou didst close

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

ἀγῶνος ἤψω φαῦλον ἀθλήσας πόνον,
 οὐ δ' εἰς κρίνος βλέψαντα καὶ λόγχης ἀκμὴν
 320 χρῆν ἐκπονήσαι, δειλὸς ὢν ἐφηυρέθης.
 μὴ δῆτ' ἐμός γ' ὢν, ὦ τέκνον, δράσης τάδε.
 ὄρας, ἄβουλος ὡς κεκερτομημένη
 τοῖς κερτομοῦσι γοργὸν ὄμμ' ἀναβλέπει
 σὴ πατρίς; ἐν γὰρ τοῖς πόνοισιν αὖξεται·
 αἱ δ' ἥσυχαι σκοτεινὰ πρίσσουναι πόλεις
 σκοτεινὰ καὶ βλέπουσιν εὐλαβούμεναι.
 οὐκ εἰ νεκροῖσι καὶ γυναιξὶν ἀθλίαις
 προσωφελήσων, ὦ τέκνον, κεχρημέναις;
 ὡς οὔτε ταρβῶ σὺν δίκη σ' ὀρμώμενον,
 330 Κάδμου θ' ὀρώσα λαὸν εὐ πεπραγότα,
 ἔτ' αὐτὸν ἄλλα βλήματ' ἐν κύβοις βαλεῖν
 πέποιθ'. ὁ γὰρ θεὸς πάντ' ἀναστρέφει πάλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ φιλτάτη μοι, τῷδέ τ' εἴρηκας καλῶς
 κάμοι· διπλοῦν δέ χάρμα γίγνεται τόδε.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἐμοὶ λόγοι μὲν, μήτηρ, οἱ λελεγμένοι
 ὀρθῶς ἔχουσ' εἰς τόνδε, κάπεφηνάμην
 γνώμην ὑφ' οἴων ἐσφάλῃ βουλευμάτων·
 ὀρῶ δὲ καγὼ ταῦθ' ἄπερ με νουθετεῖς,
 ὡς τοῖς ἐμοῖσιν οὐχὶ πρόσφορον τρόποις
 φεύγειν τὰ δεινὰ. πολλὰ γὰρ δράσας καλά,
 340 ἔθος τόδ' εἰς Ἑλληνας ἐξεδειξάμην,
 αἰεὶ κολαστῆς τῶν κακῶν καθεστάναι.
 οὐκουν ἀπαυδᾶν δυνατὸν ἐστὶ μοι πόνους.
 τί γάρ μ' ἐροῦσιν οἳ γε δυσμενεῖς βροτῶν,
 ὅθ' ἠ τεκοῦσα χυπερορρωδοῦσ' ἐμοῦ

SUPPLIANTS

In strife of little toil with that wild swine,¹
But when behoved to face the helm, bear brunt
Of the spear's point, a craven wert thou found.
Ah, do not so, my son, as thou art mine ! 320
Hast marked—bemocked for reckless policy,
How on the mockers glares with fierce bright eyes
Thy country?—in her energy is her life.

But states which work in darkness, cautelous,
Grope in the darkness, for their caution's meed.
What, to the dead, and women misery-worn
Wilt thou not bring help, son, in this their strait ?
I fear naught : justice is with thine essay ;
And, though the folk of Cadmus prosper now,
Far otherwise yet for them the dice of doom 330
Shall fall, I trust :—God bringeth low the proud.

CHORUS

O best-beloved, well hast thou said, for him
And me alike ; herein is twofold joy.

THESEUS

Mother, the words I spake were words of truth
Unto this man, wherein I showed my mind
Touching the counsels by the which he fell.
Yet these thy warnings—yea, I see their force,
That with my life's use it accordeth not
To flinch from peril. Many a glorious deed
Hath shown to sons of Hellas this my wont, 340
Ever to be a punisher of wrong.

Toil's challenge therefore cannot I refuse :
For what will they which hate me say of me,
When she that bare me—who, beyond all, fears

¹ Phaea, the wild sow of Kromnyon, slain by Theseus.

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

πρώτη κελεύεις τόνδ' ὑποστήναι πόνον ;
 δράσω τάδ'· εἶμι καὶ νεκροὺς ἐκλύσομαι
 λόγοισι πείθων· εἰ δὲ μή, βία δορὸς
 ἤδη τόδ' ἔσται κούχλι σὺν φθόνῳ θεῶν.
 350 δόξαι δὲ χρήζω καὶ πόλει πάσῃ τόδε.
 δόξει δ' ἐμοῦ θέλοντος· ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου
 προσδοὺς ἔχοιμ' ἂν δῆμον εὐμενέστερον.
 καὶ γὰρ κατέστησ' αὐτὸν εἰς μοναρχίαν
 ἐλευθερώσας τήνδ' ἰσόψηφον πόλιν.
 λαβὼν δ' Ἄδραστον δεῖγμα τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων,
 εἰς πλήθος ἀστῶν εἶμι· καὶ πείσας τάδε,
 λεκτοὺς ἀθροίσας δεῦρ' Ἀθηναίων κόρους
 ἤξω· παρ' ὅπλοις θ' ἤμενος πέμψω λόγους
 Κρέοντι νεκρῶν σώματ' ἐξαιτούμενος.
 360 ἀλλ' ὦ γεραιαί, σέμν' ἀφαιρεῖτε στέφη
 μητρός, πρὸς οἴκους ὡς νιν Αἰγέως ἄγω,
 φίλην προσάψας χεῖρα· τοῖς τεκοῦσι γὰρ
 δύστηνος ὅστις μὴ ἀντιδουλεύει τέκνων.
 κάλλιστον ἔρανον δοὺς γὰρ ἀντιλάζυται
 παίδων παρ' αὐτοῦ τοιαῖδ' ἂν τοκεῦσι δῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

ἰππόβοτον Ἄργος, ὦ πάτριον ἐμὸν πέδον,
 ἐκλύετε τάδ' ἐκλύετ' ἄνακτος
 ὅσια περὶ θεοὺς καὶ μεγάλα Πελασγία
 καὶ κατ' Ἄργος.

ἀντ. α

370 εἰ γὰρ ἐπὶ τέρμα καὶ τὸ πλεόν ἐμῶν κακῶν
 ἰκόμενος ἔτι ματέρος ἄγαλμα
 φόνιον ἐξέλοι, γὰν δὲ φίλιον Ἰνάχου
 θεῖτ' ὀνήσας.

SUPPLIANTS

For me,—first bids me undertake this toil?
 I will unto the deed, redeem their dead
 By fair words, if I may ; if not, the might
 Of spears shall do it, nor the Gods shall grudge.
 Yet I require all Athens' sanction here.
 My wish should win their sanction ; yet, if I 350
 Show cause withal, the loyaller shall they be.
 For I have made the land one single realm,
 A free state, with an equal vote for all.
 Adrastus for my witness will I take,
 And meet their concourse ; their consenting won,
 With muster of chosen youths Athenian
 Will I return ; and tarrying under arms,
 Will send to Creon, asking back the dead.
 But ye, grey women, from my mother take
 The holy wreaths, that I may clasp her hand, 360
 And lead to Aegeus' halls. A sorry son
 Is he that pays not service-debt to parents.
 Who giveth of love's best, by his own sons
 For all he hath given his parents is repaid.

[*Exeunt* THESEUS and AETHRA.]

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

O Argos, mead of the battle-steed, O land where my
 fathers abode of yore, [the hero-king,
 Ye have heard it, heard in Heaven was the word of
 His sacred plight in Pelasgia's sight, the pledge to be
 published all Argos o'er.

(Ant. 1)

O may he gain—yea, more than attain to the goal
 that seeth my miseries end ! [mother to bring
 Forth let him go, let him wrest from the foe, to the 370
 Her darling's clay blood-stained, and for aye have
 our own dear Inachus' land to friend.

529

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

καλὸν δ' ἄγαλμα πόλεσιν εὐσεβῆς πόνος στρ. β'
 χάριν τ' ἔχει τὰν ἐς αἰεί.
 τί μοι πόλις κρανεῖ ποτ' ; ἄρα φίλιά μοι
 τεμεί, καὶ τέκνοις ταφὰς ληψόμεσθα ;

ἄμυνε ματρί, πόλις, ἄμυνε, Παλλάδος, ἀντ. β'
 νόμους βροτῶν μὴ μιαίνειν.
 σύ τοι σέβεις δίκαν, τὸ δ' ἦσσον ἀδικία
 380 νέμεις, δυστυχή τ' αἰὲ πάντα ρύει.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τέχνην μὲν αἰὲ τήνδ' ἔχων ὑπηρετεῖς
 πόλει τε κάμοί, διαφέρων κηρύγματα·
 ἐλθὼν δ' ὑπέρ τ' Ἄσωπὸν Ἴσμηνοῦ θ' ὕδωρ
 σεμνῷ τυράννῳ φράζε Καδμείων τάδε·
 Θησεύς σ' ἀπαιτεῖ πρὸς χάριν θάψαι νεκρούς,
 συγγείτον' οἰκῶν γαίαν, ἀξιῶν τυχεῖν,
 φίλον τε θέσθαι πάντ' Ἐρεχθιδῶν λεῶν.
 κἂν μὲν θέλωσιν αἰνέσαι, παλίσσυτος
 στεῖχ' ἦν δ' ἀπιστῶσ', οἶδε δεῦτεροι λόγοι·
 390 κῶμον δέχεσθαι τὸν ἐμὸν ἀσπιδηφόρον.
 στρατὸς δὲ θάσσει κάξεταιζεται παρῶν
 Καλλίχορον ἀμφὶ σεμνὸν εὐτρεπῆς ὄδε.
 καὶ μὴν ἐκούσά γ' ἀσμένη τ' ἐδέξατο
 πόλις πόνον τόνδ', ὡς θέλοντά μ' ἦσθητο.
 ἔα· λόγων τίς ἐμποδῶν ὄδ' ἔρχεται ;
 Καδμείος, ὡς ἔοικεν οὐ σάφ' εἰδότι.

SUPPLIANTS

(Str. 2)

Memorial fair shall the cities share of the sacred labour
of love : evermore [lingering.

The grace thereof shall abide, and the love aye
Ah, what shall come of their rede?—what doom?—
shall Athens bestow the grace I implore?

Shall she league her might with me, and the right of
the tomb to my slaughtered sons restore?

(Ant. 2)

O Pallas' Town, for my help step down; the holy
cause of the mother defend; [thing.

So the laws of men shall be made not then a polluted
Thou reverencest great Justice' hest: injustice be-
neath thy yoke shall bend:

And through all the lands thy champion hands to the
helpless oppressed deliverance send.

380

Enter THESEUS with ATHENIAN HERALD.

THESEUS

O thou that usest still thine art to serve
Athens and me, wide publishing mine hests,
Pass thou Asopus and Ismenus' stream,
And to the proud Cadmean despot say:

“Theseus of grace asks corpses for the tomb:

He dwells thy neighbour, and he claims but right:

So make thou the Erechtheid folk thy friend.”

If they consent to grant it, turn thou back.

If they refuse, my second message speak,

“Look for my shielded revel-rout of war!”

390

Mine host is camped and marshalled hard at hand

By sacred Callichorus for fight prepared.

Yea, Athens of good will, and glad withal,

Took up this task, made ware of my desire.

Ha!—breaking in upon my speech who comes?

Theban, I deem, yet know not certainly:—

531

M M 2

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

κῆρυξ. ἐπίσχεσ, ἦν σ' ἀπαλλάξῃ πόνου
μολῶν ὕπαντα τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλευμασιν.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

400

τίς γῆς τύραννος ; πρὸς τίν' ἀγγεῖλαι με χρῆ
λόγους Κρέοντος, ὃς κρατεῖ Κάδμου χθονός,
'Ετεοκλέους θανόντος ἀμφ' ἑπταστόμους
πύλας ἀδελφοῦ χειρι Πολουεῖκους ὑπο ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ἤρξω τοῦ λόγου ψευδῶς, ξένε,
ζητῶν τύραννον ἐνθάδ'· οὐ γὰρ ἄρχεται
ένος πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρα πόλις.
δῆμος δ' ἀνάσσει διαδοχαῖσιν ἐν μέρει
ἐνιαυσίαισιν, οὐχὶ τῷ πλούτῳ διδούς
τὸ πλείστον, ἀλλὰ χῶ πένης ἔχων ἴσον.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

410

ἐν μὲν τόδ' ἡμῖν ὥσπερ ἐν πεσσοῖς δίδως
κρεῖσσον· πόλις γὰρ ἦς ἐγὼ πάριμ' ἀπο
ένος πρὸς ἀνδρός, οὐκ ὄχλω κρατύνεται·
οὐδ' ἔστιν αὐτὴν ὅστις ἐκχαυνῶν λόγοις
πρὸς κέρδος ἴδιον ἄλλοτ' ἄλλοσε στρέφει·
ὁ δ' αὐτίχ' ἠδὺς καὶ διδούς πολλὴν χάριν,
εἰσαῦθις ἐβλαψ', εἶτα διαβολαῖς νέαις
κλέψας τὰ πρόσθε σφάλματ' ἐξέδου δίκης.
ἄλλως τε πῶς ἂν μὴ διορθεύων λόγους
ὀρθῶς δύναιτ' ἂν δῆμος εὐθύνειν πόλιν ;

420

ὁ γὰρ χρόνος μάθησιν ἀντὶ τοῦ τάχους
κρεῖσσω δίδωσι. γαπόνος δ' ἀνὴρ πένης
εἰ καὶ γένοιτο μὴ ἀμαθής, ἔργων ὑπο
οὐκ ἂν δύναιτο πρὸς τὰ κοῖν' ἀποβλέπειν.
ἦ δὴ νοσῶδες τοῦτο τοῖς ἀμείνοσιν,
ὅταν πονηρὸς ἀξίωμ' ἀνὴρ ἔχη
γλώσση κατασχῶν δῆμον, οὐδὲν ὦν τὸ πρίν.

SUPPLIANTS

A herald!—stay : thy toil perchance is spared.
His coming meets my purpose in mid way.

Enter THEBAN HERALD.

HERALD

Your despot, who?—to whom must I proclaim
The words of Creon, lord of Cadmus' land 400
Since Eteocles by the hand was slain
Of Polyneices by the sevenfold gates ?

THESEUS

First, stranger, with false note thy speech began,
Seeking a despot here. Our state is ruled
Not of one only man : Athens is free.
Her people in the order of their course
Rule year by year, bestowing on the rich
Advantage none ; the poor hath equal right.

HERALD

One vantage hast thou given me, as to one
That playeth draughts :—the city whence I come 410
By one man, not by any mob, is swayed.
There is none there who, slaving them with talk,
This way and that way twists them for his gain,
Is popular now, and humours all their bent ;
Now, laying on others blame for mischief done,
He cloaks his faults, and slips through justice' net.

How should the mob which reason all awry
Have power to pilot straight a nation's course ?
For time bestoweth better lessoning
Than haste. But yon poor delver of the ground, 420
How shrewd soe'er, by reason of his toil
Can nowise oversee the general weal.
Realm-ruining in the wise man's sight is this,
When the vile tonguester getteth himself a name
By wooing mobs, who heretofore was naught.

