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THE
ORESTEIA OF AESCHYLUS
LONDON: MACMILLAN & Co., Ltd.
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The Oresteia of Aeschylus
Agamemnon, Choephori, Eumenides

THE GREEK TEXT
as arranged for performance at Cambridge

WITH

AN ENGLISH VERSE TRANSLATION

BY

R. C. TREVELYAN, B.A.
Trinity College

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EDITOR'S NOTE

In arranging the text of the Oresteia for performance, the editor has endeavoured to preserve the balance of the composition, due regard being had to the fact that the modern orchestra enables the producer to obtain his lyrical effects more rapidly than was possible with the simpler ancient music. Though much has inevitably been sacrificed which he would have been glad to retain, he hopes that the Trilogy, as now arranged, will not appear to the reader to have become a series of disjointed episodes.

The text owes much to the critical work of the late Dr Walter Headlam. For two choral odes in the Eumenides (pp. 134 ff. and 140 ff.), the verse translation composed by the late Dr A. W. Verrall for an earlier performance of the Eumenides has been retained.

Mr R. C. Trevelyan's verse translation, which, by his generous permission, is now printed for the first time, follows the original line for line, and aims at reproducing the metrical pattern of Greek in the lyrical parts.

The music for the Cambridge performance has been composed by Mr C. Armstrong Gibbs. The vocal score will shortly be published by Messrs Goodwin and Tabb, Ltd.

J. T. S.
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Agamemnon, King of Argos, son of Atreus.
Clytaemnestra, his wife.
Orestes, his son.
Electra, his daughter.
Aegisthus, his cousin and enemy, paramour of Clytaemnestra.
Pylades, son of Strophius, friend of Orestes.
Cassandra, daughter of Priam, King of Troy.
A Watchman, loyal to Agamemnon.
Herald of Agamemnon.
Nurse of Orestes.
Servant of Aegisthus.
Pythian Prophetess.
Apollo.
Athene.
Hermes.

Chorus of Argive Elders, Trojan Bondwomen, and Furies.

Retinue of Agamemnon, Women attendant on Clytaemnestra, Bodyguard of Aegisthus, Areopagites, Athenian Women, etc.
THE AGAMEMNON

Before the royal palace at Argos. Night.

WATCHMAN

The Gods have I besought for my release
This whole long year of vigil, wherein couched
On the Atreidae’s roof on bent arms, dogwise,
I have learnt the nightly sessions of the stars,
Those chiefly that bring storm and heat to men,
The bright conspicuous dynasts of the sky.
Still am I watching for the signal flame,
A beam of fire carrying news from Troy
And tidings of its capture: so dictates
A woman’s sanguine heart to a man’s will joined.
Now when upon my restless dew-damp couch
I have laid me down, this bed of mine where dreams
Haunt not: for fear instead of sleep stands by—
Oft as I have a mind to sing or hum,
A tune in slumber’s stead by way of salve,
Then do I weep the fortunes of this house
No more so wisely managed as of old.
But now blessed release from toil be mine,
And the fire’s happy tidings shine through gloom.

Oh hail, thou lamp, that dawnest on the night
Like daybreak, heralding in Argos many
A choral dance for joy at this good hap!
Ioû! Ioû!
THE AGAMEMNON

Before the royal palace at Argos. Night.

ΦΥΛΑΞ

Θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶν ἀπάλλαγῃν πόνων
φρουρᾶς ἐτείας μῆκος, ἢν κοιμώμενος
στέγαις Ἀτρειδῶν ἀγκαθεν, κυνὸς δίκην,
ἀστρῶν κάτοικα νυκτέρων ὀμήγυριν,
καὶ τοὺς φέροντας χεῖμα καὶ θέρους 
λαμπρῶν δυνάστας, ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι·
καὶ νῦν φυλάσσω λαμπάδος τὸ σύμβολον,
ἀυγὴν πυρὸς φέρουσαν ἐκ Τροίας φάτιν
ἀλώσιμον τε βάξιν: ὅπε γὰρ κρατεῖ
γυναικὸς ἀνδρόβουλον ἐλπίζου κέαρ.

εὐτ' ἂν δὲ νυκτιπλαγκτον ἐνδροσόν τ' ἔχω
εὐνήν ὀνείροις οὐκ ἔπισκοπομένην
ἐμὴν· φόβος γὰρ ἀνθ' ὑπνον παραστατεῖ·
ὅταν δ' ἀείδειν ἢ μινύρεσθαι δοκῶ,
ὑπνον τὸδ' ἀντίμολπων ἐντέμνων ἄκος,
κλαίω τότ' οἴκου τοῦδε συμφορὰν στένων
οὐχ ὡς τὰ πρόσθ' ἄριστα διαπονομένου.
νῦν δ' εὔνυχῆς γένοιτ' ἀπάλλαγη πόνων
εὐαγγέλων φανέντος ὀρφανίου πυρὸς.

ὁ χαῖρε λαμπτήρ, νυκτὸς ἦμερήσιον
φάος πυφαύσκων καὶ χορῶν κατάστασιν
πολλῶν ἐν 'Αργεί, τήσδε συμφορᾶς χάριν.
ἰον ἱοῦ.
Agamemnon's queen thus loudly do I summon
To arise from her couch and lift within
The house forthwith a shout of holy joy
To greet yon light, if verily Ilium's town
Be captured, as the announcing beacon boasts.
For the rest I keep silence: on my tongue
A great ox treads: though, had it speech, this house
Might tell a plain tale. I, for folk who know,
Speak gladly: for know-nothings I forget.

[Exit Watchman. Clytaemnestra's cry of triumph
is heard within. Enter Chorus of Elders.]

CHORUS
'Tis the tenth year now since Priam's mighty
Avenging foe,
Menelaus, and king Agamemnon too,
From the shores of Greece launched forth with a
Argive crews [thousand
United in armed federation.
Loud rang their wrathful warcry forth,
As the scream of vultures robbed of their young,
When in mountain solitudes over their eyrie
They wheel and circle
With endless beating of oarlike wings,
Reft of the nestlings
Their watchful labour had tended.
But above there is one, be it Apollo,
Or Pan, or Zeus, who hearing the shrill
Sad cry of those birds, his suppliant wards,
Shall one day send
Retribution upon the offenders.
Unsolved the event
Still waiteth: and yet to an issue is moving.
'Αγαμέμνονος γυναικὶ σημαίνω τορῶς
eύνης ἐπαντείλασαν ὡς τάχος δόμωις
ὀλολυγαῖον ἐφημοῦντα τῇδε λαμπτάδι
ἐπορθιάζειν, εἴπερ Ἰλίου τόλης
ἐάλωκεν, ὡς ὁ φρυκτὸς ἀγγέλλων πρέπει·
tὰ δ’ ἄλλα σιγῶ· βοῦς ἐπὶ γλώσσῃ μέγας
βέβηκεν· οἶκος δ’ αὐτός, εἴ φθονγὴν λάβοι,
sαφέστατ’ ἄν λέειειν· ὡς ἐκὼ ἐγὼ
μαθοῦσιν αὐῶν κοῦ μαθοῦσι λῆθομαι.

(EXIT WATCHMAN. CLYTAEERNESTRA’S CRY OF TRIUMPH.
is heard within. Enter CHORUS OF ELDERS.)

ΧΟΡΟΣ

dékaton μὲν ἔτος τόδ’ ἐπεὶ Πριάμου
mégas ἀντίδικος,
Μενέλαιος ἄναξ ἦδ’ 'Αγαμέμνων,
στόλου 'Αργείων χιλιοναύτην
τῆσ’ ἄπό χώρας

ἡραν, στρατιώτων ἄρωγήν,
méγαν ἐκ θυμοῦ κλάξοντες 'Αρη
tρόπον αἰγυπτίων, ὡτ’ ἐκπατίοις
ἀλγεσὶ παίδων ὕπατηλεχέων
στροφοδινοῦνται
πτερύγων ἐρετμοίσιν ἐρεσοῦμενοι,

δεμιοτήρῃ
tῶν ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες·
ὕπατος δ’ αἰὼν ἦ τις 'Απόλλων
ἡ Παῦ ἦ Ζεὺς οἰωνόθροον
γόνον δὲνβόαν τῶνδε μετοίκων,
ὑστεροποιοῦν

πέμπει παραβάσιν Ἐρινύν.

ἐστι δ’ ὅτε νῦν
ἐστι· τελειται δ’ ἐς τὸ πεπρωμένον'.
Neither oil poured over nor fire lit beneath
Shall temper the stubborn
Wrath for the sacrifice unburnt.

[Enter Clytaemnestra.]

But thou, O daughter
Of Tyndareus, Clytaemnestra, Queen,
What hath chanced? What tidings have reached
That at every shrine [thine ears,
Thou commandest ritual oblations?
And of all those Gods that frequent our town,
From on high, from beneath,
Whether heavenly sublime, or of earthlier power,
Glowing with gifts are the altars.
And on all sides one by one bright flames
Skyward are leaping,
Medicined and nursed by the innocent spell
And soft persuasion of hallowed gums,
Rich unguent stored for a King’s use.
Hereof what can and may be revealed
Deign thou to declare,
And so be the healer of this my doubt,
Which now to an evil boding sinks,
But anon from the sacrifice Hope grown kind
Drives back from the soul those ravening thoughts,
That grief that gnaws at the heart-roots.

I am come, Clytaemnestra, reverencing
Thy will; for it is just that we should honour
The sovereign’s wife, when the throne lacks its lord.
Now whether certified, or but in hope
Of happy news, thou makest sacrifice,
Fain would I know; yet shall not grudge thee silence.
THE AGAMEMNON

oùθ' ύποκαίων οὔτ' ἐπιλείβων
ἀπύρων ιερῶν
ὀργὰς ἄτενείς παραθέλξει.

[Enter Clytaemnestra.]

σὺ δὲ, Τυνδάρεω
θύγατερ, βασίλεια Κλυταμήστρα,
tί χρέος; τί νέον; τί δ' ἐπαισθομένη,
tίνος ἀγγελίας
πενθοὶ περίπεμπτα θυσκεῖς;
πάντων δὲ θεῶν τῶν ἀστυνόμων,
ὑπάτων, χθονίων,
tῶν τ' οὐρανίων τῶν τ' ἀγοραίων,
βωμοὶ δώροις φλέγονται.

ἀλλὰ δ' ἀλλοθεὶν οὐρανομῆκης
λαμπάς ἀνίσχει,
φαρμασσομένη χρίματος ἁγνοῦ
μαλακᾶς ἀδόλοισι παρηγορίας,
τελάνυφ μυχόθεν βασιλείῳ.

τούτων λέξασ' ὁ τι καὶ δυνατὸν
καὶ θέμις αἰνεῖν,

παῖον τε γενοῦ τῆς ἄμερίμης,
ἡ νῦν τοτὲ μὲν κακόφρων τελέθει,
tότε δ' ἐκ θυσιῶν τὴν θυμοβόρον
φροντίδ' ἀπληστον

φαίνουσ' ἀγάν' ἐλπὶς ἀμύνει.

ἡκὼ σεβίζων σόν, Κλυταμήστρα, κράτος·
δίκη γάρ ἐστι φωτὸς ἄρχηγοι τίεν
γυναίκ' ἐρημωθέντος ἁρσενὸς θρόνου.

σὺ δ' εἶ τι κεδυνὸν εὔτε μὴ πεπυσμένη
eυαγγέλοισιν ἐλπίσιν θυηπολεῖς,
κλύομ' ἄν εὐφρων' οὔδὲ σιγώσῃ φθόνος.
With happy tidings, so the proverb runs,
May the dawn issue from her mother night.
But hear now joy greater than any hope:
For the Argives have captured Priam's town.

Ch. How sayst thou? I scarce heard through unbelief.
Cl. The Achaeans now hold Troy. Do I speak plain?
Ch. Joy overwhelms me, calling forth a tear.
Cl. Thine eye convicts thee of a loyal joy.
Ch. But where's thy warrant? Hast thou proof of this?
Cl. I have. Why not? Unless a God deceives me.
Ch. Dost thou respect a dream's delusive phantoms?
Cl. A drowsing mind's fancy I should not utter.
Ch. Hath some vague unwinged rumour cheered thy soul?
Cl. My wits thou wouldst disparage like a girl's.
Ch. How long then is it since the town was sacked?
Cl. This very night that gives birth to yon dawn.

Ch. And what messenger could arrive so speedily?
Cl. Hephaestus, from Ida flinging the bright glare.
   Then beacon hitherward with posting flame
   Sped beacon; Ida first to Hermes' rock
On Lemnos; from whose isle Athos, the peak
Of Zeus, was third to accept the mighty brand;
   Nor did the watch deny the far-sped glow,
But made their bonfire higher than was enjoined.
   Then over lake Gorgopis the beam shot,
   And having reached mount Aigiplanctus, there
Urged swift performance of the fiery rite.
Kindling they launch with generous energy
A mighty beard of flame which could o'erpass
ΚΑΤΩΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ευάγγελος μέν, ἀσπερ ἡ παροιμία,
ἐως γένοιτο μυτρὸς εὐφρόνης πάρα.
πεύσει δὲ χάρμα μεῖξον ἐλπίδος κλῆειν.
Πριάμου γὰρ ἡρήκασιν 'Αργείων πόλιν.
Χο. πῶς φῆς; πέφευγε τούτος ἐξ ἀπιστίας.
Κλ. Τροίαν Ἀχαίων οὐσαν· ἡ τορδές λέγω;
Χο. χαρὰ μ' ύφέρπει δάκρυν ἐκκαλουμένη.
Κλ. εὖ γὰρ φρούνοντος ὄμμα σοὶ κατηγορεῖ.
Χο. τί γὰρ τὸ πιστὸν; ἔστι τῶνδε σοι τέκμαρ;
Κλ. ἔστιν· τί δ' οὐχὶ; μὴ δολῶσαντος θεοῦ.
Χο. πότερα δ' ὅνειρων φάσματ' εὐπιθή σέβεις;
Κλ. οὐ δὸξαν ἂν λάκοιμι βριζό σοις φρενός.
Χο. ἀλλ' ἢ σ' ἐπίλανεν τις ἀπτερος φάτις;
Κλ. παιδὸς νέας ὡς κάρτ' ἐμωμησώ φρένας.
Χο. ποίον χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις;
Κλ. τῆς νυν τεκούσης φῶς τὸ δ' εὐφρόνης λέγω.
Χο. καὶ τίς τὸ δ' ἐξίκουν' ἂν ἀγγέλων τάχος;
Κλ. "Ἡφαιστος Ἰδὴς λαμπρὸν ἐκτέμπων σέλας.
φυκτὸς δὲ φυκτὸν δεύρ' ἀπ' ἀγγάρου πυρὸς
ἐπεμπεν· 'Ιδὴ μὲν πρὸς Ἐρμαίον λέπτας
Δήμου· μέγαν δὲ πανδὲν ἐκ νήσου τρίτον
"Αθων αἶτος Ζηνὸς ἐξεδέξατο.
φάος δὲ τηλέπομπον οὐκ ἦναντο
φρουρά πλέον καῖουσα τῶν εἰρημένων,
λίμνη δ' ὑπὲρ Γοργώπιν ἐσκηρῆνεν φάος.
ὁρος τ' ἐπ' Ἀλγίπλαγκτον ἐξικυνομένων ὀτρυνε 
θεσμὸν μὴ χρονίζεσθαι πυρὸς.
πέμπτους δ' ἀνάδαιοντες ἀφθόνῳ μένει
φλογὸς μέγαν πώγονα, καὶ Σαρωνικοῦ
The cliff that frowns o'er the Saronic gulf
Far flaring: then it alighted, then it reached
Arachne's sentinel peak, our city's neighbour.
And last here on the Atreidae's roof comes home
This light, true-fathered heir of Ida's fire.

These are the stages of my torch-racers,
Thus in succession each from each fulfilled.
But he's the winner who ran from first to last.
Such is the proof and token that I give thee,
This message sped to me by my lord from Troy.

Ch. Lady, the Gods hereafter would I praise.
But first would I fain satisfy my wonder
Hearing thy tale from point to point retold.

Cl. This day do the Achaeans possess Troy.
'Tis loud, I ween, with cries that blend not well.
Pour vinegar and oil in the same cruse,
And you would say they sundered without love.
Even so the cries of conquerors and captives
Sound distinct as their differing fortunes are.
These falling around the bodies of their husbands
And brothers slain, children it may be clasping
Gray-headed sires, from throats no longer free
Bewail the fate of those whom most they loved;
While these a weary night of roving sends
Hungry from battle to whatever fare
The town affords, not marshalled orderly,
Rather, as each has snatched his lot of luck,
Within the captured palaces of Troy
They are housing now, delivered from the frosts
And dews of the bare sky; and blessedly
Without watch will they sleep the whole night long.
Now if they show due reverence to the Gods
πορθμοῦ κάτοπτον πρῶν ὑπερβάλλειν πρόσω
φλέγουσαν· εἰτ' ἐσκηθεῖν, εἰτ' ἀφίκετο
Ἀραχναῖον αἵπος, ἀστυγείτουσας σκοπάς·
kάπετ' Ἀτρείδῶν ἐς τόδε σκήττει στέγος
φάος τόδ' οὐκ ἀπαττοῦν Ἰδαίον πυρὸς.
tοιοὶδε τοί μοι λαμπαδηφόρων νόμοι,
ἀλλος παρ' ἄλλον διαδοχαίς πληρούμενοι·
nυκά δ' ὁ πρῶτος καὶ τελευταῖος δραμῶν.
tέκμαρ τοιοῦτο σύμβολον τε σοὶ λέγω
ἀνδρὸς παραγγείλαντος ἐκ Τροίας ἐμί.
Χο. θεοὶς μὲν αὕθις, ὦ γύναι, προσεύξομαι.
λόγους δ' ἀκούσαί τούσδε κάποθαυμάσαι
dιηνεκέως θέλομι' ἄν ὡς λέγοις πάλιν.
Κλ. Τροίαν Ἀχαίοι τῇδ' ἔχουσα εἰ ἡμέρα.
oίμαι βοὴν ἀμικτον εἰν πόλει πρέπειν.
ἄξος τ' ἄλειφά τ' ἐγχέας ταὐτῷ κύτει
dιχοστατοῦντ' ἄν, οὐ φίλω, προσευνέποιι.
kαὶ τῶν ἀλόντων καὶ κρατησάντων δίχα
φθογγας ἀκούειν ἐστι συμφορᾶς διπλῆς.
oι μὲν γὰρ ἀμφὶ σῶμασιν πεπτωκότες
ἀνδρῶν κασιγνητῶν τε καὶ φυταλμίων
παῖδες γερώντων οὐκέτ' ἐξ ἐλευθέρου
dέρης ἀποιμάζουσι φιλτάτων μόρον·
tοὺς δ' αὐτὲ νυκτίπλαγκτος ἐκ μάχης πόνος
νήστεις πρὸς ἀρίστοισιν δὲ ἔχει πόλις
tάσσει, πρὸς οὐδὲν ἐν μέρει τεκμηρίων,
ἄλλος ὡς ἐκαστὸς ἐσπασεν τύχης πάλου,
ἐν αἰχμαλωτόις Τροικοῖς οἰκήμασιν
ναίοσιν ἃδι, τῶν ὑπαιθρίων πάγων
δρόσων τ' ἀπαλλαχθέντες, ὡς δ' εὐδαιμονεῖς
ἀφύλακτον εὐδήσουσι πάσαν εὐφρόνην.
eι δ' εὐ σέβουσι τοὺς πολισσοῦχοις θεοὺς
That guard the conquered land, and spare their shrines,
Then may the spoilers not in turn be spoiled.
But let no ill-timed lust assail the host
Mastered by greed to plunder what they ought not.
For they have need to win safe passage home.
And if the returning host escape Heaven’s wrath,
The hatred of the dead might haply grow
Less hostile—if no sudden ill befall.
To such fears I, a woman, must give voice.
Yet may good triumph manifestly past doubt;
Of many blessings now would I taste the fruit.

Ch. Lady, sober like a wise man’s is thy speech.
Now, having heard proof so trustworthy from thee,
I will address myself to thank the Gods.
Their grace is recompense for all our toils.

[Exit Clytaemnestra.]

O sovereign Zeus! O gracious Night,
Who hast won so measureless a glory!
Who over the towers of Troy didst cast
Such a close-drawn net, that none of the great,
Nor yet of the young should escape the immense
Ensnaring mesh
Of thraldom and doom universal.
Zeus, God of guest-right, great I confess him,
Who hath wrought this vengeance; against Alexander
His bow did he hold long bent, that neither
Short of the mark his bolt should alight,
Nor beyond the stars speed idly.

From Zeûs câmè the stroke that felled them: yea that
Is sure truth: clearly may we trace it.
As He determined, so they fared. The fool said,
τοὺς τῆς ἀλούσης γῆς θεῶν θ' ἱδρύματα, 
οὐ τῶν ἑλάντες αὐθός ἀνθαλοῖεν ἄν.

ἐρος δὲ μὴ τις πρῶτερον ἐμπλήτθη στρατῷ 
πορθεῖν ἄ μὴ χρῆ, κέρδεσιν νικαμένους.

dεῖ γὰρ πρὸς οἶκους νοστίμου σωτηρίας· 
θεῶς δ' ἀναμπλάκητος εἰ μόλοι στρατός, 
eὐήγορον τὸ πῆμα τῶν ἀλωλότων 
γένοιτ' ἄν—εἰ πρόσπαια μὴ τύχοι κακά.

tοιαύτα τοι γυναίκος ἔξ ἐμοῦ κλέεις· 
τὸ δ' εὖ κρατολή, μὴ διχορρόπως ἰδεῖν. 
πολλῶν γὰρ ἐσθλῶν τὴν ὀνήσιν εἰλόμην.

Χο. γύναι, κατ' ἄνδρα σῶφρον' εὐφρόνους λέγεις. 155

ἔγω δ' ἀκούσας πιστὰ σου τεκμήρια 
θεῶς προσεπτεῖν αὖ παρασκευάζομαι.

χάρις γὰρ οὐκ ἄτιμος εὑργασται πόνων.

[Exit Clytaemnestra.]

ὁ Ζεῦ βασιλεύ καὶ νῦξ φιλία 
μεγάλων κόσμων κτεάτειρα,

ἡτ' ἐπὶ Τροίας πύργοις ἐβάλες 
στεγανῶν δίκτυων, ὡς μὴτε μέγαν 
μὴτ' οὖν νεαρῶν τῳ ὑπερτελέσαι 
μέγα δουλείας

gάγγαμον, ἄτης παναλώτον.

Δία τοι ἔξεινὸν μέγαν αἰδοῦμαι 
τὸν τάδε πράξαντ' ἐπ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ 
τείνοντα πάλαι τόξου, ὅτες ἄν 
μὴτ πρὸ καιροῦ μὴθ' ὑπὲρ ἄστρων 
βέλος ἡλίθιον σκῆψειν.

'Διὸς πλαγάν ἔχουσιν' εἰπεῖν [στρ. α. 

πάρεστιν, τούτῷ τ' ἐξιχνεύσαι.

ἐπραξαν ὡς ἔκρανεν. οὖκ ἔφα τις
"The Gods above heed not when the loveliness
Of sanctity is trampled down
By mortals." Oh blasphemy!
'Tis plain now and manifest
The wage paid for reckless sin,
The doom due to insolent presumption,
Whene'er in kings' houses wealth superfluous
Beyond the mean teemeth. Yea, let there be
What contents without want
Soberly minded wisdom.

No strong fortress against fate
Hath that man who in wealth's pride
Spurns from sight as a thing of naught
The mighty altar of Justice.

Yet strong is that obstinate Temptation,
The dire child of fore-designing Ate.
Then all in vain is remedy: unhidden
The mischief glows: baleful is the gleam thereof.
Like metal base, touched and rubbed
By a testing stone, even so
In him too trial reveals
A black stain. Like a child
A winged bird vainly he pursueth.
A dire taint lays he on all his people.
To prayers the Gods' ears are deaf. Whosoe'er
Even consorts with such men,
Shares in their guilt and ruin.

Even so Paris, a house-guest
Honoured by the Atreidae,
Did foul wrong to his host's board
By his theft of a woman.
THE AGAMEMNON

θεοὺς βροτῶν ἄξιονσθαι μέλειν
όσοις ἀθλικτων χάρις
πατοῖθ᾽ ὤ δ᾽ οὐκ εὐσεβής.
πέφανται δ᾽ ἐκτίνου-
σ᾽ άτολμήτων ἀρά,
πνεόντων μείζων ἢ δικαίως,
φλεόντων δωμάτων ὑπέρφευ
ὑπὲρ τὸ βέλτιστων. ἦστω δ᾽ ἀπή-
μαντον, ὡστ᾽ ἀπαρκεῖν
εὖ πραπίδων λαχόντα.
οὐ ἦστω γὰρ ἐπαλξὶς
πλούτου πρὸς κόρον ἀνδρὶ
λακτίσαντι μέγαν Δίκας
βομὸν εἰς ἀφάνειαν.

βιάται δ᾽ ἀ τάλαινα Πειθώ,
προβούλων παῖς ἄφερτος Ἄτας.
ἀκούσ δὲ παμμάταιον. οὐκ ἐκρύβη,
πρέπει δὲ, φῶς αἰνολαμπτές, σίνοις
κακοῦ δὲ χαλκοῦ τρόπον
τρίβω τε καὶ προσβολαῖς
μελαμπαγής πέλει
δικαιωθεῖς, ἔπει
διώκει παῖς ποτανὸν ὅρνιν,
πόλει πρόστριμμ᾽ ἄφερτον ἐνθεῖς.
λυτάν δ᾽ ἀκούει μὲν οὕτως θεῶν·
tὸν δ᾽ ἐπιστροφον τῶν
φῶτ᾽ ἄδικον καθαρεῖ.

[ἀντ. a.

οἴσι καὶ Πάρις ἐλθὼν
ἐς δόμον τὸν Ἀτρειδῶν
ὕσχυνε ἕξειον τράπε-
ξαν κλοπαίσι γυναικός.
Bequeathing to her countrymen noise of shields
Together clashed; thronging spears, stir of vesse arming,
And bearing death instead of dower to Ilium,
With light step through the gates she is flown
On reckless venture. Sore the wailing then
Throughout the halls, doleful voices crying:
"Ah home of woe! Home and woeful princes, wail
Ah woeful bed, printed yet with love's embrace!
Behold the spouse! Bowed with shame, there he sit
In silent unreviling grief.
For her beyond seas he yearns:
Pined with dreams sits he, a sceptred phantom.
Hateful now to his mood seems
The grace of loveliest statues.
Lost the light of her eyes, and lost
Now the love they enkindled.

Anon there come dream-revealed semblances,
Beguiling shapes. Brief the joy, vain the sweet de lusion.
For vainly, when he seems to view the phantom bliss
Between his arms, lo! the vision is flown
And vanishes away beyond recall
On shadowy wings down the paths of slumber."
Beside the hearth, within the royal palace, such
The grief that haunts, yea and woes transcending these
But for the host, all who once launched from Hellas
Some woman now with suffering heart
In every house mourning sits.
Wounds enough pierce them to the soul's core.
Whom they sent to the war, them
λιποῦσα δ' ἀπετίθατον ἀστικότορας [στρ. β. 205
κλάνους τε καὶ λογχίμους
ναυβάτας θ' ὀτλισμοῦς,
ἀγουσά τ' ἀντίφερουν Ἰλίῳ φθορὰν
βέβακεν ῥίμφα. διὰ πυλῶν
ἀτλητα τλάσα: πολλὰ δ' ἐστενον
τόδ' ἐνεπόντες δόμων προφήται:
' ἰδ' ἵδ' δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι,
ἵδ' λέχος καὶ στίβαι φιλάνορεσ.
πάρετσι σιγάς ἀτίμους ἀλοιδόρους
ἀλγιστ' ἀφημένων ἰδεῖν.
πόθῳ δ' ὑπερποντίας
φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν.
εὐμόρφων δὲ κολοσσών
ἐχθεται χάρις ἀνδρὶ;
ὀμμάτων δ' ἐν ἀχνίλαις
ἐρρει πᾶσ' Ἀφροδίτα.

όνειρόφαντοι δὲ πειθήμονες [ἀυτ. β. 215
πάρεσι δόξαι φέρους
ςαι χάριν ματαίαν.
μάταν γάρ, εὐτ' ἄν ἐσθλά τις δοκῶν ὃρᾶν—
παραλλάξασα διὰ χερῶν,
βέβακεν ὅψις οὐ μεθύστερον
πτεροῖς ὀπάδον' ὑπνοῦ κελεύθοις.'
τά μὲν κατ' οίκους ἐφ' ἐστίας ἁχη
τάδ' ἐστὶ καὶ τῶν ὑπερβατάτερα.
τὸ πάν δ' ἄφ' "Ελλανος αἷς συνορμένοις
πενθεῖ ἀτλησικάρδιος
δόμων ἐκάστου πρέπει.
πολλὰ γούν θυγγάνει πρὸς ἡπαρ.
οὗς μὲν γάρ τις ἔπεμψεν

A. 235
They know: but now in the man's stead
Naught comes back to the home of each
Save an urn and some ashes.

The merchant Ares—dead men's bodies are his go'd—
He whose scales weigh the poising fate of war,
From pyres beneath Ilium
To those that loved them sendeth home
Heavy sore-lamented dust,
Stowing ash that once was man
Into the compass of a jar.
Then mourning each they tell his praise,
How one in craft of war was skilled,
How that one nobly shed his blood,—
"All for a woman, wife to another,"
So an angry whisper snarls forth;
And against the sons of Atreus
An accusing grief spreads.
   Others under the wall, slain
   In their beauty, possess graves
   There 'neath Ilian earth, that now
   Hides in hate her possessors.

A people's talk, charged with wrath, is perilous.
   Oft 'tis proved potent as a public curse.
   My boding heart waits to hear
   Some news that night shroudeth still.
For on men of blood the Gods'
   Eyes are fixed; and late or soon
   Will the dark Erinues doom
The man who thrives unrighteously
To waste and dwindle luckless down,
Until his light be quenched: and once
οἶδεν, ἀντὶ γὰρ φωτῶν
τεύχῃ καὶ σποδὸς εἰς ἐκάστου δόμους ἀφικνεῖται.

ὁ χρυσαμοῖβος δ’ Ἅρης σωμάτων
καὶ ταλαντοῦχος ἐν μάχῃ δορὸς
πυροθέν εἰς Ἡλίων
φίλοις πέμπει βαρὺ
ψήγμα δυσδάκρυτον ἀντήνορος σποδοῦ γεμίσων
λέβητας εὐθέτους.

στένουσι δ’ εὗ λέγοντες ἀνδρὰς τὸν μὲν ὡς μάχης ἰδρὺς,
τὸν δ’ ἐν φοναῖς καλῶς πεσόντ’—
‘ἀλλοτρίας διαὶ γνωαίκος.’

tάδε σύγα τις βαύζει:

θεορεῖ οὐκ ἁγιος ἀλγος ἐρπεῖ

προδίκοις Ἀτρείδαις.

οἱ δ’ αὐτοῦ περὶ τεῖχος

θηκας Ἡλιάδος γὰς

eὐμορφοι κατέχουσιν· ἐ-

χθρὰ δ’ ἐχοντας ἐκρυφεν.

βαρείᾳ δ’ ἀστῶν φάτις ἔξιν κότρων

dημοκράτουν δ’ ἀρᾶς τίνει χρέος.

μένει δ’ ἀκούσαι τί μου

μέριμνα νυκτηρεῖς.

tῶν πολυκτόνων γὰρ οὐκ

ἀσκοποί θεοῖ. κελαί-

ναι δ’ Ἑρμόνεσ χρόνῳ

τυχηρὸν ὄντ’ ἀνευ δίκας

παλιντυχεῖ τριβὰ βίον

τιθεῖον ἀμαυρόν, ἐν δ’ ἄι—
Lost in the darkness, who shall help him?
In excess of glory is peril.
For on mortals overweening
Are the bolts of Zeus sped.
Mine be fortune unenvied.
No walled towns would I conquer,
Nor yet live to behold my age
Slave to alien masters.

[Enter a Herald.]

Herald

O land of Argos, thou my native soil,
To thee this tenth-born year do I return,
Of many broken hopes still grasping one.
Ne’er could I dream here in this Argive earth
Dying to share that burial I so longed for.
O palace of our kings, beloved abode,
Ye solemn seats, and ye, dawn-fronting Deities,
If e’er of old, with radiant eyes this day
Welcome with pomp our king so long time gone.
For to you and to all these alike returns
Prince Agamemnon, bringing light in gloom.
Come, ye must greet him joyfully, as beseems,
Who with the mattock of Avenging Zeus
Hath digged down Troy, and ploughed her soil to dust.
Having laid on Troy so fell a yoke, the elder
Of Atreus’ children, fortunate among princes,
Returns, of all men living worthiest praise.

Ch. Joy to thee, herald of the Achaean host!
Her. Joy is mine. Now let me die, if heaven so wills.
Ch. Hath longing for thy fatherland so tortured thee?
Her. So that for joy mine eyes weep tears upon it.
στοις τελέθουσις οὕτως ἄλκα·
tὸ δ’ ὑπερκόσως κλύειν εῦ
βαρῦ· βάλλεται γὰρ ὅσοις
Διόθεν κεραυνός.

κρίνω δ’ ἀφθονον ὀλβον’
μήτ’ εἶν πτολυπόρθης
μήτ’ οὖν αὐτὸς ἀλοῦς ὑπ’ ἄλ-
λῳ βίον κατίδοιμι.

[Enter a Herald.]

ΚΗΡΥΞ

ιὸν πατρὸφον οὔδας Ἀργείας χθονός,
δεκάτῳ σε φέγγει τῷ ἀφικόμην ἔτους,
πολλῶν ῥαγεισῶν ἐλπίδων μιᾶς τυχῶν.
οὔ γὰρ ποτ’ ἄγχουν τῇ ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονὶ
θαυμῶν μεθέξειν φιλτάτου τάφου μέρος.
ιὸν μέλαθρα βασιλέων, φίλαι στέγαι,
σεμνοί τε θάκοι, δαιμονές τ’ ἀντήλιοι,
eἰ πον πάλαι, φαιδροῖς τοισίδ’ ὀμμασι
δέξασθε κόσμῳ βασιλέα πολλῷ χρόνῳ.

ηκεῖ γὰρ ὑμῖν φῶς ἐν εὐφρόνῃ φέρων
καὶ τοῦτο ἀπασι κοινὸν Ἀγαμέμνονον ἀναξ.