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κομφός γ' ὁ κῆρυξ καὶ παρεργάτης λόγων.
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἀγῶνα καὶ σὺ τόνδ' ἠγωνίσω,
 ἄκου' ἄμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προύθηκας λόγων.
 οὐδὲν τυράννου δυσμενέστερον πόλει,
 430 ὅπου τὸ μὲν πρῶτιστον οὐκ εἰσὶν νόμοι
 κοινοί, κρατεῖ δ' εἰς τὸν νόμον κεκτημένος
 αὐτὸς παρ' αὐτῷ, καὶ τόδ' οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἴσον.
 γεγραμμένων δὲ τῶν νόμων ὃ τ' ἀσθενῆς
 ὁ πλούσιός τε τὴν δίκην ἴσην ἔχει,
 ἔστιν δ' ἐνισπεῖν τοῖσιν ἀσθενεστέροις
 τὸν εὐτυχοῦντα ταῦθ', ὅταν κλύῃ κακῶς.
 νικᾷ δ' ὁ μείων τὸν μέγαν δίκαι' ἔχων.
 τοῦλεύθερον δ' ἐκείνο· τίς θέλει πόλει
 440 χρηστόν τι βούλευμ' εἰς μέσον φέρειν ἔχων ;
 καὶ ταῦθ' ὁ χρήζων λαμπρὸς ἔσθ', ὁ μὴ θέλων
 σιγᾶ. τί τούτων ἔστ' ἰσαίτερον πόλει ;
 καὶ μὴν ὅπου γε δῆμος εὐθυντῆς χθονός,
 ὑποῦσιν ἀστοῖς ἠδεταὶ νεανίαις·
 ἀνὴρ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἐχθρὸν ἠγεῖται τόδε,
 καὶ τοὺς ἀρίστους, οὓς ἂν ἠγῆται φρονεῖν
 κτείνει, δεδοικῶς τῆς τυραννίδος πέρι.
 πῶς οὖν ἔτ' ἂν γένοιτ' ἂν ἰσχυρὰ πόλις,
 ὅταν τις ὡς λειμῶνος ἠρινοῦ στάχυν
 450 τόλμας ἀφαιρῆ κάπολωτίζη νέους ;
 κτᾶσθαι δὲ πλοῦτον καὶ βίον τί δεῖ τέκνοις,
 ὡς τῷ τυράνῳ πλείον' ἐκμοχθῆ βίον ;
 ἢ παρθενεύειν παῖδας ἐν δόμοις καλῶς
 τερπνὰς τυράννοις ἠδονάς, ὅταν θέλη,
 δάκρυα δ' ἐτοιμάζουσι ; μὴ ζῶην ἔτι,

SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

An eloquent herald this, a speech-crammed babbler !
But, since thou hast plunged into this strife, hear
me :—

[parley :—

'Twas thou flung'st down this challenge unto
No worse foe than the despot hath a state,
Under whom, first, can be no common laws, 430
But one rules, keeping in his private hands
The law : so is equality no more.

But when the laws are written, then the weak
And wealthy have alike but equal right.
Yea, even the weaker may fling back the scoff
Against the prosperous, if he be reviled ;
And, armed with right, the less o'ercomes the great.

Thus Freedom speaks¹ :—“ What man desires to bring
Good counsel for his country to the people ? ”

Who chooseth this, is famous : who will not, 440
Keeps silence. Can equality further go ?

More—when the people piloteth the land,
She joyeth in young champions native-born :
But in a king's eyes this is hatefullest ;
Yea, the land's best, whose wisdom he discerns,
He slayeth, fearing lest they shake his throne.
How can a state be stablished then in strength,
When, even as sweeps the scythe o'er springtide
mead,

One lops the brave young hearts like flower-blooms ?
What boots it to win wealth and store for sons, 450
When all one's toil but swells a despot's hoard ?
Or to rear maiden daughters virtuously
To be a king's sweet morsels at his will,
And tears to them that dressed this dish for him ?

¹ He quotes the formula with which the herald opened the proceedings of the popular assembly at Athens.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

εἰ τὰ μὰ τέκνα πρὸς βίαν νυμφεύσεται.
καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ πρὸς τὰ σὰ ἐξηκόντισα.
ἦκεις δὲ δὴ τί τῆσδε γῆς κεχρημένος ;
κλαίων γ' ἂν ἦλθες, εἴ σε μὴ ἴπεμψεν πόλις,
περισσὰ φωνῶν· τὸν γὰρ ἄγγελον χρεῶν
460 λέξανθ' ὅσ' ἂν τάξῃ τις ὡς τάχος πάλιν
χωρεῖν. τὸ λοιπὸν δ' εἰς ἐμὴν πόλιν Κρέων
ἦσσον λάλον σου πεμπέτω τιν' ἄγγελον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· κακοῖσιν ὡς ὅταν δαίμων διδῶ
καλῶς, ὑβρίζουσ' ὡς αἰὲ πράξοντες εὖ.

ΚΗΡΤΞ

λέγοιμ' ἂν ἤδη. τῶν μὲν ἠγωνισμένον
σοὶ μὲν δοκείτω ταῦτ', ἐμοὶ δὲ τάντια.
ἐγὼ δ' ἀπαυδῶ πᾶς τε Καδμείος λεῶς
ἴδραστον εἰς γῆν τήνδε μὴ παριέναι·
εἰ δ' ἔστιν ἐν γῆ, πρὶν θεοῦ δύναι σέλας,
470 λύσαντα σεμνὰ στεμμάτων μυστήρια
τῆσδ' ἐξελαύνειν, μηδ' ἀναιρεῖσθαι νεκροὺς
βία, προσήκοντ' οὐδὲν Ἀργείων πόλει.
κἂν μὲν πίθη μοι, κυμάτων ἄτερ πόλιν
σὴν ναυστολήσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, πολὺς κλύδων
ἡμῖν τε καὶ σοὶ συμμάχοις τ' ἔσται δорός.
σκέψαι δὲ, καὶ μὴ τοῖς ἐμοῖς θυμούμενος
λόγοισιν, ὡς δὴ πόλιν ἐλευθέραν ἔχων,
σφρυγῶντ' ἀμείψῃ μῦθον ἐκ βραχιόνων.
ἐλπίς γάρ ἐστ' ἄπιστον, ἢ πολλὰς πόλεις
480 συνῆψ', ἄγουσα θυμὸν εἰς ὑπερβολάς.
ὅταν γὰρ ἔλθῃ πόλεμος εἰς ψῆφον λεῶ,
οὐδεὶς ἔθ' αὐτοῦ θάνατον ἐκλογίζεται,
τὸ δυστυχὲς δὲ τοῦτ' ἐς ἄλλον ἐκτρέπει·
εἰ δ' ἦν παρ' ὄμμα θάνατος ἐν ψῆφου φορᾶ,

SUPPLIANTS

May I die ere I see my daughters ravished !
Such answering shaft to thine do I hurl back.
But thou, what wouldst thou have of this our land ?
Except thy state had sent thee, thou shouldst rue
Thine insolent prating ! 'Tis the herald's part
To speak his message, and to get him back 460
With speed. Henceforth let Creon to my town
Send a less wordy messenger than thee.

CHORUS

Out on it ! When God prospereth evil men,
Wanton they wax, as who should prosper aye.

HERALD

Now will I speak my charge. For our dispute,
Be this thy mind, contrariwise be mine.
But I and all the folk Cadmean warn thee—
Receive Adrastus not into this land.
If in the land he is, ere set of sun
Free from yon wreaths your sacred Mysteries, 470
And drive him forth, nor go about by force
To take those dead : ye have naught to do with
Argos.

If thou obey me, thou by storm unscathed
Shalt helm thy city ; if not, our great surge
Of war on thee and thine allies shall fall.

Look to it, nor, being chafed at these my words,—
Because forsooth a city free thou hast,—
Make arrogant answer from a weaker cause.
Hope is delusive : many a state hath this
Embroided, by kindling it to mad emprise. 480
For, when for war a nation casteth votes,
Then of his own death no man taketh count,
But passeth on to his neighbour this mischance.
But, were death full in view when votes were cast,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

οὐκ ἄν ποθ' Ἑλλάς δοριμανῆς ἀπώλλυτο.
 καίτοι δυοῖν γε πάντες ἄνθρωποι λόγοιν
 τὸν κρείσσον' ἴσμεν καὶ τὰ χρηστὰ καὶ κακά,
 ὅσῳ τε πολέμου κρείσσον εἰρήνῃ βροτοῖς·
 ἢ πρῶτα μὲν Μούσαισι προσφιλεστάτῃ,
 490 Ποινάισι δ' ἐχθρά, τέρπεται δ' εὐπαιδία,
 χαίρει δὲ πλούτῳ. ταῦτ' ἀφέντες οἱ κακοὶ
 πολέμους ἀναιρούμεσθα καὶ τὸν ἥσσονα
 δουλούμεθ', ἄνδρες ἄνδρα καὶ πόλις πόλιν.
 σὺ δ' ἄνδρας ἐχθροὺς καὶ θανόντας ὠφελεῖς,
 θάπτων κομίζων θ' ὕβρις οὐδ' ἀπώλεσεν.
 οὐ τάρ' ἔτ' ὀρθῶς Καπανέως κεραύνιον
 δέμας καπνοῦται, κλιμάκων ὀρθοστάτας
 ὃς προσβαλὼν πύλαισιν ὤμοσεν πόλιν
 500 πέρσειν θεοῦ θέλοντος ἦν τε μὴ θέλῃ,
 οὐδ' ἤρπασεν χάρυβδις οἰωνοσκόπον,
 τέθριππον ἄρμα περιβαλοῦσα χάσματι,
 ἄλλοι τε κείνται πρὸς πύλαις λοχαγέται
 πέτροις καταξανθέντες ὀστέων ῥαφάς.
 ἦ νυν φρονεῖν ἄμεινον ἐξαύχει Διός,
 ἦ θεοὺς δικαίως τοὺς κακοὺς ἀπολλύναι.
 φιλεῖν μὲν οὖν χρὴ τοὺς σοφοὺς πρῶτον τέκνα,
 ἔπειτα τοκέας πατρίδα θ', ἦν αὔξειν χρεῶν
 καὶ μὴ κατὰξαι. σφαλερὸν ἡγεμῶν θρασύς
 νεῶς τε ναύτης· ἦσυχος καιρῷ σοφός.
 510 καὶ τοῦτό τοι τάνδρειον, ἢ προμηθία.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐξαρκέσας ἦν Ζεὺς ὁ τιμωρούμενος,
 ὑμᾶς δ' ὑβρίζειν οὐκ ἐχρῆν τοιάνδ' ὕβριν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ παγκάκιστε—

SUPLIANTS

Never war-frenzied Greece would rush on ruin.
Yet, of elections twain, we know—all know—
Whether is best, the blessing or the curse,
And how much better is peace for men than war ;
Peace, she which is the Muses' chiefest friend,
But Retribution's foe, joys in fair children, 490
In wealth delights. Fools let these blessings slip,
And rush on war : man bringeth weaker man
To bondage ; city is made city's thrall.
Thou helpst men our foes, and dead men they,
Wouldst win for graves them whom their insolence
slew !

Good sooth, then, wrongfully did levin blast
Capaneus' frame upon yon ladder's height,
Which he had reared against our gates, and swore
To sack the town, whether God willed or no :
Wrongly earth's chasm-snatched from sight the seer, 500
Shrouding with yawning gulf his four-horse car,
While other captains lie before our gates,
The knittings of whose bones great stones have
shattered !

Or boast thee to surpass in wisdom Zeus,
Or grant that rightly Gods destroy the wicked.
Behoves the wise to love his children first,
Parents and country next,—to make her great,
Not break her down. Rash leaders, pilots heady,
Mean ruin : the wise in season sitteth still.
This too is manful valour, even discretion. 510

CHORUS

The punishment of Zeus might well suffice !
Shall ye insult with wanton arrogance ?

ADRASTUS

Villain of villains !—

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

σίγ', Ἄδραστ', ἔχε στόμα
 καὶ μὴ ἴππροσθεν τῶν ἐμῶν τοὺς σοὺς λόγους
 θῆς· οὐ γὰρ ἤκει πρὸς σέ κηρύσσων ὄδε,
 ἀλλ' ὡς ἔμ' ἡμᾶς κάποκρίνασθαι χρεῶν.
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν σε πρὸς τὰ πρῶτ' ἀμείψομαι.
 οὐκ οἶδ' ἐγὼ Κρέοντα δεσπόζοντ' ἐμοῦ
 οὐδὲ σθένοντα μείζον, ὥστ' ἀναγκάσαι
 520 δρᾶν τὰς Ἀθήνας ταύτ'. ἄνω γὰρ ἂν ῥέοι
 τὰ πράγμαθ' οὕτως, εἰ ἴπιταξόμεσθα δῆ.
 πόλεμον δὲ τοῦτον οὐκ ἐγὼ καθίσταμαι,
 ὃς οὐδὲ σὺν τοῖσδ' ἦλθον εἰς Κάδμου χθόνα.
 νεκροὺς δὲ τοὺς θανόντας, οὐ βλάπτων πόλιιν
 οὐδ' ἀνδροκμητὰς προσφέρων ἀγωνίας,
 θάψαι δικαίῳ, τὸν Πανελλήνων νόμον
 σφύζων. τί τούτων ἐστὶν οὐ καλῶς ἔχον ;
 εἰ γάρ τι καὶ πεπόνθατ' Ἀργείων ὕπο,
 530 τεθνᾶσιιν, ἡμύνασθε πολεμίους καλῶς,
 αἰσχρῶς δ' ἐκείνοισι, χῆ δίκη διοίχεται.
 εἴασατ' ἤδη γῆ καλυφθῆναι νεκρούς,
 ὅθεν δ' ἕκαστον εἰς τὸ φῶς ἀφίκετο,
 ἐνταῦθ' ἀπελθεῖν, πνεῦμα μὲν πρὸς αἰθέρα,
 τὸ σῶμα δ' εἰς γῆν· οὐτι γὰρ κεκτῆμεθα
 ἡμέτερον αὐτὸ πλὴν ἐνοικῆσαι βίον,
 κᾶπειτα τὴν θρέψασαν αὐτὸ δεῖ λαβεῖν.
 δοκεῖς κακουργεῖν Ἄργος οὐ θάπτων νεκρούς ;
 ἦκιστα· πάσης Ἑλλάδος κοινὸν τόδε,
 εἰ τοὺς θανόντας νοσφίσας ὦν χρῆν λαχεῖν
 540 ἀτάφους τις ἔξει· δειλίαν γὰρ εἰσφέρει
 τοῖς ἀλκίμοισιιν, οὗτος ἦν τεθῆ νόμος.
 κάμοι μὲν ἦλθες δεῖν' ἀπειλήσων ἔπη,
 νεκροὺς δὲ ταρβεῖτ', εἰ κρυβήσονται χθονί ;

SUPPLIANTS

THESEUS

Hold, Adrastus, peace,
And thrust not in before my words thine own ;
For not to thee yon fellow doth his message,
But unto me : 'tis I must make reply.
Now, thy first utterance will I answer first :—
I know no Creon despot over me,
Nor more of might than I, that he should force
Athens to do this. Sourceward back should flow 520
The world's stream, if we brook such hest as his ;
It is not I that launch upon this war,
Seeing with these I sought not Cadmus' land.

But lifeless bodies—harming not your state,
Nor thrusting man-destroying strife on her,—
I claim to bury : lo, all Hellas' law
Do I uphold. How is not this well done ?
For if of Argives ye have suffered aught,
They are dead : with glory ye hurled back your foes,
With shame to them :—but there your right hath
end. 530

Let now the dead be hidden in the earth,
And each part, whence it came forth to the light,
Thither return, the breath unto the air,
To earth the body ; for we hold it not
In fee, but only to pass life therein ;
Then she which fostered it must take it back.

Dost think thou woundest Argos through her dead ?
Not so : the common cause of Greece is this,
If one shall rob the dead of rightful dues,
And hold them from the tomb : this shall unman 540
Even heroes, if such law shall be ordained.
And to me comest thou to bluster threats,
While ye fear corpses, if they be entombed ?

541

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

τί μὴ γένηται; μὴ κατασκάψωσι γῆν
 ταφέντες ὑμῶν; ἢ τέκν' ἐν μυχοῖς χθονὸς
 φύσωσιν, ἐξ ὧν εἰσὶ τις τιμωρία;
 σκαιὸν γε τὰνάλωμα τῆς γλώσσης τόδε,
 φόβους πονηροὺς καὶ κενοὺς δεδοικέναι.
 550 ἄλλ' ὦ μάταιοι, γνῶτε τὰνθρώπων κακά·
 παλαίσμαθ' ἡμῶν ὁ βίος· εὐτυχοῦσι δὲ
 οἱ μὲν τάχ', οἱ δ' ἑσαῦθις, οἱ δ' ἤδη βροτῶν.
 τρυφᾷ δ' ὁ δαίμων· πρὸς τε γὰρ τοῦ δυστυχοῦς,
 ὡς εὐμενῆς ἦ, τίμιος γεραίρεται,
 ὃ τ' ὄλβιός νιν πνεῦμα δειμαίνων λιπεῖν
 ὑψηλὸν αἶρει. γνόντας οὖν χρεῶν τάδε
 ἀδικουμένους τε μέτρια μὴ θυμῷ φέρειν
 ἀδικεῖν τε τοιαῦθ' οἷα μὴ βλάψει πόλιν.
 πῶς οὖν ἂν εἴη; τοὺς ὀλωλότας νεκροὺς
 560 θάψαι δόθ' ἡμῖν τοῖς θέλουσιν εὐσεβεῖν.
 ἢ δῆλα τὰνθένδ'· εἶμι καὶ θάψω βία.
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' εἰς Ἑλληνας ἐξοισθήσεται
 ὡς εἰς ἔμ' ἔλθων καὶ πόλιν Πανδίωνος
 νόμος παλαιὸς δαιμόνων διεφθάρη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει· τὸ γάρ τοι τῆς Δίκης σφίζων φάος,
 πολλοὺς ὑπεκφύγοις ἂν ἀνθρώπων ψόγους.

ΚΗΡΤΕ

βούλει συνάψω μῦθον ἐν βραχεῖ σέθεν;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

λέγ', εἴ τι βούλει· καὶ γὰρ οὐ σιγηλὸς εἶ.

ΚΗΡΤΕ

οὐκ ἂν ποτ' ἐκ γῆς παιδάς Ἀργείων λάβοις.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κάμου νυν ἀντάκουσον, εἰ βούλει, πάλιν.

SUPPLIANTS

What fear ye? Lest they undermine your land,
There buried?—or in earth's dark womb beget
Children, of whom shall vengeance fall on you?
'Twere idle waste of speech, good sooth, to unmask
Your caitiff terrors and your empty fears!
O fools, learn ye the real ills of men:—
Our life is conflict all: of mortals some
Succeed ere long, some late, and straightway
some; 550

While Fortune sits a queen: worship and honour
The unblest gives her, so to see good days;
The prosperous extols her, lest her breeze
Fail him one day. Remembering this, should we
Meet wrong with calmness, not with fury of rage,
Neither on one whole nation visit wrong.

How shall it be then?—grant to us, who are fain
To render heaven its due, to entomb the dead.
Else, clear is the issue: this will I by force. 560
Never to Greeks shall it be said, that when
It fell to me and Athens to uphold
Heaven's ancient law, that law was set at naught.

CHORUS

Fear not: while thou upholdest Justice' light,
Thou shalt not fear what men can say of thee.

HERALD

Wouldst thou I summed up this thy claim in brief?

THESEUS

Speak, an thou list: no tongue-tied wight art thou.

HERALD

Thou ne'er shalt win from our land Argos' sons.

THESEUS

Give ear to me in turn, then, if thou wilt.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

570 κλύοιμ' ἄν· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλὰ δεῖ δοῦναι μέρος.
 ΚΗΡΤΞ
 ΘΗΣΕΤΞ
 θάψω νεκρούς γῆς ἐξελὼν Ἀσωπίας.
 ΚΗΡΤΞ
 ἐν ἀσπίσιν σοι πρῶτα κινδυνευτέον.
 ΘΗΣΕΤΞ
 πολλοὺς ἔτλην δὴ χυτέρους ἄλλους πόνους.
 ΚΗΡΤΞ
 ἦ πᾶσιν οὖν σ' ἔφυσεν ἐξαρκεῖν πατήρ;
 ΘΗΣΕΤΞ
 ὅσοι γ' ὑβρισταί· χρηστὰ δ' οὐ κολάζομεν.
 ΚΗΡΤΞ
 πράσσειν σὺ πόλλ' εἴωθας ἢ τε σὴ πόλις.
 ΘΗΣΕΤΞ
 τουγὰρ πονούση πολλὰ πόλλ' εὐδαίμονα.
 ΚΗΡΤΞ
 ἔλθ', ὥς σε λόγῃ σπαρτὸς ἐν πόλει λάβῃ.
 ΘΗΣΕΤΞ
 τίς δ' ἐκ δράκοντος θούρος ἂν γένοιτ' Ἄρης;
 ΚΗΡΤΞ
 580 γνώσει σὺ πάσῃων· νῦν δ' ἔτ' εἰ νεανίας.
 ΘΗΣΕΤΞ
 οὔτοι μ' ἐπαρεῖς ὥστε θυμοῦσθαι φρένας
 τοῖς σοῖσι κομποῖς· ἀλλ' ἀποστέλλου χθονός,
 λόγους ματαίους οὔσπερ ἠνέγκω λαβῶν.
 περαίνομεν γὰρ οὐδέν· ὀρμᾶσθαι χρεῶν
 πάντ' ἄνδρ' ὀπλίτην ἀρμάτων τ' ἐπεμβάτην,
 μοναμπύκων τε φάλαρα κινεῖσθαι στόμα
 ἀφρῶ καταστάζοντα, Καδμείαν χθόνα.
 χωρήσομαι γὰρ ἑπτὰ πρὸς Κάδμου πύλας

SUPLIANTS

HERALD

Yea—since I cannot choose but hear in turn. 570

THESEUS

From thy land will I take and bury them.

HERALD

First must thou face the hazard of the shield.

THESEUS

Full many a harder emprise have I dared.

HERALD

A champion born to match him with all men !

THESEUS

All arrogant tyrants : I scourge not the right.

HERALD

Ay, thou wilt still be meddling—thou and Athens.

THESEUS

Therefore, with much toil, much good speed is hers.

HERALD

Come !—let the Dragon-seed but find thee there !

THESEUS

What valorous host should spring from dragons' teeth ?

HERALD

This shalt thou learn, and rue. Thou art yet but
young. 580

THESEUS

Tush, man, thou canst not move mine heart to wrath
With all thy vauntings. Get thee forth the land :
The idle words thou broughtest, bear them back.
Naught comes of wrangling. [*Exit* HERALD.]

Let each man-at-arms,
Each chariot-rider, and each battle-steed,
Whose swinging cheek-plate dashes round his jaws
The foam, charge onward into Cadmus' land.
For on to Cadmus' seven gates will I march,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

590 αὐτὸς σίδηρον ὀξὺν ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων
 αὐτὸς τε κῆρυξ· σοὶ δὲ προστάσσω μένειν,
 Ἄδραστε, κάμοι μὴ ἀναμίγνυσθαι τύχας
 τὰς σάς· ἐγὼ γὰρ δαίμονος τοῦμοῦ μέτα
 στρατηλατήσω καινὸς ἐν καινῷ δορί.
 ἐνὸς μόνου δεῖ, τοὺς θεοὺς ἔχειν, ὅσοι
 δίκην σέβονται· ταῦτα γὰρ ξυνόνθ' ὁμοῦ
 νίκην δίδωσιν. ἀρετὴ δ' οὐδὲν φέρει
 βροτοῖσιν, ἣν μὴ τὸν θεὸν χρῆζοντ' ἔχη.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

ὦ μέλαι μελέων ματέρες λοχαγῶν, στρ. α'
 ὡς μοι ὑφ' ἧπατι δεῖμα χλοερὸν ταρασσει.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

600 τίν' αὐδὰν τάνδε προσφέρεις νέαν ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

στράτευμα πᾶ Παλλάδος κριθήσεται.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

διὰ δορὸς εἶπας ἢ λόγων ξυναλλαγαῖς ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

γένοιτ' ἂν κέρδος· εἰ δ' ἀρείφατοι
 φόνοι, μάχαι, στερνοτυπεῖς τ' ἀνὰ τόπον
 πάλιν φανήσονται κτύποι,
 τίν' ἂν λόγον, τάλαινα,
 τίν' ἂν τῶνδ' αἰτία λάβοιμι ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

ἀλλὰ τὸν εὐτυχία λαμπρὸν ἂν τις αἰροῖ ἀντ. α'
 μοῖρα πάλιν· τόδε μοι τὸ θράσος ἀμφιβαίνει.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

610 δικαίους δαίμονας σύ γ' ἐννέπεις.

SUPPLIANTS

Bearing myself the whetted steel in hand,
 Myself mine herald. Thee I bid remain, 590
 Adrastus : mingle not with mine thy fate.
 For I 'neath mine own fortune's star will lead
 Mine host, a taintless chief with taintless spear.
 One only thing I need, all Gods to have
 Which reverence right : for where these are, they give
 Victory. Naked valour naught avails
 To men, except it have the Gods' good will. [*Exit.*]

HALF-CHORUS 1

(*Str.* 1)

Ye hapless mothers of hapless chieftains dead,
 Ah, how is mine heart stormed-tossed with pale
 dismay—

HALF-CHORUS 2

What ominous word and strange of thee is said? 600

HALF-CHORUS 1

For the dread decision on Pallas' war-array !

HALF-CHORUS 2

Through battle, or peace-fraught parley, wouldst
 thou say ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ay, this last should be well ; but if warrior-quelling
 Slaughters and battles again shall be seen,
 With the beating of breasts in each desolate dwelling
 Of the land, what reproaches bitter-keen [*been!*]
 Should I win, through whom this sorrow hath

HALF-CHORUS 2

(*Ant.* 1)

Yet doom may the victor bring down low in dust ;
 This comforteth me, and bids be dauntless-souled.

HALF-CHORUS 1

Thou speakest of Gods that fail not, ever just. 610

547

N N 2

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄

τίνες γὰρ ἄλλοι νέμουσι συμφοράς ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α΄

διάφορα πολλὰ θεῶν βροτοῖσιν εἰσορῶ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄

φόβῳ γὰρ τῷ πάρος διόλλυσαι·
δίκα δίκαν δ' ἐκάλεσε καὶ φόνος
φόνον, κακῶν δ' ἀναψυχὰς
θεοὶ βροτοῖς νέμουσιν,
ἀπάντων τέρμ' ἔχοντες αὐτοί.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α΄

τὰ καλλίπυργα πεδία πῶς ἰκοίμεθ' ἄν, στρ. β΄
Καλλίχορον θεᾶς ὕδωρ λιποῦσαι ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄

620 ποτανὰν εἶ μέ τις θεῶν κτίσαι,
διπόταμον ἵνα πόλιν μόλω.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α΄

εἰδείης ἄν φίλων
εἰδείης ἄν τύχας.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄

τίς ποτ' αἶσα, τίς ἄρα πότμος
ἐπιμένει τὸν ἄλκιμον
τᾶσδε γᾶς ἄνακτα ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α΄

κεκλημένους μὲν ἀνακαλούμεθ' αὐ θεούς· ἀντ. β΄
ἀλλὰ φόβων πίστις ἄδε πρῶτα.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄

ἰὼ Ζεῦ, τὰς παλαιομάτορος
παιδογόνε πόριος Ἰνάχου.

SUPPLIANTS

HALF-CHORUS 2

Of whom but of such be all our fates controlled ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ah, many a change in God's ways I behold !

HALF-CHORUS 2

By the terrors o'erpast is the heart in thee stricken :

Yet justice aloud unto justice doth call ;

Blood calleth for blood, and the Gods shall requicken

Our souls, for to mortals all blessings befall

From the hands that encompass the goal of all.

HALF-CHORUS 1

(*Str.* 2)

O might I speed from the Goddess's springs,
Even Callichorus, to the fair-towered plain !

HALF-CHORUS 2

O would the Gods but vouchsafe to me wings,
So to win to the city of rivers twain !¹

620

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ah then shouldst thou clearly discern—
How thy champions speed shouldst thou learn.

HALF-CHORUS 2

Ah God, what fate, what doom doth await
The king of the mighty hand,
The hero of Cecrops' land ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

(*Ant.* 2)

We have cried to the Gods, and we cry once more
To the first best trust of the sore afraid.

HALF-CHORUS 2

Zeus, hear us, whose offspring was born of yore
Of Inachus' daughter, the heifer-maid !

¹ Thebes : round the old citadel flowed, on one side, the Ismenus, on the other, the Dirce.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

630 πόλει μοι ξύμμαχος
γενού τᾶδ' εὐμενής.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

τὸ σὸν ἄγαλμα, τὸ σὸν ἴδρυμα
πόλεος ἐκκομίζομαι
πρὸς πυρὰν ὑβρισθέν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

640 γυναῖκες, ἦκω πόλλ' ἔχων λέγειν φίλα,
αὐτός τε σωθείς, ἠρέθην γὰρ ἐν μάχῃ,
ἦν οἱ θανόντων ἑπτὰ δεσποτῶν λόχοι
ἠγωνίσαντο ρεῦμα Διρκαίου πάρα,
νίκην τε Θεσέως ἀγγελῶν. λόγου δέ σε
μακροῦ ἀποπαύσω· Καπανέως γὰρ ἦ λάτρις,
ὃν Ζεὺς κεραυνῶ πυρπόλῃ καταιθαλοῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ φίλτατ', εὐ μὲν νόστον ἀγγέλλεις σέθεν
τήν τ' ἀμφὶ Θεσέως βύξιν· εἰ δὲ καὶ στρατὸς
σῶς ἐστ' Ἀθηνῶν, πάντ' ἂν ἀγγέλλοις φίλα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

σῶς, καὶ πέπραγεν ὡς Ἄδραστος ὄφειλε
πρᾶξαι ξὺν Ἀργείοισιν, οὓς ἀπ' Ἰνάχου
στεύλας ἐπεστράτευσε Καδμείων πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ τροπαῖα Ζηνὸς Αἰγέως τόκος
ἔστησεν οἳ τε συμμετασχόντες δορός ;
λέξον· παρῶν γὰρ τοὺς παρόντας εὐφρανεῖς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

650 λαμπρὰ μὲν ἀκτίς ἡλίου, κανὼν σαφής,
ἔβαλλε γαίαν· ἀμφὶ δ' Ἥλέκτρας πύλας
ἔστην θεατῆς πύργον εὐαγῆ λαβῶν.
ὀρῶ δὲ φῦλα τρία τριῶν στρατευμάτων·

SUPPLIANTS

HALF-CHORUS 1

Oh be our champion thou,
To our city be gracious now ! 630

HALF-CHORUS 2

Thy belovèd are we, it was planted of thee,
This city whose sons we would gain
For the tomb from the outrage-stain.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Women, I come with tidings full of joy,—
Myself escaped, for I was ta'en in fight,
What time those seven bands of chieftains slain
Hard by the fount of Dirce strove their strife,—
Tidings of Theseus' triumph. I will spare thee
Question :—a vassal I of Capaneus
Whom Zeus did blast with blazing levin-bolt. 640

CHORUS

Dear friend, glad tidings this of thy return,
Glad news of Theseus : but if Athens' host
Is safe withal, thou heraldest all joy.