ἀλλ’ εὖ νυν ασπάσασθε, καὶ γὰρ οὖν πρέπει,
Τροίαν κατασκάψαντα τὸν δικηφόρον
Διὸς μακέλλη, τῇ κατείργασται πέδου.
τοινδε Τροία περιβαλῶν ζευκήριον
ἀναξ’ Ἀτρείδης πρέσβυς εὐδαιμονὸν ἀνήρ


Χο. κῆρυξ Ἀχαιῶν χαῖρε τῶν ἀπὸ στρατοῦ.
Κη. χαίρω. τεθναίην. οὐκέτ’ ἀντερῶ θεὸς.
Χο. ἔρως πατρὼς τήσδε γῆς σ’ ἐγύμνασεν.
Κη. ὄστ’ ἐνδακρύειν γ’ ὀμμασιν χαρᾶς ὑπο.
THE AGAMEMNON

Ch. Sweet then was the disease with which you languished.
Her. How so? Not yet do I understand your words.
Ch. Not unreturned was this thy yearning love.
Her. Our country pined then for its pining host?
Ch. Full oft with desolate heart we sighed for you.
Her. Whence came this gloom, clouding the host's return?
Ch. Silence I have long used, as harm's best cure.
Her. How so? The kings being gone, didst thou fear someone?
Ch. As thou didst say but now, 'twere joy to die.
Her. Because the event is well: though in all those years
Much may we reckon prosperously sped,
And much deplorably. Who save a God
May abide scathless everlastingly?
Were I to cite our hardships and ill-lodgings,
Comfortless berths on narrow decks—and what
Did we not lack by day, poor groaning wretches?
And then on land—there it was worse distress,
Bivouacked close beneath the enemy's walls:
Down from the sky, and from the fenny ground
Rained drizzling dews, a never-ceasing plague,
Making our hairy garments full of vermin.
Or should I tell of that bird-killing cold,
Unbearable winter gusts from Ida's snows,
Or of the heat, when in his noontide couch
Windless and waveless the sea sank to rest—
But what need to complain? Past is that misery.
Past is it for the dead, that nevermore
Will they take trouble even to rise again.
For us, the relics of the Argive host,
The gain prevails, the injury is outweighed.
Ch. Cheerfully I accept defeat in argument.
Χο. τερπνησ ἂρ ἦτε τήσ' ἐπήβολοι νόσου.  
Κη. πώς δή; διδαχθεὶς τοῦδε δεσπόσω λόγου.  
Χο. τῶν ἀντεράντων ἵμερο πεπληγμένωι.  
Κη. ποθεὶν ποθοῦντα τήνδε γην στρατὸν λέγεις.  
Χο. ὦς πόλλ' ἀμαυρᾶς εἰκ φρενὸς μ' ἀναστένειν.  
Κη. πόθεν τὸ δύσφρον τούτ' ἐπῆν, στύγος στράτῳ;  
Χο. πάλαι τὸ συγάν φάρμακον βλάβης ἕχω.  
Κη. καὶ πώς; ἀπάντων κωιράνων ἐτρεις τινάς;  
Χο. ὃς νῦν, τὸ σὸν δή, καὶ θανεὶν πολλή χάρις.  
Κη. εὐ γάρ πέτραιται. ταῦτα δ' ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ 305  
τὰ μὲν τις ἅν λέξειν εὗπτετῶς ἔχειν,  
tα δ' αὕτε κατίμομφα. τίς δὲ πλὴν θεόν  
ἀπαντ' ἀπήμων τὸν δι' αἰῶνος χρόνου;  
μόχθους γὰρ εἰ λέγοιμι καὶ δυσαυλίας  
σταρνὰς παρείξεις καὶ κακοστράτους, τί δ' οὐ 310  
στένοντες οὐ λαχώντες ἥματος μέρος;  
tα δ' αὕτε χέρσῳ καὶ προσήν πλέον στύγος.  
eὖναι γὰρ ἥσαν δαίων πρὸς τεῖχεσιν.  
εὖς οὖρανοῦ δὲ κἂν γῆς λειμώναι 315  
δρόσου κατεψάκαζον, ἐμπεδόν οἶνος,  
ἐσθημάτων τιθέντες ἐνθηρὸν τρίχα.  
χειμώνα δ' εἰ λέγοι τις οἰωνοκτόνον,  
οἷον παρείξ' ἀφρετοῦ 'Ἰδαία χών,  
ἡ θάλποι, εὑτε πάντος ἐν μεσημβριναῖς 320  
κοίταις ἀκύμων νηρέμοις εὕδοι πεσάνω—  
tί ταῦτα πενθεῖν δεῖ; παροίχεται πάνος.  
παροίχεται δὲ, τοῦσι μὲν τεθυνκόσιν  
tὸ μῆποτ' αὔθις μηδ' ἀναστήναι μέλειν.  
ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖσιν Ἄργειῶν στρατοῦ 325  
νεκ' τὸ κέρδος, πῆμα δ' οὐκ ἀντιρρεῖτε.  
Χο. νικώμενος λόγουσιν οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.
Old age is always young enough to learn.
But the house and Clytaemnestra this news most
Should interest, and make me too rich in joy.

Cl. I lifted up a jubilant cry long since,
When first by night came that fire-messenger
Telling of Ilium's capture and destruction.
But thou, why tell the full tale now to me?
Soon from the king's self shall I learn it all.
Rather, that I may best make speed to welcome
My revered husband to his home, (for what
More sweet to a wife's eyes than that day's light,
When to her spouse, whom heaven has saved from war,
She unbars the gate?) this to my lord declare:
Let him speed hither to meet his people's love;
And at home may he find a faithful wife,
Even such as he left her, a house-dog kind
To him she loves, to ill-wishers a foe,
And in all else unchanged, ne'er having yet
Broken one seal in all that length of time.
No more of dalliance, (no, nor of scandal's breath,)
With another man do I know, than of dipping bronze.

[Exit.]

Her. Big is the boast, though weighted well with truth,
Scarce seemly for a noble wife to utter.

Ch. Thus to thine understanding hath she spoken,
Most—speciously—to shrewd interpreters.

[A triumphal march. Enter Agamemnon,
Kassandra, etc.]

Come now, O king, despoiler of Troy,
Offspring of Atreus!
How shall I hail thee? How pay thee homage,
THE AGAMEMNON

άει γάρ ἡβα τοῖς γέρουσιν ἐυμαθείν.  
δόμοις δέ ταῦτα καὶ Κλυταμήστρα μέλειν  
eἰκὸς μάλιστα, σὺν δὲ πλουτίζειν ἐμὲ.

Κλ. ἀνώλολυξα μὲν πάλαι χαρᾶς ὑπο,  
ὅτ’ ἤλθ’ ὁ πρῶτος νῦχιος ἄγγελος πυρός,  
φράζων ἄλωσιν Ἰλίου τ’ ἀνάστασιν.  
καὶ νῦν τὰ μάσσω μὲν τί δεῖ σὲ μοι λέγειν;  
ἀνακτος αὐτοῦ πάντα πεῦσομαι λόγον.  
ὅπως δ’ ἀριστα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰδοῦν πόσιν  
σπεῦσῳ πάλιν μολόντα δεξασθαι—τί γὰρ  
γυναίκι τοῦτον φέγγος ἥδιον δρακεῖν,  
ἀπὸ στρατείας ἀνδρὶ σώσαντος θεοῦ  
πῦλας ἀνοίξαι;—ταῦτ’ ἀπάγγειλον πόσεις.  
ἵκεν ὁπως τάχιστ’ ἐράσμιον πόλεις.  
γυναίκα πιστὴν δ’ ἐν δόμοις εὐροὶ μολὼν  
οιαντερ ὅν ἔλειπε, δωμάτων κύνα  
ἐσθλὴν ἐκεῖνο, πολεμίαν τοῖς δύσφροσιν,  
καὶ τάλλι ὅμοιαν πάντα, σημαντήριον  
οὐδὲν διαφθείρασαν ἐν μῆκει χρόνου.  
οὐδ’ οἶδα τέρψιν οὐδ’ ἐπίψωγον φάτιν  
ἄλλου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς μᾶλλον ἡ χαλκοῦ βαφάς.

[Exit.]

Κη. τοιόσδ’ ὁ κόμπος τῆς ἀληθείας γέμων  
oὐκ αἰσχρὸς ός γυναῖκι γενναῖος λακεῖν.  
Χο. αὕτη μὲν οὕτως ἐσπε μανθάνοντι σοι  
tοροῦσιν ἐρμηνεύσυν εὐπρεπῶς λόγον.

[A triumphal march. Enter AGAMEMNON,  
KASSANDRA, etc.]

άγε δὴ, βασίλειδ, Τροίας πτολύπορθ’,  
’Ἀτρέως γένεθλον,  
πῶς σε προσείπω; πῶς σε σεβίζω
Neither o’ershooting, nor yet scanting
Due gratulation?
For most men practising outward shows
Hide thoughts perverse and unrighteous.
Sighs prompt and apt for another’s mischance
Each hath in plenty; yet ne’er doth an unfeigned
Sting of anguish pierce to the heart-strings:
And copying the looks of those that rejoice
They compel their lips to a counterfeit smile.
Yet should the wisely discerning shepherd
Ne’er be deceived by the eyes of fawners,
That dissembling a loyal and cordial love
Flatter him with watery affection.
And of old when thou wast levying war
For Helen’s sake, then, I deny not,
Graceless indeed was the image I formed of thee;
Ill-steered did thy wits seem thus to be spending
The life-blood of heroes
To redeem a consenting adulteress.
But now we greet thee with heart-deep love.
Happy endings make happy labours.

[Enter Clytaemnestra.]
Thou by inquisition ere long shalt learn
Whose stewardship of thy state is now
Proved faithful, and whose unfaithful.

AGAMEMNON
First to Argos and her native Gods my prayers
Are due, since they have aided my return,
And the Justice I have wreaked upon the town
Of Priam. For the Gods, when they had heard
Our voiceless plea, into the vase of blood
THE AGAMEMNON

μὴθ' ὑπεράρας μήθ' ὑποκάμψας
cαιρὸν χάριτος;
πολλοὶ δὲ βροτῶν τὸ δοκεῖν εἶναι
προτίουσι δίκην παραβάντες.
tῳ δυσπραγοῦντι δ' ἐπιστενάχειν
πᾶς τις ἔτοιμος· δήγμα δὲ λύπης
οὐδὲν ἐφ' ἦπαρ προσικνεῖται:
καὶ ξυγχαίρουσιν ὀμοιοπρεπεῖς
ἀγέλαστα πρὸσωπα βιαζόμενοι.
ὅστις δ' ἀγαθὸς προβατογνώμων,
οὐκ ἔστι λαθεῖν ὀμματα φωτός,
tὰ δοκοῦντ' εὐφρονος ἐκ διανοίας
ὕδαρεί σαίνειν φιλότητι.
σὺ δὲ μοι τότε μὲν στέλλων στρατιάν
'Ελένης ἔνεκ', οὐκ ἐπικεύσω,
kάρτ' ἀπομούσους ἢσθα γεγραμμένος,
οὐδ' εὐ πραπίδων οἰακα νέμων
θάρσος ἐκούσιον
ἀνδράσι θυγάσκουσι κομίξων.
νῦν δ' οὐκ ἄπ' ἀκρας φρενὸς οὐδ' ἀφίλως
eὐφρων πόνος εὐ τελέσασιν.

[Enter Clytaemnestra.]

γνώσει δὲ χρόνῳ διαπευθύμενος
τὸν τε δικαίως καὶ τὸν ἀκαίρως
πόλων οἰκουροῦντα πολιτῶν.

AGAMEMNON

πρῶτον μὲν Ἀργος καὶ θεοὺς ἐγχωρίους
dίκη προσεκτεῖν, τοὺς ἐμοὶ μετατίους
νόστον δικαίων θ' δὲν ἐπραξάμην πόλων
Πριάμου· δίκας γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γλώσσης θεοὶ
κλύοντες ἀνδροκυῆτάς Ἰλίου φθορᾶς
THE AGAMEMNON

For Ilium's overthrowing cast their votes
With one consent; while to the opposite urn
Hope of the hand came nigh, yet filled it not.
Her smoke still witnesses the city's fall.
The coils of doom yet live, and dying with them
The ashes pant forth opulent breaths of richness.
For this a memorable return we now
Must pay the Gods, since we have woven high
Our wrathful toils, and for one woman stolen
A town has been laid low by the Argive monster,
The horse's brood, the grim shield-bearing folk,
Rousing to spring what time the Pleiads set.
Yea leaping o'er the wall like a fleshed lion
It lapped its fill of proud and princely blood.
This ample prelude to the Gods is due.
Now for thy hinting—I heard and bear in mind.
I say the same, and share in thy suspicions.
I speak with knowledge, having thoroughly learned
How friendship is a mirror, a shadow's ghost,
The hypocrite's pretence to wish me well.
But where we find need of medicinal cure,
By wise use of the knife or cautery
We will endeavour to expel disease.
Now to my palace and domestic hearth
I pass within, there first to greet the Gods,
Who sent me forth and thus have brought me home.
May victory still bide with me to the end.
Cl. Townsmen of Argos, reverend counsellors,
I blush not to confess to you my love
And woman's fondness. As years pass, timidity
Wanes in us all. No witness but my own
I need to tell what grievous life was mine
eis aimaqhrton teuxos ou dixorropontos
psi'fous edeunto. to δ' enavnti kutei
elpís prosohipi xeiros ou plhroumenv. 
kapnu δ' alousta vuv et' eisqmos polis.
ati's théllai xwri: synvnhsqousa dé
stpodos proptémpete píonas ploutous puvqas.
toútw theos chi polúmenvtov xarín
tinein, etepitéper kai págas uperkóton
éphrazámésthia kai gynaiqos ouneka
polin dihtmáthunen 'Argein dákos,
'upnou neqos, apiptidostrófois lewos,
píhene' óroúsa amphi Pneiádow dúsin
upertoðon dé púrgon ómésthes léon
ádon éleixe'n aúmatos turanníkou.
theos mèn éxétewna fróimion tóde:
tà δ' ès to sôn frónhma, mémnmai klów,
kai phetí tauta kai svnýgoron n' écheis.
eidwfs légoim' an, ev' gar éxepístmatai,
ómilia kátotprou, éidwlon skías,
dokúntas einai kárta pruemenéis émoi.
ótov dé kai deí farmaqon paoqwínw,
htoi keántes ἥ teemóntes eufrónous
peirassómesa pímatos trépsi nóson.
vuv δ' ès melathra kai dòmos efésitoun
èldon theosi pròta dexiwsumai,
oúter prósow témpñantes ëgagov pálwv.
níkè δ' épetipter èstpet', èmptédos ménoi.

Kl. ándres politai, présbhos 'Argein tóde,
oùk aixhunómmai toûs filánoros tròpotos
léxi proûs ùmás; ev chrónos δ' apotfínei
to tárbhos ánthropousin. ouk állov párma
madoüs', èmautês dúsfhoron léxw bíon
All that long while my lord lay beneath Ilium.
First for a woman 'tis a woeful trial
To sit at home forlorn, her husband far,
Her ears filled ever with persistent tales,
One close upon the other's heels with news
Each of some worse disaster than the last.
And as for wounds, if my lord had received
As many as rumour deluged us withal,
No net had been more full of holes than he.
And had he died oft as report declared,
A second Geryon with triple body
A threefold vest of earth he might have boasted,
Dying once for each several shape anew.
By reason of such persistent rumours, oft
Have others loosened from my neck perforce
The hanging noose, foiling my fond desire.
Hence too the boy Orestes, the true bond
Of confidence between us, stands not here
Beside me, as he should. Nor think it strange.
He is in safe keeping with our good ally,
Strophius the Phocian, who has warned me oft
Of double mischief, thine own peril first
Before Troy, and the fear lest turbulent anarchy
Might risk some plot against us, as men's wont
Is to spurn him the more who has been cast down.
Such were my reasons, honest and without guile.
But as for me, the fountains of my tears
Have run themselves quite dry. No drop is left.
And my late-watching eyes have suffered hurt
Weeping thy nightly pomp of torch-bearers
Neglected ever. And the wailing gnat
With faintest pulse of wing would startle me
τοσόνδ' ὀσοντερ οὕτος ἦν ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ.
tὸ μὲν γυναῖκα πρῶτον ἄρσενοι δίχα
ὥσθαι δόμοις έρημον ἐκταγλον κακῶν,
pολλάς κλύουσαν κληδόνας παλγκότους·
καὶ τὸν μὲν ἥκεν, τὸν δ' ἐπεσφέρειν κακοῦ
κάκιον ἄλλο πῆμα, λάσκοντας δόμοις.
καὶ τραυμάτων μὲν εἰ τόσων ἐτύγχανεν
ἀνὴρ ὅδ', ὡς πρὸς οἴκον ὧχετεύετο
φάτις, τέτρηται δικτύου πλέουν λέγειν.
eἰ δ' ἦν τεθυκὼς, ὡς ἐπλήθουν λόγοι,
τρισώματος τὰν Γηρυών ὁ δεύτερος
χθονὸς τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξῆλθε καβεὶν,
ἀπαξ ἐκάστῳ καθανῦν μορφώματι.
τοιώνδ' ἐκατι κληδόνων παλιγκότων
πολλάς ἀνωθεν ἀρτάνας ἐμῆς δέρης
ἐξυσαν ἄλλοι πρὸς βίαν λειμμένης.
ἐκ τῶν δὲ τοι παῖς ἐνθάδ' οὐ παραστατεῖ,
ἐμῶν τε καὶ σῶν κύριος πιστωμάτων,
ὡς χρῆν, Ὀρέστης· μηδὲ θαυμάσθης τόδε.
τρέφει γὰρ αὐτὸν εὐμενῆς δορύξενος
Στρόφιος ὁ Φωκεύς, ἀμφίλεκτα πῆματα
ἐμοὶ προφοινών, τὸν θ' ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ σέθεν
κύνδυνον, εἰ τε δημόθρους ἀναρχία
βουλὴν καταρράψειν, ὡστε σύγγονον
βροτοῖς τὸν πεσόντα λακτίσαι πλέον.
tοιάδε μέντοι σκῆψις οὐ δόλον φέρει.
ἐμοιγε μὲν ἐκ κλαυμάτων ἐπίσεσαντοι
πηγαὶ κατεσβήκασιν, οὐδ' ἐνι σταγών.
ἐν ὑψικοίταις δ' ὁμοσίων βλάβασιν ἔχω
τὰς ἀμφὶ σοι κλάουσα λαμπτηρούχιας
ἀτημελήτους αἰεν. ἐν δ' ὀνείρασιν
λεπταῖς ὑπαὶ κόσμωτος ἐξήγειρόμην
From dreams wherein I saw thee pass through more
Than could befall within the time I slept.
Now after all these trials, with heart unpined,
I hail my husband watch-dog of the fold,
The ship's securing stay, the lofty roof's
Firm-grounded pillar, the father's sole-born child,
Or as land espied by seamen beyond hope,
Daylight as it looks fairest after storm,
A fresh spring to the thirsty wayfarer.
Such are the terms I choose to praise him fitly.
Let envy keep afar, since woes in plenty
We endured before. Now, most dear lord, descend
From yonder car; but set not upon earth
That foot, O king, wherewith thou hast trampled Troy.
Women, delay not. Know ye not your task?
Strew ye the path he treads with tapestries.
Straight let his way be carpeted with purple,
That Justice lead him to a home scarce hoped for.
For the rest a never-slumbering vigilance
Shall order justly as fate, I trust, intends.

Ag. Offspring of Leda, guardian of my home,
Lengthily, to the measure of my absence,
Hast thou stretched out thy speech: but seemly praise,
That tribute should proceed from other lips.
Moreover shame not me with womanish fopperies,
Nor grovel before me with loud-mouthed clamour,
As though I were some oriental king;
Nor with strown garments make my steps the gaze
Of envy. To the Gods such pomp belongs.
To tread, a mortal, over broidered fineries,
That to my conscience were a thing of fear.
As man, not God, I bid you reverence me.
ρυπαίσι θωύσσοντος, ἀμφὶ σοι πάθη
ὅρῶσα πλείω τοῦ ἡυνεύδουτος χρόνον.
νῦν ταύτα πάντα τλάσ' ἀπενθήτῳ φρενὶ
λέγοιμ' ἄν ἄνδρα τόνδε τῶν σταθμῶν κύνα,
σωτήρα νᾶος πρῶτονον, ψηλῆς στέγης
στυλον ποδήρη, μονογένες τέκνον πατρί,
καὶ γῆν φανείαν ναυτίλους παρ' ἐλπίδα,
κάλλιοτον ἦμαρ εἰσιδεὼν ἐκ χείματος,
ὁδοιπόρῳ διψωτὶ πηγαῖον ἰέος.
τοιοῦδε τοῦ νῦν ἄξιώ προσφεβήμασιν.
φθόνος δ' ἀπέστω· πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ πρὶν κακὰ
ήνειχώμεσθα. νῦν δὲ moi, φίλον κάρα,
ἐκβαν' ἀπήνης τῆς, μὴ χαμαι τιθεὶς
τὸν σὸν πόθ', ὠναξ, Ἰλίου πορθητορά.
δμφαί, τί μέλλεθ', αἰς ἐπέσταλται τέλος
πέδων κελεύθου στρωνύναι πετάσμασιν;
εὐθὺς γενέσθω πορφυρόστρωτος πόρος
ἐς δῶμ' ἄελπτον ὡς ἄν ἡγηταί δίκη.
τὰ δ' ἄλλα φροντὶς ὦν υπνοι νικομένη
θῆσαι δικαίως σὺν θεοῖς εἰμαρμένα.

Ἀγ. Δήδας γενέθλον, δωμάτων ἐμῶν φύλαξ,
ἀπονεῖᾳ μὲν ἐπίς εἰκότως ἐμῆ·
μακρὰν γὰρ ἐξέτεως. ἀλλ' ἐναισιμῶς
ἀινεῖν, παρ' ἄλλων χρῆ τόδ' ἐρχεσθαι γέρας·
καὶ τάλλα μὴ γυναικὸς ἐν τρόποις ἐμὲ
ἀβρυνε, μηδὲ βαρβάρου φωτὸς δίκην
χαμαίπετες βόαμα προσχάνης ἐμοί,
μὴν εἴμασι στρώσασ' ἐπίφθονον πόρον
τίθει. θεοὺς τοὺς τοῦδε τιμαλφεών χρεών·
ἐν ποικίλοις δὲ θυητὸν ὄντα κάλλεσιν
βαινεῖν ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐδαμῶς ἀνευ φόβου.
λέγω κατ' ἄνδρα, μὴ θεόν, σέβεται ἐμὲ.
No need of foot-cloths and embroideries:
Fame's voice rings loud enough. Heaven's greatest
Is a sane mind. Happy let him be called [gift
Whose life has ended in felicity.
Acting in all things thus, naught need I fear.

Cl. Come now, if judgment sanction, tell me this—
Ag. My judgment, be assured, I shall not change.
Cl. Would you in peril's hour have vowed this ritual?
Ag. Yes, had advised authority prescribed it.
Cl. What think you Priam had done, were his this
   triumph?
Ag. On brodered robes he doubtless would have trod.
Cl. Then let not human censure make thee ashamed.
Ag. Yet mighty is the people's murmuring voice.
Cl. Who stirs no jealousy, neither is he envied.
Ag. 'Tis not a woman's part to thirst for strife.
Cl. The fortunate may yield victory with grace.
Ag. Dost thou too deem this victory worth a contest?
Cl. Yield; victor still, since vanquished willingly.
Ag. Well, if it please thee, quick, let one unloose
   My shoes, these insolent slaves beneath my feet;
Lest, as with these I walk the sacred purples,
Some evil glance should strike me from afar.
'Tis shame enough to waste our wealth by trampling
And spoiling silver-purchased tapestries.
Of that enough. This stranger damsel now
Receive with kindness. A gentle master wins
Approving glances from God's distant eye.
And she, the chosen flower of our rich spoil,
The army's gift, hath followed in my train.
Since then I am reduced herein to obey thee,
To the palace will I go trampling on purples.
THE AGAMEMNON

χωρίς ποδοψήφιστρων τε καὶ τῶν πουκίλων κληδών ἀντεῖ. καὶ τὸ μὴ κακῶς φρονεῖν θεοῦ μέγιστον δῶρον. ὀδβίσαι δὲ χρή βίον τελευτήσαντ' ἐν εὐεστοὶ φίλῃ.

εἶπον τάδ' ὡς πράσσομι' ἂν εὐθαρσῆς ἐγώ.

Κλ. καὶ μὴν τόδ' εἶπὲ μὴ παρὰ γνώμην ἐμοὶ.

Ἀγ. γνώμην μὲν ἦσθι μὴ διαφθεροῦντ' ἐμέ.

Κλ. ἦδ' θεοὶς δεῖσας ἃν ὥδ' ἔρδεων τάδε; Ἀγ. εἴπερ τις, εἴδως γ' εὖ, τόδ' ἔξεσεν τέλος.

Κλ. τί δ' ἂν δοκεῖ σοι Πρίαμος, εἰ τάδ' ἤνυσεν; Ἀγ. ἐν ποικίλοις ἃν κάρτα μοι βῆναι δοκεῖ.

Κλ. μὴ νυν τὸν ἀνθρώπειον αἰδεσθῆς ψόγον. Ἀγ. φήμη γε μέντοι δημόθρους μέγα σθένει.

Κλ. ὁ δ' ἀφθονητός γ' οὐκ ἐπίξηλος πέλει.

Ἀγ. οὐτοὶ γυναικὸς ἐστιν ἰμέρειν μάχης.

Κλ. τοῖς δ' ἄλβοσ γε καὶ τὸ νικᾶσθαι πρέπει.

Ἀγ. ἦ καὶ σὺ νίκην τῆνδε δήριος πέλεις;

Κλ. τιθοῦ· κρατεῖς μέντοι παρεῖς γ' ἐκὼν ἐμοὶ.

Ἀγ. ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι ταῦθ', ὦτα τις ἀρβύλας λύοι τάχος, πρόδουλον ἐμβασιν ποδός, σὺν ταίσδ' ἡμβαίνονθ' ἀλουργέσιν θεῶν μὴ τις πρόσωθεν ὅμματος βόλοι φθόνος. πολλή γὰρ αἰδως δωματοφθορεῖν ποσὶν φθείροντα πλοῦτον ἀργυρωνῆτος θ' υφάς. τούτων μὲν οὐτω· τὴν ξένην δὲ πρεμενώς την' ἐσκόμιζε· τὸν κρατοῦντα μαλθακώς θεὸς πρόσωθεν εὐμενῶς προσδέρκεταί.
Cl. There is the sea, (and who shall drain it dry?)
Breeding abundant purple, costly as silver,
Forever oozing fresh to dip robes in.
And of such, Heaven be thanked, good store, my king,
Is ours. This house knows naught of penury.
Full many a robe for trampling had I vowed,
Had the oracles enjoined it, when I sought
Some means to ransom home so dear a life.
Thou art the living root whence springs the foliage
That screens our house against the dog-star's glare.
So thou returning to thy home and hearth
Betokenest warmth in winter's midst returned.
And when Zeus from the unripe grape's virginity
Matures wine, then like coolness in the house
Is the advent of the crowned and perfect lord.

[As Agamemnon goes in.]

Zeus, Zeus, who crownest all, crown now my prayers!
Thereafter as thou wilt mayst thou dispose.

[Clytaemnestra follows Agamemnon, but immediately returns.]

Cl. Thou too, get thee within, Kassandra, thou.

Ch. To thee she speaks, plain words, and pauses for thee.
Snared as thou art within the toils of fate,
If so thou canst, yield; or perchance thou canst not.

Cl. Nay, unless her speech be like a twittering swallow's,
Some barbarous, unintelligible tongue,
She will understand my reasoning and obey.

Ch. Go with her. As things stand, she counsels best.

Cl. I have no leisure to stand trifling here
Outside, when round the central hearth already
Κλ. ἔστιν θάλασσα, τῦς δὲ νῦν κατασβέσει; τρέφουσα πολλής πορφύρας ἵσαργυρον κηκίδα παγκαινιστον, εἰμάτων βαφάς. οἷκος δ' ὑπάρχει τῶνδε σὺν θεσὶς, ἀνὰξ, ἤχειν· πένεσθαι δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται δόμοι. πολλῶν πατησμῶν δ' εἰμάτων ἂν νηὔμην, δόμοισι προωνεχθέντος ἐν χρηστηρίοις, ψυχῆς κόμιστρα τήσδε μηχανομένη.

ρίζης γὰρ οὕσης φυλλᾶς ἱκετ' ἐς δόμους, σκιᾶν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός.

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίνων ἐστιαν, θάλπος μὲν ἐν χειμῶν σημαίνεις μολόν· ὅταν δὲ τεῦχη Ζεῦς ἀπ' ὅμφακος πικρᾶς οἴνου, τότ' ἣδη ψύχος ἐν δόμοις πέλει, ἀνδρὸς τελείου δῶμ' ἐπιστρωφαμένου.

[As Agamemnon goes in.]

Ζεῦ Ζεῦ τέλειε, τὰς ἐμᾶς εὐχὰς τέλει· μέλοι δὲ τοι σοι τῶντερ ἂν μέλλης τελείν.

[Clytemnestra follows Agamemnon, but immediately returns.]

Κλ. εἴσω κομίζον καὶ σὺ, Κασάνδραν λέγω.
Χο. σοι τοι λέγουσα παύεται σαφῆ λόγον.

ἐντὸς δ' ἁλοῦσα μορσίμων ἀγρευμάτων πείθοι' ἂν, εἰ πείθοι' ἀπειθοῖς δ' ἴσως.

Κλ. ἄλλ' εἴπερ ἐστὶ μὴ χελιδῶνος δίκην ἄγνωτα φωνὴν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη, ἔσω φρενῶν λέγουσα πείθῳ νῦν λόγῳ.
Χο. ἔπου. τὰ λόγητα τῶν παρεστάτων λέγει.

Κλ. οὐτοι θυραῖς τῇδ' ἐμοι σχολὴ πάρα τρίβειν· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐστίας μεσομφάλου
THE AGAMEMNON

The victims wait the sacrifice of fire.
No more will I waste words to be so served.

[Exit Clytaemnestra.]

Ch. And I, for I feel pity, will not chide.

KASSANDRA

'Otototoi O Earth! Earth!
O Apollo! O Apollo!
Ch. Why upon Loxias callest thou thus woefully?
He is not one who needeth dirgelike litanies.

Ka. Otototoi O Earth! Earth!
O Apollo! O Apollo!
Ch. Once more with ill-omened cries she calls that God
Whose ears by lamentations are profaned.

Ka. Apollo! Apollo!
God of Ways, Apollo indeed to me!
For me thou hast this second time in truth destroyed.
Ch. Of her own woes it seems that she will prophesy.
Heaven still inspires her mind, a slave's though it be.

Ka. Apollo! Apollo!
God of Ways, Apollo indeed to me!
Ah whither hast thou led me? yea, to what abode?
Ch. The Atreidæ's palace. If thou knowest not that,
Take my assurance: thou shalt not find it false.

Ka. Nay, 'tis abhorred of Heaven: much is it privy to,
Unnatural murders and butcheries,
A human shambles, sprinkled are the floors with blood.
Ch. Keen as a hound upon the scent she seems.
This trail shall lead her soon where murder lies.

Ka. There are the witnesses—there am I certified!
THE AGAMEMNON 39

ἔστηκεν ἣδη μῆλα πρὸς σφαγᾶς πυρὸς.
οὐ μὴν πλέω ρίψας ἀτιμασθῆσομαι.

[Exit Clytaemnêstra.]

Χο. ἔγω δ', ἐποικτείρῳ γὰρ, οὐ θυμώσομαι. 540

ΚΑΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἄτοτοτοὶ πόποι δᾶ. [στρ. α.
ἀπόλλου ἄπολλον.
Χο. τῇ ταῦτ' ἀνωτότυφας ἀμφὶ Δωξίου;
οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὡστε θρηνητοῦ τυχεῖν.

Κα. ὡτότοτοι πόποι δᾶ. [ἀντ. α. 545
ἀπόλλου ἄπολλον.
Χο. ἡ ὅ αὐτε δυσφημοῦσα τὸν θεὸν καλεῖ
οὔδὲν προσήκοντ' ἐν γόοις παραστατεῖν.

Κα. ὁ Ἀπόλλον ὁ Ἀπόλλον [στρ. β.
ἄγνιᾶτ' ἀπόλλων ἔμος.
ἀπώλεσας γὰρ οὐ μόλις τὸ δεύτερον.
Χο. χρήσεων ἔοικεν ἀμφὶ τῶν αὐτῆς κακῶν.
μένει τὸ θεῖον δουλία περ ἐν φρενὶ.

Κα. ὁ Ἀπόλλον ὁ Ἀπόλλον [ἀντ. β. 550
ἄγνιᾶτ' ἀπόλλων ἔμος.
ἄ ποι ποτ' ἦγαγές με; πρὸς ποιαν στέγην;
Χο. πρὸς τὴν Ἄτρειδὼν· εἰ σὺ μὴ τόδ' ἐννοεῖς,
ἔγω λέγω σοι· καὶ τάδ' ὅκ ἔρεις ψύθη.

Κα. μισόθεοι μὲν οὖν, πολλὰ συνίστορα [στρ. γ.
ἀυτοφῶνα κακὰ καὶ ἄρταμα,
ἀνδροσφαγεῖον καὶ πέδου ῥαντήριον.
Χο. ἔοικεν εὐρίς ἡ ξένη κυνὸς δίκην
εἶναι, ματεύει δ' ὅν ἀνευρήσει φῶνον.

Κα. μαρτυρίοισι γὰρ τοῖσδ' ἐπιτιπθομαί. [ἀντ. γ.
Babes yonder bewailing their sacrifice!
  Wailing their flesh by a father roasted and devoured!

Ch. We were acquainted with thy mantic fame:
  But of these things we seek no prophet here.

Ka. Alas! Ye Gods! What is she purposing?
  What is this new and monstrous deed,
  This deed of woe she purposes within this house,
  Beyond love's enduring,
  Beyond cure? and aloof stands
  Succouring strength afar.

Ch. I know not what these prophesyings mean.
  The first I guessed: with them the whole city is loud.

Ka. Oh cruel, cruel! Verily wilt thou so?
  Him who hath shared thy nuptial bed,
  When thou hast laved and cleansed him—how shall
  Apace, see, the deed nears! [I tell the end?
  With a swift reach she shoots forth
  Murderous hand upon hand.

Ch. Not yet do I understand. Dark riddles first,
  Dim-visioned oracles perplex me now.

Ka. Ey! Ey! Papai, papai!
  What is this now I see?
  Some net of death 'tis surely? [the crime
  But she's the snare, who shared the bed, who shares
  Of blood. Let Strife, ravening against the race,
  Utter a jubilant cry
  O'er the abhorred sacrifice.

Ch. What fiend is this thou bidst lift o'er the house
  A cry of triumph? Thy words bring me no cheer.
  Back to my heart the drops yellow and pale have run,
  As when o'er the face of one fallen in fight

...
κλαίομενα τάδε βρέφη σφαγάς, ὤπτας τε σάρκας πρὸς πατρὸς ἐβεβρωμένας.

Χο. ἦμεν κλέος σοῦ μαντικῶν πεπνυμένοι· τούτων προφήτας δ' οὔτινας ματεύομεν.

Κα. ἰδο πότοι, τί ποτε μὴδεται; [στρ. δ.]

τὸ τόδε νέον ἄχος μέγα
μέγ' ἐν δόμοισι τοῖσδε μὴδεται κακῶν
ἀφερτον φίλοισιν, δυσίατον; ἀλκὰ δ' ἐκάς ἀποστατεί.

Χο. τούτων αἰδρίς εἰμὶ τῶν μαντευμάτων.

ἐκείνα δ' ἔγνων· πᾶσα γὰρ πόλις βοᾷ. 575

Κα. ἰδο τάλανα, τόδε γὰρ τελείς,

τὸν ὅμοδέμνου πόσιν
λοντροίς φαιδρύνασα——πῶς φράσω τέλος;
τάχος γὰρ τόδ' ἐσται· προτείνει δὲ χείρ' ἐκ
χερὸς ὀρεγμέναιν.

Χο. οὔπω ξυνήκα· νῦν γὰρ ἐξ αἰνυμάτων

ἐπαργέμοις θεσφάτοις ἀμηχανώ.

Κα. ἐε, παπαῖ παπαί, τί τόδε φαίνεται; [στρ. ε.]

ἡ δίκτυνὸν τί γ' "Αἰδοῦ;

ἀλλ' ἄρκυς ἡ ξύνευνος, ἡ ἐξωνατλα

φόνου. στάσις δ' ἀκόρετος γένει
κατολολυξάτω θύματος λευσίμου.

Χο. ποῖαν Ἐρμύνην τὴνδε δόμασιν κέλει

ἐπορθιάξειν; οὐ με φαιδρύνει λόγος,

ἐπὶ δὲ καρδίαν ἐδραμε κροκοβαφῆς

σταγών, ἀτε καὶ δορὶ πτωσίμοις

570

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590
Pallor of death is spread
Timed with life’s sinking rays;
And the end neareth swift.

*Ka.* Ah! Ah! Beware! Beware!
From his accursed mate
Keep far the bull. In vestments
She entangles him, and with her black and crafty horn
Gores him. He falls into the cauldron’s steam.
Treachery murdering bath,
Thus thy dark story is told.

*Ch.* I cannot boast to be a skilful judge
Of oracles; but ’tis woe I spell from these.
When from a prophet’s mouth ever to mortal ears
Have good tidings sped? ’Tis naught else but woe
Volubly chanted forth,
Teaching fear, fear alone,
In skilled monotone.

*Ka.* Alas, alas! What hapless sorrowful doom is mine!
For of my own sad fate, mingled with his, I tell.
Ah whither hast thou brought me now, the hapless one?
For naught save only to share death with thee? What

*Ch.* Frenzied and heaven-possessed, ever thine own
In wild, lawless strains
Thou art uttering, even as doth heart-sore,
Never with wailing satiate,
Some brown nightingale.
Ityn, Ityn she sighs, mourning in anguish all
Her woe-plenished life.

*Ka.* Alas, alas! The doom of the musical nightingale!
For with a winged and soft-featherèd form the Gods
ξυνανύτει βίου δύντος αὐγαῖς. ταχεῖα δ' ἄτα πέλει.

Κα. ἀ ἂ, ἰδοὺ ἰδοῦ· ἀπεχε τῆς βοῶς ἄν τοῦ ταύρου· ἐν πέπλοισι 595
μελαγκέρφω λαβοῦσα μηχανήματι
τύπτει· πίνυε δ' ἐν ἐνύδρῳ κύτει.
δολοφόνου λέβητος τύχαν σοι λέγω.

Χο. οὐ κομπάσαμι' ἀν θεσφάτων γυνάμων ἄκρος εἶναι, κακῷ δὲ τῷ προσεικάξῳ τάδε. 600
ἀπὸ δὲ θεσφάτων τῖς ἀγαθὰ φάτις
βροτοῖς στέλλεται; κακῶν γὰρ διὰ
πολυπειδῶς τέχναι θεσπιρδὸν φόβον
férousin mathēin.

Κα. ἰδ' ἰδῷ ταλαίναις κακόπτομοι τύχαι· [στρ. ζ.]
tὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν θροῶ πάθος ἐπεγχύδαν.
ποὶ δὴ με δεύρῳ τῆν τάλαναν ἦγαγες;
οὐδέν ποτ' εἰ μὴ ξυνθανομένην τί γὰρ; 606

Χο. φρενομανής τις εἰ θεοφόρητος, ἀμ-
φί δ' αὐτᾶς θροεῖς 610
νόμον ἀνομοῦν, οἶα τις ξουθὰ
ἀκόρετος βοᾶς, φεῦ, ταλαίναις φρεσιν
'Ιτιν ἵτιν στένουσ' ἀμφίθαλῆ κακοῖς
ἀγῶν βίον.

Κα. ἰδ' ἰδῷ λυγελάς μόρον ἀγδόνως· [ἀντ. ζ.
περίβαλον γε οἱ πτεροφόρον δέμας 616
Arrayed her, a gentle suffering a tearless change.  
But me awaits the cleaving of a two-edged blade.

Ch.  Agony fierce and vain, passionate mantic throes,  
Oh whènce hast thou these,  
Such a terrible chant in wild harsh cries  
Fashioning forth, yet clear-voiced  
In loud rhythmic strains?  
What may it be that thus guides and inspires thy word  
On its ill-boding path?

Ka.  Lo now my oracle no more through a veil  
Shall look forth dimly, like a bride new-wed;  
But clear and strong towards the rising sun  
Shall it come blowing, and before it roll  
Wave-like against the light a woe than this  
More huge.  No longer in riddles will I monish you.  
This house is ever haunted by a quire  
Of hideous concord, for the song is foul.  
Lo, drunken with human blood till they wax bold  
And insolent, they abide within, a rout,  
Hard to expel, of revelling kindred fiends.  
They infest the chamber-doors chanting their chant  
Of that first sin: anon they execrate  
The abhorred defiler of a brother's bed.  
Say, have I missed, or was my shaft aimed home?  
Or am I a false seer, a prating vagabond?  
Bear witness with an oath that well I know  
The ancient tale of the sins of this house.

Ch.  How should an oath, though ne'er so truly plighted,  
Bring remedy?  But I much admire that thou,  
Though bred beyond the sea, shouldst speak as cer-  
tainly [there.  
Of a strange land as though thou hadst sojourned
THE AGAMEMNON

θεοὶ γλυκῶν τ' ἄγωνα κλαυμάτων ἄτερ·
ἐμοὶ δὲ μίμνει σχισμὸς αμφήκης δορὶ.

Χο. πόθεν ἑπισσύτους θεοφόρους τ' ἔχεις
ματαίους δύοις,
τὰ δ' ἐπίφοβα δυσφάτῳ κλαγγά
μελοτυπεῖς ὅμοι τ' ὀρθίοις ἐν νόμοις;
πόθεν ὄρους ἔχεις θεσπεσίας ὅδοι
κακόρρήμονας;

Κα. καὶ μὴν ὁ χρήσμος οὐκέτ' ἐκ καλυμμάτων
ἐστάι δεδορκὼς νεογάμου νύμφης δίκην·
λαμπρὸς δ' ἐοικεν ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολᾶς
πνεῶν ἐσάξειν, ὥστε κύματος δίκην
κλύζειν πρὸς αὐγὰς τούδε πῆματος πολὺ
μείζον' φρενόσω δ' οὐκέτ' ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων.

τὴν γὰρ στέγην τήνδ' οὔποτ' ἐκλείπει χορὸς
σύμφθογγος οὐκ εὐφωνος· οὐ γὰρ εὗ λέγειν.
καὶ μὴν πεπωκώς γ', ὡς θρασύνεσθαι πλέον,
βρότειον αἴμα κόμως ἐν δόμοις μένει,
δύσπεμπτος ἔξω, συγγόνων Ἰερινών.

ὑμνοῦσι δ' ὑμοὶ δώμασιν προσήμεναι
πρὸταρχον ἀτὴν· ἐν μέρει δ' ἀπετυπαν
εὐνὰς ἀδελφοῦ τῷ πατοῦντι δυσμενεῖς.

ήμαρτον, ἢ θηρῶ τι τοξότης τις ὧς;

ἡ φευδόμαιτες εἰμι θυροκόπος φλέδων;

ἐκμαρτύρησον προμόσας τὸ μ' εἰδέναι
λόγῳ παλαιᾶς τῶν ἀμαρτίας δόμων.

Χο. καὶ πῶς ἄν ὄρκος, πῆγμα γενναῖως παγέν,
παιώνιος γένοιτο; θαυμάζω δέ σε
- πόντου πέραν τραφεῖσαν ἀλλόθρουν πόλιν

κυρεῖν λέγουσαν, ὥσπερ εἰ παρεστάτεις.
KA. The seer Apollo endowed me with this skill.
CH. Smitten with love perchance, God though he be?
KA. Hitherto shame forbade me to confess it.
CH. Yes, we are all more delicate in prosperity.
KA. Vehement and mighty was the love he breathed.
CH. And in due course came you to child-bearing?
KA. I gave consent, then kept not faith with Loxias.
CH. Already wast thou possessed by power of prophecy?
KA. Already Troy's whole agony I foretold.
CH. How then! Couldst thou escape the wrath of Loxias?
KA. None would believe my words: so was I punished.
CH. Yet to us thy words seem worthy of belief.
KA. Ioû! Ioû! Oh agony!
   Again dire pangs of clear vision whirl
   And rack my soul with awful preludings.
   Behold them there, sitting before the house,
   Young children, like to phantom shapes in dream!
   Boys slain by their own kindred they appear.
   Their hands are filled with flesh, yea 'tis their own.
   The heart, the inward parts, see, they are holding,
   (Oh piteous burden,) whereof their father tasted.
   For this, I tell you, vengeance is devised
   By a recreant lion who lurking in the bed
   Keeps watch, ah me! for the returning lord;
   My lord; for the slave's yoke I must endure.
   The fleet's high captain, Ilium's ravager,
   He knows not what the abhorred she-hound's tongue
   After long-drawn fawning welcome—what accurst
   Treacherous stroke she aims with deadly stealth.
   O wickedness horrible! Of her lord the wife
THE AGAMEMNON

Ka. μάντις μ᾽ Ἀπώλλων τῷ ἔπεστησεν τέλει.

Χο. μῶν καὶ θεός περ ἵμερο πεπληγμένος;

Ka. προτοῦ μὲν αἰδώς ἦν ἐμοὶ λέγειν τάδε.

Χο. ἀβρύνεται γὰρ πᾶς τις εὗ πρᾶσσον πλέον. 650

Ka. ἄλλῳ ἦν παλαιστής κάρτ’ ἐμοὶ πυνέων χάριν.

Χο. ἦ καὶ τέκνων εἰς ἔργον ἠλθέτην νόμῳ;

Ka. ἔνυναινεσασα Δοξίαν ἐψευσάμην.

Χο. ἡδὴ τέχναισιν ἐνθεος ἤρημην;

Ka. ἡδὴ πολλαῖς πάντ’ ἐθεσπίζον πάθῃ. 655

Χο. τῶς δήτ’; ἄνατος ἡσθα Δοξίου κότῳ;

Ka. ἔπειθον οὐδέν’ οὐδέν, ὡς τάδ’ ἦμπλακον.

Χο. ἢμῶν γε μὲν δὴ πιστὰ θεσπίζειν δοκεῖς.

Ka. ἵνα ioυ, ὅ ὁ κακά.

ὑπ’ αὐ μὲ δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος

στροβεῖ παράσσων φρομίοις δυσφρομίοις.

ὁράτε τούσδε τοὺς δόμοις ἐφημένους

νέους, ἀνέφορον προσφερεῖς μορφώμασι;

παῖδες θανόντες ὦστερει πρὸς τῶν φίλων,

χεῖρας κρεών πλήθοντες οἰκείας βορᾶς,

σὺν ἐντέροις τε σπλάγχνι, ἐπολεκτιστὸν γέμος,

πρέπου’ ἐχοντες, ὥς πατήρ ἐγεύσατο.

ἐκ τῶν δε τοινάς φημι βουλεύειν τινὰ

λέοντ’ ἀναλκεῖν ἐν λέχει στρωφώμενον

οἰκουρὸν, οἶμοι, τῷ μολόντι δεσπότῃ

ἐμὸ’ φέρεις γὰρ χρή τὸ δούλιον ζυγὸν’

νεῶν δ’ ἐπαρχὸς Ἑλίου τ’ ἀναστάτης

οὐκ οἶδεν οία γῆς σα μισητῆς κυνὸς

λέξασα κακτείνασα φαιδρόνους, δίκην

ἀτη ναθαρίου, τεύξεται κακῇ τῦχῃ.

τοιάδε τόλμη θῆλυς ἀρσενος φονεύς 675
Is murderess. By what loathsome monster's name
Should I describe her fitly? An amphisbaena?
Or some cliff-lairing Scylla, bane of mariners,
A raging demon mother, breathing havoc
Against her dearest? And how she cried in triumph,
The all-shameless fiend, as when a battle breaks,
Feigning to glory in his safe return!
Herein though I gain no credence, 'tis all one.
What must be, shall be; and thou beholding soon
Shalt call me in pity a prophet all too true.

Ch. Thyestes' banquet of his own children's flesh
Shuddering I understood. Yea horror seized me
Hearing the true tale without fable.
But in all else I wander far afield.

Ka. Agamemnon's death I say thou shalt behold.
Ch. Peace, wretched woman! Hush thy ill-omened lips.
Ka. This word no Healing God can remedy.
Ch. Not if it must be so: but Heaven avert it!
Ka. While thou prayest, the slayers are making ready.
Ch. What man is the contriver of this woe?
Ka. Wide indeed of my warning must thou have looked.
Ch. For I perceive not how the deed is possible.
Ka. See now, I know the Greek tongue all too well.
Ch. So doth the Pythoness: yet her words are dark.
Ka. Papai! What is this fire! It surges upon me!
Ototoi! Lycean Apollo! Ay me, me!
Yonder two-footed lioness, who shares
The wolf's couch, while the noble lion is far,
Shall slay me, hapless woman. A vengeful charm
She is brewing, and therein will mix my recompense.
ἐστὶν. τὸ νῦν καλοῦσα δυσφίλες δάκος τύχοιμ’ ἂν; ἀμφίσβαιναν, ἢ Σκύλλαν τινὰ οἰκοῦσαν ἐν πέτραισιν, ναυτὶλὼν βλάβην, θύουσαν᾽ Ἀιδοῦ μητέρ’ ἄσπονδόν τ’ ἄρην φίλοις πτέονσαν; ὡς δ’ ἐπωλολύζατο ἢ παντότολμος, ὃσπερ ἐν μάχης τροπῇ. δοκεῖ δὲ χαίρειν νοστίμῳ σωτηρίᾳ.

καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων εἰ τι μὴ πεῖθος τί γὰρ; τὸ μέλλον ἢξει. καὶ σὺ μ’ ἐν τάχει παρών ἄγαν γ’ ἀληθόμαντι οἰκτείρας ἑρεῖς.

Χο. τὴν μὲν Θυέστου δαίτα παίδειων κρεὼν ἐξουκῆκα καὶ πέφρικα, καὶ φόβος μ’ ἔχει κλύνοντ’ ἀληθῶς οὐδὲν ἐξηκασμεία.

tὰ δ’ ἀλλ’ ἀκούσας ἐκ δρόμου πεσὼν τρέχω. 690

Κα. Ἀγαμέμνονος σὲ φημ’ ἐπόψεσθαι μόρον.

Χο. εὐφημον, ὥ τάλαϊνα, κοίμησον στόμα.

Κα. ἀλλ’ οὕτι Παιῶν τῷ δ’ ἐπιστατεῖ λόγῳ.

Χο. οὐκ, εἰπέρ ἔσται γ’. ἀλλὰ μὴ γένοιτο πῶς.

Κα. σὺ μὲν κατεύχει, τοῖς δ’ ἀποκτείνειν μέλει. 695

Χο. τίνος πρὸς ἀνδρὸς τοὺς ἄχος ποροῦνται;

Κα. ἢ κάρτα τάρ’ ἂν παρεκόπτῃς χρησμὸν ἐμῶν.

Χο. τοὺ γὰρ τελούντος σὺ ἐξουκῇ μηχανήν.

Κα. καὶ μὴν ἄγαν γ’ “Ελλην’ ἐπισταταιμα φάτιν.

Χο. καὶ γὰρ τὰ πυθόκραντα· δυσμαθὴ δ’ ὀμοὶ. 700

Κα. παπαῖ, οἶον τὸ πῦρ· ἐπέρχεται δὲ μοι.

ἀοτοῦ, Ἀύκει Ἀπολλοῦ, οἱ ἐγὼ ἐγὼ.

αὕτη δῖτοις λέαινα συγκοιμομένη λύκῳ, λέοντος εὐγενοὺς ἀπουσίαν,

κτενεὶ με τὴν τάλαϊναν· ὡς δὲ φάρμακον τεῦχοσα κάμῳ μισθὸν ἐυθήσει κότῳ.
Sharpening her man-slaying sword, she vows
Bloodily to repay my bringing hither.
Why then to my own derision bear I these—
This wand, these mantic fillets round my neck?
Thee at least, ere I perish, will I destroy.
Down to the ground I cast you, and thus requite you.
Enrich some other, as ye did me, with doom.
But lo, Apollo himself strips off from me,
My prophet's robe, now the spectacle grows stale
Of his victim in these vestments laughed to scorn
By friends and foes alike, and all in vain—
And like a vagabond mountebank such names
As beggar, wretch or starveling I endured—
And now this seer, being finished with my seership,
Has brought me to be murdered in this place,
Where awaiteth me no altar of my home,
But a block whereon the last blood yet is warm.
Yet not forgotten of Heaven shall we die.
There shall come one to vindicate us, born
To slay his mother and avenge his sire.
A wandering homeless outlaw shall he return
To cope the fabric of ancestral sin.
For with a mighty oath the Gods have sworn,
His father's outstretched corpse shall draw him home.
Why then do I stand thus wailing piteously?
I will meet my fate: I will endure to die.
These gates, as they were Hades' gates, I hail
And that the stroke be mortal is my prayer:
So swiftly and easily shall my blood gush forth,
And without struggle shall I close my eyes.

Ch. Woman, so hapless, yet withal so wise,
Long hast thou held us listening; yet if verily
καπεύχεται θήγουσα φωτὶ φάσγανον ἐμῆς ἀγωγῆς ἀντιτίσσασθαι φῶνον.

tί δὴ τ ἐμαυτὴς καταγέλωτε ἔχω τάδε,
καὶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μαντεία περὶ δέρη στέφη; 710
σὲ μὲν πρὸ μοίρας τῆς ἐμῆς διαφθερῶ.
ἔτ' ἐς φόρον· πεσόντα θ' ὁδ' ἀμείψομαι.
dźελην τιν' ἄτης ἀντ' ἐμοῦ πλουτίζετε.

ιδοὺ δ Ἀπόλλων αὐτὸς ἔκδύων ἐμὲ
χρηστηρίαν ἐσθήτ', ἐποττεύοισα δὲ με
κὰν τοίσδε κόσμοις καταγελομένην μέγα
φίλων ὑπ' ἔχθρῶν οὐ διχορρόπως, μάτην—
καλομενή δὲ φοιτᾶς ὡς ἀγύρτρια
πτωχὸς τάλαινα λιμοθνης ἱνεσχόμην—
καὶ νῦν ὁ μάντις μάντιν ἐκπράξας ἐμὲ
ἀπίγαγεν' ἐς τοιάσδε θανασίμους τύχας.

βομοὺ πατρόφου δ ἀντ' ἐπίζητον μένει,
θερμὴν κοπέντος φοινίῳ προσφάγματι.
οὐ μὴν ἀτιμοὶ γ' ἔκ θεῶν τεθυνήξομεν.

"Ὡς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἄλλοι αὖ τιμάρος,

μυτροκτόνοι φίτυμα, ποινάτορ πατρός·

φυγας δ' ἀλήθης τῆς δὲ γῆς ἀπόξενον
κάτεισιν, ἄτας τάσδε θρυγκώσων φιλοίς;

ὁμώμορας γὰρ ὀρκος ἐκ θεῶν μέγας,

ἄξειν νῦν υπτίασμα κειμένου πατρός.

tί δὴ τ' ἐγὼ κάτοικτος ὃδ' ἀναστέων;

ἰούσα πράξω· τλήσομαι τὸ καθανεῖν.

"Αἰδοὺ πῦλας δὲ τάσδ' ἐγὼ προσευνέτω·

ἐπεύχομαι δὲ καιρίας πληγῆς τυχεῖν,

ὡς ἀσφαδάστος, αἰμάτων εὐθυνοίμων

ἀπορρυνέων, ὄμμα συμβάλω τόδε.

Χο. ὃ πολλὰ μὲν τάλαινα, πολλὰ δ' αὖ σοφὴ

γύναι, μακρὰν ἔτεινας. εἰ δ' ἐτητύμως
THE AGAMEMNON

Thou knowest thine own doom, how, as some heaven-led victim,
Patiently to the altar canst thou move?

Ka. There is no escape, friends, none, when time is full.
Ch. Yes, but time's last hour still is found the best.
Ka. The day is come. Little were gained by flight.
Ch. Truly a patient fortitude is thine.
Ka. Such praise none heareth to whom fate is kind.
Ch. Yet is there comfort in a glorious death.
Ka. Alas my father! thou and thy noble children!
Ch. Why dost thou start? What terror turns thee back?
Ka. Foul! Foul!
Ch. Why criest thou foul? Is it some brainsick loathing?
Ka. Horror this house exhales from blood-dript walls.
Ch. Nay, nay, 'tis naught but odours of hearth-sacrifice.
Ka. 'Tis such a reek as riseth from a sepulchre.
Yet will I enter, and there bewail my fate
And Agamemnon's. I have lived long enough.
Alas, my friends!
I clamour not like a bird that dreads a bush.
Idly. When I am dead confirm my words,
When another woman for my death shall die,
And for a man ill-mated a man falls.
I claim this office as at point to die.
Ch. Poor wretch, I pity thy prophetic doom.
Ka. Yet once more would I speak—or is not this
My own dirge rather? To the sun I pray,
This last seen by me, that when my champions come,
My foes may pay murder's price for me too,
For this poor slave's death, their inglorious prey.
μόρον τὸν αὐτῆς οἰσθα, πῶς θεηλάτου
βοὺς δίκην πρὸς βωμὸν εὐτόλμως πατεῖς;

Κα. οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλυξις, οὐ, ξένοι, χρόνου πλέω.
Χο. ὁ ὦ ὦστατός γε τοῦ χρόνου πρεσβεύεται.
Κα. ἤκει τόδ' ἦμαρ· σμικρὰ κερδανῶ φυγῆ.
Χο. ἀλλ' ἵσθι τλήμων οὖσ' ἀπ' εὐτόλμου φρενός.
Κα. οὐδείς ἀκούει ταῦτα τῶν εὐδαιμόνων.
Χο. ἀλλ' εὐκλεῶς τοις καθανεῖν χάρις βροτῷ.
Κα. ἰὼ πάτερ σοῦ τῶν τε γενναίων τέκνων.
Χο. τὶ δ' ἐστὶ χρήμα; τίς σ' ἀποστρέφει φόβος;
Κα. φεῦ φεῦ.
Χο. τὶ τοῦτ' ἐφευξάς; εἶ τι μὴ φρενῶν στῦγος.
Κα. φόνου δόμοι πνέουσιν αἰματοσταγῆ.
Χο. καλ πῶς; τὸδ' ἄξιοι θυμάτων ἐφεστῶν.
Κα. ὁμοίος ἄτμος ὁσπερ ἐκ τάφου πρέπει.
ἀλλ' εἰμὶ καν δόμοις κωκύσου' ἐμὴν
'Αγαμέμνονος τε μοιραν. ἄρκεῖτο βίος.
Κα. ἵω ξένοι.
οὐτοί δυσοίζω θάμνον ὡς ὄρνις φόβῳ
ἀλλως' θανούσῃ μαρτυρεῖτέ μοι τόδε,
ὅταν γυνὴ γυναικὸς ἄντ' ἐμοῦ θάνῃ,
ἀνὴρ τε δυσδάμαρτος ἄντ' ἄνδρὸς πέσῃ.
ἐπιξενοῦμαι ταῦτα δ' ὡς θανομένη.
Χο. ὁ τλήμον, οἰκτεῖρω σε θεσφάτου μόρον.
Κα. ἀπαξ ἔτ' εἰπεῖν ρήσιν ἢ θρήνου βέλῳ
ἐμὸν τὸν αὐτῆς. ἥλιον δ' ἐπεύχομαι
πρὸς ὦστατον φῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς τιμαόρους
ἐχθροὺς φόνευσιν τοὺς ἐμοὺς τίνειν ὁμοὶ
δούλης θανούσης, εὐμαρῴς χειρόματος.
Alas for man's estate! His happiness
Shows like a sketch, a shadow: but his misery—
'Tis a picture by a wet sponge dashed clean out.
And this is the more pitiable by far.

[Exit.]

Ag. [within]. Ah me! I am smitten—to the heart, a mortal stroke!
Ch. Silence! Who is that cries out as smitten by a mortal wound?
Ag. Ah me! Again! A second time, a murderous stroke!

Ch. I. Done is now the deed, I fear me. That is the death-groan of the king.
Come let us consult, if haply some safe counsel we may find.
2. This is my counsel, that we summon hither
   A rescue of the townsfolk to the palace.
3. And I say, with all speed let us burst in,
   And prove the foul deed while the sword yet drips.

[As they are about to enter the palace, the scene opens and discloses Clytaemnestra standing over the bodies of Agamemnon and Kassandra.]

Cl. All that I spoke before to serve the time,
I shall feel no shame now to contradict.
For how by avowing open hate to enemies,
Presumed to be our friends, could we build up Destruction's toils too high to be overleapt?
By me long since against victory long-deferred Was planned this duel, yet at last it came.
Here stand I where I struck, my work achieved.
THE AGAMEMNON

'ώ βρότεια πράγματ' εύτυχοντα μὲν σκιά τις ἄν πρέψειν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχῆ, βολαῖς ύγρώσσων σπόγγος ὁλεσεν γραφήν. 770 καὶ ταῦτ' ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἰκτείρω πολύ.

[Exit.]

Ἀγ. ὁμοί, πέπλημμαι καρίαν πληγὴν ἔσω.
Χο. σίγα· τίς πληγὴν ἀντεῖ καρίως οὔτασμένος;
Ἀγ. ὁμοί μᾶλ' αὖθις, δευτέραν πεπληγμένος.
Χο. τούργον εἰργάσθαι δοκεῖ μοι βασιλέως οἰμώ-γματι. 775 ἀλλὰ κοινωσώμεθ' ἢν πως ἀσφαλῆ βουλεύματ' ἦ.—

2. ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῖν τὴν ἐμὴν γυνόμην λέγω, πρὸς δῶμα δεῦρ' ἀστοίς κηρύσσειν βοήν.—

3. ἐμοὶ δ' ὅπως τάχιστα γ' ἐμπεσεῖν δοκεῖ καὶ πράγμ' ἐλέγχειν σὺν νεορρύτῳ ξίφει.— 780.

[As they are about to enter the palace, the scene opens and discloses CLYTAEMNESTRA standing over the bodies of AGAMEMNON and KASSANDRA.]

Κλ. πολλὰν πάροιθεν καρίως εἰρημένων τάναυτ' εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἐπαισχυνθῆσομαι. πώς γὰρ τις ἐχθροὶ ἐχθρὰ πορσύνων, φίλοις δοκοῦσιν εἶναι, γημονὴ ἀρκύστατ' ἄν φράξειν, ὑψὸς κρεῖσσον ἐκπηδήματος; 785 ἐμοὶ δ' ἀγὼν ὅδ' οὐκ ἀφρόντιστος πάλαι νείκης παλαιὰς ἤλθε, σὺν χρόνῳ γε μὴν· ἐστηκα δ' ἐνθ' ὅπως ἐπὶ ἐξειργασμένοις.
Even so I wrought—this too will I not deny—
That neither should he escape nor ward his doom.
A blind entanglement, like a net for fish,
I swathe around him, an evil wealth of robe.
And twice do I smite him, till at the second groan
There did his limbs sink down; and as he lies,
A third stroke do I deal him, unto Hades,
Safe-keeper of dead men, a votive gift.
Therewith he lies still, gasping out his life:
And spouting forth a vehement jet of blood
Strikes me with a dark splash of murderous dew,
No less rejoicing than in Heaven's sweet rain
The corn doth at the birth-throes of the ear.
The truth being such, ye grave elders of Argos,
Rejoice, if so ye may; but I exult.

Ch. We marvel at thine audacity of tongue
To glory in such terms over thy slain lord.

Cl. Ye assail me as though I were a witless woman.
But I with heart unshaken what all know
Declare—whether thou praise me or condemn,
'Tis all one—this is Agamemnon, mine
Own husband, done to death by this right hand's
Most righteous workmanship. The case stands so.

Ch. Woman, what earth-engendered
Venomous herb, or what evil drug,
Scum of the restless sea, canst thou have tasted of,
Thus to incur the loud fury of a people's curse?
Away thou hast cast, away thou hast cleft, away shall
the city fling thee,
A monstrous burden of loathing.

Cl. Yes, now for me thou doomest banishment,
A city's loathing and a people's curses:
ούτω δ' ἐπτρακσα, καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι· ὡς μήτε φεύγειν μήτ' ἀμώνεσθαι μόρον, ἀπειρον ἀμφίβληστρον, ὡσπερ ἱχθῦνω, περιστιχίζω, πλούτον εἴματος κακόν. παλῶ δὲ νῦν δις· κἂν δυὸν οἰμώγμασιν μεθηκεν αὐτοῦ κῶλα· καὶ πεπτωκότι τρίτην ἐπενδίδωμι, τοῦ κατὰ χθονὸς "Αἰδον νεκρῶν σωτήρος εὐκταίαν χάριν. οὔτω τὸν αὐτοῦ θυμὸν ὄρμανει πεσών· κάκφυσιῶν δέξειν αἶματος σφαγῆν βάλλει μ' ἔρμυνη ψακάδι φωνίας δρόσουν, χαίρουσαν οὐδέν ἠσοῦν ἢ διοσδότῳ γάνει στορητὸς κάλυκος ἐν λοχεύμασιν. ὥς δό' ἑχόντων, πρέσβος Ἀργείων τόδε, χαίροιτ' ἄν, εἰ χαίροιτ', ἐγὼ δ' ἐπεύχομαι.

Χο. θαυμαξομέν σου γλώσσαν, ὡς θρασύστομος, ἦτις τοιάνθ' ἔπ' ἀνδρὶ κομπαξίες λόγον. 805
Κλ. πειράσθε μου γυναικός ὡς ἀφράσμονος· ἐγὼ δ' ἀπρέστω καρδίᾳ πρὸς εἰδότας λέγω· σὺ δ' αἴνειν εἴτε με ψέγειν θέλεις ὅμοιον. οὔτὸς ἐστιν Ἀγαμέμνων, ἐμὸς πόσις, νεκρὸς δὲ, τῆςδ' δεξιὰς χερὸς ἔργον, δικαλας τέκτονος. τάδ' ἀδ' ἧξει.

Χο. τί κακόν, ὦ γυναι, χθονοτρεφές ἐδανὼν ἢ ποτὸν πασαμένα ρυτάς ἐξ ἄλος ὄρμενον τόδ' ἐπέθου θύσος, δημοθρόους τ' ἀράς; ἀπέδικες τ' ἀπεταμές τ'· ἀπότοπλις δ' ἐσεὶ 815 μίσος ὄβριμον ἄστοις.
Κλ. νῦν μὲν δικάζεις ἐκ πόλεως φυγῆν ἐμοὶ καὶ μίσος ἀστῶν δημόθροους τ' ἤχειν ἀράς,
THE AGAMEMNON

Yet once no whit didst thou withstand this man,
Who recking not, as 'twere a beast that died,
Although his woolly flocks bare sheep enough,
Sacrificed his own child, that dear delight
Born of my pangs, to charm the winds of Thrace.

Ch. Insolent is thy mood,
Thine utterance arrogant. Therefore even
As with the deed of blood frenzied is now thy soul,
So doth a gory smear fitly adorn thy brow.
With none to avenge, none to befriend, verily yet shall
Stroke for stroke in reprisal. [you pay

Cl. This likewise shalt thou hear, my solemn oath:
By the Justice here accomplished for my child,
By the Sin and Doom, whose victim here I have slain,
Not for me doth Hope tread the halls of Fear,
While yet fire on my hearth is kindled by
Aegisthus, my kind friend as heretofore.
For yonder, no small shield for our assurance,
Lies low the man who outraged his own wife,
Darling of each Chryseis under Troy,
And by him this bond-slave and auguress,
His oracle-delivering concubine,
Who, as his faithful couch-mate, shared with him
The mariners' bench. But punished are they now.
For he fare thus: and she, now she has wailed
Swan-like her last lamenting song of death,
Lies there, his lover, adding a delicate
New seasoning to the luxury of my couch.

Ch. Oh for a speedy death, painless without a throe,
No lingering bedridden sickness,
A gentle death, bearing sleep eternal,
οὐδὲν τότ' ἀνδρὶ τῷ ἔναντίον φέρων·
δὲ οὗ προτιμῶν, ὁσπερεὶ βοτοῦ μόρον,
μήλων φλεόντων εὐπόκοις νομεύμασιν,
ἐθυσεν αὐτοῦ παιδα, φιλτάτην ἐμοὶ ὀδῖν', ἐποδὸν Ὁρηκίων ἀημάτων.