MESSENGER

Safe : and hath fared—I would Adrastus so
Had fared with Argos' sons, whom forth he led
From Inachus to that Cadmean burg.

CHORUS

How then did Aegeus' son uprear to Zeus
The trophy, he and those his spear-allies ?
Tell ; thou wast there : them that were not make glad.

MESSENGER

Bright the sun's beam, true-levelled shaft of light, 650
Smote on the earth. Beside Electra's gate
On a far-looking tower I stood to watch.
And three tribes I beheld of war-bands three :

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

τευχεςφόρον μὲν λαὸν ἐκτείνουτ' ἄνω
 Ἴσμήνιον πρὸς ὄχθον, ὡς μὲν ἦν λόγος,
 αὐτόν τ' ἄνακτα, παῖδα κλεινὸν Αἰγέως,
 καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ, δεξιὸν τεταγμένους
 κέρας, παλαιᾶς Κεκροπίας τ' οἰκήτορας,
 662 ἴσους ἀριθμόν· ἀρμάτων δ' ὀχήματα
 659 αὐτόν τε Πάραλον ἐστολισμένον δορί·
 660 κρήνην παρ' αὐτὴν Ἄρεος· ἵππότην δ' ὄχλον
 661 πρὸς κρασπέδοισι στρατοπέδου τεταγμένον.
 664 Κάδμου δὲ λαὸς ἦστο πρόσθε τειχέων,
 665 νεκροὺς ὀπισθεν θέμενος, ὧν ἕκειτ' ἀγών.
 663 ἔνερθε σεμνῶν μνημάτων Ἀμφίονος.¹
 ἵππεῦσι δ' ἵππῆς ἦσαν ἀνωπλισμένοι
 τετραόροισί τ' ἀντί' ἄρμαθ' ἄρμασιν.
 κῆρυξ δὲ Θησέως εἶπεν εἰς πάντας τάδε·
 670 σιγᾶτε, λαοί, σίγα, Καδμείων στίχες,
 ἀκούσαθ'· ἡμεῖς ἤκομεν νεκροὺς μέτα
 θάψαι θέλοντες, τὸν Πανελλήνων νόμον
 σφύζοντες, οὐδὲν δεόμενοι τείναι φόνον.
 κούδεν Κρέων τοῖσδ' ἀντεκῆρυξεν λόγοις,
 ἀλλ' ἦστ' ἐφ' ὄπλοις σίγα. ποιμένες δ' ὄχων
 τετραόρων κατῆρχον ἐντεῦθεν μάχης·
 πέραν δὲ διελάσαντες ἀλλήλων ὄχους,
 παραιβάτας ἔστησαν εἰς τάξιν δορός.
 χοῖ μὲν σιδήρῳ διεμάχονθ', οἱ δ' ἔστρεφον
 πῶλους ἐς ἀλκὴν αὐθις ἐς παραιβάτας.
 680 ἰδὼν δὲ Φόρβας, ὃς μοναμπύκων ἀναξ
 ἦν τοῖς Ἐρεχθεΐδαισιν, ἀρμάτων ὄχλον,
 οἷ τ' αὐτὸ Κάδμου διεφύλασσον ἵππικόν,
 συνῆψαν ἀλκὴν κἀκράτου ἡσσῶντό τε.
 λεύσσων δὲ ταῦτα κού κλύων, ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἦ

¹ Murray's re-arrangement adopted.

SUPPLIANTS

A mail-clad host far-stretching up the slopes
 Unto the height Ismenian, as men said ;
 I saw the king's self, Aegeus' glorious son,
 And his own war-band, marshalled on the right
 With all the folk of Cecrops' ancient land,
 Equal by tale. And all the battle-cars
 And Seaboard Men, arrayed with spears, were ranged
 By Ares' fountain ; and the clouds of horse 660
 Were drawn out on the fringes of the host.
 Before their walls were marshalled Cadmus' folk—
 Behind them lay those corpses, cause of strife—
 On levels 'neath Amphion's hallowed tomb.
 So against horsemen panoplied horsemen stood,
 And four-yoked chariots were by chariots faced.
 Then Theseus' herald cried in all men's ears :
 " Silence, ye people ! Hush ye, ranks of Cadmus !
 Hearken—we come but for the corpses' sake, 670
 To bury them, and keep all Hellas' law
 Inviolate ; nor would lengthen bloodshed out."
 But Creon let his herald answer not,
 But silent under shield abode. Thereat
 The four-horsed chariot-lords began the fray.
 On, down the battle-lanes of foes they swept,
 Set down their warriors, spear opposing spear,
 And, while these strove with bickering steel, those
 wheeled
 Their steeds about, to aid their fighting-men.
 Then Phorbas, captain of the Erechtheid horse, 680
 And they withal which led the Theban riders,
 Marking the tumult of the battle-cars,
 Down charging clashed, now triumphing, rolled back
 now.
 This saw I, and not heard ; for I was there,

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

- ἐνθ' ἄρματ' ἠγωνίζεθ' οἳ τ' ἐπεμβάται.
 τὰκεῖ παρόντα πολλὰ πήματ', οὐκ ἔχω
 τί πρῶτον εἶπω, πότερα τὴν ἐς οὐρανὸν
 κόνιν προσαντέλλουσαν, ὡς πολλὴ παρῆν,
 ἢ τοὺς ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω φορουμένους
 690 ἱμάσιν, αἵματός τε φοινοῦ ῥοάς,
 τῶν μὲν πιτνόντων, τῶν δέ, θραυσθέντων δίφρων,
 εἰς κρᾶτα πρὸς γῆν ἐκκυβιστώντων βία
 πρὸς ἄρμάτων τ' ἀγαῖσι λειπόντων βίον.
 νικῶντα δ' ἵπποις ὡς ὑπέιδετο στρατὸν
 Κρέων τὸν ἐνθένδ', ἰτέαν λαβὼν χερὶ
 χωρεῖ, πρὶν ἐλθεῖν ξυμμάχοις δυσθυμίαν.
 καὶ συμπατάξαντες μέσον πάντα στρατὸν
 700 ἔκτεινον ἐκτείνοντο, καὶ παρηγγύων
 κελευσμὸν ἀλλήλοισι σὺν πολλῇ βοῇ·
 θεῖν', ἀντέρειδε τοῖς Ἐρεχθεΐδαισι δόρυ.
 697 καὶ μὴν τὰ Θησέως γ' οὐκ ὄκνω διεφθάρη,
 698 ἀλλ' ἴετ' εὐθύς λάμπρ' ἀναρπάσας ὄπλα.¹
 703 λόχος δ' ὀδόντων ὄφεος ἐξηνδρωμένος
 δεινὸς παλαιστής ἦν· ἔκλινε γὰρ κέρας
 τὸ λαιὸν ἡμῶν· δεξιῶ δ' ἠσώμενον
 φεύγει τὸ κείνων· ἦν δ' ἀγὼν ἰσόρροπος.
 κὰν τῷδε τὸν στρατηγὸν αἰνέσαι παρῆν·
 οὐ γὰρ τὸ νικῶν τοῦτ' ἐκέρδαιεν μόνον,
 ἀλλ' ὄχετ' εἰς τὸ κάμνον οἰκείου στρατοῦ.
 710 ἔρρηξε δ' αὐδὴν, ὥσθ' ὑπηχῆσαι χθόνα·
 ὦ παῖδες, εἰ μὴ σχήσετε στερρὸν δόρυ
 σπαρτῶν τόδ' ἀνδρῶν, οἴχεται τὰ Παλλάδος.
 θάρσος δ' ἐνώρσε παντὶ Κραναΐδων στρατῷ.
 αὐτός θ' ὄπλισμα τοῦπιδαύριον λαβὼν
 δεινῆς κορύνης διαφέρων ἐσφενδόνα,

¹ Murray's re-arrangement adopted.

SUPLIANTS

There where the chariots and the warriors grappled.
Of thousand horrors there, which first to tell
I know not—or of dust that surged and soared
Upward unto the heavens, clouds on clouds,—
Of men, by tangling reins snatched from the cars,
Slung earthward,—of the murder-streams of gore,— 690
Men falling here, and there, as crashed the chariots,
With violence hurled head downwards to the earth,
And battered out of life by chariot-shards.

But Creon, marking how our horse prevailed
On one wing, grasped his buckler in his hand,
And vanward pressed, ere allies' hearts should faint.
All down the lines the fronts of battle clashed :
Men slew—were slain—a thunder of wild war-cries 700
Rang, roared, of men on-cheering each his fellow—
“Smite!”—“Drive the spear against Erechtheus'
sons!”

Ha, but the heart of Theseus fainted not !
On charged he, tossing high his flaming shield.
But the host wrought to man of dragon-teeth
Was a grim wrestler : back it bowed our wing
Far on the left ; but, by our right o'erborne,
Fled theirs : so equal-balanced was the fight.

Then did our captain well and worshipfully ;
His triumph on the right sufficed him not,
But he to his hard-pressed half-array sped fast,
And sent a shattering shout,—earth rang again,— 710
“My sons, except ye stay the stubborn spear
Of the Dragon-seed, your Pallas' cause is lost !”
So thrilled with courage all his Cranaid host.
Himself that Epidaurian weapon seized,
The fearful mace, and slingwise swung it round,

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ·

ὁμοῦ τραχήλους κἀπικείμενον κἀρα
 κυνέας θερίζων κἀποκαυλίζων ξύλω.
 μόλις δέ πως ἔτρεψεν εἰς φυγὴν πόδα.
 720 ἐγὼ δ' ἀνηλάλαξα κἀνωρρησάμην
 κἀκρουσα χεῖρας. οἱ δ' ἔτεινον εἰς πύλας.
 βοή δὲ καὶ κωκυτὸς ἦν ἀνὰ πτόλιν
 νέων, γερόντων, ἱερά τ' ἔξεπίμπλασαν
 φόβω. παρὸν δὲ τειχέων εἴσω μολεῖν,
 Θησεὺς ἐπέσχευ' οὐ γὰρ ὡς πέρσων πόλιν
 μολεῖν ἔφασκεν, ἀλλ' ἀπαιτήσων νεκρούς.
 τοῖόνδε τοι στρατηγὸν αἰρεῖσθαι χρεῶν,
 ὃς ἔν τε τοῖς δεινοῖσιν ἐστὶν ἄλκιμος
 μσεῖ θ' ὑβριστὴν λαόν, ὃς πρᾶσσων καλῶς
 730 εἰς ἄκρα βῆναι κλιμάκων ἐνήλατα
 ζητῶν ἀπώλεσ' ὄλβον ᾧ χρῆσθαι παρήν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νῦν τήνδ' ἄελπτον ἡμέραν ἰδοῦσ' ἐγὼ
 θεοὺς νομίζω, καὶ δοκῶ τῆς συμφορᾶς
 ἔχειν ἔλασσον, τῶνδε τισάντων δίκην.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δῆτα τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτοὺς
 φρονεῖν λέγουσι; σοῦ γὰρ ἐξηρητήμεθα
 δρῶμέν τε τοιαῦθ' ἂν σὺ τυγχάνης θέλων.
 ἡμῖν γὰρ ἦν τό τ' Ἄργος οὐχ ὑποστατόν,
 αὐτοῖ τε πολλοὶ καὶ νέοι βραχίλοισιν
 740 Ἐτεοκλέους δὲ σύμβασιν ποιουμένου,
 μέτρια θέλοντος, οὐκ ἐχρήζομεν λαβεῖν,
 κἀπειτ' ἀπωλόμεσθ'. οὐδ' αὖ τότ' εὐτυχής,
 λαβὼν πένης ὡς ἀρτίπλουτα χρήματα,
 ὑβρίζ', ὑβρίζων τ' αὐθις ἀνταπώλετο
 Κάδμου κακόφρων λαός. ὦ καιροῦ πέρα ¹

¹ Murray's transposition of κεν. βρ. and κ. περ. adopted.

SUPLIANTS

Down-mowing and clean-logging with his club
Alike their necks and heads in helmets cased :
And scarce even then those stubborn feet would fly.
And I, for joy I shouted, yea, I danced,
And clapped mine hands. On strained they to the
gates. 720

Then rang a cry and wailing through the town
Of young and old : the panic-stricken thronged
The fanes. But, though the way within lay clear,
There Theseus stayed :—" Not to destroy the town
Came I," spake he, " but to reclaim the dead."
Well might men choose such battle-chief as this,
Who is in peril's midst a tower of strength,
But hates the scorners who, in fortune's hour
Seeking to mount the ladder's topmost round,
Let slip the bliss that lay within their hands. 730

CHORUS

Now I, beholding this unhopcd-for day,
Know that Gods live, and feel my load of ill
Lighter, since these have paid the penalty.

ADRASTUS

Zeus, wherefore do they say that wretched man
Is wise ? For lo, we hang upon thy skirts,
And that we do, it is but as thou wilt.
We deemed before our Argos none might stand,
Ourselves, a countless host of lusty arms ;
And, when Eteocles proffered terms of peace,
Fair was his offer, yet we would not hear ; 740
So were undone. Now, prospering in their turn,
Like beggar-wight with sudden-gotten wealth,
Wanton they waxed, and perished in their pride
Cadmus' mad-hearted sons. O foolish men

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

750 τὸ τόξον ἐντείνοντες, ὦ κενοὶ βρωτῶν,
καὶ πρὸς δίκης γε πολλὰ πάσχοντες κακά,
φίλοις μὲν οὐ πείθεσθε, τοῖς δὲ πράγμασι
πόλεις τ', ἔχουσαι διὰ λόγου κύμψαι κακά,
φόνῳ καθαιρείσθ', οὐ λόγῳ, τὰ πράγματα.
ἀτὰρ τί ταῦτα; κείνο βούλομαι μαθεῖν,
πῶς ἐξεσώθης· εἶτα τᾶλλ' ἐρήσομαι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐπεὶ ταραγμὸς πόλιν ἐκίνησεν δορί,
πύλας διήλθον, ἤπερ εἰσῆι στρατός.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦν δ' εἶνεχ' ἀγὼν ἦν, νεκροὺς κομίζετε;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὄσοι γε κλεινοῖς ἔπτ' ἐφέστασαν λόχοις.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

πῶς φῆς; ὁ δ' ἄλλος ποῦ κεκμηκότων ὄχλος;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τάφῳ δέδονται πρὸς Κιθαιρώνος πτυχαῖς.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

τοῦκείθεν ἢ τούνθενδε; τίς δ' ἔθαψέ νιν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θησεύς, σκιώδης ἐνθ' Ἐλευθερῖς πέτρα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

760 οὓς δ' οὐκ ἔθαψε ποῦ νεκροὺς ἦκεις λιπῶν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐγγύς· πέλας γὰρ πᾶν ὃ τι σπουδάζεταιται.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἢ που πικρῶς νιν θέραπες ἦγον ἐκ φόνου;

SUPLIANTS

Who strain the bow beyond the mark, and suffer
Much harm at justice' hand, and yield at last
Not to friends' mediation, but stern facts !
O foolish states, which might by parley end
Feuds, yet decide them in the field of blood !
Yet wherefore this ?—fain would I know of thee 750
How thou didst 'scape ; then will I ask the rest.

MESSENGER

When tumult's battle-earthquake shook the town,
Through that gate slipt I where the host poured in.

ADRASTUS

And the dead bring ye, cause of all the strife ?

MESSENGER

Even all which captained those seven bands renowned.

ADRASTUS

Ha !—and the rest which perished, where be they ?

MESSENGER

Laid in the tomb, hard by Cithaeron's folds.

ADRASTUS.

On that side, or on this ?¹—who buried them ?

MESSENGER

Theseus, where hangs Eleutherae's shadowing rock.