Χο. μεγαλόμητις εἰ, περίφρονα δ' ἐλακές· ὁσπερ οὖν
φονολιβεὶ τύχα φρὴν ἐπιμαίνεται·
λίπος ἐπ' ὀμμάτων αἴματος ἐμπρέπει·
ἀτίτον δ' ἐτι σὲ χρῆ στερομέναν φίλοι
τύμμα τύμματι τίσαι.

Κλ. καὶ τήνδ' ἀκούεις ὀρκών ἐμῶν θέμιν·
μὰ τὴν τέλειον τῆς ἐμῆς παιδὸς Δίκην,
"Ατὴν Ἑρυμῦν θ', αἰσι τόνδ' ἔσφαξ' ἑγώ,
οὐ μοι φόβου μέλαθρον ἐλπὶς ἐμπατεὶ,
ἔως ἄν αἴθη πῦρ ἐφ' ἐστίας ἐμῆς
Ἀγισθος, ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν εὑ φρονῶν ἐμοί.
οὔτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀστῖς οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους.
κεῖται γυναικὸς τῆς ἱερωντήριος,
Χρυσόιδων μείλιγμα τῶν ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ·
ἡ τ' αἰχμάλωτος ἥδε καὶ τερασκότος
καὶ κοινόλεκτρος τοῦδε, θεσφατηλόγος
πιστὴ ξύνευος, ναυτίλων δὲ σελμάτων
ἰσοτριβής. ἀτιμα δ' οὐκ ἐπραξάτην.
ὁ μὲν γὰρ οὔτως, ἡ δὲ τοι κύκνου δίκην
τὸν ὑστατον μέλψασα θανάσιμον γόον
κεῖται φιλήτορ τῷδ', ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπήγαγεν
εὐνῆς παροψώφημα τῆς ἐμῆς χλιδῆν.

Χο. φεῦ, τίς ἂν ἐν τάχει, μὴ περιώδυνος,
μηδὲ δεμιουργῆς,
μόλις τὸν αἰὲ φέρουσ' ἐν ἡμῖν
Sleep without end, for to us the kindest,
Truest of guardians is lost,
Who for a woman’s sin endured toils untold;
Yea, and by a woman’s hand he fell.
Demon, who o’er the house broodest, and o’er the twi-
Branching Tantalid offspring,
And through the wives, equals in destruction,
Wieldest a power, to my heart an anguish!
Now on the carcase like a loathed
Carrion crow perched he stands, and gloryingly
Chanting forth creaks his tuneless hymn.

Cl. Now thy judgment hast thou amended,
Since thou accusest
The thrice-gorged demon of this whole lineage.
For from him is bred this lust of the heart
For blood to be lapped—ere yet the old woe
Is over and gone, ever fresh gore.

Ch. Ay me! Ay me! My king, my king!
How shall I weep thee?
What word shall I speak from a loving heart?
In this spider’s web to be lying thus caught,
By a foul death gasping thy soul forth!
Ah me, me! couched thus shamefully like a slave,
Stricken down by a deadly hand
Craftily armed with a cleaving sword-blade!

Cl. Do you dare to avouch this deed to be mine?
Nay, fancy not even
That in me Agamemnon’s spouse you behold:
But disguised as the wife of the man who is slain
Yonder, the ancient wrathful Avenger
Of Atreus, that grim feaster, hath found
Μούρ' ἀτέλευτον ὦπνον, δαμέντος φύλακος εὐμενεστάτου
πολέα τλάντος γυναικὸς διαὶ;
πρὸς γυναικὸς δ' ἀπέφθισεν.
δαῖμον, ὃς ἐμπίτευς δῶμασι καὶ
dιφυίους Τανταλίδαισι,
κράτος τ' ἱσόψυχον ἐκ γυναικῶν
καρδίοδηκτόν ἐμοὶ κρατύνεις.
ἐπὶ δὲ σῶματος δίκαν μοι
κόρακος ἑχθροῦ σταθείο' ἐκνόμως
ὑμνον ὑμνεῖν ἐπεύχεται.

Κλ. νῦν δ' ἀφθονος στόματος γνώμην,
tὸν τριπάχυντον
daἴμωνα γέννης τῆςδε κυκλῆσκων.
ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ ἔρως αἰματολοιχὸς
νειρυτροφεῖται, πρὸς καταλῆξαι
tὸ παλαίδων ἀχος, νέος ἰχώρ.

Χο. ἵδ' ἵδ' βασιλεὺς βασιλεύ,
pὸς σε δακρύσω;

φρενὶς ἐκ φιλίας τ' ποτ' ἐἳπω;
κεῖσαι δ' ἀράχνης ἐν ὑφάσματι τῶς
ἀσεβεί θανατῶ βίον ἐκπυνῶν.
ἂμοι μοι κοίταν τὰν ἀνελεύθερον
dολιὼς μόρφ δαμεῖς
ἐκ χερὸς ἀμφιτύμῳ βελέμψω.

Κλ. αὖχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοῦργον ἐμὸν·
μηδ' ἐπιλεξῆς
'Ἀγαμεμνονίαν εἶναι μ' ἄλοχον.
φανταξόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ
tοῦτ' ὁ παλαίδος δριμὸς ἅλαστωρ
'Ἀτρέως χαλεποῦ θωινατῆρος
Yonder a full-grown
Victim for the ghosts of the children.

Ch. That thou of the blood here shed
Art innocent, who shall essay to witness?
No, no! Yet the fiend avenging
The father's sin may have aided.
And swept along on floods of gore
From slaughtered kindred by the red
Deity of Strife, he comes where he must pay now
For the caked blood of the mangled infants.

Cl. What, did not he too wreak on his household
As crafty a crime?
Nay but the branch he grafted upon me,
My long-wept-for Iphigeneia,
Even as he dealt with her, so is he faring:
Therefore in Hades let him not boast now.
As he sinned by the sword,
So is death by the sword his atonement.

Ch. In blank amaze, reft of thought's resourceful
Counselling aid, I know not
Which way to turn, now the house is falling.
I dread the fierce, crashing storm that wrecks the home,
The storm of blood. Ceased is now the small rain.
But Justice is but whetting for some other deed
Of bale her sword's edge on other whetstones.

Ay me! Earth, Earth! Would thou hadst covered me,
Or ere in the silver-sided bath
Outstretched in death I had seen him!
Who shall make his grave? Who shall sing his dirge?
Who by the tomb of the deified hero weeping
THE AGAMEMNON

τόνδ᾿ ἀπέτισεν,

τέλεον νεαροὶς ἐπιθύσας.

Χο. ὡς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἰ

touδὲ φόνον τίς ὁ μαρτυρήσων;

πῶ πῶ; πατρόθεν δὲ συλλή-

πτωρ γένοιτ' ἀν ἄλαστωρ.

βιάζοντι δ᾿ ὁμοσπόροις

ἐπιρροαίσιν αἰμάτων

μέλας Ἀρης, ὅποι δίκαιν προβαίνων

πάχνα κουροβόρῳ παρέξει.

Κλ. οὐδὲ γὰρ οὕτως δολίαιν ἄτην

οἶκοις εἰν ἐθνή;

ἀλλ᾿ ἐμὸν ἐκ τούδ᾿ ἔρνος ἄρεθέν,

τὴν πολυκλαύτην Ἰφιγενείαν,

ἄξια δράσας ἄξια πάσχου

μηδὲν ἐν Ἀίδου μεγαλαυχεῖτον,

ξιφὸδελητῷ

θανάτῳ τίσας ἀπερ ἦρξεν.

Χο. ἀμηχανῶ φροντίδος στερηθεῖς

evπάλαμον μέριμναν

ὡς πράττωμαι, πίτνοντος οἴκου.

δέδοικα δ᾿ ὁμβροῦ κτύπον δομοσφαλῆ

tὸν αἴματηρὸν· ψακὰς δὲ λήγει.

Δίκη δ᾿ ἐπ᾿ ἄλλο πράγμα θηγάνει ἑλάβης

πρὸς ἄλλας θηγάναισιν ἀορ.

ἰῶ γὰρ γὰ, εἶθ᾿ ἐμ᾿ ἐδέξαν,

πρὶν τόνδ᾿ ἐπιδεῖν ἀργυροτόιχου

dροίτας κατέχοντα χαμεύνην.

τίς ὁ θάψων νυν; τίς ὁ θρηνήσων;

τίς δ᾿ ἐπιτύμβιον αἴνου ἐπ᾿ ἀνδρὶ θείῳ
The Agamemnon

Shall chant his praise, and bowed down
In unfeigned grief of heart lament him?

Cl. Thee it beseems not herein to concern thee:
No, for beneath us
He bowed, he lay dead, and below shall we bury him,
Not to a mourning household's dirges,
But Iphigeneia with welcome blithe,
As a daughter should,
Shall encounter her sire at the swift-flowing strait
Of Wailing, and there
Fling around him her arms and shall kiss him.

Ch. Reviling thus answereth reviling.
Hard to adjudge the strife seems.
The spoiler is spoiled, the slayer pays reprisal.
While on his throne Zeus abides, abides the truth:
Who doth the deed, suffereth: so the law stands.
Who from the house shall cast the brood of curses forth?
The whole race is welded fast to ruin.

Cl. When you stumbled upon this saw, 'twas truth
Led thee. But I now
With the fiend of the Pleisthenid race consent
This treaty to swear: what is done, we accept,
Hard be it to bear, if he will but quit
Henceforth this house, and afflict with kindred
Murder some other race instead.
Though mine be a small
Portion of wealth, that in full shall suffice me,
If I thus may cleanse
These halls from the frenzy of blood-feud.
THE AGAMEMNON

65

ξύν δακρύοις ἱάπτων
ἀλαθείᾳ φρενῶν πονησεί;

Κλ. οὐ σὲ προσήκει τὸ μέλημ’ ἀλέγειν
tούτῳ πρὸς ἡμῶν
κάππεσε, κάθανε, καὶ καταθάψομεν
ὑπὸ ἑκατοχμῶν τῶν ἔξ οἴκων,…
ἀλλ’ Ἰφιγένεια ὑπὸ ἄσπασίως
θυγάτηρ, ὡς χρῆ,
pατέρ’ ἀντιάσασα πρὸς ἀκύπτορον
πόρθμευμ’ ἀχέων

περὶ χείρε βαλοὺσα φιλήσει.

Χο. ὁνείδος ἢκει τὸδ’ ἀντ’ ὁνείδους.

δύσμαχα δ’ ἦστι κρῖναι.
φέρει φέροντ’, ἐκτίνει δ’ ὁ καῖνων.
μέμνει δὲ μίμωντος ἐν θρόνῳ Ἄιδος
παθεῖν τὸν ἐργαίτα· θέσμου γάρ.

τίς ἀν γονὰν ἀραῖον ἐκβάλοι δόμων;
κεκάληται γένος πρὸς ἄτα.

Κλ. ἐς τὸν’ ἐνέβης ξύν ἂληθείᾳ
χρησμόν, ἔγω δ’ οὖν

ἐθέλω δαίμονι τῷ Πλεισθενίδῶν
ὀρκοὺς θεμένη τάδε μὲν στέργειν,
δύστητα περὶ οὐθ’· ὃ δὲ λυπότων, ἵοντ’

ἐκ τῶν δόμων ἀλλην γενεὰν
τρίβει θανάτοις αὐθένταισι’
κτεάνων τε μέρος

βαιὸν ἐχοῦσῃ πάν ἀπόκρη μοι
μανίας μελάθρων
ἀλληλοφόνους ἄφελούσῃ.
[Enter Aegisthus attended by a body-guard of spearmen.]

AEGISTHUS

O glad dawn of the day that brings redress! Now can I say that from above earth Gods Look down to avenge the sorrows of mankind, Now that I see this man in woven robes Of Retribution stretched dead to my joy, Paying in full for a father’s crafty sin. For Atreus, lord of Argos, this man’s sire, Atreus, with zeal scarce welcome to my father, Feigning to hold a joyful feasting day, Served him a banquet of his children’s flesh. The extremities, the feet and fingered hands, He kept concealed, the rest disguised he set Before Thyestes, where he sat apart: Who at the first unwitting took and ate That food now proved unwholesome to his race. Then, recognizing the unhallowed deed, He groaned, and falls back vomiting the sacrifice, And calls a fell doom on the sons of Pelops, Kicking the table away to aid his curse: That thus might perish all the race of Pleisthenes. For such cause do you see this man laid low; And justly so did I contrive this slaughter. While yet I dwelt abroad I reached my foe, Weaving this dark conspiracy’s whole plot. Thus glorious were death itself to me, Now I have seen him caught in toils of Justice.

Ch. Aegisthus, I scorn to insult distress: But dost thou own wilfully to have slain him, And alone to have contrived this woeful murder,
THE AGAMEMNON 67

[Enter Aegisthus attended by a body-guard of spearmen.]

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

α φέγγος εὐφρον ἡμέρας δικηφόρου. 940
φαίνην ἄν Ἡδη νῦν βροτῶν τιμάροις
θεοὺς ἀνωθεν γῆς ἐποπτεύειν ἄχη,
ιδὼν ύφαντος ἐν πέπλοις Ἑρμύων
tὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε κείμενον φίλος ἐμοί,
χερὸς πατρός ἐκτύνοντα μηχανάς.

'Ατρεὺς γὰρ ἄρχοιν τῆς δὲ γῆς, τούτου πατήρ
'Ατρεὺς, προθύμοις μᾶλλον ἡ φίλως, πατρὶ
tῶμῳ, κρεουργῶν ἡμαρ εὐθύμοις ἄγειν
dοκῶν, παρέσχε δαίτα παιδείων κρεών.
tὰ μὲν ποδήρη καὶ χερῶν ἄκρους κτένας
ἐκρυπτὶ ἀνωθεν ἄνδρ’ ἐκας καθήμενον
ἀσημ’. ὁ δ’ αὐτῶν αὐτίκ’ ἀγνοίᾳ λαβών
ἐσθει βορᾶν ἄσωτον, ὡς ὁρᾶς, γένει.
κάπετ’ ἐπιγνοῦς ἔργον οὐ καταίσιον
ἀμοίζειν, ἀμπτίπτει δ’ ἀπὸ σφαγὴν ἔρων,
μόρον δ’ ἀφετον Πελοπίδαις ἐπεύχεται,
λάκτισμα δείπνου ξυνῆκως τιθεὶς ἀρά,
οὕτως ὀλέσθαι πάν τὸ Πλεισθένους γένοις.
ἐκ τῶν δ’ σοι πεσόντα τόνδ’ ἰδεῖν πάρα.
κάγῳ δίκαιοι τούδε τοῦ φόνου ῥάφευσ.
καὶ τούδε τάνδρος ἡγάμην θυραῖοι ὡν,
πᾶσαν συνάψας μηχανὴν δυσβουλίας.
οὕτω καλῶν δὴ καὶ τὸ καθανεῖν ἐμοί,
ἰδόντα τούτον τῆς δίκης ἐν ἔρκεσιν.

Χο. Αἶγισθ’, ὑβρίζειν ἐν κακοῖσιν οὐ σέβω.
σὺ δ’ ἄνδρα τόνδε φῆς ἐκὼν κατακτανεῖν,
μόνος δ’ ἐποικτον τόνδε βουλεύσαι φόνον·

5—2
Know thine own head, judged guilty, shall not scape
The curses of a people flung in stones.

_Ae._ Thou to prate so, benched at the lowest oar,
While those of the upper tier control the ship!
Your old age shall be told how bitter it is
To be schooled in discreetness at your years.
Bonds and the pangs of hunger are supreme
Physicians to instruct even senile minds
In wisdom. Doth not this sight make thee see?
Kick not against the pricks, lest the wound smart.

_Ch._ Thou woman, in wait for returning warriors,
Lurking at home, defiling a man's bed—
For a mighty captain didst thou plot this death?

_Ae._ These words likewise shall prove the source of tears.

_Ch._ Thou to be despot of our Argive folk,
Who durst not, when thou hadst contrived his death,
Durst not achieve the crime with thine own hand.

_Ae._ The beguiling was the wife's part manifestly.
I was suspected, a foe by my birth.
Now with the dead king's treasure will I strive
To rule this people: but the mutinous man
I shall yoke sternly, not like a corn-fed colt
In traces; no, but grim starvation, lodged
With darkness, shall not leave him till he is tamed.

_Ch._ Why, craven soul, didst thou not kill thy foe
Unaided, but must join with thee a woman,
Defilement of our country and its Gods,
To slay him? Oh, is Orestes living yet,
That he by fortune's grace returning home
Victoriously may put both these to death?

_Ae._ Nay, if thus in word and deed you threaten, soon
shall you be taught.
THE AGAMEMNON

οὗ φημεὶς ἀλύζεων ἐν δίκη τὸ σῶν κάρα δημορρίφεισ, σάφε οἰσθι, λευσίμους ἀράς.

Αἰ. σὺ ταῦτα φωνεῖς νερτέρα προσήμενος κάπη, κρατοῦντων τῶν ἔπι ζυγῷ δορός; γνώσει γέρων ὁν ὃς διδάσκεσθαι βαρῦ τῷ τηλικούτῳ, σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον. δεσμῶς δὲ καὶ τὸ γῆρας αἱ τε νῆστιδες δύαι διδάσκεναι ἐξοχῶται φρενῶν ἰατρομάντεις. οὐχ ὃρᾶς ὃρῶν τάδε; πρὸς κέντρα μὴ λάκτιζε, μὴ παῖςας μογῆσ.

Χο. γύναι, σὺ τους ἥκοντας ἐκ μάχης μένων οἰκουρός εὕην ἀνδρὸς αἰσχύνων ἅμα ἀνδρὶ στρατηγῷ τὸν ἐβούλευσας μόρον;

Αἰ. καὶ ταῦτα τάπη κλαμμάτων ἀρχηγενή.

Χο. ὡς δὴ σὺ μοι τῷρανυος 'Ἀργείων ἔσει, ὃς οὐκ, ἐπειδὴ τῷ ἐβούλευσας μόρον, δρᾶσαι τόδ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔτης αὐτοκτόνωι.

Αἰ. τὸ γὰρ δολῶσαι πρὸς γυναικὸς ἢν σαφῶς· ἐγὼ δ' ὕποπτος ἐχθρός ἡ παλαιγενής. ἐκ τῶν δὲ τοῦδε χρημάτων πειράσομαι ἀρχεῖν πολιτῶν· τὸν δὲ μὴ πειθάνορα ξεύξω βαρελαῖς οὔτι μοι σειραφόρον κρεθῶντα πῶλον· ἀλλ' ὁ δυσφίλει σκότῳ λίμῳς ἥνυσικος μαλθακόν σφ' ἐπόψεται.

Χο. τὸ δη τῶν ἀνδρα τόνδ' ἀπὸ ψυχῆς κακῆς οὐκ αὐτὸς ἡνάριξε, ἀλλὰ νιν γυνῇ χώρας μίασμα καὶ θεῶν ἐγχωρίων ἐκτείνει· 'Ορέστης ἀρά που βλέπει φῶς, ὅπως κατελθὼν δεύρο πρεμενεῖ τῦχῃ ἀμφοίν γένηται τοῦτε παγκράτης φονεύς;

Αἰ. ἀλλ' ἔπει δοκεῖς τάδ' ἔρδειν καὶ λέγειν, γνώσει τάχα.
Forward now, my trusty spearmen! Here is work for us at hand.

**SOLDIERS**

Forward now! His sword unsheathing, each man stand upon his guard.

*Ch.* Nay, I too, my sword unsheathing, shrink not back, though I must die.

*So.* Die, thou sayest. The word is welcome. Ours be now to make it good.

*Cl.* Nay forbear, my dearest husband. Let us do no further ill.

Miseries are here to reap in plenty, a pitiable crop.

Harm enough is done already: let no blood by us be spilt.

Then if haply these afflictions prove enough, there let us stop,

Sorely smitten thus already by the heavy heel of fate.

Sodoth a woman's reason counsel, if so be that any heed.

*Ae.* But for these to let their foolish tongues thus blossom into speech,

Flinging out such overweening words, as though to tempt their fate!

*Ch.* Never was it Argive fashion to fawn upon a villainous man.

*Ae.* Well, I'll visit this upon you soon or late in days to come.

*Ch.* That thou shalt not, if but Heaven guide Orestes back to his home.

*Ae.* Yes, I know full well myself how banished men will feed on hopes.

*Ch.* Do thy worst; wax fat, befouling righteousness, while yet thou mayest.
εἰς δὴ, φίλοι λοχῖται, τούργον οὖχ ἐκάς τὸδε.

ΔΟΧΙΤΑΙ
eἰς δὴ, ξίφος πρόκωπον πᾶς τις εὐτρεπήζετον.

Χο. ἀλλὰ μὴν κἀγὼ πρόκωπος οὖν ἀναίνομαι θανεῖν.

∆ο. δεχομένως λέγεις θανεῖν σε· τὴν τύχην δ᾽ αἰροῦμεθα.

Κλ. μηδαμῶς, οὐ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, ἀλλὰ δράσωμεν κακά.

ἀλλὰ καὶ τάδ' ἔξαμήσαι πολλὰ δύστην ὁδός·

τημονῆς δ᾽ ἄλις γ᾽ ὕπάρχει· μηδὲν αἰματώμεθα.

εἰ δὲ τοι μόχθων γένοιτο τῶν' ἄλις, δεχομεθ᾽ ἄν,

δαίμονος χηλὴ βαρείᾳ δυστυχῶς πεπληγμένοι.

ἀδ' ἔχει λόγος γυναικός, εἰ τις ἄξιοι μαθεῖν.

Ἀι. ἀλλὰ τούσδ' ἐμοὶ ματαίαν γλώσσαν ὡδ᾽ ἀπανθίσαι

κάκβαλείν ἐπὶ τοιαύτα δαίμονος πειρωμένους.

Χο. οὐκ ἄν Ἀργείων τόδ' εἰ, φῶτα προσαίνειν κακῶν.

Ἀι. ἄλλῳ ἔγω σ᾽ ἐν υστέραισιν ήμέραις μέτειμ' ἐτί.

Χο. οὐκ, ἐὰν δαίμων Ὀρέστην δεῦρ ἀπευθύνῃ

μολεῖν.

Ἀι. οἶδ᾽ ἐγὼ φεύγοντας ἀνδρας ἐλπίδας συτουμένους.

Χο. πρᾶσσε, πιαίνου, μιαίνων τὴν δίκην, ἐπει πάρα.
Ae. Take my warning; for this folly thou shalt make amends some day.

Ch. Brag: be valiant like a cock who crows and struts beside his hen.

Cl. Treat with the contempt they merit these vain yelpings. Thou and I, Now the masters in this palace, will rule all things righteously.
Αι. ἵσθι μοι δῶσων ἄποινα τῆςδε μωρίας χρόνῳ.
Χο. κόμπασον θαρσῶν, ἀλέκτωρ ὡστε θηλείας πέλας.
Κλ. μὴ προτιμήσῃς ματαίων τῶνδ’ ὑλαγμάτων· ἐγὼ καὶ σὺ θήσομεν κρατοῦντε τῶνδε δωμάτων καλώς.
THE CHOEPHORI
OF
AESCHYLUS
THE CHOEPHORI

[The grave of Agamemnon, near the palace of Argos.]

ORESTES

Nether Hermes, guardian of paternal rights,
Preserve me and fight with me at my prayer.
Over this grave’s mound on my sire I call
To hearken, to give heed.
I was not there, father, to wail thy death,
Nor did I stretch my hand towards thy bier.

[Enter Electra and the Chorus.]

What is it I see? What is this troop of women
Approaching in conspicuous black robes
Of mourning? To what cause should I assign it?
Hath some new sorrow fallen upon the house?
Or should I guess they are bringing these libations
To appease my father in the world below?
Naught else? Yonder, it must be, walks Electra,
My sister. By the bitterness of her grief
I know her. O Zeus, grant me now to avenge
My sire’s death; on my side deign thou to fight.
Pylades, stand we aside, that I may learn
More surely who these suppliant women are.

CHORUS

"Go," said she, "from the palace bear
Libations forth, with sharp resounding stroke of hand."
Behold, my cheek is newly scarred with crimson,
THE CHOEPHORI

[The grave of Agamemnon, near the palace of Argos.]

OPRESTHES

'Ερμῆς χθόνιες πατρῴ, ἐποπτεύουν κράτη,
σωτῆρ γενοῦ μοι ξύμμαχός τ' αἰτουμένω·
tύμβου δ' ἐπ' ὄχθω τάδε κηρύσσω πατρὶ
κλέειν, ἀκούσαν.
οὐ γὰρ παρόν φῶμιξα σόν, πάτερ, μόρον
οὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χείρ' ἐπ' ἐκφορᾷ νεκροῦ.

[Enter ELEKTRA and the CHORUS.]
tί χρήμα λεύσσω; τίς ποθ' ἤδ' ὀμήγυρης
στείχει γυναικῶν φάρεσσω μελαγχύρωις
πρέπουσα; ποιὰ ξύμφορα προσεικάσω;
pότερα δόμοισι πήμα προσκυρεῖ νέου;
ἡ πατρὶ τῶμῳ τάσδ' ἐπεικάσας τύχῳ
χώς φεροῦσας νερτέροις μειλύγματα;
οὐδὲν ποτ' ἀλλο· καὶ γὰρ Ἡλέκτραν δοκῶ
στείχεων ἀδελφὴν τὴν ἐμήν πένθει λυγρῷ
πρέπουσαν. ὃ Ζέυ, δός με τίσασθαι μόρον
πατρός, γενοῦ δὲ σύμμαχος θέλων ἐμοί.
Πυλάδη, σταθῶμεν ἐκποδῶν, ὃς ἂν σαφῶς
μάθω γυναικῶν ἀτίς ἢδε προστροπῆ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰαλτὸς ἐκ δόμων ἔβαν [στρ. a.
χοᾶς προπομπὸς δεῦχει σὺν κτύπῳ.
πρέπει παρης φοινίος ἀμυγμοῦς

20
Rent by the bloodily furrowing nail!
At all hours feeds my heart on lamentation ceaselessly.
A scream was heard of linen torn,
As in my agony I ripped it up,
These folds o'er my breast,
Robes cruelly mangled,
Victims of my joyless task.

For thrilling Fear with lifted hair,
Prophetic to the house in dreams, and breathing wrath
From sleep, at dead of night with panic outcry
Uttered a shriek from the inner recess,
A fierce wail, bursting on the chamber where the women
And they who read this dream declared, [slept.
Pledging a verity by heaven revealed,
That ghosts underground,
Souls wrathfully plaintive,
Still against their slayers raged.

To avert such horror, the impious woman who sends
(Alas, Earth, Mother!) [me forth,
Plans a vain appeasement
That can ne'er appease. But I
Fear to speak the words she bade.
For what redemption can there be for blood once
Woe for this miserable hearth! [spilt?
Woe for this house to ruin doomed!
A sunless gloom, abhorred of men,
A shroud of hate broods o'er a house
Death-bereaved of its master.

That venerable, resistless, invincible majesty,
That once found a way through
The ears and hearts of all men,
THE CHOEPHORI

οὖνχος ἀλοκε νεοτόμῳ,
δ' αἰώνος δ' ἱνγμοῖοι βόσκεται κέαρ.
λυροθόροι δ' ὑφασμάτων
λακίδες ἐφλαδον ὑπ' ἀλγεσιν,
πρόστερνοι στολμοὶ
πέπλων ἀγελάστοις
ξυμφοραῖς πεπληγμένων.

τορός γὰρ ὀρθόθριξ φόβος,
δόμων ὑνειρόμαντις, εἰ ὑπνοῦ κάτων
πνέων, ἀφρόνυκτον ἁμπόαμα
μυχόθεν ἐλακε περὶ φόβῳ,
γυναικείοις ἐν δόμασι βαρὺς πίτυνων.
κριταί τε τῶν ὑνειράτων
θεόθεν ἐλακον ὑπέγγυοι

μέμφεσθαι τοὺς γᾶς
νέρθεν περιθύμως
τοῖς κτανοῦσι τ' ἐγκοτεῖν.

τοιώδει χάριν ἀχάριτον ἀπότροπον κακῶν,

[ἀντ. α.]

[στρ. β.]

Ιδ' γαλα μαία,
μαμένα μ' ἴαλλει
δύσθεος γυνα. φοβοῦ-

μαι δ' ἔπος τόδ' ἐκβαλεῖν.
τί γὰρ λύτρον πεσόντος αἰματος πέδοι;
Ιδ' πάνωξις ἑστία,
Ιδ' κατασκαφαί δόμων.
ἄνηλιοι βροτοστυγέις
διὸ φοι καλύπτουνι δόμους
δεσποτῶν θανάτουι.

[ἀντ. β.]

σέβας δ' ἀμαχον ἀδάματον ἀπόλεμον τὸ πρίν

δ' ὀτῶν φρενὸς τε
δαμίας περαίνων
Now has fallen away. 'Tis Fear
Reigns instead. Prosperity—
That among mortals is a god, and more than god.
But Justice, watching with her scale,
On some by daylight swiftly swoops,
Or in the borderland of dark
Her lingering wrath ripening bides:
Others utterly the night whelms.

**ELECTRA**

Maidens, who serve our house and give it order,
While I pour forth these funeral offerings,
How must I speak, how pray, to appease my sire?
Shall I say that I bring a gift of love
From wife to loving husband—from my mother?
Nay, that I dare not. I know not what to say.

*Ch.* While you pour, utter blessings for the loyal.

*El.* To whom shall I give that name among our friends?

*Ch.* First to thyself, and all who hate Aegisthus.

*El.* For myself must I pray then, and for thee?

*Ch.* You know the truth: 'tis yours now to decide.

*El.* Whom else then to this company should I add?

*Ch.* Remember Orestes, banished though he be.

*El.* 'Tis well said. Wisely have you admonished me.

*Ch.* Next, mindful of those guilty of that bloodshed—


*Ch.* Pray that upon them come some god or mortal—

*El.* To judge or to avenge? Which do you mean?

*Ch.* Say simply this: "one to take life for life."

*El.* Is that a holy prayer for me to utter?

*Ch.* Why not?—to requite foes with injury!

*El.* Mighty Herald between worlds above and under,
   Aid me, O nether Hermes, summoning
THE CHOEPHORI

νῦν ἀφιστάται. φοβεῖ
tαι δὲ τις. τὸ δ' εὐτυχείν
tὸδ' ἐν βροτοῖς θεὸς τε καὶ θεοῦ πλέον.
ροτή δ' ἐπισκοπεῖ δίκας
ταχεῖα τοὺς μὲν ἐν φάει,
tὰ δ' ἐν μεταίχμιῳ σκότου
μένει χρονίζοντι βρύει,
tοὺς δ' ἀκρατος ἔχει νῦς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

διμαλι γυναίκες, δωμάτων εὐθήμονες,
tί φῶ χέουσα τάσσε νηδείους χοὰς;
πῶς εὐφρον' εἶπω, πῶς κατεύξωμαι πατρί;
πότερα λέγουσα παρὰ φίλης φίλφο φέρειν
γυναῖκός ἀνδρί, τῆς ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάρα;
τῶν' οὐ πάρεστι θάρσος, οὐδ' ἔχω τί φῶ.

Χο. φθέγγου χέουσα κεδνὰ τοίνυν εὐφροσίν. 65

Ηλ. τίνας δὲ τούτοις τῶν φίλων προσευνέπω; 70

Χο. πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὴν χώστις Αὐγισθοῦ στυγεῖ.

Ηλ. ἐμοὶ τε καὶ σοὶ τάρ' ἐπεύξωμαι τάδε;

Χο. αὐτὴ σὺ ταῦτα μανθάνουσ' ἢδη φράσαι.

Ηλ. τίν' οὖν ἔτ' ἄλλοιν τῆδε προστιθὸ στάσει; 75

Χο. μέμνησ᾽ Ὄρεστον, κεῖ θυραῖος ἐσθ' ὦμως.

Ηλ. εὖ τοῦτο, καφρένωσας οὐχ ἧκιστά με.

Χο. τοῖς αἰτίοις νυν τοῦ φῶνου μεμημένη.

Ηλ. τί φῶ; δίδασκ' ἀπειρον ἐξηγομένη.

Χο. ἐλθεῖν τίν' αὐτοῖς δαίμον' ἢ βροτῶν τίνα

Ηλ. πότερα δικαστὴν ἢ δικηφόρον λέγεις; 80

Χο. ἀπλῶς τί φράζοσ', ὅστις ἀνταποκτενεῖ.

Ηλ. καὶ ταῦτα μοῦστιν εὐσεβὴθ θεῶν πάρα;

Χο. πῶς δ' οὔ τοῦ ἔχθρον ἀνταμείβεσθαι κακοῖς;

Ηλ. κηρυξ μέγιστε τῶν ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω,

ἀρηξον, Ἐρμῆ χθόνιε, κηρύξας ἐμοί,
The powers beneath the earth to hear my prayers
Uttered for wrongs done to a father's home.
Pouring this lustral water to dead men,
I call upon my sire: Have pity on me.
With dear Orestes kindle thy dark halls.
And for me grant that I prove chaster far
Than was my mother, more innocent my hand.
For us these prayers. But for our adversaries
One to avenge thee, father, I bid rise,
And that thy slayers justly in turn be slain.

Or. Tell the Gods that thy prayers have been fulfilled,
   And pray hereafter for like good-success.
El. Why, for what boon have I to thank them now?
Or. The sight of that for which thou hast prayed so long.
El. Whom canst thou know that I was summoning?
Or. Whom but Orestes, the idol of thy soul?
El. And what proof have I that my prayers are answered?
Or. Here am I. Seek no nearer friend than me.
El. O Sir, is this some snare you are weaving round me?
Or. Against myself then am I framing it.
El. I see you wish to mock at my afflictions.
Or. Then at my own too, if indeed at thine.
El. As if thou wert Orestes then I bid thee....
Or. Nay, 'tis himself thou seest and wilt not know.
El. O thou sweet eye, glancing for me with love
   Fourfold! To thee must needs be given the name
   Of father: to thee falls the love I owe
   To a mother—mine has merited utmost hate—
   And to a sister, cruelly sacrificed.
Proved now a brother true, I reverence thee.
Only may Power and Justice, and with these
Zeus, mightiest of all, be on thy side.
THE CHOEPHORI

τοὺς γῆς ἔνερθε δαίμονας κλύειν ἐμᾶς εὐχᾶς, πατρῴων δωμάτων ἐπισκόπους κἀγὼ χέονσα τάσδε χέρυβας βροτοῖς λέγω καλοῦσα πατέρ', ἐποίκτειρόν τ' ἐμὲ φίλον τ' Ὀρέστῃν φῶς ἀναψον ἐν δόμοις. αὐτῇ τέ μοι δὸς σωφρονεστέραν πολὺ μητρῶς γενέσθαι χειρά τ' εὐσεβεστέραν. ἥμιν μὲν εὐχᾶς τάσδε, τοῖς δ' ἐναντίοις λέγω φαινοῖν σου, πάτερ, τιμάορον, καὶ τοὺς κτανόντας ἀντικαθθανεῖν δίκην. 