ADRASTUS

Where leftest thou those whom he buried not ? 760

MESSENGER

At hand : for earnest haste brings all things near.

ADRASTUS

With loathing, surely, thralls took up the slain.

¹ *i.e.* On the Theban or the Attic side of the range : the tombs would be in the possession of the people in whose land they were. Eleutherae was in Attica.

ΪΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐδεὶς ἐπέστη τῷδε δούλος ὦν πόνω.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

* * * * *

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

φαίης ἄν, εἰ παρήσθ' ὄτ' ἠγάπα νεκρούς.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐνίψεν αὐτὸς τῶν ταλαιπώρων σφαγᾶς;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

κᾶστρωσέ γ' εὐνάς κακάλυψε σώματα.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δεινὸν μὲν οὖν βάσταγμα καὶσχύνην ἔχον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τί δ' αἰσχρὸν ἀνθρώποισι τἀλλήλων κακά;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οἴμοι· πόσῳ σφιν συνθανεῖν ἂν ἤθελον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

770 ἄκραντ' ὀδύρει ταῖσδέ τ' ἐξάγεις δάκρυ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

δοκῶ μὲν, αὐταί γ' εἰσὶν αἱ διδάσκαλοι.

ἀλλ' εἶεν· αἶρω χεῖρ' ἀπαρτήσας νεκροῖς

"Αἶδου τε μολπὰς ἐκχέω δακρυρρούους,

φίλους προσαιδῶν, ὧν λελειμμένος τάλας

ἔρημα κλαίω· τοῦτο γὰρ μόνον βροτοῖς

οὐκ ἔστι τἀνάλωμ' ἀναλωθὲν λαβεῖν,

ψυχὴν βροτείαν· χρημάτων δ' εἰσὶν πόροι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ μὲν εὖ, τὰ δὲ δυστυχή·

στρ. α'

πόλει μὲν εὐδοξία

780 καὶ στρατηλάταις δορός

διπλάζεται τιμά·

SUPPLIANTS

MESSENGER

Never a slave set hand unto the toil.

ADRASTUS

[How?—did the *king* endure this, of his love?]

MESSENGER

Hadst thou but seen his ministry of love!

ADRASTUS

He washed, himself, the poor youths' slaughter-stains!

MESSENGER

And spread the biers, and veiled the bodies o'er.

ADRASTUS

An awful burden was it, fraught with shame!

MESSENGER

Nay, but what shame to men are brethren's ills?

ADRASTUS

Ah me, far liever had I died with them!

MESSENGER

Bootless thy mourning, stirring these to tears.

770

ADRASTUS

I trow themselves this mourning-lore have taught.
Enough: I raise mine hand to greet the dead,
And pour out songs of death with streaming eyes,
Hailing our loved, bereft of whom—ah me!—
Forlorn I weep: for the one loss is this
That never mortal maketh good again,—
The life of man, though wealth may be re-won.

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

There is joy, there is sorrow this day; for our town
Hath a garland of glory;
And the chiefs of the spear-host, lo, twofold renown
Maketh splendid their story.

780

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ.

ἔμοι δὲ παίδων μὲν εἰσιδεῖν μέλη
πικρὸν, καλὸν θέαμα δ', εἵπερ ὄψομαι
τὰν ἄελπτον ἀμέραν,
ἰδοῦσα πάντων μέγιστον ἄλγος.

790 ἄγαμόν μ' ἔτι δεῦρ' αἰεὶ
χρόνος παλαιὸς πατῆρ
ᾧφελ' ἀμερᾶν κτίσαι.
τί γάρ μ' ἔδει παίδων;
τί μὲν γὰρ ἤλπιζον ἂν πεπονθέναι
πίθος περισσόν, εἰ γάμων ἀπεζύγην;
νῦν δ' ὀρώ σαφέστατον
κακόν, τέκνων φιλτίτων στερεῖσθαι.

ἀντ. α'

ἀλλὰ τάδ' ἤδη σώματα λεύσσω
τῶν οἰχομένων παίδων· μελέα
πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμην σὺν τοῖσδε τέκνοις
κοινὸν ἐς Ἄϊδην καταβᾶσα;

ΛΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

800 στεναγμόν, ὦ ματέρες,
τῶν κατὰ χθονὸς νεκρῶν
ἀύσατ' ἀπύσατ' ἀντίφων' ἐμῶν
στεναγμάτων κλύουσαι.

στρ. β'

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ παῖδες, ὦ πικρὸν φίλων
προσηγόρημα ματέρων,
προσαυδῶ σε τὸν θανόντα.

ΛΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰώ,

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῶν γ' ἐμῶν κακῶν ἐγώ.

SUPPLIANTS

But to see my sons' limbs!—sight bitter for me,
Yet proud, for the day that I hoped not to see
Hath uprisen before me,
Who have seen earth's ghastliest misery.

(*Ant.* 1)

Ah that Time the father, the ancient of days,
Had but caused me unmarried
To abide! Was I wholly in evil case
While childless I tarried?
Yea, what dark bodings of anguish broke
My peace, when I thought to refuse love's yoke?
But of dear sons harried
Now see I mine home, no visioned stroke.

790

Ah, yonder I see the forms draw nigh
Of our perished children; alas!
O but with these my beloved to die,
Unto union in Hades to pass!

*Enter THESEUS, with Athenian soldiers marching in
procession with corpses on biers.*

ADRASTUS

Mothers, ring out the moan
For dear dead 'neath the ground;
Echo my crying with accordant groan
Of mournful-wailing sound.

(*Str.* 2)

800

CHORUS

O dead son!—bitter word
For mothers' lips to know!
I cry on thee, in ears that have not heard:
Ah for my woe!

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

αἰαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

* * * * *

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἐπάθομεν ὦ —

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ κύντατ' ἄλγη κακῶν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ὦ πόλις Ἀργεία, τὸν ἐμὸν πότμον οὐκ ἐσοράτε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὀρώσιν ἐμὲ τὴν
τάλαιναν, τέκνων ἄπαιδα.

810

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

προσάγετε τῶν δυσπότμων
σώμαθ' αἵματοσταγῆ,
σφαγέντας οὐκ ἄξι' οὐδ' ὑπ' ἀξίων,
ἐν οἷς ἀγὼν ἐκράνθη.

ἀντ. β'

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δόθ', ὡς περιπτυχαῖσι δὴ
χέρας προσαρμόσασ' ἐμοῖς
ἐν ἀγκῶσι τέκνα θῶμαι.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἔχεις ἔχεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πημάτων γ' ἄλις βάρος.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

αἰαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῖς τεκοῦσι δ' οὐ λέγεις;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἀιετέ μου.

564

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

We suffered—

CHORUS

Deepest anguish!

ADRASTUS

Ah, fair town
Of Argos, see my fate!

CHORUS

O yea, upon our sorrows she looks down,
The childless desolate!

810

ADRASTUS

Bring them, the blood-besprent (*Ant.* 2)
Forms of the evil-starred,

When to unrighteous foes the victory went,
Slain, an unmeet reward!

CHORUS

Give them, that I may cast
Mine arms round these, and lull,
In death's sleep clasped, my children.

ADRASTUS

This thou hast.

CHORUS

Grief's cup is full!

ADRASTUS

Woe!

CHORUS

For these mothers wail!

ADRASTUS

Hear me!

565

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

820

ΧΟΡΟΣ
στένεις ἐπ' ἀμφοῖν ἄχη.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
εἶθε με Καδμείων ἕναρον στίχες ἐν κοίαισιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἐμὸν δὲ μήποτ' ἐζύγη
δέμας γ' ἐς ἀνδρὸς εὐνάν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἴδετε κακῶν πέλαγος, ὦ
ματέρες τάλαιναι τέκνων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
κατὰ μὲν ὄνυξιν ἠλοκίσμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ
σποδὸν κάρα κεχύμεθα.

830

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ
ἰὼ ἰὼ μοί μοι·
κατὰ με πέδον γᾶς ἔλοι,
διὰ δὲ θύελλα σπάσαι,
πυρός τε φλογμὸς ὁ Διὸς ἐν κάρᾳ πέσοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πικροὺς ἐσεῖδες γάμους,
πικρὰν δὲ Φοίβου φάτιν·
ἔρημά σ' ἂ πολύστονος Οἰδιπόδα
δῶματα λιπούσ' ἦλθ' Ἐρινύς.

840

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ
μέλλων σ' ἐρωτᾶν, ἠνίκ' ἐξήντλεις στρατῶ
γούους, ἀφήσω· τοὺς ἐκεῖ μὲν ἐκλιπῶν
εἶασα μύθους, νῦν δ' Ἄδραστον ἱστορῶ
πόθεν ποθ' οὔδε διαπρεπεῖς εὐψυχία
θνητῶν ἔφυσαν; εἰπέ γ', ὡς σοφώτερος,
νέοισιν ἀστῶν τῶνδ' ἐπιστήμων γὰρ εἶ.

SUPPLIANTS

CHORUS

Thy moan
For us, for thee, is sped. 820

ADRASTUS

Oh had the foe slain me !

CHORUS

Oh to have known
Never a husband's bed !

ADRASTUS

Ah mother !—ah, dead child !
Lo, what a trouble-sea !

CHORUS

Our cheeks are furrow-scarred, and our white heads
are marred

With ashes all defiled.

ADRASTUS

Woe's me, ah woe is me !
Yawn for my grave, earth's floor !
Storm-blast, in pieces break ! 830

O that on mine head dashed the flame of Zeus down
flashed !

CHORUS

Ruin those bridals bore :

Thy ruin Phoebus spake.

The curse of Oedipus, with sighing fraught,
Childless hath left his house, and thee hath sought.

THESEUS (*to leader of CHORUS*)

Thee had I asked, but, for thy mourning poured
Forth to the host, refrain, and my request
To thee forgo, and ask Adrastus now :— 840
Of what race sprang these chiefs, above all men
Which shone in valour? To my young Athenians
Tell, of thy fuller wisdom ; for thou know'st.

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

εἶδες ¹ γὰρ αὐτῶν κρείσσον' ἢ λέξαι λόγῳ
 τολμήμαθ', οἷς ἤλπιζον αἰρήσειν πόλιν.
 ἐν δ' οὐκ ἐρήσομαί σε, μὴ γέλωτ' ὄφλω,
 ὄτῳ ξυνέστη τῶνδ' ἕκαστος ἐν μάχῃ
 ἢ τραῦμα λόγῃς πολεμίων ἐδέξατο.
 850 κοινοὶ ² γὰρ οὗτοι τῶν τ' ἀκουόντων λόγοι
 καὶ τοῦ λέγοντος · πῶς τις ἐν μάχῃ βεβῶς
 λόγῃς ἰούσης πρόσθεν ὀμμάτων πυκνῆς
 σαφῶς ἀπήγγειλ' ὅστις ἐστὶν ἀγαθός ;
 οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην οὔτ' ἐρωτῆσαι τάδε
 οὔτ' ἂν πιθέσθαι τοῖσι τολμῶσιν λέγειν·
 μόλις γὰρ ἂν τις αὐτὰ τὰναγκαί' ὄραν
 δύναιτ' ἂν ἐστῶς πολεμίοις ἐναντίος.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν · καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἄκοντί μοι
 δίδως ἔπαινον τῶνδ', ἐγὼ τε βούλομαι
 φίλων ἀληθῆ καὶ δίκαι' εἰπεῖν πέρι.
 860 ὀρᾶς τὸ Δίου οὐ βέλος διέπτατο ;
 Καπανεὺς ὄδ' ἐστίν · ᾧ βίος μὲν ἦν πολὺς,
 ἤκιστα δ' ὄλβῳ γαῦρος ἦν · φρόνημα δὲ
 οὐδέν τι μείζον εἶχεν ἢ πένης ἀνὴρ,
 φεύγων τραπέζαις ὅστις ἐξογκοῖτ' ἄγαν
 τάρκουντ' ἀτίζων · οὐ γὰρ ἐν γαστρὸς βορᾷ
 τὸ χρηστὸν εἶναι, μέτρια δ' ἐξαρκεῖν ἔφη.
 φίλος τ' ἀληθῆς ἦν φίλοις παρούσι τε
 καὶ μὴ παρούσιν · ὧν ἀριθμὸς οὐ πολὺς.
 870 ἀψευδὲς ἦθος, εὐπροσήγορον στόμα,
 ἄκραντον οὐδέν οὔτ' ἐς οἰκέτας ἔχων
 οὔτ' εἰς πολίτας. τὸν δὲ δεῦτερον λέγω

¹ Paley ; for MSS. εἶδον.

² So MSS. Grotius, κενὸι : "For this, for those that tell and those that hear, Were an idle tale."

SUPPLIANTS

Their gallant deeds, too great for words to speak,
Thou saw'st, whereby they hoped to win yon Thebes.

One question, meet for laughter, I ask not—
Whom each of these encountered in the strife,
Or from what foeman's spear received his wound.
For they that hear such tales as much could say
As he which tells. Who, that hath stood in fight, 850
When spear on spear is flying before men's eyes,
Can certainly report who bravely bears him?
I could not ask such vanity as this,
Nor them believe whose impudence would tell.
Scarce can a man see what needs must be seen,
What time he standeth foot to foot with foes.

ADRASTUS

Hear then. To no unwilling lips thou givest
The praise of these : full fain am I to speak
Both truth and justice touching men I loved.

Seest thou yon corpse wherethrough leapt Zeus's
bolt? 860

Capaneus he, a mighty man of wealth,
Yet naught thereby exalted, but he bare
A spirit no whit loftier than the poor,
Shunning the man whose pomp of banquets scorned
That which sufficeth. "Not in gluttony,"
Said he, "is good : enough is as a feast."
True friend to friends was he, alike when near
And far : of such is there no multitude.
A guileless heart, a mouth of gracious speech,
Who left no dues unrendered, or to servants 870
Or citizens. Now of the next I speak,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

Ἐπέοκλον, ἄλλην χρηστότητ' ἠσκηκότα·
 νεανίας ἦν τῷ βίῳ μὲν ἐνδεής,
 πλείστας δὲ τιμὰς ἔσχ' ἐν Ἀργεῖα χθονί.
 φίλων δὲ χρυσὸν πολλάκις δωρουμένων
 οὐκ εἰσεδέξατ' οἶκον ὥστε τοὺς τρόπους
 δούλους παρασχεῖν χρημάτων ζευχθεῖς ὑπο.
 τοὺς δ' ἔξαμαρτάνοντας, οὐχὶ τὴν πόλιν
 ἤχθαιρ'· ἐπεὶ τοι κοῦδὲν αἰτία πόλις
 880 κακῶς κλύουσα διὰ κυβερνήτην κακόν.
 ὁ δ' αὖ τρίτος τῶνδ' Ἴππομέδων τοιοῦσδ' ἔφνυ-
 παῖς ὢν ἐτόλμησ' εὐθύς οὐ πρὸς ἡδονὰς
 Μουσῶν τραπέσθαι πρὸς τὸ μαλθακὸν βίου,
 ἀγροὺς δὲ ναίων, σκληρὰ τῇ φύσει διδούς
 ἔχαιρε πρὸς τάνδρειον, εἰς τ' ἄγρας ἰὼν
 ἵπποις τε χαίρων τόξα τ' ἐντείνων χεροῖν,
 πόλει παρασχεῖν σῶμα χρήσιμον θέλων.
 ὁ τῆς κυναγοῦ δ' ἄλλος Ἀταλάντης γόνος,
 890 παῖς Παρθενοπαῖος, εἶδος ἔξοχώτατος,
 Ἄρκας μὲν ἦν, ἐλθὼν δ' ἐπ' Ἰνάχου ῥοὰς
 παιδεύεται κατ' Ἄργος. ἐκτραφεῖς δ' ἐκεῖ
 πρῶτον μὲν, ὡς χρῆ τοὺς μετοικούντας ξένους,
 λυπηρὸς οὐκ ἦν οὐδ' ἐπίφθονος πόλει
 οὐδ' ἔξεριστῆς τῶν λόγων, ὅθεν βαρὺς
 μάλιστ' ἂν εἴη δημότης τε καὶ ξένος·
 λόχοις δ' ἐφεστῶς ὥσπερ Ἀργεῖος γεγῶς
 ἤμυνε χώρα, χῶπότη' εὐπράσσοι πόλις,
 ἔχαιρε, λυπρῶς δ' ἔφερεν, εἴ τι δυστυχοῖ.
 900 πολλοὺς δ' ἔραστὰς κατὰ θηλειῶν ὄσας
 ἔχων, ἐφρούρει μηδὲν ἔξαμαρτάνειν.
 Τυδέως δ' ἔπαινον ἐν βραχεῖ θήσω μέγαν·
 οὐκ ἐν λόγοις ἦν λαμπρὸς, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀσπίδι
 δεινὸς σοφιστῆς πολλά τ' ἔξευρεῖν σοφός.