Ὁρ. εὐχοῦν τὰ λοιπά, τοῖς θεοῖς τελεσφόροις εὐχᾶς ἐπαγγέλλουσα, τυγχάνειν καλῶς.

Ἥλ. ἐπει τί νῦν ἔκατι δαιμόνων κυρῶν;

Ὁρ. εἰς ὅψιν ἥκεις ὧντερ ἐξηύχουν πάλαι.

Ἥλ. καὶ τίνα ὑποστά μοι καλουμένη βροτῶν;

Οὗρ. σύνοιδ' Ὀρέστῃν πολλά σ' ἐκπαγιλομένην.

Ἥλ. καὶ πρὸς τι δητα τυγχάνων κατευγμάτων;

Ὠρ. ὅδ' εἰμί· μὴ μάτευ' ἐμοῦ μᾶλλον φίλον.

Ἥλ. ἂλλ' ἡ δόλων τιν', ὃ ἔξεν', ἀμφι μοι πλέκεις;

Ὠρ. αὐτὸς καθ' αὐτοῦ τάρα μηχανορραφῶ.

Ἦλ. ἂλλ' ἐν κακοῖς τοῖς ἐμοῖς γελᾶν θέλεις.

Ὠρ. κἂν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἄρ', εἴπερ ἐν γε τοῖς σοῖς.

Ἥλ. ὡς ὄντ' Ὀρέστῃν τάρ' ἐγὼ σε προὐννέπω;

Ὠρ. αὐτὸν μὲν ὀὖν ὀράσα δυσμαθεῖς ἐμὲ.

Ἥλ. ὃ τερπνὸν ὁμμα τέσσαρας μοίρας ἔχουν ἐμοὶ· προσαυδᾶν δ' ἔστ' ἀναγκαῖος ἔχον πατέρα τε, καὶ τὸ μητρὸς ἐς σε μοι βέπει στέργηθρον· ἢ δὲ πανδίκας ἐκθαίρεται· καὶ τῆς τυθεόσης νηλεός ὀμοσπόρου· πιστὸς δ' ἀδελφος ἰσθ', ἐμοὶ σέβας φέρων· μόνον Κράτος τε καὶ Δίκη σὺν τῷ τρίτῳ πάντων μεγίστῳ Ζηνὶ συγγένοιτό σοι.
Or. Zeus, Zeus, look down; witness what here is done. Behold this orphan brood of an eagle sire That perished in the twines and writhing coils Of a fell viper. Fatherless are they, gripped By hungry viper, for strength is not yet theirs To bring home to the nest their father's prey. Like them mayst thou behold me; and her too, Electra, children fatherless and forlorn, Both suffering the same exile from our home. Ch. O children, saviours of the ancestral hearth, Silence, I pray, lest someone overhear, And to ease a babbling tongue report all this To those that rule. Ah may I one day watch Their corpses in the spluttering resinous flame! Or. Never shall Loxias' mighty oracle Betray us. He it was who bade me endure This peril, threatening oft with voice uplifted Woes to make cold as winter my warm heart, If I avenged not those that slew my sire. The wrath rising from earth of hostile powers His voice proclaimed to men, citing such plagues As leprous ulcers crawling o'er the flesh, Eating its health away with cruel jaws: And how upon this plague a white down grows. Yet other onslaughts of the avenging fiends Sprang from a father's blood, so he foretold: For the unseen weapon of the nether powers, Stirred by slain kinsmen calling for revenge, Frenzy and causeless terror of the night, Perturb and harass; till by the brazen scourge His marred carcase is chased forth from the town. At last without rites, without friends, he dies,
THE CHOEPHORI

Op. Ζεύ Ζεύ, θεωρός τῶνδε πραγμάτων γενού·
ιδού δὲ γένναν εὖνιν αιετοῦ πατρός,
θανόντος ἐν πλεκταῖσι καὶ σπειράμασι
δεινῆς ἐξίδυσις· τοὺς δ’ ἀπορφανισμένους
νήστις πιέζει λιμός· οὐ γὰρ ἐντελεὶς
θήραν πατρῴαν προσφέρειν σκηνήμασιν.
οὔτω δὲ κάμε τήνδε τ’, Ὅλεκτραν λέγω,
ιδεῖν πάρεστί σοι, πατροστηρὴ γόνον,
ἀμφό φυγῆν ἐχοντε τὴν αὐτὴν δόμων.

Xo. ὃ παῖδες, ὃ σωτῆρες ἐστίας πατρός,
συγάθ’, ὅπως μὴ πεῦσεται τις, ὃ τέκνα,
γλῶσσης χάριν δὲ πάντ’, ἀπαγγελὴ τάδε
πρὸς τοὺς κρατοῦντας· οὐς ἴδομ’ ἐγὼ ποτε
θανόντας ἐν κηκίδι πισσήρει φλογὸς.

Op. οὔτοι προδόσει Δοξίου μεγασθενὴς
χρησμὸς κελεύων τὸνδε κίνδυνον περὰν,
καζορθιάζων πολλὰ καὶ δυσχειμέρους
ἀτας ὅφ’ ἱππαρθεμὸν ἐξαιδώμενος,
εἰ μὴ μέτειμι τοῦ πατρὸς τοὺς αἰτίους·
tὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ γῆς δυσφρόνου μηνύματα
βροτοὺς πυφαύσκων εἰπε, τάσδ’ αἰνῶν νόσους—
σαρκῶν ἐπαμβατῆρας ἀγρίας γνάθοις
λειχήνας ἐξέσθοντας ἀρχαιὰν φύσιν,
λευκὰς δὲ κόρσας τῇδ’ ἐπαντέλλειν νόσῳ·
ἀλλὰς τ’ ἐφώνει προσβολᾶς Ἑρινών
ἐκ τῶν πατρῴων αἰμάτων τελομένας·
tὸ γὰρ σκοτειών τῶν ἐνερτέρων βέλος
ἐκ προστροπαίων ἐν γένει πεπτωκότων,
καὶ λύσα τε καὶ μάπαίος ἐκ νυκτῶν φόβοι
κινεῖ, παράσσει, καὶ διώκεσθαι πόλεως
χαλκηλάτῳ πλάστυγγι λυμανθέν δέμας,
πάντων δ’ ἀτιμοὺ κάφιλον θυπσκείν χρόνῳ
Utterly wasted to a vile mummied corpse.
Should I not trust such oracles as these?
Though I trust them not, the deed must yet be done.

Ch. O powerful Fates, let Zeus now send
    Prosperous fortune
    Unto us whom righteousness aideth.
    "Enmity of tongue for enmity of tongue
    Be paid in requital," cries Justice aloud,
    Exacting the debt that is owed her.
    "Murderous blow for murderous blow
    Let him take for his payment." "To the deed its
    So speaks immemorial wisdom.

Or. Father, O father of woe, what word
    Am I to speak, or what do
    To waft this message afar to thee,
    Where in the grave thou coucheest?
    As darkness and light are sundered,
    Loving rites cannot reach thee,
    The dirge chanted of old to praise
    Kings of the house of Atreus.

Ch. My son, the ravening jaw
    Of fire subdues not wholly
    The spirit of him who is dead.
    Someday his mood he revealeth.
    When the slain man is bewailed, then
    Is the injurer discovered.
    And a rightful lamentation
    For a parent hunts and ranges
    With wide search, till the guilt is tracked down.

El. Hear then, O father, as we in turn
    Utter our tearful anguish.
κακῶς ταριχευθέντα παμφθάρτω μόρφ.
tουώσε Χρησμοίς ἀρα χρὴ πεποιθέναι;
κεὶ μὴ πέποιθα, τοῦργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον.

Χ. ἄλλ' ὁ μεγάλαι Μοῦραι, Διόθεν
tήδε τελευτάν,
ἡ το δίκαιον μεταβαίνει.
'ἀντὶ μὲν ἐχθράς γλώσσῃς ἐχθρᾶ
γλώσσα τελείσθω' τουφειλόμενον
πράσσουσα Δίκη μέγ' ἀντει.'
'ἀντὶ δὲ πληγής φονίας φονίαν
πληγήν τινέω.' 'δράσαντι παθεῖν,'
τρυγέρων μύθος τάδε φωνεῖ.

Ο. ὁ πάτερ αἰνοπαθεῖς, τί σοι
φάμενος ἢ τί ἰέξας
τύχουμ' ἀγκαδαν οὐρίσας,
ἐνθα σ' ἔχουσαν εὑνάι;
σκότω φάος ἀντίμοι-
ρον· 'χάριτες δ' ὁμοίως
κέκληματι γόος εὐκλεῖς
προσθοδόμοις 'Ἀτρείδαις.

Χ. τέκνον, φρόνημα τοῦ
θανόντος οὐ δαμάζει
πυρὸς μαλερὰ γνάθος,
φαίνει δ' ύστερον ὄργας·
ὅτοτύζεται δ' ὁ θυμίσκοι,
ἀναφαίνεται δ' ὁ βλάπτων.
πατέρων τε καὶ τεκόντων
γόος ἔδικος ματεύει
tο πάν ἀμφιλαφῆς ταραχθεῖς.

Ἡλ. κλύθι νυν, ὃ πάτερ, ἐν μέρει
πολυδάκρυτα πένθη.
Thy two children are we whose dirge
Wails for thee o'er thy grave-mound.
The suppliant and the exile
To thy tomb we draw near.
What here is well? What is free from woe?
Vain with our doom to wrestle.

_Ch._ I beat my breast to an Arian dirge, and in the mode
Of Kessian wailing-women slaves, [hands
With clutching and bespattering strokes behold my
In quick succession uplifted higher and higher still
To fall in battering blows, until my miserab
Belaboured head resounds beneath the cruel shock.

_El._ Oh fie on thee! Cruel fiend!
Thou wicked mother! Cruel was that funeral.
Without kinsfolk, him, a king,
Without lament, unbewailed,
Thou hadst the heart so to inter a husband.

_Or._ No rites at all! Was it so then? Oh shame!
Nay verily, for my father's shaming
By help of heaven she shall pay,
By help of these hands of mine.
And then, when I have slain her, let me perish.

_Ch._ This also know, his limbs were lopped and mangled.
'Twas her design, hers who so could bury him;
To make his death such that thou
Shouldst not endure still to live.
Thou now hast heard how thy sire was outraged.

_Or._ On thee I call; father, stand beside thine own.
_El._ And I to his, all in tears, would add my voice.
_Ch._ And we too all cry aloud with one accord:
δίπαις τοῖ σ' ἑπιτύμβιος
θρήνος ἀναστενάζει.
tάφος δ' ἱκέτας δέδεκται
φυγάδας θ' ὁμοίως.
tί τῶνδ' εὖ, τί δ' ἄτερ κακῶν;
οὐκ ἄτριακτος ἄτα;

Χο. ἐκοψα κομμὸν "Ἀριων ἐν τε Κισσίας
νόμοις ἱλεμίστριας,
ἀπρυγκτόπληκτα πολυπάλακτα δ' ἦν ἰδεῖν
ἐπασσυντεροτριβῆ τὰ χερὸς ὅρεγματα
ἀνωθεν ἀνέκαθεν, κτύτυφ δ' ἐπιρροθεῖ
κροτητῶν ἁμόν πανάθλιον κάρα.

Ηλ. ἴδω ἴδω δαῖα
πάντολμε μάτερ, δαῖας ἐν ἐκφοραῖς
ἀνευ πολιτάν ἀνακτ',
ἀνευ δὲ πενθημάτων
ἐτλας ἀνοίμωκτον ἀνδρα θάψαι.

Ορ. ταφᾶς ἀτίμους ἑλέξας, οἷμοι;
πάτρος δ' ἀτίμωσιν ἄρα τίσει
ἐκατὶ μὲν δαιμόνων,
ἐκατὶ δ' ἁμάν χερῶν.
ἐπειτ' ἐγὼ νοσφίσας δλοίμαν.

Χο. ἐμασχαλίσθη δὲ γ', ὡς τὸδ' εἰδῆς,
ἐπρασσε δ' ἄτερ νιν ὄδε θάπτει,
μόρον κτίσαι μωμένα
ἀφετον αἰώνι σφ.
κλύεις πατρόφους δύας ἀτίμους.

Ορ. σέ τοι λέγω, ξυγγενοῦ, πάτερ, φίλοις.
Ηλ. ἐγὼ δ' ἐπιφθέγγομαι κεκλαμένα.
Χο. στάσις δὲ πάγκωινος ἢδ' ἐπιρροθεῖ.
Or. El. Ch. Oh hearken; visit thou the light:
Aid us against our foes' hate.

Or. Let sword with sword, right encountering meet with right.

El. Ye deities, judge the right with righteousness.

Ch. A shudder steals o'er me, as I hear such prayers.

Or. El. Ch. Though destiny hath bided long,
Yet shall your prayer reveal it.

Or. O father, who wast so unkingly slain,
Grant, I implore thee, lordship in thy house.

El. A like boon, father, do I ask of thee:
Let me escape, and let Aegisthus perish.

Or. O Earth, release my sire to guide me in fight.

El. O Persephassa, grant fair victory.

Or. Remember the bath wherewith they slew thee, father.

El. Remember what strange cloak-net they devised.

Or. In fetters no smith forged thou wast snared, father.

El. Yes, in a wrapping plotted for thy shame.

Or. Art thou not wakened by these tauntings, father?

El. Dost thou not lift up thy beloved head?

Or. Either send Justice to fight beside thine own,
Or grant us the like grip of them in turn,
If thou by victory wouldst retrieve defeat.

El. Hearken once more to this last cry, father.
Behold these nestlings crouching at thy tomb,
And pity us both, thy daughter and thy son.

Or. And blot not out this seed of Pelops' line:
For thus, though thou hast died, thou art not dead.

Ch. Come, amply have you lengthened out your dirge,
Due tribute to the tomb's unwept dishonour.
For the rest, since now thy heart is set on deeds,
Get thee to work forthwith, and test thy fortune.
THE CHOEPHORI

Or. Hl. Xo. ἀκοουσιν ἐς φάος μολὼν,

ἐὖν δὲ γενοῦ πρὸς ἔχθροὺς.

Or. Ἄρης Ἁρεὶ ἐξουσιαί, Δίκαι Δίκαι.

Hl. ἱδιθελς, κραίνειτ’ ἐνδικος δίκαι.

Xo. τρόμος μ’ ὕφερτει κλύοσαι εὐγμάτων.

Or. Hl. Xo. τὸ μόρσιμον μὲνει πάλαι,

εὐχομένοις δ’ ἄν ἐλθοι.

Or. πάτερ, τρόποισιν οὐ τυραννικοὶς θανὼν,

αἰτουμένῳ μοι δὸς κράτος τῶν σῶν δήμων.

Hl. καγώ, πάτερ, τοιάνδε σοι χρειάν ἔχω,

οἰκείν μετ’ ἀνδρὸς θείαν Ἀιγίνσθιό μόρον.

Or. Ὁ γαῖ’, ἀνεῖ μοι πατέρ’ ἐποπτεῦσαι μάχην.

Hl. ὅ Περσέφασσα, δὸς δέ γ’ εὐμορφον κράτος.

Or. μέμνησο λουτρόν οἷς ἐνοσφίσθης, πάτερ.

Hl. μέμνησο δ’ ἀμφίβληστρον ὅς ἐκαίνισας—

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Or. πέδαις γ’ ἀχαλκεύτοισι θηρευθέας, πάτερ,—

Hl. αἰσχρῶς τε βουλευτοῖσι ἐν καλύμμασιν.

Or. ἄρ’ ἔξεγείρει τοῦδ’ ὅνειδεσιν, πάτερ;

Hl. ἄρ’ ὀρθὸν αἴρεις φίλτατον τὸ σὸν κάρα;

Or. ἦτοι δίκην ιάλλε σύμμαχον φίλοις,

ἡ τὰς ὁμοιὰς ἀντίδος λαβᾷς λαβεῖν,

εἴπερ κρατηθείς γ’ ἀντιπολέμαι θέλεις.

Hl. καὶ τῆς’ ἀκοουσόν λουσθίον βοῆς, πάτερ,

ιδὼν νεοσσοὺς τοῦσ’ ἐφημένους τάφῳς ὁἰκτειρεθη ἡμῖν ἀρσενὸς θ’ ὁμοῦ γόουν.

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Or. καὶ μη ἕξαλείψῃς στέρμα Πελοπίδῳν τόδε.

οὕτω γὰρ οὐ τέθυνκας οὔδε περ θανῶν.

Xo. καὶ μὴν ἀμεμφῆ τοῦδ’ ἐπεινάτῃν λόγον,

τίμημα τύμβου τῆς ἀνομίακτου τύχης.

τὰ δ’ ἄλλ’, ἐπειδὴ δρᾶν κατώρθωσαι φρενί,

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ἔρδοις ἄν ἣδη δαιμόνος πειρώμενος.
**Or.** That will I. Yet first it were well to enquire,  
Wherefore she sent libations; what could move her  
So late to make amends for wrongs past cure?  

*Ch.* I know, my son; for I was there. By dreams  
And prowling terrors of the night perturbed,  
The godless woman sent these offerings.  

**Or.** And did you learn the dream? Then tell it me.  

*Ch.* She gave birth in her dream to a snake, she says,  
And couched it like a babe in swaddling bands.  

**Or.** For what food did it crave, this new-born monster?  

*Ch.* She offered it her own breast in her dream,  
And with the milk it sucked a curd of blood.  
Then she awoke from sleep shrieking for terror;  
And many a lamp, whose light the dark had blinded,  
Flared up throughout the house at the queen's need.  
Therefore these pious offerings she sends,  
In hope to lance and cure the mischief so.  

**Or.** Now to this earth and to my father's grave  
I pray that in me this dream may be fulfilled.  
She who thus nursed so dread a prodigy  
Must die by force, and I, enserpented,  
Shall be her slayer, as this dream foretells.  

*Ch.* I accept thy divination of these signs.  
So may it prove. Teach now thy friends their part,  
Telling what each should do or should not do.  

**Or.** 'Tis simple. Let Electra go within.  
These women I bid keep concealed my plan.  
Then as by craft they slew a noble prince,  
By craft they shall be caught in the same noose,  
And perish, even as Loxias foretold.  
For like a traveller, and in full disguise,  
To the main gate will I come with Pylades here,
THE CHOEPHORI

Op. ἐσται· πυθέσθαι δ’ οὐδέν ἐστ’ ἔξῳ δρόμου, τόθεν χοᾶς ἐπεμψεν, ἐκ τίνος λόγου μεθύστερον τιμῶσ’ ἀνήκεστον πάθος;

Xo. οἶδ’, ὃ τέκνου, παρῆ γάρ· ἐκ τ’ ὀνειράτων καὶ νυκτιπλάγκτων δειμάτων πεπαλμένη χοὰς ἐπεμψε τάσδε δύσθεος γυνή.

Op. ἦ καὶ πέπνυσθε τοῦναρ, ὡστ’ ὀρθῶς φράσαι; Xo. τεκεῖν δράκοντ’ ἐδοξεν, ὡς αὐτῇ λέγει. κάν σπαργάνοις παιδὸς ὀρμίσαι δίκην.

Op. τίνος βορᾶς χρήζοντα, νεογενές δάκος;

Xo. αὐτῇ προσέχε μαζ’ ἐν τώνειρατι ὡστ’ ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβου αἴματος σπάσαι. ἦ δ’ ἔξῳ ὑπνοῦ κέκραγεν ἐπτομένη.

πολλοὶ δ’ ἀνήθον, ἐκτυφλωθέντες σκάτῳ, λαμπτήρες ἐν δόμοις δεσποινῆς χάριν· πέμπει τ’ ἐπείτα τάσδε κηδείους χοᾶς, ἄκος τομαῖον ἐλπίσασα πημάτων.

Op. ἀλλ’ ἐὔχομαι γῆ τῇ καὶ πατρὸς τάφῳ τοῦνειρον εἶναι τοῦτ’ ἐμοὶ τελεσφόρον. δεῖ τοῖς νυν, ὡς ἔθρεψεν ἐκπαγυλον τέρας, θανεῖν βιαίως· ἐκδρακοντωθείς δ’ ἐγὼ κτείνω νυν, ὡς τοῦνειρον ἐννέπει τόδε.

Xo. τερασκότον δὴ τῶνδε σ’ ἀἱροῦμαι πέρι. γένοιτο δ’ οὕτως. τάλλα δ’ ἐξηγοῦ φίλοις, τοὺς μὲν τι ποιεῖν, τοὺς δὲ μή τι δράν λέγω.

Op. ἄπλους ὁ μῦθος· τήνδε μὲν στείχειν ἔσω, αἰνῶ δὲ κρύπτειν τάσδε συνθήκας ἐμάς, ὡς ἄν δόλῳ κτείναντες ἄνδρα τίμιον δόλοις καὶ λῃσθῶσιν ἐν ταύτω βρόχῳ θανόντες, ἦ καὶ Λοξίας ἐφῆμισεν. ξένῳ γὰρ εἴκοσι, παντελῇ σαγῆν ἔχων, ἦξῳ σὺν ἄνδρι τῶν’ ἐφ’ ἐρκείους πῦλας.
A guest to the house, aye and its spear-guest too.
And both of us will don Parnassian speech,
'Copying the accent of a Phocian tongue.
Then once I have crossed the threshold of the court,
And found him seated in my father's throne,
Or if afterwards he meet me face to face
And speak—dropping his craven eyes, be sure—
Ere he can say, "Whence comes this stranger?" dead,
Snared by my nimble weapon, will I smite him.
The Avenging Spirit, stinted ne'er of slaughter,
Shall drink in blood unmixed her third last draught.
Do thou then keep good watch within the house.
And you, I charge you, bear a cautious tongue
For speech or silence as the moment needs.
Last thou, friend, follow me and stand at watch
To succour me in the contest of the sword.

Ho, slave! open the gates! You hear me knock.
Is any there within doors?—Ho, slave, ho!

GATE-KEEPER
Enough! I hear. Of what land are you? Whence?

Or. Announce me to the masters of the house.
The tidings I come bringing are for them.
And make haste; for night's dusky chariot
Comes on apace. 'Tis time we travellers found
Some public guest-house to cast anchor in.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Friends, speak your wishes. At your service here
Are all such comforts as befit this house,
Warm baths, and to refresh your weariness,
Soft couches, and true eyes to attend your wants.
But if you have affairs of weightier counsel,
That is work for men, to whom we will impart it.
THE CHOEPHORI

Πυλάδης· ξένος δὲ καὶ δορίζεινος δόμων·
ἀμφω δὲ φωνήν ἢσομεν Παρνησία,
γλώσσης ἀντὴν Φωκίδος· μμουμένω.
ei δ' οὖν ἀμείβω βαλὸν ἐρκείον πυλῶν
κάκειον ἐν θρόνοισιν εὔρήσω πατρός,
ἡ καὶ μολὼν ἑπειτά μοι κατά στόμα
ἐρεῖ, σάφ' ἵσθι, καὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς βάλει,
πρὶν αὐτὸν ἐπείτιν 'ποδαπὸς ὁ ξένος·' νεκρὸν
θῆσω, ποδάκει περιβαλῶν χαλκεύματι.
φόνου δ' Ἐρινὺς οὐχ ὑπεστανισμένη
ἀκρατοῦ αἴμα πίεται τρίτην πόσων.
νῦν οὖν σὺ μὲν φύλασσε τὰν ὀίκῳ καλῶς,
ὑμῖν δ' ἐπαίνῳ γλῶσσαν εὐφήμονοι φέρειν,
σιγᾶν θ' ὅπου δεῖ καὶ λέγειν τὰ καίρια.
tὰ δ' ἄλλα τούτω δεῦρ' ἐποπτεύσαι λέγω,
ξιφιφόροις ἀγώνας ὀρθώσαντι μοι.

παί παί, θύρας ἄκουσον ἐρκείας κτύπου.

τίς ἔνδον, ὦ παί—παί, μάλ' αὐ, τίς ἐν δόμοις;

ΟΙΚΕΤΗΣ

eἴεν, ἄκουω· ποδαπὸς ὁ ξένος; πόθεν;

Ορ. ἀγγελλὲ τοίσι κυρίοισι δωμάτων,
πρὸς οὖσπερ ἥκω καὶ φέρω καίνους λόγους.
tάχυνε δ', ὦς καὶ νυκτός ἁρμ' ἐπείγεται

σκοτεινών, ὥρα δ' ἐμπόρους καθίναι
ἄγκυραν εὖ δόμοισι πανδόκοις ξένων.

ΚΑΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ξένους, λέγοιτ' ἀν εἰ τι δεῖ· πάρεστι γὰρ
οποιάπερ δόμοισι τοῖσι δ' ἐπεικότα,
καὶ θερμὰ λουτρὰ καὶ πότων θελκτήριος

στρωμνή, δικαίων τ' ὁμμάτων παρουσία.
ei δ' ἄλλο πρᾶξαι δεῖ τι βουλιώτερουν,
ἀνδρῶν τόδ' ἐστὶν ἔργον, οἷς κοινώσομεν.
Or. I am a Daulian traveller from Phocis.
As at my own risk I was carrying goods
To Argos, where now my long journey ends,
There met me a man I knew not, nor he me,
Strophius, a Phocean, so I learnt in talk.
Having asked my way and told me his, he said:
"Since anyhow you are bound for Argos, Sir,
Bear heedfully in mind to tell his parents
That Orestes is dead. Do not forget.
So whether his friends resolve to fetch him home,
Or bury him, our denizen and guest
Forever, bring me their injunctions back.
Meanwhile the curved sides of a brazen urn
Enclose his ashes, in due form bewept."
I have told my whole message. Whether now
I am speaking to the rulers, and his kindred,
I know not; but his parent should be told.

Cl. Ah me! we are taken ruthlessly by storm.
O thou all-conquering curse that haunts this house,
How wide thy vision! with sure aim thy shafts
Strike even that we have hidden with care afar,
Stripping my dear ones from me, unhappy woman!

Or. For my part certainly I could have wished
With happier tidings to commend myself
To hosts so princely, and earn their entertainment.

Cl. Nay, due reward shall none the less be thine,
Nor shall you find yourself less welcome here.
Some other would have brought this news instead:
But now 'tis the hour when guests, tired by the day's
Long journey, should be tended as befits.
Take him and lodge him well in the men's chambers
With these his fellow-travellers and attendants.
THE CHOEPHORI

Oπ. ξένος μὲν εἶμι Δαυλεὺς ἐκ Φωκέων:

στείχοντα δ' αὐτόφορτον οἰκεῖα σαγῆ

εἰς Ἀργος, ὡσπερ δευρ' ἀπεξύγην πόδα,

ἀγνῶς πρὸς ἀγνώτ' εἰπε συμβαλῶν ἀνήρ,

ἐξιστορῆσας καὶ σαφηνίσας ὄδον,

Στρόφιος ὁ Φωκεύς: πεύθομαι γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ:

'ἐπείπερ ἄλλως, οἶ ξέν', εἰς Ἀργος κίεις,

πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας πανδίκως μεμημένος
tεθνεῶτ' Ὀρέστην εἰπέ, μηδαμὸς λάθη.

εἴτ' οὖν κομίζειν δόξα νικήσει φίλων,

εἴτ' οὖν μέτοικον, εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἄει ξένουν,

θάπτειν, ἐφεμάς τάσδε πόρθμευσον πάλιν.

νῦν γὰρ λέβητος χαλκέου πλευρώματα

σποδόν κέκευθην ἀνδρὸς εὗ κεκλαυμένου:
tοσαύτ' ἀκοῦσας εἴπον. εἰ δὲ τυγχάνω

τοῖς κυρίοις καὶ προσήκουσι δέγαν

οὐκ οἶδα, τὸν τεκόντα δ' εἰκὸς εἰδέναι.

Κλ. οἴ 'γώ, κατ' ἀκρας νηλεώς πορθούμεθα.

ο' δυσπάλαιστε τῶνδε δωμάτων ἀρά,

ὡς πόλλ' ἐπωτᾶς κάκτοδων εὗ κείμενα,

τόξοις πρόσωθεν εὐσκόπους χειρομενή,

φίλων ἀποφιλίοις με τήν παναθλίαν.

Oπ. ἐγώ μὲν οὖν ξένοις εἶ ἐνδαίμοσι

κεδυνῶν ἔκατε πραγμάτων ἄν ἥθελον

γνωστὸς γενέσθαι καὶ ξενωθήναι: τί γὰρ;

Κλ. οὗτοι κυρήσεις μεῖον ἄξιων δέθεν,

οὐδ' ἤγουν ἄν γένοιο δόμασιν φίλοις.

ἄλλος δ' ὄμολος ἤλθεν ἄν τάδ' ἀγγελῶν.

ἀλλ' ἐσθ' ὁ καιρὸς ἡμερεύοντας ξένους

μακρᾶς κελεύθου τυγχάνειν τὰ πρόσφορα.

ἀγ' αὐτὸν εἰς ἀνδρῶνας εὐξένουσι δόμων,

ὅπις θύτους τε τούσδε καὶ ξυνεμπόρους.
Let them receive there what beseems our house.
I warn you, for their comfort you must answer.
This news meanwhile we will impart to those
Who bear rule here. Having no lack of friends,
We will take counsel on this sad event.

Ch. O reverend Earth, O reverend mound,
Thou that beneath thee coverest the outworn
Dust of the armed fleet's kingly commander,
Deign now to hearken, deign to give succour.
Now is the hour when guileful Deceit
Must enter to aid us, and Chthonian Hermes,
Patron of stealth, stand sentinel over
This deadly encounter of sword-blades.

Our traveller, it seems, is working mischief.
Yonder I see Orestes' nurse in tears.
Where are you going, Kilissa, through the gates,
With grief to bear you company unhired?

NURSE

The mistress bids me summon Aegisthus home
As quick as may be, to meet these stranger guests,
And learn more certainly as man from man
This new-told rumour—while before her servants
Behind eyes of pretended gloom she hides
A laugh at work done excellently well
For her, but miserably for this house,
Hearing the tale these strangers told so plain.
That heart of his I warrant will be glad
When he has learnt their story. Wellaway!
All other troubles patiently I bore:
But dear Orestes, the babe I spent my soul on,
κάκει κυρούντων δόμασιν τὰ πρόσφορα.
αἶνῳ δὲ πράσσειν ὡς ὑπευθύνῳ τάδε.
ήμεις δὲ ταῦτα τοὺς κρατοῦσι δωμάτων
κοινώσομεν τε καὶ σπανίζοντες φίλων
βουλευσόμεσθα τῆς δὲ συμφοράς πέρι.

Χο. ὁ πότνια χθῶν καὶ πότνι’ ἀκτή
χόματος, ἣ νῦν ἐπὶ ναυάρχῳ
σώματι κεῖσαι τῷ βασιλείῳ,
νῦν ἐπάκουσον, νῦν ἐπάρηξον.
νῦν γὰρ ἀκμαζεῖ Πειθῶ δολίαν
ἐξουκαταβήναι, χθόνιον δ’ Ἐρμῆ
καὶ τὸν νῦχιον τοῦδ’ ἐφορεύσαι
εὐφοδηλήτοισιν ἀγώσιν.

ἔοικεν ἀνὴρ ὁ ξένος τεύχειν κακόν·
τροφόν δὲ Ἐρέστου τὴν’ ορῷ κεκλαμμένην. 350
ποὶ δὴ πατεῖς, Κίλισσα, δωμάτων πύλας;
λύπη δ’ ἀμισθός ἐστί σοι ξυνέμπορος.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

Ἄγισθον ἡ κρατοῦσα τοῖς ξένοις καλεῖν
ὅτως τάχιστ’ ἀνωγεν, ὡς σαφέστερον
ἀνήρ ἄπ’ ἀνδρός τὴν νεάγγελτον φάτιν
ἐλθὼν πῦθηται τήνδε, πρὸς μὲν οἰκέτας
θετοσκυθρωπῶν ἐντὸς ὅμματων γέλων
κεύθουσ’ ἐπ’ ἔργους διαπεπραγμένους καλῶς
κείνης, δόμοις δὲ τοίσδε παγκάκως ἔχει,
φήμης ὑφ’ ἡ γναθεῖλαν οἰ-ξένοι τορφῆς. 355
ἡ δ’ κλῦουν ἐκείνος εὑραμει νόνν,
ἐντ’ ἄν πῦθηται μῦθον. ὃ τάλαν’ ἐγὼ·
tὰ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλα τλημόνως ἤμυλον κακά·
φίλου δ’ Ἐρέστην, τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς τριβήν,
Whom straight from his mother's womb I took to nurse....

And then those shrill cries summoning me by night,
And all those weary tasks, mere trouble wasted.
They were: for a senseless thing one needs must nurse
Like a dumb beast—how else—? by humouring it.
The cry of a boy in swaddlings tells you nothing,
Whether hunger, thirst or wanting to make water
Grips him: a child's young body will have its way.
These wants I would forecast; but often, it may be,
Would guess wrong, and so have to cleanse his linen,
Laundress and nurse reckoning as one office.
Aye, these two handicrafts both fell to me,
When I received Orestes from his father.
Now, woe is me! I learn that he is dead.
So I must fetch the man who has brought this house
To ruin. Glad will he be to hear my tale.

Ch. Tell us, how does she bid him come arrayed?
Nu. "Arrayed?" Speak plain. I understand you not.
Ch. Whether with escort, or may be alone?
Nu. She bids him bring a bodyguard of spearmen.
Ch. Bear no such message then to our hated master,
But bid him come alone, that he may hear
Without alarm, at once, with cheerful heart.
Nu. Can you be looking kindly on these tidings?
Ch. But what if Zeus should change ill winds to fair?
Nu. How, when Orestes, hope of the house, is gone?
Ch. Not yet. A seer of small skill might know that.
Nu. What! Know you aught outside what has been told?
Ch. Go, take thy message. Do as thou wert charged.
That which concerns the Gods is their concern.
Nu. Well, I will go, following thy advice.

May it prove all for the best by the Gods' grace.
ΤΟΣΟΥΝ ΚΕΛΕΥΕΙΝ ΒΙΝ ΜΟΛΕΙΝ ΕΣΤΑΛΜΕΝΟΝ;
ΤΡ. ΤΙ ΠΩΣ; ΛΕΓ' ΑΥΘΙΣ, ὌΣ ΜΑΘΩ ΣΑΦΕΣΤΕΡΟΝ.
ΧΩ. ΕΙ ΞΩΝ ΛΟΧΙΤΑΙΣ ΕΙΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΜΟΝΟΣΤΙΒΗ.
ΤΡ. ἌΓΕΙΝ ΚΕΛΕΥΕΙ ΔΟΡΥΦΟΡΟΥΣ ΟΡΑΟΝΑΣ.
ΧΩ. ΜΗ ΒΙΝ ΣΥ ΤΑΥΤ' ἈΓΓΕΛΛΕ ΔΕΣΤΟΤΟΥΝ ΣΤΟΥΓΕΙ.'
ΤΡ. ἈΛΛ' ΑΥΤΩΝ ἘΛΘΕΙΝ, ὍΣ ΑΔΕΙΜΑΝΤΩΣ ΚΛΥΗ,
ΤΡ. ἈΛΛ' Ἡ ΦΡΟΝΕΙΣ ΕΥ ΤΟΙΣ ΒΙΝ ἩΓΓΕΛΜΕΝΟΙΣ;
ΧΩ. ἈΛΛ' ΕΙ ΤΡΟΠΑΙΑΝ ΖΕΝΣ ΚΑΚΩΝ ΘΗΣΕΙ ΠΟΤΕ.
ΤΡ. ΚΑΙ ΠΩΣ; 'ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ ἘΛΠΙΣ ΟΙΧΕΤΑΙ ΔΟΜΩΝ.
ΧΩ. ΟΥΠΩ; ΚΑΚΩΣ ΥΕ ΜΑΝΤΙΣ ἌΝ ΓΝΟΙΧ ΤΑΔΕ.
ΤΡ. ΤΙ ΦΗΣ; ἘΧΕΙΣ ΤΙ ΤΩΝ ΛΕΛΕΓΜΕΝΩΝ ΔΙΧΑ;
ΧΩ. ἈΓΓΕΛΛ' ΙΟΥΣΑ, ΠΡΑΣΙΣ ΤΑΠΕΣΤΑΛΜΕΝΑ.
ΤΡ. ἈΛΛ' ΕΙΜΙ ΚΑΙ ΣΟΙΣ ΤΑΪΤΑ ΠΕΙΣΟΜΑΙ ΛΟΓΟΙΣ.
ΤΡ. ΑΛΛ' ΕΙΜΙ ΚΑΙ ΣΟΙΣ ΤΑΪΤΑ ΠΕΙΣΟΜΑΙ ΛΟΓΟΙΣ.
THE CHOEPHORI

Ch. O reverend Earth, O reverend mound,
Thou that beneath thee coverest the outworn
Dust of the armed fleet’s kingly commander,
Deign now to hearken, deign to give succour.
Now is the hour when guileful Deceit
Must enter to aid us, and Chthonian Hermes,
Patron of stealth, stand sentinel over
This deadly encounter of sword-blades.

AEGISTHUS
I am come in answer to a summoning message.
A strange tale has been brought, so I am told,
By travellers, news of no pleasant sort.
Orestes’ death—a horror-dripping burden
Would that prove, were it too laid on this house
Already mauled and festering with past bloodshed.
What should I think? Is it the living truth?
Or else mere talk, begotten of women’s fears,
That leaps into the air to die in smoke?
Can you say aught to clear my mind of doubt?

Ch. We heard indeed—But go in to the strangers,
And ask of them. No messenger so sure
As to enquire oneself of him who knows.

Ae. This messenger I must see and question further,
Whether he was present at the death himself;
Or from some phantom rumour learnt his tale.
Be sure they shall not cheat a clear-eyed mind.

Ch. Zeus, Zeus, what speech shall I find? Whence now
Shall begin my fervent prayer to thy Godhead?
How in loyal zeal
Give utterance due to my longing?
For now is the hour when either the blood-stained
THE CHOEPHORI

Χο. ὃ πότνια χθὼν καὶ πότιν' ἀκτῇ χώματος, ἢ νῦν ἐπὶ ναυάρχῳ σῶματι κεῖσαι τῷ βασιλεῖ, νῦν ἐπάκουσον, νῦν ἐπαρήξον· νῦν γὰρ ἀκράζει Πειθῶ δολίαν ἐνυγκαταβηθῆναι, χθόνιον δὲ Ἐρμῆν καὶ τὸν νύχιον τοῖσδ' ἐφορεύσαι ξιφοδηλήτοισιν ἀγώσιν.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἡκὼ μὲν οὐκ ἀκλητος, ἀλλ' ὑπάγγελος· νέαν φάτιν δὲ πεύθομαι λέγειν τινὰς ἕνας μολόντας οὐδαμῶς ἐφίμερον, μόρον δ' Ὄρεστοι. καὶ τόδ' ἀμφέρειν δόμοις γένοιτ' ἀν ἄχθος αἰματοσταγῆς φόνῳ τῷ πρόσθεν ἐλκαίνουσι καὶ δεδηγμένοις. πῶς ταῦτ' ἀληθῆ καὶ βλέποντα δοξάσω; ἢ πρὸς γυναικῶν δειματούμενοι λόγοι πεδάρσιοι θρύσκουσι, θυμϊκοντος μάτην; τί τῶν' ἀν εἰποῖς ὦστε δηλώσαι φρενί; 410

Χο. ἠκούσαμεν μὲν, πυνθάνου δὲ τῶν ἔνων εἶσον παρελθὼν. οὐδὲν ἀγγέλων σθένος ὡς αὐτὸς' αὐτὸν ἀνδρα πεύθεσθαι πέρι.

Αἰ. ἰδεῖν ἔλεγξαι τ' αὖθελὼν τὸν ἀγγελον, εἰτ' αὐτὸς ἢν θυμίκοντος ἐγγύθεν παρὼν, εἰτ' ἐξ ἀμαυρᾶς κληθώνος λέγει μαθών. οὕτω φρέν' ἀν κλέψειεν ἀμματαμένην. 420

Χο. Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, τί λέγω, πόθεν ἀρξώμαι τάδ' ἐπευχομένη κατιθεάζουσ', ὑπὸ δ' εὐνοίας πῶς ἱσον εἰποῦσ' ἀνύσωμαι; νῦν γὰρ μέλλουσι μανθεῖσαι.
Edges of cleaving man-slaying sword-blades
Must utterly whelm in destruction the house
Of great Agamemnon for all time;
Or else he, kindling a fire and a light
For the cause of freedom and lawful rule,
Shall win the great wealth of his fathers.
Such now is the prize for which, one against two,
Our heaven-guided champion Orestes
Must wrestle. Oh yet may he conquer.

_Ae._ (within).  Eh! Eh! Otototoi!

_Ch._ Ah! What is it?

How is it now?  How doth Fate crown the event?
Stand we aside while the issue is in doubt,
That so we may seem blameless of these woes.
For 'tis by the sword the verdict must be sealed.

_SERVANT_

Woe is me!  Utter woe!  My lord is slain.
Woe yet once more, a third last farewell cry!
Aegisthus is no more.  But open, open,
And with all speed.  Unbar the women's gates.
Draw the bolts.  And right lusty hands are needed—
Though not to help the dead—what use were that?
Ioû! Ioû!

I am shouting to the deaf and wasting words
On idle sleepers.  Where is Clytaemnestra?
What doth she?  Her own neck is like to fall
Beside the block beneath the stroke of Justice.

_Cl._ What is it now?  What clamour are you raising?

_Ser._ The dead, I tell you, are murdering the living.

_Cl._ Ay me!  I read the purport of your riddle.

Even as by craft we slew, so must we perish.
Haste, someone, give me a man-destroying axe.
πειραὶ κοτάνων ἄνδροδαικτῶν
ἡ πάνυ θήσεω Ὁγαμεμνονίων
οίκων ἄλεθρον διὰ παντὸς,
ἡ πῦρ καὶ φῶς ἐπ’ ἔλευθερία
δαῖων ἀρχῶς τε πολυσσονόμους
πατέρων θ’ ἐξεὶ μέγαν ὀλβον.
tοιανδε πάλην μάνος ὡν ἐφεδρος
dισσοῖς μέλλει θείος Ὠρέστῃς
ἀψευ. εἰν δ’ ἐπὶ νίκῃ.

Ἀ. ἐῇ, ὅταντοτοί.
Χ. ἐὰν ἐὰ μάλα:

πῶς ἔχει; πῶς κέκρανται δόμοις;
ἀποσταθῶμεν πράγματος τελουμένου,
ὅπως δοκόμεν τῶν ἀναίται κακῶν
eίναι· μάχης γὰρ δὴ κεκύρωται τέλος.

ΟΙΚΕΣ

οἶμοι, πανομοὶ δεσπότου πεπληγμένου·
οἶμοι μάλ’ αὕθις ἐν τρίτοις προσφθέγμασιν.
Ἄγιοςθος οὐκέτ’ ἐστίν. ἅλλ’ ἀνοίξατε
ὅπως τάχιστα, καὶ γυναικεῖος πύλας
μοχλοῖς χαλάτε· καὶ μάλ’ ἥβωντος ὡδ δεῖ,
οὐχ ὡστ’ ἄρηξαι διαπεπραγμένω· τί γὰρ;
ἰοῦ ἵοῦ.

καφοῖς ἄντω καὶ καθεύδουσιν μάτην
ἀκραντα βάζω. τοῖ Κλυταιμήστρα; τί δρά;
ἔσκε νῦν αὐτῆς ἐπιζήξου πέλας
αὐχὴν πεσείσθαι πρὸς δίκην πεπληγμένος.

Κ. τί δ’ ἐστὶ χρήμα; τίνα βοήν ἱστης δόμοις;
Ο. τὸν ξόντα καίνειν τοὺς τεθυκότας λέγω.

Κα. οί ’γα. ξυνήκα τούπος ἐξ αἰνυμάτων.
δόλοις ὀλούμεθ’, ὡστερ οὖν ἐκτείναμεν.
δοῖν τις ἄνδροκῆτα πέλεκυν ὅς τάχος·
Let us know if we are conquerors or conquered. To such a pass this woeful way has brought me.

_Or._ 'Tis thee I seek. For him, it is enough.

_Cl._ Ah me, beloved Aegisthus! Art thou dead?

_Or._ Thou lovest the man? Why then in the same grave Shalt thou lie, ne'er to abandon him in death.

_Cl._ Forbear, my son. Reverence this, dear child, This breast at which thou oft, slumbering the while, Didst suck with toothless gums the fostering milk.

_Or._ How, Pylades? Should awe make me spare my mother?

**PYLADES**

Who then will heed henceforth the voice of Loxias, His Pythian oracles, aye and the faith of oaths? Rather hold all men enemies than the Gods.

_Or._ I approve thy sentence. Well dost thou exhort me. Come now. I mean to slay you at yon man's side. In his life you deemed him better than my sire; Sleep with him then in death; since he is the man You love, and him you should have loved, you hate.

_Cl._ I reared thee, and with thee would I grow old.

_Or._ My father's murderess, wouldst thou share my home?

_Cl._ Nay, child, the blame in part must lie with Fate.

_Or._ Then this doom also Fate has brought to pass.

_Cl._ Hast thou no awe, child, of a parent's curse?

_Or._ A mother's, who could cast me forth to misery.

_Cl._ To a friendly house! That was no casting forth.

_Or._ Foully was I sold, I, son of a free sire.

_Cl._ Where is the price then I received for thee?

_Or._ That taunt for shame I cannot plainly utter.

_Cl._ Nay, but speak likewise of thy father's follies.
THE CHOEPHORI

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εἰδῶμεν εἰ νικῶμεν, ἢ νικῶμεθα. 460

ἑνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ τοῦδ᾽ ἀφικόμην κακοῦ.

Or. σὲ καὶ ματεῦω· τῶς δ᾽ ἀρκούντως ἔχει.
Kl. οὔ γὰρ. τέθυμηκας, φίλτατ’ Ἀιγίσθοι βία.
Or. φιλεῖς τὸν ἄνδρα; τοιγὰρ ἐν ταύτῃ τάφῳ
κείσει. θανῶντα δ᾽ οὔτι μὴ προδόθης ποτε.
Kl. ἐπίσχεσ, ὦ παῖ, τόνδε δ᾽ αἰδεσαί, τέκνοι,
μαστῶν, πρὸς φ᾽ σὺ πολλὰ δὴ βρίζων ἅμα
οὐλοισιν ἐξίμελξας εὔτραφὲς γάλα.
Or. Πυλάδη, τί δράσοω; μητέρ’ αἰδεσθῶ κτανείν;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ποῦ δὴ τὰ λοιπὰ Δοξίου μαντεύματα
τὰ πυθόχρηστα, πιστὰ τ’ εὐδοκόματα;
ἀπαντας ἐχθροὺς τῶν θεῶν ἡγοῦ πλέον.

Or. κρίνω σὲ νικᾶν, καὶ παραινεῖς μοι καλῶς.
ἔπου, πρὸς αὐτὸν τόνδε σὲ σφάξαι θέλω.
καὶ ζῶντα γὰρ νῦν κρέσσουν ἡγήσω πατρός
τούτῳ θανοῦσα ξυνικάθευθ’, ἐπεὶ φιλεῖς
τὸν ἄνδρα τούτου, διὸ ἐχρῆμ φιλεῖν στυγεῖς.
Kl. ἐγὼ σ’ ἔθρεψα, σὺν δὲ γηράναι θέλω.
Or. πατροκτονοῦσα γὰρ ξυνοικήσεις ἐμοί;
Kl. ἡ Μοῖρα τούτων, ὦ τέκνοι, παρατία.
Or. καὶ τόνδε τοῖνυν Μοῖρ’ ἐπόροσυνεν μόρον.
Kl. οὐδὲν σεβίξει γενέθλιους ἄρας, τέκνοι;
Or. τεκοῦσα γὰρ μ’ ἔρρυψας ἐς τὸ δυστυχές.
Kl. οὔτοι σ’ ἀπέρρυψ’ ἐς δόμους δορυξένους.
Or. αἰσχρῶς ἐπράθην δὲν ἐλευθέρου πατρός.
Kl. ποῦ δὴθ’ ὁ τίμος, ὄντων ἀντεδεξάμην;
Or. αἰσχύνομαι σοι τοῦτ’ ὀνειδίσαι σαφῶς.
Kl. ἀλλ’ εἴφ’ ὀμοίως καὶ πατρὸς τοῦ σοῦ μάτας.
Or. Idling at home, censure not him who toils.
Cl. 'Tis grief for a woman, child, to lack a mate.
Or. Yet man's labour maintains her in idleness.
Cl. Thou meanest then, my child, to slay thy mother.
Or. 'Tis thou wilt be thine own slayer, not I.
Cl. Look to it! Beware the hounds of a mother's fury.
Or. How escape my father's, if I shirk this task?
Cl. Words then are vain as a dirge to a dead tomb.
Or. Vain, for my sire's fate brings his doom upon thee.
Cl. Aye me! This is the snake I bare and suckled.
Or. Yes, a true prophet was that dream-born terror.
   You slew whom you ought not: suffer what you should not.

Ch. As upon Priam's sons punishment came at last,
   Heavily fraught with doom,
   So to the royal house of Agamemnon came
   A twofold lion, a twofold sword;
   Yea to the utmost end
   The Pytho-crowned fugitive,
   Sped by the voice divine, his race now has run.
   Utter a cry of joy, now that our master's house
   Thus hath escaped its woes, yea and the waste of
   By an unclean and guilty pair—
   [wealth
   A hard, weary road!

Now upon him who loved treacherous fight, is come
Cunningly plotted doom.
And in the strife 'twas she guided aright his hand,
The veritable child of Zeus:
Justice the name whereby
She is called by men truthfully.
Deadly the wrath she breathes against those she hates.
THE CHOEPHORI 109

Or. μη ἀγχε τὸν πονοῦντ’ ἔσω καθημένη.

Kλ. ἄλγος γνωαιξὲν ἀνδρὸς εἰργεσθαι, τέκνον.

Or. τρέφει δέ γ’ ἀνδρὸς μόχθος ήμένας ἔσω.

Kλ. κτενεὶν έοικας, ὃ τέκνον, τὴν μητέρα.

Or. σύ τοι σεαυτὴν, οὐκ έγὼ, κατακτενεῖς.

Kλ. ὥρα, φύλαξαι μητρὸς ἐγκότους κύνας.

Or. τάς τοῦ πατρὸς δὲ πώς φύγω, παρεῖς τάδε;

Kλ. έοικα θρηνεὶν ξώσα πρὸς τύμβον μάτην.

Or. πατρὸς γὰρ αἴσα τόνδε σφηζει μόρον.

Kλ. οὐ ’γὼ τεκοῦσα τόνδ’ ὃφιν ἑθρεψάμην.

Or. ή κάρτα μάντις οὔξ ἀνειράτων φόβος.

ἐκανες δι’ οὐ κρήν, καὶ τὸ μῆ χρεών πάθε.

Χο. ἐμολε μὲν δίκα Πριαμίδαις χρόνῳ,

βαρύδικος ποινα·

ἐμολε δ’ εἰς δόμων τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος
dιπλούς λέων, διπλούς Ἀρης.

ἐλασε δ’ εἰς τὸ πάν

ὁ πυθόχρηστος φυγας

θεόθεν εὑ φραδαίσιν ὀρμημένοις.

ἐπολολύξατ’ ὃ δεσποσύνων δόμων
anαφυγὰς κακῶν καὶ κτεάνων τριβας

ὑπὸ δυνών μιαστόροιν,

δυσοίμου τύχας.

ἐμολε δ’ ὃ μέλει κρυπταδίου μάχας
dολιόφρων ποινά·

ἔθυγε δ’ ἐν μάχα χερὸς ἐτήτυμος

Δίος κόρα—Δίκαν δὲ νιν

προσαγορεύομεν βροτοι τυχόντες καλῶς—

ὁλέθριου πνέουσ’ ἐν ἑκβροῖς κότον.
Kindled is now the light: gone is the mighty curb
Holding the house in thrall.
Up then, arise, ye halls! Grovelling on the ground
Too long have ye been lying.

Or. Behold this twofold tyranny of our land,
They that slew the father and despoiled the house.
Stately they were once, seated on their thrones,
And loving even now, as from their plight
Is manifest. True to its pledge their oath still stands.
Both swore my father’s murder, and to die
Together. That too has been faithfully kept.
Behold too, ye that judge these deeds of woe,
The snare wherewith my unhappy sire was bound,
For his hands a fetter, for his feet a trap.
Open it out, and standing round, display
This man-enwrapping sheet, that so the Father,
Not mine, but he whose eye sees all things here,
The sun, may behold my mother’s unclean work,
And some day at my trial may appear
To witness that I wrought this slaying justly,
My mother’s, (for Aegisthus’ death I count not:
His the seducer’s penalty by law:)
But she who planned this horror against her lord,
Whose children she had borne beneath her girdle,
That once dear burden, proved now a deadly foe,
What think you of her? Were she sea-snake or viper,
Her touch would rot another’s flesh unbitten,
If cruelty and wicked will could do it.
What can I name it, speak I ne’er so mildly?
A trap for a beast? Or else a coffin-cloth
To wrap the feet of a corpse? Nay, ’tis a net:
πάρα τὸ φῶς ἰδεῖν. μέγα τ’ ἀφηρέθη
ψάλιον οἰκετῶν,
ἀναγε μᾶν δόμοι· πολὺν ἁγαν χρόνον
χαμαιπτεῖς ἔκεισθε.

Ορ. ἰδεσθε χάρας τὴν διπλὴν τυραννίδα
πατροκτόνους τε δωμάτων πορθήτορας.
σεμνοι μὲν ἦσαν ἐν θρόνοις τὸθ’ ἦμενοι,
φίλοι δὲ καὶ νῦν, ὡς ἐπεικάσαι πάθη
πάρεστιν, ὄρκος τ’ ἐμμένει πιστώμασιν.

ξυνάρμοσαν μὲν θάνατον ἄθλιω πατρὶ
καὶ ξυνθανεῖσθαι· καὶ τάδ’ εὐρόκως ἔχει.
ἰδεσθε δ’ αὐτε, τόυδ’ ἐπήκουσι κακῶν,
τὸ μηχάνημα, δεσμὸν ἄθλιω πατρὶ,
τέδας τε χειροῖν καὶ ποδοῖν ἐξυποίδα.

ἐκτεῖνατ’ αὐτὸ καὶ κύκλῳ παραστάδον
στεγαστρον ἄνδρος δείξαθ’, ὡς ἐδὴ πατήρ,
οὐχ οὐμόσ, ἀλλ’ ὁ πάντ’ ἐποπτεύων τάδε
"Ηλίος, ᾠανήμα μητρὸς ἐργα τῆς ἐμῆς,
ὡς ἄν παρῆ μοι μάρτυς ἐν δίκῃ ποτε,
ὡς τόνδ’ ἐγὼ μετήλθον ἐνδίκως μόρον
τὸν μητρὸς· Διγήσθον γὰρ οὐ λέγω μόρον,
ἐχει γὰρ αἰσχυντήρος, ὡς νόμος, δίκην·
ήτης δ’ ἐπ’ ἄνδρι τοῦτ’ ἐμῆσατο στύγος,
ἐξ οὖ τέκνων ἤμεγχ’ ὑπὸ ξώνην βάρος,
 φίλου τέως, νῦν δ’ ἔχθρον, ὡς φαίνει, κακῶν,
tί σοι δοκεῖ; μύραινα γ’ εἰτ’ ἔχιδν’ ἔφυ
σήπειν θυγοῦσ’ ἀν ἄλλον οὖ δεδηγμένον
τόλμης ἔκατι κακίδιοι φρουμάτος.

τί νῦν προσεύπω, κἀν τίχω μᾶλ’ εὐστομῶν;
ἀγρευμὰ θηρός, ἡ νεκροῦ ποδένυτον
δρόιτης κατασκήνωμα; δίκτυν μὲν οὖν,
Toils you might say, or long foot-trammelling robes;
Just such a thing some cozener might contrive,
One who tricks travellers, practising the trade
Of robbery. Many with this knavish snare
Might he destroy, and his heart often glow.
With such a woman never may I share
My home. Sooner let heaven slay me, childless.

Ch. Ah me! Ah me! 'Twas a wicked deed.
By a terrible death thou art laid low.
Alas!
Woe is flowering too for the living.

Or. Did she the deed, or did she not? I call
This robe to witness, dyed by Aegisthus' sword.
'Tis gushing blood that here hath aided time
In spoiling the embroidery's many hues.
Now can I praise, now wail him where he fell:
And as I address this web that slew my sire,
I grieve for the crime, the penance, the whole race.
Such victory wins not envy, but pollution.

Ch. No mortal man may pass through his life
Without scathe, if he pay not in sorrow.
Alas!
Woe must be, to-day or hereafter.

Or. Now hear me, for I know not how it will end—
Yea, like a driver mastered by his steeds,
My restive wits are whirling me astray
Far from the course; while Terror fain would sing
To my heart, and set her dancing to his tune.
So while I am sane, proclaiming to my friends
I say, with justice did I slay my mother,
My sire's foul murderess, abhorred of heaven.
THE CHOEPHORI

άρκυν τ’ ἀν εἵποις καὶ ποδιστήρας πέπλους. 
τοιούτουν ἀν κτήσαιτο φηλήτης ἀνήρ, 
ξένων ἀπαιόλημα κάργυροστερῆ 
βίον νομίζων, τῶδε τ’ ἀν δολώματι 
πολλοῖς ἁναιρῶν πολλᾶ θερμαῖοι φρένα. 
τοιάδ’ ἐμοὶ ξύνοικος ἐν δόμοισι μὴ 
γένοιτ’, ὁλοίμην πρόσθεν ἐκ θεῶν ἄπαις.

Xo. αἰαὶ αἰαὶ μελέων ἔργων. 
στυγερῷ θανάτῳ διεπράξθης. 
ἐ ἔ, μύμνοντι δὲ καὶ πάθος ἀνθεῖ.

Ορ. ἔδρασεν ἢ οὐκ ἔδρασε; μαρτυρεῖ δὲ μοι 
φάρος τόδ’, ὥς ἐβαψεν Αἰγίσθουν ξίφος. 
φόνου δὲ κηλεὶς ξὺν χρόνῳ ξυμβάλλεται, 
πολλαὶ βαφαὶ φθείρουσα τοῦ ποικίλματος. 
νῦν αὐτὸν αἰνῶ, νῦν ἀποιμώξῳ παρῶν, 
πατροκτόνοιν θ’ ύφασμα προσφωνῶν τόδε 
ἀλγῶ μὲν ἔργα καὶ πάθος γένος τε πάν, 
ἄξηλα νίκης τῆςδ’ ἔχων μιάσματα.

Xo. οὔτις μερόπων ἄσινῆ βίοτον 
διὰ παντὸς ἀνατος ἄμείψει. 
ἐ ἔ, μόχθος δ’ ὁ μὲν αὐτίχ’, ὁ δ’ ἤξει.

Ορ. ἀλλ’ ὡς ἂν εἰδῆτ’, οὐ γὰρ οἶδ’ ὅτη τελεῖ— 
ἄσπερ ξὺν ὕπποις ἡμιοστρόφοιν δρόμου 
ἐξωτερῶ φέρουσι γὰρ νικώμενον 
φρένες δύσαρκτοι τ’ πρὸς δὲ καρδία φόβος 
ζδεῖν ἐτοιμὸς ἡ δ’ ὑπορχεῖσθαι κότο. 
ἐως δ’ ἐτ’ ἐμφρον εἰμὶ, κηρύσσω φίλοις, 
κτανείν τε φημι μητέρ’ οὐκ ἁνευ δίκης, 
πατροκτόνοιν μίασμα καὶ θεῶν στύγος.
And for the spells that nerved me to this deed,
I cite the Pythian oracle of Loxias,
That should I act thus, I were clear of blame,
But if I failed to act—how name the penalty?
So now behold me: furnished with this bough
Enwreathed with wool, a suppliant will I go
To the mid-navel shrine, the home of Loxias,
And to that fire-light, famed imperishable,
Exiled for kindred bloodshed. To no hearth
Save his did Loxias bid me turn for refuge.
A wandering, homeless fugitive, I leave
Behind me, in life or death, such fame as this.

Ch. Nay, thou hast done well. Yoke not then thy lips
To ill-omened speech, nor utter boding words.

Or. Ah! Ah!

Bondwomen, see them yonder, Gorgon-like,
In dusky raiment, twined about with coils
Of swarming snakes! I cannot stay here more.

Ch. What fantasies toss thee, dearest of all sons
To a father? Stay: fear nothing. Thou hast vanquished.

Or. To me these horrors are no fantasies,
But indeed the sleuth-hounds of my mother’s wrath.

Ch. ’Tis that the blood is yet fresh on thy hands.
Hence the confusion that invades thy soul.

Or. Sovereign Apollo, yonder they come now thronging!
And from their eyes is dripping a loathsome gore.

Ch. In, in! The purge of Loxias with a touch
Shall free thee from such visionary horrors.

Or. Ye do not see these beings, but I see them.
I am hunted by them. I can stay no more.

Ch. Blessings go with thee, and may gracious Gods
Watch over and keep thee safe with happy chance.
καὶ φίλτρα τόλμης τήςδε πλειστηρίζομαι τὸν πυθόμαντιν Δοξίαν, χρήσαντ' ἐμοὶ πράξαντι μὲν ταῦτ' ἐκτὸς αἰτίας κακῆς εἶναι, παρέντα δ'—οὐκ ἐρώ τὴν ξημιὰν— καὶ νῦν ὑδάτε μ', ὡς παρεσκευασμένος ἐξ ὁ τοῦδε θαλλὼ καὶ στέφει προσίξομαι μεσόμφαλὸν θ' ἱδρυμα, Δοξίου πέδων, πυρὸς τε φέγγος ἀφθιτον κεκλημένον, φεύγων τὸδ' αἵμα κοινόν· οὐδ' ἐφ' ἐστίαν ἄλλην τραπέζηναι Δοξίας ἐφίετο. ἐγὼ δ' ἀλήτης τῆςδε γῆς ἀπόξενος, ζῶν καὶ τεθυρίως τάσσει κληθονας λυπῶν—

Χο. ἀλλ' εὗ γ' ἐπράξας, μηδ' ἐπιζευγχῆς στόμα φήμη πονηρά μηδ' ἐπιγλωσσῶ κακά.

Ὀρ. ἀ, ἀ.

δμωάι γυναίκες αἴδε Γοργόνων δίκην φαινοχίτωνες καὶ πεπλεκτανήμενα πυκνοῖς δράκουσιν· οὐκέτ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.

Χο. τίνες σὲ δόξαι, φιλτατ' ἀνθρώπων πατρί, στροβοῦσιν; ἦσχε, μη φοβοῦ, νικῶν πολύ.

Ὀρ. οὐκ εἰσὶ δόξαι τῶνδε πηματῶν ἐμοὶ· σαφῶς γὰρ αἴδε μητρὸς ἐγκοτοι κύνες.

Χο. ποταίνου γὰρ αἶμα σοι χερῶν ἑτὶ· ἐκ τῶνδε τοι ταραγμὸς ἐς φρένας πίτνειν.

Ὀρ. ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, αἴδε πληθύνουσι δή, κάξ ὄμματων στάξουσιν αἴμα δυσφίλες.

Χο. εἰς σοὶ καθαρμᾶς· Δοξίας δὲ προσθυγὼν ἐλεύθερον σε τῶνδε πηματῶν κτίσει.

Ὀρ. υμεῖς μὲν οὐχ ὅρατε τάςδ', ἐγὼ δ' ὅρω· ἐλαύνομαι δὲ κούκετ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.

Χο. ἀλλ' εὔνυχοίης, καὶ σ' ἐποπτεύων πρόφρων θέος φιλάσσοι καιρίοις συμφόραις.
Thus again for a third time, risen from the race,
Hath a storm swept over
The house of our kings and subsided.
First was the cruel doom of the children
Slain at the banquet.
Next was the anguish of a man, of a king,
When the Achaeans' warrior chieftain
In the bath fell slain.
Now comes yet a third, a deliverer, nay,
Rather destroyer.
What end shall there be? When shall the fury
Of revenge sink lulled into slumber?
THE CHOEPHORI

οδὲ τοι μελάθροις τοῖς βασιλείοις τρίτος αὖ χειμῶν
πνεύσας γονίας ἐτελέσθη.
παιδοβόροι μὲν πρώτον ὑπῆρξαν
μόχθοι τάλανες:
δεύτερον ἀνδρὸς βασίλεια πάθη.
λοντροδάικτος δ' ὥλετ' Ἀχαιῶν
πολέμαρχος ἀνήρ.
νῦν δ' αὖ τρίτος ἡλθεν ποθεν σωτήρ,
ἡ μόρον εἴπω;
ποὶ δὴτα κρανεῖ, ποὶ καταλήξει
μετακοιμισθέν μένος ἀτῆς.
THE EUMENIDES
OF
AESCHYLUS
THE EUMENIDES

[Before the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Enter the Pythian Prophetess.]

THE PROPHETESS

First of all gods I worship in my prayer
The first diviner Earth; after her Themis,
The second, legend saith, to take her seat
Here in her mother's shrine. Third in succession,
With her consent, no violence done to any,
Another Titan child of Earth took seat,
Phoebe: who as a birthday gift bestowed it
On Phoebus, bearing a name from her derived.
His mind with divine art did Zeus inspire,
And seated him, fourth prophet, on this throne,
As Loxias, spokesman of his father Zeus.
These gods I worship in my opening prayer.
Pallas our neighbour too I name with reverence.
I adore the Nymphs who haunt the caverned rock
Corycis, loved by birds, by gods frequented.
The springs of Pleistos and Poseidon's might
I invoke, and Zeus supreme, the crown of all,
Then seat myself as prophetess on my throne.
May they now bless my entrance more than ever
In past days. Let all Hellenes present here
Approach, as custom bids, by fall of lot.
As the God leads me, so do I give response.

[The Prophetess enters the shrine, but quickly returns.]

Things terrible to speak, terrible to see,
Have driven me forth again from Loxias' house.
THE EUMENIDES

[Before the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Enter the Pythian Propheteess.]

ΠΥΘΙΑΣ

Πρῶτον μὲν εὐχῇ τῇ δε πρεσβεύωθεν ἐκ τῆς θεᾶς, ἡ δή τὸ μητρός δευτέρα τὸ δεῖ, μαντεῖον, ὅς λόγος τις ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ λάχει, θελούσης, οὔτε πρὸς βίαιν τινὸς, 5

Τιτανίς ἄλλη παῖς Χθόνος καθέξετο, Φοίβη· δίδωσι δ’ ἡ γενέθλιον δόσιν

Φοίβῳ· τὸ Φοίβης δ’ ὄνομ’ ἐχει παρώνυμον.

ὑεχὴς δὲ τοι ἐνθεον κτίσας φρένα ἵκει τέταρτον τοῖς μαντίν ἐν θρόνοις·

Δίὸς προφήτης δ’ ἐστὶ Δοξίας πατρός.

ποτούς ἐν εὐχαῖς φροιμάξομαι θεοῦς.

Παλλὰς προναῖα δ’ ἐν λόγοι πρεσβεύεται.

σέβω δὲ νῦμθας, ἐνθα Κωρυκῖς πέτρα κοίλη, φιλορνις, δαμόνων ἀναστροφή·

10

Πλειστοῦ τε πηγάς καὶ Ποσειδῶνος κράτος καλοῦσα καὶ τέλειον ὑψίστου Δία,

ἐπειτα μάντις ἐς θρόνους καθιζάνω.

καὶ νῦν τυχεῖν με τῶν πρὶν εἰσόδων μακρὸ ἀρίστα δοθὲν· κεὶ παρ’ Ἐλλήνων τινὲς,

καὶ νῦν τυχεῖν με τῶν πρὶν εἰσόδων μακρὸ ἀρίστα δοθέν· κεὶ παρ’ Ἐλλήνων τινὲς,

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υτὸν πάλω λαχύντες, ὡς νομίζεται.

μαντεύομαι γὰρ ὅτι ἡ γνώται θεῷς.

[The Propheteess enters the shrine, but quickly returns.]