SUPPLIANTS

Eteoclus, graced, he too, with excellence.
A young man he, not rich in this world's goods,
But in the Argive land dowered rich with honour ;
Who oft, when friends would lavish on him gold,
Received it not his doors within, to make
His life a slave bowed 'neath the yoke of wealth.
He loathed wrong-doers, not his erring country ;
Seeing the guilt is nowise in the State
That through an evil pilot wins ill fame. 880
Such too Hippomedon was, the third with these.
From childhood up he deigned not turn aside
Unto the Muses' joys, for ease of life ;
But in the field abode, enduring hardness
Gladly for valour's sake, and, hunting still,
Joyed in the steed and hands that strain the bow,
Eager to yield his land his body's best.

The fourth was huntress Atalanta's son,
Parthenopaeus, unmatched in goodlihead :
Arcadian he, but came to Inachus, 890
And lived his youth at Argos. Fostered there,
First, as beseems the sojourner in the land,
He vexed not, nor was jealous of the state,
Nor was a wrangler, whereby citizens
Or aliens most shall jar with fellow-men ;
But in the ranks stood like an Argive born,
Fought for the land, and, whenso prospered Argos,
Rejoiced, and grieved when it went ill with her ;—
Of many a man, of many a woman loved,
Yet from transgression did he keep him pure. 900

Tydeus' high praise next will I sum in brief.
In speech he shone not ; a dread reasoner he
In logic of the shield, and war's inventions :

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

γνώμη δ' ἀδελφοῦ Μελεάγρου λελειμμένος,
 ἴσον παρέσχεν ὄνομα, διὰ τέχνης δορός
 εὐρῶν ἀκριβῆ μουσικὴν ἐν ἀσπίδι·
 φιλότιμον ἦθος, πλούσιον φρόνημα δὲ
 ἐν τοῖσιν ἔργοις, οὐχὶ τοῖς λόγοις ἴσον.
 910 ἐκ τῶνδε μὴ θαύμαζε τῶν εἰρημένων,
 Θησεῦ, πρὸ πύργων τούσδε τολμήσαι θανεῖν.
 τὸ γὰρ τραφῆναι μὴ κακῶς αἰδῶ φέρει·
 αἰσχύνεται δὲ τὰγάθ' ἀσκήσας ἀνὴρ
 κακὸς κεκλήσθαι πᾶς τις. ἢ δ' εὐανδρία
 διδακτός, εἴπερ καὶ βρέφος διδάσκεται
 λέγειν ἀκούειν θ' ὧν μάθησιν οὐκ ἔχει.
 ἂ δ' ἂν μάθη τις, ταῦτα σῶζεσθαι φιλεῖ
 πρὸς γῆρας. οὕτω παῖδας εὖ παιδεύετε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

920 ἰὼ τέκνον, δυστυχῆ σ'
 ἔτρεφον, ἔφερον ὑφ' ἥπατος
 πόνους ἐνεγκούσ' ἐν ὠδίσι· καὶ νῦν
 "Αἶδας τὸν ἐμὸν ἔχει
 μόχθον ἀθλίας, ἐγὼ δὲ
 γηροβοσκὸν οὐκ ἔχω
 τεκοῦσ' ἅ τάλαινα παῖδα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

930 καὶ μὴν τὸν Οἰκλέους γε γενναῖον τόκου
 θεοὶ ζῶντ' ἀναρπάσαντες εἰς μυχοὺς χθονὸς
 αὐτοῖς τεθρίπποις εὐλογοῦσιν ἐμφανῶς·
 τὸν Οἰδίπου δὲ παῖδα, Πολυνείκην λέγω,
 ἡμεῖς ἐπαινέσαντες οὐ ψευδοίμεθ' ἄν.
 ξένος γὰρ ἦν μοι πρὶν λιπῶν Κάδμου πόλιν

SUPLIANTS

In counsel not as his brother Meleager,
Yet of like fame, through science of the spear
Getting him ripest scholarship of war.
A soaring soul was his, a spirit rich
Where deeds might serve ; in speech of less avail.

Hearing my words, O Theseus, marvel not
That these before yon towers feared not to die. 910
The fruit that noble nurture bears is honour ;
And whosoe'er hath practised knightly deeds
Would blush to be called craven. Ye may teach
This chivalry ; for even the babe is taught
To speak and hear things not yet understood ;
And what one learneth, that he is wont to keep
To hoary hairs. Then train ye well the child.

CHORUS

O son, for thy sorrow I gave thee
Life of my life 'neath my zone,
And I bore for thee travail-pain : 920
And now is my loss death's gain ;
Of my labours no fruit doth remain,
Nor to foster mine eld may I have thee.
Woe's me that I bare a son !

THESEUS

To Oekleus' noble son the very Gods,
Who whelmed him with his car down earth's abyss
Living, gave manifest token of their praise.¹
But Oedipus' son—I tell of Polyneices—
Myself shall praise, nor falsely speak herein.
My guest was he, ere, leaving Cadmus' town 930

¹ As being rescued from pursuers, and entombed by the Gods.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

φυγῆ πρὸς Ἄργος διαβαλεῖν αὐθαίρετος.
ἀλλ' οἴσθ' ὃ δρᾶσαι βούλομαι τούτων πέρι;

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἓν, σοῖσι πείθεσθαι λόγοις.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τὸν μὲν Διὸς πληγέντα Καπανέα πυρί—

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἢ χωρὶς ἱερὸν ὡς νεκρὸν θάψαι θέλεις;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ναί· τοὺς δέ γ' ἄλλους πάντας ἐν μιᾷ πυρᾷ.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτα θήσεις μνήμα τῷδε χωρίσας;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

αὐτοῦ παρ' οἴκουσ τούσδε συμπήξας τάφον.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

οὗτος μὲν ἤδη δμωσὶν ἂν μέλοι πόνος.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

940 ἡμῖν δέ γ' οἶδε· στειχέτω δ' ἄχθη νεκρῶν.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

ἴτ', ὦ τάλαιναί μητέρες, τέκνων πέλας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦκιστ', Ἄδραστε, τοῦτο πρόσφορον λέγεις.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

πῶς; τὰς τεκούσας οὐ χρεῶν ψαῦσαι τέκνων;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὄλοιωτ' ἰδοῦσαι τούσδ' ἂν ἠλλοιωμένους.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

πικρὰ γὰρ ὄψις αἷμα κῶτειλαι νεκρῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί δῆτα λύπην ταῖσδε προσθεῖναι θέλεις;

SUPPLIANTS

Self-banished, unto Argos he crossed o'er.
But knowest thou my wish as touching these?

ADRASTUS

Naught know I, save one thing—to heed thy words.

THESEUS

Capaneus, stricken by the fire of Zeus—

ADRASTUS

Wouldst bury him apart, a hallowed corpse?

THESEUS

Yea, but the rest all on one funeral-pyre.

ADRASTUS

Where wilt thou set for him that several tomb?

THESEUS

Here, by these halls I have built his sepulchre.

ADRASTUS

Our servants' tendance shall he straightway have.

THESEUS

These, mine. Now let the biers of death move on. 940

ADRASTUS

Come, hapless mothers, to your sons draws nigh.

THESEUS

Adrastus, this thou say'st were all unmeet.

ADRASTUS

How should the mothers choose but touch their sons?

THESEUS

'Twere death to look on them so sorely marred.

ADRASTUS

Bitter to see are slain men's blood and wounds.

THESEUS

Why then wouldst add fresh anguish to their grief?

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

950 νικᾶς· μένειν χρή τλημόνως· λέγει γὰρ εὖ
 Θησεύς· ὅταν δὲ τοῦσδε προσθῶμεν πυρί,
 ὅστ᾽ ἀπροσάξεσθ'· ὦ ταλαίπωροι βροτῶν,
 τί κτᾶσθε λόγχας καὶ κατ' ἀλλήλων φόνους
 τίθεσθε; παύσασθ', ἀλλὰ λήξαντες πόνων
 ἄσθη φυλάσσεθ' ἥσυχτοι μεθ' ἥσυχων.
 σμικρὸν τὸ χρήμα τοῦ βίου· τοῦτον δὲ χρή
 ὡς ῥᾶστα καὶ μὴ σὺν πόνοις διεκπερᾶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκέτ' εὐτεκνος, οὐκέτ' εὐπαις, στρ.
 οὐδ' εὐτυχίας μετεστίν μοι
 κουροτόκοις ἐν Ἀργείαις·
 οὐδ' Ἄρτεμις λοχία
 960 προσφθέγγεται' ἂν τὰς ἀτέκνους.
 δυσαίων δ' ὁ βίος,
 πλαγκτὰ δ' ὡσεὶ τις νεφέλα,
 πνευμάτων ὑπὸ δυσχίμων αἴσσω.

ἐπτὰ ματέρες ἐπτὰ κούρους ἀντ.
 ἐγεινάμεθ' αἱ ταλαίπωροι
 κλειωτάτους ἐν Ἀργείοις·
 καὶ νῦν ἄπαις ἄτεκνος
 γηράσκω δυστηνοτάτως,
 οὔτ' ἐν φθιμένοις
 οὔτ' ἐν ζῶσιν κρινομένα,
 970 χωρὶς δὴ τινα τῶνδ' ἔχουσα μοῖραν.

ὑπολελειμμένα μοι δάκρυα· ἐπωδ.
 μέλεα παιδὸς ἐν οἴκοις
 κεῖται μνήματα, πένθιμοι
 κουραὶ καὶ στέφανοι κόμας,

SUPPLIANTS

ADRASTUS

Well said. Ye, tarry patiently, for well
 Speaks Theseus. When to fire we have given these,
 Yourselves the bones shall gather. Hapless mortals!
 Why do ye get you spears and deal out death 950
 To fellow-men? Stay, from such toils forbear,
 And peaceful mid the peaceful ward your towns.
 Short is life's span : behoves to pass through this
 Softly as may be, not with travail worn.

*The funeral procession passes on to the pyres, which are
 kindled in sight of the stage.*

CHORUS

Crowned with fair sons above others (Str.)
 No more am I seen,
 Neither blessed mid Argive mothers ;
 Nor the Travail-queen
 To the childless shall give fair greeting !
 Forlorn is my life, as a fleeting 960
 Lone cloud that flees from the beating
 Of storm-scourges keen.

Seven mothers—and heroes seven (Ant.)
 To our sorrow we bare :
 None princelier to Argos were given.
 Now in childless despair
 Drear old age creepeth upon me ;
 Yet the ranks of the dead have not known me,
 Nor the count of the living may own me ;
 But an outcast I fare. 970

For me are but tears remaining : (Epode)
 Saddest memorials rest
 In mine halls of my son—shorn hair
 And garlands of mourning are there ;

577

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

λοιβαί τε νεκύων φθιμένων,
 αοιδαί θ' ἄς χρυσοκόμας
 Ἄπολλων οὐκ ἐνδέχεται
 γόοισιν δ' ὀρθρευομένα
 δάκρυσιν νοτερόν ἀεὶ πέπλων
 πρὸς στέρνῳ πτύχα τέγγω.

- 980 καὶ μὴν θαλάμας τάσδ' ἐσορῶ δὴ
 Καπανέως ἤδη τύμβον θ' ἱερὸν
 μελάθρων τ' ἐκτὸς
 Θησέως ἀναθήματα νεκροῖς,
 κλεινὴν τ' ἄλοχον τοῦ καταφθιμένου
 τοῦδε κεραυνῷ πέλας Εὐάδην,
 ἣν Ἴφις ἀναξ παῖδα φυτεύει.
 τί ποτ' αἰθερίαν ἔστηκε πέτραν,
 ἣ τῶνδε δόμων ὑπερακρίζει,
 τήνδ' ἐμβαίνουσα κέλευθον ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

- 990 τί φέγγος, τίν' αἴγλαν στρ.
 ἐδίφρευε τόθ' ἄλιος
 σελάνα τε κατ' αἰθέρα,
 λαμπάσιν ὠκυθόαις λυγρᾶς¹
 ἰππεύουσα δι' ὄρφνας,
 * * ἀνίκα γάμων
 τῶν ἐμῶν πόλις Ἄργους
 αοιδὰς εὐδαιμονίας
 ἐπύργωσε καὶ γαμέτα
 χαλκεοτευχοῦς τε Καπανέως ;
 1000 δρομὰς ἐξ ἐμῶν πρὸς σ' ἔβαν
 οἴκων ἐκβακχευσαμένα,

¹ Text corrupt. Paley's reading and interpretation.

SUPPLIANTS

Libations—for dead lips' draining ;
 Songs—which the golden-tressed
 Apollo shall turn from in scorn ;
 And with wails shall I greet each morn,
 Ever drenching with tears fast raining
 The vesture-folds on my breast.

Lo, yonder the fiery bower, 980
 Even Capaneus' sacred pyre :
 I see it without the fane,
 With Theseus' gifts to the slain.
 Ha ! the wife draweth nigh in this hour
 To the slain of the levin-fire,
 Evadne the princess renowned !
 On yon cliff why is she found
 Whose crags above this fane tower ?
 And she climbs, and she climbs ever higher !

EVADNE *appears on the cliff above the pyre of Capaneus,
 dressed in festal attire.*

EVADNE

What light ill-omened shone (Str.) 990
 When flashed thy wheels, O Sun,
 And when the moon raced on,
 And star-lamps glancing
 Raced through a lowering sky,
 When Argos tossed on high
 The gladsome bridal-cry,
 And throbbed with dancing,
 And thrilled with song, to see
 Mine hero wed with me ?
 O love, I rush to thee 1000
 From mine home, raving,

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

πυρὸς φῶς τάφον τε
 ματεύουσα τὸν αὐτόν,
 ἐς Ἄιδαν καταλύσουσ' ἔμμοχθον
 βίοτον αἰῶνός τε πόνους·
 ἥδιστος γάρ τοι θάνατος
 συνθνήσκειν θνήσκουσι φίλοις,
 εἰ δαίμων τάδε κραίνοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1010 καὶ μὴν ὄρας τήνδ' ἧς ἐφέστηκας πέλας
 πυράν, Διὸς θησαυρόν, ἐνθ' ἔνεστι σὸς
 πόσις δαμασθεὶς λαμπάσιν κεραυνίοις.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

1020 ὄρῳ δὴ τελευτάν, ἀντ.
 ἴν' ἔστακα· τύχα δέ μοι
 ξυνάπτει ποδός· ἀλλὰ τῆς
 εὐκλείας χάριν ἔνθεν ὀρ-
 μάσω τᾶσδ' ἀπὸ πέτρας
 πηδήσασα πυρὸς ἔσω,
 σῶμά τ' αἴθοπι φλογμῷ
 πόσει συμμίξασα φίλον,
 χρώτα χρωτὶ πέλας θεμένα
 Περσεφονείας ἤξω θαλάμους,
 σὲ τὸν θανόντ' οὔποτ' ἐμᾶ
 προδοῦσα ψυχᾶ κατὰ γᾶς.
 ἴτω φῶς γάμοι τε.
 †εἶθ' ἀμείνονες εὐναὶ
 δικαίων ὑμεναίων ἐν Ἄργει
 φανεῖεν τέκνοισιν ἐμοῖς,
 εἴη δ' εὐναῖος γαμέτας†¹

¹ Text uncertain. Paley's reading and interpretation.