ἡ δεινὰ λέξαι, δεινὰ δ’ ὀφθαλμοῖς δρακεῖν,

paλω μ’ ἐπεμψεν ἐς δόμων τῶν Δοξίου,
When I drew near the wreath-decked inmost cell,
Upon the navel-stone I saw a man
Polluted, in a suppliant attitude.
With blood his hands were dripping, and he held
A drawn sword and a high-grown branch of olive,
Humbly enwreathed with a broad band of wool.
Between me and this man a fearful troop
Of women slumbered, seated upon chairs.
Yet not women: Gorgons call them rather.
Dusky they are, and loathsome altogether.
They snore with such blasts none may venture near;
And from their eyes a foul rheum oozes forth.
Their garb is neither fit to approach the statues
Of deities, nor to enter homes of men.
For what may ensue, let mightiest Loxias,
Who is master of this house, himself provide.
He is healing seer and judge of prodigies,
And can purge houses other than his own.

[Exit Prophetess. The interior of the shrine is disclosed. APOLLO, HERMES, ORESTES and the sleeping Furies are discovered.]

APOLLO
I shall not fail. To the end will I protect thee.
Near shall I be, even though far away:
Nor will I prove soft to thy enemies.
Awhile thou seest yon raveners subdued.
Lo sunken in sleep the loathly virgins lie,
These hoary ancient maidens, with whom never
Hath any god mingled, nor man, nor beast.
Evil was cause of their creation, evil
The murky pit of Tartarus where they dwell
Abhorred by men and by the Olympian gods.
Exit Prophetess. The interior of the shrine is disclosed. Apollo, Hermes, Orestes and the sleeping Furies are discovered.

Aποδαςων

ou'toi proddósow· dida télovs dé soi phúlaξ égyós paréstow· kai prósw· dé· apostatówn éxhroisí tois soís ou yevhísmoi pépouw.  
kai wv anloússas tásoe tás márgous òrás· únpow pessússai dé· aí katápntusoi kórai, 
yraiai palaiai paídes, álou mínyntai théow tis ouv· ánhrwpos ouv dé thýr poté· 
kaqón dé· ekati kágyenout· épew káqón 
skóton némonntai Tárta roý Thoqoons, 
míshtmái ánhrw nó kai théow 'Olymptíon.
Yet do not thou grow faint, but fly far hence:
For they will chase thee across the long mainland,
Ever new soil beneath thy wandering tread,
And beyond seas and past wave-girded towns.
Let not thy heart faint brooding on thy penance,
Till thou take refuge in the city of Pallas
And clasp her ancient image in thy arms.
There before judges of thy cause, with speech
Of soothing power, we will discover means
To set thee free for ever from these woes.
For I did counsel thee to slay thy mother.

ORESTES
Sovereign Apollo, what is just thou knowest:
Now therefore study to neglect it not.
Thy power to succour needs no warranty.

And thou, born of one father, my own brother,
Hermes, protect him: prove thy title true
As Guide, by shepherding my suppliant here.
The sanctity of an outlaw Zeus respects,
When thus with prosperous escort he is sped.

[APOLLO vanishes. ORESTES leaves the temple, guided by HERMES. Enter the GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA
Sleep, would you? Shame! What need of sleepers here?
And I by you thus held in slight regard
Among the other dead, and followed still
By the reproach of murder among the shades,
Yet wronged so foully by my nearest kin,
No spirit power shows wrath on my behalf,
Though slaughtered by the hands of a matricide.
Look now upon these wounds; look with thy soul.
THE EUMENIDES

ομως δὲ φεῦγε, μηδὲ μαλθακὸς γένη, ἐλώτι γὰρ σε καὶ δι' ἥπειρου μακρᾶς βιβῶντ’ ἀν' αἰεὶ τὴν πλανοστιβή χθόνα ὑπὲρ τε πόντου καὶ περιρρύτας πόλεις. καὶ μὴ πρόκαμψε τῶν δὲ βουκολούμενος πόνου: μολὼν δὲ Παλλάδος ποτὶ πτόλυν ἵζου παλαιὸν ἀγκαθεν λαβὼν βρέτας.
κακεὶ δικαστὰς τῶν καὶ θελετηρίους μύθους ἔχοντες μηχανάς εὐρήσουμεν ὀστ’ ἐς τὸ πᾶν σε τῶν ἀπαλλάξαι πόνων. καὶ γὰρ κτανεῖν σ’ ἐπείσα μητρὸν δέμας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ἀναξ’ Ἀπόλλων, οἶσθα μὲν τὸ μὴ ’δικείν· ἑπεὶ δ’ ἑπίστας, καὶ τὸ μὴ ’μελείν μάθε. σθένος δὲ ποιεῖν εὐ χερέγγυν τὸ σῶν.

Ἀπ. μέμνησο, μὴ φόβος σὲ νικάτω φρένας. σὺ δ’, αὐτάδελφον αἶμα καὶ κοινὸν πατρός, Ἶρμη, φύλασσε· κάρτα δ’ ὅν ἐπόνυμος πομπαίος ἵσθι, τόνδε πομπαίων ἐμὸν ἱκέτην. σέβει τοι Ζεύς τόδ’ ἐκνόμων σέβας, ὀρμώμενον βροτοῖσιν εὐπτόμπῳ τύχῃ.

[APOLLO VANISHES. ORESTES LEAVES THE TEMPLE, GUIDED BY HERMES. ENTER THE GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ

ἐὕδοιτ’ ἂν, ὦ, καὶ καθευδουσῶν τί δεῖ; ἐγὼ δ’ ὑφ’ ῥυμῶν ὃδ’ ἀπητιμασμένη ἀλλοισίν ἐν νεκροἰσίν, ὃν μὲν ἔκτανον ἰδειοὶ ἐν φθιτοίσιν οὐκ ἐκλείπτεταί, παθοῦσα δ’ οὕτω δεινὰ πρὸς τῶν φιλτάτων, οὐδεῖς ὑπὲρ μου δαιμόνων μηνιέται, κατασφαγείσης πρὸς χερῶν μητροκτόνων. ὄρα δὲ πληγᾶς τάσδε καρδία σέθεν·
For while it sleeps, the mind is lit with eyes.
Oft indeed of my offerings have you lapped,
Wineless libations, sober soothing draughts,
Dread midnight banquets, when no god but you
Is worshipped, on the altar would I sacrifice.
All this, I see, is spurned beneath your feet.
The man is gone, escaping like a fawn,
Ay, from the very snares' midst has he sprung
Lightly, making great mouths at you in scorn.
Hear me. 'Tis for my very soul I plead.
Awake, O goddesses of the nether world.
In dream now do I, Clytaemnestra, call you.

CHORUS

(Mutterings.)

Cl. Yes, whimper! But the man is gone, fled far.

Ch. (Mutterings.)

Cl. Too deep you drowse, and pity not my wrong.
Fled is Orestes, who slew me, his mother.

Ch. (Moanings.)

Cl. Whining and drowsing! Come, rise up forthwith.

Ch. (Moanings.)

Cl. Sleep and fatigue, puissant conspirators,
Have spoiled the dreadful dragoness of her might.

Ch. (Mutterings redoubled and louder.)

Follow, follow, follow, follow! Mark there!

Cl. In dream you hunt your prey, and give tongue like
A hound, whose fancy never quits the chase.
What dost thou? Arise! Let not fatigue defeat thee.
Let thy heart wince at merited rebuke,
Which to the righteous is a very goad.
Waft thou thy blood-hot breath upon the man:
eὐδοῦσα γὰρ φρὴν ὦμασιν λαμπρύνεται.
ἡ πολλὰ μὲν δὴ τῶν ἐμὸν ἐλείξατε,
χοᾶς τ’ ἀόλων, νηφάλια μειλύγματα,
καὶ νυκτίσεμνα δεῖπν’ ἐπ’ ἐσχάρα πυρὸς
ἔθουν, ὅραν οὐδενὸς κοινῆν θεῶν.
καὶ πάντα ταῦτα λάξ ὅρῳ πατοῦμενα.
ὁ δ’ ἐξαλύξας οἴχεται νεβροῦ δίκην,
καὶ ταῦτα κούφως ἐκ μέσων ἀρκυστάτων
ἀρουσεν ὑμῖν ἐγκατιλλῶψας μέγα.
ἀκούσαθ’ ὅς ἐλεξα τῆς ἐμῆς περὶ
ψυχῆς, φρονήσατ’, ὥς κατὰ χθονὸς θεαί.
δὴν ὅρῳ ὑμᾶς νῦν Κλυταμήστρα καλῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

(μυγμός.)

Κλ. μῦζοιτ’ ἄν, ἀνὴρ δ’ οἴχεται φεύγων πρόσω.
Χο. (μυγμός.)

Κλ. ἅγιαν ὑπνώσεις κού κατωκτίζεις πάθος:
φονεὺς δ’ Ὄρεστη θήσεις μητρὸς οἴχεται.
Χο. (ἀγμός.)

Κλ. ὑπνον πόνος τε κύριοι συνουμόται
δεινῆς δρακάνης ἐξεκήραναν μένος.
Χο. (μυγμός διπλοὺς ὁξύς.)

λαβὲ λαβὲ λαβὲ λαβέ, φράξου.

Κλ. δὴναρ διώκεις θῆρα, κλαγγαίνεις δ’ ἀπερ
κύων μέριμναν οὔποτ’ ἐκλείπτων πόνου.
τί δρᾶς; ἀνίστω, μῆ’ σε νικάτω πόνος.
ἀλγησον ἵππαρ ἐνδίκους ὅνείδεσιν.
τοῖς σώφροσιν γὰρ ἀντίκεντρα γίγνεται.
σὺ δ’ αἰματηρὸν πνεῦμ’ ἐπουρύσσασα τῷ,

(Μφιτρίδης.)

Κλ. ἄνωθεν ὑπνον πόνος τε κύριοι συνουμόται
δεινῆς δρακάνης ἐξεκήραναν μένος.
Χο. (Μφιτρίδης διπλοὺς ὁξύς.)

λαβὲ λαβὲ λαβὲ λαβὲ, φράξου.

Πολύσεις θῆρας κλαγγαίνουσαν,
τί δρᾶς; ἀνίστω, μῆ’ σε νικάτω πόνος.
ἀλγησον ἵππαρ ἐνδίκους ὅνείδεσιν.
τοῖς σώφροσιν γὰρ ἀντίκεντρα γίγνεται.
σὺ δ’ αἰματηρὸν πνεῦμ’ ἐπουρύσσασα τῷ,
Shrivel him with thy belly's fiery blast.
Follow him; wither him with a fresh pursuit.

[Exit the Ghost of Clytaemnestra.]

Ch. Awake!—Do thou wake her—while I wake thee.
Dost thou sleep? Rise; and spurning sleep afar,
Let us see if this warning dream prove false.

Behold! Behold! Oh shame! See, we have suffered wrong!
Much painful toil have I endured, and all in vain.
Bitter indeed the wrong done to us. Oh the shame!
Defeat hard to bear! [is gone.
Our game has slipped right through the meshes, and
By sleep subdued, lo! I have lost, lost the prey.

[Apollo re-appears.]

Aha, son of Zeus! Thou art a thief, and knave.
Thy youth rides trampling over elder deities.
What is thy suppliant? What but a godless man,
A cruel son? Yet him,
This matricide, thou hast stolen from us, thou, a god.
Who dares pretend—none—that such deeds are just?

Ap. Out, I command you, from these precincts! Hence
With speed! Begone from my prophetic shrine;
Lest smitten by a wingèd glistening snake
Sped from my gold-wrought bow-string, thou in anguish
Shouldst spit forth foam darkened with human blood.
This is no dwelling fit for your approach.
Go rather where doomed heads are lopped, eyes gouged,
Throats cut; where by destruction of the seed
THE EUMENIDES

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άτμῳ κατισχυννουσά, νηδύος πυρί,
ἐπού, μάραινε δευτέροις διώγμασιν.

[Exit the Ghost of Clytemnestra.]

Χο. ἔγειρ', ἔγειρε καὶ σὺ τήν', ἐγὼ δὲ σέ.
eὐδεῖς; ἀνίστω, κατολακτίσας' ὑπνον,
ιδῶμεθ' εἰ τι τούδε φρονίμου ματῆ.

ιὸν ἵον πόπαξ. ἐπάθομεν, φίλαι,—
ἡ πολλὰ δὴ παθοῦσα καὶ μάτην ἐγώ,—
ἐπάθομεν πάθος δυσαχές, ὦ πόποι,
ἀφετον κακόν.
ἐξ ἄρκυνων πέπτωκεν οὐχεταί θ' ὁ θήρ—
ὑπνῷ κρατηθεὶσ' ἀγραν ὀλέσα.

[Apollo re-appears.]

ιὼ παῖ Δίος, ἐπίκλοπος πέλει,—
νέος δὲ γραίας δαίμονας καθ' ὑππάσω,—
tὸν ἱκέταν σέβων, ἀθέου ἀνδρα καὶ
tοκεύσιν πικρών;
τὸν μητραλοίαν δ' ἐξέκλεψας ὃν θεόσ.—
tί τῶν' ἐρεῖ τις δικαίως ἔχειν;

Ἀπ. ἐξὼ, κελεύω, τῶνδε δωμάτων τάχος
χορεῖτ', ἀπαλλάσσεσθε μαντικῶν μυχῶν,
μή καὶ λαβοῦσα πτηνὸν ἀργηστήν ὃφιν,
χρυσηλάτου θώμηγγος ἐξορμάμενον,
ἀνής ὑπ' ἄλγους μέλαν ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων ἄφρων.
οὕτοι δόμωσι τοὺσδε χρέμπτεσθαι πρέπει·
ἀλλ̄' οὐ καρανιστήρες ὀφθαλμωρύχοι
dίκαιι σφαγαί τε σπέρματός τ' ἀποφθορά̃

Δ. 9
The virile strength of boys is maimed, where men
Are sliced or stoned, or wail in long-drawn moans
Impaled beneath the spine. Do you hear me? Go,
Vile flock without a shepherd; get you hence!
For such a herd no god has love to give.

Ch. Sovereign Apollo, hear now our reply.
   Thou thyself art not guilty of this in part:
   Thou alone didst all; the whole guilt is thine.


Ch. Thy voice enjoined this man to slay his mother.

Ap. I enjoined him to avenge his sire. What then?

Ch. We hunt forth mother-slayers from all homes.

Ap. How deal you then with wives who slay their lords?

Ch. That were no true murder of kindred blood.

Ap. Then of slight honour and no worth you make
   The troth-plight between Zeus and crowning Hera.
   The fate-sealed marriage bed of man and wife,
   Fenced with its rights, is mightier than all oaths.
   Then without justice you pursue Orestes.
   But Pallas at this trial shall arbitrate.

Ch. And I, drawn by a mother's blood, pursue
   This man with vengeance, till I hunt him down.

Ap. And I will aid my suppliant and protect him.
   For dreaded among men and gods alike
   Is the appealer's wrath, should I forsake him.

[Exeunt omnes. The scene changes to Athens. Enter
   ORESTES, who takes sanctuary at a shrine of
   ATHENA.]

Or. Goddess Athena, by command of Loxias
   I come. Receive this outcast graciously,
   No suppliant unabsolved with hand unpurged;
THE EUMENIDES  

παίδων κακούται χλούνις, ἦ δ' ἀκρωνία, λευσμός τε, καὶ μύζουσιν ὁμηρισμὸν πολὺν ὑπὸ ράχιν παγέντες. ἄρ' ἀκούετε; χωρεῖτ' ἄνευ βοτήρως αἰτιολούμεναι. πολύνης τοιαύτης δ' οὕτις εὐφιλῆς θεών.

Χο. ἀναξ' Ἀσπιλλον, ἀντάκουσον ἐν μέρει.

ἄυτός σὺ τούτων οὐ μεταίτισιν πέλει, ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ πάν ἐπιτραξας ὁν παναιτίον.

Ἀπ. πός δῆ; τοσοῦτο μῆκος ἐκτεινον λόγου.

Χο. ἐχρησας ὡστε τὸν ξένου μητροκτονεῖν.

Ἀπ. ἐχρησα ποινᾶς τοῦ πατρός πρᾶξαι. τί μὴν;

Χο. τοὺς μητραλοιας ἐκ δόμων ἐλαύνομεν.

Ἀπ. τί γὰρ γυναικὸς ἦτις ἄνδρα νοσφίσῃ;

Χο. οὐκ ἂν γένουθ' ὅμαιμος αὐθέντης φόνος.

Ἀπ. ἕ κάρτ' ἀτιμα καὶ παρ' οὐδὲν ἥρκεσσω

"Ὅρας τελείας καὶ Δίὸς πιστόματα.

ἐυνὴ γὰρ ἄνδρι καὶ γυναικι μόρσιμος ὄρκου 'στι μείζων τῇ δίκῃ φρουρουμένη.

οὐ φημ' Ὀρέστην σ' ἐνδίκως ἄνδρηλατείν.

δίκας δὲ Παλλᾶς τῶν' ἐποπτεύσει θεᾶ.

Χο. ἐγὼ δ', ἄγει γὰρ αἷμα μητρῶν, δίκας

μέτειμι τόνδε φῶτα κάκκυνηγητῶ.

Ἀπ. ἐγὼ δ' ἀρήξω τὸν ἱκέτην τε ῥύσομαι.

δεινὴ γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖς καὶν θεοῖς πέλει
tοῦ προστροπσαίον μῆνις, εἰ προδώ σφ' ἐκὼν.

[Exeunt omnes. The scene changes to Athens. Enter Orestes, who takes sanctuary at a shrine of Athena.]

Ὀρ. ἀνασα' Ἀθάνα, Δοξίου κελεύσμασιν ἥκω, δέχον δὲ πρεπεμένος ἀλάστορα,

οὐ προστρόπασιν οὐδ' ἀφοίβαντον χέρα,
Long since the stain is dimmed and worn away
By sojournings and journeyings among men.
Obedient now to Loxias' oracles
I approach thy dwelling and thine image, Goddess.
Here clinging, will I wait my trial's end.

[Enter the Furies.]

Ch. Good! Here is a clear trace of the man.
The smell of human blood smiles sweetly upon me.

Again, search again! Spy into every nook,
For fear the matricide stealthily slip from our wrath.
Yes, there again safe he lurks,
Clinging around the image of the deathless god:
Trial he now would claim for his foul handiwork.
But it may not be: a mother's blood, once spilt, is
To gather up; hard indeed.

That which on earth is shed vanishes and is gone.
Now thou in turn must yield me from thy living self,
Ruddy and rich from the heart, liquor to lap: and on
I mean to thrive, evil draught though it be. [thee
I'll wither thee alive and drag thee down below,
There to atone, pang for pang, thy mother's agony.

Or. Schooled by my miseries, I have experience
In purifying rites. Where speech befits
I know, where silence too. But in this case
A wise instructor charges me to speak.
For the blood sleeps and is fading from my hand:
The stain of matricide is washed away.
While yet fresh, at divine Apollo's hearth
It was expelled by purging blood of swine.
THE EUMENIDES

ἀλλ’ ἀμβλύν ἦδη προστετριμμένον τε πρὸς ἀλλοισιν οἴκους καὶ πορεύμασιν βροτῶν. 165
σόζων ἐφετμᾶς Λοξίου χρηστηρίους, πρόσεμι δώμα καὶ βρέτας τὸ σὸν, θεᾶ, αὐτοῦ φυλάσσων ἄμμενῳ τέλος δίκης.

[Enter the Furies.]

Χ. εἰεῦ. τὸδ’ ἐστὶ τάνδρος ἐκφανὲς τέκμαρ.
ὄσμῃ βροτείων αἰμάτων με προσγελᾷ. 170
οὐρι οὐρα μᾶλ’ αὖ
λεύσει τε πάντα, μὴ
λάθη φύγαδα βᾶς
ματροφόνος ἀτίτας.—
ὁ δ’ αὐτὲ γ’ ἀλκαν ἔχων
περὶ βρέτει πλεχθεῖς θεᾶς ἀμβρότως
ὑπόδικος θέλει γενέσθαι χερῶν.—
τὸ δ’ οὐ πάρεστιν· αἷμα μητρὸν χαμαι
dυσαγκόμιστον, παπαί,
tὸ διερὸν πέδου χύμενον οὐχεταί.—
ἀλλ’ αὐτιδοῦναι δεῖ σ’ ἀπὸ ξώντος ῥοφεῖν
ἐρυθρὸν ἐξ μελῶν πέλανον· ἀπὸ δὲ σοῦ
φερόμαν βοσκάν πώματος δυσπότου—
καὶ ξώντα σ’ ἵσχυνασ’ ἀπάξωμαι κάτω,
ἄντιποι’ ὡς τίνης ματροφόνου δύας. 185

Ορ. ἐγὼ διδαχθεῖς ἐν κακοῖς ἐπίσταμαι
πολλοὺς καθαρμοὺς, καὶ λέγειν ὅπου δίκη
σιγάν θ’ ὦμοίως· ἐν δὲ τῷ δράγματι
φωνεῖν ἐτάχθην πρὸς σοφοῦ διδασκάλου·
βρίζει γὰρ αἷμα καὶ μαραίνεται χερὸς,
μητροκτόνοι μίασμα δ’ ἐκπλυτον πέλει.
ποταίνοι γὰρ ὅν πρὸς ἐστία θεοῦ
Φοῖβου καθαρμοὺς ἡλίθῃ χοιροκτόνοις.
Now with pure lips, religiously, I call
On this land's Queen, Athena, that she come
Hither to aid me.
Oh haste—a god hears even from afar—
And bring with thee deliverance from these woes.

Ch. Ne'er shall Apollo nor Athena's might
Protect thee, but abandoned shalt thou perish,
Finding no place for gladness in thy soul.
Wilt thou not answer, wilt thou scorn my words,
Though for me thou art bred and consecrated?
Alive, slain at no altar, shalt thou feed me.
Now shalt thou hear a hymn to bind thee fast.

Let us now\(^1\) with solemn step move in accord,
And show in accord
The enthralling might of our music.
Come now let us preach to the sons of men:
Yea let us tell them of our vengeance:
Yea let us all make mention of justice.
Whoso showeth hands that are undefiled,
Lo he shall suffer nought of us ever,
But shall go unharmed to his ending.
But, if he hath sinned, like unto this man,
And covereth hands that are blood-stained,
Then is our witness true to the slain man;
And we sue for the blood, sue and pursue for it,
So that at the last there is payment.

Mother mine who bare me,
Oh Mother Night,
To be feared of them who see and see not—hear!

\(^1\) This Ode (lines 206–240) was translated by the late Dr A. W. Verrall.
καὶ νῦν ἀφ’ ἀγνοῦ στόματος εὐφήμως καλῶ
χώρας ἀνασαν τῆς Ἀθηναίαν ἔμοι
μολεῖν ἄρωγον.
ἔλθοι,—κλύει δὲ καὶ πρόσωθεν ὃν θεός,—
ὅπως γένοιτο τῶν ἔμοι λυτήριοι.

Χο. οὖτοι σ’ 'Απόλλων οὐδ’ 'Αθηναίας σθένος
ῥύσαι’ ἃν ὡστε μὴ οὔ παρημελημένον
ἐρρεῖν, τὸ χαίρειν μὴ μαθόνθ’ ὅπου φρενῶν·
οὐδ’ ἀντιφωνεῖς, ἀλλ’ ἀποπτύες λόγους
ἔμοι τραφείς τε καὶ καθιερωμένοις;
καὶ ἧν με δαίσεις οὔδὲ πρὸς βομφοὶ σφαγεῖς·
ὕμνον δ’ ἀκούσει τόνδε δέσμιον σέθεν.

ἀγε δὴ καὶ χορὰν ἁψωμεν, ἐπεὶ
μοῦσαν στυγερὰν
ἀποφαινεσθαι δεδόκησεν,
λέξαι τε λάχη, τὰ κατ’ ἀνθρώπους
ὡς ἐπινομὰ στάσις ἁμά.
εὐθυδίκαιοι δ’ οἴμουθ’ εἶναι·
tὸν μὲν καθαρὰς χεῖρας προνέμοντ’
οὕτω ἐφέρπει μῆνις ἀφ’ ἦμων,
ἀσινῆς δ’ αἰῶνα διοικουεῖ·
όστις δ’ ἀλμῶν ὢσπερ ὦδ’ ἄνηρ
χεῖρας φονίας ἐπικρύπτει,
μάρτυρες ὧρθαι τοῖς θανοῦσιν
παραγγελθέμεναι πράκτορες αὖματος
αὐτῷ τελέως ἐφάνημεν.

μᾶτερ ἃ μ’ ἔτικτες, ὥ μᾶτερ
Νῦξ, ἀλαοῖσι καὶ δεδορκόσων ποινάν,
The young god Apollo, he jests at our justice,
Covers yon cowering culprit, albeit a mother's blood
    hath marked him mine.
Sing then the spell, Sisters of Hell;
Chant him the charm, mighty to harm,
Binding the blood, madding the mood;
Such the music that we make:
Quail, ye sons of men, and quake;
Bow the heart, and bend, and break.

Even so 'tis written
(Oh sentence sure!)
Upon all that wild in wickedness dip hand
In the blood of their birth, in the fount of their
    flowing:
So shall he pine until the grave receive him—to find
    no grace even in the grave.
Sing then the spell, Sisters of Hell;
Chant him the charm, mighty to harm,
Binding the blood, madding the mood;
Such the music that we make:
Quail, ye sons of men, and quake;
Bow the heart, and bend, and break.

ATHENA
I heard a suppliant cry from far away
Beside Scamander's stream.
Thence came I speeding with unwearied foot,
To the wingless rustling of my bellying aegis.
Beholding these strange visitants in my land,
The sight dismays me not, though it astounds.
Who are you? I would question all alike,
Both him who sits a suppliant at my image,
And you, so unlike aught begotten of seed.
κλῦθ'. ὁ Δατόος γὰρ ἵνα μ’ ἀτιμὸν τίθησι
tόνδ’ ἀφαιρούμενος
πτῶκα, ματρῴον ἁγνίσμα κύριον φόνον.

ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ
τόδε μέλος, παρακοπα,
παραφορὰ φρενοδαλῆς,
ὕμνος ἐξ ‘Ερινύων,
δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρμικτος, αὐνᾶ βροτοῖς.

τοῦτο γὰρ λάχος διανταία
Μοῖρ’ ἐπέκλωσεν ἐμπέδως ἐχειν, θυντῶν
tοῖσιν αὐτουργίαν ἐξμπέσωσιν μάταιοι,
tοῖς ὑμαρτείν, ὀφρ’ ἀν
γὰν ὑπέλθη: θανῶν δ’ οὐκ ἅγαν ἐλεύθερος.

ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ
τόδε μέλος, παρακοπά,
παραφορὰ φρενοδαλῆς,
ὕμνος ἐξ ‘Ερινύων,
δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρμικτος, αὐνᾶ βροτοῖς.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

πρόσωθεν ἐξήκουσα κληδόνος βοὴν
ἀπὸ Σκαμάνδρου: ἐνθὲν διώκουσ’ ἥλθον ἀτρυτον πόδα,
πτερῶν ἀτερ ῥοβδοῦσα κόλπουν αἰγίδος.
καίνην δ’ ὀρῶσα τήνδ’ ὁμιλιάν χθονὸς
ταρβῶ μὲν οὐδέν, θαῦμα δ’ ὀμμασιν πάρα.
τίνες ποτ’ ἔστε; πᾶσι δ’ ἐσ κοινὸν λέγω·
βρέτας τε τούμον τρὸς ἐφημένῳ ξένῳ,
ὑμᾶς τ’ ὄμοιας οὐδενὶ σπαρτῶν γένει.
Ch. Thou shalt hear all in brief, daughter of Zeus.
We are Night's eternal children. In our homes
Below the earth, the Curses are we called.
Slayers of men we hunt forth from all homes.
Ath. And the slayer's flight—where is the end of it?
Ch. Where happiness is no more to be found.
Ath. Is the flight such whereon you hound this man?
Ch. Yes, for he dared to be his mother's murderer.
Ath. Was there no other power, whose wrath he feared?
Ch. What goad so strong as to compel matricide?
Ath. There are two parties here, and but one plea.
Ch. Well, question him, then judge with equity.
Ath. What reply, stranger, wouldst thou make to this?
But tell me first thy country and thy lineage,
And thy misfortunes; then repel this charge.
Or. Sovereign Athena,
I seek no absolution, nor with hand
Polluted to thine image do I cling.
Long since have I been duly purified
Elsewhere, with victim and with lustral stream.
Hear now my race. In Argos was I born.
My sire, to whom thy question fitly leads,
Was Agamemnon, chieftain of warrior seamen,
With whose aid thou didst make the city of Troy
No more a city. He returning home
Died shamefully, by my black-souled mother slain,
Enveloped in a cunning snare, that still
Remained as witness of that murderous bath.
So I slew her who bare me, I deny it not,
Requiting thus my beloved father's blood.
And herein Loxias shares the guilt with me.
If I did right or no, be thou the judge.
Whate'er my fate, from thee will I accept it.
THE EUMENIDES

Χο. πεύσει τὰ πάντα συντόμως, Διὸς κόρη, 250
ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἔσμεν Νικτόσ αἰανὴ τέκνα.
'Αραὶ δὲ ἐν οἴκοις γῆς ὑπαὶ κεκλήμεθα.
βροτόκτονοντας ἐκ δόμων ἐλαύνομεν.

Α. θ. καὶ τῷ κτανόντι ποῦ τὸ τέρμα τῆς φυγῆς;
Χο. ὅπου τὸ χαίρειν μηδαμοῦ νομίζεται.

Α. θ. ἢ καὶ τοιαύτας τὸν ἐπιρροζεῖς φυγάς;
Χο. φονεύς γὰρ εἶναι μητρὸς ἥξιόσατο.

Α. θ. ἄλλαις ἀνάγκαις, ἢ τινος τρέων κότον;
Χο. ποῦ γὰρ τοσοῦτο κέντρον ὃς μητροκτονεῖν;

Α. θ. δυνών παρόντων ἡμύσις λόγος πάρα.
Χο. ἀλλ' ἐξέλεγχε, κρίνε δὲ εὐθείαν ἄδημν.

Α. θ. τί πρὸς τάδ' εἰπτεῖν, ὦ ἐξ', ἐν μέρει θέλεις;

Ο. ρ. ἀνασά', Ἀθάνα,
οὐκ εἰμὶ προστρόπαιος, οὐδ' ἔχων μῦσος
. πρὸς χειρὶ τῇμῇ τὸ σὸν ἐφεξώμην βρέτας.

γένος δὲ τοῦμὸν ὃς ἔχει πεύσει τάχα.

'Αργείδος εἰμι, πατέρα δ' ἱστορεῖς καλῶς,

'Αγαμέμνων', ἀνδρῶν ναυβατῶν ἀρμόστορα.

ἐξ' ὧν σὸν Τροίαν ἀπολὼν Ἰλίου πόλιν

θηκας. ἐφθιθ' οὔτος οὐ καλῶς, μολὼν

εἰς οἰκον· ἀλλὰ νῦν κελαινόφρων ἐμὴ

μήτηρ κατέκτα, ποικίλοις ἀγρεύμασι

κρύψας, ὥς λουτρὸν ἐξεμαρτύρει φόνον

ἐκτείνα τὴν τεκοῦσαν, οὐκ ἄρνήσομαι,

καὶ τῶνδε κοινῆ Δοξίας μεταίτισο.

σῷ δ' εἰ δικαίως εἶπε μὴ κρίνον δίκην

πράξας γὰρ ἐν σοί πανταχ' τάδ' αἰνέσω.
Ath. The matter is too grave for any mortal
To presume to try it: nor may I myself
Lawfully judge a case of passionate murder.
But since this cause has lighted on our city,
I will appoint judges of murder, bound
By oath, to be an ordinance for all time.
When I have chosen the best among my citizens,
I will return to sift this matter truly.

Ch. Now shall justice wholly fail\(^1\),
Fade and faint, cease to be,
If the slayer’s wrongful plaint,
Here in plea, dare prevail.
Such a deed
Not a sinner but shall find
All too featly to his mind.

Give to fear her proper seat.
Still to watch the wanton thought
Let her sit, as just and meet:
Sigh and tear,
Wisdom must with these be bought.

Praise not thou the slavish lot,
And the lawless, praise it not,
Praise it not.
Blest is the mean; go thou ever between, and God
shall prosper the going.

Wisely sayeth the ancient rede,
“Naughtiness gendereth pride, as the fruit of the
But in the wholesome heart
Good hopes, good wishes start:
And good rewards the sowing.

\(^1\) This Ode (lines 291–341) was translated by the late Dr A. W. Verrall.
Αθ. τὸ πράγμα μεῖξον, εἰ τις οἴεται τὸ δὲ
βροτὸς δικάξειν. οὐδὲ μὴν ἐμοὶ θέμις
φόνον διαιρεῖν ἐξυμηνίτους δίκας.
ἐπεὶ δὲ πράγμα δεύρ’ ἐπέσκηψεν τὸ δὲ,
φόνων δικαστάς ὀρκίους αἴρομενή
θεσμὸν τὸν εἰς ἀπαντ’ ἐγὼ θῆσω χρόνον.
κρίνασα δ’ ἀστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν τὰ βέλτατα
ἡξώ, διαιρεῖν τούτῳ πράγμ’ ἐτητύμως.

Χο. νῦν καταστροφαὶ νέων
θεσμίων, εἰ κρατή-
σει δίκα τε καὶ βλάβα
tοῦδε ματροκτόνου.
πάντας ἣδη τὸδ’ ἔργον ἐυχερεῖ-
α συναρμόσει βροτοὺς.
ἐσθ’ ὅπου τὸ δεινὸν εὗ,
καὶ φρενῶν ἐπίσκπτον
deῖ μένειν καθήμενον.
ξυμφέρει
σωφρονεῖν ὑπὸ στένει.

μήτ’ ἀνάρχετον βίον
μήτε δεσποτούμενον
ἀνέσθη.
παντὶ μέσῳ τὸ κράτος
θεὸς ὁπασεῖν, ἀλλ’
ἀλλὰ δ’ ἐφορεύειν.

ξύμμετρου δ’ ἔπος λέγω,
δυσσεβίας μὲν ὑβρις
τέκος ὡς ἐτύμως.

ἐκ δ’ ὑγιεί-
ας φρενῶν ὁ πάμφιλος
καὶ πολύευκτος ὀλβός.
Then be this thy constant law,
Throned Right to hold in awe,
Hold in awe:
Which if thou spurn for a profit to earn, wait awhile,
then weep thy deception,
When the balance stands redrest.
 Honour then father and mother, who looks to be
Give to the stranger too [blest;]
Within the gates his due:
Let him have large reception.