SUPPLIANTS

Seeking thy tomb, thy pyre,
Longing with strong desire
To end in that same fire
 Mine anguish, braving
Hades—to end life's woe ;
For death is sweetest so
With dear dead to lie low :—
 God grant my craving !

CHORUS

Lo, the pyre nigh,—above it dost thou stand,—
Zeus' own possession, on the which is laid
Thy lord, o'erthrown by flash of levin-bolt. 1010

EVADNE

The end !—I see it now, (Ant.)
Here standing. Friend art thou,
Fortune ! From this cliff's brow,
 For wifhood's glory,
With spurning feet I dart
Down into yon fire's heart
To meet him, ne'er to part,—
 Flames reddening o'er me,— 1020
To nestle to his side,
In Cora's¹ bowers a bride !
O love, though thou hast died,
 I'll not forsake thee.
Farewell life, bridal bed !
By happier omens led,
Ah, be our children wed !
 May leal love make ye,
Bridegrooms to be, life through
Unto my daughters true :

¹ Persephone, queen of Hades.

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

1030 *συντηχθεὶς αὔραις ἀδόλοισ
γενναίας ψυχᾶς ἀλόχῳ.*

ΧΟΡΟΣ

*καὶ μὴν ὄδ' αὐτὸς σὸς πατὴρ βαίνει πέλας,
γεραιὸς Ἴφισ εἰς νεωτέρους λόγους,
οὓς οὐ κατειδῶς πρόσθεν ἀλγήσει κλύων.*

ΙΦΙΣ

1040 *ὦ δυστάλαινα, δυστάλας δ' ἐγὼ γέρων,
ἦκω διπλοῦν πένθημ' ὀμαιμόνων ἔχων,
τὸν μὲν θανόντα παῖδα Καδμείων δορὶ
Ἐτέοκλον εἰς γῆν πατρίδα ναυσθλώσων νεκρόν,
ζητῶν δ' ἐμὴν παῖδ', ἣ δόμων ἐξώπιος
βέβηκε πηδήσασα Καπανέως δάμαρ,
θανεῖν ἐρώσα σὺν πόσει. χρόνον μὲν οὖν
τὸν πρόσθ' ἐφρουρεῖτ' ἐν δόμοις· ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγὼ
φυλακὰς ἀνήκα τοῖς παρεστῶσιν κακοῖς,
βέβηκεν, ἀλλὰ τῆδέ νιν δοξάζομεν
μάλιστ' ἂν εἶναι· φράζετ' εἰ κατείδετε.*

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

*τί τάσδ' ἐρωτᾶς; ἦδ' ἐγὼ πέτρας ἔπι
ὄρνις τις ὡσεὶ Καπανέως ὑπὲρ πυρᾶς
δύστηνον αἰώρημα κουφίζω, πάτερ.*

ΙΦΙΣ

*τέκνον, τίς αὔρα; τίς στόλος; τίνος χάριν
δόμων ὑπερβᾶσ' ἦλθες εἰς τήνδε χθόνα;*

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

1050 *ὄργην λάβοις ἂν τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων
κλύων· ἀκούσαι δ' οὐ σε βούλομαι, πάτερ.*

ΙΦΙΣ

τί δ'; οὐ δίκαιον πατέρα τὸν σὸν εἶδέναι;

SUPPLIANTS

One love-breath breathe in you.
Now, Death, come—take me !

1030

CHORUS

Lo, here himself, thy sire, is drawing nigh,
Old Iphis, within sound of thy strange speech,
Which, heard not yet, shall wring his heart to hear.

Enter IPHIS.

IPHIS

O hapless ye !—O hapless ancient I !
Burdened with twofold grief for kin I came,
To bear unto his fatherland oversea
My son Eteoclus, slain by Theban spear,
And seeking for my daughter, who hath fled
Forth of mine halls, the wife of Capaneus,
Longing with him to die. Through days o'erpast 1040
Guarded she was at home : but soon as I
Slackened the watch, for ills that pressed on me,
Forth did she pass. Howbeit here, methinks,
Is she most like to be. Say, have ye seen her ?

EVADNE

Wherefore ask these ? Here am I on the rock.
Even as a bird, my father, hang I poised
In misery o'er the pyre of Capaneus.

IPHIS

My child, what wind hath blown, what journeying
led thee ?
Why flee thine home and come unto this land ?

EVADNE

Thou wouldst be wroth to hear my purposes. 1050
O father, I would not that thou shouldst hear.

IPHIS

How ?—were't not just thy very father knew ?

583

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

κριτης ἂν εἴης οὐ σοφὸς γνώμης ἐμῆς.

ΙΦΙΣ

σκευῇ δὲ τῆδε τοῦ χάριν κοσμεῖς δέμας ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

θέλει τι κλεινὸν οὗτος ὁ στολμός, πάτερ.

ΙΦΙΣ

ὡς οὐκ ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ πένθιμος πρέπεις ὄραν.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

εἰς γάρ τι πρᾶγμα νεοχμὸν ἐσκευάσμεθα.

ΙΦΙΣ

κᾶπειτα τύμβῳ καὶ πυρᾷ φαίνει πέλας ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ καλλίνικος ἔρχομαι.

ΙΦΙΣ

1060 νικῶσα νίκην τίνα ; μαθεῖν χρήζω σέθεν.

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

πάσας γυναῖκας ἃς δέδορκεν ἥλιος.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἔργοις Ἀθάνας ἢ φρενῶν εὐβουλία ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἀρετῇ· πόσει γὰρ συνθανοῦσα κείσομαι.

ΙΦΙΣ

τί φῆς ; τί τοῦτ' αἰνιγμα σημαίνεις σαθρόν ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

ἄσσω θανόντος Καπανέως τήνδ' εἰς πύραν.

ΙΦΙΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, οὐ μὴ μῦθον εἰς πολλοὺς ἐρεῖς ;

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

τοῦτ' αὐτὸ χρήζω, πάντας Ἀργείους μαθεῖν.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἄλλ' οὐδέ τοί σοι πείσομαι δρώση τάδε.

SUPPLIANTS

EVADNE

Thou wouldst be no wise judge of my resolve.

IPHIS

And why in this attire array thy form ?

EVADNE

Father, this vesture glorious meaning hath.

IPHIS

Thou seemest not as one that mourns her lord.

EVADNE

For deed unheard-of have I decked me thus.

IPHIS

By tomb and pyre appear'st thou in such guise ?

EVADNE

Yea, I for victory's triumph hither come.

IPHIS

What victory this ? Fain would I learn of thee. 1060

EVADNE

Over all wives on whom the sun looks down.

IPHIS

In works by Pallas taught, or prudent wit ?

EVADNE

In courage. With my lord will I lie dead.

IPHIS

How sayest thou ?—what sorry riddle this ?

EVADNE

I plunge to yon pyre of dead Capaneus.

IPHIS

O daughter, speak not so before a throng !

EVADNE

Even this would I, that all the Argives hear.

IPHIS

Nay, surely will I let thee from this deed.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΕΤΑΔΝΗ

1070 ὁμοιον· οὐ γὰρ μὴ κίχης μ' ἔλων χερί.
καὶ δὴ παρεῖται σῶμα, σοὶ μὲν οὐ φίλον,
ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τῷ συμπυρουμένῳ πόσει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰώ, γύναι, δεινὸν ἔργον ἐξειργάσω.

ΙΦΙΣ

ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, Ἀργείων κόραι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔ ἔ, σχέτλια τάδε παθῶν,
τὸ πάντολμον ἔργον ὄψει τάλας.

ΙΦΙΣ

οὐκ ἄν τιν' εὔροιτ' ἄλλον ἀθλιώτερον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ τάλας·
μετέλαχες τύχας Οἰδιπόδα, γέρον,
μέρος καὶ σὺ καὶ πόλις ἐμὰ τλάμων.

ΙΦΙΣ

1080 οἴμοι· τί δὴ βροτοῖσιν οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε,
νέους δις εἶναι καὶ γέροντας αὖ πάλιν ;
ἀλλ' ἐν δόμοις μὲν ἦν τι μὴ καλῶς ἔχη,
γνώμαισιν ὑστέραισιν ἐξορθούμεθα,
αἰῶνα δ' οὐκ ἔξεστιν. εἰ δ' ἡμεν νέοι
δις καὶ γέροντες, εἴ τις ἐξημάρτανε,
διπλοῦ βίου τυχόντες ἐξωρθούμεθ' ἄν.
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἄλλους εἰσορῶν τεκνουμένους
παίδων τ' ἐραστῆς ἢ πόθῳ τ' ἀπωλλύμην.
1090 εἰ δ' εἰς τόδ' ἦλθον κάξεπειράθην παθῶν¹
οἶον στέρεσθαι πατέρα γίγνεται τέκνων,
οὐκ ἄν ποτ' εἰς τόδ' ἦλθον εἰς ὃ νῦν κακόν·

¹ Paley ; for MSS. τέκνων.

SUPPLIANTS

EVADNE

Let or let not—thou canst not reach nor seize me.
Lo, hurled my body falls, for grief to thee, 1070
For joy to me and him with me consumed.

Throws herself from the cliff on to the pyre.

CHORUS

O lady, what awful deed hath been compassed of
thee!

IPHIS

O Argos' daughters, wretched I!—undone!

CHORUS

Woe for thee, woe, who hast borne this misery!
Yet its fulness of horror remaineth for thee to see.

IPHIS

None other shall ye find more sorrow-crushed.

CHORUS

O ancient, O sore-stricken heart,
In the fortune partaker thou art [part.
Of Oedipus: thou and mine hapless city therein have

IPHIS

Ah me, why is not this to men vouchsafed, 1080
Twice to see youth, and twice withal old age?
Now in our homes, if aught shall fall out ill,
By wisdom's second thoughts this we amend;
Life lived we may not. Might we but be young
And old twice o'er, if any man should err,
We would amend us in that second life.
For I, beholding others rich in sons,
For children yearned, and by my longing perished.
Had I to that come first,—by suffering proved
What to a father child-bereavement means, 1090
I had never come to this, to this day's woe,

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΣ

ὅστις φυτεύσας καὶ νεανίαν τεκὼν
 ἄριστον, εἶτα τοῦδε νῦν στερίσκομαι.
 εἶεν· τί δὴ χρῆ τὸν ταλαίπωρόν με δρᾶν;
 στείχειν πρὸς οἴκους; κατ' ἔρημίαν ἴδω
 πολλὴν μελάθρων ἀπορίαν τ' ἐμῷ βίῳ;
 ἢ πρὸς μέλαθρα τοῦδε Καπανέως μόλω;
 ἤδιστα πρὶν γε δῆθ', ὅτ' ἦν παῖς ἦδε μοι.
 ἀλλ' οὐκέτ' ἔστιν ἢ γ' ἐμὴν γενειάδα
 1100 προσήγετ' ἀεὶ στόματι καὶ κᾶρα τόδε
 κατεῖχε χερσίν· οὐδὲν ἤδιον πατρὶ¹
 γέροντι θυγατρός· ἀρσένων δὲ μείζονες
 ψυχαί, γλυκεῖαι δ' ἦσσαν εἰς θωπεύματα.
 οὐχ ὡς τάχιστα δῆτά μ' ἄξειτ' εἰς δόμους
 σκότῳ τε δώσεται; ἔνθ' ἀσιτιαῖς ἐμὸν
 δέμας γεραιὸν συντακεῖς ἀποφθερῶ.
 τί μ' ὠφελήσει παιδὸς ὀστέων θυγεῖν;
 ὦ δυσπάλαιστον γῆρας, ὡς μισῶ σ' ἔχων,
 1110 μισῶ δ' ὅσοι χρήζουσιν ἐκτείνειν βίον,
 βρωτοῖσι καὶ ποτοῖσι καὶ μαγεύμασι
 παρεκτρέποντες ὀχετὸν ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν·
 οὐς χρῆν, ἐπειδὴν μηδὲν ὠφελῶσι γῆν,
 θανόντας ἔρρειν κάκποδῶν εἶναι νέοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰώ, τάδε δὴ παίδων φθιμένων
 ὅστα φέρεται. λάβετε, ἀμφίπολοι
 γραιῖας ἀμενοῦς· οὐ γὰρ ἔνεστιν
 ῥώμη παίδων ὑπὸ πένθους,

¹ Burney : for MSS. χειρὶ· πατρὶ δ' οὐδὲν ἤδιον.

SUPPLIANTS

I, who begat a young son of my loins
Most goodly, and am now of him bereft!
No more!—what must I do, the sorrow-fraught?
Wend home?—and filled with desolation see
Home—for my life the hunger of despair?
Or seek the mansion of yon Capaneus?—
Once sweet, O sweet, when this my daughter lived!
Ah, but she is no more, who wont to draw
Down to her lips my face, fold in her arms 1100
Mine head:—naught sweeter than a daughter is
To grey-haired sire; sons' hearts be greater-framed,
But not, not theirs the dear caressing wiles!
Lead me, with speed O lead me to mine home,
And hide in darkness, there to make an end
Of this old frame, by fasting pined away.
What profit if I touch my daughter's bones?
Strong wrestler Eld, O how I loathe thy grasp—
Loathe them which seek to lengthen out life's span,
By meats and drinks and magic philtre-spells 1110
To turn life's channel, that they may not die,
Who, when they are but cumberers of the ground,
Should hence, and die, and make way for the young.

*The stage gradually fills with a procession, in which the
SONS of the dead chiefs bear the urns containing their ashes.*

The members of the CHORUS advance to meet them.

CHORUS

Woe is me, woe!
Onward, onward the bones of sons, sons dead,
Are borne: O lend me your hands; my strength is
sped,
Handmaids: stricken with eld, in childless pain
I faint for my dear sons slain,

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

1120

πολλοῦ τε χρόνου ζώσης μέτα δή,
καταλειβομένης τ' ἄλγεσι πολλοῖς.
τί γὰρ ἂν μεῖζον τοῦδ' ἔτι θνητοῖς
πάθος ἐξεύροις
ἢ τέκνα θανόντ' ἐσιδέσθαι;

ΠΑΙΔΕΣ

φέρω φέρω,¹ στρ. α'
τάλαινα μάτερ, ἐκ πυρᾶς πατρὸς μέλη,
βάρος μὲν οὐκ ἀβριθῆς ἀλγέων ὕπερ,
ἐν δ' ὀλίγῳ τὰ μὰ πάντα συνθείς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1130

ἰὼ ἰώ.
παῖ δάκρυα φέρεις φίλα
ματρὶ τῶν ὀλωλότων,
σποδοῦ τε πλήθος ὀλίγον ἀντὶ σωμάτων
εὐδοκίμων δήποτ' ἐν Μυκῆναις;

ΠΑΙΣ α'

παπαῖ παπαῖ· ἀντ. α'
ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος ἀθλίου πατρὸς τάλας
ἔρημον οἶκον ὀρφανεύσομαι λαβών,
οὐ πατρὸς ἐν χερσὶ τοῦ τεκόντος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

ἰὼ ἰώ.
ποῦ δὲ πόνος ἐμῶν τέκνων,
ποῦ λοχευμάτων χάρις
τροφαί τε ματρὸς αὐπνὰ τ' ὀμμάτων τέλη
καὶ φίλιαι προσβολαὶ προσώπων;

¹ Paley's arrangement of this *Commos* adopted.

SUPPLIANTS

Bowed down under the load of years on years,
Wasted ever with sorrows, aye with tears.
Couldst thou tell of a harder, sorer stroke 1120
That lighteth on mortal folk,
Than when mothers behold their dead sons' biers?

CHORUS OF CHILDREN

I bear, O I bear, (Str. 1)
Sad mother, the limbs of my sire from the
burning,— [there,—
A burden not light, for the weight of my sorrow is
All that I love in this little vial inurning.

CHORUS OF MOTHERS

Woe is me, woe!
Is it all that thou bringest, the salt tears' flow,
To the dead man's mother?—naught else canst
thou show? [the men of renown
To a handful of dust brought down are the forms of 1130
So glorious erewhile in Mycenae-town?

FIRST CHILD

Alas for my doom! (Ant. 1)
Sad son by an ill-starred father forsaken,
Henceforth I inherit the orphan's desolate home,
Unsheltered by arms of the sire from whose loins
I was taken.

FIRST MOTHER

Woe for my plight!
Whitherward hath my toil for my babes taken
flight?
What now doth the pain of my travail requite?
What reward hath the mother's breast, and the eyes
that would take no rest, [pressed?
And the face to the dear little babe-face

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΔΕΣ

ΠΑΙΣ Β'

1140 βεβᾶσιν, οὐκέτ' εἰσίν· οἴμοι πάτερ· στρ. β'
 βεβᾶσιν αἰθὴρ ἔχει νιν ἤδη,

ΧΟΡΟΣ Β'

πυρὸς τετακότας σποδῶ·
 ποτανοὶ δ' ἤνυσαν τὸν Ἄιδαν.

ΠΑΙΣ Γ'

πάτερ, μῶν σῶν κλύεις τέκνων γόους ;
 ἄρ' ἀσπιδούχος ἔτι ποτ' ἀντιτίσομαι σὸν φόνον ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ Γ'

εἰ γὰρ γένοιτο, τέκνον.

ΠΑΙΣ Δ'

ἔτ' ἂν θεοῦ θέλοντος ἔλθοι δίκαια ἀντ. β'
 ἴπατρῶος· οὐπω κακὸν τόδ' εὔδει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ Δ'

ἄλις γόων, ἄλις τύχας,
 ἄλις δ' ἀλγέων ἐμοὶ πάρεστιν.

ΠΑΙΣ Ε'

1150 ἔτ' Ἄσωπού με δέξεται γάνος
 χαλκίοις ἐν ὄπλοις Δαναϊδῶν στρατηλάταν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ Ε'

τοῦ φθιμένου πατρὸς ἐκδικαστάν.

ΠΑΙΣ Σ'

ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν σε, πάτερ, ἐπ' ὀμμάτων δοκῶ— στρ. γ'

ΧΟΡΟΣ Σ'

φίλον φίλημα παρὰ γένυν τιθέντα σοῦ.

SUPPLIANTS

SECOND CHILD

They are gone! No sons hast thou any more—they
are lost!—
Alas for my father!—through void air drifts each 1140

(*Str.* 2)

[ghost.]

SECOND MOTHER

They crumbled to ashes mid flame as they lay,
And to Hades now have they winged their way.

THIRD CHILD

O my father, the wail of thy sons ringeth down
unto thee.
Ah shall I ever bear shield, an avenger to be
Of thy blood?

THIRD MOTHER

God grant it, my child, to thy destiny!

FOURTH CHILD

My father's avenging!—one day unto me shall it
come,
If God will :—the wrong sleepeth not by his side in

(*Ant.* 2)

[the tomb.]

FOURTH MOTHER

Ah, to-day's disaster and sorrow suffice :
Sufficeth the grief on mine heart that lies! 1150

FIFTH CHILD

Ha, yet shall they greet me, Asopus' ripples of light,
Leading the Danaans onward in brass-mail dight!

FIFTH MOTHER

A champion thou of thy perished father's right.

SIXTH CHILD

O father mine, methinks I see thee now— (Str. 3)

SIXTH MOTHER

Laying the kiss of love upon thy brow.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

ΠΑΙΣ 5'

λόγων δὲ παρακέλευσμα σῶν
ἀέρι φερόμενον οἴχεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ 5'

δυοῖν δ' ἄχῃ, ματέρι τ' ἔλιπε—
σέ τ' οὔποτ' ἄλγη πατρῶα λείψει.

ΠΑΙΣ 5'

ἔχω τοσόνδε βᾶρος ὅσον μ' ἀπώλεσεν. ἀντ. γ'

ΧΟΡΟΣ 5'

1160 φέρ', ἀμφὶ μαστὸν ὑποβάλω σποδόν.

ΠΑΙΣ 5'

ἔκλαυσα τόδε κλύων ἔπος
στιγνότατον· ἔθιγέ μου φρενῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ 5'

ὦ τέκνον, ἔβας· οὐκέτι φίλον
φίλας ἄγαλμ' ὄψομαί σε ματρός.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1170 Ἄδραστε καὶ γυναῖκες Ἀργεῖαι γένος,
ὀρᾶτε παῖδας τούσδ' ἔχοντας ἐν χεροῖν
πατέρων ἀρίστων σώμαθ' ὧν ἀνειλόμην·
τούτοις ἐγὼ σφε καὶ πόλις δωρούμεθα.
ὕμᾳς δὲ τῶνδε χρὴ χάριν μεμνημένους
σφῶζειν, ὀρῶντας ὧν ἐκύρσατ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ.
παισὶν δ' ὑπεῖπον τοῖσδε τοὺς αὐτοὺς λόγους,
τιμᾶν πόλιν τήνδ', ἐκ τέκνων αἰεὶ τέκνοις
μνήμην παραγγέλλοντας ὧν ἐκύρσατε.
Ζεὺς δὲ ξυνίστωρ οἷ τ' ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοὶ
οἴων ὑφ' ἡμῶν στείχεται ἡξιωμένοι.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

Θησεῦ, ξύνισμεν πάνθ' ὅσ' Ἀργεῖαν χθόνα
δέδρακας ἐσθλὰ δεομένην εὐεργετῶν,

SUPPLIANTS

SIXTH CHILD

But thy words of exhorting are come to naught ;
They are wafted afar on the wind's wing caught.

SIXTH MOTHER

Unto twain is anguish bequeathed, unto me,
And grief for thy father shall ne'er leave thee.

SEVENTH CHILD

By this my burden am I all undone ! (*Ant.* 3) 1160

SEVENTH MOTHER

Let me embrace the ashes of my son !

SEVENTH CHILD

I weep to hearken thy piteous word,
Most piteous—the depths of mine heart hath it
stirred.

SEVENTH MOTHER

O son, thou art gone : never more shall I gaze
On the light of thy mother, thy glorious face !

THESEUS

Adrastus, and ye dames of Argive race,
Ye see these children bearing in their hands
The dust of gallant sires whom I redeemed :
That dust do I and Athens give to these.
But ye must guard the memory of this grace,
Keeping my boon for aye before your eyes ; 1170
And on these boys I lay thè selfsame charge,
To honour Athens, and from son to son
To pass on like a watchword this our boon.
Lo, Zeus is witness, and the Gods in heaven,
How honoured and how favoured hence ye pass.

ADRASTUS

Theseus, our hearts know all thy noble deeds
To Argos, and thy kindness in her need.

ΙΚΕΤΙΔΕΣ

χάριν τ' ἀγήρων ἔξομεν· γενναῖα γὰρ
παθόντες ὑμᾶς ἀντιδρᾶν ὀφείλομεν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1180 τί δῆτ' ἔθ' ὑμῖν ἄλλ' ὑπουργῆσαί με χρή·

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ

χαῖρ'· ἄξιος γὰρ καὶ σὺ καὶ πόλις σέθεν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἔσται τάδ'· ἀλλὰ καὶ σὺ τῶν αὐτῶν τύχοις.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἄκουε, Θεσεῦ, τούσδ' Ἀθηναίας λόγους,
ἃ χρή σε δρᾶσαι, δρῶντα δ' ὠφέλειν τάδε.
μὴ δῶς τάδ' ὅστ' αὖ τοῖσδ' ἐς Ἀργεῖαν χθόνα
παισὶν κομίζειν ῥαδίως οὕτω μεθείς,
ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τῶν σῶν καὶ πόλεως μοχθημάτων
πρῶτον λάβ' ὄρκον. τόνδε δ' ὀμνῦναι χρεῶν
"Ἄδραστον· οὗτος κύριος, τύραννος ὢν,
1190 πάσης ὑπὲρ γῆς Δαναϊδῶν ὀρκωμοτεῖν.
ὁ δ' ὄρκος ἔσται, μήποτ' Ἀργείους χθόνα
εἰς τήνδ' ἐποίσειν πολέμιον παντευχίαν,
ἄλλων τ' ἰόντων ἐμποδῶν θήσειν δόρυ.
ἦν δ' ὄρκον ἐκλιπόντες ἔλθωσιν πόλιν,
κακῶς ὀλέσθαι πρόστρεπ' Ἀργείων χθόνα.
ἐν ᾧ δὲ τέμνειν σφάγια χρή σ', ἄκουέ μου.
ἔστιν τρίπους σοι χαλκόπους εἴσω δόμων,
δν Ἰλίου ποτ' ἐξαναστήσας βάθρα
1200 σπουδὴν ἐπ' ἄλλην Ἡρακλῆς ὀρμώμενος
στήσαί σ' ἐφείτο Πυθικὴν πρὸς ἐσχάραν.
ἐν τῷδε λαιμούς τρεῖς τριῶν μῆλων τεμῶν
ἔγγραψον ὄρκους τρίποδος ἐν κοίλῳ κύτει,
κάπειτα σφάζειν θεῷ δὸς ᾧ Δελφῶν μέλει,
μνημεῖά θ' ὄρκων μαρτύρημά θ' Ἑλλάδι.
ἦ δ' ἂν διοίξῃς σφάγια καὶ τρώσης φόνον,

SUPPLIANTS

Our love shall ne'er wax old : ye havê dealt with us
Nobly : your debtors owe you like for like.

THESEUS

What service yet remains that I may render? 1180

ADRASTUS

Fare well : for thou art worthy—thou and Athens.

THESEUS

So be it. The same fortune light on thee.

ATHENA *appears in her chariot above the temple-roof.*

ATHENA

Give ear, O Theseus, to Athena's hest
What thou must do—for Athens' service do :—
Yield thou not up thus lightly yonder bones
For these their sons to bear to Argive land.
Nay, first, for thine and Athens' travail's sake,
An oath take of them. Let Adrastus swear—
He answereth for them, despot of their folk,
For all troth of the land of Danaus' sons :— 1190
Be this the oath,—that never Argive men
Shall bear against this land array of war ;
If others come, their spear shall bar the way.
If they break oath, and come against our town,
Call down on Argos miserable ruin.

And where to slay the victims hear me tell :
Thou hast a brazen tripod in thine halls,
Which Hercules, from Ilium's overthrow
Hasting upon another mighty task,
Bade thee to set up at the Pythian hearth. 1200
O'er this three throats of three sheep sever thou,
And in the tripod's hollow grave the oath.
Then give it to the Delphian God to guard,
Token of oaths and witness unto Hellas. [gashed
And that keen knife, wherewith thou shalt have

ΙΚΕΤΙΑΕΣ

1210 ὀξύστομον μάχαιραν ἐς γαίας μυχοὺς
 κρύψον παρ' αὐτάς ἐπὶ πυρκαϊᾶς νεκρῶν·
 φόβον γὰρ αὐτοῖς, ἦν ποτ' ἔλθωσιν πόλιν,
 δειχθεῖσα θήσει καὶ κακὸν νόστον πάλιν.
 δράσας δὲ ταῦτα πέμπε γῆς ἔξω νεκρούς.
 τεμένη δ', ἴν' αὐτῶν σώμαθ' ἠγνίσθη πυρί,
 μέθες παρ' αὐτὴν τρίοδον Ἰσθμίαν θεῶ.
 σοὶ μὲν τὰδ' εἶπον· παισὶ δ' Ἀργείων λέγω·
 πορθήσεθ' ἠβήσαντες Ἰσμηνοῦ πόλιν,
 πατέρων θανόντων ἐκδικάζοντες φόνον,
 σύ τ' ἀντὶ πατρός, Αἰγιαλεῦ, στρατηλάτης
 νέος καταστάς, παῖς τ' ἀπ' Αἰτωλῶν μολῶν
 Τυδέως, ὃν ὠνόμαζε Διομήδην πατήρ.
 1220 ἀλλ' οὐ φθάνειν χρὴ συσκιάζοντας γένυν
 καὶ χαλκοπληθῆ Δαναϊδῶν ὄρμᾶν στρατὸν
 ἐπτάστομον πύργωμα Καδμείων ἐπι.
 πικροὶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦξετ', ἐκτεθραμμένοι
 σκυμνοὶ λεόντων, πόλεος ἐκπορθήτορες.
 κούκ ἔστιν ἄλλως· Ἐπίγονοι δ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδα
 κληθέντες ὧδ' ὑστέροισι θήσετε·
 τοῖον στράτευμα σὺν θεῶ πορεύσετε.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1230 δέσποιν' Ἀθάνα, πείσομαι λόγοισι σοῖς·
 σὺ γάρ μ' ἀνορθοῖς, ὥστε μὴ ἔμαρτάνειν·
 καὶ τόνδ' ἐν ὄρκοις ζεύξομαι· μόνον σὺ με
 εἰς ὄρθον ἴστη· σοῦ γὰρ εὐμενοῦς πόλει
 οὐσης τὸ λοιπὸν ἀσφαλῶς οἰκήσομεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχωμεν, Ἄδρασθ', ὄρκια δῶμεν
 τῶδ' ἀνδρὶ πόλει τ'· ἄξια δ' ἡμῖν
 προμεμοχθήκασι σέβεσθαι.

SUPPLIANTS

The victims with the death-wound, bury thou
 In the earth's depths hard by the seven pyres.
 For, if they march on Athens ever, this, [shame.
 Shown them, shall daunt, and turn them back with
 This done, then send the dead dust forth the land. 1210

The precinct where fire purified their limbs
 Be the God's Close, by those three Isthmian ways.

This to thee : now to the Argives' sons I speak.

Ye shall, to man grown, waste Ismenus' town :

In vengeance for the slaughter of dead sires.

Thou in thy sire's stead, Aegialeus,¹ shalt be

Their young chief : from Aetolia Tydeus' son,

Named Diomedes of his sire, shall come.

When beards your cheeks are shadowing, tarry not

To hurl a brazen-harnessed Danaïd host 1220

On the Cadmean seven-gated hold.

Bitter to them, the lions' whelps full-grown

To strength, to sack their city shall ye come.

This is sure doom. "The After-born" through

Hellas

Named, shall ye kindle song in days to be ;

Such war-array with God's help shall ye lead.

THESEUS

Athena, Queen, thy words will I obey :

Thou guid'st me ever that I may not err.

Him will I bind with oaths : only do thou

Still lead me aright ; for, gracious while thou art 1230

To Athens, shall we ever safely dwell.

CHORUS

On pass we, Adrastus, and take oath-pledge

Unto Theseus and Athens. That worship requite

Their travail for us, is meet and right.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.

¹ Son of Adrastus.

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