Who free of will
Doeth right, shall prosper still;
Mercy comes behind him.
Destroyed quite
Sure ye shall not find him.
The bold in sin
By transgression shall not win;
Nor gathered heap
Of guilty spoil shall keep.
Perforce he scatters bulk and bale.
When from the tops the halyard drops,
When sinks the sail,—then mind him!

He prays—he raves—
Wrestles—Ah! the grasping waves
Will not be prevented,
But laugh, Aha!
Ha! for spite contented!
The fool, whose pride
Wind and waters’ worst defied,
With helpless hand
Beating off he beats to land!
ἐσ τὸ πᾶν δὲ σοὶ λέγω,
βομμὸν αἴδεσαι δίκας·
μηδὲ νῦν
κέρδος ἰδὼν ἄθεω
ποδὶ λαξίσης·
pοινὰ γὰρ ἐπέσται.
kύριον μὲνεὶ τέλος.

πρὸς τάδε τις τοκέων
σέβας εὖ προτίων
και ἕνετι-
μους δόμων ἐπιστροφᾶς
αἰδόμενος τις ἔστω.

ἐκὼν δ' ἀνάγκας ἀτερ δίκαιος ὁ
οὐκ ἄνολβος ἔσται·

πανώλεθρος δ' οὔποτ' ἄν γένοιτο.
τὸν ἀντίτολον δὲ φαμὶ παρβάδαν
ἀγωνα τολλὰ παντόφυρτ' ἄνευ δίκας
βιαίως ἥν χρόνῳ καθήσειν
λαίφος, ὅταν λάβῃ πόνος
θραυμέναις κεραιάς.

καλεῖ δ' ἀκούοντας οὐδὲν ἐν μέσα
δυσπαλεὶ τε δίνα·

γελᾷ δὲ δαίμων ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θερμῷ,
τὸν οὔποτ' αὐχοῦντ' ἵδὼν ἀμαχάνοις
dύαις λαπαδίνων οὐδ' ὑπερθέοντ' ἀκραν·
One touch of fate with swift surprise  
Wrecks the gay freight; he sinks, he dies,  
Lost and of none lamented!

_Ath._ Proclaim now, Herald: bid the folk be still.  
And let the Tyrrhene trumpet, with shrill note  
Piercing the heavens, filled with breath of man,  
Utter its high-pitched message to the throng.  
In silence let my ordinance be heard  
By this whole city, for all time to come,  
And by these, that their suit be rightly judged.  
Sovereign Apollo, rule what is thine own.  
How in this business, pray, art thou concerned?

_Ap._ I come, first to give witness,—for my house,  
My hearth received this man as suppliant,  
And it was I who purged him of this murder,—  
To plead too for myself; for I was cause  
Of his mother's slaying. Open thou the case  
In such form as thy wisdom may think best.

_Ath._ The word is now with you. The case is opened.

_Ch._ Many we are, but briefly will we speak.  
Sentence for sentence do thou make reply.  
Say first, art thou thy mother's murderer?

_Or._ I slew her. That fact there is no denying.

_Ch._ Of the three falls already here is one.  
But how it was you slew her, you must say.

_Or._ I will. With a sword I stabbed her in the throat.

_Ch._ And who suggested, who advised the deed?

_Or._ The oracle of this God. He bears me witness.

_Ch._ Did he, the seer, prompt you to matricide?

_Or._ Apollo, be thou witness now: pronounce  
Whether it was with justice that I slew her.
THE EUMENIDES

340 δι' αἰώνος δὲ τὸν πρὶν ὀλβον
ἐρματὶ προσβαλῶν δίκας

345 ὥλετ' ἀκλαυτος, ἄστος.

Α. κύρυσσε, κῆρυξ, καὶ στρατὸν κατειργαθοῦ ἡ τ' οὖν διάτορος αἰθέρος Τυρσηνική σάλπιγξ βροτείου πνεύματος πληρομένη ὑπέρτονον γῆρυμα φαινέτω στρατῷ. συγάν ἁρήγει καὶ μαθεῖν θεσμοὺς ἐμοὺς πόλιν τε πᾶσαι ἐς τὸν αἰανή χρόνον καὶ τούσδ', ὅπως ἄν εὔ διαγνωσθῇ δίκῃ— ἀναξ' Ἀπολλον, ὅν ἔχεις αὐτός κράτει. τι τούδε σοι μέτεστι πράγματος λέγε. 350

Απ. καὶ μαρτυρῆσων ἦλθαν—ἐστὶ γὰρ νόμῳ ἰκέτης ὃδ' ἀνήρ καὶ δόμων ἐφέστιος ἐμῶν, φόνου δὲ τούδ' ἐγὼ καθάροτος— καὶ ξυνδικήσων αὐτώς· αἰτίαι σ' ἔχω τῆς τούδε μητρὸς τοῦ φόνου. σὺ δ' εἴσαγε ὅπως τ' ἐπίστατα τήνδε κύρωσον δίκην.

Αθ. ὑμῶν ὃ μῦθος, εἰσάγω δὲ τὴν δίκην.

Χὸ. πολλαί μὲν ἐσμεν, λέξομεν δὲ συντόμως. ἐπος δ' ἀμείβου πρὸς ἐπος ἐν μέρει τιθείς. τὴν μητέρ' εἰπὲ πρῶτον εἰ κατέκτονας. 360

Ορ. ἐκτείνα· τούτοι δ' οὕτις ἄρνησις πέλει. Χὸ. ἐν μὲν τὸδ' ἤδη τῶν τριῶν παλαισμάτων. εἰπτείν γε μέντοι δεὶ σ' ὅπως κατέκτανες. Ορ. λέγω· ξιφουλκοχεῖρι πρὸς δέρνην τεμῶν.

Χὸ. πρὸς τού δ' ἐπείσθης καὶ τίνος Βουλεύμασι; 365 Ορ. τοῖς τούδε θεσφάτοις· μαρτυρεῖ δὲ μοι.

Χὸ. ὁ μάντις ἔξηγεῖτο σοι μητρόκτονεῖν;

Ορ. ἡδη σὺ μαρτύρησον. ἔξηγοῦ δὲ μοι,

Ἀπολλον, εἰ σφε σὺν δίκῃ κατέκτανου.
THE EUMENIDES

Ap. To you, the high court of Athena, honest
Shall be my words. A prophet may not lie.
Never from mantic throne have I said aught
Save by command of Zeus, the Olympian Father.

Ch. So Zeus gave thee this oracle, that bade
This Orestes to avenge his father’s blood
Regardless of a mother’s claim to awe?

Ap. Nay, it was far worse shame that a noble man,
Endowed with god-given royalty, should die,
And that by a woman’s hand.

Ch. So a father’s fate, you say, wins more respect
From Zeus, who himself enchained his old sire Cronos.

Ap. O loathly, brutish monsters, heaven-abhorred!
Fetters he might undo: there is cure for that;
Yea many the means to loosen what is bound.
But when the dust hath swallowed a man’s blood,
Once dead, there is no raising of him then.
No healing charm hath Zeus my father made
For that: all else now high now low he shifts
And turns about with no least breath of toil.

Ch. See what it means, thy plea in his defence.
His mother’s kindred blood he spilt on the earth.
Shall his father’s house in Argos yet be his?
What altar of public worship shall he use?
What brotherhood will admit him to its rites?

Ap. This too will I expound; and mark how justly.
The mother of her so-called child is not
Parent, but nurse of the young life sown in her.
The male is parent: she, but a stranger to him,
Keeps safe his growing plant, unless fate blight it.
Of this truth I will show you evidence.
A sire may beget without a mother. Here
THE EUMENIDES

Απ. λέξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς τόνδ' Ἀθηναίας μέγαν θεσμὸν δικαίως, μάντις ὅν δ' οὖ ψεύσομαι. οὐπώποτ' ἔποιον μαντικοῦσιν ἐν θρόνοις, δ' μὴ κελεύσαι Ζεὺς Ὄλυμπῖον πατήρ.

Χο. Ζεὺς, ὃς λέγεις σὺ, τόνδε χρησμὸν ὁπ' αὐτῷ, φράζειν Ὄρεστη τῷ δ' τὸν πατρὸς φῶς πράξαντα μητρὸς μηδαμοῦ τιμᾶς νέμειν;

Απ. οὐ γὰρ τι ταῦταν ἄνδρα γενναίον θανεῖν διοσκότοις σκήπτροις τιμαλφοῦμεν, καλ ταῦτα πρὸς γυναῖκός.

Χο. πατρὸς προτιμᾶ Ζεὺς μόρον τῷ σφ' λόγῳ· αὐτὸς δ' ἔδησε πατέρα πρεσβύτην Κρόνον.

Απ. ὃ παντομισθο σκόταλα, στύγη θεῶν, πέδαι μὲν ἂν λυθεῖν, ἔστι τούθ' ἄκος, καὶ κάρτα πολλή μηχανή λυτήριος· ἄνδρος δ' ἔπειδαν αἰμ' ἀναστάσῃ κόνις ἀπαξ θανόντως, οὗτς ἔστ' ἀνάστασις. τούτων ἔπροδας οὐκ ἔποίησεν πατήρ οὐμός, τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντ' ἀνώ τε καὶ κάτω στρέφων τίθησιν οὐδὲν ἀσθενῶν μένει.

Χο. πώς γὰρ τὸ φεύγειν τοῦθ' ὑπερδικεῖσ ὅρα· τὸ μητρὸς αἰμ' ὁμαίμον ἐκχέασ πέδοι ἔπειτ' ἐν 'Δρυγεί δῶματ' οἰκήσει πατήρος; ποίουσι βωμοῖς χρώμενος τοῖς δημίοις; ποία δὲ χέριψ φρατέρων προσδέχεται;

Απ. καὶ τούτο λέξω, καὶ μάθ' ὃς ὅρθως ἐρώ. οὐκ ἔστι μήτηρ ἢ κεκλημένου τέκνου τοκεύς, ἀρετῶς δ' κύματος νεοστάρουν. τίκτει δ' ὃ θρόσκων, ἢ δ' ἀπερ ἔνες ἔνη ἐσώσεν ἔρνος, οἶξι μὴ βλάψῃ θεὸς. τεκμήριον δ' τοῦτο σοι δεῖξω λόγου· πατήρ μὲν ἂν γένοιτ' ἄνευ μητρὸς· πέλας
My witness stands, child of Olympian Zeus,
Who grew not in the darkness of a womb,
Yet plant so fair no goddess could bring forth.

_Ath._ Has enough now been said; and may I bid
These judges give their true and honest vote?

_Ch._ For our part, all our shafts have now been shot.
I wait to hear how the issue shall be judged.

_Ath._ And you? Are you content I order so?

_Ap._ You have heard what you have heard. Friends, give your votes;
And let your hearts pay reverence to your oath.

_Ath._ Hear now my ordinance, people of Athens,
Judges of the first trial for shed blood.
Here for all time to come shall Aegeus’ folk
Meet as a jurors’ council on this rock,
The Hill of Ares. Thereon Reverence,
And Fear, its kinsman, among my citizens
Shall check wrong-doing night and day alike.
Neither ungoverned nor tyrannical,
Such rule I bid you venerate and maintain.
Nor wholly from the city banish dread;
For what mortal is righteous who fears naught?
Such be your reverence and your righteous awe,
And you shall have, to guard your land and town,
A bulwark such as none elsewhere possess,
Not mid the Scythians, nor in Pelops’ isle.
Pure from corruption, reverend, quick to wrath,
Such the tribunal I establish here,
A vigilant guardian of the land’s repose.
To exhort my citizens for times to come,
At such length have I spoken. Now let each rise
And take his ballot, and decide the cause
With reverence for his oath. My words are ended.
THE EUMENIDES

μάρτυς πάρεστι παῖς Ὅλυμπίου Δίως,
οὐκ ἐν σκότοις νηδύος τεθραμμένης,
ἀλλ’ οίδον ἔρνος οὕτως ἄν τέκοι θεός.

Ἀθ. ἣδη κελεύω τούσδ’ ἀπὸ γνώμης φέρειν
ψῆφον δικαίαν, ὡς ἄλις λελεγμένων;
Χο. ἡμῖν μὲν ἣδη πᾶν τετάξευται βέλος.
μένω δ’ ἄκούσαι πῶς ἄγων κριθήσεται.

Ἀθ. τί γάρ; πρὸς ὑμῶν πῶς τίθειν’ ἀμομφός ὡς;
Ἀπ. ἢκουσάθ’ ὡν ἢκουσσατ’, ἐν δὲ καρδίᾳ
ψῆφον φέροντες ὅρκον αἰδεῖσθε, ξένοι.

Ἀθ. κλύουσ’ ἄν ἣδη θεσμόν, Ἀττικὸς λέως,
πρώτας δίκας κρίνοντες αἵματος χυτού.
ἐσται δὲ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν Διόγεως στρατῷ
αιεὶ δικαστῶν τούτῳ βουλευτήριον,
pέτρα, πάγος τ’ Ἀρείος‘ ἐν δὲ τῷ σέβας
ἀστῶν φόβος τε ξυγγενῆς τὸ μὴ ’δικεῖν
σχήσει τὸ τ’ ἡμαρ καὶ κατ’ εὐφράνην ὀμῶς.
τὸ μήτ’ ἀναρχον μήτε δεσποτοῦμενον
ἀστοῖς περιστελλοῦσι βουλεύω σέβεσιν,
καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἔξω βαλέων.
τὸ γάρ δεδουκὼς μηδὲν ἐνδίκως βροτῶν;
τοιόνδε τοι παρβούντες ἐνδίκως σέβας
ἐρυμά τε χόρας καὶ πόλεως σωτήριον
ἐχούτ’ ἄν, οίον οὕτως ἄνθρωποιν ἔχει,
οὔτ’ ἐν Σκύθαισιν οὔτε Πέλοπος ἐν τόποις.
κερδῶν ἀθικτον τούτῳ βουλευτήριον,
αιδοῖον, ὀξύθυμον, εὐδόντων ὑπερ
ἐγρηγορός φρούρημα γῆς καθίσταμαι.

ταύτην μὲν ἐξέτειν’ ἐμοὶς παραίνεων
ἀστοίσιν ἐς τὸ λοιπὸν· ὀρθοῦσθαι δὲ χρὴ
cαὶ ψήφον αἰρεῖν καὶ διαγνώναι δίκην
αιδομένους τὸν ὅρκον. εἴρηται λόγος.
Dangerous visitants are we to your land.
Do not affront us then, I counsel you.

And I say, dread my oracles, wherein
Zeus also speaks his will. Foil not their fruit.

You talk! But I, if I gain not my cause,
Will soon revisit and chastise this land.

Among the young gods and the elder too
You are despised. The victory shall be mine.

Since thy young violence over-rides our age,
I wait to hear the verdict, still in doubt
Whether to wreak my wrath against the town.

Mine shall this task be, to give judgment last;
And this my vote to Orestes will I reckon.
For of no mother was I born: in all,
Save to be wedded, with whole heart I approve
The male. I am strongly of the father's side.
Therefore a wife's fate shall I less esteem,
Who slew her husband, the master of her house.
Orestes wins, even with equal votes.
Forthwith turn out the ballots from the urns,
You judges to whom that function is assigned.

O bright Apollo, how will the judgment go?
O Night, dark Mother, dost thou behold these things?
For me 'tis now the noose, or life's light still.
For us, ruin, or worship without end.

Number aright the votes cast out, my friends.
As you divide them, reverence honesty.

This man is acquitted of blood-guiltiness;
For equal is the number of the lots.

O Pallas! O thou saviour of my house!
Yea, thus to my lost fatherland hast thou
Restored me: and through Hellas men shall say,
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Xo. καὶ μὴν βαρείαν τὴν’ ὅμιλαν χθονὸς ἡγιασθῆναι.

Ἀπ. κάγωνε χρησμὸν τοὺς ἐμοὺς τε καὶ Διὸς

Xo. λέγεις· ἐγὼ δὲ μὴ τυχοῦσα τῆς δίκης

Ἀπ. ἀλλ’ ἐν τοῖς νέοισι καὶ παλαιτέροις

Xo. ἐπεὶ καθιστάζεις με πρεσβύτιν νέος,

Ἀθ. ἐμὸν τὸδ’ ἐργον, λοισθίαν κρίναι δίκην.

Ὀρ. ὁ Φοῖβος Ἀπολλοῦ, πῶς ἀγών κρίθησεται;

Χο. ὁ Νῦξ μέλαινα μήτερ, ἄρ’ ὀράσει τάδε;

Ὀρ. νῦν ἄγχονης μοι τέρματ’, ἢ φάσος βλέπειν.

Χο. ἠμίν γὰρ ἔρρειν, ἢ πρόσω τιμᾶς νέμειν.

Ἀπ. πεπάζετ’ ὅρθος ἐκβολὰς ψήφων, ἕνοι,

Ἀθ. ἄνηρ ὁδ’ ἐκπέφευγεν αἷμας δίκην·

Ὀρ. ὁ Παλλᾶς, ὁ σώσασα τοὺς ἐμοὺς δόμους,

καὶ τεῖς Ἑλλήνων ἔρει,
"He is again an Argive, and may dwell
In his sire's heritage, by help of Pallas,
And Loxias, last of Him who ordaineth all,
The Saviour." Pitying my sire's fate, he looked
On these, my mother's advocates, and saved me.
Farewell. May thou and this thy city's people
Grapple your foes in a resistless grip,
Till safety and victorious arms be yours.

[Exit Orestes.]

Ch. Oh shame, ye younger deities! The old, holy laws
Ye have ridden down, and stolen from our hands the prey.
But I, dishonoured, grief-afflicted, heavily wroth,
On this land accurst
Poison, poison, woe for woe, drops of sterile influence
Will I drip down to earth, hot from my heart; and thence
Birth-killing blight, bud-withering, (Oh revenge!)
Scattering over the ground,
Shall sow the soil with man-destroying blots of
Oh wail! wail!—How act now?
I am mocked, mocked.—A sore grief
To Athens be my wrongs!
Alas, heavy the wrongs
We bear, Maids of Night,
Mourning our loss of honour.

Ath. I pray you, do not grieve thus bitterly.
You are not vanquished; but in equal votes
The cause ends, fairly, not to your dishonour.
Then be not passionate; hurl no wrathful threats
Against this land, nor cause sterility
THE EUMENIDES

“Ἀργείος ἀνήρ αἰθις ἐν τε χρήμασιν
οἶκεὶ πατρόφωι, Παλλάδος καὶ Δοξίου
ἐκατι, καὶ τοῦ πάντα κραίνοντος τρίτων
σωτήρος,” δὲ πατρόθων αἰδεσθεὶς μόρον
σφέει με, μητρὸς τάσδε συνδίκους ὅρων.
καὶ χαίρε, καὶ σὺ καὶ πολισσούχος λεώς.
πάλαισι’ ἀφυκτον τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἔχοις,
σωτήριόν τε καὶ δορὸς νικηφόρον.

[Exit Orestes.]

Χο. ἵδι θεοὶ νεώτεροι, παλαιοὺς νόμους
καθιστάσασθε κακὸν χερῶν εἰλεσθέ μου.
εὐγὼ δ’ ἄτιμος ἡ τάλαινα βαρύκοτος
ἐν γὰ τάδε, φεῦ,
ίδιν ἵδι ἀντιπενθῆ
μεθείσα καρδίας, σταλαγμὸν χθονὶ
ἀφορον· εκ δὲ τοῦ
λειχὴν ἄφυλλος, ἄτεκνος,
ἵδι δίκα, πέδον ἐπισύμενος
βροτοφθόρους κηλίδας ἐν χώρῳ βαλεῖ.
στενάζω; τί ῥέξω;
γελώμαι· δύσοιστα
πολίταις ἔπαθον·
ἵδι μεγάλα τοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς
Νυκτὸς ἄτιμοπενθεῖς.

Ἀθ. ἐμοὶ πίθεσθε μὴ βαρυστόνως φέρειν.
οὐ γὰρ νενίκησθ’, ἀλλ’ ἵσοψηφος δίκη
ἐξῆλθ’ ἀληθῶς, οὐκ ἁτιμώς σέθεν·
ὔμεις δὲ μὴ θυμοῦσθε μηδὲ τῇδε γῆ
βαρὺν κότον σκῆψητε, μηδ’ ἀκαρπίαν

10—5
By shedding venomous drops of magic dew.
For here I promise you most faithfully
A cavern for your shrine in sacred ground,
Where on bright altars you shall sit enthroned,
Adored and worshipped by my citizens.

Ch. Oh wail! wail!—How act now?
I am mocked, mocked.—A sore grief
To Athens be my wrongs!
Alas, heavy the wrongs
We bear, Maids of Night,
Mourning our loss of honour.

Ath. Ye are not dishonoured: then restrain your wrath.
Being gods, plague not with spells a land of mortals.
I put my trust in Zeus: what need to say it?
Alone of gods I know the keys that open
The chamber where the thunder is sealed up.
But of that there is no need. Be counselled by me:
Sow not the earth with fruit of a wild tongue.
Calm the black billowing wave's fierce violence:
Become the revered partner of my home.

Ch. We to endure such a shame!
We the primaevally wise! thus domiciled, thus
Dishonouring, shameful thought! [housed!
I breathe forth passionate rage, uttermost wrath.
Oh! Oh! Shame! Foul!
What is this agony—this that assails my breast?
Hear my fury, O Mother [tricks,
Night: for the gods have robbed me by vile crafty
Stolen my ancient honours, brought low my pride.

Ath. I will indulge thy moods, for thou art elder.
But if you pass to a land of other folk,
THE EUMENIDES

τεῦξητ’, ἀφείσαι δαμώνων σταλάγματα.
ἔγω γὰρ ὑμῖν παιδίκως ὑπίσχομαι
ἐδρας τε καὶ κευθμώνας ἐνδίκων χθονὸς
λυπαροθρόνοισιν ἠμένας ἐπ’ ἐσχάραις
ἐξειν ὑπ’ ἀστῶν τῶν τῶνδε τιμαλφουμένας.

Χο. στενάζω; τί ἰέξω;
γελώμαι· δύσοιστα
πολίταις ἐπαθον·
ιώ μεγάλα τοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς
Νυκτὸς ἁτύμοπενθεῖς.

Α.θ. οὐκ ἔστ’ ἀτιμοί, μηδ’ ὑπερθύμως ἀγαν
θεαὶ βροτῶν κτίσητε δύσκηλου χθόνα.
κάγω πέποιθα Ζηνί, καὶ τί δεῖ λέγειν;
καὶ κλήδας οἶδα δώματος μόνη θεόν,
ἐν ὧν κεραυνὸς ἔστιν ἐσφραγισμένος·
ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν αὐτοῦ δεῖ· σὺ δ’ εὔπιθης ἐμοί
γλώσσης ματαίας μὴ ἱβάλης ἐπὶ χθονί,
καρπὸν φέροντα πάντα μὴ πράσσειν καλῶς.
κολῷ κελαινοῦ κύματος πικρὸν μένος
ὡς σεμνότιμος καὶ πνευκήτωρ ἐμοί.

Χο. ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε, φεῦ,
ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα κατὰ τε γὰς οἶκεῖν,
φεῦ, ἀτίσεισιν μύσοις.
πνέω τοι μένους ἀπαντά τε κότον.
οίοι δὰ, φεῦ.
τίς μ’ ὑποδύεται, τίς ὀδύνα πλευράς;
θυμῶν ἁie, μάτερ
Νύξ· ἀπὸ γάρ με τιμᾶν δαναιάν θεῶν
δυσπάλαιμοι παρ’ οὐδὲν ἥραν δόλοι.

Α.θ. ὄργας ἔνυισος σοι· γεναιτέρα γὰρ εἰ.
ὕμεις δ’ ἐσ’ ἀλλόφυλον ἐλθοῦσαι χθόνα
You will regret our Athens, I forewarn you.
For to her citizens time's stream shall flow
With larger honour; whilst thou, honourably
Enshrined by Erechtheus' temple, shalt receive
From adoring troops of men and women, more
Than thou couldst hope in the wide world beside.

Ch. We to endure such a shame!
We the primaevally wise! thus domiciled, thus
Dishonouring, shameful thought! [housed!

Ath. I will not weary of speaking thee fair words.
No, if divine Persuasion, the soothing charm
And magic of my tongue, be sacred to thee,
Then here abide: but if thou wouldst not stay,
Thou canst not justly afflict this city's folk
With wrath or hate, or do them any hurt.
For thou mayst claim thy portion in her soil
Rightfully, with all honourable worship.

Ch. Athena, what is this home thou offerest me?
Ath. One from all sorrow free. Accept it now.
Ch. Say I accept: what privilege shall be mine?
Ath. That without thee no household shall have increase.
Ch. Canst thou endow me with such power as that?
Ath. Aye, we will bless thy votaries with good fortune.
Ch. And wilt thou give me warrant for all time?
Ath. No need to promise what I would not do.
Ch. I feel thy soothing charm: my wrath abates.

We accept.
Here with Pallas let us dwell.
Scorn we not her citadel
By almighty Zeus and Ares cherished
As the fortress of the gods,
γῆς τῆς ἐρασθήσεσθε· προσπέπω τάδε.
οὔπερρέων γὰρ τιμιώτερος χρόνος
ἔσται πολίταις τοῦδε. καὶ σὺ τιμίαν
ἐδραν ἔχουσα πρὸς δόμοις 'Ερεχθέως
τεύξει παρ' ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικείων στόλων,
δὲν παρ' ἄλλων οὔποτ' ἀν σχέθοις βροτῶν.

Xo. ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε, φεῦ,
ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα κατά τε γὰς οἰκεῖν,
φεῦ, ἀτίετον μύσος.

Ἀθ. οὔτοι καμοῦμαι σοι λέγουσα τάγαθά.
ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἄγνων ἐστὶ σοι Πειθώς σέβας,
γλώσσης ἔμης μελωμα καὶ θελκτήριον,
σὺ δ' οὖν μένοις ἄν· εἰ δὲ μὴ θέλεις μένειν,
οὐ τὰν δικαίως τῆς ἐπιρρέποις πόλει
μὴνίν τιν' ἢ κότον τιν' ἢ βλάβην στρατῷ.

Xo. ἀνασσ' Ἀθάνα, τίνα με φῆς ἔχειν ἔδραν;
Ἀθ. πάσης ἀπτήμου οἴζουσ' δέχου δὲ σύ.
Xo. καὶ δὴ δεδεγμαί· τίς δὲ μοι τιμῇ μένει;
Ἀθ. ὡς μὴ τιν' οἰκών εὐθενεῖν ἄνευ σέθειν.
Xo. σὺ τοῦτο πράξεις, ὡστε με οἴζενιν τόσον;
Ἀθ. τῷ γὰρ σέβομεν σμφορὰς ἀρθόσομεν.
Xo. καὶ μοι πρόπαντος ἐγγύην θήσει χρόνου;
Ἀθ. ἔξεστι γὰρ μοι μὴ λέγειν ὃ μὴ τελῶ.
Xo. θέλειν μ' ἐοίκας καὶ μεθίσταμαι κότον.

δέξομαι Παλλάδος ξυνοικίαν,
οὖν ἀτιμάσω πόλιν,
τὰν καὶ Ζεὺς ὁ παγκρατής "Αρης τε
φρουριον θεῶν νέμει,
Crown of Hellas, guarding
The altars of her deities.

Evil breath
Never blow to hurt her trees:
Such to Athens be my grace.
Never trespass hither scorching wind
To nip the budding eyes of plants.
May no blast of sterile
Blighting plague assail her fields.
And with double births let Pan
At the appointed season bless
The mothers of the thriving flock; and may rich
Teem with abundant offspring,
[Earth Gifts to thank the bounteous gods.

Ath. Hear with what wise speech into the pathway
Of blessing they enter.
Stern and terrible though they appear, yet
Great gain shall they bring you, people of Athens.
If you repay them for kindness with kindness
And reverent worship, this shall your fame be,
To guide both your land
And city in the straight path of justice.

Ch. Joy to you, joy in the wealth that is each man’s
Joy be to this city’s folk!
Lovers are you, and beloved,
Of the Virgin throned by Zeus.
Timely wisdom now is yours,
Sheltered under Pallas’ wings,
Sacred in the Father’s eyes.

Ath. Joy to you also! But before you I go;
For now will I show you your cavern shrines
THE EUMENIDES


ρυσίβωμον Ἐλλά-

νων ἀγαλμα δαιμόνων.

dενδροπήμων δὲ μὴ πυέοι βλάβα, τὰν ἐμὰν χάριν λέγω·

φλογμός τ' ὀμματοστερῆς φυτῶν, τὸ μὴ περὰν ὄρον τόπων,

μηδ' ἄκαρπος αἰα-

νὴς ἐφερτέτω νόσος,

μήλα τ' εὐθενοῦντα Πᾶν

ξῦν διπλοίσιν ἐμβρύοις

τρέφοι χρώνῳ τεταγμένῳ· γόνος δὲ γάς

πλουτόχθων ἔρμαιαν

dαιμόνων δόσιν τίοι.

Αθ. ἀρα φρονοῦσαι γιλώσῃς ἄγαθης

ὁδὸν εὐρίσκουσ';

ἐκ τῶν φοβερῶν τῶν ἰε προσώπων

μέγα κέρδος ὁρῶ τούσδε πολίταις·

τάσδε γὰρ εὐφρονας εὐφρονες ἀεὶ

μέγα τιμώντες καὶ γῆν καὶ πόλιν

ἔρθοδίκαιον

πρέψετε πάντως διάγοντες.

Χο. χαίρετε χαίρετ' ἐν αἰσιμίαισι πλοῦτων.

χαίρετ' ἀστικὸς λεώς,

ἴκταρ ἡμένας Διὸς

παρθένου φίλας φίλοι

σωφρονοῦντες ἐν χρώνῳ.

Παλλάδος δ' ὑπὸ πτεροῦς

ἄντας ἄξεται πατήρ.

Αθ. χαίρετε χύμεις· προτέραν δ' ἐμὲ χρὴ

στείχεων βαλάμους ἀποδείξεωςαν

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By the sacred light of these your conductors.
With solemn sacrifice now let us speed you
To your homes in the earth. What will hurt this city,
Emprison it there; but whate'er bringeth gain,
Send forth to increase her with glory.
Lead now these newcomers on their way,
You my citizens, children of Kranaos:
And still in your hearts
For a kind deed let there be kind thoughts.

Ch. Joy to you, joy yet again with a double blessing,
All ye dwellers in this land
Deities and mortal men!
While in Pallas’ town ye dwell,
And our rights as denizens
Reverence still, you shall not find
In your life’s lot aught unkind.

Ath. Your prayers of benediction I commend,
And by bright-gleaming torch-light will conduct you
Unto your nether subterraneous homes,
Escorted by these ministrants, who guard
My image, (and with right; for 'tis the eye
Of Theseus' land), a fair-famed company
Of maidens and of wives and aged dames.
Drape now our guests in honourable robes
Of crimson. Let the lights move on before.
Erelong shall these new residents show their love
By prospering the manhood of our land.

CHORUS OF THE ESCORT
Pass on your way in the pride of your worship,
Night’s dread Children, with glad-hearted escort.
(Silence now for our sacred song!)
THE EUMENIDES

πρὸς φῶς ἱερὸν τόνδε προπομπῶν. ἵτε καὶ σφαγίων τῶν ἕπτ᾽ ὑπὸ σεμνῶν κατὰ γῆς σύμεναι τὸ μὲν ἀτηρὸν χῶρα κατέχειν, τὸ δὲ κερδαλέον πέμπειν πόλεως ἐπὶ νίκη.

ύμεις δ' ἥγεισθε, πολισσοῦχοι παῖδες Κραναοῦ, ταῖσδε μετοίκοις.
εἰς δ' ἀγαθὰν ἀγαθὴ διάνοια πολίταις.

Χο. χαίρετε, χαίρετε δ' αὐθις, ἐπὴ διπλάξω, τάντας οἱ κατὰ πτόλιν,

δαίμονες τε καὶ βροτοι, Παλλάδος πόλιν νέμοντες. μετοικίαν δ' ἐμὴν εὐ. σέβοντες οὕτι μέμψεσθε συμφορᾶς βιοῦ.

Α.θ. αἰνῶ τε μύθοις τῶνδε τῶν κατευθυμάτων πέμψω τε φέγγηι λαμπάδων σελασφόρων ἐς τοὺς ἐνέρθη καὶ κάτω χθονὸς τόπους ἔλθπροσπόλοισιν, αἴτε φρουροῦσιν βρέτας τοῦμὸν δικαίως. ὅμμα γὰρ πάσης χθονὸς Θησείδος. ἐξίκειτ' ἀν εὐκλεῆς λόχος παίδων, γυναικῶν, καὶ στόλος πρεσβυτίδων.

φοινικόβαπτοις ἐνδυτοῖς ἐσθήμασι τιμᾶτε, καὶ τὸ φέγγος ὀρμάσθω πάρος, ὅπως ἀν εὐφρων ἤδ' ὀμιλία χθονὸς τὸ λοιπὸν εὐάνδρουσι συμφορᾶς πρέπῃ.

ΠΡΟΠΟΜΠΟΙ

βαθ' ὁδόν, ὦ μεγάλαι φιλότιμοι [στρ. α.]

Νυκτὸς παῖδες, ὑπ' εὐφρονι πομπῇ,

εὐφαμεῖτε δὲ, χωρίται,
There within Earth's immemorial caverns
Ritual worship and offerings await you.
(Silence all as we wend along!)

Kind and loyal of heart to our land,
Come, ye revered ones, pleased with the festive
Flame-devoured torch, as you pass to your home.
(Cry aloud a refrain to our chorus!)

Let Peace follow with flaring of torches.
Burghers of Pallas, unto this ending
Zeus the all-seeing and Fate have conspired.
(Cry aloud a refrain to our chorus!)
γὰς ὑπὸ κεῦθεσιν ὀγυγίουσιν,
tιμαῖς καὶ θυσίαις περὶσεπταί,
eὐφαμεῖτε δὲ πανδαμεῖ.

[i]λαοὶ δὲ καὶ εὐθύφρονες γὰρ

dεῦρ' ἥτε, σεμναί, ἕξον πυριδάπτῳ

λαμπάδι τερπόμεναι καθ' ὀδόν.

ὅλολύξατε νῦν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς.

σπονδαὶ δ' εἰσόπτῳ ἐνδαιδες ἱτων.

Παλλάδος ἀστοῖς Ζεὺς ὁ πανόπτας

οὔτω Μοῖρα τε συγκατέβα.

ὅλολύξατε νῦν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς.