THE LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY
EDITED BY

SOPHOCLES
II
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AJAX</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTRA</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRACHINIAE</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHILOCTETES</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ARGUMENT

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

ΑΘΗΝΑ
ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
ΑΙΑΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΣΑΛΑΜΙΝΙΩΝ ΝΑΤΤΩΝ
ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ
ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

 Athena.
 Odyssey, King of Ithaca.
 Ajax, son of Telamon and Euboea, leader of the men of Salamis.
 Tecmessa, his captive wife, daughter of Teleutas, King of Phrygia.
 Eurysaces, their infant son.
 Teucer, son of Telamon by Hesione.
 Menelaus, King of Sparta.
 Agamemnon, his brother, captain of the host.
 Messenger, one of Ajax's men.
 Chorus, Mariners of Salamis.

 Scene: The shore on the Northern coast of the Troad before the tent of Ajax. Time: Early morning.
ἈΙΑΣ

ἈΘΗΝΑ

'Αεὶ μὲν, ὁ παῖ Δαρτίου, δέδορκά σε πειράν τιν' ἐχθρῶν ἀρτάσαι θηρώμενον· καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ σκηναῖς σε ναυτικαῖς ὁρῶ Ἀίαντος, ἔνθα τάξιν ἐσχάτην ἔχει, πάλαι κυνηγητοῦντα καὶ μετρούμενον ἵχνη τὰ κείνου νεοχάραξθ', ὡπως ἰδης εἰτ' ἔνδον εἰτ' οὐκ ἔνδον. εὐ δὲ σ' ἐκφέρει κυνὸς Δακαίνης ὡς τις εὐρίων βάσις. ἔνδον γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἄρτη τυγχάνει, κάρα στάξων ἱδρῶτι καὶ χέρας ξιφοκτόνους. καὶ σ' οὐδὲν εἰσώ τῇ δὲ παπταίνειν πῦλης ἐτ' ἐργον ἐστὶν, ἐνεπείν ὸ δὲ χάριν σπουδὴν ἔθου τήνδ', ὃς παρ' εἰδυίας μάθης.

ΟΔΥΣΕΥΣ

ὁ φθέγμ' Ἀθάνας, φιλτάτης ἐμοί θεῶν, ὡς εὐμαθὲς σου, κἀν ἀποττος ἦς ὁμως, φώνημ' ἀκούω καὶ ἐναρπάξω φρενί χαλκοστόμου κόδωνος ὡς Τυρσηνικῆς. καὶ νῦν ἐπέγνως εὖ μ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ δυσμενεὶ βάσιν κυκλοῦντ', Ἀίαντι τῷ σακεσφόρῳ.
AJAX

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

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

ODYSSEUS
Voice of Athena, Goddess most by me
Beloved, how clearly, though I see thee not,
Those accents strike my ear and thrill my soul,
Like some Tyrrhenian trumpet, brazen-mouthed.
Yea, thou hast well divined why thus I cast
About in hot pursuance of a foe,
Ajax, the bearer of the seven-fold shield:
κεῖνον γὰρ, οὔδέν’ ἄλλον, ἰχνεύω πάλαι.
νυκτὸς γὰρ ἡμᾶς τῆς δὲ πρᾶγμας ἀσκοποῦν
ἐχεὶ περάνας, εἴπερ εἰργασταί τάδε, ἵσμεν γὰρ οὔδέν’ τρανές, ἀλλ’ ἀλώμεθα·
κάγῳ ἑθελοντής τὸ δ’ ὑπεξύγην πόνῳ.
ἐφθαρμένας γὰρ ἄρτιώς εὐρίσκομεν
λείας ἀπάσας καὶ κατηγαρισμένας
ἐκ χειρὸς αὐτοῖς ποιμνίων ἐπιστάταις.
τὴν’ οὖν ἐκείνῳ πᾶς τις αἰτίαν νέμει.
καὶ μοὶ τις ὁπτήρ ἄυστον εἰσίδον μόνον
πηδώντα πεδία σὺν νεορράντῳ ξίφει
φράζει τε κάδηλωσεν· εὐθέως δ’ ἐγὼ
κατ’ ἰχνὸς ἀσω, καὶ τὰ μὲν σημαίνομαι,
τὰ δ’ ἐκπέπληγμαι κούκ ἐχω μαθεῖν ὅτιν.
καιρὸν δ’ ἐφήκεις· πάντα γὰρ τὰ τ’ οὖν πάρος
tὰ τ’ εἰσέπειτα σῇ κυβερνῶμαι χερί.

ἈΘΗΝΑ
ἐγνων, Ὅδυσσεύ, καὶ πάλαι φύλαξ ἔβην
τῇ σῇ πρόθυμος εἰς ὅδον κυναγία.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
ἡ καί, φίλη δέσποινα, πρὸς καιρὸν πονῶ;

ἈΘΗΝΑ
ὡς ἔστιν ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε τάργα ταῦτά σοι.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
καὶ πρὸς τί δυσλόγιστον ὃδ’ ὑξεν χέρα;

ἈΘΗΝΑ
χόλῳ βαρυθέλει τῶν Ἀχιλλείων ὅπλων.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
τί δῆται ποίμναις τῆν’ ἐπεμπίπτει βάσιν;

ἈΘΗΝΑ
δοκῶν ἐν ὑμῖν χεῖρα χραίνεσθαι φόνῳ.
AJAX

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

ATHENA

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

ODYSSEUS

Tell me, dear mistress, will my quest succeed?

ATHENA

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

ODYSSEUS

What moved him to this rash, insensate deed?

ATHENA

Resentment touching dead Achilles' arms.

ODYSSEUS

Why did he fall upon the innocent sheep?

ATHENA

He thought his hands were gory with your blood.
ΑΙΑΣ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

η καὶ τὸ βούλευμ’ ὡς ἐπ’ Ἀργείους τόδ’ ἦν;
ΑΘΗΝΑ
καὶ ἐξεπράξατ’, εἰ κατημέλησ’ ἐγὼ.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ποίαισι τόλμαις ταῖσδε καὶ φρενῶν θράσει;
ΑΘΗΝΑ
νύκτωρ ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς δόλιος ὀρμᾶται μόνος.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἡ καὶ παρέστη κατὶ τέρμ’ ἀφίκετο;
ΑΘΗΝΑ
καὶ δὴ πι δισσαῖς ἦν στρατηγίσιν πύλαις.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

καὶ πὼς ἐπέσχε χεῖρα μαμώσαν φόνου;
ΑΘΗΝΑ
ἐγὼ σφ’ ἀπείρῳ, δυσφόρους ἐπ’ ὀμμασι
γνώμας βαλοῦσα τῆς ἀνηκέστου χαρᾶς,
καὶ πρὸς τε ποίμνας ἐκτρέπω σύμμικτα τε
λείας ἀδαστα βουκόλων φρουρήματα.
ἐνθ’ εἰσπεσὼν ἐκειρε πολύκερων φόνου
κύκλῳ ῥαχίζων’ καθόκει μὲν ἔσθ’ ἵτε
δισσοὺς Ἀτρείδας αὐτόχειρ κτείνειν ἔξων,
ὅτ’ ἄλλοτ’ ἄλλον ἐμπίτυνων στρατηλατῶν.
ἐγὼ δὲ φοιτῶντ’ ἄνδρα μαμάσαν νόσοις
ωτρυνον, εἰσεβάλλον εἰς ἔρκη κακά.
κάπετ’ ἐπειδὴ τοῦδ’ ἐλώφησεν πόνου,
τοὺς ἄνωτας αὐθ δεσμοὶς συνδήσας βοῶν
ποίμνας τε πάσας εἰς δόμους κομίζεται,
ὡς ἄνδρας, οὐχ ὡς εὐκερῶν ἄγραν ἔξων,
καὶ νῦν κατ’ οίκους συνδέτους αἰκίζεται.
δείξω δὲ καὶ σοὶ τήνδε περιφανὴ νόσου,
ὡς πάσιν ’Αργείουσιν εἰσίδων θροῆς.
AJAX

ODYSSEUS
What, was this onslaught planned against the Greeks?

ATHENA
Aye, and it had succeeded, but for me.

ODYSSEUS
How could he venture such fool-hardiness?

ATHENA
He schemed a night attack, by stealth, alone.

ODYSSEUS
And did he reach us and arrive his goal?

ATHENA
At the tent door of the two chiefs he stood.

ODYSSEUS
What then arrested him athirst for blood?

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

θαρσῶν δὲ μίμε μηδὲ συμφορὰν δέχου
τὸν ἂνδρ’· ἐγὼ γὰρ ὄμμάτων ἀποστρόφους
ἀγάς ἀπείρῳ σὴν πρόσοψιν εἰσιδεῖν.
οὔτος, σὲ τὸν τὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας χέρας
δεσμοῖς ἀπευθύνοντα προσμολεῖν καλῶ·
Ἄιαντα φωνῷ· στείχε δωμάτων πάροι.

ΟΔΤΣΖΕΣΕΙ

tί̑ δρᾶς, Ἅθανα; μηδαμῶς σφ’ ἔξω κάλει.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

οὐ σὺγ’ ἀνέξει μηδὲ δειλίαν ἄρεῖ;

ΟΔΤΣΖΕΣΕΙ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν, ἀλλ’ ἐνδον ἀρκεῖτω μένων.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

τί μὴ γένηται; πρόσθεν οὖκ ἀνὴρ ὅδ’ ἦν;

ΟΔΤΣΖΕΣΕΙ

ἐχθρὸς γε τώδε τὰνδρὶ καὶ τανῦν ἐτὶ.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

οὐκουν γέλως ἥδιςτος εἰς ἐχθροὺς γελὰν;

ΟΔΤΣΖΕΣΕΙ

ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀρκεῖ τοῦτον ἐν δόμοις μένειν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

μεμηνὸτ’ ἄνδρα περιφανῶς ὁκνεῖς ἰδεῖν;

ΟΔΤΣΖΕΣΕΙ

φρονοῦντα γάρ νῦν οὐκ ἂν ἐξέστην ὁκνῷ.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ νῦν σε μὴ παρόντ’ ἵδη πέλας.

ΟΔΤΣΖΕΣΕΙ

πῶς, εἰπερ ὀφθαλμοῖς γε τοῖς αὐτοῖς ὀρᾶ;

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἔγω σκοτώσω βλέφαρα καὶ δεδορκότα.
AJAX

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

(To AJAX within the tent.)

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

ODYSSEUS

What dost thou, Goddess? Nowise call him forth.

ATHENA

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

ODYSSEUS

Nay, nay; suffice it that he bide within.

ATHENA

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

ODYSSEUS

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

ATHENA

What mockery sweeter than to mock at foes?

ODYSSEUS

Enough for me that he abide within.

ATHENA

What, fear to see a madman face to face?

ODYSSEUS

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

ATHENA

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

ODYSSEUS

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

ATHENA

I will obscure his vision, howe’er clear.
ΑΙΑΣ

ΟΔΥΣΕΥΣ
γένοιτο μένταν πάν θεοῦ τεχνωμένου.
ΑΘΗΝΑ
σίγα νυν ἐστῶς καὶ μένʼ ὡς κυρεῖς ἔχων.
 μένοιμʼ ἄνʼ ἥθελον δʼ ἄν ἐκτὸς δὲν τυχεῖν.
ΑΘΗΝΑ
ὁ οὖτος, Αἴας, δεύτερὸν σε προσκαλῶ.
τί βαιὸν οὖτως ἐντρέπει τῆς συμμάχου;

ΑΙΑΣ
ὁ χαῖρʼ Ἀθάνα, χαίρε Διογενὲς τέκνον,
ὡς εὐ παρέστης· καὶ σε παγχρύσοις ἐγὼ
στέψω λαφύρους τῆς ἄγγας χάριν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ
καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἄλλʼ ἐκεῖνο μοι φράσον,
ἔβαψας ἐγχος εὐ πρὸς Ἀργεῖων στρατῷ;

ΑΙΑΣ
κόμπος πάρεστι κοῦκ ἀπαρνοῦμαι τὸ μῆ.

ΑΘΗΝΑ
ἡ καὶ πρὸς Ἀτρείδαισιν ἦχμασας χέρα;

ΑΙΑΣ
ὡςτʼ οὖποτʼ Αἴανθο οἶδʼ ἀτιμᾶσουσʼ ἐτι.

ΑΘΗΝΑ
τεθνᾶσιν ἀνδρεῖς, ὡς τὸ σὸν ξυνῆκʼ ἐγὼ.

ΑΙΑΣ
θαυμάσιν ἡδὴ τάµʼ ἀφαιρεῖσθων ὀπλα.

ΑΘΗΝΑ
εἶεν, τί γὰρ δὴ παῖς ὁ τοῦ Δαερτίου,
ποῦ σοι τύχης ἔστηκεν; ἡ πέφευγε σε;

ΑΙΑΣ
ἡ τούπτητριπτον κίναδος ἐξῆρου μʼ ὀπου;
AJAX

ODYSSEUS
Well, when a god works, all is possible.

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

ODYSSEUS
So will I—yet had liefer been far hence.

ATHENA (to AJAX)
Ho, Ajax! once again I summon thee.
Say, why this scant regard for thine ally?
*Enter Ajax.*

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

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

AJAX
A glorious deed that I will not disclaim.

ATHENA
Haply thou has assailed the Atridae too?

AJAX
So that they ne'er will outrage Ajax more.

ATHENA
If I interpret rightly, they are dead.

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

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

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

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἐγὼ γ'. Ὅδυσσεά τὸν σοῦ ἐνστάτην λέγω.

ΑΙΑΣ

ηδιστος, ὦ δέσποινα, δεσμώτης ἐσω θακεὶ· θανεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸν οὐ τί πω θέλω.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

πρὶν ἀν τί δράσης ἢ τί κερδάνης πλέον;

ΑΙΑΣ

πρὶν ἀν δεθεῖς πρὸς κίον' ἐρκείου στέγης.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

τί δῆτα τὸν δύστηνον ἐργάσει κακὸν;

ΑΙΑΣ

μάστυγι πρῶτον νῶτα φοινικθείς θάνη.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

μὴ δῆτα τὸν δύστηνον ὧδε γ' αἰκίσῃ.

ΑΙΑΣ

χαίρειν, Ἀθάνα, τάλλ' ἐγὼ σ' ἐφίεμαι·

κεῖνος δὲ τίσει τὴνδε κοῦκ ἄλλην δίκην.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

σὺ δ' οὖν, ἐπειδῆ τέρψις ἦδε σοι τὸ δρᾶν,

χρῶ χειρί, φείδου μὴδὲν ὄπυρε ἐννοεῖς.

ΑΙΑΣ

χωρῶ πρὸς ἔργον· σοι δὲ τοῦτ' ἐφίεμαι,

τοῖανδ' ἀεὶ μοι σύμμαχον παρεστάναι.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ὁρᾶς, Ὅδυσσεί, τὴν θεῶν ἱσχὺν ὁση;

τούτου τίς ἂν σοι τάνυρδός ἢ προνοούστερος

ἡ δρᾶν ἀμείωνων ηὐρέθη τὰ καίρια;

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδεν' οἶδ· ἐποικτίρω δὲ νῦν

δύστηνον ἐμπας, καίπερ ὄντα δυσμενή,
AJAX

ATHENA

Of him—Odysseus, thy antagonist.

AJAX

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

ATHENA

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

AJAX

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

ATHENA

What vengeance wilt thou wreak on the poor wretch?

AJAX

Flay with my scourge his back before he die.

ATHENA

O torture not the wretch so savagely.

AJAX

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

ATHENA

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

AJAX

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

[Exit AJAX.

ATHENA

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

ODYSSEUS

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

όθούνεκ' ἀτη συγκατέξευκται κακῇ,
oυδὲν τὸ τοῦτο μᾶλλον ἢ τούμον σκοπῶν·
ὀρῷ γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ὄντας ἄλλο πλῆν
εἰδωλ' ὀσοιτερ ζῶμεν ἢ κούφην σκιάν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

tοιαῦτα τοίνυν εἰσορῶν ὑπέρκοπον
μηδέν ποτ' εἴπης αὐτὸς εἰς θεοὺς ἐπος,
μηδ' ὄγκον ἄρη μηδέν', εἴ τινος πλέον
ἡ χειρὶ βρίθεις ἢ μακροῦ πλούτου βάθει.
ὡς ἡμέρα κλίνει τε κανάγει πάλιν
ἀπαντα τὰνθρώπεια: τοὺς δὲ σώφρονας
θεοὶ φιλοῦσι καὶ στυγοῦσι τοὺς κακούς.

ΧΩΡΟΣ

Τελαμώνιε παῖ, τῆς ἀμφιρύτου
Σαλαμίνος ἔχων βάθρον ἄγχιάλου,
σὲ μὲν εὗ πράσσοντ' ἐπιχαίρω·
σὲ δ' ὅταν πληγῇ Διὸς ἡ ζαμενής
λόγος ἐκ Δαναῶν κακόθρους ἐπιβῆ, 140
μέγαν ὄκνον ἔχω καὶ πεφόβημαι
πτηνῆς ὡς ὁμμα πελείας.
ὡς καὶ τῆς νῦν φθιμένης νυκτὸς
μεγάλοι θόρυβοι κατέχουσα' ἡμᾶς
ἐπὶ δυσκλείᾳ, σὲ τὸν ἵππομανή
λειμῶν' ἐπιβάντ' ὀλέσαι Δαναῶν
βοτὰ καὶ λείαν,
ἡπερ δορίληπτος ἐτ' ἢν λοιπῇ,
κτείνοντ' αἰθῶνι σιδήρῳ.
τοιούσδε λόγους ψιθύρους πλάσσων
εἰς ὅτα φέρει πᾶσιν Ὃ' Ὀδυσσεύς,
AJAX

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

ATHENA

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

[Exeunt Athena and Odysseus. Enter chorus.

CHORUS

Son of Telamon, thou whose isle,
Sea-girt Salamis, doth smile
O'er the surge, thy joys I share
When thy fortunes promise fair;
But if stroke of Zeus assail,
Or the slanderous tongues prevail
Of the Danaï, to blast
Thy repute, I cower aghast,
Like a dove with quivering eye.
For of yesternight there fly
Bitter plaints and loud-voiced blame
Crowding on us to our shame—
How thou speddest o'er the meads
Rich in troops of unbacked steeds,
And with flashing sword didst slay
All the yet unparted prey
Of the Greeks, in foray ta'en,
Spoiling all their hard earned gain.
Such the scandal, as we hear,
Odysseus breathes in every ear;
καὶ σφόδρα πείθειν. περὶ γὰρ σοῦ νῦν εὔπειστα λέγει, καὶ πᾶς ὁ κλύων τοῦ λέξαυτος χαίρει μᾶλλον τοὺς σοὺς ἀχεσιν καθυβρίζων.
τῶν γὰρ μεγάλων φυχάν ιεῖς οὐκ ἂν ἄμαρτοις· κατὰ δὲ ἂν τίς ἐμοῦ τοιαῦτα λέγων οὐκ ἂν πείθοιν πρὸς γὰρ τὸν ἔχονθ᾽ ὁ φθόνος ἔρπει. καίτοι σμικροὶ μεγάλων χωρίς σφαλερὸν πύργου ρύμα πέλουται μετὰ γὰρ μεγάλων βαίος ἀριστ᾽ ἂν καὶ μέγας ὀρθοθ᾽ ὑπὸ μικροτέρων. ἀλλ᾽ οὗ δυνατὸν τοὺς ἀνοίτους τούτων γνώμας προδιδάσκειν. ὑπὸ τοιούτων ἀνδρῶν θορυβεῖ χήμεις οὐδὲν σθένομεν πρὸς ταῦτ᾽ ἀπαλέξασθαι σοῦ χωρίς, ἀναξ. ἀλλ᾽ ὅτε γὰρ δὴ τὸ σὸν ὀμι᾽ ἀπέδραν, παταγοῦσιν ἄπερ πτηνῶν ἁγέλαι: μέγαν αἰγυπτιών ὁ ¹ ὑποδείσαντες τὰχ᾽ ἄν ἔξαίφησης, εἰ σὺ φανεῖς, σιγῆ πτήξειαν ἄφωνοι.

ἡ ρά σε Ταυροπόλα Διὸς Ἀρτέμις— στρ.
ὁ μεγάλα φάτις, ὃ
μᾶτερ αἰσχύνας ἐμᾶς—
ὄρμασε πανδάμους ἐπὶ βοῦς ἁγελαίας, ἡ ποῦ τινος νῖκας ἀκάρπωτον χάριν, ἡ ῥὰ κλυτῶν ἐνάρων
ψευσθεῖσ᾽, ἄδώροις, ² εἴτ᾽ ἐλαφαβολίας;

¹ Dawes adds ὅ.
² ἀδώροις MSS., Stephanus corr.
AJAX

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

Was it the Tauric Artemis, Jove's daughter, (Str.)
(O dread report, begetter of my shame!)
Drave thee the flocks, our common stock, to slaughter?
Didst thou in victory rob her of her claim
To tithe of spoil, her part,
When to thy bow there fell some noble hart?
ἡ χαλκοθάραξι μὴ τιν’ Ἑυνάλιος
μομφάν ἔχων ἔννοι νορὸς ἐννυχλίους
μαχαναὶς ἐτίσατο λώβαν;

οὐ ποτε γὰρ φρενόθεν γ’ ἐπ’ ἀριστερά, ἀντ.
παῖ Τελαμώνος, ἔβας
tόσσου, ἐν πολίμναις πίτνων.
ηκοι γὰρ ἄν θεία νόσος· ἄλλ’ ἀπερύκοι,
καὶ Ζεὺς κακὰν καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀργείων φάτων.
eἰ δ’ ὑποβαλλόμενοι
κλέπτουσι μύθουσ οἱ μεγάλοι βασιλῆς
ἡ τὰς ἁσωτον Σισυφίδαν γενεάς,
μὴ μή, ἀναξ, ἔθ’ ὧδ’ ἐφάλλοις κλισίαις
ομὶ’ ἔχων κακὰν φάτων ἁρη.

ἄλλ’ ἂνα ἔξ’ ἐδράνων, ὅπου μακραῖων
στηρίζει ποτὲ τὰδ’ ἀγωνίῳ σχολῆ
ἐταν οὐρανίαν φλέγων.
ἐχθρῶν δ’ ὑβρις ὧδ’ ἀτάρβητα
ορμᾶται ἐν εὐανέμοις βάσσαις,
πάντων καγχαζόντων
γλώσσαις Βαρνάλγητα;
ἐμοι δ’ ἄχος ἐστακεν.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ναῦς ἄρωγοι τῆς Δί’ἀντοις,
γενεὰς χθονίων ἀπ’ Ἐρεχθειδῶν,
ἐχομεν στοναχᾶς οἱ κηδόμενοι
τοῦ Τελαμώνος τηλόθεν οἴκου.
νῦν γὰρ ὁ δεινὸς μέγας ὁμοκρατῆς
Ἀιας θολερῷ
κεῦται χειμώνι νοσῆσας.

1 ἦ τιν’ MSS., Musgrave corr.
AJAX

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

(∗∗∗∗∗)

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

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

Enter TECMESSA from the tent.

TECMESSA

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

1 Odysseus, reputed son of Sisyphus, not Laertes.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί δ' ἐνήλλακται τῆς ἡμερίας
νυξ ἦδε βάρος;
paὶ τοῦ Φρυγίου Τελεύταντος,
λέγ', ἐπει σὲ λέχος δουριάλωτον
στέρξας ἀνέχει θούριος Λ'ας·
ὠστ' οὐκ ἂν αἰδρίς ὑπείποις.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
πῶς δῆτα λέγω λόγον ἄρρητον;
θανάτῳ γὰρ ἵσουν βάρος ἐκπεύσει.
μανίᾳ ἔργῳ ἄλοιπος ἦμιν ὁ κλεινὸς
νύκτερος Λ'ας ἀπελοβηθῆ.
τοιαύτ' ἄν ἴδοις σκηνῆς ἐνδον
χειροδαίκτα σφάγι' αἰμοβαφῆ,
κείνων χρηστήρια τάνδρος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οἷαν ἐδήλωσας ἀνέρος 1 αἰθὸνος
ἀγγελίαν ἀτλατον οὐδὲ φευκτᾶν,
tὸν μεγάλων Δαναῶν ὑπὸ κληζομέναν,
tὰν ὁ μέγας μῦθος ἄεξει.
οἷοι φοβοῦμαι τὸ προσέρπον· περίφαντος ἀνήρ
θανεῖται, παραπλάκτω χερὶ συγκατακτᾶς
κελαινοὶς ξίφεσιν βοτὰ καὶ βοτήρας ἱππονώμασ.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
ἄμου· κείθεν κείθεν ἂρ ἦμιν
δεσμῶτιν ἀγων ἠλυθε ποίμην·
ὅν τὴν μὲν ἔσω σφάς ἐπὶ γαίας,
tὰ δὲ πλευροκοπῶν δίχ' ἀνερρήγυν.
δύο δ' ἀργίποδας κριοὺς ἀνελὼν
τοῦ μὲν κεφαλῆν καὶ γιλῶσαν ἄκραν

1 MSS. ἀνδρὸς.
AJAX

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

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

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

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

ρηπτεί θερίσας, τόν δ' ὀρθὸν ἀνώ κίονι δήσας
μέγαν ἵπποδέτην ἑντῆρα λαβὼν
παίει λυγυρὰ μάστυνα διπλή,
κακὰ δεινάζων ρήμαθ', ἃ δαίμων
κούδεις ἀνδρῶν ἐδίδαξεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

όρα τιν' ἥδη τοι κράτα καλύμμασι
κρυψάμενον ποδοῖν κλοπὰν ἀρέσθαι
ἡ θοὸν εἰρεσίας ξυγὸν ἐξὸμενον
ποντοπόρῳ νὰι μεθεῖναι.

τοίας ἐρέσσουσιν ἀπειλᾶς δικρατεῖσι 'Ατρείδαι
καθ' ἡμῶν' πεφόβημαι λιθόλευστον 'Αρη
ξυναλγεῖν μετὰ τοῦδε τυπείς, τὸν αἰσ'
ἀπλατός ἵσχει.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οὐκέτι λαμπρᾶς γὰρ ἀτερ στεροπῆς
ἀξίας ὑδὴς νότος ὅς λήγει,
καὶ νῦν φρόνιμος νέου ἄλγος ἔχειν.
τὸ γὰρ ἐσπέυσσειν οἰκεία πάθη,
μηδενὸς ἀλλον παραπράξαντος,
μεγάλας ὀδύνας ὑποτείνει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ πέπαυται, κάρτ' ἂν εὐτυχεῖν δοκῶν
φρούδου γὰρ ἥδη τοῦ κακοῦ μείων λόγος.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

πότερα δ' ἂν, εἰ νέμοι τοις αἶρεσιν, λάβοις,
φίλους ἀνὶὸν αὐτὸς ἑδονὰς ἔχειν,
ἡ κοινὸς ἐν κοινοῖσι λυπεῖσθαι ξυνών;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tὸ τοι διπλάζον, ὦ γύναι, μεῖξον κακὸν.
AJAX

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

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

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

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

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

CHORUS
The twofold sorrow, lady, is the worse.
ΑΙΑΣ

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ήμεις ἂρ' οὐ νοσοῦντες ἀτώμεσθα νῦν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; οὐ κάτοιδ' ὅπως λέγεις.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἄνηρ ἐκεῖνος, ἥνικ' ἦν ἐν τῇ νόσῳ,
ἀυτὸς μὲν ἤδεθ' οὕσιν εἴχετ' ἐν κακῶι,
ἡμᾶς δὲ τοὺς φρονοῦντας ἡνία ἔσων' νῦν δ' ὡς ἐλθεῖ θάνατα περίπεσος τῆς νόσου,
κεῖνος τε λύτη πᾶς ἐληλαταὶ κάκη
ἡμεῖς θ' ὁμοίως οὐδὲν ἡμῶν ἦςουν ἡ πάρος.
ἀρ' ἔστι ταύτα δις τόσ' ἐξ ἄπλων κακά;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐξύμφημι δὴ σοι καὶ δέδοικα μὴ 'κ θεοῦ
πληγή τις ἥκη.1 πῶς γὰρ, εἰ πεπαυμένος
μηδέν τι μάλλον ἦ νοσῶν εὐφραίνεται;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἄνηρ ἐξόντων τῶν ἐπίστασθαί σε χρή.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τής γὰρ ποτ' ἀρχῇ τοῦ κακοῦ προσέπτατο;
δῆλωσον ἡμῖν τοῖς ἤσω νόσων τύχας.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἄπαν μαθῆσει τούργουν ὡς κοινωνὸς ὁν.
κεῖνος γὰρ ἄκρας νυκτῶς, ἥνιχ' ἐσπεροι
λαμπτῆρας οὐκέτ' ἦδον, ἀμφηκες λαβὼν
ἐμαίετ' ἐγχος ἐξόδους ἑρπεῖν κενᾶς.
κάγῳ πυπλήσω καὶ λέγω: τί χρῆμα δρᾶς,
Αἶας; τί τήνδ' ἄκλητος οὐθ' ὑπ' ἀγγέλων
κληθείς ἀφορμᾶς πείραν οὔτε τοῦ κλύουν
σάλπιγγης; ἀλλὰ νῦν ὦ με πᾶς εὐδεὶ στρατός.
ὁ δ' εἴπε πρός με βάι', ἀεὶ δ' ὑμνούμενα.

1 ὧκοι MSS., Suidas corr.
Then are we losers now our plague is past.

What meanest thou? it passes my poor wit.

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

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

His case is as thou sayest, rest assured.

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

Hear then the story of our common woe.
At dead of night when all the lamps were out,
He took his two-edged sword, as if intent
On some wild expedition. So I chid him,
Saying, "What dost thou, Ajax, why go forth?
No summons, messenger or trumpet blast,
Hath called thee; nay, by now the whole host sleeps."
He answered lightly with an ancient saw,
γύναι, γυναιξὶ κόσμον ἢ σιγῇ φέρει.
κάγῳ μαθοῦσ᾽ ἔληξ᾽, ὦ δ᾽ ἐσσύθη μόνος.
καὶ ταῖς ἐκεῖ μὲν οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν πάθας·
ἐσοὶ δ᾽ ἐσῆλθε συνδέτους ἄγων ὁμοῦ
ταῦρους, κύνας βοστῆρας, εὔερόν ἅγραν.
καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἥχεινζε, τοὺς δ᾽ ἀνώ τρέπων
ἐσφαξε κάρραξιζε, τοὺς δὲ δεσμίους
ηκίζεθ᾽ ὡστε φῶτας ἐν ποίμναις πίτνων.
τέλος δ᾽ ὑπάξας διὰ θυρῶν σκιὰ τινι
λόγους ἀνέσπα, τοὺς μὲν Ἀτρείδαν κάτα,
τοὺς δ᾽ ἀμφ᾽ Ὀδυσσεῖ, συντιθεὶς γέλων πολύν,
ὡςν κατ᾽ αὐτῶν ὕβριν ἐκτίσαιτ᾽ ἱών·
καπειτ᾽ ἐπάξας αὐθίς ἐς δήμους πάλιν,
ἐμφρών μόλις ποὺς ξύνων χρόνον καθίσταται,
καὶ πλῆρες ἄτης ὡς διοπτεύει στέγος,
παίσας κάρα ἱώντες· ἐν δ᾽ ἐρεπτίοις
νεκρῶν ἐρεφθείς ἐξετ᾽ ἀρνείου φόνον,
κόμην ἀπρίξ ὄνυξι συλλαβῶν χερί.
καὶ τὸν μὲν ἣστο πλείστον ἄφθογγος χρόνων·
ἐπειτ᾽ ἐμοὶ τὰ δεῖν ἐπητεύλης ἔπη,
εἰ μή φανοίην πάν τὸ συντυχόν πάθος,
κανήρετ᾽ ἐν τῷ πράγματος κυροὶ ποτὲ.
καγώ, φίλου, δείσασα τοὺξειργασμένου
ἐλεξά πάν ὀσσουρε ἐξηπιστάμην.
ὁ δ᾽ εὐθὺς ἐξόμωξεν οὐμωγάς λυγράς,
ἄς ὀὐποτ᾽ αὐτοῦ πρόσθεν εἰσήκουσ᾽ ἐγώ·
πρὸς γὰρ κακοῦ τε καὶ βαρυψύχου γόους
τοιοῦσδ᾽ ἀεὶ ποτ᾽ ἀνδρός ἐξηγεῖτ᾽ ἔχειν·
ἀλλ᾽ ἀνφόρητος ὑξέους κωκυμάτων
ὑπεστέναξε ταῦρος ὅς βρυχῶμενος.
νῦν δ᾽ ἐν τοιᾷδε κείμενος κακῇ τύχῃ

1 εὐκερῶν MSS., Schneidewin corr.
AJAX

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

άσιτος ἀνήρ, ἀποτόμος, ἐν μέσοις βοτοῖς σιδηροκρημνῆσιν ἱσυχὸς θακεὶ πεσὼν· καὶ ὅψις ἐστὶν ὡς τι δρασεῖαν κακόν. τοιαύτα γὰρ πως καὶ λέγει κακὸν εἶπεν. ἀλλ' ὁ φίλοι, τοῦτων γὰρ οὐκ ἐστίν, ἀρῆξατ' εἰσελθόντες, εἰ δύνασθε τι' φίλων γὰρ οἱ τοιοὶ δικαίωται λόγοις.

XOROS
Τέκμησα, δεινά, παῖ Τελεύταντος, λέγεις ἡμῖν, τὸν ἄνδρα διαπεφοίβασθαι κακοῖς.

ΑΙΑΣ

ιὸ μοί μοι.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΑ

tάχ', ὡς ἐοικε, μᾶλλον· ἡ σικ ἱκούσατε Ἀλαντὸς οἶαν τῆνδε θωῦσσει βοήν;

ΑΙΑΣ

ιὸ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀνήρ ἐοικεν ἡ νοσεῖν ἡ τοῖς πάλαι νοσήμασιν ξυνοῦσι λυπεῖσθαι παρῶν.

ΑΙΑΣ

ιὸ παῖ παῖ.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΑ

ὡμοί τάλαιν'. Εὐρύσακες, ἀμφὶ σοι βοᾷ. τί ποτε μενοινᾶ; ποὺ ποτ' εἴ; τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

ΑΙΑΣ

Τεῦκρον καλῶ. ποὺ Τεῦκρος; ἦ τὸν εἴσαει λεηλατῆσει χρόνον, ἐγὼ δ' ἀπόλλυμαι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀνήρ φρονεῖν ἐοικεν. ἀλλ' ἀνοίγετε. τάχ' ἂν τιν' αἰδῶ καπ' ἐμοὶ βλέψας λάβοι.
AJAX

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

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

AJAX
Woe, woe is me!

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

AJAX
Woe, woe is me!

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

AJAX
My son, my son!

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

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

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

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ιδού, διοίγω. προσβλέπειν δ' ἐξεστὶ σοι
tὰ τοῦδε πράγη, καῦτος ὡς ἔχων κυρεῖ.

ΑΙΑΣ

ιδ' φίλοι ναυβάται, μόνοι ἐμὸν φίλων,
μόνοι ἐτ' ἐμμένουτες ὦρθῷ νόμῳ,
"δὲσθὲ μ' οἶον ἄρτι κῦμα φοινίας ὑπὸ ξάλης
ἀμφίδρομον κυκλεῖται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμ' ὡς ἐοικας ὦρθὰ μαρτυρεῖν ἄγαν.
δηλοὶ δὲ τοῦργον ὡς ἀφροντίστως ἔχει.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἀντ. α'

γένος ναιας ἄρωγον τέχνας,
ἀλιον ὃς ἐπέβας ἐλίσσων πλάταν,
σὲ τοι σὲ τοι μόνον δέδορκα πημονὰν ἐπαρκέσοντ'.

ἀλλὰ με συνδαίξουν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὐφημα φώνει; μὴ κακὸν κακῷ διδοὺς
ἀκος, πλέον τὸ πῆμα τῆς ἄτης τίθει.

ΑΙΑΣ

όρας τὸν θρασὺν, τὸν εὐκάρδιον,
τὸν ἐν δαίοις ἀτρεστον μάχαις,
ἐν ἀφόβοις με θηροὶ δεινὸν χέρας;
ὁμοι γέλωτος, οἶον ὑβρίσθην ἡρα.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

μὴ, δέσποτ' Αἴας, λίσσομαι σ', αὖδα τάδε.

ΑΙΑΣ

οὐκ ἐκτός; οὐκ ἀψρον ἐκνεμεῖ πόδα;
αιαί αἰαι.
AJAX

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

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

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

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

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

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

TECMESSA
Ajax, my dearest master, speak not so.

AJAX
Out with thee, woman; hence, a vaunt, begone!
Ah me! ah me!
ΑΙΑΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐ πρὸς θεῶν ὑπεικε καὶ φρόνησον εὖ.

ΑΙΑΣ
ὡς δύσμορος, ὡς χερὶ μὲν μεθήκα τοὺς ἀλάστορας, ἐν δὲ ἐλίκεσσι βουσὶ καὶ κλυτοῖς πεσὼν αἰτολίους ἐρεμὺν αἷμ᾽ ἐδεύσα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί δὴ ἂν ἀλγοῦσι ἐπ᾿ ἐξειργασμένοις; οὐ γὰρ γένοιτ᾽ ἂν ταῦθ᾽ ὅπως οὐχ ὃδ᾽ ἔχειν.

ΑΙΑΣ
ιὼ πάνθ᾽ ὄρων ἀπάντων τ᾽ άεί ἀντ. β' κακῶν ὄργανον, τέκνων Δαρτίου, κακοπινέστατον τ᾽ ἀλήμα στρατοῦ, ἢ που πολύν γέλωθ᾽ υφ᾽ ἡδονῆς ἄγεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ξῦν τοι θεῷ πᾶς καὶ γελὰ κωδύρεται.

ΑΙΑΣ
ιδοιμι μὴν᾽ νιν, καίτερ ὧδ᾽ ἀτώμενος. ιὼ μοὶ μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
μηδὲν μέγ᾽ εἴπης. οὐχ ὄρας ἵν᾽ εἰ κακοῦ;  

ΑΙΑΣ
ὁ Ζεῦ, προγόνων προπάτωρ, πῶς ἂν τὸν αἰμυλώτατον, ἐχθρὸν ἀλήμα, τοὺς τε δισσάρχας ὀλέσσας βασιλῆς τέλος θάνοιμι καυτός;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
ὁταν κατεὐχὴ ταῦθ᾽, ὁμοῦ κάμοι θανεῖν εὐχουν τί γὰρ δεῖ ξῆν με σοῦ τεθνηκότος;

1 Dindorf adds μὴν.
AJAX

CHORUS
O listen, I adjure thee, and be ruled.

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

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

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

CHORUS
Laughter or mourning comes as God ordains.

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

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

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

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

σκότος, ἐμὸν φάος,
ἔρεβος ὁ φαινότατον, ὡς ἐμοί,
ἔλεσθ' ἔλεσθ' μ' οἰκῆτορα,
ἔλεσθ' μ'· οὔτε γὰρ θεῶν γένος οὐθ' ἀμερίων
ἐτ' ἄξιος βλέπειν τιν' εἰς ὄνασιν ἀνθρώπων.
ἀλλά μ' ἄ Διὸς
ἀλκίμα θεὸς
οὐλέθρι' αἰκίζει.
ποὶ τις οὖν φύγης;
ποὶ μολὼν μενῶ;
εἰ τὰ μὲν φθίνει, φίλοι, τοιοῦσιν' 1
ὁμοῖ πέλας, μώραις δ' ἁγραίς προσκείμεθα,
πάς δὲ στρατὸς δίπαλτος ἂν μὲ
χειρὶ φονεύοι.

ΤΕΧΝΗΣΑ

ὁ δυστάλαινα, τοιάδ' ἄνδρα χρήσιμον
φωνεῖν, ἃ πρόσθεν οὐντος οὐκ ἔτη ποτ' ἂν.

ΑΙΑΣ

πόροι ἀλίρροθοι
πάραλά τ' ἄντρα καὶ νέμος ἐπάκτιον,
πολὺν πολὺν μὲ δαρῶν τε ὅη
κατείχετ' ἀμφὶ Τροίαν χρόνον· ἀλλ' οὐκέτι μ', οὐκ
ἐτ' ἀμπυνῶς ἔχοντα· τούτῳ τις φρονῶν ἵστω.
ὁ Σκαμάνδριοι
γείτονες ροαί,
εὐφρονες Ὀργείοις,
οὐκέτ' ἄνδρα μὴ
tόνδ' ἕδητ', ἐπος

1 τοῖσδ' MSS., Jebb corr.
AJAX

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

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

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

ἐξερῶ μέγ᾽, οίου οὕτινα
Τροία στρατοῦ δέρχθη χθονὸς μολὼντ᾽ ἀπὸ Ἐλλανίδος τανῦν δ᾽ ἄτιμος
ὦδε πρόκειμαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὕτωι σ᾽ ἀπείργειν οὐδ᾽ ὅπως ἐὼ λέγειν ἔχω, κακοῖς τοιοίσδε συμπεπτώκοτα.

ΑΙΑΣ

αἰαῖν τίς ἄν ποτ᾽ φεθ᾽ ὃδ᾽ ἐπὼνυμον
tούμον ἔννοισειν ὄνομα τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς;
νῦν γὰρ πάρεστι καὶ δῖς αἰάξειν ἐμοί καὶ τρίς τοιούτους γὰρ κακοῖς ἑντυγχάνων
ὁτου πατήρ μὲν τῆσδ᾽ ἀπ᾽ Ἰδαίας χθονὸς
tὰ πρῶτα καλλιστεί ἀριστεύσασ στρατοῦ
πρὸς οἴκον ἥλθε πᾶσαν εὐκλειαν φέρων ἐγὼ δ᾽ ὁ κείνου παῖς, τὸν αὐτὸν ἐς τόπον
Τροίας ἐπελθὼν οὐκ ἐλάσσονι σθενεὶ οὐδ᾽ ἔργα μείω χειρὸς ἄρκεσας ἐμῆς,
ἄτιμος Ἀργεῖοισιν ὃδ᾽ ἀπόλλυμαι.
καλτοὶ τοσοῦτον γ᾽ ἐξεπίστασθαι δοκῶν
ei ζῶν Ἀχιλλευς τῶν ὀπλῶν τῶν ὄν πέρι
κρίνειν ἐμελλε κράτος ἀριστείας τινό,
οὐκ ἂν τὸς αὐτ᾽ ἐμαρφθὲν ἀλλὸς ἀντ᾽ ἐμοῦ.
νῦν δ᾽ αὐτ᾽ Ἀτρείδαι φωτὶ παντουργὸ φρένας
ἐπραξάμεν, ἀνδρὸς τοῦ δ᾽ ἀπώσαντες κράτη
κεῖ μὴ τόδ᾽ ὄμμα καὶ φρένες διάστροφοι
γνώμης ἀπῆξαν τῆς ἐμῆς, οὐκ ἂν ποτὲ
δίκην κατ᾽ ἀλλοῦ φωτὸς ὃδ᾽ ἑψήφωσαν.
νῦν δ᾽ Ἡ Δίος γοργῶπος ἁδάματος θεά

430

440

450
AJAX

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

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

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

1 Like Shakespeare's 'Gaunt' (Richard II, II, i) he plays on his name Ajax.

41
ΑΙΔΣ

ηδή μ’ ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς χειρ’ ἐπεντύνοντ’ ἐμὴν ἐσφηλευ, ἐμβαλοῦσα λυσσώδη νόσου, ὡστ’ ἐν τοιοίσδε χείρας αἰμάξαι βοτοῖς· κεινοὶ δ’ ἐπεγγελώσων ἐκπεφευγότες, ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐχ ἐκόντος· εἰ δὲ τις θεῶν βλάπτοι, φύγοι τὰν χῶ κακῶς τὸν κρέασσον. καὶ νῦν τί χρή δρᾶν; ὡστὶς ἐμφανῶς θεοῖς ἐχθαίρομαι, μισεῖ δὲ μ’ Ἐλλήνων στρατός, ἔχθει δὲ Τροίᾳ πᾶσα καὶ πεδία τάδε. πότερα πρὸς οἴκους, ναυλόχους λυπῶν ἐδρασ μόνους τ’ Ἀτρείδας, πέλαγος Αἴγαλὼν περῶ; καὶ πολῶν ὃμμα πάτρι δηλώσω φανεῖς Τελαμώνι; πῶς με τλῆσεται ποτ’ εἰσιδειν γυμνῶν φανέντα τῶν ἀριστείων ἄτερ, ὅν αὐτὸς ἐσχε στεφάνου εὐκλείας μέγαν; οὐκ ἔστι τούργοι τλητῶν. ἄλλα δὴν ἰδὼν πρὸς ἐρυμα Τρώων, ἔμπτεσον μόνοις μόνοις καὶ δρῶν τι χρηστόν, εἰτα λοίσθιον θάνω; ἄλλ’ ὀδε γ’ Ἀτρείδας ἄν εὐφράναμι πον. οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα. πείρα τις ξητητέα τοιάδ’ ἀφ’ ἂς γέροντι δηλώσω πατρὶ μή τοι φύσιν γ’ ἀσπλαγχνὸς ἐκ κείνου γεγώς. αἰσχρὸν γὰρ ἀνδρα τοῦ μακροῦ χρῆξειν βίον, κακοῖσιν ὡστὶς μηδὲν ἐξαλλάσσεται. τὶ γὰρ παρ’ ἡμαρ ἡμέρα τέρπειν ἔχει προσθείσα κἀναθείσα τοῦ γε καθθανείν; οὐκ ἄν πριαίμην οὐδενὸς λόγου βροτὸν ὡστὶς κεναίων ἐλπίσιν θερμαίνεται· ἄλλ’ ἂ καλῶς ζῆν ἢ καλῶς τεθυνκέναι τὸν εὐγενῆ χρή. πάντ’ ἀκήκοας λόγον.
Almost at grips with them, in act to strike—
Foiled me, abused me by a frenzy fit,
Imbrued my hands with blood of these poor beasts.
And thus my foes exult in their escape,
Albeit I willed it not, and mock at me.
But if some god or goddess intervene,
Even a knave may worst the better man.
And now what's left me? By the gods, 'tis clear,
I am detested, hated by the host
Of Greeks, abhorred by Troy and all the camp.
Shall I sail homeward o'er the Aegean, leave
The sons of Atreus to fight on alone,
This roadstead undefended? Then how face
My father Telamon? How will he endure
To look on me returning empty-handed
Without the meed of valour that he held
Himself, a crown of everlasting fame?
That were intolerable. Am I then
Alone to storm the Trojan battlements,
And facing single-handed a whole host,
Do some high deed of prowess—and so die?
Nay, that methinks would give the Atridae joy.
It may not be; some emprise must be found
That shall convince my aged sire his son
Is not degenerate from his father's breed.
Base were it that a man should want long life
When all he gets is long unchanging trouble.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow—
What pleasure comes of that? 'Tis but a move
Forward or backward and the end—is death!
I would not count that mortal worth a doigt
Who lives on, fed by visionary hopes.
Nobly to live—that is the true knight's choice,
Or nobly end his life. I have said my say.


ΔΙΑΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδεὶς ἐρεῖ ποθ' ὡς ὑπόβλητον λόγον, Δίας, ἔλεξας, ἀλλὰ τῆς σαυτοῦ φρενὸς
παῦσαι γε μέντοι καὶ δὸς ἀνυδράσιν φίλοις
γνώμης κρατήσας, τάσδε φροντίδας μεθεῖς.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ὁ δέσποτ' Δίας, τῆς ἀναγκαίας τύχης
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν μείζον ἀνθρώποις κακὸν.
ἐγὼ δ' ἔλευθερον μὲν ἐξέφυν πατρός,
εἶπερ τινὸς σθένουτος ἐν πλούτῳ Φρυγῶν·
νῦν δ' εἰμὶ δοῦλης θεοῖς γὰρ ὃδ' ἐδοξάζει πον
καὶ σῇ μάλιστα χειρί. τουγαροῦν, ἐπεὶ
τὸ σὸν λέχος ἐξυπηλθοῦν, εῦ φρονῶ τὰ σά,
καὶ σ' ἀντιάξω πρὸς τ' ἐφεστίου Δίδος
ἐυνής τε τῆς σῆς, ἡ συνηλλάχθης ἐμοί,
μὴ μ' ἀξιώσῃς βάξιν ἀλγευὴν λαβεῖν
τῶν σῶν ὑπ' ἑχθρῶν, χειρίαν ἐφεῖς τινι.
ἡ γὰρ θάνης σὺ καὶ τελευτῆσας ἀφῆς,
ταῦτη νόμιζε καὶ τῇ τόθ' ἠμέρα
βία ξυναρπασθείσαν Ἀργείων ὑπὸ
ξύν παιδὶ τῷ σῷ δουλίαν ἐξειν τροφὴν.
καὶ τις πικρὸν πρόσφθεγμα δεσποτῶν ἐρεὶ
λόγους ἱάπτων· ἱδεῖς τὴν ομευνεῖν
Αἰαντος, ὃς μέγιστον ἰσχυσεν στρατοῦ,
οὐας λατρείας ἐνθ' ὅσον ζῆλον τρέφει.
τοιαυτ' ἐρεῖ τις· κάμε μὲν δαίμων ἐλά,
σοι δ' αἰσχρὰ τάπη ταῦτα καὶ τῷ σῷ γένει.
ἀλλ' αἰδέσαι μὲν πατέρα τὸν σὸν ἐν λυγρῷ
γύρα προλείπον, αἰδέσαι δὲ μητέρα
πολλῶν ἐτῶν κληροῦχον, ἡ σε πολλάκις
θεοῖς ἀράται ξύντα πρὸς δόμους μολεῖν·
οἴκτιρε δ', ὅναξ, παῖδα τὸν σῶν, εἰ νέας
AJAX

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

TECMESSA
Ah, my lord Ajax, heavier lot is none
Than to lie helpless in the coils of fate.
I was the daughter of a high-born sire
Of Phrygians unsurpassed in wealth and might.
And now, I am a slave; 'twas so ordained
By Heaven, methinks, and by thy might of arm.
Since fate has willed, then, I should share thy bed,
Thy good is mine; and O by the god of the hearth,
O by the wedded bond that made us one,
Let me not fall into a stranger's hand,
A laughing-stock! For, surely, if thou die
And leave me widowed, on that very day
I shall be seized and haled away by force,
I and thy son, prey to the Argive host,
Our portion slavery. Then shall I hear
The flouts and gibes that my new lords let fly.
"Look on her," one will say, "the leman once
Of Ajax, mightiest of the Argive chiefs,
How has she fallen from her place of pride!"
Thus will they prate, and hard will be my lot,
But on thy race and thee how foul a slur.
Take pity and bethink thee of the sire
Thou leavest, an old man, disconsolate;
Bethink thee of thy mother bowed with years,
Think of her prayers and vows for thy return.
And, O my lord, take pity on thy son,
τροφής στερηθείς σοῦ διοίσεται μόνος ὑπ’ ὀρφανιστῶν μὴ φίλων, ὅσον κακόν κείνῳ τε κάμοι τοῦθ’, ὅταν θάνης, νεμεῖς. ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν εἰς ὃ τι βλέπω πλὴν σοῦ. σὺ γὰρ μοι πατρίδ’ ἡστῶσας δόρει, καὶ μητέρ’ ἄλλη μοῖρα τὸν φύσαντά τε καθείλεν “Αἴδου θανασίμους οἰκήτορας. τῆς δήτ’ ἐμοὶ γένοιτ’ ἂν ἀντὶ σοῦ πατρίς; τῆς πλοῦτος; ἐν σοὶ πᾶσ’ ἐγώγη σῳξόμαι. ἀλλ’ ἵσχε κάμου μνήστωμ: ἁνδρὶ τοι χρεῶν μνήμην προσείναι, τερπνὸν εἰ τί που πάθοι. χάρις χάριν γὰρ ἐστιν ἡ τίκτουσ’ ἀεί· ὅτου δ’ ἀπορρεῖ μνήστις εἰ πεποιθότος, οὔκ ἂν γένοιτ’ ἐθ’ οὕτος εὐγενῆς ἀνήρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
Αἰας, ἔχειν σ’ ἂν οἰκτον ὡς κάνω φρενὶ θέλομ’ ἂν· αἰνοῆς γὰρ ἂν τὰ τῆσδ’ ἐπη.

ΑΙΑΣ
καὶ κάρτ’ ἐπαίνον τεύξεται πρὸς γοῦν ἐμοῦ, ἕαν μόνον τὸ ταχθὲν εὔ τολμὰ τελεῖν.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
ἀλλ’ ὡ φίλ’ Αἰας, πάντ’ ἐγώγη πείσομαι.

ΑΙΑΣ
κόμιξε νῦν μοι παίδα τὸν ἐμόν, ὡς ἴδω.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
καὶ μὴν φόβοισί γ’ αὐτὸν ἐξελυσάμην.

ΑΙΑΣ
ἐν τοίῳ δε τοῖς κακοίσιν; ἢ τί μοι λέγεις;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
μὴ σοὶ γέ πον δύστηνος ἀντήσας θάνοι.

ΑΙΑΣ
πρέπουν γέ τὰν ἂν δαίμονος τοῦμοῦ τόδε.
AJAX

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

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

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

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

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

TECMESSA
Oh, in alarm I sent him from my charge.

AJAX
When I was stricken? Or what meanest thou?

TECMESSA
Yea, lest the poor child meeting thee should die.

AJAX
That fate indeed had matched my fortunes well.
ΑΙΑΣ

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ἀλλ’ ὦ ν ἐγὼ 'φύλαξα τοῦτό γ’ ἀρκέσαι.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἐπήνεο’ ἔργον καὶ πρόνοιαν ἦν ἔθον.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

τί δήτ’ ἂν ὡς ἐκ τῶν ἂν ὡφελοίμι σε;

ΑΙΑΣ

δός μοι προσειπτεῖν αὐτὸν ἐμφανῆ τ’ ἱδεῖν.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

καὶ μὴν πέλας γε προσπόλοις φυλάσσεται.

ΑΙΑΣ

τί δήτα μέλλει μὴ οὐ παρουσίαν ἔχειν;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ὦ παῖ, πατὴρ καλεῖ σε. δεῦρο προσπόλων ἂγ’ αὐτὸν ὅσπερ χερσιν εὐθύνων κυρεῖς.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἐρποντι φωνεῖς ἢ λελειμμένω λόγων;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

καὶ δὴ κομίζει προσπόλων ὁδ’ ἐγγύθεν.

ΑΙΑΣ

αἷρ’ αὐτὸν, αἰρε δεῦρο· ταρβήσει γὰρ οὐ νεοσφαγῆ που τόνδε προσλεύσοσιν φόνον, εἴπερ δικαίως ἐστ’ ἐμὸς τὰ πατρόθεν. ἄλλ’ αὐτίκ’ ὁμοίς αὐτὸν ἐν νόμοις πατρὸς δεῖ πωλοδαμνεῖν κἀξομοιούσθαι φύσιν.

ὦ παῖ, γένοιο πατρός εὐτυχέστερος, τὰ δ’ ἄλλ’ ὁμοίοις· καὶ γένοι ἂν οὐ κακὸς. καῖτοι σε καὶ νῦν τοῦτό γε ξηλοῦν ἔχω, ὅθούνεκ’ οὐδὲν τῶν ἐπαισθάνει κακῶν· ἐν τῷ φρονεῖν γὰρ μηδὲν ἡδιστος βίος,
AJAX

TECMESSA
Well, I averted that calamity.

AJAX
Thy forethought and the action I commend.

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

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

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

AJAX
Then wherefore is his coming thus delayed?

TECMESSA
My child, thy father calls thee.

(To the servants)
Bring him hither,
Whoever of you guides his infant steps.

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

TECMESSA
I see one just approaching with the boy.

(eurysaces is led forward.)

AJAX
Lift him, O lift him to my arms; no dread,
If he be mine, his father's true-born son,
He'll feel in gazing on this fresh spilt blood.
He must be early trained and broken in
To the stern rule of life his father held,
And moulded to the likeness of his sire.
My boy, mayst thou prove happier than thy sire,
But like him in all else, and thou wilt prove
No weakling; nay, e'en now, in this at least
I envy thee: of woes thou wittest naught,
[τὸ μὴ φρονεῖν γὰρ κάρτ’ ἀνώδυνου κακῶν] 1 ἔως τὸ χαίρειν καὶ τὸ λυπεῖσθαι μάθης.
ὅταν δ’ ἵκη πρὸς τοῦτο, δεῖ σ’ ὅπως πατρὸς
deίξεις ἐν ἔχθροῖς, οἶος ἐξ ὦν τ’τράφης.
tέως δὲ κούφοις πνεύμασιν βόσκουν, νέαν
ψυχὴν ἀτάλλων, μητρὶ τῇδε χαρμονῆν.
oὔτοι σ’ Ἀχαιῶν, οἶδα, μὴ τις ὑβρίσῃ
στυγναίσι λῴβαις, οὔδὲ χωρίς οὕτ’ ἐμοῦ.
tοῖον πυλωρὸν φύλακα Τεῦκρον ἀμφὶ σοι
λείψω τροφῆ τ’ ἀοκνον ἐμπα, κεὶ ταῦν
τηλωτὸς οἴχνει, δυσμενῶν θήραν ἔχων.
ἀλλ’, ἄνδρες ἀστιστήρες, ἐνάλιος λεώς,
ὑμῖν τε κοινήν τῆν ἐπισκήπτω χάρων,
κεῖνῳ τ’ ἐμην ἀγγείλατ’ ἐντολήν, ὅπως
tὸν παΐδα τόνδε πρὸς δόμους ἐμοὶς ἁγών
Τελαμώνι δείξει μητρὶ τ’, Ἐριβοία λέγω,
ὡς σφὶν γέννηται γηροβοσκὸς εἰσαέι,
[mέχρις οὐ μυχοῦς κίχωσι τοῦ κάτω θεοῦ], 2
καὶ τὰμὰ τεύχη μὴ’ ἀγωναρχαὶ τινες
θήσου’ Ἀχαιοῖς μηθ’, ὁ λυμέων ἐμός.
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸ μοι σὺ, παι, λαβῶν ἐπώνυμον,
Εὐρύσακες, ὅσχε διὰ πολυρράφου στρέφων
πόρπακος, ἔπταβοιον ἀρρηκτὸν σάκος:
tὰ δ’ ἀλλα τεύχη κοιν’ ἐμοὶ τεθάφεται.
ἀλλ’ ὅς τάχος τὸν παίδα τόνδ’ ἣδ’ δέχον
καὶ δῶμα πάκτου, μηδ’ ἐπισκήνους γόους
δάκρυε’ κάρτα τοι φιλοικτιστὸν γυνῆ.
πύκαζε θᾶσσον οὐ πρὸς ιατρὸν σοφοῦ
θρηνεῖν ἐποδὰς πρὸς τομὼν πῆματι.

1 Omitted by Stobaeus.
2 Omitted as spurious by most Editors.
AJAX

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

¹ Eurysaces means 'broad shield.'
ΑΙΑΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
δέδοικ' ἄκούουν τῇςδε τὴν προθυμίαν
οὐ γάρ μ' ἄρέσκει γλώσσαί σου τεθηγμένη.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
ὡ δέσποτ' Αἴας, τί ποτε δρασεῖεις φρενί;

ΑΙΑΣ
μὴ κρίνε, μὴ ἕξεταξε· σωφρονεῖν καλὸν.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
οἷ' ὡς ἄθυμω· καὶ σε πρὸς τοῦ σοῦ τέκνου
καὶ θεῶν ἰκνοῦμαι, μὴ προδοῦς ἡμᾶς γένη.

ΑΙΑΣ
ἀγαν γε λυπεῖσ· οὐ κάτοικοθ' ἐγὼ θεοῖς
ὡς οὔδὲν ἀρκεῖν εἰμ' οδειλέτης ἔτι;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
εὐφημα φώνει.

ΑΙΑΣ
τοῖς ἄκοντοις λέγε.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
σὺ δ' οὐχὶ πείσεις;

ΑΙΑΣ
πόλλ' ἀγαν ἤδη θροεῖς.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
ταρβῶ γάρ, ὄναξ.

ΑΙΑΣ
οὐ ξυνέρξεθ' ὡς τάχος;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
πρὸς θεῶν, μαλάσσου.

ΑΙΑΣ
μῶρά μοι δοκεῖς φρονεῖν,
eἰ τοῦμὸν ἢθος ἄρτι παιδεύειν νοεῖς.
AJAX

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

TECMESSA
O my lord Ajax, what is in thy heart?

AJAX
Question not, ask not; be discreet and wise.

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

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

TECMESSA
Oh hush, blaspheme not!

AJAX
Speak to ears that hear.

TECMESSA
Wilt thou not heed?

AJAX
I have heard from thee too much.

TECMESSA
Fear, my lord, makes me speak.

AJAX
Quick, close the doors.

TECMESSA
Yield, I implore thee.

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

[Exit Ajax.]
ΑΙΑΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ κλείνα Σαλαμίς, σὺ μέν ποὺ ναίεις ἀλήπλακτος, εὐδαίμων,
πᾶσιν περίφαντος ἀεὶ·
ἔγω δ᾽ ὁ τιλάμων παλαιὸς ἀφ᾽ οὗ χρόνος
"Ιδαία μίμνων λειμώνι' ἐπαυλὰ μηνῶν
ἀνήριθμος αἰὲν εὐνώμαι 1
χρόνῳ τρυχόμενος,
κακὰν ἐλπίδ' ἔχων
ἐτὶ μὲ ποτ' ἀνύσειν
tὸν ἀπότροπον ἄίδηλον "Αἰδαν·
καὶ μοι δυσθεράπευτος Αἴας
ξύνεστιν ἐφεδρος, ὃμοι μοι,
θεία μανία ξύναυλος·
ὅν ἐξεπέμψω πρὶν δὴ ποτε θουρίω
κρατοῦντ' ἐν 'Αρει· νῦν δ' αὐθενδὸς οἰσβώταις
φίλοις μέγα πένθος ηὐρήται.
τὰ πρὶν δ' ἐργα χεροῖν
μεγίστας ἀρετᾶς
ἀφίλα παρ' ἀφίλοις
ἐπεσ' ἐπεσε μελέοις 'Ατρείδαις.

στρ. β'

ἡ ποὺ παλαιὰ μὲν σύντροφος 2 ἀμέρα,
λευκῷ δὲ γήρᾳ μάτηρ νυν ὅταν νοσοῦντα
φρενομόρφω ἀκούσῃ,
ἀἰλινον ἀἰλινον
οὕτοι οἰκτρᾶς γόον ὅρμιθος ἁγδῶς
ήσει δύσμορος, ἀλλ' ἡξυτόνους μὲν ὁδᾶς

1 ἰδαία μίμνων | λειμώνια τολαι, μῆλων | ἀνήριθμος αἰὲν εὐνώμαι
2 σύντροφος MSS., Nauck corr.
AJAX

CHORUS

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

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

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

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

θρηνήσει, χερόπλακτοι δ' έν στέρνοισι πεσούνται
dοῦποι καὶ πολιάς ἄμυγμα χαῖτας.

ἀντ. β'

cρείσσων παρ' "Αιδα κεύθων ὁ νοσῶν μάταν,
ὅς ἐκ πατρίως ἦκὼν γενεὰς ἀριστος ἡ
πολυπόνων Ἀχαϊών,
οὐκέτι συντρόφοις
ἀργαισ ἐμπέδος, ἀλλ' ἔκτος ὠμιλεῖ.
ὁ πλάμον πάτερ, οὖν σε μένει πυθέσθαι
παιδὸς δύσφορον ἀταν,
ἀν οὐπως τις ἐθρεψεν
dίων Αἰακίδαν ἀπερθε ντοῦδε.

ΑΙΑΣ

ἀπανθ' ὁ μακρὸς κάναριθμητος χρόνος
φύει τ' ἄδηλα καὶ φανέντα κρύπτεται.κόν
κούκ ἐστ' ἀελπτον οὐδέν, ἀλλ' ἀλήσκεται
χω δεινὸς ὁρκος καὶ περισκελείς φρένες.
κάγῳ γάρ, ὅσ τὰ δείν' ἐκαρτέρουν τότε,
βαφῆ σίδηρος ὅς ἐθηλύμηθη στόμα
πρὸς τής ἡγήστη τῆς γυναικός. οἰκτίρω δὲ
χήραν παρ' ἐχθροὶς παιδά τ' ὁρφανὸν λιτεῖν.
ἀλλ' εἴμι πρὸς τε λουτρὰ καὶ παρακτίους
λειμώνας, ὡς ἃν λύμαθ' ἀγνίσας ἐμὰ
μῆν' βαρείαν ἐξαλύξωμαι θεᾶς
μολὼν τε χῶρον ἐνθ' ἀν ἀστιβῇ κίχω,
κρυψω τόδ' ἐγχος τοῦμον, ἐχθιστὸν θελῶν,
γαίας ὀρύξας ἐνθα μὴ τις ὠψεται.
ἀλλ' αὐτὸ νὺξ "Αἰδῆς τε σφόντων κάτω.
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐξ οὗ χειρὶ τοῦτ' ἐδεξάμην
AJAX

(No plaintive ditty of the nightingale)
With beating of the breast and rending of white hair.
Better be buried with the dead
Who lives with brain bewilderèd.
Of all the Greeks toil-worn
Behold the noblest born,
Now from his native temper warped and strange,
Whose thoughts in alien paths distracted range.
O wretched father, what a curse 'tis thine
Upon thy son to hear—curse that on none
E'er fell of all the Aeacidae's great line
Save him alone.

Enter AJAX.

AJAX
Time in its slow, illimitable course
Brings all to light and buries all again;
Strange things it brings to pass, the dreadest oath
Is broken and the stubbornest will is bent.
E'en I whose will aforetime was as iron
Steeled in the dipping, now have lost the edge
Of resolution, by this woman's words
Unmanned, to pity melted at the thought
Of her a widow and my orphan son
Left amidst foemen. But I go my way
To the sea baths and meadows by the beach,
That I may there assoil me and assuage
The wrathful goddess, having purged my sin.
Then will I seek some solitary spot
And hide this sword, of weapons most accursed,
Deep under earth, consigned to Night and Hell,
Where never eye of man may see it more;
For since the day I hanselled it, a gift
παρ' "Εκτορος δόρημα δυσμενεστάτου, 
όπω τι κεδυνὸν ἔσχον Ἀργείων πάρα. 
ἀλλ' ἐστ' ἀληθὴς ἢ βροτῶν παρομία, 
ἐχθρῶν ἄδωρα δῶρα κοῦκ ὄνησιμα. 
τοιγάρ τὸ λουπὸν εἰσόμεσθα μὲν θεοὺς 
εἰκεῖν, μαθησόμεσθα δ' Ἀτρείδας σέβειν. 
ἀρχοντές εἰσίν, ὡσθ' ὑπεικτέον. τί μὴν 1; 
καὶ γὰρ τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τὰ καρτερώτατα 
ἔτους ὑπείκειν τοῦτο μὲν νυφοστιβεῖς 
χειμῶνες ἐκχωροῦσιν εὐκάρπῳ θέρειν: 
ἐξίσταται δὲ νυκτὸς αἰανὴς κύκλος 
τῇ λευκοπώλῳ φέγγος ἡμέρα φλέγειν: 
δεινῶν τ' ἀγμα πνευμάτων ἐκοίμισε 
στένοντα πόντων. ἐν δ' ὁ παγκράτης ὕπνος 
ἐμεῖ πεδήσας, οὐδ' ἄει λαβῶν ἔχει. 
ἡμεῖς δὲ πῶς οὐ γνωσόμεσθα σωφρονεῖν; 
ἐγώγ'. 2 ἐπίσταμαι γὰρ ἀρτίως ὅτι 
ὁ τ' ἐχθρὸς ἡμῶν ἐστι τοσοῦτο ἐχθαρτεός, 
ὡς καὶ φιλήσων ἀνθίς, ἐσε τῶν φιλῶν 
τοσαῦθ' ὑπουργῷ ὄφελεῖν βουλήσσομαι, 
ὡς αἰὲν οὐ μενοῦντα τοῖς πολλοῦσι γὰρ 
βροτῶν ἀπιστῶς ἐσθ' ἐταιρεῖας λιμήν. 
ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ μὲν τοῦτοισιν εῦχετε ἔν ὑχὴσει 680 
σὺ δὲ ἔσω θεοῖς ἐλθοῦσα διὰ τάχους, γύναι, 
ἐν χον τελείσθαι τοὺμόν ὁν ἐρα κέαρ. 
ἡμεῖς δ', ἐταίροι, ταύτα τῇ δὲ μοι τάδε 
τιμᾶτε, Τεῦκρω τ', ἦν μόλις, σημῆνατε 
μέλειν μὲν ἡμῶν, εὐνοεῖν δ' ὕμων ἀμα. 
ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰμ' ἔκεισ' ὅποι πορευτέουν: 690

1 τί μὴ MSS., Herwerden corr. 
2 ἐγὼ δ' ἐπισταμαι MSS., Blaydes corr.
AJAX

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

χορος
ἔϕρηξ' ἐρωτ, περιχαρής δ' ἀνεπτόμαν. στρ.
ἰὼ ἰὼ Πάν Πάν, ὁ Πάν Πάν ἀλήπλαγκτε, Κυλλανίας χιουνοκτύπου πετραίας ἀπὸ δειράδος φάνηθ', ὁ θεῶν χοροτοί' ἀναξ', ὀπως μοι Νῦστα Κνώσι' ὀρχήματ' αὐτοδαὴ ξυνῶν ἰάψης' νῦν γὰρ ἐμοὶ μέλει χορέσσαι.
Ἱκαρίων δ' ὑπὲρ πελαγέων μολῶν ἀναξ' Ἀπόλλων ὁ Δάλιος εὐγνωστὸς ἐμοὶ ξυνεὶ διὰ παντὸς εὐφρων.

ἐλυσεν αἰνὸν ἄχος ἀπ' ὄμμάτων Ἀρης. ἀντ.
ἰὼ ἰὼ, νῦν αὖ, νῦν, ὁ Ζεῦ, πάρα λευκὸν εὐάμερον πελάσαι φάος θοᾶν ὁκνάλων νεῶν, ὦτ' Λίας λαθίπνονος πάλιν, θεῶν δ' αὖ πάνθυτα θέσμι' ἔξηνυος' εὐνομία σὲβῶν μεγίστα.
πάνθ' ὁ μέγας χρόνος μαραίνει, κοῦδεν ἀναύδατον φατίσαιμ' ἀν, εὑτὲ γ' ἐξ ἄελπτων Λίας μετανεγνώσῃ θυμοῦ τ' Ἀτρείδαις μεγάλων τε νεικέων.

ἀγγελος
ἀνδρες φίλοι, τὸ πρῶτον ἀγγείλαι θέλω.
Τεύκρος πάρεστιν ἄρτι Μυσίων ἀπὸ κρημνῶν' μέσον δὲ προσμολῶν στρατήγιον κυδάζεται τοῖς πάσιν Ἀργεῖοις ὁμοῖ.
στείχοντα γὰρ πρόσωθεν αὐτὸν ἐν κύκλῳ

1 θυμόν τ' or θυμόν MSS., Hermann corr.
AJAX

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

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

(Ant.)

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

Enter messenger.

MESSENGER
Teucer is here—that, friends, is my first news—
Back from the Mysian highlands newly come.
But as he neared headquarters in mid camp,
He was beset with universal shouts
Of obloquy; they spied him from afar,
μαθόντες ἀμφέστησαν, εἰτ' ὄνείδεσιν ἡρασοῦν ἐνθέν κάνθεν οὕτις ἔσθ' ὦς οὖ, τοῦ τοῦ μανέντος καπιβουλευτοῦ στρατοῦ ξύναιμον ἀποκαλοῦντες, ὡς οὐκ ἄρκεσοι τῷ μῇ οὕ πέτροισι πᾶς καταξανθεῖς θανεῖν ὡςτ' εἰς τοσοῦτον ἦλθον ὡστε καὶ χεροὶ κολεῶν ἔρυστὰ διεπεραιώθη ξίφη.

λήγει δ' ἐρίς δραμοῦσα τοῦ προσωτάτῳ ἀνδρῶν γερόντων ἐν ξυναλλαγῇ λόγῳ.

ἀλλ' ἦμιν Αἰας ποῦ 'στιν, ὡς φράσω τάδε; τοῖς κυρίοις γὰρ πάντα χρή δηλοῦν λόγον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐκ ἐνδον, ἀλλὰ φροῦδος ἄρτιώς, νέας βουλᾶς νέοισιν ἐγκαταζεῦξας τρόποις.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τὸν ἂνδρ' ἀπηύδα Τεύκρος ἐνδοθεν στέγης μὴ ἐξω παρήκειν, πρίν παρὸν αὐτῶς τύχῃ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ταύτ' ἐστὶ τάπη μωρίας πολλῆς πλέα, εἰπερ τῷ Κάλχας εὕ φρονῶν μαντεῦται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῖον; τὸ δ' εἴδως τούδε πράγματος πάρει; ¹

¹ πέρι MSS., Schneidewin corr.
AJAX

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

CHORUS

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

MESSENGER

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

CHORUS

What pressing business has been slackly done?

MESSENGER

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

CHORUS

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

MESSENGER

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

CHORUS

What prophecy? what knowest thou thereof?
ΑΙΑΣ

ΑΡΓΕΛΟΣ

toσούτουν οίδα καὶ παρὼν ἐτύγχανον. ἐκ γὰρ συνέδρου καὶ τυραννικὸν κύκλον Κάλχας μεταστὰς οἶος Ἀτρείδῶν δίχα, εἰς χείρα Τεῦκρον δεξιὰν φιλοφρόνως θείς εἶπε κατεσκηψε, παντοὶ τέχνη ἑιρξαὶ κατ᾽ ἡμαρ τούμφανες τὸ νῦν τόδε Ἀιανθ’ ὑπὸ σκηναῖσι μηδ’ ἄφεντ’ ἔαν, εἰ γὰρ ἐκείνου εἰσιδεῖν θέλοι ποτέ.

ἐλά γὰρ αὐτὸν τῇ δὲ θῆμερα μόνη διὰς Ἀθάνασ μῆνες, ὡς ἐφῆ λέγων.

τὰ γὰρ περισσὰ κἂνόνητα σώματα πίπτειν βαρείας πρὸς θεῶν δυσπραξίας ἔφασχ’ οἱ μάντις, ὥστιν ἀνθρώπων φύσιν ἐκίνος δ’ ἀπ’ οἴκων εὐθὺς ἐξορμόμενος ἄνους καλῶς λέγομα τὴν ἐρήθῃ πατρὸς.

ὁ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐννέπετεν: τέκνου, δόρει βούλου κρατεῖν μὲν, σὺν θεῷ δ’ ἂεὶ κρατεῖν. ὁ δ’ ὡς ὑπικόμπως καθρόνως ἡμείψατο: πάτερ, θεοὶς μὲν καὶ ὁ μὴδὲν ὅν ὀμοῦ κράτος κατακτήσατ’ ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ δίχα κεῖνων πέποιθα τὸν ἐπισπάσεων κλέος.

toσόνδ’ ἐκόμπησε μοῦνον. εἶτα δεύτερον διὰς Ἀθάνας, ἤνικ’ ὀπτύνουσα νῦν ἥυδατ’ ἐπ’ ἔχθροις χείρα φωνίαν τρέπειν, τὸτ’ ἀντιφωνεὶ δεινον ἄρρητόν τ’ ἔπος· ἀνάσσα, τοῖς ἀλλοισιν Ἀργείοιν πέλας ἵστω, καθ’ ἡμᾶς δ’ οὐποτ’ ἐκρήξει μᾶχη. τοιοῦσδε τοι λόγουσιν ἀστεργήθη θεᾶς ἐκτῆσατ’ ὄργῃ, οὐ κατ’ ἀνθρωπον φρονῶν. ἀλλ’ εἶπερ ἔστι τῇ δὲ θῆμερα, τάχ’ ἂν
Thus much I know, for I was there. The seer
Leaving the council of assembled chiefs,
From the Atridae drew aside and laid
His right hand lovingly in Teucer’s hand,
And spake and charged him straitly by all means,
For this one day whose light yet shines, to keep
Ajax within his tent nor let him forth,
If he would see him still a living man.
"Only to-day," said Calchas, "will the wrath
Of dread Athena vex him, and no more.
O'erweening mortals waxing fat with pride
Fall in their folly, smitten by the gods
With dire disaster" (so the prophet spake),
"Whene'er a mortal born to man’s estate
Exalts himself in thoughts too high for man.
Thus Ajax, e'en when first he left his home,
In folly spurned his father's monishments—
'Seek victory, my son' (so warned the sire),
'But seek it ever with the help of heaven.'
He in his wilful arrogance, replied,
'Father, with gods to aid, a man of naught
Might well prevail, but I without their help.'
Such was his haughty boast. A second time,
To Queen Athena, as she spurred him on
To turn his reeking hand upon his foes,
He spake a blasphemous, outrageous word,
'Queen, stand beside the other Greeks; where I
Am posted, fear not that our ranks will break.'
Such vaunting words drew on him the dire wrath
Of the goddess—pride too high for mortal man.
γενοίμεθ' αὐτοῦ σὺν θεῷ σωτήριοι.
tοσαῦθ' ὁ μάντις εἰφ'. ὦ ὃ' εὐθὺς ἐξ ἐδρας
πέμπει με σολ φέροντα τάσ' ἐπιστολάς
Τεῦκρος φυλάσσειν. εἰ δ' ἀπεστερήμεθα,
οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνηρ κεῖνος, εἰ Ἐλάχις σοφὸς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ δαίμα Τέκμησσα, δύσμορον γένος,
ὁρα μολούσα τόνδ' ὅποι' ἐπῆ θροεί·
ξυρεῖ γὰρ ἐν χρώ τοῦτο μὴ χαίρειν τινά.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῦδ' εἰσάκουε τάνδρος, ὡς ἥκει φέρων
Ἄιαντος ἡμῖν πράξειν ἥν ἡλησθ' ἐγώ.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οὕμοι, τί φῆς, ἀνθρώπε; μῶν ὀλώλαιεν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ οίδα τὴν σήν πρᾶξεν, Ἀἰαντος δ' ὦτι,
θυραῖοις εὗπερ ἐστίν, οὐ θαρσῶ πέρι.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

καὶ μὴν θυραίοις, ὡστε μ' ὁδίνειν τί φῆς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐκείνων εἰργείν Τεῦκρος ἐξεφλέται
σκηνῆς ὑπαύλου μηδ' ἀφιέναι μόνον.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ποῦ δ' ἐστὶ Τεῦκρος, κάτι τῷ λέγει τάδε;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πάρεστ' ἐκείνος ἄρτι τήνδε δ' ἔξωδον
ὁλεθρίαν Ἀἰαντος ἐλπίζει φέρειν.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οὐμοι τάλαινα, τοῦ ποτ' ἀνθρώπων μαθῶν;
AJAX

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

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

Enter Tecmessa.

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

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

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

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

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

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

TECMESSA
And where is Teucer? Wherefore speaks he thus?

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

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

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

tου Θεστορείου μάντεως, καθ’ ἡμέραν τὴν νύν, ὦτ’ αὐτῷ θάνατον ἢ βίον φέρει.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οἱ ’γενόμεναι, φίλοι, πρόστηται ἀναγκαίας τύχης, καὶ σπεύσαθ’ ἵνα μὲν Τεῦκρον ἐν τάχει μολεῖν, οἱ δ’ ἐστέρουσ ἀγκώνας, οἱ δ’ ἀνυπλίους ζητεῖτ’ ἑντεῦθεν τάνδρος ἔξοδον κακήν

ἔγνωκα γὰρ ἐκεῖ αὐτὸν ἤπαθημένη
καὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς χάριτος ἐκβεβλημένη.

οἷς, τῷ δρόμῳ, τέκνου; οὐχ ἰδρυτέουν

χορῷμεν, ἐγκονώμεν, οὐχ ἐδρασ ἀκμὴ

χορεῖν θέλοντας ἀνδρα γ’ ὑπεύθυνη θανεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χορεῖν ἔτοιμος, κοῦ λόγῳ δεῖξω μόνων;

tάχος γὰρ ἔργου καὶ ποδῶν ἀμ’ ἐφεταί,
AJAX

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

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

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

AJAX
The slayer standeth where his stroke is sure—
If I have time to muse thus curiously—
The gift of Hector erst my foeman-friend,
The man most hateful to my soul and sight,
Now fixed in foemen's land, the land of Troy;
Fresh edged upon the iron-fretting stone,
Here have I planted it and set it fast,
A friend to help me to a speedy death.
My part is done; for what remains, O Zeus,
First I invoke thine aid; and claim my due;
'Tis no excessive boon I shall demand.
I pray thee send some messenger to bear
Τεύκρω φέροντα, πρώτος ὡς με βαστάσῃ πεπτώτα τὸ δε περὶ νεορράντων ξίφευ, καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἐχθρῶν τοὺς κατοπτευθεῖς πάρος μιθωκυσίν πρόβλητος οἴωνοις θ’ ἔλωρ. τοσαυτά τ’ ὲ Ζεῦ, προστρέπω, καλὸ δ’ ἀμα πομπαῖον Ἑρμῆν χθόνιον εὖ με κοιμᾶσαι, ξίν ἀσφαλῶστο καὶ ταχεὶ πηδήματι πλευρὰν διαρρήξαντα τῷ δε φασγάνῳ. καλὸ δ’ ἀρωγοὺς τὰς ἀεὶ τε παρθένους ἀεὶ θ’ ὀρώσας πάντα τὰν βροτοῖς πάθη, σεμνᾶς Ἑρμῆν τανύποδας, μαθεὶν ἐμὲ πρὸς τῶν Ἀτρειδῶν ὡς διόλλυμαι τάλας, καὶ σφας κακοὺς κάκιστα καὶ πανωλέθρους ξυναρτάσειαν, ὥσπερ εἰσορῶ’ ἐμὲ [αὐτοσφαγή πίπτοντα, τῶς αὐτοσφαγεῖς πρὸς τῶν φιλίστων ἐκγώνων ὀλοιατο].1 ἵτ’ ὢ ταχεὶα παίνιμοι τ’ Ἑρμῆες, γεύεσθε, μὴ φείδεσθε πανδήμου στρατοῦ· σὺ δ’, ὡ τὸν αἰτίνι οὐρανὸν διφρηλατῶν Ἡλίε, πατρφών τὴν ἐμὴν ὅταν χθόνα ὑδης, ἐπισχῶν χρυσόνωτον ἡμίαν ἀγγειλον ἀτας τὰς ἐμὰς μόρων τ’ ἐμὸν γέροντι πατρεί τῇ τε δυστήνως τροφῇ. ἡ ποὺ τὰλανα, τῆνδ’ ὅταν κλυὴ φαῦτιν, ἔσει μεγάν κοκυτοῦ ἐν πάσῃ πόλει. ἀλλ’ οὖν, ἐφιγον ταῦτα βριθνεῖσθαι ματήν, ἀλλ’ ἁρκτέον τὸ πράγμα σὺν τάξει τινί. ὤ Θάνατε Θάνατε, νῦν μ’ ἐπίσκεψαι μολὼν. καίτω σὲ μὲν κάκει προσαυδήσω ξυνών. σὲ δ’, ὦ φασενής ἡμέρας τὸ νῦν σέλας, καὶ τὸν διφρεντὴν Ἡλίου προσεωνέπο, 1 Rejected by Hermann, etc.
AJAX

To Teucer the sad tale, that he may come
To lift me where I lie a bleeding corpse,
Fallen on this gory sword, lest I be first
Discovered by some enemy and cast forth,
A prey to dogs and birds. Thus much, O Zeus,
I crave of thee; and Hermes I invoke,
Born guide of spirits to the nether world,
To lay me soft to rest at one swift gasp,
Without a struggle, when into my side
I plunge this sword. Ye too I call to aid,
Maidens immortal, with immortal eyes
Beholding all the many woes of man,
Swift-footed hounds of vengeance, mark ye well
How by the Atridae I am all undone.
Swoop on them, Furies, blight and blast them both
In utter ruin, as they see me now!
On, ye Avengers, glut your maw, spare not,
Let ruin seize the whole Achaean host!
And thou whose chariot climbs the steep of heaven,
When in thy course thou see'st my father-land,
Draw in thy gold-bedizened rein and tell
My aged sire and mother of their son,
His sorrows and his end. Poor mother! when
She hears the tale, her piercing wail will ring
Through all the city. But how profitless
These idle lamentations and delay!
With such despatch as may be let's to work.
O Death, Death, Death, draw nigh and look on me—
Yet there below I shall have time enow
To converse face to face with Death. But thee,
O bright effulgence of this radiant day,
On thee, the Sun-god charioteer, I call
πανύστατον δὴ κοὐποτ' αὐθίς ύστερον. 
ό φέγγος, ά γάς ίερόν οἰκείας πέδου 
Σαλαμίνος, ά πατρήφων ἐστίας βάθρον 
kλεινάι τ' Ἀθῆναι καὶ τὸ σύντροφον γένος 
kρήναι τε πόταμοι θ' οὐδε, καὶ τὰ Τρωϊκ' 
pέδια προσανδώ, χαίρετ', ό τροφής ἐμοί. 
τοῦθ' ὑμῖν Αίας τοῦτος ύστατον θροεί, 
tὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἐν "Αἰδου τοῖς κάτω μυθήσομαι.

HMIXOPION α'
πόνος πόνω πόνον φέρει.
πά πά
πά γαρ οὐκ ἐβαν ἐγώ; 
κακοὶς ἐπίσταται με συμμαθεῖν ¹ τόπος. 
ιδού.
δοῦτον αὐ κλύω τινά.

HMIXOPION β'
ἡμῶν γε νάδος κοινόπλουν ὀμιλίαν.

HMIXOPION α'
ti oýn δή;

HMIXOPION β'
páv εστίβηται πλευρὸν ἐσπερον νεὼν 
HMIXOPION α'
ἐχεις οὖν;

HMIXOPION β'
pόνον γε πλῆθος, κοῦδέν εἰς ὁψίν πλέον.

HMIXOPION α'
ἀλλ' οὐδέ μὲν δὴ τῆν ἀφ' ἡλίου βολών 
kέλευθον ἀνὴρ οὐδαμοῦ δηλοὶ φανεῖς.

¹ The Greek is obscure and probably corrupt. Jebb suggests, but does not print σφε σωραλεῖν.
AJAX

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

[He falls upon his sword.]

Re-enter chorus.

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

semi-chorus 2
'Tis we, thy mates.

semi-chorus 1
What cheer, mates?

semi-chorus 2
All westward of the fleet we've ranged and found

semi-chorus 1
Found, say you!

semi-chorus 2
Of moil enow, of what we sought no trace.

semi-chorus 1
No better luck to the eastward; on the road
That fronts the sunrise not a trace of him.

¹ Or, 'No spot can tell me of his presence there.'
ΔΙΑΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τίς ἂν δήτα μοι, τίς ἂν φιλοσόφων
ἀλιαδαν ἐχων ἄμπνους ἄγρας,
ἡ τίς Ὅλυμπιάδων θεὰν ἡ ῥυτῶν
Βοσπορίων ποταμῶν, τὸν ὁμόθυμον
eἰ ποθι πλαζόμενον λεύσσων
ἀπότοι; σχέτλια γὰρ
ἐμὲ γε τὸν μακρῶν ἀλάταν πόνων
οὐρίω μὴ πελάσαι δρόμῳ,
ἀλλὰ ἀμενηνὸν ἀνδρά μὴ λεύσσειν ὑπον.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΑ
ιὸ μοι μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τίνος βοή πάραυλος ἐξέβη νάπους;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΑ
ιὸ τλήμων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τὴν δουρίληπτον δύσμορον νύμφην ὄρῳ
Τέκμησαν, οὐκτῷ, τῷ δὲ συγκεκραμένην.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΑ
ὣς, ὁλωλα, διαπεπόρθημαι, φίλοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί δ᾽ ἔστιν;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΑ
Ἄιας ὁδ᾽ ἡμῖν ἀρτίως νεοσφαγῆς
κεῖται, κρυφαῖος φασγάνω περιπτυχῆς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὁμοί ἔμοι νόστων.
ὁμοί, κατεπέφυσ, ἀναξ,
tοῦδε συνναυταν, τάλας
ὡ ταλαίφρων γύναι.
AJAX

CHORUS

O that some toiling fisher by the bay,
   Dragging his nets all night,
   Some Oread from Olympus' height,
Or nymph who haunts the tides of Bosporus,
Might spy the wanderer on his wayward way
   And bring the tale to us.
Hard lot is ours who tack
To east, to west, and find no track,
Ne'er in our luckless course descry
The derelict nor come anigh.
(They hear a cry in the covert.)

TECMESSA

Woe, woe is me!

CHORUS

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

TECMESSA

Me miserable!

CHORUS

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

TECMESSA

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

CHORUS

What aileth thee?

TECMESSA

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

CHORUS

O for my hope of return!
O my chief, thou hast slain
   Me thy shipmate! my heart
   Bleeds for thee, lady forlorn.
ΑΙΑΣ

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ός ὁδὲ τοῦδ' ἐχοντος αἰώζειν πάρα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίνος ποτ' ἄρ' ἐπραξε χειρὶ δύσμορος;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

αὐτὸς πρὸς αὐτοῦ, δῆλον· ἐν γὰρ οἱ χθονὶ πηκτὸν τὸδ' ἐγχος περιπετεῖς κατηγορεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁμοι ἐμᾶς ἄτας, οἶδος ἄρ' αἰμάχθης, ἀφαρκτος φίλων·

ἐγὼ δ' ὁ πάντα κωφός, ὁ πάντ' ἀϊδρις, κατ-

ημέλησα. πὰ πὰ

κεῖται ὁ δυστράπελος, δυσώνυμος Λᾶς;

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οὕτωι θεατος· ἀλλὰ νῦν περιπτυχέι

φάρει καλύψω τῶδε παμπῆδην, ἐπεὶ

οὐδείς ἄν, ὡστις καὶ φίλος, τλαίη βλέπειν

 φυσώντι ἄνω πρὸς ρύνας ἕκ τε φοινίας

πληγῆς μελανθὲν αἱμ' ἀπ' οἴκειας σφαγῆς.

οἶμοι, τί δράσω; τίς σε βαστάσει φίλων;

ποῦ Τεῦκρος; ὡς ἀκμαἰ' ἄν, εἰ βαἰη, μόλοι, πεπτῶτ' ἄδελφον τῶδε συγκαθαρμόσαι.

ὁ δύσμορ' Αἴας, οἶος ὃν οἴως ἔχεις,

ὡς καὶ παρ' ἔχθροις ἀξίος θρήνων τυχεὶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμελλες, τάλας, ἐμελλες χρόνῳ

ἀντ.

στερεόφρων ἄρ' ἐξανύσσειν κακὰν

μοῖραν ἀπειρεσίων πόλων. τοῖὰ μοι

πάνυνχα καὶ φαέθοντ' ἀνεστέναξε

ὡμόφρων ἐχθροδότ' Ἀτρείδαις

76
AJAX

TECMESSA
Thus lies he overthrown; 'tis ours to wail.

CHORUS
By whose hand did he thus procure his death?

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

CHORUS
Out on my blindness! All alone
Unwatched of friends he bled to death!
And I saw naught, heard naught, recked naught of thee!
Where lies he, Ajax, the self-willed,
The unbending, luckless as his name?

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

CHORUS
Ah woeful hero, 'twas thy fate,
With that unyielding soul of thine,
In endless misery to decline,
And reach the goal of ruin, soon or late.
I knew it as I heard thee eve and morn
Against the Atridae vent
Thy passionate complaint,
οὐλίω σὺν πάθει.
μέγας ἄρ’ ἂν ἔκεινος ἀρχῶν χρόνος
πημάτων, ἦμως ἀριστόχειρ
—it—ὀπλαν ἐκεῖν ἁγῶν πέρι.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ιό μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
χωρεῖ πρὸς ἡπαρ, οἶδα, γενναία δύη.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

ιό μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐδέν σ’ ἀπιστῶ καὶ δίς οἶμῶξαι, γύναι,
tοιοῦδ’ ἀποβλαφθείσαν ἄρτιώς φίλου.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ξυνανδῶ.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οἶμοι, τέκνον, πρὸς οίᾳ δουλείας ξυγὰ
χωροῦμεν, οἴοι νῦν ἐφεστάσιν σκοποί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀμοι, ἀναλγήτων
δισσῶν ἐθρόησας ἄναυδ’
ἐργ’ Ἀτρειδῶν τῆς ἄχει.
ἀλλ’ ἀπείργοι θεός.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ

οὐκ ἂν τάδ’ ἔστη τῆς μὴ θεῶν μέτα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄγαν ὑπερβριθῆς γὰρ 2 ἄχθος ἦνυσαν.

1 ἄναυδον ἐργον MSS., Hermann corr.
2 Elmsley adds γὰρ.
AJAX

A bitter cry of proud disdain and scorn.
Aye, then began my woes
When first arose
The contest who those arms could claim
As guerdon for the first in warlike fame.

TECMESSA

Woe, woe is me!

CHORUS

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

TECMESSA

Woe, woe is me!

CHORUS

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

TECMESSA

The woe I feel thou canst in part conceive.

CHORUS

'Tis true.

TECMESSA

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

CHORUS

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

TECMESSA

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

CHORUS

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

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
τοιώνδε μέντοι Ζηνώς ἢ δεινὴ θεὸς
Παλλᾶς φυτεύει πῆμ’ Ὅδυσσέως χάριν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
η ῥα κελαινώπαυ θυμὸν ἐφυβρίζει πολύτλας ἀνήρ,
γελάδ’ δ’ τούς δε μαυρομένοις ἄχεσιν πολύν γέλωτα,
φεῦ φεῦ,
ξῦν τε διπλοὶ βασιλῆς κλύοντες Ὅστρείδαι.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
οί δ’ οὖν γελώντων κάπισταρόντων κακοῖς
τοῖς τούδ’ ἱσως τοι, κεῖ βλέποντα μη’ πόθουν,
θανόντ’ ἂν οὐλάξειαν ἐν χρεία ἑορόσ.
οί γὰρ κακοί γνώμααι τάγαθῶν χεροῖν
ἐχοντες οὐκ ἵασαί, πριν τις ἐκβάλη.
ἐμοὶ πικρὸς τεθυκεν ἡ κεῖνοις γλυκός,
αὐτῷ δὲ τερπνός· οὐν γὰρ ἡράσθη τυχεῖν
ἐκτῆσαθ’ αὐτῷ, θανατον ὄντερ ἡθελεν.
τί δῆτα τούδ’ ἐπεγγελ森林公园 ἂν κάτα;
θεοῖς τεθυκεν ὅτος, οὐ κείνοισιν, οὐ.
πρὸς ταύτ’ Ὅδυσσεύς ἐν κενοῖς ὑβριζέτω.
Αἰας γὰρ αὐτοῖς οὐκέτ’ ἐστίν, ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ
λυπῶν ἀνίας καὶ γούς διοίχεται.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ
ἰῷ μοὶ μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
σύγησον· αὐθὴν γὰρ δοκῶ Τεύκρον κλὺειν
βοῦτος ἄτης τῆς ἐπίσκοποι μέλος.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ
ὡ φίλτατ’ Αἰας, ὡ̣ ξύναιμον ὃμμ’ ἐμοί,
ἀρ’ ἡμπόληκας, ὡσπερ ἡ φάτις κρατεῖ;
AJAX

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

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

TECMessa
Well, let them laugh and mock at Ajax fall'n.
It may be, though they missed him not in life,
When comes the stress of war they'll mourn him dead.
Men of mean judgment know not the good thing
They have and hold till they have squandered it.
He by his death more sorrow gave to me
Than joy to them; to himself 'twas pure content,
For all he yearned to attain he won himself—
Death that he chose. Then wherefore scoff at him?
The gods were authors of his death, not they.
So let Odysseus, if it please him, vent
Vain taunts; for them there is no Ajax more,
And dying he has left me naught but woe.

TEucer
Woe, woe is me!

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

Enter TEucer.

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δὸλωλεν ἀνήρ, Τεῦκρε, τοῦτ᾽ ἐπίστασο.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὁμοι βαρείας ἀρα τῆς ἐμῆς τύχης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὡς ὠδ᾽ ἐχώντων

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὁ τάλας ἐγὼ, τάλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πάρα στενάζειν.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὁ περισσερχέσ πάθος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀγαν γε, Τεῦκρε.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

φεῦ τάλας: τί γὰρ τέκνουν

to τοῦδε, πού μοι γῆς κυρεῖ τῆς Τρφάδος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μόνος παρὰ σκηναίσιν.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

οὐχ ὅσον τάχος

dὴτ᾽ αὐτῶν ἄξεις δεύρο, μὴ τις ὡς κενής

σκύμνον λεαίνης δυσμενῶν ἀναρτάσῃ;

Ἱ᾽, ἐγκόνει, σύγκαμνε τοῖς θανούσι τοι

φιλούσι πάντες κειμένους ἐπεγγελάν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἔτι ξῶν, Τεῦκρε, τοῦδε σοι μέλειν

ἐφίεθ᾽ ἀνήρ κεῖνος, ὡσπερ οὖν μέλει.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὁ τῶν ἀπάντων δὴ θεαμάτων ἐμὸλ

ἀλγίστον ὃν προσείδον ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐγὼ,
AJAX

CHORUS
He hath perished, Teucer, and report spake true.

TEUCER
Then woe is me for my most grievous loss.

CHORUS
And since 'tis thus—

TEUCER
Alas for me, alas!

CHORUS
The hour for mourning—

TEUCER
O sharp pang of pain!

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

TEUCER
Ay me!

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

CHORUS
Alone beside the tent.

TEUCER
Then bring him quickly,
Lest of our foemen one should snatch him up,
As from a lioness forlorn her cub.
Go quick, bestir thyself. 'Tis the world's way
To flout and triumph o'er the prostrate dead.

[Exit Tecmessa.]

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

TEUCER
O saddest sight of all I ever saw,
O bitterest of all paths I ever trod,
όδος θ' ὅδων πασῶν ἀνιάσασα δὴ
μάλιστα τοῦμον σπλάγχνον, ἢν δὴ νῦν ἔβην.
ὃ φίλτατ' Άιας, τὸν σὸν ὡς ἐπησθόμην
μόρον διώκων καξιχνυσκοπούμενος.
ὁξεῖα γὰρ σου βάξις ὡς θεοῦ τινος
dιῆλθ', Ἀχαιοῖς πάντας ὡς οἶχει θανῶν.
ἀγὸ κλών δύστημος ἐκποδῶν μὲν ὧν
ὕπεστέναξον, νῦν δ' ὄρων ἀπόλλυμαι.
οἴμοι.
ιθ', ἐκκάλυψον, ὡς ἵδω τὸ πᾶν κακὸν.
ὅ δυσθέατον ὅμμα καὶ τόλμης πικρᾶς,
ὅσα ἀνίασ μοι κατασπείρας φθείνεις.
ποὶ γὰρ μολεῖν μοι δυνατόν, εἰς ποίους βροτοῦς,
τοῖς σοῖς ἀρίζαντ' ἐν πόνοισι μηδαμοῦ;
ἡ ποὺ με 1 Τελαμών, σὸς πατὴρ ἔμος θ' ἀμα,
δέξατ' ἄν εὐπρόσωπος ἵλεος τ' ἱσώς
χωροῦντ' ἄνευ σοῦ. πῶς γὰρ οὕχ; ὅτω πάρα
μὴ εὐτυχοῦντι μηδὲν ἥδιον γελάν.
οὕτος τί κρύψει; ποίον οὐκ ἔρει κακὸν
τὸν ἐκ δορὸς γεγοῦτα πολεμίου νόθου,
τὸν δειλία προδόντα καὶ κακανδρία
σέ, φίλτατ' Άιας, ἣ δόλοις, ὡς τὰ σὰ
κράτηθα διανότος καὶ δόμους νέμοιμ σοὺς.
τοιαῦτ' ἀνήρ δύσοργος, ἐν γῆρα βαρύς,
ἐρεί, πρὸς οὐδὲν εἰς ἑρίν θυμοῦμενος.
τέλος ὦ ἀπωστὸς γῆς ἀπορριφθήσομαι,
δοῦλος λόγοις ἀντ' ἐλευθέρου φανεῖς.
τοιαῦτα μὲν κατ' οἴκον· ἐν Τροίᾳ δὲ μοι
πολλοὶ μὲν ἐχθροί, παῦρα δ' ὀφελήσιμα,
καὶ ταῦτα πάντα σοῦ θανόντος ηὐρόμην.
οἴμοι, τί δράσοι; πῶς σ' ἀποστάσω πικροῦ

1 MSS. omit με, added by Kuster.
The path that led me hither, Ajax loved,
My best-loved Ajax! when I learnt thy fate,
E'en as I tracked in desperate haste thy steps;
For a swift rumour, like a voice from heaven,
Ran through the host that thou wert dead and gone.
I heard it and I moaned in spirit afar,
But now the sight strikes death into my soul.
O woe!
Come, lift the searcloth; let me see the worst.
O bleeding form, O agonising sight!
How brave, how rash, how cruel in thy death;
Thy death, what seed of misery for me!
Where can I turn, what race of men will house me,
The wretch who failed to help thee in thy woes?
How Telamon, thy sire and mine withal,
Will beam upon me (can'st not picture him?)
When I return without thee! Telamon
Who in his hours of fortune never smiles!
Will he refrain? Will he not curse and ban
The bastard of his spear-won concubine,
The wretch who like a coward and poltroon
Forsook thee, dearest Ajax, or conspired
To hold thy realm and halls when thou wert dead?
Thus will he rave, the choleric, soured old man,
Ready to pick a quarrel for a straw.
And in the end I shall be banned, defamed,
Rejected, branded—No free man, a slave.
Such cheer at home awaits me, and at Troy
My foes are many and my friends to seek.
Thus by thy death I've profited! Ah me!
How tear thee from this cruel glittering blade,
τοῦδ' αἰώλου κυνόδουτος, ὃ τάλας, ὑφ' οὐ φοινέως ἀρ' ἐξέπνευσας; εἴδες ὡς χρόνῳ ἐμελλὲ σ' Ἔκτωρ καὶ θανῶν ἀποθίσειν; σκέψασθε, πρὸς θεῶν, τὴν τύχην δυνών βροτοῖν. Ἔκτωρ μέν, ὃ δὴ τοῦδ' ἐδωρήθη πάρα, ζωστήρι πρισθείς ἵππικών ἐξ ἀντύγων ἐκνάπτετ' αἰέν, ἔστ' ἀπέψυξεν βίον· οὖτος δ' ἐκείνου τῇνδε δωρεάν ἔχων πρὸς τοῦδ' ὀλωλε θανασίμμω πεσήματι. ἄρ' οὐκ Ἐρμύς τοὺτ' ἐχάλκευσεν ἐξίφος κάκεινον Ἀιδῆς, δημοουργός ἀγρίως; ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν καὶ ταύτα καὶ τὰ πάντ' ἔαλ φάσκοιμ' ἄν ἀνθρώποις μηχανὰν θεοὺς· ὅτι δὲ μὴ τάδ' ἐστίν ἐν γυνώμη φίλα, κείνος τ' ἐκείνα στεργέτω κάγῳ τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μὴ τείνε μακράν, ἀλλ' ὅπως κρύψεις τάφῳ φράζου τὸν ἄνδρα χῶ τι μυθήσει τάχα. Βλέπω γὰρ ἔχθρον φώτα, καὶ τάχ' ἄν κακοὶς γελῶν ἄ ἰῇ κακοῦργος ἐξίκοιτ' ἀνήρ.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

τίς δ' ἐστίν ὄντιν ἄνδρα προσλεύσεις στρατοῦ; ΧΟΡΟΣ

Μενέλαος, ὁ δὴ τόνδε πλοῦν ἐστείλαμεν.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ὁρῶ· μαθεῖν γὰρ ἐγγὺς ὅν οὐ δυσπετήσ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὖτος, σὲ φανῶ τόνδε τὸν νεκρὸν χερῶν μὴ συγκομίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐὰν ὅπως ἔχει.
AJAX

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

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

TEUCER
What captain dost thou see?

CHORUS
Menelaus, he at whose behest we sailed.

TEUCER
'Tis he, not hard to recognise thus near.

Enter Menelaus.

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

¹ Homer knows nothing of the belt and it is the dead Hector who is dragged round the tomb of Patroclus.
ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ
τίνος χάριν τοσόνδ’ ἀνήλωσας λόγον;
ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ
dοκοῦντ’ ἐμοί, δοκοῦντα δ’ ὅς κραίνει στρατοῦ.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ
οὐκοῦν ἄν εἴποις ἢμνιν’ αἰτίαν προθείς;
ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ
όθούνεκ’ αὐτόν ἐλπίσαντες οἴκοθεν
ἀγειν Ἀχαίοις ἔμμαχόν τε καὶ φίλον,
ἐξηύρομεν ξητούντες ἐχθίων Φρυγῶν·
όστις στρατῷ Ξύμπαντ τοῦ[ύ]δε οὐνοῦ
νύκτωρ ἐπεστάτευσεν, ὡς ἔλοι δόρεν·
κεῖ μὴ θεῶν τις τήνδε πείραι ἐσβεσεν,
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἄν τήνδ᾿ ἦν ὅδ᾿ εἰληχεν τύχην
θανόντες ἄν προυκείμεθ’ αἰσχίστῳ μορῷ,
οὕτος δ᾿ ἄν ἔξη. νῦν δ᾿ ἐνήλλαξεν θέος
tὴν τοῦδ᾿ ὑβριν πρὸς μῆλα καὶ ποίμνας πεσεῖν.
ὡν εἶνεκ’ αὐτόν οὕτις ἔστ᾿ ἀνήρ σθένων
tοσοῦτον ὡστε σῶμα τυμβεύσαι τάφῳ,
ἄλλ᾿ ἀμφὶ χλωρᾶν ψώμαθον ἐκβεβλημένος
ὅρισι φορῆ παραλίους γενήσεται.

πρὸς ταῦτα μηδὲν δεινὸν ἐξάρης μένος.
εἰ γὰρ βλέποντος μὴ ἑυψηθήμεν κρατεῖν,
pάντως θανόντος γη’ ἄρξομεν, καὶ μὴ θέλης,
χερσίν παρευθύνοντες· οὐ γὰρ ἐσθ᾿ ὅπου
λόγων γη’ ἄκούσαι ξῶν ποτ’ ἥθέλησ᾿ ἐμῶν.
καίτοι κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ὄντα δημότην
μηδὲν δικαιοῦν τῶν ἐφεστῶτων κλύειν.
οὐ γὰρ ποτ’ οὔτ’ ἄν ἐν πόλει νόμοι καλῶς
φέροιντ’ ἂν, ἐνθα μὴ καθεστήκη δέος,
οὔτ’ ἄν στρατὸς γε σωφρόνως ἄρχοιτ’ ἐτι,
μηδὲν φόβου πρόβλημα μηδ’ αἰδοὺς ἔχων.

88
AJAX

TEUCER

Wherefore dost waste thy breath in these proud words?

MENELAUS

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

TEUCER

On what pretence? wilt please to tell us that?

MENELAUS

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

άλλ' ἀνδρα χρῆ, κἂν σῶμα γεννήσῃ μέγα,
dοκεῖν πεσεῖν ἂν κἂν ἄπτο σμικροῦ κακοῦ.
dεός γὰρ ὦ πρόσεστιν αἰσχύνη θ' ὦ μοῦ,
σωτηρίαν ἔχοντα τόνδ' ἐπίστασο· ὦ
ὀπού δ' ὑβρίζειν δρᾶν θ' ἄ βούλεται παρῆ,
tαύτην νόμιζε τὴν πόλιν χρόνῳ ποτὲ
ἐξ οὐρίων δραμοῦσαν εἰς βυθὸν πεσεῖν.
ἀλλ' ἐστάτω μοι καὶ δέος τι καλριον,
καὶ μὴ δοκῶμεν δρόντες ἂν ἡδώμεθα
οὐκ ἀντιτίσεων ἀθίς ἂν λυπόμεθα.
ἔρπει παραλλάξ ταῦτα. πρόσθεν οὗτος ἦν
αἴθων υβριστής, νῦν δ' ἐγὼ μέγ' αὐθρονο.
καὶ σοι προφωνῶ τόνδε μὴ θάπτειν, ὅπως
μὴ τόνδε θάπτων αὐτὸς εἰς ταφὰς πέσης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Μενέλαιε, μὴ γνώμας ὑποστήσας σοφὰς
eἰτ' αὐτός ἐν θανοῦσιν υβριστής γένη.

ΤΕΥΧΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν ποτ', ἀνδρεῖς, ἀνδρα θαυμάσαμ' ἐτι,
ὅς μὴδὲν ἄν γοναίσιν εἰθ' ἀμαρτάνειν,
ὁθ' οἱ δοκοῦντες εὐγενεῖς πέφυκέναι
tουιαῦθ' ἀμαρτάνουσιν ἐν λόγοις ἐπή·
ἀγ' εἴπ' ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐθίς, ἢ σὺ φής ἄγειν
τόνδ' ἀνδρ' Ἀχαίοις δεύρο σύμμαχον λαβῶν;
οὐκ αὐτὸς ἐξέπλευσεν ὡς αὐτοῦ κρατῶν;
ποῦ σὺ στρατηγεῖς τοῦδε; ποῦ δὲ σοι λεῶν
ἐξεστ' ἀνάσσειν ἄν ὦ θα' ἡγαγ' ὀἰκθέν,
Σπάρτης ἀνάσσων ἥλθες, οὐχ ἢμῶν κρατῶν
οὐδ' ἐστ' ὦ ποτον σοι τόνδε κοσμήσαι πλέον
ἀρχῆς ἐκείτο θεσμὸς ἢ καὶ τῦδε σέ.
ὑπαρχος ἀλλων δεύρ' ἐπιευσας, οὐχ ὀλὼν
AJAX

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

CHORUS

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

TEUCER

Friends, I shall never marvel after this
If any baseborn fellow gives offence,
When men who pride them on their lineage
By their perverted utterance thus offend.
Repeat thy tale: thou claimest to have brought
My brother hither as a Greek ally,
Secured by thee forsooth. Sailed he not forth
As his own master, of his own free will?
Who made thee lord of him? What right hast thou
To rule the clansmen whom he brought from home?
Thou cam' st as Sparta's king, no lord of ours.
Thou hast no more prerogative or right
To govern him than he to govern thee;
Thou sailedst under orders, not as chief,
στρατηγός, ὡστ' Ἀλαντός ἤργείσθαι ποτε. ἀλλ' ἄνυπερ ἄρχεις ἄρχε καὶ τὰ σέμν' ἐπὶ κόλαξ ἐκείνους· τόνδε ὅ', εἴτε μὴ σὺ φῆς εἴθ' ἀτέρος στρατηγός, εἰς ταφᾶς ἔγν' ἰήσῳ δικαίως, οὐ τὸ σὸν δείσας στόμα. οὐ γὰρ τι τῆς σῆς εἶνεκ' ἐστρατεύσατο γυναικός, ὥστερ οἱ πόνοι πολλοῦ πλέω, ἀλλ' εἶνεχ' ὀρκων οἶςν ἢν ἐνώμοτος, σοῦ δ' οὐδέν· οὐ γὰρ ἥξιον τοὺς μηδένας. πρὸς ταῦτα πλείους δεύρο κήρυκας λαβὼν καὶ τὸν στρατηγὸν ἥκε, τοῦ δὲ σοῦ ψόφου οὐκ ἄν στραφεῖν, ἔως ἄν ἢς οἶός περ εἰ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐδ' αὖ τοιαύτην γλῶσσαν ἐν κακοῖς φιλῶ· τὰ σκληρὰ γὰρ τοι, καὶν ύπέρδικ' ἦ, δάκνει.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ
ὁ τοξότης ἐοίκεν οὐ σμικρὸν φρονεῖν.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ
οῦ γὰρ βάναυσον τὴν τέχνην ἐκτησάμην.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ
μέγ' ἂν τῇ κομπάσειας, ἀσπίδι' εἰ λάβοις.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ
καὶ γνωρίδος ἀρκέσαιμι σοί γ' ὀπλισμένῳ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ
ἡ γλῶσσα σου τὸν θυμὸν ὡς δεινὸν τρέφει.

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

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

MENELAUS
Methinks this archer hath a captain's pride.

TEUCER
Aye, as the master of no vulgar art.

MENELAUS
How wouldst thou strut, promoted to a shield!

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

MENELAUS
How valorous with thy tongue!

TEUCER
He can be bold who hath his quarrel just.

1 'Archer' like 'ranker' by itself is a term of reproach.
In the Iliad Teucer is the best Bowman in the Achaean host, but also a good man-at-arms.
AIAΣ

MENELAOS
δικαια γαρ τουδ’ ευτυχειν κτειναντα με;
TETKROS
κτειναντα; δεινον γ’ ειπας, ει και ζης θανων.
MENELAOS
θεος γαρ έκσωξει με, τωδε δ’ οιχομαι.
TETKROS
μη νυν ατιμα θεους, θεοις σεσωσμενος.
MENELAOS
εγω γαρ αν ψεξαιμι δαιμονων νομους;
TETKROS
ει τοις θανοντας ουκ εας θαπτειν παρων.
MENELAOS
τοις γ’ αυτως αυτων πολεμιους. ου γαρ καλον.
TETKROS
η σοι γαρ Άιας πολεμιος προυστη ποτε;
MENELAOS
μισουντ’ εμισει: και συ τουτ’ ηπιστασο.
TETKROS
κλεπτης γαρ αυτων ψηφοποιος ηυρεθης.
MENELAOS
εν τοις δικασταις, κοικ εμοι, τοδ’ εσφαλη.
TETKROS
πολλ’ αν κακως λαθρα συ κλεψειας κακα.
MENELAOS
τουτ’ εις ανιαν τουπους έρχεται τινι.
TETKROS
ου μαλλον, ως έοικεν, η λυπησομεν.
MENELAOS
εν σοι φρασω· τονδ’ έστιν ουχι θαπτεον.
TETKROS
αλλ’ αντακουσει τουτουν ως τεθαψεται.
AJAX

MENELAUS

Justice quotha, to exalt my murderer?

TEUCER

Murdered, and yet thou livest! that is strange!

MENELAUS

Heaven saved me; in intention I was slain.

TEUCER

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

MENELAUS

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

TEUCER

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

MENELAUS

Of mine own foes; to bury them were sin.

TEUCER

Was Ajax e'en thine enemy in the field?

MENELAUS

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

TEUCER

Aye, thou hadst robbed him by suborning votes.

MENELAUS

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

TEUCER

A fair face thou canst put on foulest frauds.

MENELAUS

Someone I know will suffer for that word.

TEUCER

He who provoked is like to suffer more.

MENELAUS

One word more; he shall not be burièd.

TEUCER

One word in answer; buried he shall be.
MENELAOS

ηδη ποτ' ειδον ἀνδρ' ἐγὼ γλώσσῃ θρασύν
ναύτας ἐφορμήσαντα χειμώνος τὸ πλέον,
δ' θέγμ' ἂν οὐκ ἂν ἦδρες, ἤνίκ' ἐν κακῷ
χειμώνος εἴχετ', ἀλλ' ὦφ' εἴματος κρυφεῖς
πατεῖν παρεῖχε τῷ θέλοντι ναυτίλων.
οὕτω δὲ καὶ σὲ καὶ τὸ σὸν λάβουν στόμα
σμικροῦ νέφους τὰχ', ἂν τις ἐκπνεύσας μέγας
χειμών κατασβέσειε τὴν πολλὴν βοήν.

TETKROS

ἐγὼ δὲ γ' ἀνδρ' ὁπωτα μορίας πλέων,
δ' εὖν κακοῖς ὑβρίζε τούς τὸν πέλας.
καὶ αὐτὸν εἰσιδων τις ἐμφερής ἐμοὶ
ὁργῆν θ' ὁμοίως εἴπε τοιοῦτον λόγον.
ἀνθρωπε, μή δράτος τεθνηκότας κακῶς;
εἰ γὰρ ποήσεις, ἵσθι πημανοῦμενος.
τοιαῦτ' ἀνολβον ἀνδρ' ἑνοὐθέτει παρόν.
ὁρῶ δὲ τοὶ νῦν, κάστιν, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ,
οὐδείς ποτ' ἀλλος ἢ σύ. μῶν ἡνιξάμην;

MENELAOS

ἀπειμω. καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρόν, εἰ πῦθοιτό τις
λόγοις κολάζειν ὃ βιαζεσθαί πάραι.

TETKROS

ἄφεστε υνν. καμῳ γὰρ αἰσχιστον κλύειν
ἀνδρὸς ματαίου φλαῦρ' ἐπὶ μυθουμένου.

XOROS

ἔσται μεγάλης ἐριδός τις ἀγῶν.
ἀλλ' ὡς δύνασαι, Τεῦκρε, ταχύνας
σπεύσον κούλῃν κάπτετον τῷ ἰδεῖν
τῶν, ἔθα βροτὸς τὸν ἀείμνηστον
τάφον εὐρώπετα καθέξει.
AJAX

MENELAUS

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

TEUCER

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

MENELAUS

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

TEUCER

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

CHORUS

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

VOL. II.
ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ
καὶ μὴν ἐς αὐτῶν καιρὸν οἴδε πλησίοι
πάρεισιν ἀνδρός τούδε παῖς τε καὶ γυνῆ,
tάφον περιστελλόμεντε δυστήμου νεκροῦ.
ὡς παῖ, πρόσελθε δεύρο καὶ σταθεῖς πέλας
ικέτης ἐφαψιν πατρός, ὡς σ' ἐγείνατο.
θάκει δὲ προστρώσαις ἐν χεροίν ἔχων
κόμας ἐμᾶς καὶ τῆςδε καὶ σαυτοῦ τρίτου,
ἰκτήριον ὑπαυρόν. εἰ δὲ τις στρατοῦ
βιά σ' ἀποσπάσεις τοῦδε τοῦ νεκροῦ,
κακὸς κακῶς ἀθαντός ἐκπέσοι χθονός,
γένους ἀπαντός ρίζαν ἔξημημένως,
αὐτὸς ὄπωσπερ τόνδ' ἐγὼ τέμνω πλάκον.
ἐχ' αὐτῶν, ὡς παί, καὶ φύλασσε, μηδὲ σὲ
κινησάτω τις, ἀλλὰ προσπεσῶν ἔχου.
ὑμεῖς τε μὴ γυναῖκες ἀντ' ἀνδρῶν πέλας
παρέστατ', ἀλλ' ἀρήγησ', ἐστ' ἐγὼ μολὼν
tάφον μεληθῶ τῶδε, καὶ μηδείς ἔδα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

τις ἀρα νέατος ἐς πότε λήξει πολυπλάγκτων
ἐτέων ἄριθμός,
τὰν ἀπαυστὸν αἰεὶν ἐμοὶ δορυσοὴτων
μόχθων ἀταν ἐπάγων
ἀν' τὰν εὐρώδεα Τρῳάν,¹

δύστανον ὄνειδος Ἐλλάνων;

ἀντ. α'

ὀφελε πρότερον αἰθέρα δῦναι μέγαν ἢ τὸν
πολύκοινον Ἐλίσαν
κείνος ἀνήρ, ὡς στυγηρῶν ἐδείξεν ὄπλων
"Ἔλλασιν κοινὸν" Ἀρη.

¹ ἀνά τὰν εὐράδη Τρῳάν MSS., Ahrens corr.
Enter TECMESSA and child.

TEUCER

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

[Exit TEUCER.]

CHORUS  (Str. 1)

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

(Ant. 1)

Would he had sunk to hell, or vanished in ether afar,
Who first admonished the Greeks to league themselves for the war—
Ιδώ πόνοι πρόγονοι πόνων,
κείνος γὰρ ἐπερσεν ἀνθρώπους.

ἐκεῖνος οὔτε στεφάνων
οὔτε βαθείαν κυλίκων
νείμεν ἐμοὶ τέρψειν ὀμιλεῖν,
οὔτε γλυκὰν αὐλῶν ὅτοβοιν,
δύσμορος, οὔτ' ἐνυχίαν ¹
tέρψειν ιαύειν.
ἐρῶτων δ', ἐρῶτων ἀπέπαυσεν, ὁμοί.
κείμαι δ' ἀμέριμνος οὔτως,
ἀεὶ πυκναῖς δρόσοις
tεγγόμενος κόμας,
λυγρᾶς μνήματα Τροίας.

καὶ πρὶν μὲν αἱὲν νυχίουν
δείματος ὑπὶ μοι προβολὰ
cαὶ βελέων θούριος Αἰας·
νῦν δ' οὕτως ἀνεῖται στυγερὸ
δαίμονι· τὶς μοι, τὶς ἐτ' οὖν
tέρψει ἐπέστατι;

gενοίμαν ὑπ' ὑλὰεν ἐπεστι πόντου
πρόβλημ' ἀλίκλυστον, ἀκραν
ὑπὸ πλάκα Σοῦνίου,
τὰς ἱερὰς ὅπως
προσεῖποιμεν Ἀθάνας.

¹ ἐνυχίαν MSS., Wolff corr.
AJAX

War, the father of toils, whence mortal sorrows began;
Yea, it was he who begat the plague and ruin of man.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ
καὶ μὴν ἰδῶν ἔσπευσα τὸν στρατηλάτην
'Αγαμέμνον ἥμιν δεύρο τόνο' ὀρμώμενον
δῆλος δὲ μοῦστι σκαίαν ἐκλύσων στόμα.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
σὲ δὴ τὰ δεινὰ ῥήματ' ἀγγέλλουσι μοι
tλήναι καθ' ἡμῶν ὡδ' ἀνοιμωκτὶ χανεῖν;
σὲ τοι, τὸν ἐκ τῆς αἰχμαλωτίδος λέγω,
η' πον τραφεῖς ἃν μητρὸς εὐγενοὺς ἀπὸ
ὑψῆλ' ἐκόμπτεις κατ' ἁκρων ὡδοιτόρεις,
ὁτ' οὖν ὃν ὃν τοῦ μηδὲν ἀντέστης ὑπὲρ,
κοῦτε στρατηγοὺς οὔτε ναυάρχους μολεῖν
ἡμᾶς Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲ σοῦ διωμόσω,
ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἄρχων, ὡς σὺ φής, Αἴας ἔπλει.
ταῦτ' οὐκ ἄκουεν μεγάλα πρὸς δούλων κακά;
ποῖον κέκραγας ἁνδρὸς ὡδ' ὑπέρφρονα;
ποὶ βάντωσ ἃ ποῦ στάντος οὔπερ οὐκ ἐγώ;
οὐκ ἄρ' Ἀχαιόις ἁνδρεῖς εἰσὶ πλήν ὅδε;
πικροῦς ἐουμεν τῶν Ἀχιλλείων ὁπλῶν
ἀγώνας Ἀργεῖοις κηρύξαι τάτε,
1230
εἰ πανταχοῦ φαινούμεθ' ἐκ Τεῦκρον κακοί,
κοῦν ἄρκεσει ποθ' ὑμῖν οὖδ' ἡσσ'μένοις
eἰκεῖν ἃ τοῖς πολλοῖσιν ἠρέσκεν κριταῖς,
ἀλλ' αἰέν ἡμᾶς ἢ κακοῖς βαλεῖτε πον
η' σῦν δόλῳ κεντήσεθ' οἱ λελειμμένοι.
ἔκ τῶν μέντοι τῶν τρόπων οὐκ ἂν ποτε
κατάστασις γένοιτ' ἢν οὖνεν νόμον,
εἰ τοὺς δίκη νικώντας ἐξωθήσομεν
καὶ τοὺς ὄπισθεν εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν ἄξομεν.
1240
ἀλλ' εἰρχτέον τάδ' ἐστιν' οὐ γὰρ οἱ πλατεῖς
οὐδ' εὐρύνωτοι φῶτες ἀσφαλέστατοι,
AJAX

Enter TEUCER.

TEUCER

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

AGAMEMNON

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

103
ἀλλ’ οἱ φρονοῦντες εὑρ κρατοῦσι πανταχοῦ. μέγας δὲ πλευρὰ θεοῦ ὑπὸ σμικράς ὡμοὶ μάστυγος ὀρθὸς εἰς ὅδον πορεύεται. καὶ σοι προσέρπου τοῦτ’ ἦγο τὸ φάρμακον ὁρῶ τάχ’, εἰ μὴ νοῦν κατακτήσει τινὰ· ὅσ ἀνδρὸς οὐκέτ’ ὄντος, ἀλλ’ ἡ ἕτης σκιάς, θαρσῶν ὑβρίζεις κἀξελευθεροστομεῖς.

οὐ σωφρονήσεις; οὐ μαθὼν δὲ εἰ φύσιν ἄλλον τιν’ ἄξεις ἀνδρα δεύρ’ ἠλέυθερον, ὅστις πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀντὶ σοῦ λέξει τὰ σά; σοῦ γὰρ λέγοντος οὐκέτ’ ἀν μάθοιμ’ ἐγὼ· τὴν βάρβαρον γὰρ γλῶσσαν οὐκ ἐπαίω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰθ’ ύμῖν ἀμφοῖν νοῦς γένοιτο σωφρονεῖν· τοῦτον γὰρ οὐδὲν σφῶν ἔχω λῶν φράσαι.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

φεῦ· τοῦ θανόντος ός ταχειά τις βροτοῖς χάρις διαρρέει καὶ προδοῦσ’ ἀλίσκεται, εἰ σοῦ γ’ ὁδ’ ἄνηρ οὐδ’ ἐπὶ σμικρῶν λόγων, Αἰας, ἐτ’ ἵσχει μνήστιν, οὐ σὺ πολλάκις τὴν σὴν προτεινών προούκαμες ψυχὴν δόρει. ἀλλ’ οὐχεῖται δὴ πάντα ταῦτ’ ἔρριμμένα. ὦ πολλὰ λέξας ἄρτι κανόνη’ ἑπη, οὐ μνημονεύεις οὐκέτ’ οὐδέν, ἡμίκα ἐρκέων ποθ’ ὑμᾶς οὕτος ἐγκεκλημένους, ἡδὴ τὸ μηδὲν ὄντας, ἐν τροπῇ δορὸς ἐρρύσατ’ ἐλθῶν μοῦνος, ἀμφὶ μὲν νεῶν ἀκροίσων ἡδὴ ναυτικοῖς ἐδωλείας πυρὸς φλέγοντος, εἰς δὲ ναυτικὰ σκάφη πηδῶντος ἄρδην ὁ πτερος τάφρων ὑπὲρ; τὸς ταῦτ’ ἀπειρῆσεν; οὐχ’ ὅδ’ ἦν ὁ δρῶν τάδε, 1280
AJAX

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

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

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

105
ΑΙΑΣ

ὃν οὔδαμον φῆς, οὐ σὺ μή, βῆναι1 ποδὶ;
ἀρ' ὡμιν οὖν ταῦτ' ἐδρασεν ἐνιδικα;
χωτ' αὖθις αὐτὸς Ἐκτόρος μόνος μόνου
λαχὼν τε κάκελευστος ἦλθ' ἐναντίος,
οὐ δραπέτην τὸν κλήρον ἐς μέσον καθείς,
ὑγρᾶς ἀρούρας βῶλον, ἀλλ' ὃς εὐλόφου
κυνῆς ἐμελλε πρῶτος ἅλμα κουφεῖν;
ὁδ' ἦν ὁ πράσσων ταῦτα, σὺν δ' ἐγὼ παρών,
ὁ δούλος, οὐκ τῆς βαρβάρου μητρὸς γεγώς.
δύστημε, ποῖ βλέπων ποτ' αὐτὰ καὶ θροεῖς;
οὐκ οἴοθα σοῦ πατρὸς μὲν ὃς προύφυν πατήρ
ἀρχαίον ὄντα Πέλοπα βάρβαρον Φρύγα;
'Ατρέα δ', δς αὐ σ᾽ ἐσπειρε δυσεβέστατον,
προθέντ' ἀδελφῶν δείπνων οἰκεῖων τέκνων;
αὐτὸς δὲ μητρὸς ἐξέφυς Κρήσιος, ἤφ' ἦ
λαβὼν ἑπακτόν ἀνήρ' ὁ φιτύσας πατήρ
ἐφήκεν ἐλλοίς ἱχθύσιν διαβδόραν.
τοιοῦτος ὃν τοιῶδ᾽ ὅνεμίζεις στοράν;
ὁς ἐκ πατρὸς μὲν εἶμι Τελαμώνος γεγώς,
ὁστὶς στρατοῦ τὰ πρῶτ᾽ ἀριστεύσας ἐμὴν
ἰσχεὶ ἔσσει σε οἰκέων μητέρ', ἤ φύσει μὲν ἦν
βασίλεια, Δαομέδουτος ἔκκριτον δέ νῦν
δώρημα κέλῳ ᾽δοκεῖν Ἀλκμήνης γόνος.
ἀρ' ὡδ' ἀριστος ἐξ ἀριστείων δυνὼν
βλαστῶν ἄν αἰσχύνοιμι τοὺς πρὸς αἴματος,
οὐς νῦν σὺ τοιοῦδ' ἐν πόνοισι κείμενους
ἀθέησι ἀθάπτοτος, οὐδ' ἐπαισχύνει λέγων;
εὖ νῦν τόδ' ἵσθι, τούτον εἰ βαλείτε που,
AJAX

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

1 An allusion to the story of Creshontes who after the Dorian Conquest agreed to cast lots for his share of the Peloponnese and in order to secure the last lot, which he coveted, put a lump of clay into the urn instead of a potsherd.
βαλείτε χήμας τρεῖς ὀμοὶ συγκειμένους. ἐπεὶ καλὸν μοι τοῦδ' ὑπερτοποιομένω
θανεῖν προδῆλως μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς σῆς ὑπὲρ
γυναικὸς, ἢ τοῦ σοῦ γ' ὀμαίμονος λέγω;
πρὸς ταῦθ' ὥρα μὴ τούμον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ σόν·
ὡς εἶ με πημανεῖς τι, βουλήσει ποτὲ
καὶ δειλὸς εἶναι μᾶλλον ἢ ἑν ' ἐμὸ βρασός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἀναξ Ὁδυσσεῦ, καίρον ἵσθ' ἐληλυθώς,
eἰ μὴ ἔπναψων, ἀλλὰ συλλύσων πάρει.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
τί δ' ἔστιν, ἀνδρέσ; τηλόθεν γὰρ ἡσθόμην
βοήν 'Ἀτρειδῶν τῷ ἔπ' ἀλκίμῳ νεκρῷ.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
οὐ γὰρ κλύουτές ἐσμεν αἰσχρότους λόγους,
ἀναξ Ὁδυσσεῦ, τοῦδ' ὑπ' ἀνδρὸς ἀρτίως;

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
ποίον; ἐγὼ γὰρ ἀνδρὶ συγγνώμην ἔχω
κλύουτι φλαύρα συμβαλεῖν ἔπη κακά.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
ἣκουσεν αἰσχράν· δρόων γὰρ ἦν τοιαύτα με.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
τί γὰρ σ' ἑδρασεν, ὡστε καὶ βλάβην ἔχειν;

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
οὐ φησ' ἐάσειν τόνδε τὸν νεκρὸν ταφής
ἀμοιροῦν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς βλαυθὲν ἐμοῦ.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
ἐξεστὶν ὦν εἰπόντι τάληθῆς φύλῳ
σοὶ μηδὲν ἥσσον ἡ πάρος ξυνηρέτην;  2

1 σοῦ τ' MSS., Bothe corr.  2 ξυνηρέτην MSS., Lobeck corr.
AJAX

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

Enter odysseus.

CHORUS

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

ODYSSEUS

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

AGAMEMNON

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

ODYSSEUS

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

AGAMEMNON

I did abuse him as his acts deserved.

ODYSSEUS

Say by what action gave he just offence?

AGAMEMNON

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

ODYSSEUS

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

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

εὖπ᾽ ἢ γὰρ εἰην οὐκ ἀν εὗ φρονῶν, ἐπεὶ φίλον σ᾽ ἐγὼ μέγιστον Ἀργείων νέμω.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

ἄκουε νυν. τὸν ἀνδρα τόνδε πρὸς θεῶν μὴ τλῆς ἄθαπτον ὥδ᾽ ἀναλγήτως βαλεῖν ὑπὸ ἡ βία σε μιθαμὼς νικησάτω τοσόνδε μισεῖν ὡστε τὴν δίκην πατεῖν. κάμοι γὰρ ήν ποθ᾽ οὕτος ἐξθιστος στρατοῦ, εξ οὐ 'κράτησα τῶν 'Ἀχιλλεῖων ὁπλων, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐμπας ὧντ᾽ ἔγὼ τοιόνδ᾽ ἐμοὶ οὐκ ἀντατιμάσαιμ' ἂν, ὡστε μὴ λέγειν ἐν ἀνδρό ἰδείν ἀριστον Ἀργείων, ὅσοι Τροίαν ἀφικόμεσθα, πλὴν Ἀχιλλέως. ὡστ ὦκ ἀν ἐνδίκως γ' ἄτιμαζοιτό σοι· οὐ γὰρ τι τούτον, ἀλλά τοὺς θεῶν νόμους φθείροις ἂν. ἀνδρα δ᾽ οὐ δίκαιον, εἰ θάνοι, βλάπτειν τὸν ἐσθλὸν, οὐδ᾽ ἐὰν μισῶν κυρῆς.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

σὺ ταῦτ', Ὥδυσσεῦ, τοῦδ᾽ ὑπερμαχεῖς ἐμοί;

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

ἐγωγ᾽ ἐμύσουν δ', ἢνικ᾽ ἢν μισεῖν καλόν.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

οὐ γὰρ θανόντι καὶ προσεμβῆναι σε χρή;

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

μὴ χαίρ', Ἀτρείδη, κέρδεσιν τοῖς μὴ καλοῖς.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

τὸν τοι τύραννον εὔσεβεῖν οὐ ράδιον.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

ἀλλ᾽ εὗ λέγουσι τοῖς φίλοις τιμᾶς νέμειν.

1330

1340

1350
AJAX

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

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

AGAMEMNON
Wilt thou, Odysseus, take his part against me?

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

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

ODYSSEUS
Delight not, son of Atreus, in ill gains.

AGAMEMNON
'Tis hard for monarchs to show piety.

ODYSSEUS
But not respect for friends who counsel well.
ΑΙΑΣ

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
κλύειν τὸν ἐσθλὸν ἀνήρ τῶν ἐν τέλει.
ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
παῦσαι: κρατεῖς τοι τῶν φίλων νικώμενος.
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
μέμνησ' ὁποίῳ φωτὶ τὴν χάριν δίδως.
ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
οδ" ἔχθρος ἀνήρ, ἀλλὰ γενναῖος ποτ' ἦν.
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
τι ποτε ποήσεις; ἔχθρον ὦδ' αἰδεῖ νέκυν;
ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
νικᾶ γὰρ ἀρετὴ με τῆς ἔχθρας πολὺ.
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
τοιοίδε μέντοι φῶτες ἐμπληκτοὶ βροτῶν.
ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
ἡ κάρτα πολλοὶ νῦν φίλοι καθίς πικροί.
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
τοιοῦσῳ ἐπαινεῖς δήτα σὺ κτᾶσθαι φίλους;
ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
σκληρὰν ἐπαινεῖν οὐ φιλῶ ψυχὴν ἐγώ.
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
ἡμῶς σὺ δειλοὺς τῇδε θημέρα φανεῖς.
ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
ἀνδρας μὲν οὖν Ἐλλησι πᾶσιν ἐνδίκους.
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
ἀνωγας οὖν με τὸν νεκρὸν θάπτειν ἔαν;
ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
ἐγὼγε· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἐνθάδ' ἵξομαι.
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
ἡ πάνθ' ὦμοια πᾶς ἀνήρ αὐτῷ πονεῖ.
AJAX

AGAMEMNON
A true man ever heeds authority.

ODYSSEUS
Forbear: thou conquerest, yielding unto friends.

AGAMEMNON
Think to what kind of man thou showest grace.

ODYSSEUS
My foe he was, but still a noble foe.

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

ODYSSEUS
With me his worth outweighs his enmity.

AGAMEMNON
Such sudden change of mind we call caprice.

ODYSSEUS
Common enough the change from friend to foe.

AGAMEMNON
Dost thou commend such fickle friends as these?

ODYSSEUS
A stubborn temper I would ne'er commend.

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

ODYSSEUS
Nay, as just rulers in the eyes of Greece.

AGAMEMNON
Thou bidst me then permit the burial?

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

AGAMEMNON
How true the saw, each labours for himself.
ΔΙΑΣ

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ
τῷ γάρ μὲ μάλλον εἰκός ἢ μαυτῷ πονεῖν;
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
σὸν ἄρα τούργον, οὗκ ἐμὸν κεκλήσεται.
ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ
ὡς ἄν ποήσης, πανταχῇ χρηστός γ' ἔσει.
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
ἀλλ' εὖ γε μέντοι τούτ' ἐπίστασος ὡς ἐγὼ
σοὶ μὲν νέμοιμ' ἂν τήσδε καὶ μείζω χάριν,
οὕτως δὲ κάκει κανθάδ' ὅν ἐμοὶ' ὀμῶς
ἐχθιστος ἔσται· σοὶ δὲ δραίν ἐξεσθ' ἄ χρῆς.  
ΧΟΡΟΣ
οἵτις σ', 'Οδυσσεῦ, μὴ λέγει γνώμη σοφὸν
φύναι, τοιούτων ὄντα, μῶρος ἐστ' ἀνήρ.
ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ
καὶ νῦν γε Τεῦκρο ράπο τοῦτ' ἀγγέλλομαι,
ὅσον τότ' ἐχθρὸς ἡ, τοσόν' εἶναι φίλος.
καὶ τὸν θανόντα τόνδε συνθάπτειν θέλω
καὶ ξυμπονεῖν καὶ μηδὲν ἐλλείπειν ὃς ὁν
χρή τοῖς ἀρίστοις ἀνδράσιν πονεῖν βροτοὺς.
ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ
ἀριστ' 'Οδυσσεῦ, πάντ' ἔχω σ' ἐπαινέσαι
λόγοις, καὶ μ' ἐψευσας ἐπίδος πολὺ.
τούτῳ γὰρ ὃν ἐχθιστος 'Αργείων ἰνήρ
μόνος παρέστη χεράιν, οὔτ' ἐτλης παρὼν
θανόντι τῶδε ξῶν ἐφυβρίσαι μέγα,
ὡς ὁ στρατηγὸς οὐτίβροντιτος μολὼν
αὐτὸς τε χῶ ἔνυαιμος ἠθελησάτην
λωβητοῦν αὐτῶν ἐκβαλεῖν ταφῆς ἀτερ.
τοιγάρ σφ' 'Ολύμπον τοῦδ' ὁ πρεσβεύσων πατὴρ

1 χρή MSS., Dindorf corr.
AJAX

ODYSSEUS
And who deserves my labour more than I?

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

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

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

Exit AGAMEMNON.

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

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

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

μνήμων τ' Ἐρινὺς καὶ τελεσφόρος Δίκη
cakouýs kakouýs phēíreian, ósster ūthelou
ton ándera lóbetais ekbetaleív anaξiós.

Senate, ó geferaiou spérmma Láerptou patrós,
táfou ménu ōknw toud' épistfaúev ēan,

µh tō thánonti touto duxheres poıów.
tā ð' állla kai ėúmpraßse, kei tina strator
thelías kómizeiv, oudèn álýgos eξomenv.

ēgō de tāllla pánta porsonwō. su de
ánhρ kath' ἡμᾶς ésoθλος dvn éplísstaso.

ΟΔΤΣΕΣΤΕΣ

all' ūthelou méu. ei de mū' stí sou filon
prásaßeiv tād' ἡμᾶs', eim' epainésas to són.

ΤΕΤΚΡΟΣ

ális' ēthη γaρ polús ekêtetai
chrónos. all' oí ménu koilhν kýpeton
χerofi tachúnate, toî ð' úsibatou
triptōd' ámfísturoν loutrōn ὁσίων
théso' épíkaíroun·

mía ð' eik klesías ánderōn ìlē
ton úpaspíðion kýsmon feretω.

pāi, su de patrōs y', ósou isχyēis,

φilótētī thegōν pleurās sūn ēmō
táso' épikouphìz'. ēti γaρ thermai
sýrignhes ānōw fυsōsi mēlan
méνos. all' āge pāis, filos òstis ānhρ

1490

1410

116
AJAX

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

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

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

φησὶ παρεῖναι, σοῦσθω, βάτω, τῶδ᾽ ἀνδρὶ πονῶν τῷ πάντ᾽ ἀγαθῷ κοῦδενὶ πω λόφου τηνητῶν 
[Αἷαντος, ὅτ᾽ ἦν, τότε φωνῶ].

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡ πολλὰ βροτοῖς ἐστὶν ἴδουσιν γνῶναι: πρὶν ἱδεῖν ὃ οὐδεὶς μάντις τῶν μελλόντων, ὃ τι πράξει.

1 Rejected by Dindorf.
AJAX

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

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

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

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

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ΚΛΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

AGED SERVANT OF ORESTES

ORESTES, son of Agamemnon, the late king of Argos, and Clytemnestra

ELECTRA  \ daughters of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra

CHRYSOTHEMIS

CLYTEMNESTRA, Queen of Argos and Mycenae.

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

CHORUS OF MYCENAEAN WOMEN.

SCENE: At Mycenae before the Palace of Agamemnon.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

"Ω τοῦ στρατηγήσαντος ἐν Τροίᾳ ποτὲ Ἄγαμέμνονος παῖ, νῦν ἔκειν ἔξεστί σοι παρόντι λεύσσειν, ὃν πρόθυμος ἦσθ᾽ ἀεί. τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν Ἀργος οὐπόθεεις τόδε, τῆς οἰστροπλήγου ἄλσος Ἰνάχου κόρης· αὕτη δ᾽ Ὄρέστα, τοῦ λυκοκτόνου θεοῦ ἄγορὰ Δύκειος· οὕξ ἀριστερᾶς δ᾽ ὅδε Ἡρας ὁ κλεινὸς ναὸς· οἱ δ᾽ ἱκάνομεν, φάσκειν Μυκῆνας τὰς πολυχρύσους ὀρᾶν πολύφθορον τε δῶμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε, ὅθεν σε πατρὸς ἐκ φονῶν ἑγώ ποτε πρὸς σῆς ὁμαίμου καὶ κασιγνήτης λαβὼν ἡνεγκα καξέσωσα καξεθρεψάμην τοσόνδ᾽ ἐς ἤβης, πατρὶ τιμωρῶν φόνου. νῦν οὖν, Ὄρέστα καὶ σὺ φίλτατε ἔξονεν Πυλάδη, τὰ ἄραν ἐν τάχει βουλευτέων"
Enter aged servant with Orestes and Pylades.

AGED SERVANT

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

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

2 Apollo Lukeios, the god of light, but by folk-etymology connected with λύκος, wolf.
ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

wód ἡμῖν ῥῆθα λαμπρῶν ἱλίου σέλας
ἐῴα κινεῖ φθέγματ' ὅρυίθων σαφῆ
μέλαινα τ' ἀστρων ἐκλείοιπεν εὐφρῶνη.

πρὶν οὖν τιν' ἀνδρῶν ἐξοδοπορεῖν στέγης,
εὐναπτητον λόγοισιν: ὡς ἐνταῦθ' ἐμὲν,¹
ἵν' οὐκέτ' ὄκνειν καιρός, ἦλλ' ἔργῳν ἀκμῆ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὁ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν προσπόλων, ὡς μοι σαφῆ
σημεῖα φαίνεις ἐσθλός εἰς ἡμᾶς γεγώς.

ὡς περ γὰρ ἵππος εὐγενής, κἂν ἡ γέρων,
ἐν τοῖς δεινοῖς θυμὸν οὐκ ἀπόλλεσαι,
ἀλλὰ ὀρθῶν οὕς ἰστησιν, ὲσαύτως δὲ σὺ
ἡμᾶς τ' ὀτρύνεις καῦτος ἐν πρώτοις ἐπει.

τοιγαρ τὰ μὲν δόξαντα δηλώσω, σὺ δὲ
ὁξείαν ἀκοὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις διδούς,
ei μὴ τι καιροῦ τυχχάνω, μεθάρμοσον.

ἐγώ γὰρ ἦνιχ' ἱκόμην τὸ Πυθικὸν
μαντεῖον, ὡς μάθομ' ὅτῳ τρόπῳ πατρὶ
δίκας ἀροίμην τῶν φονευσάντων πάρα,

χρῆ μοι τοιαύθ' ὁ Φοῖβος ὃν πεῦσει τάχα:
ἀσκευον αὐτῶν ἀσπίδων τε καὶ στρατοῦ
δύλοις κλέφαιοι χειρῶς ἐνδίκους σφαγᾶς.

οτ' οὖν τοιώνδε χρησμον εἰσηκοῦσαμεν,
σὺ μὲν μολὼν, ὅταν σε καιρὸς εἰσάγῃ,
δόμων ἐσῳ τῶν', ἵσθι πάν το δρώμενον,
ὀπεσ ἀν εἰδὼς ἡμῖν ἀγγείλης σαφῆ.

οὐ γὰρ σὲ μὴ γῆρα τε καὶ χρόνῳ μακρῷ
γνώς', οὐδ' ὑποπτεύσουσιν ὧδ' ἦνθισμένου.

λόγῳ δὲ χρῶ τοιώθ', ὧτι ξένοις μὲν εἰ
Φωκέως παρ' ἀνδρὸς Φαυνότεως ἥκων' ὁ γὰρ

¹ ἐμὲν cannot stand. Hartung's ὡς, ἱν' ἐσταμεν, οὐκ ἐστ' ēτ' ὄκνειν καιρός is the most probable emendation.
ELECTRA

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

ORESTES
Dearest of followers, how well thou show'st
The constant service of thy loyalty!
For as the high-bred steed, though he be old,
Pricks up his ears and champs the bit for joy
When battle rages, even so dost thou
Both urge us on and follow with the first.
Therefore I will unfold our plans, and thou
Note well my words, and if in aught I seem
To miss the mark, admonish and correct.
Know then that when I left thee to consult
The Pythian oracle and learn how best
To execute just vengeance for my sire
On those that slew him, Phoebus answered thus:

Trust not to shields or armed hosts, but steal
The chance thyself the avenging blow to deal.
Since then the Pythian god hath thus advised,
Go thou and watch thine opportunity
To enter in the palace and observe
What happens there and bring us full report.
And fear not to be recognised; long years
And thy white locks, the blossom of old age,
Have changed thee wholly. Forge some specious tale:
Thou art a Phocian stranger hither sent
By Phanoteus their doughtiest ally.
Μέγιστος αὐτός τυγχάνει δορυφέων.
ἀγγέλλε δ' ὥρκοι προστιθείς θούνεκα
tέθυνηκ' Ὄρεστης ἐξ ἀναγκαίας τύχης,
ἄθλοισι Πυθικοίσιν ἐκ τροχηλάτων
dίφρων κυλισθείς· ὡδ' ὁ μύθος ἑστάτω.
ἡμεῖς δὲ πατρὸς τύμβου, ὡς ἐφίετο,
λοιβαίσι πρὸς τοὺς καρατόμοις χλιδαῖς
στέψαντες εἰτ' ἁφορρον ἦξομεν πάλιν,
tύπωμα χαλκόπλευρον ἱρμένοι χεροῖν,
ὁ καὶ σὺ θάμνοις οἴσθα πον κεκρυμμένον,
ὅπως λόγῳ κλέπτοντες ἠδείαν φάτιν
φέρωμεν αὐτοῖς, τούμων ὡς ἔρρει δέμας
φλογιστὸν ἡδὴ καὶ κατηθρακμένον.
τι γάρ με λυπεῖ τοὺθ', ὅταν λόγῳ θανῶν
ἐργοσὶ σωθ’ καξενέγκωμαι κλέος;
δοκῶ μὲν, οὐδὲν ῥῆμα σὺν κέρδει κακόν.
ἡδὴ γὰρ εἶδον πολλάκις καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς
λόγῳ μάτην θυνίσκοντας· εἰθ’, ὅταν δόμους
ἐλθὼσιν αὐθίς, ἐκτετίμηνται πλέον.
ὡς καὶ ἐπαυχό τήσδε τῆς φήμης ἀπὸ
dεδορκότ’ ἐχθροῖς ἀστρον ὡς λάμψειν ἔτι.
ἀλλ’, ὁ πατρὼν γῆθεοι τ’ ἐγχώριοι,
δέκασθε μ’ εὐτυχοῦστα ταίσδε ταῖς ὀδοῖς,
σὺ τ’, ὁ πατρῴον δῶμα· σοῦ γὰρ ἐρχομαί
dίκη καθαρτής πρὸς θεῶν ὀρμημένοις
καὶ μή μ’ ἀτιμον τῆς ἀποστείλητε γῆς,
ἀλλ’ ἀρχέπλουτον καὶ καταστάτην δόμων.
εὑρήκα μὲν νυν ταύτα· σοι δ’ ἡδή, γέρον,
τὸ σὸν μελέσθω βάντι φρουρῆσαι χρέος.
νῦ δ’ ἔξιμεν· καιρὸς γὰρ, ὅσπερ ἀνδράσιν
μέγιστος ἔργου παντὸς ἐστ’ ἐπίστατης.

1 ὥρκυ MSS., Reiske corr.
ELECTRA

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

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ἀρ' ἔστιν ἡ δύστηνος Ἡλέκτρα. Θέλεις μείνωμεν αὐτοῦ καὶ πακοῦσωμεν ¹ γόων;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
ηκιστα· μηδεν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ Δοξίου
πειρώμεθ' ἔρδειν κατὸ τῶν ἀρχηγετεῖν,
πατρὸς χέοντες λουτρά· ταῦτα γὰρ φέρει
νίκην τ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ κράτος τῶν δραμένων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ὁ δὲ φῶς ἄγνων
καὶ γῆς ἱσόμοιρ' ἄνρ, ὡς μοι
πολλὰς μὲν θρήνων ᾑδάς,
πολλὰς δ' ἀντήρεις ὕσθον
στέρνων πληγάς αἰμασσομένων,
ὅποταν δυνοφερὰ νῦξ ὑπολειφθη.
τὰ δὲ παννυχίδων ἡδη στυγηραὶ
ξυνίσασ' εὐναὶ μογερῶν οἰκῶν,
ὅσα τοῦ δύστηνον ἐμὸν θρηνῶ
πατέρ', ὅν κατὰ μὲν βάρβαρον αἰαν
φοίνιος Ἀρης οὐκ ἐξένισεν,
μήτηρ δ' ἡμὴ χ' κοινολεξῆς
Αὔγισθος ὁπως δρῦν ὑλοτόμοι

¹ κανακουσώμεν MSS., Nauck corr.
Ah me! unhappy me!

Aged Servant

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

Orestes

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

Aged Servant

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

[Exeunt. Enter Electra from the palace.

Electra

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

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

σχίζουσι κάρα φονίω πελέκει,
κούδείς τούτων οίκτος ἀπ᾿ ἄλλης ἥ μοῦ φέρεται, σοῦ, πάτερ, οὕτως αἰκῶς οίκτρῶς τε θανόντος.

ἀλλὰ οὔ μὲν δὴ
λήξω θρήνων στυγερῶν τε γόων,
ἔστ᾿ ἄν παμφεγγεῖς ἀστρῶν
μιτᾶς, λεύσσω δὲ τὸ δ’ ἡμαρ,
μὴ οὐ τεκνολετειρ’ ὡς τις ἀγθῶν
ἐπὶ κωκυτῷ τῶνδε πατρῶν
πρὸ θυρῶν ἡχὼ πᾶσι προφωνεῖν.
ὡ δῶμ᾽ Ἀίδου καὶ Περσεφόνης,
ὡ χθόνι Ἐρμῆ καὶ πότνι Ἀρά
σεμναί τε θεῶν παῖδες Ἐρυνύες,
αὐ τοὺς ἄδικως θυησκοντας ὀράθ’,
αὐ τοὺς εὐνὰς ὑποκλεπτομένους,
ἐλθετ’, ἁρῆξατε, τίσασθε πατρὸς
φόνου ἡμετέρου,
καὶ μοι τὸν ἐμὸν πέμψατ’ ἀδελφὸν
μούνῃ γὰρ ἅγειν οὐκέτι σωκὸ
λύπης ἀντίρροπον ἄχθοσ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὡ παῖ, παῖ δυστανοτάτας
Ἡλεκτρα ματρός, τίν’ ἂεὶ
tάκεις ὅδ’ ἀκόρεστον οἰμωγὰν
τὸν πάλαι ἐκ δολερᾶς ἀθεώτατα
ματρὸς ἀλῶντ’ ἀπάταις Ἀγαμέμνονα
κακᾶ τε χειρὶ πρόδοτον; ὡς ὁ τάδε πορῶν
ὁλοῖτ’, εἰ μοι θέμις τάδ’ αὐδᾶν.
ELECTRA

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

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

Enter chorus.

CHORUS

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

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁ γενέθλια γενναίων,
ηκετ’ ἐμῶν καμάτων παραμύθιον.
οἴδα τε καὶ ξυνήμι τάδ’, οὐ τί με
φυγγάνει, οὐδ’ ἐθέλω προλυπεῖν τόδε,
μὴ οὐ τὸν ἐμὸν στενάχειν πατέρ’ ἀθλιον.
ἀλλ’ ὃ παντοίας φιλότητος ἀμειβόμεναι χάριν,
ἐὰτε μ’ ὦδ’ ἀλύειν,
αἰαὶ, ἰκνοῦμαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ’ οὗτοι τῶν η’ εῖ ’Αἶδα ἀντ. α’
παγκοίνου λίμνας πατέρ’ ἀν-
στάσεισ οὕτε γόοισιν οὕτ’ εὐχαίς.1
ἀλλ’ ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων ἐπ’ ἀμήχανον
ἀλγος ἀεὶ στενάχουσα διόλυσαι,
ἐν οἷς ἀνάλυσίς ἐστὶν οὐδεμία κακῶν.
τί μοι τῶν δυσφόρων ἐφίει;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

νήπιος ὃς τῶν οἰκτρῶς
οἰχομένων γονέων ἐπιλάθεται.
ἀλλ’ ἐμὲ η’ ἀ στονόεσσ’ ἄραρεν φρένας,
ἀ ’Ἰτυν, αἰεὖ ’Ἰτυν ὀλοφύρεται,
ὅρνος ἀτυξομένα, Διὸς ἀγγελος.
ἰδ’ παντλάμων Νιόβα, σὲ δ’ ἐγγογε νέμω θεόν,
ἄτ’ ἐν τάφῳ πετραίῳ
αἰεὶ δακρύεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὗτοι σοὶ μοῦνα, τέκνον,
στρ. β’
ἄχος ἐφάνη βροτῶν,

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

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

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

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

πρὸς ὁ τι σὺ τῶν ἐνδον εἰ περισσά, οἷς ὀμόθεν εἰ καὶ γονᾶ ξύναιμος, οἷᾳ Χρυσόθεμις ζῶει καὶ 'Ἰφιάνασσα, κρυπτᾶ τ' ἀχέων ἐν ἤβα, ὀλβιος, ὃν ἀ κλεινά
γὰ ποτε Μυκηναίων
dέξεται εὐπατρίδαν, Διὸς εὐφρονι
βηματι μολόντα ταύτε γὰν 'Ὀρέσταν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁν γ' ἐγὼ ἀκάματα προσμένουσ', ἀτεκνος, τάλαω', ἀνύμφευτος αἰὲν οἶχυω, δάκρυσι μυδαλέα, τὸν ἀνήνυτον ἄτον ἕχουσα κακῶν· ὁ δὲ λάθεται ἀλιτ ἐπαθ' ὁν ἀδάν. τ' γὰρ οὖκ ἐμοὶ ἔρχεται ἀγγελίας ἀπατώμενον;
ἀεὶ μὲν γὰρ ποθεῖ,
ποθῶν ο' οὖκ ἄξιοι φανήναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει μοι, θάρσει, τέκνον. ἀντ. β'
ἐτι μέγας οὐρανῷ
Ζεὺς, ὃς ἐφορᾷ πάντα καὶ κρατύνειν· ὃ τὸν ὑπεραληγή χόλον νέμουσα μήθ' οἷς ἐχθαίρεις ὑπεράχθεο μήτ' ἐπιλάθουν χρόνος γὰρ εὐμαρῆς θεὸς.
οὔτε γὰρ ὁ τὰν Κρίσαν
βούνομον ἔχων ἀκτάν
παῖς 'Αγαμεμνονίδας ὑπερίτροπος
οὔθ' ὁ παρὰ τὸν 'Ἄχέροντα θεὸς ἀνάσσων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' ἐμὲ μὲν ὁ πολὺς ἀπολέλουτεν ἢδη
βίοτος ἀνέλπιστος, οὐδ' ἐτ' ἄρκῳ.
Think on thy kinsfolk whom afflictions press
Than thine no less,
Iphianassa and Chrysothemis.
Think of thy brother; sorrow now is his,
An exiled youth, yet shortly shall he come
By heaven's good guidance home,
And glad Mycenae shall Orestes own
Heir to his father's throne.

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

CHORUS
(ANT. 2)
Take heart, my child, Zeus still in heaven is king,
And orders everything;
To him commit the wrath that gnaws thy breast,
His will is ever best.
Nurse, as is meet, thy vengeance, but abate
Excess of hate,
For Time can heal, a gentle god and mild.
Nor Agamemnon's child
Who long by Crisa's pastoral shore remains,
Nor he who reigns
O'er Acheron will nevermore relent.

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

άτις ἀνευ τεκέων ἕνεκα κατατάκομαι, ἃς φίλος οὕτις ἀνήρ ὑπερίσταται, ἀλλ' ἀπερεί τις ἐποικὸς ἀναξία ὀἰκονομῶ θαλάμους πατρός, ὥδε μὲν ἑικεὶ σὺν στολᾷ,
κεναῖς δ' ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἰκτρὰ μὲν νόστοις αὐδᾷ,
οἰκτρὰ δ' ἐν κοίταις πατρῴας
ὅτε οἱ 2 παγχάλκων ἀνταία
γενύων ὡρμάθη πλαγά.
δόλος ἦν ὁ φράσας, ἔρος ὁ κτεινας,
δειφὼν δεικνὺς προφυτεύοντες
μορφάν, εἰτ' οὖν θεός εἰτε βροτῶν
ἡν ὁ ταῦτα πράσσων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ πασάν κεῖνα πλέον ἀμέρα
ἐλθοῦσ' ἐχθίστα δὴ μοι.
ὦ νῦξ, ὦ δείπνων ἀρρήτων
ἐκπαγάλ' ἄχθη,
τοὺς ἐμὸς ἰδὲ πατὴρ
θανάτους αἰκεῖς διδύμαις χειρῴν,
αὖ τὸν ἐμὸν εἴλον βίον πρόδοτον, αὖ μ' ἀπώλεσαν
οῖς θεός ὁ μέγας Ὁλύμπιος
ποίμνα πάθεα παθεῖν πόροι,
μηδὲ ποτ' ἀγλαίας ἀποναίατο
τοιάδ' ἀνύσαντες ἔργα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φράζον μὴ πόρσῳ φωνεῖν.
ὦ γνώμαν ὑσχεῖς ἐξ οἷων

1 τοκέων MSS., Meineke corr.
2 ὅτε σοι MSS., Hermann corr.
ELECTRA

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

CHORUS

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

ELECTRA

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

CHORUS

(O curb thy tongue! hast thou no thought

 Antar. 3)
τὰ παρόντ' οἷκείας εἰς ἄτας
ἐμπίπτεις οὔτως αἰκῶς;
πολὺ γὰρ τι κακῶν ὑπερεκτῆσω,
σᾶ δυσθύμῳ τίκτουσ᾽ ἀεὶ
ψυχὰ πολέμους. τὰ δὲ τοῖς δυνατοῖς
οὐκ ἔριστὰ πλάθειν.

ΠΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

dεινοῖς ἣμαρκάσθην, δεινοῖς.
ἐξοίδ', σὲ λάθει μ' ὅργα.
ἀλλ' ἐν γὰρ δεινοὶς σὺ σχῆσω
ταῦτας ἄτας,
ὑφρα μὲ βίος ἔχη.
τίνι γὰρ ποτ' ἀν', ὁ φιλία γενέθλα,
πρόσφορον ἀκοῦσαιμ' ἔπος, τίνι φρονοῦντι καίρια;
ἀνετέ μ' ἀνετε, παράγοροι
τάδε γὰρ ἃλυτα κεκλησταί,
οὐδὲ ποτ' ἐκ καμάτων ἀποπαύσομαι
ἀνάριθμος ὥδε θρήνων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὖν εὐνοία γ' αὐδῶ,
μάτηρ ὅσεὶ τις πιστά,
μὴ τίκτειν σ' ἄταν ἄταις.

ΠΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

cαὶ τί μέτρον κακότατος ἔφυ; φέβε,
πῶς ἐπὶ τοῖς φθιμένοις ἀμελεῖν καλὸν;
ἐν τίνι τοῦτ' ἐβλάσττ' ἀνθρώπων;
μὴτ' εἴην ἐντιμός τούτοις
μὴτ', εἰ τῷ πρόσκειμαι χρηστῷ,
ξυνναίοιμ' εὐκήλους, γονέων
ἐκτίμους ἵσχουσα πτέρυγας
ὁξυτόνων γονῶν.

142
ELECTRA

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

ELECTRA

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

CHORUS

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

ELECTRA

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

ei γαρ ο μεν θανών γα τε και ουδεν όν
κεϊσται τάλας,
oi δε μη πάλιν
δώσουσι’ ἀντιφόνους δίκας,
έρροι τ’ ἄν αιδώς
ἀπάντων τ’ ευσέβεια θνατῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν, ὦ παῖ, καὶ τὸ σοῦ σπεύδουσι’ ἀμα
καὶ τοῦμον αὐτῆς ἤλθοι· εἰ δὲ μὴ καλῶς
λέγω, σὺ νίκα· σοὶ γὰρ ἐψόμεσθ’ ἀμα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αἰσχύνομαι μὲν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ δοκῶ
πολλοίσι θρήνοις δυσφορεῖν ύμίν ἄγαν.
ἀλλ’ ἦ βία γαρ ταῦτ’ ἀναγκάζει με δρᾶν,
σύγγνωτε· πῶς γαρ ἢτις εὐγενής γυνή,
πατρός ὀρῶσα πήματ’, οὐ δρόφη τάδ’ ἄν;
ἀγὼ κατ’ ἡμαρ καὶ κατ’ εὐφρόνην ἀεὶ
θάλλοντα μᾶλλον ἢ καταφθίνουθ’ ὁρῶ·
ἡ πρώτα μὲν τὰ μητρὸς, ἢ μ’ ἐγείνατο,
ἐχθιστα συμβέβηκεν· ἑτα δῶμασιν
ἐν τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τοῖς φονεύσαι τοῦ πατρὸς
ξύνειμι, κὰκ τῶν’ ἀρχομαι κὰκ τῶνδε μοι
λαβεῖν θ’ ὑμών καὶ τὸ τητάσθαι πέλει.
ἐπειτα ποίας ἡμέρας δοκεῖς μ’ ἄγειν,
ὅταν θρόνοις Ἀἰγυηθον ἐνθακοῦντ’ ἵδω
τοῖσιν πατρόφοις, εἰσίδω δ’ ἐσθήματα
φοροῦντ’ ἐκεῖνω ταῦτα καὶ παρεστίους
σπεύδουντα λοιμᾶς ἐνθ’ ἐκεῖνον ὀλέσειν,
ἵδω δὲ τούτων τὴν τελευταίαν ὑβριν,
τὸν αὐτοεντην ἦμιν ἐν κοίτη πατρὸς
ξυν τῇ ταλαίνῃ μητρί, μητέρ’ εἰ χρεῶν.
ELECTRA

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

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

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

ταύτην προσαυνάν τώδε συγκοιμώμενην.
ή δ’ άδε δλήμων άστε τῷ μάστορι
εύπεστ’, ερυίνυν ούτων’ εκφοβουμένην.
άλλ’ άσπερ εγχελώσα τοῖς ποιουμένοις,
εύρούσ’ εκείσθην ήμέραν, ἐν ἦ τότε
πατέρα τὸν ἀμόν έκ δόλου κατεκτανεν,
ταύτην χοροῦς ἱστησε καὶ μηλοσφαγεὶ
θεοίσων έμμήν’ έερά τοῖς σωτηρίοις.
εγὼ δ’ ορόσ’ ή δύσμορος κατὰ στέγας
κλαίω, τέτηκα, κάπιτοκώκῳ πατρός
tὴν δυστάλαιναν δαιτ’ ἐπωνομαζόμενην
άυτῆ πρὸς αὐτήν. οὔδε γὰρ κλαῖσαι πάρα
tοσόνδ’ ὅσον μοι θυμὸς ἥδουνη φέρει.
άυτῆ γὰρ ἡ λόγοις γενναία γυνὴ
φωνοῦσα τοιάδ’ έξενείδίζει κακά·
ὁ δύσθεον μίσημα, σοὶ μόνη πατὴρ
tέθνηκεν; ἀλλὸς δ’ οὔτις εν πένθει βροτῶν;
κακῶς δλοιοι, μηδὲ σ’ εκ γόων ποτὲ
tῶν νῶν ἀπαλλάξειαν οἱ κάτω θεοὶ.
τάδ’ έξυπβρίζει· πλὴν ὅταν κλύη τῶν
ήξουτ’ Ὀρέστην· τηνικαύτα δ’ έμμανής
βοᾶ παραστάσι’ οὐ σοὶ μοι τῶν’ αὐτία;
οὐ σῶν τόδ’ ἐστὶ τούργον, ἢτις εκ χερῶν
κλέψασ’ Ὀρέστην τῶν ἐμῶν υπεξέθου;
ἀλλ’ ἵσθι τοι τίσουσά γ’ ἀξίαν δίκην.
τοιαῦτ’ ὦλακτεὶ, σὺν δ’ ἐποτρύνει πέλας
ὁ κλεινὸς αὐτὴ έταύτα νυμφίος παράν,
ὁ πάντ’ ἀναλκις οὔτος, ή πᾶσα βλάβη,
ὁ σὺν γυναίξιά τὰς μάχας ποιούμενος.
εγὼ δ’ Ὀρέστην τῶνδε προσμένουσ’ ἀεὶ
παυστὴρ’ ἐφήξειν ἡ τάλαιν’ ἀπόλλυμαι.
μέλλων γὰρ ἀεὶ δράν τι τὰς οὐσας té μου
His paramour? So lost to shame is she
That the adulteress fears no vengeance. No,
As if exulting in her infamy,
She watches month to month to know the day
Whereon by treachery she slew my sire,
And keeps that day with dance and sacrifice,
Each month, of sheep to tutelary gods.
Beholding this I weep and waste within,
And to myself bewail the unhallowed feast
Named of my sire, with silent tears, for e'en
The luxury of wailing is denied me.
This woman (saintly is her speech) upbraids
And rates me thus: "Ungodly, hateful girl,
Hast thou alone to bear a father's loss,
Art thou the only mourner? Out upon thee!
Perdition seize thee! and in hell may'st thou
Find no deliverance from thy present grief!"
So rails she, save at times when rumours run
Orestes is at hand, then wild with rage
She thunders in my ears "This is thy doing;
Was it not thou who from my hands didst steal
Orestes and convey him safe away?"
Mark my words, thou shalt rue it!" So she screams,
And her abettor's there to egg her on,
Her glorious consort who repeats her gibes,
That rogue in grain, that dastardly poltroon,
Who fights his battles with a woman's aid.
Meanwhile I wait until Orestes comes
To end my woes, and waiting pine away.
By ever dallying he has quite destroyed
καὶ τὰς ἀπούσας ἑλπίδας διέφθορεν. ἐν οἷς τοιούτοις οὔτε σωφρονεῖν, φίλαι, οὔτ' εὐσεβεῖν πάρεστιν. ἀλλ' ἐν τοι κακοῖς πολλῇ στ' ἀνάγκῃ κατιτιθεύειν κακά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
φέρει εἴπε, πότερον ὄντος Ἀγνίσθου πέλας λέγεις τάδ' ἡμῖν ἡ βεβώτος ἐκ δόμων;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἡ κάρτα: μὴ δόκει μ' ἄν, εἴπερ ἧν πέλας, θυραίον οἶχείν. νῦν δ' ἀγροφίσι τυγχάνει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἡ καὶ ἠγὼ θαρσοῦσα μᾶλλον ἐς λόγους τοὺς σοὺς ἰκοίμην, εἴπερ δ' ὅδε ταῦτ' 'ἐχει;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ὡς νῦν ἀπόντος ἱστόρει τι σοι φίλου;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
καὶ ὅ' σ' ἑρωτῶ. τοῦ κασιγνήτου τι φῆς, ἱξοντος ἡ μέλλοντος; εἰδέναι θέλω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
φησίν γε' φάσκων δ' οὐδὲν ὧν λέγει ποεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
φίλει γὰρ οἴκνειν πράγμ' ἀνὴρ πράσσον μέγα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
καὶ μὴν ἐγγυ' ἔσωσ' ἐκείνον οὐκ ὄκνω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
θάρσειν. πέφυκεν ἐσθλός, ὢςτ' ἄρκειν φίλους.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
πέποιθ', ἐπεὶ τὰν οὐ μακράν ἔξων ἑγώ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
μὴ νῦν ἐτ' εἴπης μηδέν. ὡς δόμων ὅρῳ τὴν σὴν ὀμαιμον ἐκ πατρὸς ταὐτοῦ φύσιν,
ELECTRA

The hopes I had and those I might have had. In such a case what room is there, my friends, For patience, what for piety? In sooth Those in ill plight are driven to evil ways.

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

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

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

ELECTRA
It is; ask what thou wilt.

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

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

CHORUS
A man thinks twice with some great work in hand.

ELECTRA
I thought not twice when I delivered him.

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

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

CHORUS
No more for this time; at the doors I see Chrysothemis, thy sister, of one sire
Χρυσόθεμιν, ἦκ τε μητρός, ἐντάφια χεροῖν φέρουσαν, οία τοῖς κάτω νομίζεται.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

τίν’ αὐ ἐν τῇ πρὸς θυρώνοις ἐξόδως ἔθιοῦσα φωνεῖς, ὅ κασιμητὴ, φάτιν, κοῦδ’ ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ διδαχθῆναι θέλεις θυμῷ ματαῖῳ μὴ χαρίζεσθαι κενά; καίτοι τοσοῦτον γ’ οἶδα κάμαντήν, ὅτι ἄλγῳ πι τοῖς παροῦσιν. ὡστ’ ἂν, εἰ σθένος λάβοιμι, δηλώσαιμι ἂν οὖ’ αὐτοῖς φρονῶ. νῦν δ’ ἐν κακοῖς μοι πλεῖν υφειμένη δοκεῖ, καὶ μὴ δοκεῖν μὲν δρᾶν τι, πημαίνειν δὲ μὴ· τοιαῦτα δ’ ἄλλα καὶ σὲ βουλόματι ποεῖν. καίτοι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον οὐχ ἢ ’γω λέγω, ἀλλ’ ἢ σὺ κρίνεις; εἰ δ’ ἐλευθέραν μὲ δεὶ ξῆν, τῶν κρατοῦντων ἐστὶ πάντ’ ἀκουστέα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δεινόν γε σ’ οὐσαν πατρὸς οὐ σὺ παῖς ἐφυ, κείνου λεληθθαί, τῆς δὲ τικτούσης μέλειν. ἀπαντά γαρ σοι τὰμὰ νουθητῆματα κείνης διδακτᾶ, κοῦδὲν ἐκ σαντῆς λέγεις. ἔπειθ’ ἐλοῦ γε θήτερ’, ἢ φρονεῖν κακῶς ἢ τῶν φίλων φρονοῦσα μὴ μιμήμην ἔχειν· ἂτις λέγεις μὲν ἀρτίως ως, εἰ λάβοις σθένος, τὸ τούτον μύσος ἐκδείξειας ἂν, ἐμοῦ δὲ πατρὶ πάντα τιμωρομένης οὔτε ἐνυέρδεις τὴν τε δρῶσαν ἐκτρέπεις. οὐ ταῦτα πρὸς κακοῖς δειλιαν ἔχει; ἐπεὶ δίδαξον, ἢ μάθ’ ἐξ ἐμοῦ, τί μοι κέρδος γενοῖτ’ ἂν τῶνδε ληξάσῃ γόων. οὐ ξῶ; κακῶς μὲν, οἶδ’, ἐπαρκοῦντως δ’ ἐμοὶ.
ELECTRA

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

Enter chrysothemis.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

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

ELECTRA

O shame that thou, the child of such a sire, Should'st him forget and take thy mother's part; For all these admonitions are not thine, A lesson thou repeatest, learnt of her. Make thine election then, to be unwise, Or show thy wisdom by forgetting friends. Thou saidst, "If but the power were granted me, I would make plain the hate I feel for them;" And yet when I am straining every nerve To avenge my sire, thou wilt not aid me; nay, Dissuadest and wouldst have me hold my hand. Shall we to all our ills add cowardice? Tell me—or let me tell thee—what have I To gain by ceasing from my sad complaint? I still have life? a sorry life, indeed,
Λυπῶ δὲ τούτους, ὡστε τῷ τεθνηκότι τιμᾶς προσώπειν, εἰ τις ἔστ᾿ ἐκεῖ χάρις.
σὺ δ᾿ ἡμῖν ἡ μυσόσα μισεῖς μὲν λόγῳ,
ἔργῳ δὲ τοῖς φονεύσει τοῦ πατρὸς ξύνει.
ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἂν ποτ᾿, οὔδ᾿ εἰ μοι τὰ σὰ μέλλοι τις οὔσειν δῶρ᾿, ἐφ᾿ οἷς ὑψί νῦν χλιδᾶς,
τούτοις ὑπεικάθοιμι· σοὶ δὲ πλουσία
τράπεζα κείσθω καὶ περιρρεῖτω βίος.
ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἐστω τούμε μὴ λυπεῖν μόνων
βοσκημα· τῆς σῆς δ᾿ οὐκ ἐρῶ τιμῆς τυχεῖν,
οὔδ᾿ ἂν σὺ, σώφρων γ᾿ οὕσια. νῦν δ᾿ ἔξον πατρὸς
πάντων ἁρίστου παίδα κεκλῆσθαι, καλοῦ
tῆς μητρὸς· οὕτω γὰρ φανεῖ πλεῖστοις κακῇ,
θανόντα πατέρα καὶ φίλους προδοῦσα σοῦς.

ΧΩΡΟΣ
μὴ δὲν πρὸς ὅργῃν, πρὸς θεῶν· ὡς τοῖς λόγοις
ἔνεστιν ἀμφοίν κέρδος, εἰ σὺ μὲν μάθοις
τοῖς τῆς δε ιρήνθαι, τοῖς δὲ σοῖς αὐτῇ πάλιν.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ἐγὼ μὲν, ὃ γυναῖκες, ἥθας εἰμὶ πως
tῶν τῆς δε μάθων· οὔδ᾿ ἂν ἐμνήσθην ποτὲ,
εἰ μὴ κακὸν μέγιστον εἰς αὐτὴν ἰδν
ἡκοῦσ᾿, ἃ ταύτην τῶν μακρὸν σχῆσει γὼν.

ΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φὲρ᾿ εἰπὲ δὴ τὸ δεινὸν· εἰ γὰρ τῶνοί μοι
μεῖζον τι λέξεις, οὐκ ἄν ἀντείποιμ᾿ ἐτι.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ἀλλ᾿ ἐξερῶ σοι πάν ὅσον κάτοιχ ἐγὼ.
μέλλουσί γὰρ σ᾿, εἰ τῶνοι μη πάξεις γὼν,
ἐνταῦθα πέμψειν ἐνθα μὴ ποθ᾿ ἡλίου
φέγγος προσόψει, ξῶσα δ᾿ ἐν κατηρεφεὶ
στέγῃ χθονὸς τῆς δ᾿ ἐκτὸς ὑμνήσεις κακά.
But good enough for me; and them I vex,
And vexing them do honour to the dead,
If anything can touch the world of shades.
Thou hatest? Nay, thy deeds belie thy words,
While thou consortest with the murderers;
So would not I, though they should offer me
The pomp that makes thee proud, the loaded board,
Thy life of ease; no, I would never yield.
Enough for me spare diet and a soul
Void of offence; thy state I covet not,
Nor wouldst thou, wert thou wise. Men might have
called thee
Child of the noblest sire that ever lived;
Be called thy mother's, rightly named as base,
Betrayer of thy dead sire and thy kin.

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

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

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

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

πρὸς ταῦτα φράζου καὶ μὲ μῆ ποθ’ ύστερον παθοῦσα μέμψη: νῦν γὰρ ἐν καλῷ φρονεῖν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἡ ταῦτα δὴ μὲ καὶ βεβούλευνται ποεῖν;

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

μάλισθ᾽ ὅταν περ οἶκαδ’ Ἀἰγίσθος μόλῃ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ’ ἐξίκοιτο τοῦτο γ’ οὕνεκ’ ἐν τάχει.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

τίν’, ὡ τάλαινα, τόνδ’ ἐπηράσω λόγον;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐλθεῖν ἐκείνον, εἰ τι τῶνδε δράν νοεῖ.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ὅπως πάθης τί χρῆμα; ποῦ ποτ’ εἰ φρενῶν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὅπως ἀφ’ ύμῶν ὡς προσωτάτω φύγω.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

βίον δὲ τοῦ παρόντος οὐ μνειαν ἔχεις;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καλὸς γὰρ οὐμὸς βίστος ὡστε θαυμᾶσαι.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ’ ἢν ἀν, εἰ σὺ γ’ εὖ φρονεῖν ἥπιστασο.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μὴ μ’ ἐκδίδασκε τοῖς φίλοις εἶναι κακὴν.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ’ οὐ διδάσκω· τοῖς κρατοῦσι δ’ εἰκαθεῖν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σὺ ταῦτα θώπευ’· οὐκ ἐμοὺς τρόπους λέγεις.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καλὸν γε μέντοι μὴ ’ξ ἄβουλιας πεσεῖν.
Therefore reflect, and blame me not too late; 
Take warning and repent while yet 'tis time.

ELECTRA
Have they indeed resolved to treat me thus?

CHRYSOthemIS
The instant that Aegisthus is returned.

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

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

ELECTRA
Would he were here, if this be his intent.

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

ELECTRA
A flight long leagues away from all of you.

CHRYSOthemIS
Art thou indifferent to thy present life?

ELECTRA
O 'tis a marvellously happy life!

CHRYSOthemIS
It might have been, couldst thou have schooled thyself.

ELECTRA
Teach me not basely to betray my friends.

CHRYSOthemIS
Not I; I teach submission to the strong.

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

CHRYSOthemIS
Yet not to fall through folly were no blame.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πεσούμεθ’, εἰ χρῆ, πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
πατὴρ δὲ τούτων, οἶδα, συγγνώμην ἔχει.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
tαῦτ᾽ ἐστὶ τάπη πρὸς κακῶν ἐπαίνεσαι.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
σὺ δ’ οὐχὶ πείσει καὶ συναινέσεις ἐμοί;
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
οὐ δῆτα· μὴ πώ νοῦ τοσὸνδε εἰην κενή.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
χωρήσομαι τὰρ’ ὀπερ ἐστάλην ὀδοῦ.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ποὶ δ’ ἐμπορεύει; τῷ φέρεις τάδ’ ἐμπυρα;
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
μὴ τὴρ με πέμπτει πατρὶ τυμβεύσαι χοᾶς.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
πῶς εἰπας; ἦ τῷ δυσμενεστάτῳ βροτῶν;
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
δὲν ἔκταν’ αὐτὴ· τοῦτο γὰρ λέξαι θέλεις.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἐκ τοῦ φίλων πεισθείσα; τῷ τοῦτ’ ἤρεσεν;
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ἐκ δείματός του νυκτέρου, δοκεῖν ἐμοί.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ὦ θεοὶ πατρῷοι, συγγένεσθέ γ’ ἄλλα νῦν.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ἐχεις τι θάρσος τούδε τοῦ τάρβους πέρι;
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
eἰ μοι λέγοις τὴν ὀψιν, εἴποιμί ἃν τότε.
ELECTRA

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

CHRYSOTHEMIS
I trust our father pardons us for this.

ELECTRA
Traitors take refuge in like sentiments.

CHRYSOTHEMIS
Thou wilt not heed then or be ruled by me?

ELECTRA
I am not in my dotage, save the mark!

CHRYSOTHEMIS
Then I will do my errand.

ELECTRA
Whither away?

For whom art carrying these burnt offerings?

CHRYSOTHEMIS
My mother bids me crown our father's grave.

ELECTRA
Her mortal enemy's! How sayest thou?

CHRYSOTHEMIS
The husband whom she slew, so thou wouldst say.

ELECTRA
Which of her friends advised her? whence this whim?

CHRYSOTHEMIS
A nightly vision warned her, so I think.

ELECTRA
Gods of my fathers, aid me in this pass!

CHRYSOTHEMIS
Dost thou take heart of courage from her dread?

ELECTRA
Before I answer let me hear the dream.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ’ οὐ κάτοιδα πλήν ἐπὶ σμικρὸν φράσαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λέγ’ ἀλλὰ τοῦτο· πολλά τοι σμικροὶ λόγοι ἐσφηλαν ἥδη καὶ κατώρθωσαν βροτοὺς.

ΧΡΤΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

λόγος τις αὐτὴν ἔστιν εἰσίδειν πατρὸς τοῦ σοῦ τε κάμοϋ δευτέραν ὁμιλίαν ἐλθόντος ἐσ φῶς· εἶτα τόνδ’ ἐφέστιον πῆξαι λαβόντα σκῆπτρον ὁφόρει ποτὲ αὐτὸς, ταῦν δ’ Ἀλγυσθος· ἔκ δὲ τοῦδ’ ἄνω βλαστείν βρύοντα θαλλόν, ὥ κατάσκιον πᾶσαν γενέσθαι τὴν Μυκηναίων χθόνα. τοιαύτα τοῦ παρόντος, ἥνίχ’ Ἡλίῳ δείκνυσι τούναρ, ἐκλυνον ἐξηγομένου. πλειώ δὲ τούτων οὐ κάτοιδα, πλὴν ὅτι πέμπει με κείνη τοῦδε τοῦ φόβου χάριν. πρὸς νυν θεῶν σε λίσσομαι τῶν ἐγγενῶν ἐμοὶ πιθέσθαι μηδ’ ἄβουλία πεσεῖν· εἰ γάρ μ’ ἀπώσει, σὺν κακῷ μέτει πάλιν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ’, ὥ φίλη, τούτων μὲν ὅν ἔχεις χερῶν τύμβῳ προσάψῃς μηδέν· οὐ γὰρ σοι θέμισς οὔδ’ ὀσίον ἑχθρᾶς ἀπὸ γυναικός ἱστάναι κτερίσματ’ οὔδε λοντρά προσφέρειν πατρί· ἀλλ’ ἡ πνεαῖσιν ἡ βαθυσκαφεῖ κόνει κρύψων νῦν, ἐκθά μὴ ποτ’ εἰς εὖν ὁ πατρὸς τούτων πρόσεισε μηδέν· ἀλλ’ ὅταν θάνη κευμήλῃ αὐτῇ ταύτα σφζεσθω κάτω. ἀρχὴν δ’ ἄν, εἰ μὴ τλημονεστάτη γυνην πασῶν ἐβλαστε, τάσδε δυσμενεῖς χοάς
ELECTRA

CHRYSOTHEMIS
There is but little that I have to tell.

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

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

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

159
οὐκ ἂν ποθ' ὄν γ' ἐκτείνε, τῷ δ' ἐπέστεφε.
σκέψαι γὰρ εἰ σοι προσφίλώς αὐτῇ δοκεῖ γέρα τάδ' οὖν τάφοις δέξεσθαι νέκυς,
υφ' ἢς θανῶν ἀτίμος, ὅστε δυσμενής,
ἐμασχαλίσθη, κατὶ λουτρόσων κάρα κηλίδας ἐξεμαξεν. ἂρα μὴ δοκεῖς
λυτήρι' αὐτῇ ταῦτα τοῦ φώνου φέρειν;
οὐκ ἔστιν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν μέθες· σὺ δὲ
tεμοῦσα κρατῶς βοστρύχων ἀκρας φόβας
κάμοι ταλαίνης, σμικρὰ μὲν τάδ', ἀλλ' ὦμως
ἂνο, δος αὐτῷ, τήνδ' ἀλπαρῆ τρίχα
cαὶ ζώμα τοῦμόν οὗ χλειδαίς ἥσκημένου,
αὐτοῦ δὲ προσπότυνουσα γῆθεν εὐμενῆ
ἡμῖν ἀρωγὸν αὐτὸν εἰς ἑχθροὺς μολεῖν,
cαὶ παῖδ' ὀρέστην ἐξ ὑπερτέρας χερὸς
ἐχθροίσων αὐτοῦ ζωντ' ἐπεμβήναι ποδί,
ὅπως τὸ λοιπὸν αὐτὸν ἀφνεωτέραις
χερσίν στέφωμεν ἡ τανῦν ὄροούμεθα.
ὁμαι μὲν οὖν, ὁμαι τι κάκεινω μέλον
πέμψαι τάδ' αὐτῇ δυσπρόσωπτον ὑφείρατα·
ὦμως δ', ἀδελφή, σοι θ' ὑπούργησον τάδε
ἐμοὶ τ' ἀρωγὰ τῷ τε φιλτάτῳ βροτῶν
πάντων, ἐν ἂιδου κειμένῳ κοινῷ πατρί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἡ κόρη λέγει· σὺ δὲ,
eἰ σωφρονήσεις, ὦ φίλη, δράσεις τάδε.

ΧΡΙΣΘΕΜΙΣ

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

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

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

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

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

πειρωμένη δὲ τῶν τῶν ἔργων ἐμοὶ
συγγ. παρ’ úμων, πρὸς θεῶν, ἔστω, φίλαιν
ὡς εἰ τάδ’ ἡ τεκοῦσα πεύσεται, πικράν
δοκῶ με πεύραν τήνδε τολμήσειν ἐτί.

XΟΡΟΣ

εἴ μὴ γὰρ παράφρων μάντις ἐφύν καὶ γνώμας
λειπομένα σοφάς,
εἰσιν ἀ πρόμαντις
Δίκα, δίκαια φερομένα χερῶν κράτη
μέτεισιν, ὦ τέκνου, οὗ μακροῦ χρόνου.
ὑπεστὶ μοι θάρσος,
ἀδυτυνῶν κλύουσαν
ἀρτίως οὐειράτων.
οὐ γὰρ ποτ’ ἀμναστεῖ γ’ ὦ φύσας σ’ Ἑλλάνων
ἀνάξ,
οὐδ’ ἀ παλαιὰ χαλκόπλακτος ἀμφάκης γένεσ,
ἀ νυν κατέπεφθεν αἰσχίσταις ἐν αἰκίαις.

ἀντ.

ἡξει καὶ πολύπους καὶ πολύχειρ ἀ δεινοῖς
κρυπτομένα λόχοις
χαλκόπους Ἐρμινύς.
ἀλεκτρ’ ἄνυμφα γὰρ ἐπέβα μιαφόνων
γάμων ἀμιλλήμαθ’ οἶσιν οὐ θέμις.
πρὸ τῶν τοίς μ’ ἔχει
μή ποτὲ μή ποθ’ ἥμιν
ἀψεγές πελάν τέρας
τοῖς δρόσι καὶ συνδρόσιν. ἡ τοῖς μαντεῖαι βροτῶν
οὐκ εἰσών ἐν δεινοῖς ὁνείροις οὐδ’ ἐν θεσφάτοις,
eι μὴ τόδε φάσμα νυκτὸς εὐ κατάσχήσει.

1 Wakefield adds σ’.
ELECTRA

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

[Exit Chrysorthemis.]

CHORUS  

Count me a prophet false, a witless wight,  
If Justice, who inspires my prophecy,  
Comes not, my child, to vindicate the right.  
She comes and that right speedily.  
My heart grows bold and nothing fears;  
That dream was music in my ears.  
It tells me that thy sire who whilom led  
The Greeks to victory hath not forgot;  
Yea, and that axe with double brazen head  
Still thirsts for blood to wipe away its blot.

(Ans.)

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

163
ὅ Πέλοπος ὑπὸ ρόσθεν
πολύπονος ἐπίπεια,
ὡς ἐμολεσ αἰανής
tάδε γὰρ.
eὐτε γὰρ ὁ ποντισθεὶς
Μυρτίλος ἐκοιμάθη,
παγχρύσεων δίφρων
δυστάυοις αἰκιαῖς
πρόρριζοις ἐκριφθεὶς,
οὐ τί πω
ἐλειπεν ἐκ τοῦ οὐκοῦ
πολύπονος αἰκία.

ΚΑΣΣΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
ἀνειμένη μὲν, ὡς ἑοικας, αὖ στρέφειν.
oὐ γὰρ πάρεστ' Λύγισθος, ὦς σ' ἐπείχ' ἄει
μὴ τοι θυραίαν γ' ὀνεαν αἰαχύνειν φίλους·
νῦν δ' ὡς ἀπεστ' ἐκεῖνος, οὐδὲν ἐντρέπει
ἐμοῦ γε' καῖτοι πολλὰ πρὸς πολλοὺς με δὴ
ἐξείπας ὧς θρασεία καὶ πέρα δίκης
ἀρχῳ, καθυβρίζουσα καὶ σε καὶ τὰ σά·
ἐγὼ δ' ὑβριν μὲν ὅικ ἔχω, κακῶς δὲ σε
λέγω κακῶς κλύουσα πρὸς σέθεν θαμά.
πατήρ γὰρ, οὐδὲν ἄλλο, σοὶ πρόσχημ' ἂεὶ
ὡς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τέθυνεν. ἐξ ἐμοῦ· καλὸς
ἐξοίδα· τῶν ἀρνησις ὅικ ἑνεστὶ μοι·
ἡ γὰρ Δίκη νῦν εἶλεν, ὅικ ἐγὼ μόνη,
ἡ χρῆν σ' ἀρνήγειν, εἰ φρονοῦσ' ἐτύγχανες·
ἐπεὶ πατὴρ σὸς οὐτος, ὂς ἡρηνεῖς ἂεὶ,
ELECTRA

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

Enter clytemnestra.

clytemnestra

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

1 The charioteer of Ocnomaüs. In the race for the hand of Hippodameia, the king's daughter, he betrayed his master by removing a linch-pin. Pelops won the race, but afterwards for an insult offered to his wife, he hurled into the sea Myrtilus, who invoked a dying curse on the house.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

tήν σήν ὁμαίμον μοῦνος Ἐλλήνων ἐτλη
θύσαν θεόσιν, οὐκ ἵσον καμὼν ἐμοὶ
λύπής, ὡς ἐσπείρ', ὄσπερ ἡ τίκτουσ' ἐγώ.
εἰεν, δίδαξον δὴ με τοῦ χάριν, τίνων
ἐθυσεν αὐτὴν πότερον Ἀργείων ἐρείς;
ἀλλ' οὖ μετήν αὐτοίσι τὴν γ' ἐμὴν κτανείν.
ἀλλ' ἀντ' ἀδελφοῦ δῆτα Μενέλεω κτανῶν
τάμ', οὐκ ἔμελλε τῶνδε μοι δώσειν δίκην;
πότερον ἐκείνω παιδεῖς οὐκ ἤσαν διπλοῖ,
οὐς τῆςδε μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἢν θυήσκειν, πατρὸς
καὶ μητρὸς ὄντας, ἢς ὁ πλοῦς ὄδ' ἢν χάριν;
ἡ τῶν ἐμῶν "Αἰδῆς τιν' ἱμερον τέκνων
ἡ τῶν ἐκείνης ἔσχε δαίσασθαι πλέον;
ἡ τῷ πανώλει πατρὶ τῶν μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ
παίδων πόθος παρεῖτο, Μενέλεω δ' ἐνήν;
οὐ ταῦτ' ἄβούλου καὶ κακοῦ γνώμην πατρὸς;
δοκῶ μὲν, εἰ καὶ σῆς δίχα γνώμης λέγων
φαίη δ' ἄν ἡ θανοῦσά γ', εἰ φωνήν λάβοι.
ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ εἰμὶ τοῖς πεπραγμένοις
δύσθυμοι: εἰ δὲ σοὶ δοκῶ φρονεῖν κακῶς,
γνώμην δικαίαν σχούσα τοὺς πέλας ψέγε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐρείς μὲν οὐχὶ νῦν γέ μ' ὡς ἀρξασά τι
λυπηρὸν εἶτα σοῦ τάδ' ἐξήκουστ' ὑπο·
ἀλλ' ἢν ἐφῆς μοι, τοῦ τεθυνικότος θ' ὑπερ
λέξαιμ' ἄν ὅρθως τῆς κασινυήτης θ' ὀμοῦν.

ΚΛΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

καὶ μην ἐφήμ' εἰ δὲ μ' ὄδ' ἄει λόγους
ἐξήρχες, οὐκ ἄν ἦσθα λυπηρὰ κλύειν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι. πατέρα φής κτείναι. τίς ἂν
τούτον λόγος γένοιτ' ἂν αἰσχίων ἐτι,
ELECTRA

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

ELECTRA

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

CLYTEMNESTRA

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

ELECTRA

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

εἴτ' οὖν δικαίως εἶτε μή; λέξω δὲ σου 560
ὡς οὖ δίκη γ' ἐκτεινας, ἀλλὰ σ' ἐσπασεν
πειθὼ κακού πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἦ ταυτὶ ἐξύνει.
ἐροῦ δὲ τήν κυναγόν "Ἀρτεμιν, τίνος
ποινὰς τὰ πολλὰ πνεύματ' ἐσχ' ἐν Αὐλίδιν·
ἡ γ' φράσω· κείνης γὰρ οὐθέμις μαθεῖν.
πατήρ ποθ' οὐμός, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω, θεάς
παίζων κατ' ἄλσος ἐξεκίνησεν ποδοῖν
στικτὸν κεραστὴν ἐλαφον, οὐ κατὰ σφαγὰς
ἐκκομπάσας ἔποσ τι τυγχάνει βαλὼν.
κὰκ τούδε μηνίσασα Δητὰς κόρη
κατείχ' Ἀχαιοὺς, ὡς πατήρ ἀντίσταθμον
τοῦ θηρὸς ἐκθύσει τὴν αὐτοῦ κόρην.
ὅδ' ἣν τὰ κείνης θύματ'· οὐ γὰρ ἦν λύσις
ἀλλη στρατῷ πρὸς οἰκον οὖδ' εἰς 'Ἰλιον.
ἀνθ' ὡν, βιασθεῖς πολλὰ κάντιβάς, μόλις
ἔθυσεν αὐτὴν, οὐχὶ Μενέλεω χάρων.
εἰ δ' οὖν, ἐρω γὰρ καὶ τὸ σὸν, κείνον θέλων
ἐπωφελήσαι ταῦτ' ἔδρα, τούτοις θανεῖν
χρῆν αὐτὸν οὖνεκ' ἐκ σέθεν; ποίῳ νόμῳ;
ὅρα τιθείσα τόνδε τὸν νόμον βροτοῖς
μὴ πῆμα σαυτή καὶ μετάγγιοιν τιθῆς.
εἰ γὰρ κτενοῦμεν ἄλλον ἀντ' ἄλλον, σὺ τοι
πρώτῃ θάνοις ἃν, εἰ δίκης γε τυγχάνοις.
ἀλλ' εἰσόρα μὴ σκῆψιν οὖκ οὐσαν τίθης.
εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, δίδαξον ἄνθ' ὠτον ταῦτ' 580
αἰσχίστα πάντων ἔργα δρῶσα τυγχάνεις,
ἡτὶς ἐυνεῦδες τὸ παλαμναίω, μεθ' οὐ
πατέρα τὸν ἁμόν πρόσθεν ἐξαπώλεσας,
καὶ παιδοποιεῖς, τοὺς δὲ πρόσθεν εὐσεβείς
καὶς εὔσεβῶν βλαστόντας ἐκβαλοῦν' ἑχείας.
πῶς ταῦτ' ἐπαινέσασιμ' ἃν; ἢ καὶ ταῦτ' ἑρεῖς

168
Justly or not, what matters? But I'll prove
There was no justice in it; 'twas the lure
Of a vile wretch that hurried thee along,—
Thy lover's. Ask the Huntress Artemis
For what offence she prisoned every gust
That blows at Aulis; rather, as from her
Thou mayst not win an answer, I will tell thee.
My father once—so have I heard the tale—
Taking his pleasure in her sacred glade
Started an antlered stag with dappled hide,
Shot it, and shooting made some careless vaunt.
Latona's daughter, wroth thereat, detained
The Achaeans, that in quittance for her hart
My sire might give his daughter, life for life.
And so it came to pass that she was slain:
The fleet becalmed no other way could win
Homeward or Troyward. For that cause alone
Reluctantly, by hard constraint, at last
He slew her, no wise for his brother's sake.
But if, as thou interpretest the deed,
'Twas done to please his brother, even thus
Should he for that have died by hand of thine?
What law is this? In laying down such law
See that against thyself thou lay not up
Dire retribution; for if blood for blood
Be justice, thou wouldst justly die the first.
Look, if thy pleading be not all a lie,
Say, if thou wilt, why thou art living now
A life of shame as partner of his bed,
The wretch who aided thee to slay my sire,
Bearing him children, casting out for them
The rightful heirs in rightful wedlock born.
Can I approve such acts? Or wilt thou say
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

όσ τής θυγατρός ἀντίποινα λαμβάνεις; αἰσχρῶς δ', ἐὰν περ καὶ λέγης· οὐ γὰρ καλὸν ἐγχθροῖς γαμεῖσθαι τῆς θυγατρὸς οὖνεκα. ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ νουθετεῖν ἔξεστι σε, ἥ πάσαν ἦς γλώσσαν ὡς τὴν μητέρα κακοστομοῦμεν. καὶ σ' ἔγωγε δεσπότιν ἥ μητέρ' οὐκ ἔλασσον εἰς ἡμᾶς νέμω, ἥ ζῷ βίου μοχθηρόν, ἕκ τε σοῦ κακοίς πολλοῖς ἀεῖ ἐννοῦσα τοῦ τε συννόμου· δ' ἄλλος ἐξω, χείρα σὴν μόλις φυγὼν, τλῆμον 'Ορέστης δυστυχὴ τρίβει βίων· ὅν πολλὰ δή με σοὶ τρέφειν μωάτορα ἐπητιάσω· καὶ τόδ', εἴπερ ἐσθενοῦ, ἐδρῶν ἄν, εἴ τοῦτ ἦσθι· τοῦδε γ' οὖνεκα κήρυσσε μ' εἰς ἀπαντας, εἰτε χρῆς κακὴν εἴτε στόμαργον εἴτ' ἀναιδείας πλέαν. εἰ γὰρ πέφυκα τῶνδε τῶν ἐργῶν ἱδρωσ οὐδὲν τι τῆν σὴν οὐ καταίσχυνω φύσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁμοῦ μένος πνέουσαν· εἰ δὲ σὺν δίκη ἐξύνεστι, τοῦδε φροντίδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσορῶ·

ΚΛΑΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ποίας δ' ἐμοὶ δεῖ πρός γε τήνδε φροντίδοις, ἦτις τοιαῦτα τὴν τεκούσαν ὑβρίσεν, καὶ ταῦτα τηλικούτος; ἃρα σοι δοκεὶ χωρεῖν ἂν εἰς πάν ἐργον αἰσχύνης ἀτερ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εὔνυν ἐπίστω τῶνδὲ μ' αἰσχύνην ἔχειν, κεῖ μὴ δοκῶ σοι· μανθάνω δ' ὀδούνεκα ἐξωρα πρᾶσσο καῦκ ἐμοὶ προσεικότα. ἀλλ' ἢ γὰρ ἐκ σοῦ δυσμένεια καὶ τὰ σὰ
ELECTRA

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

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

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

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

ἔργ᾽ ἐξαναγκάζει με ταύτα δράν βίαν
αἰσχροῖς γὰρ αἰσχρὰ πράγματ᾽ ἐκδιδάσκεται.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ὁ θρέμμ᾽ ἄναίδες, ἢ σ᾽ ἔγω καὶ τὰμ᾽ ἐπὶ
καὶ τάργα τάμα πόλλ᾽ ἄγαν λέγειν ποεῖ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σὺ τοι λέγεις νῦν, οὐκ ἔγω· σὺ γὰρ ποεῖς
tοῦργον· τὰ δ᾽ ἔργα τοὺς λόγους εὐρίσκεται.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἀλλ᾽ οὐ μᾶ τὴν δέσποταν Ἄρτεμιν θράσους
tούδ᾽ οὐκ ἄλυξεις, εῦτ᾽ ἄν Αἰγισθος μόλη.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁρᾶς; πρὸς ὅργην ἐκφέρει, μεθεῖσά μοι
λέγειν ἀχρίζοιμ᾽, οὐδ᾽ ἐπίστασαι κλύειν.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

οὐκοῦν εάσεις οὐδ᾽ ὕπ᾽ εὐφήμου βοής
θύσαι μ᾽, ἐπειδὴ σοὶ γ᾽ ἐφῆκα πάν λέγειν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐῶ, κελεύω, θεέ· μηδ᾽ ἐπαιτιῶ
tοῦμὸν στόμ᾽, ὡς οὐκ ἀν πέρα λέξαιμ᾽ ἐτι.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἐπαίρε δὴ σὺ θύμαθ᾽ ἢ παροῦσά μοι
πάγκαρπ᾽, ἀνακεῖ τῶδ᾽ ὅπως λυτηρίους
εὐχὰς ἀνάσχω δειμάτων, ἄ νῦν ἔχω.
κλύουσ ἀν ἦδη, Φοῖβε προστατήριε,
κεκρυμμένην μου βάξιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐν φίλοις
ὁ μύθος, οὐδὲ πάν ἀναπτύξαι πρέπει
πρὸς φῶς παροῦσας τήσδε πλησίας ἐμοί,
μὴ σὺν φθόνῳ τε καὶ πολυγλώσσῳ βοή
σπείρῃ ματαίαν βάξιν εἰς πᾶσαν πόλιν.
ἀλλ᾽ ὁδ᾽ ἄκουε· τήδε γὰρ κἀγὼ φράσω.
ELECTRA

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

CLYTEMNESTRA

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

ELECTRA

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

CLYTEMNESTRA

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

ELECTRA

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

CLYTEMNESTRA

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

ELECTRA

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

CLYTEMNESTRA

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

ἀ γὰρ προσεῖδον νυκτὶ τῆς φάσματα
dισσῶν ὑνείρων, ταῦτά μου, Δύκει' ἀναξ,
ei μὲν πέφηνεν ἐσθλά, δός τελεσφόρα,  
ei δ' ἐχθρά, τοὺς ἐχθροῖσιν ἐμπάλιν μέθες·
καὶ μὴ με πλούτου τοῦ παρόντος εἰ τινες
δόλιοι βουλεύουσιν ἐκβαλεῖν, ἐφῄς,  
ἀλλ' ὃδε μ' αἰεὶ ξῶσαν ἀβλαβεῖ βίω
δόμους Ἀτρειδῶν σκῆπτρα τ' ἀμφέπειν τάδε,
φίλους τε ξυνοῦσαν οἷς ξύνειμοι νῦν
eὔμεροῦσαν καὶ τέκνων ὅσων ἔμοι
δύσνοια μὴ πρόσεστιν ἡ λύπη πικρά.
ταῦτ', ὡ Δύκει' ᾿Απόλλου, ἰλεως κλύων
δός πᾶσιν ἡμῖν ὀσπερ ἐξαιτούμεθα.
τὰ δ' ἀλλὰ πάντα καὶ σιωπώσθης ἐμοῦ
ἐπαξίω σε δαίμον ὄντ' ἐξειδέναι·
τοὺς ἐκ Δίως γὰρ εἰκόνος ἐστὶ πάνθ' ὅραν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ
ξέναι γυναῖκες, πῶς ἂν εἰδείη σαφῶς
ei τοῦ τυράννου δώματ' Ἀἰγίσθου τάδε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
tάδ' ἐστίν, ὥ ξέν'. αὐτὸς ἢκασας καλῶς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ
ἡ καὶ δάμαρτα τήνδ' ἐπεικάζοιν κυρῷ
κείνου; πρέπει γὰρ ὡς τύραννος εἰσορᾶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
μάλιστα πάντων· ἢδε σοι κείνη πάρα.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ
ὁ χαῖρ', ἀνασσα· σοι φέρων ἥκω λόγους
ἡδεῖς φίλου παρ' ἄνδρός Ἀἰγίσθῳ θ' ὅμοι.

ΚΑΤΑΙΜΗΝΗΣΤΡΑ
ἐδεξάμην τὸ ρηθέν· εἰδέναι δὲ σοι
πρώτιστα χρῆξο τίς σ' ἀπέστειλεν βροτῶν.
ELECTRA

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

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

CHORUS
It is, Sir; thou thyself hast guessed aright.

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

CHORUS
Indeed thou art in presence of the queen.

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

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


ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

Φαυτεύς ὁ Φωκεύς, πράγμα πορσύνων μέγα.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
tὸ ποιὸν, ὡξέν'; εἰπὲ· παρὰ φίλου γὰρ ὁ ἄνδρός, σάφ' οἶδα, προσφίλεις λέξεις λόγους.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τέθνηκ' Ὥρεστης· ἐν βραχεὶ ξύνθεις λέγω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὗ γὰρ τάλαιν', ὡλωλα τῇ ἵ ἐν ἡμέρα.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
tί φῆς, τί φῆς, ὡξεῖνε; μὴ ταύτης κλύε.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θανόντ' Ὥρεστην νῦν τε καὶ πάλαι λέγω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, οὕδεν εἰμ' ἔτι.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

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

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

κάπεμπόμην πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ τὸ πὰν φράσω. 680
κεῖνος γὰρ ἐλθὼν εἰς τὸ κλεινὸν Ἑλλάδος
πρόσχημ', ἀγὼνος Δελφικῶν ἄθλων χάριν,
ἐπὶ ἴσθησε' ἄνδρός ὁ ὅθεν κηρυγμάτων
δρόμου προκηρύξαντος, οὐ πρώτη κρίσις,
ἐιςήλθε λαμπρός, πᾶσι τοῖς ἐκεῖ σέβας·
δρόμου δ' ἰσώσας τάφεσει ἓ ἐν τέρματα
νίκης ἐξών εξῄλθε πάντων γέρας.

χώπως μὲν ἐν πολλοῖς παύρα σοι λέγω
οὐκ οἶδα τοιοῦτον ἄνδρός ἐργα καὶ κράτην·
ἐν δ' ἵσθα' ὅσων γὰρ εἰσεκηρύξαν βραβής

1 τῇ φύσει MSS., Musgrave corr.
ELECTRA

AGED SERVANT
Phanoteus, the Phocian,
On a grave mission.

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

AGED SERVANT
Orestes’ death, to sum in brief my tale.

ELECTRA
Me miserable! Now am I undone.

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

AGED SERVANT
I say again, Orestes is no more.

ELECTRA
Ah me, I’m lost, ah wretched me, undone!

CLYTEMNESTRA
Attend to thine own business. (To aged servant.)
Tell me, Sir,
The circumstance and manner of his death.

AGED SERVANT
That was my errand, and I’ll tell thee all.
To the great festival of Greece he went,
The Delphic Games, and when the herald’s voice
Announced the opening trial, the foot race,
He stepped into the lists, a radiant form,
The admired of all beholders. Like a shaft
He sped from starting point to goal and back,
And bore the crown of glorious victory.
To speak in brief where there is much to tell,
I never heard of prowess like to his.
HAEKTPA
[Bpofimv StavXcov TrevraOX' a vo/Jbi^€Tai]^
TovTcov ivejKcov rravra TainviKUi
od\l3i^€T, Apyelo<; fiev avaKaXovfX€Vo<;,

tov to Kkeuvov 'FAXa8o9
^Ayafiifjivovo'; o-rpaTev/Jb ayelpavro^ irore,
KoX ravra p.ev roiavO'' orav Be rt? Oecov ^
^XaTTTT), hvvaiT av ovh' av la')^vcov (pvyelv.
ovofia

8'

Kelvo^

yap dWrj<;

'OpeaTTjfiy

r)pLepa<i,

66' liriTLKMV

TeWovTO<; onKVirov; aydyv,
ela-TJXOe ttoWcov dpfjLarrjXaTMV fiera.
el? ^v 'Axciio^, eh airo ^Trdprr)^, Bvo
Al^v€<; ^vycoTMV dp/xdrcov iinaTaTai*
KdKelvo^ iv TovTOiai, (deaaaXd^ €%a)Z/
Treyu-TTTO?" €/cto(; e| AtVwXta?^
tTTTrou?,
^avOalai ircoXot^' €^Bo/jlo<; Mdyvr]^ dvrjp*
6 h' 6ySoo<; Xev/ctTTTTO?, Alvtdv yevor

Tjv

rfKiov

evaro^ 'A6r]vcov rcov deoBfirjrwv diro'
BoiWTo? dXXo<;, BUarov eKTrXrjpMV oxov.

700

^

avrov^i ol reray/jLevot $pa^7]<i
KXripoi<; eirrjXav koL KariaTrjo-av Bi^pov^i,
XciXKri<; viral adXinyyo^ V^^v' ol B afia

dravTe^

S' Xv

6iJLOKX7jaavT6<; r)Via^

XiriTOL^;

eceiGav

X^poiv

iv Be ird'; ifie(TTCo6r] Bp6fio<;

KTVTTOV KpoTrjTMV dp/jbdrcov KovL^
6/jLov

(fyopeW-

710

5'

dv(o

Be irdvTe^ dvapie/jLLyfievot

^eiBovTo KevTpcov ovBev, &>? virep^dXoi
yvoa^ Tt9 avTcov fcal ^pvdyfiad LiriTLKa.
^daei,<;
ofJLOV yap dp.^1 vcora koI Tpo^fov
Tjcjipi^ov,

Ketvo^
1

elae^aXXov

in next line to

178

avTfjv e(TxdT7)v (TTTjXrjv excov

B" VTT

Jebb with most

lirTTiKal irvoai.

critics rejects

it6A.coi'.

the line and alters tovtuu

720


ELECTRA

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

ἐχριμπτε, ἀλεί πύριγγα, δεξιόν δ’ ἀνείς σετραῖον ὑππον εἴργε τὸν προσκείμενον.
καὶ πρὶν μὲν ὅρθοὶ πάντες ἔστασαν διφρὸν· ἐπείτα δ’ Ἁλιάνος ὀνδρὸς ἀστομοί πῶλοι βία φέρουσιν· ἐκ δ’ ὑποστροφῆς τελοῦντες ἐκτον ἐβδομόν τ’ ἧδη ὄρμον μέτωπα συμπαίονοι Βαρκαίους όχοις· καντεύθεν ἀλλός ἀλλόν εξ ἔνοις κακοῦ ἐθραυνε κάνετιπτε, πάν δ’ ἐπιμπλατο ναναγίων Κρισαῖον ἱππικῶν πέδουν.

γνοὺς δ’ οὗξ ‘Αθηνῶν δεινὸς ἡμιοστρόφος ἐξω παραστήν κάνακαχεύει παρεῖς κλύδων ἐφιππον ἐν μέσῳ κυκώμενον.

ηλαυνε δ’ ἐσχατος μὲν, ὑστέρας δ’ ἐχω κιρό λογος Ὀρέστης, τῷ τελε πίστιν φέρων ὅπως δ’ ὀρά μόνον νιν ἐπλελειμμένον, ἐξον δι’ ὀτῶν κέλαδον ἐνσείσας θοις πῶλοις διώκει, κάξισόσαντες ξυγά ηλαυνέτην, τότ’ ἀλλος, ἀλλοθ’ ἀτερος κάρα προβάλλοι ἱππικῶν ὑχμάτων.

καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἀλλοις πάντας ἄσφαλεῖς ὄρμον ὀμαθ’ δ’ τιθμῶν ὅρθος εξ ὀρθῶν διφρῶν· ἐπείτα λύοιν ὑμίαν ἀριστερὰν κάμπτοντος ὑππον λανθάνει στήλην ἀκραν παῖσας εὐθαυσε δ’ ἄξονος μέσας χύνας καξ ἀντύγχον οὐλισθεν· εν δ’ ἐλίσσεται τμητοῖς ἴμασιν τοῦ δὲ πίπτοντος πέδῳ πῶλοι διεσπάρησαν ες μέσον ὄρμου. στρατός δ’ ὅπως ὀρᾷ νιν ἐκπεπτωκότα διφρῶν, ἀνωκλολύξε τὸν νεανίαν, οἱ ἔργα δράσας οία λαγχάνει κακά, φορούμενος πρὸς υόδας, ἀλλοτ’ ωὑρανφ
Steered close and shaved the pillar with his nave,
Urging his offside trace-horse, while he checked
The nearer. For a while they all sped on
Unscathed, but soon the Aenian's hard-mouthed steeds
Bolted, and 'twixt the sixth and seventh round
'Gainst the Barcaean chariot headlong dashed.
Then on that first mishap there followed close
Shock upon shock, crash upon crash, that strewed
With wrack of cars all the Crisaeian plain.
This the shrewd charioteer of Athens marked,
Slackened and drew aside, letting go by
The surge of chariots running in mid course.
Last came Orestes who had curbed his team
(He trusted to the finish), but at sight
Of the Athenian, his one rival left,
With a shrill holloa in his horses' ears
He followed; and the two abreast raced on,
Now one, and now the other a head in front.
Thus far Orestes, ill-starred youth, had steered
Steadfast at every lap his steadfast team,
But at the last, in turning, all too soon
He loosed the left-hand rein, and ere he knew it
The axle struck against the pillar's edge.
The axle box was shattered, and himself
Hurled o'er the chariot rail, and in his fall
Caught in the reins' grip he was dragged along,
While his scared team dashed wildly o'er the course.
But as the crowd beheld his overthrow,
There rose a wail of pity for the youth—
His doughty deeds and his disastrous end—
Now flung to earth, now bounding to the sky
Feet uppermost. At length the charioteers
ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

σκέλη προφαίνων, ἐς τέ νῦν διφρηλάται, μόλις κατασχεθώτες ἵππικὸν δρόμον, ἠλυσαν αἰματηρόν, ὡστε μηδένα γνώναι φίλων ἰδόντ’ ἄν ἄθλιον δέμας. καὶ νῦν πυρὰ κέαντες εὖθὺς ἐν βραχεὶ χαλκῷ μέγιστον σῶμα δειλαίας σποδοῦ φέρουσιν ἀνδρεῖς Φωκέων τεταγμένοι, ὅπως πατρὸς τύμβου ἐκλάχη χθονός. τοιαύτα σοι ταύτ’ ἐστίν, ὡς μὲν ἐν λόγῳ ἀλγεινά, τοῖς δ’ ἰδούσιν, οὕτερ εἶδομεν, μέγιστα πάντων ὑν ὅπωπ’ ἐγὼ κακῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ πᾶν δὴ δεσπόταισι τοῖς πάλαι πρόρριζον, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐφθαρται γένος.

ΚΑΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ὡ Ζεῦ, τὶ ταύτα, πότερον εὐτυχὴ λέγω, ἦ δεινὰ μέν, κέρδη δὲ; λυπηρῶς δ’ ἐχει, εἰ τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τὸν βίον σφὸξ κακοῖς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ

τὶ δ’ ὅδ’ ἀθυμεῖς, ὃ γύναι, τῷ νῦν λόγῳ;

ΚΑΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

δεινὸν τὸ τίκτειν ἐστίν· οὔδε γὰρ κακῶς πάσχοντι μίσος ὃν τέκη προσγιγνειται.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ

μάτην ἀρ’ ἡμεῖς, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἣκομεν.

ΚΑΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

οὕτω μάτην γε’ πῶς γὰρ ἄν μάτην λέγουσ, εἰ μοι θανόντος πίστ’ ἐχον τεκμηρία προσῆλθες, ὃστις τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς γεγώς, μαστῶν ἀποστάς καὶ τροφῆς ἐμῆς, φυγᾶς ἀπεξευώυτο καὶ μ’, ἐπεὶ τῆς χθονός ἔξηλθεν, οὐκὲτ’ εἶδεν, ἐγκαλῶν δὲ μοι.
ELECTRA

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

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

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

AGED SERVANT
Why, lady, why downhearted at my news?

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

AGED SERVANT
So it would seem our coming was in vain.

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

φόνους πατρίφους δείν' ἐπηπείλει τελείν; ὁστ' οὔτε νυκτὸς ὑπνούν οὔτ' ἐξ ἡμέρας ἐμὲ στεγάζειν ἥδυν, ἀλλ' ὁ προστάτας χρόνος διηγεῖ μ' αἰέν ὃς θανουμένην. νῦν δ'—ἡμέρᾳ γὰρ τῇ δ' ἀπῆλλαγμαι φόβον πρὸς τήσδ' ἐκεῖνον θ' ἢδε γὰρ μείζων βλάβη ξύνοικος ἦν μοι, τούμον ἐκπίνοισ' ἄει ψυχῆς ἀκρατον αἶμα—νῦν δ' ἐκηλά ποιν τῶν τήσδ' ἀπειλῶν οὖνεχ' ἡμερεύσομεν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
οὖμοι τάλαινα· νῦν γὰρ οἰμὼξαι πάρα, Ὅρεστα, τὴν σὴν ξυμφορᾶν, ὃθ' ὅδ' ἔχων πρὸς τῆσδ' ὑβρίζει μητρός. ἀρ' ἔχει καλῶς; 790
ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
οὔτοι σὺ· κεῖνοι δ' ὡς ἔχει καλῶς ἔχει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἀκοῦε, Νέμεσι τοῦ θανόντος ἀρτίως.
ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
ἡκοῦσεν δὲν δεῖ καπεκύρωσεν καλῶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ὑβρίζε· νῦν γὰρ εὐτυχοῦσα τυγχάνεισ.
ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
οὖκον Ὅρεστῆς καὶ σὺ παύσετον τάδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
πεπαύμεθ' ἥμεις, οὔχ ὅπως σὲ παύσομεν.
ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
πολλῶν ἄν ἥκοις, ὃ ξέν', ἀξίως τυχεῖν, εἰ τήνδ' ἐπαυσάς τῆς πολυγλώσσου βοής.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ
οὖκοιν ἀποστείχομι' ἄν, εἰ τάδ' εὖ κυρεῖ. 184
Slandered me as the murderer of his sire
And breathed forth vengeance?—Neither night nor
day
Kind slumber closed these eyes, and immanent dread
Of death each minute stretched me on the rack.
But now on this glad day, of terror rid
From him and her, a deadlier plague than he,
That vampire who was housed with me to drain
My very life blood—now, despite her threats
Methinks that I shall pass my days in peace.

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

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

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

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

Mock on; this is thine hour of victory.

That hour Orestes shall not end, nor thou.

End it! 'Tis we are ended and undone.

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

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

ΚΑΛΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

800 ἥκιστ... ἐπείπερ οὔτ' ἐμοῦ κατάξει' ἀν πράξειας οὔτε τοῦ πορεύσαντος ξένου.
ἀλλ' εἰσιθ' εἰσώ τήνδε δ' ἐκτοθεν βοῶν ἐν τά θ' αὐτῆς καὶ τὰ τῶν φίλων κακά.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

810 ἀρ' ὑμῖν ὡς ἀλγοῦσα κάδυνωμένη δεινῶς δακρύσαι κάπικωκύσαι δοκεῖ τὸν νεὼν ἡ δύστηνος ὤδ' ὀλωλότα;
ἀλλ' ἐγγελώσα φρούδος. ὁ τάλαν' ἐγώ.
'Ορέστα φίλταθ', ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας θανῶν.
ἀποσπάσας γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς οἶχει φρενὸς αἰ' μοι μόναι παρῆσαν ἐλπίδων ἐτί, σὲ πατρὸς ἰγειν ξώντα τιμωρόν ποτε κάμοι ταλαίνης. νῦν δὲ ποὶ με χρή μολείν;
μόνη γάρ εἰμι, σοῦ τ' ἀπεστερημένη καὶ πατρός. ἦδη δεὶ με δουλευεῖν πάλιν ἐν τοῖσιν ἐχθῆστοισιν ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ φουνεῖν πατρός. ἄρα μοι καλῶς ἔχει;
ἀλλ' οὗ τι μὴν ἔγωγε τοῦ λοιποῦ χρόνου ξύνοκος, εἴσειμ', ἀλλὰ τὴδε πρὸς τύλην 
παρεῖσ' ἐμαυτὴν ἄφιλος αὐνανὸ βίον. πρὸς ταῦτα καὶνέτω τις, εὶ βαρύνεται, τῶν ἐνδον ὄντων' ὡς χάρις μὲν, ἦν κτάνη, λύτη δ', ἐὰν ξώ' τοῦ βίου δ' οὐδεὶς πόθος.

ΧΩΡΟΣ

820 στρ. α'
ποῦ ποτε κεραυνοὶ Δίως ἢ ποὺ φαέθων Ἄλιος, εἰ ταῦτ' ἐφορῶντες κρύπτουσιν ἐκηλοῖ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

186 ε ἐ, αἰαί.

1 ἐσσοῦ MSS., Hermann corr.
ELECTRA

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

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

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Where, O Zeus, are thy bolts, O Sun-god, where is
thy ray,
If with thy lightning, thy light, these things be not
shewn to the day?

ELECTRA
Ah me! Ah me!
ΧΟΡΟΣ

ο παι, τί δακρύεις;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μηδέν μέγ' ἀύσης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ei τῶν φανερῶς οἰχομένων

εἰς Ἀϊδαν ἑλπίδ᾽ ὑποίσεις, κατ᾽ ἐμοῦ τακομένας

μᾶλλον ἐπεμβάσαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

άντ. α'

οἶδα γὰρ ἀνακτ᾽ Ἀμφιάρεων χρυσοδέτοις

ἐρκεσί κρυφθέντα γυναικῶν· καὶ νῦν ὑπὸ γαίας

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐ ἐ, ἰὼ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πάμψυχος ἀνάσσει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ δῆτ᾽ ὅλον γὰρ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐδάμην.
ELECTRA

CHORUS
Daughter, why weepest thou?

ELECTRA
Woe!

CHORUS
Hush! No rash cry!

ELECTRA
Thou’lt be my death.

CHORUS
What meanest thou?

ELECTRA
If ye would whisper hope
That they we know for dead may be alive;
Ye trample on a bleeding heart.

CHORUS
Nay, I bethink me how
The Argive seer 1 was swallowed up,
Snared by a woman for a golden chain,
And now in the nether world—

ELECTRA
Ah me!

CHORUS
A living soul he reigns.

ELECTRA
Ah woe!

CHORUS
Aye woe! for the murderess—

ELECTRA
Was slain.

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

ναί.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἶδ᾽ οἶδ᾽. ἐφάνη γὰρ μέλητωρ ἀμφι τὸν ἐν πένθει· ἐμοὶ δ’ οὐτὶς ἐτ’ ἔσθ’· δὴ γὰρ ἐτ’ ἤν, φρούδος ἀναρπασθεῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
deilaiα deilaiων κυρεῖς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

cάγω τοῦδ᾽ ἵστωρ, ὑπερίστωρ, πανσύρτῳ παμμήνῳ πολλῶν δεινῶν στυγνῶν τ’ αἰώνι.¹

ΧΟΡΟΣ
eîdomeν ἄθρηνεις.²

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μὴ μὲ νυν μηκέτι παραγάγῃς, ἵν’ οὐ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
tί φῆς;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πάρεισιν ἐλπίδων ἔτι κοινοτόκων εὐπατριδῶν ἄρωγαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πᾶσι θνατοῖς ἐφ’ μόρος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἡ καὶ χαλάργοις ἐν ἀμίλλαις οὕτως, ὥς κεῖνοι δυστάνῳ, τμητοῖς ὀλκοῖς ἐγκύρσαι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀσκοπος ἀ λώβα.

¹ ἀχέων MSS., Hermann corr. ² θροεῖς MSS., Dindorf corr.
ELECTRA

CHORUS
Aye, slain.

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

CHORUS
A weary, weary lot is thine. (Str. 2)

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

CHORUS
We have watched its tearful course.

ELECTRA
Cease then to turn it where—

CHORUS
What wouldst thou say?

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

CHORUS
Death is the common lot. (Ant. 2)

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

CHORUS
Torture ineffable!
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς γὰρ οὐκ; εἰ ξένος ἀτερ ἐμὰν χερῶν
ΧΟΡΟΣ
παπαῖ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
κέκευθεν, οὔτε τὸν τάφον ἀντιάσας οὔτε γόων παρ’ ἧμῶν.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ὐφ’ ἤδονῆς τοι, φιλτάτη, διώκομαι τὸ κόσμιον μεθείσα σὺν τάχει μολεῖν· φέρω γὰρ ἤδονάς τε κανάπαυλαν ὅν πάροιθεν εἰκὲς καὶ κατέστενες κακῶν

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
πάθεν δ’ ἄν εὔροις τῶν ἐμῶν σὺ πημάτων ἀρηξίω, οἷς ἱασίν οὐκ ἐνεστ’ ἰδεῖν;

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
πάρεστ’ Ὠρέστης ἦμῶν, ἵσθι τοῦτ’ ἐμοῦ κλύουσ’, ἐναργῶς, ἀσπέρ εἰσορᾶς ἐμὲ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἀλλ’ ἢ μέμηνας, ὦ τάλαινα, κάπι τοὺς σαυτῆς κακοίσι κάπι τοῖς ἐμοῖς γελᾶς;

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
μὰ τὴν πατρῷαν ἐστίαν, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὑβρεῖ λέγω τάδ’, ἀλλ’ ἐκείνων ως παρόντα νῦν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
οὐμοι τάλαινα· καὶ τίνος βροτῶν λόγου τόνδ’ εἰσακοῦσαι ὡδε πιστεύεις ἄγαν;

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ἐγὼ μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ τε κοῦκ ἄλλης, σαφῆ σημεῖ’ ἰδούσα, τόδε πιστεύω λόγῳ.

192
ELECTRA

ELECTRA
Yea, in a strange land far away—

CHORUS
Alas!

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

Enter CHRYSOTHEMIS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίν', ω τάλαιν', ἔχουσα πίστιν; ἐσ' τί μοι
βλέψασα θάλπει τῷ ἀνηκέστῳ πυρί;

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

πρὸς νῦν θεῶν ἀκούσου, ὡς μαθοῦσά μου
τὸ λοιπὸν ἢ φρονοῦσαν ἢ μωρὰν λέγης.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

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

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι πᾶν ὅσον κατειδόμην.
ἐπει γὰρ ἤλθον πατρὸς ἀρχαῖον τάφον,
ὁρῶ κολώνης ἐξ ἄκρας νεορρύτους
πηγὰς γάλακτος καὶ περιστεφὴ κύκλῳ
πάντων ὁσ' ἐστίν ἀνθέων θήκην πατρός.
ἰδοῦσα δ' ἐσθοῦν βάρμα, καὶ περισκοπῶ
μὴ ποῦ τις ἡμῖν ἐγνύς ἐγχρίμπτῃ βροτῶν.
ὡς δ' ἐν γαλήνῃ πάντ' ἐδερκόμην τόπον,
τύμβου προσείρπον ἁσσον' ἐσχάτης δ' ὅρω
πυρᾶς νεώρη βόστρυχον τετμημένον·
κευθὺς τάλαιν' ὑμεῖς εἴδον, ἐμπαίει τι μοι
ψυχὴ σὺνθῆς ὀμμα, φιλτάτου βροτῶ
πάντων Ὁρέστου τοῦθ' ὡρᾶν τεκμήριον·
καὶ χερσὶ βαστάσασα δυσφημῶ μὲν οὗ,
χαρὰ δὲ πίμπλημ' εὐθὺς ὀμμα δακρύνων.
καὶ νῦν θ' ὀμοίως καὶ τότ' ἐξεπίσταμαι
μή του τόδ' ἀγλαίσσα πλήν κείνου μολεῖν·
τῷ γὰρ προσήκει πλήν γ' ἐμοῦ καὶ σοῦ τόδε;
κάγω μὲν οὐκ ἐδρασά, τοῦτ' ἐπίσταμαι,
οὔδ' αὐ ποῦ τῶν γάρ, ἦ' γε μηδὲ πρὸς θεῶν
ἐξέπτ' ἀκλαύστῳ τῆς ἀποστῆιαν στέγης.
ἀλλ' οὔδ' μὲν δὴ μητρὸς οὔθ' ὁ νοῦς φιλεῖ

194
ELECTRA

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

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

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

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

tοιαύτα πράσσειν ούτε δρῶς ἐλάνθαν' ἄν· 1 ἀλλ᾽ ἐστ᾽ ὁ Ὀρέστος ταύτα τἀπιτύμβια. 2 ἀλλ᾽, ὁ φίλη, θάρσυνε: τοῖς αὐτοῖς τοι οὐχ αὐτὸς αἰεὶ δαιμόνων παραστατεῖ.

νῦν ἢν τὰ πρόσθεν στυγνός· ἢ δὲ νῦν ἵσως πολλῶν ὑπάρξει κύρος ἡμέρα καλῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φεῦ, τῆς ἀνοίας ὡς σ᾽ ἐποικτίρω πάλαι.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

τί δ᾽ ἐστιν; οὐ πρὸς ἥδουν λέγω τάδε;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ οἶσθ᾽ ὅποι γῆς οὐδ᾽ ὅποι γυώμης φέρει.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

πῶς δ᾽ οὐκ ἐγὼ κάτοικόν ἂν γ᾽ εἴδον ἐμφανῶς;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

tέθυηκεν, ὁ τάλαινα, τάκεινον δὲ σοι σωτηρί' ἐρρεί· μηδὲν εἰς κείνον γ᾽ ὀρα.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

οἵμοι τάλαινα· τοῦ τάδ' ἥκουσας βροτῶν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

tοῦ πλησίον παρόντος, ἵνικ' ὀλλυτω.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καὶ ποῦ 'στιν οὕτως; θαῦμα τοὶ μ᾽ ὑπέρχεται.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κατ᾽ οἰκόν, ἢδὺς οὖδὲ μητρὶ δυσχερῆς.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

οἵμοι τάλαινα· τοῦ γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ποτ᾽ ἢν τὰ πολλὰ πατρὸς πρὸς τάφον κτερίσματα;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἵμαι μάλιστ' ἕγωγε τοῦ τεθυμκότος μνημεῖ' ὁ Ὀρέστος ταύτα προσθείναι τίνα.

1 ἐλάνθανεν MSS., Heath corr.
2 τἀπιτύμβια MSS., Dindorf corr.
ELECTRA

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

ELECTRA

Alas! I pity thy simplicity,
Fond sister.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Are not then my tidings glad?

ELECTRA

Thou knowst not in what land of dreams thou art.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Wouldst have me doubt the evidence of my eyes?

ELECTRA

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

CHRYSOTHEMIS

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

ELECTRA

One who was present when he met his fate.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

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

ELECTRA

Within; our mother's not unwelcome guest.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

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

ELECTRA

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

ὁ δυστυχής· ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν χαρᾷ λόγους
tοιούσοδ’ ἔχουσ’ ἔσπευδον, οὐκ εἰδυῖ άρα
ἳ’ ἴμεν ἄτης· ἀλλὰ νῦν, οὗ’ ικόμηnf,
tά τ’ ὠντα πρόσθεν ἀλλα θ’ εὐρίσκω κακά.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὕτως ἔχει σοι ταῦτ’· ἐὰν δὲ μοι πίθη,
tῆς νῦν παρούσης πημονῆς λύσεις βάρος.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

ἡ τοῦς θανόντας ἐξαναστήσω ποτέ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἐσθ’ ὅ γ’ εἶπον· οὐ γὰρ ὅδ’ ἄφρων ἔφυν.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

tί γὰρ κελεύεις ὧν ἐγὼ φερέγγυς;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τλῆναι σε δρόσαν ἄν ἐγὼ παραίνεσω.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ’ εἰ τις ὠφέλεια γ’, οὐκ ἀπώσομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

όρα, πόνου τοι χωρίς οὐδὲν ἐντυχεῖ.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

όρῳ. ξυνοίσω πάν ὁσονπερ ἄν σθένω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀκουε δ’ νυν ἥ βεβούλευμαι ποεῖν.

παρουσίαν μὲν οἰσθα καὶ σύ που φίλων
ὡς οὕτις ἦμιν ἔστιν, ἀλλ’ Αἰδης λαβῶν
ἀπεστέρηκε καὶ μόνα λελεῖμμεθον.

ἐγὼ δ’ ἐως μὲν τὸν κασίγμητον βίω
θάλλοντ’ ἐτ’ εἰσηκονοῦν, εἰχον ἐλπίδας
φόνου ποτ’ αὐτὸν πράκτορ’ ἰξεσθαί πατρός·

νῦν δ’ ἡμίκ’ οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν, εἰς σὲ δὴ βλέπω,

ὁπως τὸν αὐτόχειρα πατρόφου φόνου

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἐσθ’ ὅ γ’ εἰπον· οὐ γὰρ ὅδ’ ἄφρων ἔφυν.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

τί γὰρ κελεύεις ὥν ἐγὼ φερέγγυς;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τλῆναι σε δρόσαν ἄν ἐγὼ παραίνεσω.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ’ εἰ τις ὠφέλεια γ’, οὐκ ἀπώσομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

όρα, πόνου τοι χωρίς οὐδὲν εντυχεῖ.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

όρῳ. ξυνοίσω πάν ὁσονπερ ἄν σθένω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀκουε δ’ νυν ἥ βεβούλευμαι ποεῖν.

παρουσίαν μὲν οἰσθα καὶ σύ που φίλων
ὡς οὕτις ἦμιν ἔστιν, ἀλλ’ Αἰδης λαβῶν
ἀπεστέρηκε καὶ μόνα λελεῖμμεθον.

ἐγὼ δ’ ἐως μὲν τὸν κασίγμητον βίω
θάλλοντ’ ἐτ’ εἰσηκονοῦν, εἰχον ἐλπίδας
φόνου ποτ’ αὐτὸν πράκτορ’ ἰξεσθαί πατρός·

νῦν δ’ ἡμίκ’ οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν, εἰς σὲ δὴ βλέπω,

ὁπως τὸν αὐτόχειρα πατρόφου φόνου

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἐσθ’ ὅ γ’ εἰπον· οὐ γὰρ ὅδ’ ἄφρων ἔφυν.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

τί γὰρ κελεύεις ὥν ἐγὼ φερέγγυς;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τλῆναι σε δρόσαν ἄν ἐγὼ παραίνεσω.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ’ εἰ τις ὠφέλεια γ’, οὐκ ἀπώσομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

όρα, πόνου τοι χωρίς οὐδὲν εντυχεῖ.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

όρῳ. ξυνοίσω πάν ὁσονπερ ἄν σθένω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀκουε δ’ νυν ἥ βεβούλευμαι ποεῖν.

παρουσίαν μὲν οἰσθα καὶ σύ που φίλων
ὡς οὕτις ἦμιν ἔστιν, ἀλλ’ Αἰδης λαβῶν
ἀπεστέρηκε καὶ μόνα λελεῖμμεθον.

ἐγὼ δ’ ἐως μὲν τὸν κασίγμητον βίω
θάλλοντ’ ἐτ’ εἰσηκονοῦν, εἰχον ἐλπίδας
φόνου ποτ’ αὐτὸν πράκτορ’ ἰξεσθαί πατρὸς·

νῦν δ’ ἡμίκ’ οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν, εἰς σὲ δὴ βλέπω,

ὁπως τὸν αὐτόχειρα πατρόφου φόνου

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἐσθ’ ὅ γ’ εἰπον· οὐ γὰρ ὅδ’ ἄφρων ἔφυν.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

τί γὰρ κελεύεις ὥν ἐγὼ φερέγγυς;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τλῆναι σε δρόσαν ἄν ἐγὼ παραίνεσω.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ’ εἰ τις ὠφέλεια γ’, οὐκ ἀπώσομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

όρα, πόνου τοι χωρίς οὐδὲν εντυχεῖ.

ΧΡΙΣΩΘΕΜΙΣ

όρῳ. ξυνοίσω πάν ὁσονπερ ἄν σθένω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀκουε δ’ νυν ἥ βεβούλευμαι ποεῖν.

παρουσίαν μὲν οἰσθα καὶ σύ που φίλων
ὡς οὕτις ἦμιν ἔστιν, ἀλλ’ Αἰδης λαβῶν
ἀπεστέρηκε καὶ μόνα λελεῖμμεθον.

ἐγὼ δ’ ἐως μὲν τὸν κασίγμητον βίω
θάλλοντ’ ἐτ’ εἰσηκονοῦν, εἰχον ἐλπίδας
φόνου ποτ’ αὐτὸν πράκτορ’ ἰξεσθαί πατρὸς·

νῦν δ’ ἡμίκ’ οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν, εἰς σὲ δὴ βλέπω,

ὁπως τὸν αὐτόχειρα πατρόφου φόνου
ELECTRA

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

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

CHRYSOTHEMIS
Wouldst have me raise the dead to life again?

ELECTRA
I meant not that; I am not so demented.

CHRYSOTHEMIS
What wouldst thou then that lies within my powers?

ELECTRA
Be bold to execute what I enjoin.

CHRYSOTHEMIS
If it can profit, I will not refuse.

ELECTRA
Success, remember, is the meed of toil.

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

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

εύν τῇ̣δ' ἀδελφῇ μὴ κατοκυθσεῖς κτανεῖν
Δι' ἵμας οὖθεν γάρ σε δεί κρύπτειν μ' ἔτι.
ποί γὰρ μενεῖς ράθυμοι, εἰς τίν' ἐλπίδων
βλέψας' ἐτ' ὀρθὴν; ἡ πάρεστι μὲν στένειν
πλοῦτου πατρῷον κτῆσιν ἐστερημένην,
πάρεστι δ' ἀλγεῖν ἕς τοσάνδε τοῦ χρόνου
ἀλέκτρα γηράσκουσαν ἀνυμέναια τε.
καὶ τῶν μὲν τού μηκέτ' ἐλπίσης ὅπως
τεῦξει ποτ' οὐ γὰρ ὃδ' ἀβουλὸς ἐστ' ἀνὴρ
Αὐγίσθος ὡστε σον ποτ' ἢ κάμον γένος
βλαστεῖν ἕασαι, πημονὴν αὐτῷ σαφῆ.
ἀλλ' ἢν ἐπίστη τοῖς ε疬οῖς βουλεύμασιν,
πρὸ τοῦ μὲν εὔσεβειαν ἐκ πατρὸς κάτω
θανόντος οὔσει τοῦ κασιγνήτου θ' ἀμα·
ἐπείτα δ', ὡσπερ ἐξέφυσ', ἐλευθέρα
καλεῖ τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ γάμων ἐπαξίων
τεῦξειν ποτειγίαν πρὸς τὰ χρηστὰ πᾶς θραῖν.
λόγων γε μὴν εὐκλειαν οὐχ ὀρᾶς ὅσην
σαυτῇ τε κάμοι προσβαλεῖς πεισθείσ' ἐμοὶ;
tis γὰρ ποτ' ἀστῶν ἢ ξένων ἡμᾶς ἴδων
τοιοῦτον ἐπαινοῖς οὐχὶ ἐξιώτευσαι·
ίδεσθε τῶδε τὸ κασιγνήτω, φίλοι,
ὦ τὸν πατρὸδον οἰκὸν ἐξεσωσάτην,
ὦ τοῖς ἐξθροῖς εὖ βεβηκόσιν ποτὲ
ψυχής ἀφειδήσαντε προὐστήσῃν φόνου·
tοῦτῳ φίλειν χρῆ, τόδε χρῆ πάντας σέβειν,
tῶδ' ἐν θ' ἐετραίς ἐν τε πανδῆμῳ πόλει
τιμῶν ἅπαντας οὖν' ἀνδρείας χρεών.
τοιαύτα τοι νῦ πᾶσ τις ἐξερεί βροτῶν,
ξώσαιν θανούσαιν θ' ὡστε μὴ 'κλιπεῖν κλέος.
ἀλλ', ὡ φίλην, πείσθητι, συμπόνει πατρί,
σύγκαμμ' ἀδελφῷ, παύσου εκ κακῶν ἐμέ,
ELECTRA

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

παύσον δὲ σαυτήν, τούτο γυνώσκουσ' ὅτι ἐμ' αἰσχρόν αἰσχρῶς τοῖς καλῶς περιφυκόσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

καὶ πρίν γε φωνεῖν, ὅ γυναικες, εἰ φρενῶν ἐτύγχαν' αὐτὴ μὴ κακῶν, ἐσώζετ' ἄν τὴν εὐλάβειαν, ὡσπερ οὐχὶ σώζεται.  
ποῖ γὰρ ποτ' ἐμβλέψασα τοιοῦτον θράσος αὐτῇ θεὸν πλίξει καὶ υπηρετεῖν καλεῖς; 
οὔκ εἰσορᾶς; γυνὴ μὲν οὖν ἄνηρ ἐφυς, σθένεις δ' ἐλασσον τῶν ἐναντίων χερί. 
δαίμων δὲ τοῖς μὲν εὐτυχεῖ καθ' ἡμέραν, 
ἡμῖν δ' ἀπορρέι κάτι μηδὲν ἔρχεται. 

τὸς οὖν τοιοῦτον ἀνδρα βουλευόν ἐλεῖν ἀλυτος ἄτης ἐξαπαλλαχθῆσεται; 

ὄρα κακῶς πράσσοντε μὴ μείζῳ κακὰ κτησώμεθ', εἰ τις τοῦσ' ἀκούσεται λόγους. 

λυει γὰρ ἡμῖν οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἐπωφελεῖ 
βάξιν καλὴν λαβόντε δυσκλέως θανείν. 
οὔ γὰρ θανεῖν ἐχθιστον, ἀλλ' ὅταν θανείν χρήζων τις εἰτα μηδὲ τούτ' ἐχθ λαβείν. 

ἀλλ' ἀντιάξω, πρὶν πανωλέθρους τὸ πᾶν ἡμᾶς τ' ὀλέσθαι κἀξερημόσαι γένος, 

κατάσχεις ὄργην. καὶ τὰ μὲν λελεγμένα ἀρρητ' ἑγώ σοι κάτελη φυλάξοιμαι, 

αὐτὴ δὲ νοῦν σχές ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ ποτὲ, 

σθένουσα μηδέν τοῖς κρατοῦσιν εἰκαθεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πείθον· προνοιάς οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἐφυ κέρδος λαβεῖν ἀμείνον οὐδὲ νοὺ σοφοῦ.
ELECTRA

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

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

CHRYSOTHEMIS
Before she spake, were not her mind perverse,
She had remembered caution, but she, friends,
Remembers not. (To Electra.) What glamour fooled thee thus
To take up arms thus boldly and enlist me?
Thou art a woman, see'st thou not? no man,
No match in battle for thine adversaries;
Their fortune rises with the flowing tide,
Ours ebbs and leaves us soon a stranded hulk;
Who then could hope to grapple with a foe
So mighty and escape without a fall?
Bethink thee, if thy speech were overheard,
We are like to change our evil plight for worse.
Small comfort or commodity to win
Glory and die an ignominious death!
Mere death were easy, but to crave for death
And be denied that last boon—there's the sting.
Nay, I entreat, before we wreck ourselves
And perish root and branch, restrain thy rage.
All thou hast said for me shall be unsaid,
An empty breath. O learn at length, though late,
To yield, nor match thy weakness with their strength.

CHORUS
Hearken! for mortal man there is no gift
Greater than forethought and sobriety.
ΦΕΥ:
εἰ ὡφελες τοιάδε τὴν γνώμην πατρὸς ἃντικοντος εἶναιν' πάν γὰρ ἄν κατειργᾶσο\.}

ἈΛΛ' ἦ φύσιν γε, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἥσσων τὸτε.

ἈΣΚΕΙ ΤΟΙΑΤΗ ΝΟῌΝ ΔΙ' ΑΙΔΟΝΟΣ ΜΕΝΕΙΝ.

โอกา τινί οὕχι συνδράσουσα νουθετεῖς τάδε.

ΕΙΚΟΣ ΓΑΡ ΕΓΧΕΙΡΟΥΝΤΑ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΑΣΣΕΙΝ ΚΑΚΩΣ.

ζηλῶ σε τοῦ νοὺ, τῆς δὲ δειλίας στυγῶ.

ἈΝΕΞΟΜΑΙ ΚΛΥΝΟΥΣΑ ΧΩΤΑΝ ΕΙΝ ΛΕΓΗΣ.

ἈΛΛ' ΟΥ ΠΟΤ' ΕΞ ΕΜΟΥ ΓΕ ΜΗ ΠΆΘΗΣ ΤΟΤΕ.

ΜΑΚΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΚΡΙΝΑΙ ΤΑΥΤΑ ΧΩ ΛΟΙΠῶΣ ΧΡΟΝΟΣ.

ΑΠΕΙΔΘΈΣ ΣΟΙ ΓΑΡ ὩΦΕΛΗΣΙΣ ΟΥΚ ΕΝΙ.

ΕΝΕΣΤΙΝ' ἈΛΛΆ ΣΟΙ ΜΑΘΗΣΙΣ ΟΥ ΠΆΡΑ.

ΕΛΘΟÙΣΑ ΜΗΤΡΙ ΤΑΥΤΑ ΠΑΝΤ' ἘΞΕΙΤΕ ΣΗ.
ELECTRA

'Tis as I thought: before thy answer came
I knew full well thou wouldst refuse thine aid.
Unaided then and by myself I'll do it,
For done it must be, though I work alone.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Ah well-a-way!
Would thou hadst been so minded on that day
Our father died! What couldst thou not have wrought!

ELECTRA

My temper was the same, my mind less ripe.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Study to keep the same mind all thy days.

ELECTRA

This counsel means refusal of thine aid.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Yes, for misfortune dogs such enterprise.

ELECTRA

I praise thy prudence, hate thy cowardice.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

E'en when thou shalt commend me, I will bear
Thy commendation no less patiently.

ELECTRA

That trial thou wilt ne'er endure from me.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Who lives will see; time yet may prove thee wrong.

ELECTRA

Begone! in thee there is no power to aid.

CHRYSOTHEMIS

Not so; in thee there is no will to learn.

ELECTRA

Go to thy mother; tell it all to her.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
οὐδ’ αὖ τοσοῦτον ἔχθος ἐχθαίρω σ’ ἐγὼ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἀλλ’ οὖν ἐπίστω γ’ οἱ μ’ ἀτιμίας ἄγεις.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ἀτιμίας μὲν οὖ, προμηθίας δὲ σοῦ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
tῷ σῷ δικαίῳ δὴ τ’ ἐπιστῆσθαι μὲ δεῖ;
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ὅταν γὰρ εὖ φρονήσ, τόθ’ ἤγησει σὺ νῦν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἡ δεινῶν εὖ λέγουσαν ἤξαμαρτάνειν.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
eἰρήκας ὅρθως ὃ σὺ πρόσκεισαι κακῷ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
tί δ’; οὐ δοκῶ σοι ταῦτα σὺν δίκῃ λέγειν;
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ἀλλ’ ἔστιν ἐνθα χ’ δίκη βλάβην φέρει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
tούτως ἐγὼ ζῆν τοῖς νόμοις οὐ βουλομαι.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
ἀλλ’ εἰ ποιήσεις ταῦτ’, ἐπαινεῖσεις ἐμέ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
cαὶ μὴν ποιήσω γ’ οὐδὲν ἐκπλαγεῖσα σε.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
cαὶ τοῦτ’ ἀληθές, οὐδὲ βουλεύσει πάλιν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
βουλήσ γὰρ οὐδὲν ἔστιν ἐχθιόν κακῆς.
ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
φρονεῖν ἐσικᾶς οὐδὲν ὅν ἐγὼ λέγω.
ELECTRA

CHRYSOthemis
My hatred of thee does not reach so far.

ELECTRA
Thou wouldst dishonour me; that much is sure.

CHRYSOthemis
Dishonour? No, I seek to save thine honour.

ELECTRA
Am I to make thy rule of honour mine?

CHRYSOthemis
When thou art wise, then thou shalt guide us both.

ELECTRA
Sound words; 'tis sad they are so misapplied.

CHRYSOthemis
Thouittest well the blot that is thine own.

ELECTRA
How? dost deny the plea I urge is just?

CHRYSOthemis
No; but e'en justice sometimes worketh harm.

ELECTRA
I choose not to conform to such a rule.

CHRYSOthemis
Well, if thy purpose hold, thou'lt own me right.

ELECTRA
It holds; I shall not swerve in awe of thee.

CHRYSOthemis
Is this thy last word? Wilt not be advised?

ELECTRA
No, naught is loathlier than ill advice.

CHRYSOthemis
Thou seemest deaf to all that I can urge.
ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

πάλαι δέδοκται ταῦτα κοῦ νεωστὶ μοι.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀπειμυ τοίνυν' οὔτε γὰρ σὺ τὰμ' ἐπη τὸλμᾶς ἐπαινεῖν οὔτ' ἐγὼ τοὺς σοὺς πρόποιους.

ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' εἰσιθ'. οὐ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαι ποτε, οὐδ' ἦν σφόδρ' ἵμείρουσα τυγχάνης' ἐπεὶ πολλῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τὸ θηρᾶσθαι κενά.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι φρονεῖν, φρόνει τοιαύθ'. ὅταν γὰρ ἐν κακοὶς ἡδη βεβήκης, τὰμ' ἐπαινείσεις ἐπη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ στρ. α'

τί τοὺς ἀνωθεν φρονιμωτάτους οἰωνοὺς ἐσορόμενοι 1060 τροφᾶς κηδομένους ἂφ' ὃν τε βλάστσωσιν ἂφ' ὃν τ' ὀνασιν εὐρ.

ωςι, ταῦδ' οὔκ ἐπ' ἱσας τελούμεν;
ἀλλ' οὐ τὰν Δίος ἀστραπὰν καὶ τὰν οὐρανίαν Θέμιν, δαρὸν οὔκ ἀπόνητοι.

ὁ χθονία βροτοῖσι φάμα, κατὰ μοι βόσασον οἰκτρᾶν ὅπα τοῖς ἐνερθ' Ἀτρείδας, ἀχόρευτα φέρουσι' ὑνείδη.

ἀντ. α'

ὁτι σφίν ἡδη τὰ μὲν ἐκ δόμων νοσεὶ δὴ,1 τὰ δὲ 1070 πρὸς τέκνων διπλῆ φύλοτης οὐκέτ' ἐξισοῦται φιλοτασίῳ διαί-

τα' πρόδοτος δὲ μόνα σαλεύει

1 Triclinius adds δή.
ELECTRA

My resolution was not born to-day.

CHRYSOthemis
Then I will go, for thou canst not be brought
To approve my words, nor I to approve thy ways.

ELECTRA
Go in then; I shall never follow thee,
E'en shouldst thou pray me: 'tis insane to urge
An idle suit.

CHRYSOthemis
Well, if thou art wise
In thine own eyes, so let it be; anon,
Sore stricken, thou wilt take my words to heart.

[Exit CHRYSOthemis.

CHORUS
Wise nature taught the birds of air
For those who reared them in the nest to care;
The parent bird is nourished by his brood,
And shall not we, as they,
The debt of nature pay,
Shall man not show like gratitude?
By Zeus who hurls the leven,
By Themis throned in heaven,
There comes a judgment day;
Not long shall punishment delay.
O voice that echoes to the world below,
Bear to the dead a wail of woe,
A coronach, a tale of shame
To Atreus' line proclaim.

Tell him his house is stricken sore,
Tell him his children now no more
In amity together dwell;
Dire strife the twain divides,
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

'Ηλέκτρα, τὸν ἂεὶ 1 πατρὸς
dειλαία στενάχουσ', ὅπως
ἀ πάνω ἀηδόν, 2
οὔτε τι τοῦ θανεῖν προμηθῆς τὸ τε μὴ βλέπειν
ἐτοίμα,
dιδύμον ἐλοῦσ' Ἐρινύν', τίς ἂν εὐπατρίς ὅδε 1080
βλάστοι;

οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀγαθῶν γὰρ 2
ζων κακῶς εὐκλειαν ἀίσχυναι θέλει
νόμυμος, ὦ παῖ παῖ.
ὡς καὶ σὺ πάγκλαυτον ἀἰώνα κοινῶν εἴλου,
τὸ μὴ καλὸν καθοπλίσασα, ὄυο φέρειν ἐν ἐνὶ
λόγῳ,
σοφά τ' ἄριστα τε παῖς κεκλίσθαι.
ζόφης μοι καθύπερθεν 3
χειρὶ καὶ πλούτῳ τεῶν ἐχθρῶν ὅσον
νῦν ὑπόχειρ ναίεις·
ἐπεί σ' ἑφηύρηκα μοῖρα μὲν οὐκ ἐν ἐσθλᾷ
βεβώσαν, ἃ δὲ μέγιστ' ἐβλαστε νόμιμα, τῶνδε
φερομέναν
ἀριστα τὰ Ζηνὸς 4 εὐσεβεία.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ἀρ', ὦ γυναῖκες, ὅρθα τ' εἰσηκούσαμεν
ὁρθῶς θ' ὀδοποροῦμεν ἐνθά χρήζομεν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τι δ' ἐξερευνᾶς καὶ τι βουληθεὶς πάρει;

1 The text is corrupt, and no plausible emendation has yet been suggested.
2 Hermann adds γὰρ metri gratia.
3 ὑπὸ χεὶρα MSS., Musgrave corr.
4 αἰτὶ MSS., Triclinius corr.
ELECTRA

Alone Electra bides,
   Alone she braves the surging swell.

Disconsolate doth she her sire bewail,
Like the forlornest nightingale;
Reckless of life, could she but quell
The cursed pair, those Furies fell.
Where shall ye find on earth
A maid to match her worth?

No generous soul were fain
By a base life his fair repute to stain.
Such baseness thou didst scorn,
Choosing, my child, to mourn with them that mourn.
Wise and of daughters best—
With double honours thou art doubly blest.

O may I see thee tower
As high above thy foes in wealth and power
As now they tower o'er thee;
For now thy state is piteous to see.
Yet brightly dost thou shine,
For fear of Zeus far-famed and love of laws divine.

Enter orestes.

ORESTES

Pray tell me, ladies, were we guided right,
And are we close upon our journey's end?

CHORUS

What seek'st thou, stranger, and with what intent?
ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Αὔμισθον ἐνθ' ὅκηκεν ἵστορῷ πάλαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὖ θ' ἵκανεις χω φράσας ἀξίμιοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὸς οὖν ἂν ὑμῶν τοῖς ἐσῳ φράσειεν ἂν ἥμων ποθεινήν κοινόποιν παροῦσιαν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡδ', εἰ τὸν ἀγχιστὸν γε κηρύσσειν χρεών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

'θ', ὃ γυναι, δήλωσον εἰσελθοῦσ' ὦτι Ἔφακῆς ματεύουσ' ἄνδρες Ἀὔμισθόν τινες,

ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

οἴμοι τάλαιν', οὐ δὴ ποθ' ἢς ἥκουσαμεν φήμης φέροντες ἐμφανὴ τεκμήρια;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ οἴδα τὴν σὴν κληδόν'. ἀλλὰ μοι γέρων ἐφεῖτ', Ὄρεστον Ἐικόφιος ἀγγείλαι πέρι.

ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

τὶ δ' ἔστιν, ὃ ξέν'; ὡς μ' ὑπέρχεται φόβος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φέροντες αὐτοῦ σμικρὰ λείψαν' ἐν βραχεὶ τεῦχει θανόντος, ὡς ὀρᾶς, κομίζομεν.

ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

οἱ' γὼ τάλαινα, τοῦτ' ἐκεῖν' ἕδη σαφὲς πρόχειρον ἄχθος, ὡς ἑοικε, δέρκομαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

eἴπερ τι κλαίεις τῶν Ὅρεστείων κακῶν, τὸδ' ἄγγος ἵσθι σῶμα τούκεινον στέγον.

ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

ὡ ξεῖνε, δὸς νυν, πρὸς θεῶν, εἴπερ τόδε κέκευθεν αὐτῶν τεῦχος, εἰς χείρας λαβεῖν,
ELECTRA

ORESTES
I seek and long have sought Aegisthus' home.

CHORUS
'Tis here; thy guide is nowise blameable.

ORESTES
Would one of you announce to those within
The auspicious advent of our company?

CHORUS
This maiden, as the next of kin, will do it.

ORESTES
Go, madam, say that visitors have come
And seek Aegisthus—certain Phocians.

ELECTRA
Ah woe is me! You come not to confirm
By ocular proof the rumours that we heard?

ORESTES
I've heard no "rumours." Aged Strophius
Charged me with tidings of Orestes.

ELECTRA
Ha!

What tidings, stranger? how I quake with dread!

ORESTES
Ashes within this narrow urn we bear,
All that remains of him, as thou mayst see.

ELECTRA
Ah me unhappy! in my very sight
Lies palpable the burden of my woes.

ORESTES
If for Orestes thou art weeping, know
This brazen urn contains the dust of him.

ELECTRA
O if it hold his ashes, let me, friend,
O let me, let me take it in my hands.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

όπως ἐμαυτὴν καὶ γένος τὸ πᾶν ὅμοι
ξὺν τῇ δὲ κλαύσω κἀποδύρωμαι σποδῷ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δόθ', ἦτις ἑστι, προσφέροντες· οὐ γὰρ ὡς
ἐν δυσμενέα γ' οὕς ἐπαιτεῖται τάδε,
ἀλλ' ἢ φίλων τις ἢ πρὸς αἵματος φύσιν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁ φιλτάτον μυνημεῖον ἀνθρώπων ἔμοι
ψυχῆς Ὀρέστου λοιπόν, ὡς σ' ἀπ' ἐλπίδων
οὐχ ὄντερ ἐξέπεμπτον εἰσεδεξάμην.
νῦν μὲν γὰρ οἵδεν ὀντα βαστάζω χερῶν,
δόμων δὲ σ', ὁ παῖ, λαμπρὸν ἐξέπεμψ' ἐγώ.
ὡς ὀφελον πάροιθεν ἐκλιπτεῖν βίον,
πρὶν ἐς ξένην σε γαίαν ἐκπέμψαι χερῶν
κλέψασα ταῦντε κανασώσασθαι φόνου,
ὁπως θανῶν ἐκείσο τῇ τόθ' ἡμέρα,
τύμβου πατρὸφοι κοινὸν εἰληχῶς μέρος.
νῦν δ' ἐκτὸς οἴκων κατ' ὑής ἄλλης φυγᾶς
κακῶς ἀπόλολον, σῆς κασυνήτης δίχα,
κούτ' ἐν φίλαισι χερῶν ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ
λουτρώσας σ' ἐκόσμησ' οὔτε παμφλέκτον πυρὸς
ἀνειλόμην, ὡς εἰκός, ἄθλιον βάρος,
ἀλλ' ἐν ἐξαισι χερῶν κηθευθεῖς τάλας
σμικρός προσήκεις ὄγκος ἐν σμικρῷ κύτει.
οἶμοι τάλαινα τῆς ἐμῆς πάλαι τροφῆς
ἀνωφελήτου, τὴν ἐγὼ θάμ' ἀμφι σοι
πόνῳ γλυκεῖ παρέσχον· οὔτε γὰρ ποτὲ
μητρὸς σὺ γ' ἱσθα μάλλον ἢ κάμοι φίλος,
οὔθ' οἱ κατ' οἴκων ἰσαν, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τροφὸς,
ἐγὼ δ' ἀδελφὴ σοι προσημήσωμην ἄεὶ.
νῦν δ' ἐκλέξοιτε ταῦτ' ἐν ἡμέρα μιᾶ.
ELECTRA

Not for this dust alone, but for myself
And all my house withal, I'll weep and wail.

ORESTES
Bring it and give it her, whoe'er she be;
For not as an ill-wisher, but as friend,
Or haply near of kin, she asks the boon.

ELECTRA
Last relics of the man I most did love,
Orestes! high in hope I sent thee forth;
How hast thou dashed all hope in thy return!
Radiant as day thou speddest forth, and now
I hold a dusty nothing in my hands.
Would I had died before I rescued thee
From death and sent thee to a foreign land!
Then hadst thou fallen together with thy sire
And lain beside him in the ancestral tomb:
Now in a strange land, exiled, far from home,
Far from thy sister thou hast died, ah me!
How miserably! I was not by to lave
And deck with loving hands thy corse, and snatch
Thy charred bones from out the flaming pyre.
Alas! by foreign hands these rites were paid,
And now thou comest back to me, of dust
A little burden in this little urn.
O for the nursing and the toil, no toil,
I spent on thee an infant, all in vain!
For thou wast ne'er thy mother's babe, but mine;
Thou hadst no nurse in all the house but me,
I was thy sister, none so called but me.
But now all this hath vanished in a day,
Θανόντι σού σοι· πάντα γὰρ συναρπάσας θύελλ’ ὅπως βέβηκας. οἱ λέγεται πατήρ·
tέθυναι ἐγὼ σοι· φροῦδος αὐτὸς εἰ θανὼν·
γελῶσι δ’ ἐχθροί· μαίνεται δ’ ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς
μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ, ἦς ἐμοὶ σὺ πολλάκις
φήμας λάθρα προὐπεμπμες ὡς φανοῦμενον
tιμωρῶς αὐτὸς. ἀλλὰ ταῦθ’ ὁ δυστυχῖς
daίμων ὁ σὸς τε κάμος ἔξαφείλετο,
ós σ’ ὀδέ μοι προὐπεμψεν ἀντὶ φιλτάτης
μορφῆς σποδὸν τε καὶ σκιὰν ἀνωφελῆ.
οἴμοι μοι.

ὁ δέμας οἰκτρόν. φεῦ φεῦ.
ὁ δεινοτάτας, οἴμοι μοι,
τεμφθεῖς κελεύθους, φίλταθ’, ὡς μ’ ἀπώλεσας
ἀπώλεσας δῆτ’, ὁ κασιγνητον κάρα.

τοιγὰρ σὺ δέξαι μ’ ἐς τὸ σὸν τόδε στέγος,
τὴν μηδὲν εἰς τὸ μηδέν, ὡς σὺν σοὶ κάτω
ναῦτ τὸ λοιπὸν· καὶ γὰρ ἡμίκ’ ἡσθ’ ἄνω,
ξύν σοι μετείχον τῶν ἱσων, καὶ νῦν ποθῶ
τὸν σὸν θανοῦσα μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι τάφοι.
τοὺς γὰρ θανόντας οὐχ ὀρὼ λυπουμένους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θυντοῦ πέφυκας πατρός, Ἡλέκτρα, φρονεῖ,
θυντὸς δ’ ὁ Ὅρεστῆς. ὥστε μὴ λίαν στένε.
πᾶσιν γὰρ ἡμῖν τοῦτ’ ὀφείλεται παθεῖν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ φεῦ. τί λέξω; ποῖ λόγον ἀμηχανῶν
ἐλθω; κρατεῖν γὰρ οὐκέτι γλώσσης σθένω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ’ ἐσχίς ἄλγος; πρὸς τί τοῦτ’ εἰπὼν κυρεῖς;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Ἡ σὸν τὸ κλεινὸν εἶδος Ἡλέκτρας τόδε;
ELECTRA

Dead with thy death, a whirlwind that passed by,
And left all desolate; thy father’s gone,
And I am dead in thee, and thou art lost;
And our foes laugh. That mother, mother none,
Whose crimes, as oft thou gav’st me secret word,
Thou wouldst thyself full speedily avenge,
Is mad for joy. But now malignant fate,
Thy fate and mine, hath blasted all and sent me,
Instead of that dear form I loved so well,
Cold ashes and an unavailing shade.
   Ah me!  Ah me!
   O piteous corse!
   Ah woe is me!

O woeful coming! I am all undone,
Undone by thee, beloved brother mine!
Take me, O take me to thy last lone home,
A shadow to a shade, that I may dwell
With thee for ever in the underworld;
For here on earth we shared alike, and now
I fain would die to share with thee thy tomb;
For with the dead there is no mourning, none.

CHORUS

Child of a mortal sire, Electra, think,
Orestes too was mortal; calm thy grief.
Death is a debt that all of us must pay.

ORESTES

Ah me! what shall I say where all words fail?
And yet I can no longer curb my tongue.

ELECTRA

What sudden trouble made thee speak like this?

ORESTES

Is this the famed Electra I behold?
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τόδ' ἐστ' ἐκεῖνο, καὶ μάλ' ἀδλίως ἔχον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
οὗμοι ταλαίνης ἀρα τῆς ἔκνευσε συμφορᾶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
οὐ δὴ ποτ' ὃ ξέν', αμφ' ἐμοὶ στένεις τάδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ὡ σῶμ' ἀτίμως κάθεως ἐφθαρμένον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
οὗτοι ποτ' ἄλλην ἤ 'με δυσφημεῖς, ξένε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
φεῦ τῆς ἀνύμφου δυσμόρου τε σῆς τροφῆς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
τί δὴ ποτ', ὃ ξέν', ὃδ' ἐπισκοπῶν στένεις;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ὡς σὺκ ἄρ' ήδη τῶν ἐμῶν οὔδεν κακῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἐν τῷ διέγνως τούτῳ τῶν εἰρημένων;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ὁρῶν σε πολλοῖς ἐμπρέπουσαν ἀλγεσίω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
καὶ μὴν ὀρᾶς γε παύρα τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
καὶ πῶς γένοιτ' ἄν τῶν ἐτ' ἐχθίῳ βλέπειν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
οὕθονεκ' εἰμὶ τοῖς φονεύσι σύντροφος

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
τοῖς τού; πόθεν τούτ' ἐξεσήμηνας κακῶν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
τοῖς πατρὸς; εἶτα τοῦσδε δουλεύω βία.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
τίς γάρ σ' ἀνάγκῃ τῇ δε προτρέπει βροτῶν;

218
ELECTRA

'ELECTRA
'Tis she, and very wretched is her state.

ORESTES
O for the heavy change! Alas, alas!

ELECTRA
Surely thy pity, sir, is not for me.

ORESTES
O beauty marred by foul and impious spite!

ELECTRA
Yea, sir, this wreck of womanhood am I.

ORESTES
Alas, how sad a life of singleness!

ELECTRA
Why gaze thus on me, stranger, and lament?

ORESTES
Of my own ills how little then I knew!

ELECTRA
Was this revealed by any word of mine?

ORESTES
By seeing thee conspicuous in thy woes.

ELECTRA
And yet my looks reveal but half my woes.

ORESTES
Could there be woes more piteous to behold?

ELECTRA
Yea, to be housemate with the murderers—

ORESTES
Whose murderers? at what villany dost hint?

ELECTRA
My father's; and their slave am I perforce.

ORESTES
Who is it puts upon thee this constraint?
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μήτηρ καλεῖται, μητρὶ δ' οὐδὲν ἐξισοῖ.
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
tί δρῶσα; πότερα χερσὶν ἡ λύμη βίου;
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λύμαισι καὶ πᾶσιν κακοῖς.
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
οὐδ' οὔπαρήξων οὐδ' ὁ κολύσων πάρα;
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
οὐ δὴθ'. ὅς ἦν γάρ μοι σὺ προὔθηκας σποδόν.
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ὡς σύσποτμ', ὡς ὅρων σ' ἐποικτίρω πάλαι.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
μόνοις βροτῶν νῦν ἴσθ' ἐποικτίρας ποτέ.
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
μόνοις γὰρ ἥκω τοῖς ἵσοις ἀλγῶν κακοῖς.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
οὐ δὴ ποθ' ἡμῖν ξυγγενῆς ἢκεις ποθέν;
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ἐγὼ φράσαιμ' ἀν, εἰ τὸ τῶνδ' εὐνοῦν πάρα.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἀλλ' ἐστὶν εὐνοῦν, ὡστε πρὸς πιστὰς ἐρεῖς.
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
μέθες τὸδ' ἄγγος νῦν, ὡπως τὸ πᾶν μάθης.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
μὴ δὴτα πρὸς θεῶν τοῦτό μ' ἐργάσῃ, ξένε.
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
πείθον λέγοντι κοῦχ ἀμαρτήσει ποτέ.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
μὴ, πρὸς γενείου, μὴ ἰξέλῃ τὰ φίλτατα.
ELECTRA

My mother, not a mother save in name.

ORESTES
By blows or petty tyrannies or how?

ELECTRA
By blows and tyrannies of every kind.

ORESTES
And is there none to help or stay her hand?

ELECTRA
None; there was one, the man whose dust I hold.

ORESTES
Poor maid! my pity's stirred at sight of thee.

ELECTRA
Thou art the first who ever pitied me.

ORESTES
I am the first to feel a common woe.

ELECTRA
What, canst thou be some kinsman from afar?

ORESTES
If these are friends who hear us, I would answer.

ELECTRA
Yes, they are friends; thou needst not fear to speak.

ORESTES
Give back this urn, and then I'll tell thee all.

ELECTRA
Ask not so hard a thing, good sir, I pray.

ORESTES
Do as I bid thee; thou shalt not repent it.

ELECTRA
O, I adjure thee, rob me not of that
The most I prize on earth.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔ φημὶ ἐάσειν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄ τάλαιν' ἔγῳ σέθεν,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὖφημα φώνει· πρὸς δίκης ἤπρ σοῦ στένεις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς τὸν θανόντ' ἀδελφὸν σοῦ δικῇ στένω;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔ σοι προσήκει τήνδε προσφώνειν φάτιν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὕτως ἄτιμός εἰμι τοῦ τεθνηκότους;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄτιμος οὐδενὸς σὺ· τοῦτο δ' οὐχί σόν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εἴπερ γ' Ὀρέστου σῶμα βαστάζω τόδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐκ Ὀρέστου, πλὴν λόγῳ γ' ἡσκημένου.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ποῦ δ' ἐστ' ἐκεῖνον τοῦ ταλαιπώρου τάφος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἐστὶ· τοῦ γὰρ ζῶντος οὐκ ἐστὶν τάφος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς εἶπας, ὦ παι;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ψευδὸς οὐδὲν ὅν λέγω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἡ ξῆ γὰρ ἄνηρ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἴπερ ἐμψυχός γ' ἐγώ.
ELECTRA

ORESTES
It may not be.

ELECTRA
Ah! woe for thee, Orestes, woe is me,
If I am not to give thee burial.

ORESTES
Guard well thy lips; thou hast no right to mourn.

ELECTRA
No right to mourn a brother who is dead!

ORESTES
To speak of him in this wise is not meet.

ELECTRA
What, am I so dishonoured of the dead?

ORESTES
Of none dishonoured: this is not thy part.

ELECTRA
Not if Orestes' ashes here I hold?

ORESTES
They are not his, though feigned to pass for his.

ELECTRA
Where then is my unhappy brother's grave?

ORESTES
There is no grave; we bury not the quick.

ELECTRA
What sayst thou, boy?

ORESTES
Nothing that is not true.

ELECTRA
He lives?

ORESTES
As surely as I am alive.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

η γὰρ σὺ κεῖνος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τήνδε προσβλέψασά μου
σφαγίδα πατρός ἐκμαθ' εἰ σαφῆ λέγω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὡ φίλτατον φῶς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φίλτατον, συμμαρτυρῶ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὡ φθέγμ', ἀφίκουν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μηκέτ' ἀλλοθεν πῦθη,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐχω σε χερσίν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡς τὰ λοίπ' ἐχους ἀει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὡ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ὡς πολιτίδες,

ὀρᾶτ ὁ Ορέστην τόνδε, μηχαναίσι μὲν
θανόντα, νῦν δὲ μηχαναῖς σεσωσμένον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὀρὼμεν, ὡ παῖ, κἀτι συμφοραίσι μοι

γεγηθὸς ἔρπει δάκρυνον ὀμμάτων ἀπο.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰὼ γοναί,

γοναί σωμάτων ἐμοὶ φίλτατων,

ἐμόλετ' ἀρτίως,

ἐφηύρετ', ἥλθετ', εἴδεθ' οὖς ἐχρηίζετε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πάρεσμεν· ἀλλὰ σὺν ἐχονσα πρόσμενε.
ELECTRA

What, art thou he?

ORESTES
Look at this signet ring,
My father's; let it witness if I lie.

ELECTRA

O happy day!

ORESTES
O, happy, happy day!

ELECTRA

Thy voice I greet!

ORESTES
My voice gives greeting back.

ELECTRA

My arms embrace thee!

ORESTES
May they clasp me aye!

ELECTRA

My countrywomen, dearest friends, behold
Orestes who in feigning died, and so
By feigning is alive again and safe.

CHORUS

We see him, daughter, and this glad surprise
Makes our eyes overflow with happy tears.

ELECTRA

Son of my best loved sire,
Now hast thou come, art here to find, to see
Thy heart's desire.

ORESTES
E'en so; but best keep silence for a while.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ’ ἐστιν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

συγάν ἀμεινού, μη τις ἐνδοθεν κλύη.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ’ οὐ μᾶ τὴν ἀδμητον αἰέν Ἀρτεμιν, τόδε μὲν οὐ ποτ’ ἄξιωσω τρέσαι, περισσὸν ἄχθος ἐνδον γυναικῶν ὑν αἰεί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

όρα γε μὲν δὴ κἀν γυναιξίν ὡς Ἀρης ἐνεστιν’ εῦ δ’ ἑξοισθὰ πειραθεισά ποι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁτοτοτοτοῖ τοτοῖ, ἀνέφελον ἐνέβαλες οὐ ποτε καταλύσιμον, οὐδὲ ποτε λησόμενον ἀμέτερον οἶον ἑφυ κακόν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐξοιδά, παί, ταῦτ’ ἀλλ’ ὅταν παρουσία φράζῃ, τότ’ ἐργον τῶνδε μεμνησθαι χρεών.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁ πᾶς ἐμοί, ἀντ.

ὁ πᾶς ἄν πρέποι παρῶν ἐννέπειν τάδε δίκα χρόνος·
μόλις γάρ ἐσχον νῦν ἐλεύθερον στόμα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐξύμφημι κάγων· τοιγαροῦν σφίζου τόδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δρῶσα;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ μὴ στὶ καιρὸς μη μακρὰν βούλου λέγειν.

1 ἀλλ’ οὐ τὰν Ἀρτεμιν τὰν αἰέν ἀδμηταν MSS., Fröhlich corr.
ELECTRA

What need for silence?

ORESTES

'Twere wise, lest someone from the house should hear.

ELECTRA

Nay, by Queen Artemis the virgin maid,
Of women-folk I ne'er will be afraid,
Those stay-at-homes, mere cumberers of the ground.

ORESTES

Yet note that in the breasts of women dwells
The War-God too, as thou methinks hast found.

Ah me, ah me!
Thou wak'st a memory
Inveterate, ineffaceable,
An ache time cannot quell.

ORESTES

I know it too; but when the hour shall strike
Then it behoves us to recall those deeds.

ELECTRA

All time, each passing hour
Henceforward I were fain
To tell my griefs, my pain,
For late and hardly have I won free speech.

ORESTES

'Tis so; then forfeit not this liberty.

How forfeit it?

ORESTES

By speaking out of season overmuch.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίς οὖν ἂν ἡξίαν γε σοῦ πεφημότοσ
metaβάλοιτ' ἂν ὡδε σιγὰν λόγων;
ἐπεί σε νῦν ἀφράστωσ
ἀέλπτως τ' ἐσείδουν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τότ' εἶδες, εὐτε ᾧ εἶπώτρυναν μολεῖν
ἀλλ᾽ ὁ ἀργόν γενήθηκαν τοιαία

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐφρασας ὑπερτέραν
τὰς πάρον ἔτι χάριτος, εἱ σε θεὸς ἐπόρισεν
ἀμέτερα πρὸς μέλαθρα: δαιμόνιον
αὐτὸ τίθημ᾽ ἔγω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὰ μὲν σ' ὀκνῶ χαίρονσαν εἰργαθεῖν, τὰ δὲ
δέδοικα λίαν ἠδονῆ νικωμένην.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰὸν χρόνῳ μακρῷ φιλτάταν ὄδον.
ἐπάξιώσας ὡδὲ μοι φαινῇναι,
μὴ τί με, πολύπονον ὀδὸ ἱδών

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί μὴ ποίσω;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μὴ μ᾽ ἀποστερῆσῃ
tῶν σῶν προσώπων ἄδοναν μεθέσθαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἡ κάρτα κἀν ἄλλοισι θυμοίμην ἰδών.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ξυναίνεις;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί μὴν οὐ;

1 MSS. οὐτε, Jebb. corr. MSS. ὀτρυνα, Reiske corr.
But who would barter speech for silence now,  
Who could be dumb,  
Now that beyond all thought and hope  
I've seen thee come?

That sight was then vouchsafed thee when the gods  
First monished me to turn my steps towards home.

If a god guided thee  
To seek our halls, this boon  
Surpasses all before, I see  
The hand of heaven.

To check thy gladness I am loth, and yet  
This ecstasy of joy—it makes me fear.

O after many a weary year  
Restored to glad my eyes,  
Seeing my utter misery, forbear—

What is thy prayer?

Forbear to rob me of the light,  
The presence of thy face.

If any dared essay it, I were wrath.

Dost thou consent?  
How could I otherwise?
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ω φίλαι, ἐκλυον ἂν ἐγὼ οὖν ᾗς ἡλπισ' αὐδάν, οὖν ἂν ἐσχον ὀρμάν
ἀναυδον οὖδὲ σὺν βοᾷ κλύουσα, τάλαινα. νῦν δ' ἐχω σε' προυφάνης δὲ
φιλτάταν ἔχων πρόσοψιν, ἂς ἐγὼ οὖν ἂν ἐν κακοίς λαθοίμαν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὰ μὲν περισσεύοντα τῶν λόγων ἄφες, καὶ μήτε μήτηρ ὡς κακὴ δίδασκε με,
μήθ' ὡς πατριών κτήσιν Αἰγισθος δόμων ἀντλεῖ, τὰ δ' ἐκχεῖ, τὰ δὲ διασπείρει μάτην
χρόνου γὰρ ἂν σοι καιρὸν ἐξείργοι λόγος.
ἀ δ' ἀρμόσει μοι τῶ παρόντι νῦν χρόνῳ
σήμαιν', ὅποιοι φανέντες ἢ κεκρυμμένοι
γελώντας ἐχθροὺς παύσομεν τῇ νῦν ὀδῷ.
οὕτω δ' ὅπως μήτηρ σε μὴ πυγμῶσεται
phiâdrω προσώπῳ νῦν ἐπελθόντουι δόμους:
ἀλλ' ὄς ἐπ' ἄτη τῇ μάτην λελεγμένη
στεναξ'. ὅταν γὰρ εὐτυχήσώμεν, τότε
χαίρειν παρέσται καὶ γελάν ἐλευθέρως.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ', ὃ κασίγνηθ', ὅδ' ὅπως καὶ σοι φίλον
καὶ τοῦμον ἔσται τῇδ'. ἐπεὶ τάς ἠδονὰς
πρὸς σοῦ λαβοῦσα κούκ ἐμὰς ἐκτησάμην,
κοῦδ' ἂν σε λυπῆσασα δεξαίμην βραχὺ
ἀὐτὴ μέγ' εὐρείν κέρδος: οὐ γὰρ ἂν καλῶς
ὐπηρετοῖν τῷ παρόντι δαίμονι.
ἀλλ' οἶσθα μὲν τὰνθένδε, πῶς γὰρ οὐ; κλύων
ὁθούνεκ' Αἰγισθος μὲν οὐ κατὰ στέγασ,
μήτηρ δ' ἐν οἴκοις ἦν σὺ μὴ δείσης ποθ' ὡς

1 Arndt adds οὖδ' ἂν. Blomfield reads ὀρμάν for ὀργάν of MSS.
ELECTRA

ELECTRA (to CHORUS)
Friends, a voice is in my ear,
That I never hoped to hear.
At the glad sound how could I
Be mute nor raise a joyous cry?
But I have thee, and the light
Of thy countenance so bright
Not e’en sorrow can eclipse,
Or still the music of those lips.

ORESTES
Spare me all superfluity of words—
How vile our mother, how Aegisthus drains
By waste and luxury our father’s house;
The time admits not such prolixity.
But tell me rather what will best subserve
Our present need—where we must show ourselves,
Or lie in wait, and either way confound
The mockery and triumph of our foes.
And see that when we twain are gone within
Our mother read not in thy radiant looks
Our secret; weep as overwhelmed with grief
At our feigned story; when the victory’s won
We shall have time and liberty to laugh.

ELECTRA
Yea, as it pleaseth thee it pleases me,
Brother, for all my pleasure is thy gift,
Not mine; nor would I purchase for myself
The greatest boon that cost thee the least pang:
So should I cross the providence that guides us.
How it stands with us, doubtless thou hast heard.
Aegisthus, as thou knowest, is away;
Only our mother keeps the house, and fear not
γέλωτι τούμνου φαιδρῶν ὑψεται κάρα.
μῖσος τε γὰρ παλαιὸν ἐντέτηκε μοι,
κατεὶ σ’ ἐσείδουν, οὖ ποτ’ ἐκλήξω χαρᾶ
dακρυρροοῦσα· πῶς γὰρ ἂν λήξαιμ’ ἐγώ,
ητις μιᾶ σε τῇδ’ ὀδῷ θανόντα τε
καὶ ξώντ’ ἐσείδουν; εἰργασάει δὲ μ’ ἄσκοπα
ὡστ’ εἰ πατήρ μοι ξῶν ἱκουτο, μηκέτ’ ἂν
tέρας νομίζειν αὐτό, πιστεύειν δ’ ὀρᾶν.
ὁτ’ οὖν τοιαύτην ἡμῖν ἐξήκεις ὄδουν,
ἀρχ’ αὐτὸς ὡς σοι θυμός· ὡς ἐγὼ μόνῃ
οὐκ ἂν δυσών ἥμαρτον· ἢ γὰρ ἂν καλῶς
ἐσωσ’ ἐμαυτήν ἢ καλῶς ἀπωλόμην.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
συγάν ἐπῆνεσ’ ὡς ἐπ’ ἔξοδῷ κλῦω
tῶν ἐνδοθεν χωροῦντος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
εἰσιτ’, ὁ ξένωι,
ἀλλως τε καὶ φέροντες οἵ’ ἂν οὔτε τις
dόμων ἀπώσαιτ’ οὔτ’ ἂν ἡθείη λαβὼν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΟΓΟΣ
 dóla πλεῖστα μῶροι καὶ φρενῶν τητῶμενοι,
πότερα παρ’ οὔδέν τοῦ βίου κήδεσθ’ ἐτι
ἡ νοῦς ἐνεστὶν οὕτις ὑμῖν ἐγγενῆς,
ὅτ’ οὐ παρ’ αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ’ ἐν αὐτοίσιν κακοῖς
tοῖσιν μεγίστοις οὕτε οὐ γυμνώσκετε;
ἀλλ’ ἐi σταθμοίς τοῖσι δὴ ἡ’ κύροιν ἐγὼ
tάλαν φυλάσσων, ἢν ἂν ὑμῖν ἐν δόμοις
τὰ δρόμευ’ ὑμῶν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ σῶματα·
vūν δ’ εὐλάβειαν τῶνδε προούθεμην ἐγώ.
καὶ νῦν ἀπαλλαχθέντε τῶν μακρῶν λόγων
καὶ τῆς ἀπλήστου τῆςδε σὺν χαρᾶ βοής.
That she will see my face lit up with smiles;  
My hatred of her is too deep engrained.  
Moreover, since thy coming I have wept,  
Wept for pure joy and still must weep to see  
The dead alive, on one day dead and living.  
It works me strangely; if my sire appeared  
In bodily presence, I should now believe it  
No mocking phantom but his living self.  
Thus far no common fate hath guided thee;  
So lead me as thou wilt, for left alone  
I had myself achieved of two things one,  
A noble living or a noble death.  
Orestes  
Hush, hush! I hear a stir within the house  
As if one issued forth.  
Electra (to Orestes and Pylades)  
Pass in, good sirs,  
Ye are sure of welcome; they within will not  
Reject your gift, though bitter it may prove.  
Enter aged servant.  
Aged servant  
Fools! madmen! are ye weary of your lives,  
Or are your natural wits too dull to see  
That ye are standing, not upon the brink,  
But in the midst of mortal jeopardy?  
Nay, had I not kept watch this weary while,  
Here at the door, your plot had slipped inside  
Ere ye yourselves had entered. As it is,  
My watchfulness has fended this mishap.  
Now that your wordy eloquence has an end,  
And your insatiate cries of joy, go in.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

eἰσον παρέλθεθ' ὡς τὸ μὲν μέλλειν κακὸν ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἐστ', ἀπηλλάχθαι δ' ἀκμῆ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἔχει τὰντεύθεν εἰσίνωτι μοι;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καλῶς· ὑπάρχει γὰρ σε μὴ γνώναι τινα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἡγγείλας, ὡς ἔσικεν, ὡς τεθνηκότα.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

eἰς τῶν ἐν"Αἰδὸν μάνθαν' ἐνθάδ' ὄν ἀνήρ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

χαίρουσιν οὖν τούτοισιν; ἡ τίνες λόγοι;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τελομένων εἶποιμ' ἀν· ὡς δὲ νῦν ἔχειν, καλῶς τὰ κεῖνων πάντα, καὶ τὰ μὴ καλῶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

tίς οὕτως ἐστ', ἀδελφέ; πρὸς θεῶν φράσον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐχὶ ξυνίης;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐδὲ γ' ἐς θυμὸν φέρω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ οἶς θ' ὅτω μ' ἐδωκας εἰς χέρας ποτέ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ποίω; τί φωνεῖς;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ τὸ Φωκέων πέδουν

ὑπεξεπέμφθην σῇ προμηθία χεροῖν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἡ κεῖνος οὕτως, ὃν ποτ' ἐκ πολλῶν ἐγὼ μόνον προσηύρον πιστῶν ἐν πατρὸς φόνῳ;
ELECTRA

'Tis ill delaying in such case, and well 
To make an end.

ORESTES
How shall I fare within?

AGED SERVANT
Right well; to start with, thou art known to none.

ORESTES
Thou hast reported, I presume, my death.

AGED SERVANT
They'll speak of thee as though thou wert a shade.

ORESTES
And are they glad thereat, or what say they?

AGED SERVANT
I'll tell thee when the time is ripe: meanwhile 
Whate'er they do, however ill, is well.

ELECTRA
I pray thee, brother, tell me who is this?

ORESTES
Dost thou not see?

ELECTRA
I know not, nor can guess.

ORESTES
Not know the man to whom thou gav'st me once?

ELECTRA
What man? how mean'st thou?

ORESTES
He that stole me hence,
Through thy forethought, and safe to Phocis bore.

ELECTRA
Can this be he who, when our sire was slain,
Faithful among the many false I found?
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οδ' ἐστὶ· μὴ μ' ἐλεγχε πλείοσιν λόγοις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ω φίλτατον φῶς, ὃ μόνος σωτὴρ δόμων
Ἀγαμέμνονος, πῶς ἤλθες; ἦ σὺ κεῖνος εἰ,
ὡς τόνδε καὶ ἐσωσάς ἐκ πολλῶν πόνων;
ω φίλταται μὲν χεῖρες, ἦδιστον δ' ἔχων
ποδῶν ὑπηρέτημα, πῶς οὕτω πάλαι
ξυνών μ' ἔληθες οὐδ' ἐφαίνες, ἀλλά με
λόγοις ἀπώλλυς, ἔργ' ἔχων ἦδιστ' ἐμοί;
χαῖρ', ὃ πάτερ· πατέρα γὰρ εἰσοράν δοκῶ·
χαῖρ'. ἴσθι δ' ὧς μάλιστά σ' ἀνθρώπων ἐγὼ
ἡχθηρα καφίλης' ἐν ἡμέρα μιᾷ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἀρκεῖν δοκεῖ μοι· τοὺς γὰρ ἐν μέσῳ λόγους
πολλαὶ κυκλοῦνται νύκτες ἡμέραι τ' ἵσαι,
ἀλ ταυτά σοι δείξουσιν, Ἡλέκτρα, σαφῆ.
σφῶν δ' ἐννέπτω γε τοῖν παρεστῶτοιν ὅτι
νῦν καιρὸς ἐρδείν· νῦν Κλυταιμήστρα μόνη,
νῦν οὕτως ἄνθρωπον ἐνδοῦ· εἰ δ' ἐφεξετον,
φροντίζεθ' ὃς τούτοις τε καὶ σοφωτέρους
ἀλλοισι τούτων πλείοσιν μαχούμενοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν μακρῶν ἔθ' ἦμιν οὐδὲν ἂν λόγων,
Πυλάδη, τὸδ' εἶη τοῦργον, ἀλλ' ὅσον τάχος
χωρεῖν ἔσω, πατρφα προσκύσανθ' ἔδη
θεῶν, ὅσοιπερ πρόπτυλα ναίουσιν τάδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀναξ Ἀπολλοῦ, ἴλεως αὐτοῖν κλύε

236
ORESTES
'Tis he; let that suffice thee; ask no more.

ELECTRA
O happy day! O sole deliverer
Of Agamemnon's house, how cam'st thou hither?
Art thou indeed our saviour who redeemed
From endless woes my brother and myself?
O hands beloved, O messenger whose feet
Were bringers of glad tidings, how so long
Couldst thou be with me and remain unknown,
Stay me with feigned fables and conceal
The truth that gave me life? Hail, father, hail!
For 'tis a father whom I seem to see.
Verily no man in the self-same day
Was hated so and so much loved as thou.

AGED SERVANT
Enough methinks; the tale 'twixt then and now—
Many revolving nights and days as many
Shall serve, Electra, to unfold it all.

(To ORESTES and PYLADES)
Why stand ye here! 'tis time for you to act,
Now Clytemnestra is alone; no man
Is now within; but, if ye stay your hand,
Not only with her house-carls will ye fight
But with a troop more numerous and more skilled.

ORESTES
Our business, Pylades, would seem to crave
No longer parley; let us instantly
Enter, but ere we enter first adore
The gods who keep the threshold of the house.

[ORESTES and PYLADES enter the palace.

ELECTRA
O King Apollo! lend a gracious ear
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐμοῦ τε πρὸς τούτοις, ἡ σε πολλὰ δὴ ἀφ᾽ ὧν ἔχομι λιπαρεῖ προύστην χερί.
νῦν δ', ὦ Δύκει' Ἀπόλλον, ἐξ οἴων ἐχω αἰτῶ, προπίτην, λίσσομαι, γενοῦ πρόφρον
ήμιν ἄρωγὸς τῶν ἐπὶ τῶν βουλευμάτων, καὶ δείξων ἀνθρώποις τάπτημια
tῆς δυσσεβείας οἷα δωροῦνται θεοί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

'ἰδεθ ὁποι προνέμεται
τὸ δυσέριστον αἴμα φυσῶν Ἀρης.
βεβαίων ἄρτι δωμάτων ὑπόστειγοι
μετάδρομοι κακῶν πανουργημάτων ἀφυκτοί κύνες,
ἀστ' οὐ μακρὰν ἐτ' ἀμμενεῖ
τοῦμὸν φρενῶν ὄνειρον αἰωρούμενον.

παράγεται γὰρ ἐνέρων
δολιότοις ἀρωγὸς εἰςω στέγας;
ἀρχαίοπλουτα πατρὸς εἰς ἐδώλια,
νεακόννητον αἶμα χειρῶν ἔχων· ὁ Μαιας δὲ παῖς
Ερμῆς σφ' ἀγεὶ δῶλον σκότῳ
κρύψας πρὸς αὐτὸ τέρμα κοῦκέτ' ἀμμένει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ἀνδρεῖς αὐτίκα
τελοῦσι τούργοιν· ἀλλὰ σίγα πρόσμενε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς δή; τί νῦν πράσσουσιν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἡ μὲν ἐς τάφον

λέβητα κοσμεῖ, τῷ δ' ἐφέστατον πέλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ δ' ἕκτὸς ἧξας πρὸς τί;
ELECTRA

To them and me, to me too who so oft
Laid on thy shrine with humble hands my best.
And now with vows (I cannot offer more),
Apollo, Lord Lycean, I beseech,
Implore, adjure thee, prosper this our work,
Defend the right and show to godless men
How the gods vindicate impiety.

CHORUS

Breathing out blood and vengeance, lo! (Str.)
Stalks Ares, sure though slow.
E'en now the hounds are on the trail;
Within, the sinners at their coming quail.
A little while and death shall realise
The vision that now floats before mine eyes.

For now within the house is led (Ant.)
By stealth the champion of the dead;
He treads once more the ancestral hall of kings,
And death new-whetted in his hands he brings.
Great Maia's son conducts him on his way
And shrouds his guile and brooks not more delay.

ELECTRA

O dearest women, even as I speak (Str.)
The men are at their work; but not a word.

CHORUS

What work? what are they at?

ELECTRA

E'en now she decks
The urn for burial and the pair stand by.

CHORUS

Why spedst thou forth?
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
φρουρήσουσ' ὅπως
Ἀγισθος ἡμᾶς μὴ λάθη μολὼν ἔσω.
ΚΛΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
αἰαὶ. ἰδὼ στέγαι
φίλων ἐρήμοι, τῶν δ' ἀπολλύντων πλέαι.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
βοᾷ τις ἐνδον· οὐκ ἄκουετ', ὡ φίλαι;
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἡκουσ' ἀνήκουστα δύστανος, ὥστε φρίξαι.
ΚΛΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
οἴμοι τάλαιν'. Ἀγισθε, ποῦ ποτ' ὄν κυρεῖς;
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἰδοὺ μάλ' αὖ θροεῖ τις.
ΚΛΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
ὡ τέκνων τέκνων,
οὔκτιρε την τεκούσαν.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
 ullam' οὐκ ἐκ σέθεν
φικτίρεθ' οὐτος οὐδ' ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὡ πόλις, ὡ γενεὰ τάλαινα, νῦν σοι ἡ
μοῖρα καθαμερία φθίνει φθίνει.
ΚΛΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
ὡμοὶ πέπληγμαι.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
παῖσον, εἰ σθένεις, διπλήν.
ΚΛΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ
ὡμοὶ μάλ' αὖθισ.

1 νῦν σε MSS., corr. R. Whitelaw.
ELECTRA

ELECTRA
To keep a watch for fear
Aegisthus should forestall us unawares.

CLYTEMNESTRA (within)
Woe! woe! O woeful house,
Of friends forsaken, full of murderers!

ELECTRA
Listen' a cry within—hear ye not, friends?

CHORUS
I heard and shuddered—oh, an awesome cry.

CLYTEMNESTRA
Ah woe is me!  Aegisthus, where art thou?

ELECTRA
Hark; once again a wail.

CLYTEMNESTRA
O son, my son,
Have pity on thy mother!

ELECTRA
Thou hadst none
On him or on the father that begat him.

CHORUS
Unhappy realm and house,
The curse that dogged thee day by day
Is dying, dying fast.

CLYTEMNESTRA
I am stricken, ah!

ELECTRA
Strike, if thou canst, again.

CLYTEMNESTRA
Woe, woe is me once more!
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
εἰ γὰρ Αἰγίσθω θ' ὁμοῦ.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tελοῦσ' ἀραί. ξόσιν οἱ γᾶς ὑπαί κείμενοι. παλίρρυτον γὰρ αἰμ' ὑπεξαιροῦσι τῶν κτανόντων οἱ πάλαι θανόντες.

καὶ μὴν πάρεισιν οὐ̄δε' φοινία δὲ χείρ ἀντ.
στάζει θυηλῆς "Ἀρεός, οὖν ἕχω ψέγειν.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
'Ορέστα, πῶς κυρέιτε;
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
tάν δόμοισι μὲν καλῶς, Ἀπόλλων εἰ καλῶς ἑδέσπισεν.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
tέθνηκεν ἡ τάλαινα;
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
μηκέτ' ἐκφοβοῦ μητρῶν ὡς σε λῆμ 

ΧΟΡΟΣ
παύσασθε' λεύσσω γὰρ Διόμισθον ἐκ προδήλου.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ω παῖδες, οὐκ ἄφορρον;
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
eἰσορᾶτε ποῦ tῶν ἀνδρ';
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ἐφ' ἡμῖν οὕτος ἐκ προαστίου
χωρεῖ γεγηθῶς ἐκ προαστίου
ΧΟΡΟΣ
βάτε κατ' ἀντιθύρων ὅσον τάχιστα, νῦν, τὰ πρὶν εὗ θέμενοι, τάδ' ὡς πάλιν.

242
ELECTRA

I would that woe
Were for Aegisthus not for thee alone.

CHORUS
The curses work; the buried live again,
And blood for blood, the slayer's blood they drain,
The ghosts of victims long since slain.

Enter orestes and pylades from the palace.
Lo they come forth with gory hands that reek (Ant.)
Of sacrifice to Ares—'twas done well.

ELECTRA
How have ye sped, Orestes?

ORESTES
All within
Is well, if Phoebus' oracle spake well.

ELECTRA
The wretched woman's dead?

ORESTES
No longer fear
Thy mother's arrogance will flout thee more.

CHORUS
Cease, for I see Aegisthus full in sight.

ELECTRA
Back, youths, back to the house!

ORESTES
Where see ye him?

ELECTRA
Approaching from the suburb with an air
Of exultation. He is ours!

CHORUS
Quick to the palace doorway! half your work
Is well done; do no less well what remains.


**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

**ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ**

θάρσε σε τελούμεν.

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

η νοείς ἐπειγή νυν.

**ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ**

καί δὴ βέβηκα.

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

τάνθάδ' ἀν μέλοιτ' ἐµοί.

**ΧΟΡΟΣ**

di' ὁτὸς ἀν παύρα γ' ὡς ἥτις ἐννέεπεν πρὸς ἀνδρά τόνδε συμφέροι, λαθραίον ὡς ὀροῦση πρὸς δίκας ἀγάνα.

**ΑΠΙΣΘΟΣ**

τὸς οἶδεν ὑμῶν ποῦ ποθ' οἱ Φωκῆς ξένοι, οὕς φασ' Ὁρέστην ἡµῖν ἀγγείλαι βίον λελοιπόθ' ἵππικοίσιν ἐν ναυαγίοις; σὲ τοι, σὲ κρίνω, ναὶ σὲ, τὴν ἐν τῷ πάρος χρόνῳ θρασείαν· ὡς μάλιστα σοὶ μέλειν οἴμαι, μάλιστα δ' ἀν κατειδύιαν φράσαι.

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

ἐξοίδα· πῶς γὰρ οὖχι; συµφορᾶς γὰρ ἀν ἐξωθεν εἴην τῶν ἐµῶν τῆς φιλτάτης.

**ΑΠΙΣΘΟΣ**

ποῦ δὴ τ' ἀν εἰεν οἱ ξένοι; δίδασκε µε.

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

ἔνδου· φίλης γὰρ προξένου κατήνυσαν.

**ΑΠΙΣΘΟΣ**

ἡ καὶ θανόντ' ἡγγείλαν ὡς ἐτητύµως;

**ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ**

οὐκ, ἄλλα κατέδειξαν, οὐ λόγῳ µόνον.

**ΑΠΙΣΘΟΣ**

πάρεστ' ἂρ ἡµῖν ὡστε κάµφανη µαθεῖν;
ELECTRA

ORESTES

Fear not, we shall.

ELECTRA

Then speed thee on thy way.

ORESTES

See, I am gone.

ELECTRA

Leave what is here to me.

[Exeunt Orestes and Pylades; Aegisthus approaches.

CHORUS

'Twere not amiss to breathe some soft words in his ear, That he may blindly rush into the lists of doom.

AEGISTHUS

Could any of you tell me where to find The Phocian strangers who, I hear, have brought News of Orestes midst the chariots wrecked? Thee, thee I question, thee, in former days So froward: it concerns thee most, methinks, And thou, as best informed, canst tell me best.

ELECTRA

I know for sure, else were I unconcerned In what has happened to my nearest kin.

AEGISTHUS

Where then are these newcomers? Tell me straight.

ELECTRA

Within; they've won their kindly hostess' heart.

AEGISTHUS

Did they in very truth report his death?

ELECTRA

They did; and more, they showed us the dead man.

AEGISTHUS

May I too view the body to make sure?
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πάρεστι δήτα, καὶ μάλ’ ἄξιος θέα.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἡ πολλὰ χαίρειν μ’ εἰπας οὐκ εἰωθότως.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

χαίροις ἂν, εἰ σοι χαρτὰ τυγχάνοι τάδε.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

συγὰν ἀνωγά κανάδεικνύναι πύλας
πᾶσιν Μυκηναίοισιν Ἀργείοις θ’ ὀρᾶν,
ὡς εἰ τις αὐτῶν ἐλπίσιν κεναὶς πάρος
ἐξήρετ’ ἀνδρὸς τούτε, νῦν ὄρων νεκρόν
στόμια δέχηται τάμα μηδὲ πρός βίαν
ἐμοῦ κολαστοῦ προστυχῶν φύσῃ φρένας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ δὴ τελεῖται τάπ’ ἐμοῦ· τῷ γὰρ χρόνῳ
νοῦν ἔσχον, ὡστε συμφέρειν τοῖς κρείσσοσίν.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ὁ Ζεὺς, δέδορκα φάσμ’ ἀνευ φθόνου μὲν οὐ
πεπτωκός· εἰ δ’ ἔπεστι νέμεσις, οὐ λέγω.
χαλάτε πᾶν κάλυμμ’ ἀπ’ ὄφθαλμον, ὅπως
τὸ συγγενές τοι κἀ’ ἐμοῦ θρῆνων τύχη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αὐτὸς σὺ βάσταξ’· οὐκ ἐμὸν τόδ’, ἄλλα σοῦ,
τὸ ταῦθ’ ὄραν τε καὶ προσηγορεῖν φίλως.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἀλλ’ εἰ παραίνεις κάτι πείσομαι· σὺ δὲ,
εἰ ποὺ κατ’ οἰκὸν μοι Κλυταιμνήστρα, κάλει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αὐτὴ πέλας σοῦ· μηκέτ’ ἄλλοσε σκόπει.
ELECTRA

ELECTRA
Thou mayst, but 'tis a gruesome spectacle.

AEGISTHUS
Thou givest me much joy against thy wont.

ELECTRA
I wish thee joy, if here is food for joy.

AEGISTHUS
Silence! attend! throw open wide the gate,
For all Mycenae, Argos all, to see.
If any heretofore was puffed with hopes
Of this pretender, now he sees him dead,
Let him in time accept my yoke, nor wait
Wisdom by chastisement to learn too late.

ELECTRA
My lesson's learnt already; time hath taught me
The wisdom of consenting with the strong.
(The scene opens showing a shrouded corpse with ORESTES
and PYLADES beside it.)

AEGISTHUS
O Zeus, I look upon this form laid low
By jealousy of Heaven, but if my words
Seem to thee overbold, be they unsaid.
Take from the face the face-cloth; I, as kin,
I too would pay my tribute of lament.

ORESTES
Lift it thyself; 'tis not for me but thee
To see and kindly greet what lieth here.

AEGISTHUS
Well said, so will I. (To ELECTRA.) If she be within
Go call me Clytemnestra, I would see her—

ORESTES
She is beside thee; look not otherwhere.
(AEGISTHUS lifts the face-cloth.)
ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

ΑΠΙΣΘΟΣ

οίμοι, τί λεύσσω;

ΟΡΕΣΘΗΣ

τίνα φοβεῖ; τίν' ἀγνοεῖς;

ΑΠΙΣΘΟΣ

τίνων ποτ' ἀνδρῶν ἐν μέσοις ἀρκυντάτοις πέπτωχ' ὁ τλήμων;

ΟΡΕΣΘΗΣ

οὔ γὰρ αἰσθάνει πάλαι ἡώντας 1 θανοῦσιν οὔνεκ' ἀνταυδᾶς ίσα;

ΑΠΙΣΘΟΣ

οίμοι, ξυνήκα τοῦτος· οὔ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως ὃδ' οὔκ Ὁρεσθῆς ἔσθ' ὁ προσφωνῶν ἐμε. 1480

ΟΡΕΣΘΗΣ

καὶ μάντις ὅν ἄριστος ἐσφάλλου πάλαι.

ΑΠΙΣΘΟΣ

ἄλωλα δὴ δείλαιος. ἀλλὰ μοι πάρες κἂν σμικρὸν εἶπεῖν.

ΗΔΕΚΤΡΑ

μὴ πέρα λέγειν ἐὰν πρὸς θεῶν, ἄδελφε, μηδὲ μηκύνειν λόγους. τί γὰρ βροτῶν ἄν σὺν κακοῖς μεμιμγμένων θυησκεῖν ὁ μέλλων οὐ χρόνου κέρδος φέροι; ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστα κτεῖνε καὶ κτανῶν πρόθες ταφεῦσιν, ὃν τόνδ' ἐκός ἐστι τυγχάνειν, ἀποπτον ἡμῶν' ὡς ἔμοι τὸδ' ἄν κακῶν μόνων γένοιτο τῶν πάλαι λυτήριον. 1490

ΟΡΕΣΘΗΣ

χωροῖς ἂν εἴσω σὺν τάχει' λόγων γὰρ οὐ νῦν ἔστιν ἀγών, ἀλλὰ σῆς ψυχῆς πέρι.

1 ξῶν τοῖς MSS., Tyrwhitt corr.
ELECTRA

AEGISTHUS

O horror!

ORESTES

Why dost start? is the face strange?

AEGISTHUS

Who spread the net wherein, O woe is me,
I lie enmeshed?

ORESTES

Hast thou not learnt ere this
The dead of whom thou spakest are alive?

AEGISTHUS

Alas! I read thy riddle; 'tis none else
Than thou, Orestes, whom I now address.

ORESTES

A seer so wise, and yet befuddled so long!

AEGISTHUS

O I am spoiled, undone! yet suffer me,
One little word.

ELECTRA

Brother, in heaven's name
Let him not speak a word or plead his cause.
When a poor wretch is in the toils of fate
What can a brief reprieve avail him? No,
Slay him outright and having slain him give
His corse to such grave-makers as is meet,
Far from our sight; for me no otherwise
Can he wipe out the memory of past wrongs.

ORESTES (to AEGISTHUS)

Quick, get thee in; the issue lies not now
In words; the case is tried and thou must die.
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
τί δες δομοὺς ἁγείς με; πῶς, τόδε εἰ καλὸν
tούργον, σκότου δεῖ κοῦ πρόχειρος εἰ κτανεῖν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
μὴ τάσσει· χώρει δ᾽ έινθαπερ κατέκτανες
πατέρα τὸν ἀμόν, ὡς ἄν ἐν ταῦτι θάνης,

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
ἡ πᾶσι ανάγκη τήνδε τὴν στέγην ἰδεῖν
tά τ᾽ οὕτα καὶ μέλλοντα Πελοπιδῶν κακά;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
τὰ γοῦν σ᾽ ἐγὼ σοι μάντις εἰμί τῶνδ᾽ ἀκρος.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
ἀλλ᾽ οὗ πατρόφαι τὴν τέχνην ἐκόμπασας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
τόλλ᾽ ἀντιφωνεῖς, ἢ δ᾽ ὄδὸς βραδύνεται.
ἀλλ᾽ ἐρφ᾽.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
ὕφηγον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
σοὶ βαδιστέον πάρος.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
ἡ μὴ φύγω σε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
μὴ μὲν οὖν καθ᾽ ἱδονὴν
θάνης· φυλάξαι δεῖ με τούτο σοι πικρόν.
χρῆν δ᾽ εὐθὺς εἶναι τήνδε τοῖς πᾶσιν δίκην,
ὅστις πέρα πράσσειν τι τῶν νόμων θέλει,
kτεῖνειν· τὸ γὰρ πανούργον οὐκ ἄν ἢν πολύ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὡς σπέρμ᾽ Ἀτρέως, ὡς πολλὰ παθῶν
δι᾽ ἐλευθερίας μόλις ἔξηλθες
tῇ νῦν ὀρμη τελεωθέν.
ELECTRA

AEGISTHUS
Why hale me indoors? if my doom be just,
What need of darkness? Why not slay me here?
ORESTES
'Tis not for thee to order; go within;
Where thou didst slay my father thou must die.
AEGISTHUS
Ah! is there need this palace should behold
All woes of Pelops' line, now and to come?
ORESTES
Thine own they shall; thus much I can predict.
AEGISTHUS
Thy skill as seer derives not from thy sire.
ORESTES
Thou bandiest words; our going is delayed.
Go.
AEGISTHUS
Lead the way.
ORESTES
No, thou must go the first.
AEGISTHUS
Lest I escape?
ORESTES
Nay, not to let thee choose
The manner of thy death; thou must be spared
No bitterness of death, and well it were
If on transgressors swift this sentence fall,
Slay him; so wickedness should less abound.
CHORUS
House of Atreus! thou hast passed
Through the fire and won at last
Freedom, perfected to-day
By this glorious essay.
ARGUMENT

Deianira, alarmed at the long absence of her husband, resolves to send their son Hyllus in quest of his father. When he left home Heracles had told her that in fifteen months would come the crisis of his fate—either death or glory and rest from his toils. As she meditates, Lichas, the henchman of Heracles, comes in sight, tells her that his master is safe and will shortly follow. He is now at Cape Cenaeum in Euboea, about to raise an altar to Zeus in honour of his victories. With Lichas are a train of captive maidens and among them she espies Iolè. By cross-questioning she learns that Heracles has transferred to Iolè his love, and determines to win it back by means of a love-charm that the Centaur Nessus had left to her as he lay dying. So she sends by the hand of Lichas a festal robe besmeared with what proves to be a burning poison. Too late she discovers her mistake. The flock of wool that she had used to apply the charm and flung away smoulders self-consumed before her eyes. Hyllus returns from Euboea and denounces his mother as a murderer, describing the agonies of his tortured father.
ARGUMENT

At the news Deianira passes within the house and slays herself with a sword. The dying Heracles is borne home on a litter. He gives his last injunctions to Hyllus, to bear him to Mount Oeta, there burn him on a pyre, and then to return and take Iolè to wife. With a bitter word against the gods who have thus afflicted their own son, the noblest man on earth, Hyllus gives an unwilling consent.
ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ
ΤΑΛΟΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩΝ ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΩΝ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΔΙΧΑΣ
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Heracles, son of Zeus and Alcmena.
Deianira, daughter of Oeneus, his wife.
Hyllus, their son.
Lichas, herald of Heracles.
A Messenger.
Nurse.
Old Man.
Iolē, daughter of Eurytus, captive wife to Heracles
Captive Women.
Chorus of Trachinian Maidens.

Scene: Before the house of Heracles at Trachis.
ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

Δόγμα μὲν ἐστ' ἄρχαίος ἀνθρώπων φανείς, ὡς οὐκ ἂν αἰῶν' ἐκμάθοις βροτῶν, πρὶν ἂν θάνη τις, οὔτ' εἰ χρηστός οὔτ' εἰ τῷ κακόσι· ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν, καὶ πρὶν εἰς "Αἰδοὺ μολεῖν, ἐξοιτ' ἐχοῦσα δυστυχῇ τε καὶ βαρύν, ἦτις πατρὸς μὲν ἐν δόμοισιν Οἰνέως ναίους' ἐτ' ἐν Πλευρῶνι νυμφεῖων δικον ἀλγιστὸν ἕσχοιν, εἰ τις Αἰτωλίς γυνή·

μνηστήρ γὰρ ἦν μοι ποταμός, 'Αχελώον λέγω, ὃς μ' ἐν τρεισὶν μορφαίσιν ἔχῃ τεί πατρός, φοιτῶν ἑναργής ταῦρος, ἄλλοτ' αἰῶλος βράκων ἐλεῖπτος, ἄλλοτ' ἀνδρείῳ κύτει βοῦπρωφρος· ἐκ δὲ δασκίου γενειάδος κροτοῦ διερραίνοντο κρηνιάδον ποτοῦ. τοιόνδ' ἐγὼ μνηστήρα προσδεδεγμένη δύστηνας αἰεὶ καταθανεῖν ἐπηνυχμήν, πρὶν τῆς δὲ κοίτης ἐμπελασθηναί ποτε. χρόνῳ δ' ἐν ύστερῳ μὲν, ἀσμένῃ δὲ μοι, ὁ κλεινὸς ἦλθε Ζηνὸς 'Αλκμήνης τε παῖς· δει εἰς ἀγώνα τῶδε συμπεσόν μάχης ἐκλύνεται με· καὶ τρόπον μὲν ἂν πόνων οὐκ ἂν διεῖποιμ', οὐ γὰρ οἰδ' ἀλλ' ὅστις ἦν

1 ἐτ' added by Erfurdt.

258
Enter Deianira and nurse.

Deianira

There is an old-world saying current still,
"Of no man canst thou judge the destiny
To call it good or evil, till he die."
But I, before I pass into the world
Of shadows, know my lot is hard and sad.
E'en in my childhood's home, while yet I dwelt
At Pleuron with my father, I had dread
Of marriage more than any Aetolian maid;
For my first wooer was a river god,
Acheloüs, who in triple form appeared
To sue my father Oeneus for my hand,
Now as a bull, now as a sinuous snake
With glittering coils, and now in bulk a man
With front of ox, while from his shaggy beard
Runnels of fountain-water spouted forth.
In terror of so strange a wooer, I
Was ever praying death might end my woes,
Before I came to such a marriage bed.
Then to my joy, though long delayed, the son
Of Zeus and of Alcmena, good at need,
Grappled the monster and delivered me.
The circumstance and manner of that fight
I cannot tell, not knowing; whoso watched it,
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

θακών ἀταρβής τῆς θέας, ὅδ' ἀν λέγοι·
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἦμην ἐκπεπληγμένη φόβῳ
μὴ μοι τὸ κάλλος ἄλγος ἐξεύροι ποτὲ.
τέλος δ' ἔθηκε Ζεὺς ἀγώνιος καλῶς,
εἰ δὴ καλῶς. λέγοι γὰρ Ἡρακλεὶ κριτῶν
ξυστάς· ἀεὶ τιν' ἐκ φόβου φόβον τρέφω,
κεῖνον προκηραίνουσα· νῦξ γὰρ εἰσάγει
καὶ νῦξ ἀπώθει διαδεδεγμένη πόνον.
κἀφύσαμεν δὴ παίδας, οὔς κεῖνὸς ποτε,
γῆτος ὁπως ἀρουραν ἐκτοπον λαβών,
σπείρων μόνον προσείδε καξάμων ἀπαξ.
τοιοῦτος αἰὼν εἰς δόμινας τε κάκ δόμων
αἰεὶ τών ἄνδρ' ἔπεμπτε λατρεύοντα τῷ.
νῦν δ' ἦνικ' ἀθλον τοῦ ὑπερτελῆς ἔφι,
ἐνταύθα δὴ μάλιστα ταρβήσας' ἐξω.
ἐξ οὖ γὰρ ἐκτα κεῖνος 'Ἰφίτου βιαν,
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐν Τραχίνι τῇ ἀνάστατοι
ἐένω παρ' ἄνδρι ναίομεν, κεῖνος δ' ὁπον
βέβηκεν οὐδεὶς σώδεις· πλὴν ἔμοι πικρὰς
ἀδύνας αὐτοῦ προσβαλὼν ἄποιχεται.
σχεδὸν δ' ἐπίσταμαι τι πῆμ' ἐχοντά νυν·
χρόνον γὰρ οὐχὶ βαιόν, ἀλλ' ὥδη δέκα
μήνας πρὸς ἄλλοις πέντε ἀκήρυκτος μένει.
κάτιν τι δεινὸν πῆμα· τοιαύτην ἔμοι
dέλτων λυπῶν ἐστειχε, τὴν ἐγὼ θαμὰ
θεοὺς ἀρῶμαι πημονῆς ἄτερ λαβεῖν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

dέσποινα Δηάνειρα, πολλά μὲν σ' ἐγὼ
κατείδουν ἥδη πανδάκρυτ' ὀδύρματα
τὴν Ἡράκλειον ἔξοδον γομμένην·
νῦν δ', εἰ δίκαιου τοὺς ἔλευθερους φρενοῦν

260
Indifferent to the issue, might describe.
For me—I sat distracted by the dread
That beauty in the end might prove my bane.
But Zeus who holds the arbitrament of war
Ordered it well, if well indeed it be.
For since, his chosen bride, I shared the home
Of Heracles, my cares have never ceased;
Terror on terror follows, dread on dread,
And one night’s trouble drives the last night’s out.
Children were born to us, but them he sees
E’en as the tiller of a distant field
Sees it at seedtime, sees it once again
At harvest, and no more. Such life was his
That kept him roaming to and fro from home,
To drudge for some taskmaster. And to-day
When he has overcome these many toils,
To-day I am terror-stricken most of all.
For since he slew the doughty Iphitus,
We have been dwelling with a stranger, here
In Trachis, banished from our home, and he—
None knoweth where he bides; but this I know,
He has gone and left me here to yearn and pine.
Surely some mischief has befallen him,
(For since he went an age—ten long, long months,
And other five—has passed, and not a word),
Some dread calamity, as signifies
This tablet that he left me. Oh! how oft
I’ve prayed it prove no harbinger of woe.

Nurse

My lady Deianira, many a time
I’ve listened to thy lamentable plaints
And groanings for the absence of thy lord.
Now, if I seem not overbold, a slave
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

γνώμαις δούλαις, κάμε ἥρη φράσαι τὸ σὸν πῶς παισί μὲν τοσοῦδε πληθύεις, ἀτὰρ ἀνδρὸς κατὰ ξῆτησιν οὖ πέμπεις τινά, μάλιστα δ᾽ ὄντερ εἰκὸς "Τλλον, εἰ πατρὸς νέμοι τιν᾽ ὠραν τοῦ καλῶς πράσσειν δοκεῖν; ἐγγὺς δ᾽ ὧν αὐτὸς ἀρτίπους θρόσκει δόμους, ὥστε εἰ τί σοι πρὸς καιρὸν ἐννέπειν δοκῶ, πάρεστι χρῆσθαι τάνδρι τοῖς τ᾽ ἐμοῖς λόγοις.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ὁ τέκνον, ὁ παῖ, κάξ ἁγεννητῶν ἀρα μῦθοι καλῶς πιπτούσων ἦδε γὰρ γυνὴ δούλη μὲν, εἰρήκεν δ᾽ ἐλεύθερον λόγον.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ποῖον; δίδαξον, μήτερ, εἰ διδακτά μοι.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

σὲ πατρὸς οὔτω δαρὸν ἐξενωμένου τὸ μὴ πυθέσθαι ποῦ 'στιν, αἶσχύνην φέρειν.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ᾽ οἶδα, μῦθοις εἰ τί πιστεύειν χρεών.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

καὶ ποὺ κλύεις νιν, τέκνον, ἱδρύσθαι χθονός; ΤΛΛΟΣ

τὸν μὲν παρελθόντ᾽ ἄροτον ἐν μῆκει χρόνου Λυδῆ γυναικὶ φασὶ νιν λάτριν πονεῖν.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

πᾶν τοίνυν, εἰ καὶ τούτ᾽ ἐτλη, κλύοι τις ἄν.

ΤΛΛΟΣ

ἀλλ᾽ ἐξαφείται τούδε γ᾽, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ποὺ δήτα νῦν χῶν ἦ θανῶν ἀγγέλλεται;
TRACHINIAE

Would lend her counsel to a free-born dame. Why, since thou art so rich in sons, not send One on the quest, and Hyllus most of all? Who could assist thee better, if he cares To ascertain the safety of his sire? And lo, I see him in the nick of time Approaching hotfoot. Wherefore, if I seem To speak in season, use my rede and him.

*Enter Hyllus.*

DEIANIRA

My child, my boy! wise words in sooth may fall From humble lips. This woman is a slave, But her words breathe the spirit of the free.

HYLLUS

What, mother? tell me, if it may be told.

DEIANIRA

She said that never to have gone in search Of thy long absent father brings thee shame.

HYLLUS

Nay, but if rumour's true, I know of him.

DEIANIRA

Where hast thou heard, my son, that he abides?

HYLLUS

Last season, so they say, the whole year through He served as bondsman to a Lydian dame.

DEIANIRA

Naught would surprise me if he sank so low.

HYLLUS

Well, that disgrace is over, so I hear.

DEIANIRA

Where is he now reported, living or dead?
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΤΑΛΩΣ
Εὐβοΐδα χώραν φασίν, Εὐρύτου πόλιν,
ἐπιστρατεύειν αὐτὸν ἢ μέλλειν ἔτι.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ἀρ’ οἰσθα δῆτ’ ὁ τέκνον, ὡς ἔλειπτε μοι
μαντεῖα πιστὰ τῆς τῆς χώρας πέρι;

ΤΑΛΩΣ
τὰ ποία, μήτερ; τὸν λόγον γὰρ ἀγνοῦ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ὡς ἡ τελευτὴν τοῦ βίου μέλλει τελεῖν
ἡ τούτων ἁράς ἄθλον εἰς τὸ γ’ ὕστερον¹
tὸν λοιπὸν ἢ ὁ βίοτον εὐαίων ἔχειν.
ἐν οὕν ῥοπῆ τοιῶθε κειμένῳ, τέκνον,
οὐκ εἰ ἔννερξων, ἢνικ’ ἡ σεσώσμεθα
[ἡ πιπτομεν σοὺ πατρὸς ἐξολωλότος]
κείνου βίον σῶσαντος, ἡ οἴχομεσθ’ ἁμα;

ΤΑΛΩΣ
ἀλλ’ εἰμι, μήτερ; εἰ δὲ θεσφάτων ἐγὼ
βάξιν κατ᾿ ἡδῆ τῶνδε, κἂν πάλαι παρῆς
νῦν δ’ ὁ ξυνιθής πότμος οὐκ εἰα² πατρὸς
ήμας προταρβεῖν οὐδὲ δειμαίνειν ἄγαν.
νῦν δ’ ὃς ξυνιθήμ’, οὐδὲν ἐπλέειψω τὸ μὴ οὐ
πάσαν πυθέσθαι τῶνδ’ ἀλήθειαν πέρι.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
χῶρει νυν, ὁ παῖς καὶ γὰρ ὑστέρφ τὸ γ’ εὑ
πράσσειν, ἐπεὶ πῦθοιτο, κέρδος ἐμπολά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
δὲν αἰῶλα νῦς ἑναιξομένα
τίκτει κατευνάζει τε, φλογιζόμενον
"Ἀλιον" Ἀλιον αἰτῶ
τούτῳ καρδίας, τὸν Ἀλκμήνας πόθι μοι πόθι παῖς

¹ εἰς τὸν ὕστερον MSS., Reiske corr.
² εἰ MSS., Vauvilliers corr.
TRACHINIAE

HYLLUS
He wars, or is about to war, they say,
Against Euboea and King Eurytus.

DEIANIRA
Know'st thou, my son, that when he went away
He left sure oracles anent that land?

HYLLUS
What, mother? I ne'er heard of them before.

DEIANIRA
That either he should find his death, or when
He had achieved this final task, henceforth
Lead an unbroken life of peaceful ease.
Son, when his fate thus trembles in the scale,
Wilt thou not go to aid him? If he's saved,
We too are saved; if lost, we perish too.

HYLLUS
Ay, mother, I'll away; had I but known
Of this prediction I had long been gone.
But, as it was, his happy star forbade
Excess of fear or doubt; but, now I know,
No pains I'll spare to learn the perfect truth.

DEIANIRA
Go then, my son. However late the quest,
He who shall learn good news is well repaid!

Enter chorus.

CHORUS
Child of star-bespangled Night,
Born as she dies,
Laid to rest in a blaze of light,
Tell me, Sun-god, O tell me, where
Tarries the child of Alcmena fair;

[Exit Hyllus.]
TPAXINIAI

ναίει ποτ', ὃ λαμπρᾷ στεροπᾷ φλεγέθων, ἡ ποινίας αὐλώνος ἡ δισαίων ἀπείροις κλιθεῖς, εἰπ', ὃ κρατιστεύων κατ' ὀμμα.

ποθομένα γὰρ φρενὶ πυνθάνομαι ἀντ. ἁ'
τὰν ἀμφινεικῇ Δηνάνειραν ἄει, οἵ τιν' ἀθλιον ὄρνιν, οὐποτ' εὐνάζειν ἀδακρύτων βλεφάρων πόθον, ἀλλ' εὐμαστόν ἀνδρὸς δείμα τρέφουσαν ὄδοι ἐνθυμίοις εὐναῖς ἀνανδρώτοις τρύχεσθαι, κακὰν δύστανον ἐλπίζουσαν αἰσαν.

στρ. ἃ'
pολλὰ γὰρ ὡστ' ἀκάμαντος ἡ νότος ἡ Βορέα τις κύματ' ἂν εὑρέτο πόντῳ βάντ' ἐπιόντα τ' ἱδαί, οὐτὼ δὲ τὸν Καδμογενῆ στρέφει, τὸ δ' αὔξει, βιώτου πολύπονον ὅσπερ πέλαγος Κρήσιον. ἀλλὰ τις θεῶν αἰὲν ἀναμπλάκητον ᾴδα σφε δόμων ἐρύκει.

ἀντ. ἃ'
οὖν ἐπιμεμφομένα σ' αἴδοια 2 μὲν, ἀντία δ' οἴσω. φαμὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀποτρύειν ἐλπίδα τὰν ἁγαθὰν χρῆναι σ'. ἀνάλγητα γὰρ οὔδ' ὁ πάντα κραίνων βασιλεὺς ἐπέβαλε θνατοῖς Κρονίδας: ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πῆμα καὶ χαρὰ πᾶσι κυκλοῦσιν, οἷον ἄρκτον στροφάδες κέλευθοι.

μένει γὰρ οὕτ' αἴόλα νῦς βροτοῖσιν οὕτε κῆρες

1 τρέφει MSS., Reiske corr.
2 ἀδεία MSS., Musgrave corr.
TRACHINIAE

Thou from whose eyes,
Keen as lightning, naught can hide.
Doth he on either mainland bide?
Roams he over the sea straits driven?
Thou, omniscient eye of heaven,
Declare, declare!

For like bird bereft of her mate
(Sad my tale)
Deianira, desolate,
She the maiden of many wooed,
Pines by fears for her lord pursued;
Ever she bodes some instant harm
Ever she starts at a new alarm,
With vigils pale.

For as the tireless South or Northern blast
Billow on billow rolls o'er ocean wide,
So on the son of Cadmus follows fast
Sea upon sea of trouble, tide on tide;
And now he sinks, now rises; still some god
Is nigh to save him from Death's whelming flood.

Bear with me, lady, if I seem to chide thee.
Why by despondency is fair hope slain?
Think that high Zeus, if evil now betide thee,
No human lot ordaineth free from pain;
But as the Bear revolves in heaven all night,
So mortals move 'twixt sorrow and delight.

The sheen of night with daybreak wanes;
Pleasure follows after pains.
οὔτε πλοῦτος, ἀλλ' ἀφαρ
βέβακε, τῷ δ' ἐπέρχεται
χαίρειν τε καὶ στέρεσθαι.
ἀ καὶ σὲ τὰν ἀνασάν ἐλπίσων λέγω
τάδ' αἰὲν ἵσχειν· ἐπεὶ τίς ὤδε
tέκνοις Ζην' ἀβουλον εἶδεν;

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
πεπυσμένη μέν, ὡς ἀπεικάσαι, πάρει
πάθημα τοῦμόν· ὡς δ' ἐγὼ θυμοθορῷ,
μήτ' ἐκμάθως παθοῦσα νῦν τ' ἀπειρος εἰ.
τὸ γὰρ νεάζον ἐν τοιοῦτῳ βόσκεται
χώροισιν αὐτοῦ, καὶ νῦν οὐ θάλπος θεοῦ
οὐδ' ὁμβρός οὐδὲ πνευμάτων οὐδὲν κλονεῖ,
ἀλλ' ἡδοναῖς ἀμοχθον εξαίρει βίον
ἐς τοῦθ' ἐώς τις ἀντὶ παρθένον γυνὴ
cληθῇ λάβῃ τ' ἐν νυκτὶ φροντίδων μέρος,
ητοι πρὸς ἀνδρός ἢ τέκνοι φοβουμένη.
τότ' ἂν τις εἰσίδοιτο, τὴν αὐτοῦ σκοπῶν
πράξειν, κακοῖσιν ὅψ ἐγὼ βαρύνομαι.
πάθη μὲν οὖν δὴ πόλλα' ἐγων' ἐκλαυσάμην·
ἐν δ', οἶον οὕπω πρόσθεν, αὐτίκ' ἐξερῶ.
ἀδὸν γὰρ ἤμος τὴν τελευταίαν ἀναξ
ἀφρατ' ἀπ' οἶκων Ἡρακλῆς, τότ' ἐν δόμοις
λείπει παλαιὰν δέλτων ἐγγεγραμμένην
ἐπιθῆμαθ', ἀμοὶ πρόσθεν οὐκ ἔτη λυπτε,
pολλοὺς ἀγώνας ἑξιόων, οὕπω φράσαι,
ἀλλ' ὡς τι δράσων εἰρπε κοι θανούμενος.
νῦν δ' ὡς ἔτ' οὖκ ὄν τε ἐπε μεν λέχους δ' τι
χρεῖη μ' ἐλέσθαι κτῆσιν. εἰπε δ' ἦν τέκνοις

268
If perchance to-day thou art sad,
Then another man is glad.
Gains with losses alternate;
Naught is constant in one state:
Ponder this, my Queen, nor let
Carking care thy spirit fret.
Tell me hast thou ever known
Zeus unmindful of his own?

DEIANIRA
Doubtless ye must have heard of my distress,
And therefore come; but how my heart is racked
Ye cannot know—pray God ye ne'er may know it
By suffering!

Like to us, the tender plant
Is reared and nurtured in some garden close;
Nor heat, nor rain, nor any breath of air
Vexes it, but unruffled, unperturbed,
It buds and blossoms in sequestered bliss;
So fare we till the maid is called a wife
And finds her married portion in the night—
Dread terror for her husband or her child.
Only the woman who by trial knows
The cares of wedlock knows what I endure.
Many have been my sorrows in the past,
But now of one, the woefullest of all,
I have to tell. When Heracles, my lord,
On his last travel was about to start,
He left an ancient tablet in the house,
Inscribed with characters that ne'er before,
However desperate the enterprise,
He would interpret; for he aye set forth
As one about to do and not to die.
This time, as on his death bed, he prescribed
Due portion of his substance as my dower,
μοίραν πατρόφας γῆς διαμετον νέμοι,
χρόνου προτάξας ὡς τρίμηνυν ἦμικα
χώρας ἀπείη κανιαύσιον βεβὼς,
τὸτ' ἢ θανεῖν χρείη σφε τῶθε τῷ χρόνῳ
ἡ τοῦθ' ὑπεκδραμόντα τοῦ χρόνου τέλος
τὸ λοιπὸν ἠδη ἧν ἀλυπίτῳ βλω.
τοιαύτ' ἑφραξε πρὸς θεῶν εἰμαρµένα
τῶν Ἡρακλείων ἐκτελευτᾶσθαι πόνων,
ὡς τὴν παλαιὰν φηγὸν αὐδῆσαι ποτὲ
Δωδώνιοι διὸν τὸν Πελειάδων ἐφη.
καὶ τῶν ναμέρτεια συμβαίνει χρόνου
τοῦ νῦν παρόντος, ὡς τελεσθῆναι χρεών·
ὁσθ' ἡδέως εὐδουσαν ἐκπηδᾶν ἐμὲ
φόβω, φίλαι, ταρποῦσαν, εἰ μὲ χρὴ μένειν
πάντων ἁρίστου φωτὸς ἐστηρημένην.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἐυφηµίαν νῦν ὑσχ'. ἐπεὶ καταστεφῇ
στείχονθ' ὅρῳ τιν' ἀνδρα πρὸς χαρὰν λόγων.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
δέσποινα Δηάνειρα, πρῶτος ἀγγέλων
ἐκνου σε λύσω· τῶν γὰρ Ἄλκμήνης τόκον
καὶ σῶν ἐπίστω καὶ κρατοῦντα κάκ μάχης
ἀγοντ' ἀπαρχάς θεοῖς τοῖς ἐγχορίοισ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
τίν' εἴπας, ὦ γεραίε, τῶνδε μοι λόγου;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
τάχ' ἐς δόµους σοῦς τῶν πολύζηλον πόσων
ἡξεν φανέντα σὺν κράτει νικηφόρω.
And to his children severally assigned
Their heritage of lands; and fixed a date,
Saying that when a year and three full moons
Had passed since he departed from his home,
He needs must die, or, if he then survived,
Live ever after an untroubled life;
So by the mouth of the two priestly Doves
Dodona's sacred oak had once declared.
And now, this very day, the hour has struck
For confirmation of the prophecy.
Thus from sweet slumber, friends, ye see me start
With terror at the thought of widowed days,
If he, the noblest of all men, were gone.

CHORUS
Hush! no ill-omened words! I see approaching
A messenger, bay-wreathed—he brings good news.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER
Queen Deianira, let me be the first
To rid thee of thy fears. Be well assured
Alcmena's son is living; o'er his foes
Victorious he is bringing home the spoils,
To offer firstfruits to his country's gods.

DEIANIRA
Old man, what dost thou tell me?

MESSENGER
That anon
Thou shalt behold in presence, at thy gate,
Illustrious, crowned with victory, thy lord.

1 The Peleleads were the priestesses of Dodona who interpreted the rustling of the oak or the cooing of the sacred doves and their name in folk etymology was identified with peleiai, doves.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
καὶ τοῦ τόδ’ ἄστῶν ἢ ξένων μαθῶν λέγεις;

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἐν Βουθερεῖ λειμώνι πρὸς πολλοὺς θροεῖ
Δίχας ὁ κήρυξ ταῦτα· τούδ’ ἐγὼ κλύων
ἀπῆξ’, ὅπως τοι πρῶτος ἀγγείλας τάδε
πρὸς σοῦ τι κερδάναιμι καὶ κτῆμην χάριν.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
αὐτὸς δὲ πῶς ἀπέστην, εὔπερ εὐτυχεῖ;

ἈΓΓΕΛΟΣ
οὐκ εὐμαρεῖνα χρώμενος πολλῇ, γύναι.
κύκλῳ γὰρ αὐτὸν Ἔμηλεν ἄπτας λεώς
κρίνει παραστάς, οὐδ’ ἔχει βῆναι πρὸςω
τό γὰρ ποθοῦν ἐκαστὸς ἐκμαθεῖν 1 θέλων
οὐκ ἀν μεθεῖτο, πρὶν καθ’ ἡδονήν κλύειν.
οὔτως ἐκεῖνος οὐχ ἐκών, ἐκοῦσ’ δὲ
ξύνεστιν ὀψει δ’ αὐτὸν αὐτίκ’ ἐμφανῇ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ὡς Ζεὺ, τὸν Οἰνής ἄτομον ὅς λειμῶν’ ἔχεις,
ἐδώκας ἡμῖν ἄλλα σὺν χρόνῳ χαράν.
φωνήσατ’, ὦ γυναίκες, αἱ τ’ εἰσώ στέγης
αἱ τ’ ἐκτὸς αὐλῆς, ὡς ἀελπτον ὄμμ’ ἐρο
φήμης ἀνασχον τῆςδὲ νῦν καρπούμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἀνολολουξάτω 2 δόμοις ἐφεστίοις
ἀλαλαγαίς ἃ 3 μελλόνυμφος, ἐν δὲ
κοινὸς ἀρσένων ὑτω
κλαγγά τὸν εὐφαρέτραν
Ἀπόλλω προστάταν’ ὄμοι δὲ

1 M. L. Carle’s ἐκπλήσσα is the likeliest emendation of a
probably corrupt line.
2 ἀνολολουξάτε MSS., Burges corr. 3 ὃ MSS., Erfurdt corr.

272
TRACHINIAE

DEIANIRA
Some stranger or a native told thee this?

MESSENGER
The herald Lichas is proclaiming it
There in the summer pastures to the crowd.
From him I heard, and sped to be the first
To bring the news and win reward and thanks.

DEIANIRA
If such his news, why comes he not himself?

MESSENGER
That were no light task; all our Malian folk
Cluster around him, hem him on all sides,
Ply him with questions, one and all intent
To hear his news; he cannot stir a step,
Midst willing hosts a most unwilling guest,
Till all their eagerness is satisfied.
But thou shalt see him face to face anon.

DEIANIRA
Lord of the unshorn meads of Oeta, Zeus,
Though long delayed, thou giv'st me joy at last.
Women within, and ye without the gates,
Uplift your voices, hail the new-born light
That dawns to glad me when all hope had fled.

CHORUS
Maidens, let your joyous shout
Of triumph from the hearth ring out,
Swell the quire of men who raise
Their paean to Apollo's praise.
    Sing, man and maid,
    Phoebus our aid,
    Lord of the quiver,
    Strong to deliver!

VOL. II.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

παιάνα παῖαν' ἀνώγετ', ὦ παρθένοι, 210
βοᾷτε τὰν ὁμόσπορον
"Ἀρτεμίν Ὅρτυγίαν
ἐλαφαβόλον ἀμφίτυρον,
γείτονάς τε Νύμφας.
ἀείρομαι οὔδ' ἀπώσσομαι
tὸν αὐλόν, ὦ τῦραννε τὰς ἐμᾶς φρενός.
ἰδοὺ μ' ἀναταράσσει,
eὖοί μ',
ὁ κυσσὸς ἄρτι βακχίαν
ὑποστρέφων ἀμίλλαν. ἢ ὦ ὢ Παιάν.
ἰδ', ὦ φίλα γύναι,
tάδ' ἀντίπροφα δὴ σοι
βλέπειν πάρεστ' ἐναργῇ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΠΑ

ὁρῶ, φίλαι γυναῖκες, οὔδε μ' ὀμματὸς
φρουραν παρῆλθε, τὸνδε μὴ λεύσσειν στόλον:
χαίρειν δὲ τὸν κήρυκα προοννέπω, χρόνῳ
πολλῷ φανέντα, χαρτὸν εἴ τι καὶ φέρεις.

ΛΙΧΑΣ

ἀλλ' εὖ μὲν ἵγμεθ', εὖ δὲ προσφωνούμεθα,
γύναι, κατ' ἔργον κτῆσιν· ἄνδρα γὰρ καλῶς
πράσσοντ' ἀνάγκη χρηστὰ κερδαίνειν ἐπη.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΠΑ

ὁ φίλτατ' ἄνδρῶν, πρῶθ' ἀ πρώτα βουλομαι
dίδαξον, εἰ ζῶνθ' Ἡρακλῆ προσδέξομαι.

274
Hymn his sister, maid and man,
Artemis Ortygian.
   Slayer of deer,
   With fiery brand
   In either hand,
   O goddess, hear!

Hymn ye the nymphs too, her attendant band
My spirit spurns the ground;
Bid the shrill fiffe outsound,
My sovereign I obey.
   Evoë!
   The thyrsus, see,
Calls me; I must away
To join the Bacchic rout,
With Maenads dance and shout,
Once more the paean raise;
   For, lady, here,
   In presence clear,
My joy takes shape and stands before thy gaze.

DEIANIRA
Kind friends, I see, nor have my wistful eyes
Failed to perceive this company's approach—
Hail to thee, herald, if indeed thou bring'st
News that will gladden me, though long delayed.

Enter lichas with captive women.

LICHAS
Yea, lady, glad is our return and glad
Thy greeting, as befits the deed achieved.
He who speeds well a welcome fair deserves.

DEIANIRA
First tell me what I first would learn, best friend,
Shall I embrace my Heracles alive?
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΔΙΧΑΣ
ἐγὼ γέ τοι σφ' ἔλειπον ἵσχυστά τε καὶ ξόντα καὶ θάλλοντα κού νόσῳ βαρύν.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ποὺ γῆς; πατρίδας εὑτε βαρβάρου; λέγε.

ΔΙΧΑΣ
ἀκτῆς τοῖς ἔστ᾽ Ἐυβοίας, ἐνθ' ὀρίζεται βωμοὺς τέλη τ' ἐγκαρπα Κηναίῳ Διί.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
εὐκταῖα φαίνον ἢ ἀπὸ μαντεῖας τινὸς;

ΔΙΧΑΣ
εὐχαίς οὐθ' ἤρει τῶν αὐτῶν ἀνάστατον δορὶ χώραν γυναικῶν ὃν ὅρας ἐν ὁμμασίων.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
αὕται δὲ, πρὸς θεῶν, τοῦ ποτ' εἰσὶ καὶ τινὲς; οἰκτραὶ γάρ, εἰ μὴ ξυμφοραί κλέπτουσι με.

ΔΙΧΑΣ
ταύτας ἐκεῖνος Ἑὐρύτου πέρσας πόλιν ἐξείλεθ' αὐτῷ κτῆμα καὶ θεῶς κριτῶν.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ἡ κατὶ ταύτη τῇ πόλει τὸν ἄσκοπον χρόνον βεβώς ἢν ἡμερῶν ἀνήριθμον;

ΔΙΧΑΣ
οὐκ, ἀλλὰ τὸν μὲν πλείστον ἐν Δυνοῖς χρόνον κατείχεθ', ὡς φησ' αὐτός, οὐκ ἐλεύθερος, ἀλλ' ἐμποληθεῖς τοῦ λόγου δ' οὐ χρὴ φθόνον, 250 γύναι, προσείναι, Ζεὺς ὅτον πράκτωρ φαιν. κεῖνος δὲ πραθεῖς Ὀμφάλη τῇ βαρβάρῳ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐξέπλησεν, ὡς αὐτὸς λέγει.
TRACHINIAE

LICHAS
Surely; I left him both alive and hale,
In lusty strength and sound in every limb.

DEIANIRA
Where? upon Greek soil, tell me, or abroad?

LICHAS
Upon a headland in Euboea, where
He marks out altars to Cenaean Zeus,
And dedicates the fertile lands around.

DEIANIRA
In payment of some former vow, or warned
By oracles?

LICHAS
'Tis for a vow he made
When he went forth to conquer and despoil
Oechalia of these women whom thou see'st.

DEIANIRA
O tell me who these captives are and whose;
So piteous, to judge them by their plight.

LICHAS
He chose them for himself and for the gods,
When he had sacked the town of Eurytus.

DEIANIRA
Was it to take that city he delayed
All those interminable, countless days?

LICHAS
Not so; that time he mostly was detained
In Lydia; by his own account, not free,
But sold in bondage; nor shouldst thou resent
A tale of outrage, when the doer is Zeus.
Thus he fulfilled (these were his very words)
A year of servitude to Omphalë,
The barbarous queen. So grievous was the sting

277
χούτως ἐδήμαθη τοῦτο τοῦνειδος λαβὼν ὥσθ' ὥρκον αὐτῷ προσβαλῶν διώμοσεν, ἢ μὴν τὸν ἀγχιστήρα τοῦτε τοῦ πάθους ξύν παιδί καὶ γυναικὶ δουλώσειν ἐτί κούχ ἠλίωσε τούπος, ἀλλ' ὦ θ' ἁγνὸς ἂν, στρατὰν λαβὼν ἐπακτὸν ἐρχεται πόλιν τὴν Εὐρυτείαν. τόνδε γὰρ μεταίτιον μόνον βροτῶν ἐφασκε τοῦτ' εἶναι πάθους· ὃς αὐτὸν ἐλθὼν ἐς δόμους ἐφέστιον, ἡγον παλαιὸν ὄντα, πολλὰ μὲν λόγοις ἐπερρόθησε, πολλὰ δ' ἀτηρὰ φρενί, λέγων χερῶν μὲν ὡς ἀφυκτ' ἔχον βέλη τῶν ὑπ' τέκνων λείποιτο πρὸς τόξου κρίσιν, φωνεί δὲ δούλος ἀνδρὸς ὡς ἐλευθέρον ῥαίοιτο· δείπνους δ' ἡμίκ' ἢν ὁνωμένος, ἔρριψεν ἐκτός αὐτῶν. ὅν ἔχων χόλου, ὡς ἰκετ' αὕθιες Ἰφιτος Τιρυνθίαν πρὸς κλητόν, ἵππους νομάδας ἐξειχνυσκοπῶν, τότ' ἄλλος' αὐτὸν ὃμμα, θατέρα δὲ νοῦν ἔχοντ', ἀπ' ἀκρας ἦκε πυργώδους πλακός. ἔργου δ' ἐκατι τοῦτε μηνίσας ἀναξ ὡς τῶν ἅπαντων Ζεὺς πατὴρ Ὀλυμπίος πρατόν νυν ἐξετεμψεν οὐδ' ἱνέξχετο, οἴθουνεκ' αὐτὸν μοῦνον ἀνθρώπων δόλω ἐκτείνειν· εἰ γὰρ ἐμφανῶς ἡμύνατο, Ζεὺς τῶν συνεγνων ξύν δίκη χειρουμένων· ὑβριν γὰρ οὐ στέργουσιν οὐδὲ δαίμονες. κεῖνοι δ' ὑπερχλίοντες ἐκ γλώσσης κακῆς αὐτὸλ μὲν ἐα' Ἀιδοὺ πάντες εἰς οἰκήτωρες, πόλες δὲ δούλη· τάσις δὲ ἁ' ἁσπερ εἰσορᾶς ἐξ ὁλίβων ἄξηλον εὐροῦσαι βίον χωροῦσι πρὸς σέ· ταύτα γὰρ πόσις τε σὸς

278
TRACHINIAE

Of his reproach, that by a mighty oath
He swore one day to enslave with wife and child
The author of this foul calamity.
Nor vain that vow. No sooner was he purged,
Than he enlisted straight an alien host,
And marched against the city of Eurytus;
For Eurytus alone of men he deemed
The guilty cause, who when he came a guest
To one by ties of ancient friendship bound,
With many a bitter taunt and bitter spite
Assailed him, saying, "Thou indeed hast shafts
Unerring, yet in feats of archery
My sons surpass thee," or again he'd cry,
"Out on thee, slave, a freeman's down-trod thrall."
Once at a banquet too he cast him forth
When he was in his cups. Whereat incensed,
Encountering Iphitus upon the hill
Of Tiryns in pursuit of his strayed mares,
As the youth stood at gaze, his wits afield,
He hurled him from the craggy battlements.
That deed of violence provoked our King,
The sire of all, Olympian Zeus, who drave him
Forth to be sold, and spared him not, because
That once (his sole offence) he slew a foe
By treachery; had he slain him in fair fight,
Zeus had approved his righteous wrath, for gods
No more than men can suffer insolence.
So all those braggarts of outrageous tongue
Lie low in Hades and their town's ens aved,
And these, the women whom thou seeest, fallen
To abject misery from their high estate,
Are to thy hands delivered. Thus my lord
ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

ἐφειτ’, ἐγὼ δὲ πιστὸς ὑν κεῖμφ τελῶ. ἀυτὸν δ’ ἐκείνου, ἐντ’ ἂν ἁγνὰ θύματα ῥέξην πατρῷ Ζηνὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως, φρονεὶ νῦν ὡς ἤξοντα: τούτῳ γὰρ λόγου πολλοῦ καλῶς λεγήθεντος ἠδιστον κλύειν. 290

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀνασσα, νῦν σοι τέρψις ἐμφανῆς κυρεύ, τῶν μὲν παρόντων, τὰ δὲ πεπυσμένη λόγῳ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΠΑ

πῶς δ’ οὐκ ἐγὼ χαίρομαι’ ἂν, ἀνδρὸς εὐτυχῆς κλύουσα πράξεων τήνυς, παυδίκῳ φρενί; πολλὴ’ στ’ ἀνάγκη τῆς τούτο συντρέχεων. ὁμος δ’ ἐνεστὶ τοῖς εὐ σκοπουμένοις ταρβεῖ εἰς τῶν εὐ πράσσοντα, μὴ σφαλῇ ποτε. ἐμοὶ γὰρ οἴκτος δεινὸς εἰσέβη, φίλαι, ταῦτα ὀρῶσῃ δυσπότμοις ἐπὶ ξένης χώρας ἀοίκους ἀπάτορας τ’ ἀλωμένας, αἱ πρὶν μὲν ἦσαν ἐξ ἐλευθέρων ἵσως ἀνδρῶν, ταῦτα δὲ δοῦλον ἱσχυσιν βίον. 300

ὁ Ζεῦ τροπαίε, μὴ ποτ’ εἰσίδοιμι σε πρὸς τούμον οὐτω σπέρμα χωρῆσαντά ποι, μηδ’, εἰ τ’ δράσεις, τῆςδὲ γε ἥξωσθ’ ἔτι. οὐτοσ ἔγώ δέδοικα τάσδ’ ὀρωμένην, ὁ δυστάλαινα, τῖς ποτ’ εἰ κενίδων; ἀναυδρὸς ἦ τεκνοῦσα 1; πρὸς μὲν γὰρ φύσιν πάντων ἀπειρος τῶνε, γενναία δέ τίς. Λίχα, τίνος ποτ’ ἐστὶν ἦ ξένη βροτῶν; τίς ἦ τεκνοῦσα, τίς δ’ ὁ φιτύσας πατήρ; ἐξειπ’, ἐπεὶ νῦν τῶν ἰπλεῖστον φάκτισα βλέποις’, ὀσφεπερ καὶ φρονεὶν οἴδεν μόνη. 310

1 τεκνοῦσα MSS., Brunck corr.
TRACHINIAE

Charged me, and I, his liegeman true, obey.
Doubt not himself, so soon as he has paid
Due sacrifices for his victory
To Zeus his sire, will presently be here.
This crowns and consummates my happy tale.

CHORUS

Now, lady, is thy joy assured, in part
Present, with promise sure for what remains.

DEIANIRA

Hearing these happy tidings of my lord
How can I but rejoice, as it is meet,
For our two fortunes run in parallels.
Yet one who thinks on change and chance must dread
Lest such success be prelude to a fall.
And a strange pity hath come o'er me, friends,
At sight of these poor wretches, motherless,
Fatherless, homeless, in an alien land,
Daughters, it well may be, of free-born sires,
And now condemned to live the life of slaves.
Never, O Zeus who turn'st the tide of war,
Never may I behold a child of mine
Thus visited, or if such lot must be,
May it not fall while Deianira lives.
Such dread, as I behold these maids, is mine.

(To Iole)

Say, who art thou, most miserable girl,
Mother or maid? To judge thee by thy looks
Thou hast full warrant of virginity,
Yea and of high birth. Lichas, who is she?
Who was her father, and her mother? Speak.
Her most of all I pity, for she shows
Alone the sense of her calamity.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΔΙΧΑΣ
τί δ' οίδ' ἐγώ, τί δ' ἂν με καὶ κρίνοις; ἵσως
gέννημα τῶν ἐκείθεν οὕκ ἐν ὑστάτοις.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
μὴ τῶν τυράννων; Εὐρύτου σπορά τις ἦν;

ΔΙΧΑΣ
οὐκ οἴδα καὶ γὰρ οὐδ' ἀνιστάροιν μακράν.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
οὐδ' ὄνομα πρὸς τοὺς τῶν ἔυνεμπόρων ἔχεις;

ΔΙΧΑΣ
ἡκιστα' συγῇ τούμων ἔργον ἡμυτον.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
εἴπ', ὦ τάλαιν', ἀλλ' ἡμῖν ἐκ σαυτῆς, ἔπει
καὶ ἄμφορά τοι μὴ εἴδέναι σὲ γ' ἢτις εἶ.

ΔΙΧΑΣ
οὐ τάρα τῷ γε πρόσθεν οὐδέν ἐξ ἵσου
χρόνῳ διήσει 1 γλώσσαν, ἥτις οὐδαμᾶ
προὐφήμην οὔτε μείζων οὔτε ἐλάσσονα,
ἀλλ' αἰέν ὁδύνουσα συμφοράς βάρος
dακρυρροεὶ δύστήνοις, ἐξ ὦτον πάτραν
dιήμερον λέλοιπεν· ἡ δὲ τοι τύχη
κακῆ μὲν αὐτῆ γ', ἀλλὰ συγγνώμην ἔχει.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ἡ δ' οὖν ἐὰςθω, καὶ πορευέσθω στέγας
οὕτως ὅπως ἥδιστα, μηδὲ πρὸς κακοῖς
toῖς οὕσιν ἄλλην 2 πρὸς γ' ἐμοῦ λύπην λάβη; 3
ἀλις γὰρ ἡ παροῦσα. πρὸς δὲ δῶματα
χωρῶμεν ἧδη πάντες, ὡς σὺ θ' οἰ θέλεις
σπεύδης, ἐγώ τε τάνδον ἐξαρκῇ τιθῶ.

1 διαλέγει MSS., Wakefield corr.
2 οὖσι λύπην MSS., F. W. Schmidt corr.
3 λάβη MSS., Blaydes corr.
TRACHINIAE

LICHAS

How should I know? Why question me? Perchance
She was of noblest lineage in that land.

DEIANIRA

What, of their kings? Had Eurytus a daughter?

LICHAS

I know not, did not question her at length.

DEIANIRA

Did'st thou not even learn her name from one
Of her companions?

LICHAS

No, I had my work
To do, and had no time for questioning.

DEIANIRA

Then speak to me and tell me who thou art,
Poor maid; it grieves me truly not to know.

LICHAS

Well, if she opens now her lips, 'twill be
Unlike her former self, for hitherto
She hath not uttered word or syllable;
But still in travail with her heavy grief
She weeps and stays not weeping since she left
Her wind-swept home. 'Tis sad and ill for her,
This melancholy, yet 'tis natural.

DEIANIRA

Leave her in peace and let her pass within,
As is her humour. Heaven forbid that I
Should add another to her present pains,
Enough God knows. Now let us all go in,
That thou may'st start at once upon thy way.
And I make all things ready in the house.

[Exeunt Lichas and captives.]
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
αὐτὸν γε πρῶτον βαίνειν ἀμμεῖνας', ὡτεὶς
μάθης ἀνευ τῶν', οὕστιν τῷ ἄγειες ἔσω,
ὅν τ' οὔδεν εἰσήκουσας ἐκμάθης ἃ δεῖ·
tοῦτων ἔχω γὰρ πάντ' ἐπιστήμην ἐγώ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
τί δ' ἐστί; τοῦ με τήν ἐφίστασαι βάσιν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
σταθεῖσ' ἀκούσον· καὶ γὰρ οὖδὲ τῶν πάρος
μῦθον μάτην ἵκουσας, οὖδὲ νῦν δοκῶ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
πότερον ἐκείνος δῆτα δεῦρ' ἀὕθις πάλιν
καλώμεν, ἃ μοι ταῖσδέ τ' ἐξειπεῖν θέλεις;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
σοι ταῖσδέ τ' οὖδὲν εὑργεται, τούτους δ' ἔα.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
καὶ δὴ βεβάσι, χῶ λόγος σημαίνετω.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ἀνήρ ὅδ' οὖδὲν δὲν ἔλεξεν ἀρτίως
φωνεῖ δίκης ἐς ὅρθον, ἀλλ' ἃ νῦν κακὸς
ὁ πρόσθεν οὐ δίκαιος ἅγγελος παρῆν.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
τί φῆς; σαφῶς μοι φράζε πᾶν ὅσον νοεῖς.
ἀ μὲν γὰρ ἐξεἰρήκας ἁγνοία μ' ἐχει.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
toῦτον λέγοντος τάνδρὸς εἰσήκουσ' ἐγώ,
πολλῶν παρόντων μαρτύρων, ὡς τῆς κόρης
tαύτης ἐκατε κείνος Εὐρυτόν θ' ἔλοι
τῆν θ' ὑψίπυργον Ὀἰχαλίαν, "Ερως δὲ νῦν
μόνον θεῶν θέλειν αἰχμάσαι τάδε,
TRACHINIAE

MESSINGER

So be it, but first tarry here awhile
That thou may'st learn in private who are these
Whom thou dost welcome 'neath thy roof, and hear
Matters of import still untold, whereof
I have full cognisance.

DEIANIRA

What meanest thou?
Why dost thou bid me pause and stay my steps?

MESSINGER

Stay them and listen. As my former news
Was worth the hearing, so methinks is this.

DEIANIRA

Say, shall I call the others back to hear,
Or wouldst thou speak with me and these alone?

MESSINGER

With thee and these; the rest are well away.

DEIANIRA

See, they are gone; proceed then with thy tale.

MESSINGER

Yon fellow spake not the straightforward truth
In aught he told thee; either now he's false,
Or else before was no true messenger.

DEIANIRA

How say'st thou? Tell me clearly all thy mind.
These covert hints I cannot understand.

MESSINGER

'Twas for this maiden's sake (I heard the man,
And many witnesses were by, declare it)
That Heracles laid prostrate in the dust
Oechalia's battlements and Eurytus.
Love was his leader, love alone inspired
This doughty deed, not his base servitude
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

οὐ τὰπὶ Λυδοῖς οὖδ' ὑπ᾿ Ὄμφαλη πόνων
λατρεύματ' οὖδ' ὁ Ῥυππός Ἰφίτων μόρος·
ἂν νῦν παρώσας οὖτος ἔμπαλιν λέγεις.
αἷλ' ἢμίκ' οὐκ ἔπεθε τὸν φυτοσπόρον
τὴν παῖδα δοῦναι, κρύφιον ὡς ἔχου λέχος,
ἐγκλημα μικρὸν αἵτιαν θ' ἐτομάσας
ἐπιστρατεύει πατρίδα τὴν ταύτης, ἐν ἥ
τὸν Ἕῳρτον τόνδ' ἐπε δεσπόζειν θρόνων,
κτείνει τ' ἁνακτα πατέρα τῆσδε καὶ πόλιν
ἐπερσε. καὶ νῦν, ὡς ὅρας, ἦκει δόμους
ὡς τούςδε πέμπτων οὖκ ἄφροντίστως, γύναι,
οὖδ' ὡστε δούλην' μηδὲ προσδόκα τόδε·
οὖδ' εἰκός, εἶπερ ἐντεθέρμανται πόθω.
ἐδοξέν οὖν μοι πρὸς σὲ δηλώσαι τὸ πᾶν,
δέσποιν', ὅ τοῦδε τυγχάνω μαθῶν πάρα.
καὶ ταῦτα πολλοὶ πρὸς μέσῃ Τραχινίων
ἄγορᾶ συνεξήκονον ὡσαύτως ἔμοι,
ὡστ' ἐξελέγχειν· εἰ δὲ μὴ λέγω φίλα,
οὖχ ἦδομαι, τὸ δ' ὀρθὸν ἐξείρηχ' ὄμως.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οἷμοι τάλαινα, ποῦ ποτ' εἰμὶ πράγματος;
τὶν εἰσδέθεγμαι πημοιηὴ ὑπόστεχον
λαθραίων; ὁ δύστηνος· ἄρ᾽ ἀνώνυμος
πέφυκεν, ὅσπερ οὐπάγουν διώμυντο;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἡ κάρτα λαμπρά καὶ κατ᾽ ὄνομα καὶ φύσιν,
pατρὸς μὲν οὖσα γένεσιν Ἕῳρτον ποτὲ
Ἰόλῃ καλέιτο, τῆς ἐκείνος οὐδαμὰ
βλάστας ἐφόνει, δὴθεν οὖδὲν ἱστορῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄλουντο — μή τι πάντες οἱ κακοί, τὰ δὲ
λαθραί' ὃς ἀσκεῖ μή πρέποντ' αὐτῷ κακά.
TRACHINIAE

As bondsman under Lydian Omphalè,  
Nor ruth for Iphitus hurled headlong down,  
As Lichas feigned, who shrank to tell of love.  
So, when he failed to win her sire's consent  
To give the maiden for his paramour,  
Picking some petty cause of quarrel, he  
Made war upon her land (the land in which  
Eurytus, as the herald said, was King)  
And slew the prince her sire and sacked the town.  
Now, as thou see'st, he comes and sends before him  
The maiden, with set purpose, to his house,  
Not as a slave—how could he so intend,  
Seeing his heart is kindled with love's fire?  
So I determined, Queen, to tell thee all  
I had heard from Lichas; many heard it too  
Who stood with me in the Trachinian throng,  
And can convict him. If my words give pain,  
It grieves me, but, alas, they are too true.

DEIANIRA
Ah me unhappy! in what plight I stand!  
What bane have I received beneath my roof,  
Unwitting, for my ruin! Is she then  
A nameless maid, as he who brought her sware? 

MESSENGER
Nay, she hath name and fame, a princess born,  
Iolè, daughter of King Eurytus;  
This girl whose parents Lichas could not tell,  
Because, forsooth, he had not questioned her.

CHORUS
A curse on evil doers, most on him  
Who by deceit worketh iniquity!
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
τί χρή ποιεῖν, γυναῖκες; ὃς ἐγὼ λόγοις
toῖς νῦν παροῦσιν ἐκπεπληγμένη κυρῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πεύθου μολοῦσα τώνδρος, ὡς τάχε άν σαφῆ
λέξεις, εἰ τιν πρός βίαν κρίνειν θέλεις.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ἀλλ' εἰμί· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γυώμης λέγεις.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ήμεις δὲ προσμένωμεν; ἢ τί χρή ποιεῖν;

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
μέμυ', ὡς οὖ άνήρ οὐκ ἔμων ὑπ’ ἄγγέλων,
ἀλλ' αυτόκλητος ἐκ δόμων πορεύεται.

ΛΙΧΑΣ
τί χρή, γυναῖ, μολοῦντα μ’ Ἡρακλεῖ λέγειν;
δίδαξον, ὡς ἑρποῦτος, ὡς ὀρᾶς, ἕμοι.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ὡς ἐκ ταχεῖας σὺν χρόνῳ βραδεὶ μολῶν
άσσεις, πρὶν ἡμᾶς κάννεώσασθαι λόγους.

ΛΙΧΑΣ
ἀλλ’ εἰ τι χρήξεις ἱστορεῖν, πάρειμ’ ἐγώ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
ἡ καὶ τὸ πιστὸν τῆς ἀληθείας νέμεις;

ΛΙΧΑΣ
ιστῶ μέγας Ζεὺς, ὥν η’ ἂν ἐξειδῶς κυρῶ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
τῆς ἡ γυνὴ δὴ τ’ ἑστίν ἢν ἡκεῖσ ἁγὼν;

ΛΙΧΑΣ
Εὐβοῦς· ὥν δ’ ἐβλαστεῖν οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν.

1 εἰσόρας MSS., Wakefield corr.
TRACHINIAE

DEIANIRA
My friends, what shall I do? this latest news
Bewilders me.

MESSENGER
Go in and question Lichas;
Perchance, if pressed, he'll tell thee all the truth.

DEIANIRA
There's reason in thy counsel; I will go.

MESSENGER
And I—shall I remain, or what would'st thou
That I should do?

DEIANIRA
Remain, for here he comes
Without my summons, of his own accord.
Re-enter Lichas.

LICHAS
Lady, what message shall I bear my lord?
Instruct me; I am starting, as thou see'st.

DEIANIRA
Thou cam'st at leisure, but dost part in haste,
And hast no time for further talk with me.

LICHAS
If thou wouldst question me, I wait thy pleasure.

DEIANIRA
Say, dost thou reverence the honest truth?

LICHAS
So help me Zeus, I'll speak what truth I know.

DEIANIRA
Who is this woman then whom thou hast brought?

LICHAS
Euboean; of her parents I know naught.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
οὗτος, βλέφ' ὅδε· πρὸς τὸν ἐννέαπειν δοκεῖς;

ΑΙΧΑΣ
σὺ δὲ εἰς τί δὴ με τοῦτ' ἐρωτήσας ἔχεις;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
τόλμησον εἰπεῖν, εἰ φρονεῖς, ὃ σ' ἱστορῶ.

ΑΙΧΑΣ
πρὸς τὴν κρατοῦσαν Δημάνεραν, Οίνέως κόρην δἀμαρτά θ' Ἡρακλέους, εἰ μὴ κυρὼ λεύσοσιν μάταια, δεσποτῖν τε τὴν ἐμήν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
τοῦτ' αὐτ' ἔχρηζον, τοῦτο σου μαθεῖν· λέγεις δέσποιναν εἰναι τῆνδε σήν;

ΑΙΧΑΣ
δίκαια γάρ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
τί δὴτα; πολλαν ἄξιοις δοῦναι δίκην, ἢν εὑρεθήσει ἐς τήνδε μὴ δίκαιοι ὡν;

ΑΙΧΑΣ
πὼς μὴ δίκαιος; τί ποτε ποικίλας ἔχεις;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
οὐδέν· σὺ μέντοι κάρτα τοῦτο δρῶν κυρεῖς.

ΑΙΧΑΣ
ἀπειμι· μῶρος δ' ἢ πάλαι κλύων σέθεν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
οὐ, πρὶν γ' ἀν εἶπης ἱστορούμενος βραχύ.

ΑΙΧΑΣ
λέγ', εἰ τι χρήζεις· καὶ γὰρ σοι συγγιόδες εἰ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
τὴν αἰχμάλωτον, ἢν ἐπεμψας ἐς δόμους, κἀκοιοσθαί δήπον;

290
TRACHINIAE

MESSERER
Hark, sirrah, look me in the face: dost know
To whom thou speakest?

LICHAS
Who art thou to ask me?

MESSERER
Be pleased to answer, if thou hast the wit.

LICHAS
To my most gracious mistress whom I serve,
Daughter of Oeneus, spouse of Heracles,
Deianira, if I be not blind.

MESSERER
My question's answered to the point. Thou sayest
She is thy sovereign.

LICHAS
Whom I am bound to serve.

MESSERER
Then tell me what should be thy punishment,
If in thy duty thou art proved to fail.

LICHAS
Fail in my duty? What dark riddle is this?

MESSERER
My words are plain, the riddling speech is thine.

LICHAS
I go; I was a fool to stay for thee.

MESSERER
Depart, but answer one brief question first.

LICHAS
Ask what thou wilt; thou hast a wagging tongue.

MESSERER
That captive whom thou broughtest here—thou
know'st
The maid I mean?
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΔΙΧΑΣ
φημί: πρὸς τί δ' ἱστορέσ; 420
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
οὐκέουν σὺ ταύτην, ἣν ὑπ' ἀγνοίας ὀρᾶς,
'Ἰόλην ἐφασκεῖς Εὐρύτου σποράν ἅγειν;
ΔΙΧΑΣ
ποίοις ἐν ἀνθρώποισι; τίς πόθεν μολὼν
σοὶ μαρτυρῆσει ταῦτ' ἐμοῦ κλύειν πάρα; 1
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
πολλοίσιν ἁστών· ἐν μέσῃ Τραχινίων
ἀγορᾶ πολύς σου ταύτά γ' εἰσήκουσ' ὀχλός.
ΔΙΧΑΣ
κλύειν γ' ἐφασκοῦ· ταῦτό δ' οὐχὶ γίγνεται
dόκησιν εἰπεῖν κάθακριβώσαι λόγον.
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ποίαν δόκησιν; οὐκ ἐπώμοτος λέγων
dάμαρτ' ἐφασκεῖς Ἡρακλεῖ ταύτην ἅγειν;
ΔΙΧΑΣ
ἐγὼ δάμαρτα; πρὸς θεῶν, φράσουν, φίλη
dέσποινα, τόνδε τίς ποτ' ἐστίν ὁ ξένος. 430
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ὅς σοῦ παρὼν ἦκουσεν, ὡς ταύτης πόθῳ
pόλις δαμείη πᾶσα, κούχ· ἡ Λυδία
πέρσειεν αὐτήν, ἀλλ' ὁ τῆς ἐρως φανεῖς.
ΔΙΧΑΣ
ἀνθρωπος, ὃς δέσποιν', ἀποστητῶν· τὸ γάρ
νοσοῦντι ληρεῖν ἀνδρός οὐχὶ σώφρονος.
 ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
μή, πρὸς σε τοῦ κατ' ἀκρον Οἰταίον νῦτος
Διὸς καταστράπτοντος, ἐκκλεψης λόγον.
1 παρὰν MSS., Bothe corr.

292
TRACHINIAE

LICHAS
I know, and what of her?

MESSENGER
Said'st thou not she thou scarce dost know by sight
Was Iolè, the child of Eurytus?

LICHAS
To whom and when? What witness canst thou bring
To vouch for hearing such a tale from me?

MESSENGER
Scores of our townsfolk—all the multitude
That heard thee mid the great Trachinian throng.

LICHAS
They may have said so, but the vulgar bruit
Of mere surmise is not strict evidence.

MESSENGER
'Surmise,' quotha! Did'st thou not say on oath,
'I am bringing home a bride for Heracles'?

LICHAS
'Bringing a bride?' Dear lady, tell me, pray,
Who is this stranger?

MESSENGER
One who heard thy tale
How a whole city fell for love of her,
That 'twas the passion kindled by her eyes,
And not the Lydian queen who sacked the town.

LICHAS
Send him away, good lady; 'tis not wise
To bandy folly with a brain-sick fool.

DEIANIRA
Nay, by the god, I pray, who hurls his bolts
On Oeta's wooded heights, hold nothing back;
οὐ γὰρ γυναικὶ τοὺς λόγους ἑρεῖς κακὴν
οὔτε ἤτις οὐ κάτοικε ταύτῃ ῤπωθῶν, ὅτι
χαῖρειν πέφυκεν οὐχὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἑαυτῷ.
 Ἐρωτὶ μὲν νυν ὅστις ἀντανιστάται
πῦκτης ὁπώς ἐσ εἶχαρας, οὐ καλῶς φρονεῖν:
οὔτος γὰρ ἄρχει καὶ θεῶν ὁπῶς θέλει,
κάμοι γε: πῶς δ᾽ οὗ χατέρας οἷας η' ἐμοῦ;
ώστε εἰ τι τῶμῷ τ’ ἀνδρὶ τῇ δὲ τῇ νόσῳ
ληφθέντι μεμπτός εἰμι, κάρτα μανώμαι,
ἡ τῇ δὲ γυναικὶ τῇ μετατιά
τοῦ μηδὲν αἰσχροῦ μηδ' ἐμοὶ κακὸν τινος.
οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτ᾽ ἀλλ᾽ εἰ μὲν ἐκ κείνου μαθῶν
ψευδεῖ, μάθησιν οὐ καλὴν ἐκμανθάνεις.
εἰ δ’ αὐτὸς αὐτὸν ὦδε παυδεύεις, ὅταν
θέλης γενέσθαι χρηστός, ὑφθῆσε κακός.
ἀλλ᾽ εἰπὲ παῦν τὰληθὲς ὁς ἐλευθέρω
ψευδεὶ καλείσθαι κηρ πρόσεστίν οὐ καλὴ.
ὁπως δὲ λήσεις, οὔδε τοῦτο γίγνεται:
πολλοὶ γὰρ οὗς εἰρηκάς, οὗ φράσουσ᾽ ἐμοί.
κεὶ μὲν δέδουκας, οὐ καλῶς ταρβεῖς, ἐπεὶ
tὸ μὴ πυθέσθαι, τοῦτο μ᾽ ἀλγύνειν ἂν.
tὸ δ᾽ εἰδέναι τί δεινόν; οὖχι χατέρας
πλείστας ἀνὴρ εἰς Ἡρακλῆς ἐγημε δή:
κοῦπῳ τις αὐτῶν ἐκ γ᾽ ἐμοῦ λόγου κακὸν
ημέγκατ᾽ οὔδ᾽ ὄνειδος. ἢδε τ᾽ οὔδ᾽ ἄν εἰ
κάρτ᾽ ἐντακεῖν τῷ φιλεῖν, ἐπεὶ σφ᾽ ἔγω
ἀκτίρα δὴ μάλιστα προσβλέψασ᾽, ὅτι
tὸ κάλλος αὐτής τὸν βίον διώλεσεν,
καὶ ὑὴν πατρόφαιν οὖχ ἐκοῦσα δύσμορος
ἐπερσὲ κακοὔλωσεν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν
ρέστῳ κατ᾽ οὕρον᾽ σοι δ᾽ ἐγὼ φράζω κακὸν
πρὸς ἄλλον εἶναι, πρὸς δ᾽ ἐμ᾽ ἀψευδεὶν ἑαυτῷ.
TRACHINIAE

To no ungenerous woman wilt thou speak,
But one that knows the inconstancy of men,
Who e'en in joys delight not in one kind.
The gamester who would pit himself 'gainst Love
Is ill advised. Love rules at will the gods,
And me—why not then others weak as I?
So were I mad indeed either to blame
My husband stricken with love's malady,
Or her the partner of his dalliance:
That brings to them no shame or wrong to me.
I have more sense. But if he taught thee thus
To lie, the lesson thou hast learnt is base;
Or if thy fraud is self-taught, thou art like
To prove most cruel, meaning to be kind.
Nay, tell me the whole truth. The name of liar
Is to the free-born man a deadly brand.
And think not that thy lying will not out,
For many heard thy tale and will inform me.
Art thou afraid of me? Thy fears are vain.
'Twould vex me much not to be told the truth;
To know it hurts not. Hath not Heracles
Had loves before (no mortal more than he)
And no one of them ever had harsh word
Or taunt from me; nor shall this maid, howe'er
She dotes, consumed with passion, on my lord.
Nay, my heart bled for pity seeing her
Whose beauty was her bane; poor innocent,
Who brought to wrack and bondage her own land.
All that is past and over, let it sail
Adown the stream of time. But O, be thou,
Whate'er thou art to others, true to me.
ΧΟΡΟΣ

πείθου λεγούση χρηστά, κού μέμψει χρονώ
γυναικὶ τῆδε καὶ ἔμοι κτήσει χάριν.

ΔΙΧΑΣ

ἀλλ’, δὴ φίλη δέσποιν’, ἐπεὶ σε μανθάνω
θυνητῆν φρονοῦσαν θυνήτα κούκ ἀγνώμονα,
πάν σοι φράσω τάληθές οὐδὲ κρύφομαι.
ἐστιν γὰρ οὔτως ὡσπερ οὗτος ἐννέπει.
ταύτης ὁ δεινὸς ἵμερός ποθ’ Ἡρακλῆ
dιῆλθε, καὶ τῆς ἐκεῖος ἡ πολύφθορος
καθηρέθη πατρίδος Οἰχαλία δόρει.
καὶ ταῦτα, δεῖ γὰρ καὶ τὸ πρὸς κείνου λέγειν,
οὔτ’ εἶπε κρύπτειν οὔτ’ ἀπηρυθηθεῖ povτὲ,
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς, δὴ δέσποινα, δειμαίνων τὸ σῶν
μὴ στέρνων ἀλγύνοιμι τοῖσδε τοῖσ λόγοις,
ἡμαρτον, εἰ τι τῆν ἀμαρτίαν νέμεις.
ἐπεῖ γε μὲν δὴ πάντ’ ἐπίστασαι λόγον,
κείνου τε καὶ σήν ἔξου κοινὴν χάριν
καὶ στέργε τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ βούλου λόγους,
οὐδ’ εἴπασ εἰς τῆν ἐμπέδως εἰρηκέναι:
ὡς τάλλ’ ἐκεῖνος πάντ’ ἀριστεύων χεροῖν
τοῦ τῆς ἐρωτος εἰς ἄπαινθ’ ὡσων ἐφυ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΠΑ

ἀλλ’ οὖδε καὶ φρονοῦμεν οὐστε ταῦτα δράν,
kouτοι νόσου γ’ ἐπακτόν ἐξαροῦμεθα,
θεούσι δυσμαχοῦντες. ἀλλ’ εἰσώ στέγης
χωρᾶμεν, ὡς λόγων τ’ ἐπιστολαῖς φέρης,
α’ τ’ ἀντὶ δόρων δῶρα χρῆ προσαρμόσαι,
καὶ ταῦτ’ ἄγης: κεῖνον γὰρ οὗ δικαία σε
χωρεῖν προσελθόνθ’ οὖδε σὺν τολλῷ στόλῳ.
TRACHINIAE

CHORUS
Heed her, she counsels well, and thou shalt win
Her commendation soon, and thanks from me

LICHAS
Nay, then, dear mistress, since I see thou hast
A human feeling for the infirmities
Of poor humanity, I will tell thee all
Frankly and fully. 'Tis as this man saith;
The overmastering passion that inspired
The soul of Heracles was for this maid,
And for her sake he sacked Oechalia,
Her desolate home. This much in his defence
I needs must add, he ne'er himself denied
Nor bade me hide it from thee. It was I,
Fearing to wound thee, lady, I who sinned,
If such concealment should be deemed a sin.
Now, lady, that thou know'st the tale in full,
For both your sakes—thine own no less than his—
Suffer this maiden gladly, and abide
By the kind words thou spak'st concerning her.
For he who never yielded to a foe,
By her was vanquished and by love laid low.

DEIANIRA
This way my thoughts too, as thou bidst, inclined,
Nor will I fondly aggravate my trouble
By warring against Heaven. Let us indoors,
That thou may'st bear a message to my lord,
And, as a fit return for gifts received,
My gift withal. It were not meet that thou
Should'st leave me empty-handed, having come
Accompanied by such a goodly train.

[Exeunt Lichas and Deianira.]
ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

μέγα τι σθένος ἡ Κύπρις ἐκφέρεται νίκας ἄει.
καὶ τὰ μὲν θεῶν
παρέβαν, καὶ ὅπως Κρονίδαν ὑπάτασεν οὐ λέγω,
oùdē τὸν ἔννυχον "Αίδαν
ἡ Ποσειδάωνα τινάκτορα γαίας·
ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τάνδ’ ἄρ’ ἀκοιτίν
tίνες ἀμφίγνυοι κατέβαν πρὸ γάμων,
tίνες πάμπληκτα παγκόνιτά τ’ ἐξῆλθον ἄεθλ’
. ἀγώνων;

ἀντ.

ὁ μὲν ἢν ποταμοῦ σθένος, ὑψίκερω τετραόρου
φάσμα ταύρον,
"Αχελώος ἀπ’ Οἰνιαδᾶν, ὁ δὲ Βακχίας ἀπὸ
ἡλθε παλίντονα Θήβας
tόξα καὶ λόγχας ῥόπαλόν τε τινάσσον,
παῖς Διός· οὐ τὸτ’ ἀολλεῖς
ἰσαν ἐς μέσον ἰέμενοι λεχέων·
μόνα δ’ εὐλεκτρός ἐν μέσῳ Κύπρις ῥαβδονόμει
ξυνοῦσα.

tότ’ ἢν χερός, ἢν δὲ τόξων πάταγος,
tαυρεῖων τ’ ἀνάμυγδα κεράτων·
ἡν δ’ ἀμφίπλεκτοι κλίμακες,
ἡν δὲ μετόπων ὀλόεντα
πλήγματα, καὶ στόνος ἀμφοῖν.

298
TRACHINIAE

CHORUS

(\textit{Str.})

Many a trophy of war the Cyprian bears away;
To tell of the triumphs she wins o'er gods I may not stay,
How the Olympian King and the Lord of the realms of night,
Yea, and the Shaker of Earth, Poseidon, owns her might.
Fitter theme for my song the well-matched champion pair,
Rivals who entered the lists to win the hand of the fair.
Dread the strife, and the sky with dust of battle was full.

\textit{(Ant.)}

One was a river-god, four-footed and horned like a bull,
Oeneadae was his home and Acheloüs his name;
But from Thebè, beloved of Bacchus, the other came,
With bow and with brandished club and javelins twain at his side,
Child of Zeus. So they met and fought for a winsome bride.
But with her umpire wand the Cyprian Queen was there,
Goddess who rules the fight and assigns the hand of the fair.

Hark! the thud of fisted blow,
Crash of horns and twanging bow,
Grapplings close-entwined, and now
Buttings of the hornèd brow;
And amid the storm, in tones
Faint and muffled, deep-drawn groans.
ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

α δ' εὐώτις ἀβρα
τηλαμγεὶ παρ' ὀχθῳ
ἡστο, τὸν ὅν προσμένουσ' ἀκοίταν.
ἀγὼν δὲ μαργᾶ ἕμεν ὁλα φράξω
τὸ δ' ἀμφίνεικητον ὄμμα νύμφας
ἐλεινὸν ἀμμένει
καπ' ὑπαρ θαφαρ βέβακεν,
ὥστε πόρτις ἐρήμα.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΠΑ

ἡμος, φίλαι, καὶ οἶκον ὁ ξένος θροεὶ
taις αἰχμαλώτοις παίσιν ὅς ἐπ' ἐξόδῳ,
tήμος θυραίος ἥλθον ὡς ὕμᾶς λάθρᾳ,
tὰ μὲν φράσοντα χερσίν ἀτεχνησάμην,
tὰ δ' οία πάσχοι συγκατοικτομένῃ.
kόρην γὰρ, οὐμαι δ' οὐκετ', ἀλλ' ἐξενεμένην,
pαρεισδέεγμαι φόρτον ὡστε ναυτίλοιος,
lωβητὸν ἑμπόλημα τῆς ἐμῆς φρενός.
καὶ νῦν δὖ οὖσαι μίμνομεν μιᾶς ὑπὸ
χλαίνης ὑπαγκάλισμα. τοιάδ' Ἡρακλῆς,
ο πιστὸς ἢμῖν κἀγαθὸς καλοῦμενος,
οἰκοῦρι' ἀντέπερψε τοῦ μακροῦ χρόνου.
ἔγὼ δὲ θυμοῦσθαι μὲν οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι
νοσοῦντι κείνῳ πολλὰ τῇδε τῇ νόσῳ.
tὸ δ' αὖ ξυνοικεῖν τῇδ' ὁμοῦ τίς ἀν γυνὴ
dύναιτο, κοινοῦσα τῶν αὐτῶν γάμων;
ὄρω γὰρ ἡβην τῇ͵ mu ev ἐρπούσαν πρόσῳ,
tὴν δὲ φήνουσαν· ἄν υφαρπάζειν φιλεῖ
ὁθαλμὸς ἄνθος, τῶν δ' υπεκτρέπετε πόδα.
tαυτ' οὖν φοβοῦμαι μὴ πόσις μὲν Ἡρακλῆς
ἔμοις καλῆται, τῆς νεωτέρας δ' ἀνήρ.

1 ἐγὼ δὲ μάτηρ of MSS. is clearly corrupt. Jebb suggests, but does not print, ἀγὼν δὲ μαργᾶ

300
But afar upon the sward
   Sate the tender tearful maid,
   While in doubt the battle swayèd,
Musing who should be her lord.
Long she sate and wept forlorn,
Then, like heifer driven to stray,
   Weanèd, from her dam away,
Sudden from her home was torn.

Enter deianira.

Friends, while our herald guest is in the house
Conversing with the captives, ere he leaves,
I have stolen forth to speak with you alone;
Partly to tell you what my hands have wrought,
And to command your sympathy. This maid—
No maiden she but mistress now, methinks—
I have harboured (as some merchant takes on board
An over-freight) to wreck my peace of mind.
And now we twain must share a common couch,
To one lord wedded. Such the recompense
That Heracles, whom I was wont to extol
As model of all virtue, makes me now
For all my faithful service as a wife.
Yet to be wroth with one like him, infect
With this love-plague, I cannot bring myself;
But then to share his bed and board with her—
What wife could bear it? She's the budding rose,
And I o'erblown and withering on the thorn.
Men cull the flower and when the bloom has fled
Fling it far from them. This then is my fear,
That Heracles will leave me the bare name
Of consort, while the younger is his wife.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

άλλ’ οὐ γαρ, ὡσπερ εἴπον, ὄργανεν καλὸν γυναῖκα νοῦν ἔχουσαν· ἦ δ’ ἔχω, φίλαι, αὐτήριον λόφημα, τῆ δ’ ύμῶν φράσω.

ἡν μοι παλαιὸν δόρων ἄρχαίον ποτὲ θηρός, λέβητι χαλκέω κεκρυμμένον, ὁ παῖς ἐτ’ οὗσα τοῦ δασυστέρνου παρὰ Νέσσου φθινοντος ἐκ φονῶν ἀνειλόμην, ὅς τὸν βαθύρρον ποταμὸν Εὔηνον βροτοὺς μισθοῦ πόρευε χερσίν, οὔτε πομπίμωις κόπταις ἐρέσσων οὔτε λαῖφεσιν νεῶς. ὃς καμέ, τὸν πατρίδου ἴνικα στόλον ἔυν Ἡρακλεῖ τὸ πρῶτον έυνὶς ἐστόμην, φέρων ἐπ’ ὀμοις, ἴνικ’ ἢ μέσῳ πόρῳ, ψαυὶς ματαίως χερσίν’ ἐκ δ’ ἴμοι’ ἐγώ, χώ Ζηνὸς εύθὺς παῖς ἐπιστρέψας χερσίν ἢκεν κομῆτην ἴον· ἐς δὲ πλεύμονας στέρνου διερροίζησεν. ἐκθυήσκου δ’ ὁ θύρ τοσοῦτον εἴπε· παῖ γέροντος Οἰνέως, τοσόνδ’ ὄνησει τῶν ἔμων, ἐὰν πίθη, πορθμῷ, οθούνεχ’ ὑστάτην σ’ ἐπεμφ’ ἐγώ· ἐὰν γὰρ ἀμφίθρεπτον αἶμα τῶν ἔμων σφαγῶν ἐνεγκῇ χερσίν, ἢ μελαγχόλους ἔβαψεν ἴους θρείμα Δερναίας ὑδρας, ἔσται φρενὸς σοι τοῦτο κηλητήριον τῆς Ἡρακλείας, ὅστε μὴτιν εἰσιδῶν στέρξει γυναῖκα κεῖνος ἀντὶ σοῦ πλέουν. τοῦτ’ ἐννοήσασ, ὃ φίλαι, δόμους γὰρ ἢν κείνου θανόντος ἐγκεκλημένου καλὸς, χυτῶνα τὸν ἐβαψα, προσβαλουό’ ὁσα ξών κεῖνος εἴπε· καὶ πεπείρανται τάδε.

1 λύσημα MSS., Jebb corr.
TRACHINIAE

But, as I said, 'tis folly to be wroth.
I have a better way to ease my pain,
A remedy that I will now reveal.
Stored in an urn of brass I long have kept
A keepsake of the old-world monster; this
The shaggy-breasted Nessus gave to me
While yet a girl, and from his wounded side
I took it as he lay at point of death;
Nessus who ferried wayfarers for hire
Across the deep Evenus in his arms,
Without the help of oar or sail. I too,
When first I went with Heracles, a bride
Assigned him by my sire, I too was borne
On his broad shoulders, and in mid-stream he
Touched me with wanton hands. I shrieked aloud,
He turned, the son of Zeus, and straight let fly
A winged shaft that, whizzing in the air,
Pierced to the lungs. Faint with approaching death
The Centaur spake: "Daughter of Oeneus old,
This profit of my ferrying at least,
As last of all I've ferried, shall be thine,
If thou wilt heed me. Gather with thy hands
The clotted gore that curdles round my wound,
Just where the Hydra, Lerna's monstrous breed,
Has tinged the barbed arrow with her gall.
Thus shalt thou have a charm to bind the heart
Of Heracles, and never shall he look
On wife or maid to love her more than thee."
So I bethought me of this philtre, friends,
Which since the Centaur's death I had preserved
Locked in a secret place, and I have smeared
This robe as he directed while he lived.
My work is now accomplished. Far from me
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

κακάς δὲ τολμας μητ' ἐπισταίμην ἐγὼ μήτ' ἐκμάθοιμι, τας τε τολμώσας στυγῶ· φίλτρον δ' ἐάν πως τήμιδ' ὑπερβαλώμεθα τήν παιδα καὶ θέλετροις τοῖς ἑφ' Ἦρακλεῖ, μεμηχάνεται τούργον, εὐ τι μὴ δοκῶ πράσσειν μάταιον' εἰ δὲ μή, πεπαύσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄλλ' εἰ τις ἐστὶ πίστις ἐν τοῖς δρωμένοις, δοκεῖς παρ' ἡμῖν οὐ βεβουλεύσθαι κακῶς.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οὕτως ἔχει γ' ἡ πίστις, ὡς τὸ μὲν δοκεῖν ἐνεστι, πείρα δ' οὐ προσωμῖλησά πω·

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄλλ' εἰδέναι χρῆ δρῶσαν, ὡς οὖδ' εἰ δοκεῖς ἔχειν, ἔχοις ἀν γνώμα, μή πειρωμένη.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἄλλ' αὐτίκ' εἰσόμεσθα, τόνδε γἀρ βλέπω θυραῖον ἦδη· διὰ τάχους δ' ἐλεύσεται.

μόνον παρ' ὑμῶν εὐ στεγοὶμεθ'. ὡς σκότῳ κἀν αἰσχρὰ πράσσης, οὕτωτ' αἰσχύνῃ πεσεὶ.

ΛΙΧΑΣ

τὶ χρῆ ποεῖν; σήμανε, τέκνον Οἰνέως, ὡς ἐσμὲν ἡδὴ τῷ μακρῷ χρόνῳ βραδεῖς.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἄλλ' αὐτὰ δὴ σοι ταῦτα καὶ πράσσω, Λίχα, ἐως σὺ ταῖς ἐσωθεὶν ἥγορῳ ξέναις, ἀπως φέρῃς μοι τόνδε ταναύφη πέπλον, δώρημ' ἔκεινῳ τάνδρῳ τῆς ἐμῆς χερός.

διδοὺς δὲ τόνδε φράζ' ὅπως μηδεῖς βροτῶν κεῖνον πάροιθεν ἀμφιδύσεται χροῖ, μηδ' ὁψεταί νιν μῆτε φέγγος ἡλίουν

304
TRACHINIAE

Be thought of evil witch-craft or desire
To learn it; wives who try such arts I hate.
But how by love-charms I may win again
My Heracles and wean him from this maid,
This I have planned—unless indeed I seem
O'erwanton; if ye think so, I desist.

CHORUS
If thou hast warranty thy charm will work,
We think that thou hast counselled not amiss.

DEIANIRA
No warrant, for I have not tried it yet,
But of its potency I am assured.

CHORUS
Without experiment there cannot be
Assurance, howsoever firm thy faith.

DEIANIRA
Well, we shall know ere long, for there I see
Lichas just starting; he is at the gate.
Only do you be secret; e'en dark deeds
If they be done in darkness bring no blame.

Enter Lichas

LICHAS
What are thy orders, child of Oeneus, say;
Already I have tarried over long.

DEIANIRA
Whilst thou wert talking with the maids within
I have been busied, Lichas, with thy charge,
This robe; 'twas woven by my hands, a gift
That thou must carry to my absent lord.
Instruct him straitly, when thou givest it,
That he, and none before him, put it on;
And let no sunlight, nor the altar flame
Behold it, nor the fire upon his hearth,
μηθ' ἐρκος ἱερὸν μὴς ἐφεστιον σέλας, πρὸν κείνος αὐτὸν φανερὸς ἐμφανὸς σταθεὶς δεῖξη θεοίσιν ἡμέρα ταυροσφάγω.

οὕτω γὰρ ἡγημον, εἰ ποτ' αὐτὸν ἐς δόμους ἵδοιμι σωθέντι ἢ κλύοιμι πανδίκως, στελεῖν χυτῶν τάδε καὶ φανεῖν θεοῖς θυτήρα καινῷ καινὸν ἐν πεπλώματι. καὶ τῶν ἀποίσεις σήμ', ὁ κείνος εὐμαθὲς σφραγίδος ἐρκεῖ τῶδ' ὕπον μαθήσεται. ¹ 

ἀλλ' ἔρπε, καὶ φύλασσε πρῶτα μὲν νάμον, τὸ μὴ πίθυμείν πομπὸς ὃν περισσὰ δραν' ἐπειδ' ὁπως ἂν ἡ χάρις κείνου τέ σοι κάμον ἐξυνελθοῦσ' εξ ἀπλῆς διπλῆς φανῆ.

ΔΙΧΑΣ

ἀλλ' εὐπερ Ἐρμοῦ τήνδε πομπεύων τέχνην βέβαιον, οὐ τι μὴ σφαλῶ γ' ἐν σοὶ ποτε, τὸ μὴ οὐ τῶδ' ἄγγισ ὡς ἔχει δεῖξαι φέρων, λόγων τε πίστιν ὃν λέγεις ² ἐφαρμόσαι.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

στείχωσ ἂν ἡδή καὶ γὰρ ἐξεπιστάσαι τά γ' ἐν δόμοισιν ὡς ἔχοντα τυγχάνει.

ΔΙΧΑΣ

ἐπίσταμαι τε καὶ φράσω σεσωσμένα.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ἀλλ' οἴσθα μὲν δὴ καὶ τὰ τῆς ἔννης ὁρῶν προσδέγματ', αὐτὴν ὡς ἐδεξάμην φίλως.

ΔΙΧΑΣ

ὡστ' ἐκπλαγήμαι τούμον ἑδονὴ κέαρ.

¹ ἐπ' οὕμα θήσεται MSS., Billerbeck corr.
² ἔχεις MSS., Wunder corr.
Till he stand forth in sight of all arrayed
For gods to see it, at some solemn feast.
For I had vowed, if ever I should see
Or hear for certain of his safe return,
To invest him in this newly-woven robe,
And so present him duly to the gods,
A votary for the sacrifice new-dight.
And as a token point him out this seal,
The impress of my signet-ring, that he
Will surely recognise.

Now go thy way,
And heed the rule of messengers, nor let
Thy zeal outrun thy orders, but so act
That thou may'st win a double meed of thanks
For service rendered both to him and me.

LICHAS
Call me no master of the mystery
Of Hermes, if in ought I trip or fail—
Deliver not this casket as it is,
And add in attestation of the gift
Thy very words.

DEIANIRA
Thou may'st be going now.
How things are in the house thou know'st full well.

LICHAS
I know, and will report all safe and sound.

DEIANIRA
And thou canst tell him of the captive maid—
How kindly I received and welcomed her.

LICHAS
Yea, I was filled with wonder and delight.
ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

τί δήτ' ἂν ἄλλο γ' ἐννέποις; δέδοικα γὰρ μὴ πρὸ λέγους ἂν τὸν πόθον τὸν ἐξ ἐμοῦ, πρὶν εἰδέναι τάκειθεν εἰ ποθοῦμεθα. 630

ΧΩΡΟΣ

ὁ ναύλοχα καὶ πετραῖα στρ. α'
θερμὰ λυτρὰ καὶ πάγους
Οἶτας παραναιετάτοντες, οἳ τε μέσσαν Μηλίδα πάρ λίμναι
χρυσαλακάτου τ' ἀκτὰς κόρας,
ἐνθ' Ἑλλάνων ἄγοραί
Πυλάτιδες κλέονται:

ὁ καλλιβόας τάχ' ὑμῖν ἀντ. α' 640
αὐλὸς οὐκ ἀναρσίαν
ἀχῶν καναχῶν ἐπάνεισιν, ἄλλα θείας ἀντίλυρον
μούσας.
ὁ γὰρ Δίὸς Ἀλκμήνας κόρος
σοῦται πάσας ἀρετᾶς
λάφυρ' ἔχων ἐπ' οἰκους:

ὅν ἀπόπτολιν εἴχομεν παντᾶ,
νυκαίδεκάμηνον ἀμμένουσαι
χρόνου, πελάγιον, ἵδρες οὐδεν'.
δεὶ οἱ φίλα δάμαρ
τάλαιναν δυστάλαινα καρδίαν
πάγκλαυτος αἰεν οἰλυτο.
νῦν δ' Ἀρης οἰστρηθείς
ἐξέλυσ' ἐπίπονον ἀμέραν.

ἀφίκοιτ' ἀφίκοιτο· μὴ σταίη
πολύκωτον ὁχήμα ναὸς οὐτοῖ.

308
What further message have I? None, I fear; 
To tell him of my longing were too soon,
Before I know that he too longs for me.

[Exeunt Ithas and Deianira.

Chorus

Ye who on Oeta dwell,
Or where the hot springs well
And down the cliffs their steaming waters pour;
Or by the inmost shore
Of Malis, where the golden-arrowed Maid
Haunts the green glade,
Where at thy Gates, far-famed from times of old,
Greeks counsel hold;

Soon shall the clear-voiced flute
Sweet as Apollo's lute,
Echo amid your hills and vales again,
No sad funereal strain,
But hymeneals meet for gods to hear.
For now he draweth near,
The Zeus-born conqueror, Alcmena's son,
His victory won.

Him twelve weary months we wait.
Wondering what may be his fate;
And his true wife wastes away,
Pining at her lord's delay.
But the War-god, with his foes
Wroth, has given at last repose.

Spread the sail and ply the oar,
Waft him, breezes, from the shore,
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

πρὶν τάνδε πρὸς πολιν ἀνύσειε, νασιότων ἐστίαν ἀμέλφας, ἐνθα κλῆζεται θυτήρ. οθεν μόλοι πανίμερος,1 τὰς πειθοὺς παγχρίστω συγκραθεῖς ἐπὶ προφάσει φάρους.2

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
γυναῖκες, ὡς δέδοικα μὴ περαιτίρω πεπραγμέν' ἢ μοι πάνθ' ὅσ' ἀρτίως ἐδρων.

ΧΩΡΟΣ
τί δ' ἐστί, Δηάνειρα, τέκνον Οἰνέως;

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
οὐκ οἶδ'. ἄθυμῳ δ', εἰ φανήσομαι τάχα κακοῦ μέγ' ἐκπράξασ' ἅπ' ἐλπίδος καλῆσ.

ΧΩΡΟΣ
οὗ δὴ τι τῶν σῶν Ἡρακλεὶ δωρημάτων;

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
μάλιστά γ', ὡστε μῆστρ' ἀν προθυμίαιν ἀδήλον έργου τῷ παραινέσαι λαβεῖν.

ΧΩΡΟΣ
δίδαξον, εἰ διδακτόν, ἐξ ὦτου φοβεῖ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
τοιοῦτον ἐκβέβηκεν οἶνον, ἢν φράσω, γυναῖκες, ὑμᾶς 3 θαύμ' ἀνέλπιστον μαθεῖν.

4 ὡ γὰρ τὸν ἐνδυτήρα πέπλον ἄρτίως ἔχριον, ἀργής οἶδ' εὐέρου πόκος, τοὺτ' ἡφάνισται διάβορον πρὸς αὐδενὸς τῶν ἐνδον, ἀλλ' ἐδειστὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ φθίνει,

1 πανίμερος MSS., Mudge corr.
2 θηρός MSS., Haupt corr.
3 ὑμᾶ MSS., Jebb corr.
4 ἀργῆτ' ... πόκρ MSS., Lobeck corr.
TRACHINIAE

Where to Zeus, his vows all paid,
Sacrifices he hath made.
May the magic mantle fire
All his heart with fond desire,
Speed him to his true love's arms
Captive to her subtle charms.

*Enter* DEIANIRA.

DEIANIRA
Maidens, I fear I have been over bold
And ill advised in all I did of late.

CHORUS
What mean'st thou, Deianira, Oeneus' child.

DEIANIRA
I know not, but I tremble lest deceived
By fond hopes I have wrought a grievous harm.

CHORUS
Thou speak'st not of thy gift to Heracles?

DEIANIRA
'Tis so; and I would henceforth counsel none
To act in haste, unless the issue's clear.

CHORUS
Tell, if thou may'st, the cause of thy alarm.

DEIANIRA
My friends, a thing has come to pass, so strange
That, if I tell it, you will deem you hear
A miracle. The flock of wool wherewith
E'en now I smeared the festal robe ('twas plucked
From a white fleece) has disappeared, untouched
By aught within the house, but self-consumed
καὶ ψῆ κατ’ ἀκρας σπιλάδος· ὡς δ᾿ εἰδῆς ἄπαν, ἦ τούτ᾿ ἐπράχθη, μείζον᾿ ἐκτενῶ λόγον. ἐγὼ γὰρ ὅν ὁ θηρὶς καὶ Κένταυρος, ποιῶν πλευραν πικρὰ γλωχὼν, προφανεῖατο παρῆκα θεσμῶν οὐδεν, ἀλλ᾿ ἐσφόξομην χαλκίσις ὅπως δύσηπτον ἐκ δέλτων γραφὴν. καὶ μου τάδ᾿ ἦν πρόρρητα καὶ τοιαῦτ᾿ ἐδρων· τὸ φάρμακον τοῦτ᾿ ἀπερίον ἀκτίνὸς τ᾿ ἁεὶ θερμῆς ἄθικτον ἐν μνηχῶι σάζειν ἐμέ, ἐως ἦν ἀρτιχριστον ἄρμόσαιμι πον. κάδρων τοιαῦτα. ὦν δ᾿, ὃτ᾿ ἦν ἐργαστέον, ἔχρισαι μὲν κατ᾿ οἴκον ἐν δόμως κρύφη μαλλω, σπάσασα κτησιῶν βοτοῦ λάχυν, κάθηκα συμπτύξασ᾿ ἀλαμπὲς ἥλιον κοίλῳ ξυγάστρῳ δῶρον, ὦσπερ εἶδετε. εἰσῶ δ᾿ ἀποστείχουσα δέρκομαι φάτιν ἀφραστον, ἄξυμβλητον ἄνθρώπῳ μαθέων. τὸ γὰρ κάταγμα τυγχάνω ρίψασά πως τῆς οἰος, ὃ προύχριον, ἐς μέσην φλόγαν, ἀκτίνι᾿ ἐς ἅλωτιν· ὡς δ᾿ ἐθάλαπτο, ῥεὶ πάν άδηλον καὶ κατέψυχθαι χθοῦν, μορφὴ μάλιστ᾿ εἰκαστὸν ὡστε πρίονος ἐκβορώματ᾿ ἄν βλέψειας ἐν τομῇ ἔνυλον. τοιῶνδε κεῖταν προπετέσι· ἐκ δὲ γης, οἴθεν προύκειτ᾿, ἀνάζεουσι θρομβῶδεις ἀφρόι, γλαυκίσις ὀπώρας ὡστε πίονος ποτοῦ χυθέντος εἰς γῆν Βακχίας ἀπ᾿ ἀμπέλουν. ὡςτ᾿ οὐκ ἔχω τάλαινα πολὶ γνώμης πέσῳ· ὁρῶ δὲ μ᾿ ἐργον δεινῶ ἐξιεργασμένην. πόθεν γὰρ ἂν ποτ᾿ ἀντὶ τοῦ θυήσκων ὁ θηρ ἐμοὶ παρέσχετ᾿ εὐνοιαν, ἤς ἐθνησchaft; ύπερ; οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ τὸν βαλόντ᾿ ἄποφθισαι
It wasted, melting on the flags, away.
But all that chanced I will relate in full.
The precepts given me by the Centaur-beast,
What time the barb was rankling in his side,
Fixed in my memory, like some ordinance
Graven on brass indelible, I kept.
All that he then commanded me I did:
He bade me hide in some dark nook the salve,
Remote from firelight and the sun’s hot ray,
Till I had need to use it, freshly smeared.
And so I did, and, when the occasion rose,
I took a tuft of wool that I had plucked
From one of our home flock; therewith I spread
The unguent in my chamber privily;
Then folded and within its coffer laid,
Safe from the sunlight, as ye saw, my gift.
But as I passed indoors behold a sight
Portentous, well nigh inconceivable.
It chanced that I had thrown the hank of wool
Used for the smearing into the full blaze
Of sunlight; with the gradual warmth dissolved
It shrunk and shrivelled up till naught was left
Save a fine powder, likest to the dust
That strews the ground when sawyers are at work—
Mere dust and ashes. But from out the spot
Where lay the strewnings clotted froth upwelled,
As when the spilth of Bacchus, from the grapes
New pressed and purple, on the ground is poured.
Thus I for trouble know not where to turn,
And only see a fearful thing I have done.
Why should the dying Centaur then have shown
Regard for me, the author of his death?
Impossible! no, he was cozening me,
TPAXINIAI

χρήζων ἑθελγέ μ'. ὡν ἐγὼ μεθύστερον,
ὅτ' οὐκέτ' ἀρκεῖ, τὴν μάθησιν ἄρνυμαι.
μόνη γὰρ αὐτόν, εἰ τι μη ἤρευσθήσομαι
γνώμης, ἐγὼ δύστηνος ἐξαποφθερῶν·
tὸν γὰρ βαλόντ' ἀτρακτὸν οἶδα καὶ θεὸν
Χείρωνα πημήναντα, χῶντερ ἄν θύγη,
φθείρει τὰ πάντα κνώδαλ'. ἐκ δὲ τοῦδ' οἴδε
σφαγῶν διελθὼν ὕδας αἵματος μέλας
πῶς οὐκ ὁλεῖ καὶ τόνδε; δόξῃ γοῦν ἐμῆ.
καίτοι δέδοκαί, κείνοις εἰ σφαλήσεται,
tαύτῃ σὺν ὀρμῇ κάμε συνθανεῖν ἁμα·
ζὴν γὰρ κακῶς κλύουσαν οὐκ ἀνασχετόν,
ήτις προτιμά μή κακῇ πεφυκέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tαρβείν μὲν ἔργα δείν' ἀναγκαίως ἐχει,
tὴν δ' ἔλπιδ' οὐ χρὴ τῆς τύχης κρίνειν πάροι.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τοῖς μὴ καλοῖς βουλεύμασιν
οὐδ' ἐλπίς, ἠτίς καὶ θράσος τι προξενεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ τοῖς σφαλείσι μὴ 'ξ ἐκουσίας
ὀργῇ πέπειρα, τῆς σε τυγχάνειν πρέπει.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

tοιαῦτα δ' ᾿ἀν λέξειν οὐχ ὧ τοῦ κακοῦ
κοινωνός, ἀλλ' ὃ μηδὲν ἔστ' οἴκοι βαρύ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σιγῶν ᾿ἀν ἀρμοζοὶ σε τὸν πλεῖω λόγον,
eἰ μὴ τι λέξεις παιδὶ τῷ σαυτῆς· ἐπεὶ
πάρεστι, μαστήρ πατρὸς ὃς πρῖν ᾧχετο.

ΤΑΛΟΣ

ὡ μῆτερ, ὡς ᾿ἀν ἐκ τριῶν σ' ἐν εἰλόμην,
ή μηκέτ' εἶναι ξῶσαν, ἥ σεσωσμένην

314
TRACHINIAE

And sought, through me, his slayer to undo. Too late, too late, when knowledge naught avails, My eyes are opened. I alone am doomed, (Unless my fears prove false) to slay my lord. I know the shaft that slew the Centaur scathed E'en Cheiron, though a god, and any beast It touches dies. So the black venomed gore That from the wound of Nessus oozed must slay Likewise my lord. Thus I, alas, must think. Howbeit I am resolved, if fall he must, The selfsame stroke of fate shall end my days. What woman noble born would dare live on Dishonoured when her fair repute is gone?

CHORUS
'Tis true dread perils threaten; yet 'twere well To cherish hope till the event be known.

DEIANIRA
They who have counselled ill cannot admit One ray of hope to fortify their soul.

CHORUS
Men will not look severely on an act Unwittingly committed, as was thine.

DEIANIRA
With a good conscience one might urge this plea Which ill becomes a partner in the crime.

CHORUS
'Twere better to refrain from further speech, Unless thou wouldst address thy son; for he Who went to seek his father is at hand. Enter HYLLUS.

HYLLUS
Mother, I would that of three wishes one Were granted me—that thou wert lying dead,
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

άλλου κεκλησθαί μητέρ', ἢ λύφους φρένας
tῶν νῦν παρουσῶν τῶν ἀμείβασθαί ποθεν.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

tί δ' ἔστιν, ὡ παί, πρός γ' ἐμοῦ στυγούμενον;

ΤΑΔΟΣ

tὸν ἄνδρα τὸν σὸν ἵσθι, τὸν δ' ἔμον λέγω

πατέρα, κατακτέωσασ τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

οἴμοι, τίν' ἐξῆνεγκας, ὡ τέκνου, λόγον;

ΤΑΔΟΣ

ὅν ὁνῆ οὐν τε μὴ οὐ τελεσθήμαι· τὸ γὰρ

φανθεν τὸν ἀν δύναιτ' ἀν ἀγένητον ποεῖν;

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

πῶς εἴπας, ὡ παί; τοῦ παρ' ἄνθρωπων μαθῶν

ἀξηλον οὕτως ἔργον εἰργάσθαι με φής;

ΤΑΔΟΣ

αὐτὸς βαρείαν ξυμφορᾶν ἐν ὁμμασιν

πατρὸς δεδομένως κοῦ κατὰ γλῶσσαν κλύων.

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ

ποῦ δ' ἐμπελάξεις τάνδρι καὶ παρίστασαι;

ΤΑΔΟΣ

εἰ χρή μαθεῖν σε, πάντα δὴ φωνεῖν χρεών.

ὁθ' εἴρπε κλεισθ' Ἑὐρύτου πέρσας πόλιν,

νίκης ἄγων τροπαία κάκροθίνια,

ἀκτῆς τις ἀμφίκλυστος Ἑὐβοίας ἄκρον

Κήναιόν ἐστιν, ἐνθα πατρών Δίῳ

βωμοὺς ὀρίζει τεμενιάν τε φυλλάδα.

οὐ νῦν τὰ πρῶτ' ἐσείδον ἁσμενὸς πόθῳ.

μέλλοντι δ' αὐτῷ πολυθύτους τεύχειν σφαγὰς

κῆρυξ ἀπ' οἴκων ἱκετ' οἰκεῖος Λήχασ,

τὸ σὸν φέρων δώρημα, θανάσιμον πέπλον.
TRACHINIAE

Or, if alive, no mother wert of mine,
Or that thy nature might be wholly changed.

DEIANIRA
What dost thou so abhor in me, my son?

HYLLUS
Woman, I tell thee thou hast done to death
Thy husband, yea my sire, this very day.

DEIANIRA
Ah me! what word hath passed thy lips, my son?

HYLLUS
A word that of fulfilment shall not fail;
For what is done no mortal can undo.

DEIANIRA
What say'st thou, son? What warranty is thine
To charge me with a deed so terrible?

HYLLUS
The evidence of my eyes; myself I saw
My father's anguish; 'tis no hearsay charge.

DEIANIRA
Where didst thou find him? wast thou by his side?

HYLLUS
As thou must hear it, I must tell thee all.
He had sacked the famous town of Eurytus,
And thence returning rich with spoils of war,
Had reached a sea-washed promontory, named
Cenaeum, where Euboea fronts the north.
There I first met him as he marked the bounds
Of altars and a sacred grove to Zeus,
His father. At the sight my heart was glad.
He stood addressed to offer sacrifice,
A lordly hecatomb, when Lichas came,
His own familiar herald, bringing him
δὲν κεῖνος ἐνδύσ, ὡς σὺ προφεβίσσο, ταυροκτονεῖ μὲν δόθηκ' ἐντελεῖς ἐξὼν λείας ἀπαρχὴν βοῦς· ἀτὰρ τὰ πάνθ' ὀμοῦ ἐκατὸν προσήγη συμμυγή βοσκήματα. καὶ πρώτα μὲν δεῖλαίος ἱλεφ φρενί, κόσμῳ τε χαίρων καὶ στολῆ, κατηνύχετο· ὄπως δὲ σεμνῶν ὀργίων ἔδαιετο φλοξ ἀἱματηρὰ κατὸ πιείρας δρυός, ἱδρὼς ἀνήει χρωτὶ, καὶ προσπτύσσεται πλευραῖσιν ἀρτίκολλος, ὡστε τέκτονος, χιτῶν ἀπαν κατ' ἀρθρον ἠλθε δ' ὀστέων ἄδαγμος ἀντίσπαστος· εἶτα φοινίας ἔχθρᾶς ἔχιδνης ἱὸς ὃς ἔδαιντο. ἐνταῦθα δὴ ἴδη βόησε τὸν δυσδαίμονα Δίκαν, τὸν οὐδὲν αίτιον τοῦ σοῦ κακοῦ, ποίαις ἐνεγκοὶ τόνδε μηχαναῖς πέπλον· ὣ δ' οὐδὲν εἰδὼς δύσμορος τὸ σὸν μόνης δώρημ' ἔλεξεν, ὅσπερ ἦν ἐσταλμένου. κακεῖνος ὡς ἥκουσε καὶ διώδυνος σταραγμὸς αὐτοῦ πλειμόνων ἀνθήψατο, μάρψας ποδὸς νυν, ἄρθρον ἦ λυγίζεται, ῥυπτεὶ πρὸς ἀμφίκλυστον ἐκ πόντου πέτραν· κόμης δὲ λευκὸν μυελὸν ἐκραίνει, μέσον κρατὸς διασπαρέντος αἵματος θ' ὀμοῦ. ἄπας δ' ἀνηφήμησεν ὀιμώγη λεώς, τοῦ μὲν νοσοῦντος, τοῦ δὲ διαπεπραγμένου· κούδεις ἐτόλμα τάυδρος αὐτίον μολεῖν. ἐσπάτο γὰρ πέδονδε καὶ μετάρρυσις, βοῶν, ἰύζων· ἀμφὶ δ' ἐκτύπουν πέτραι, Λοκρῶν τ' ὀρειοι πρῶνες Εὐβοίας τ' ἄκραι.
Thy gift, the fatal robe; he put it on
According to thy precept; then began
His sacrifice with twice six faultless bulls,
The firstfruits of the booty; but in all
A hundred victims at the altar bled.
At first, poor wretch, with joyous air serene,
Proud of the glory of his robe, he prayed;
But when the blood-red flame began to blaze
From the high altars and the resinous pine,
A sweat broke out upon him; and the coat
Stuck to his side, and clung to every limb,
Glued, as it were, by some skilled artisan.
A pricking pain began to rack his bones.
Soon the fell venom of the hydra dire
Worked inward and devoured him. Thereupon
He called for Lichas, who, poor witless wretch,
Had in thy guilt no part or lot, demanding
Who hatched the plot and why he had brought the
robe.
The youth unwitting said it was thy gift,
Thine only, and delivered as 'twas sent.
While yet he listened a convulsive spasm
Shot through his lungs. He caught him by the foot,
Just at the ankle joint, and hurled him full
Against a rock out-jutting from the foam:
His skull was crushed to fragments, and his hair
Bedaubed with blood and flecked with scattered
brains.
A cry of horror from the crowd arose
At sight of one distraught and one struck dead;
And no man dared to face him, for the pain
Now dragged him down, now made him leap in air,
While with his yells and screams the rocks resound
From Locrian headlands to Euboean capes.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ἔπει δʼ ἀπείπε, πολλὰ μὲν τάλας χθονὶ
ρίπτουν ἕαυτόν, πολλὰ δʼ οἴμωγὴ βοῶν,
tὸ δυσπάρευνον λέκτρον ἐνδατούμενος
σοῦ τῆς ταλαίνης, καὶ τὸν Ὀἰνέως γάμον
οἶνον κατακτήσατο λυμαντὴν βίον,
tότ' ἐκ προσέδρου λυγύνως διάστροφον
οὖθαλμὸν ἄρας εἰδέ μ' ἐν πολλῷ στρατῷ
δακρυρροούντα, καὶ με προσβλέψας καλεῖ·
ὅ παϊ, πρόσελθε, μὴ φύγῃς τούμον κακῶν,
μηδεὶς εἰ σε χρῆ θανόντι συνθανεῖν ἐμοὶ·
ἀλλʼ ἄρον ἔξω, καὶ μάλιστα μὲν με θές
ἐνταῦθ' ὅπου με μὴ τίς ὁφεται βροτῶν·
ei δ' ὅκτον ὠσχεις, ἀλλά μ' ἐκ γε τῆς ὑγῆς
πόρθμευσον ὡς τάχιστα, μηδὲ αὐτοῦ θάνω.
τοσαύτ' ἐπισκήψαςτος, ἐν μέσῳ σκάφει
θέντες σφε πρὸς γῆν τῆν ἐκέλασμεν μόλις
βρυχώμενον σπασμοίς· καὶ νυν αὐτίκα
ἡ ξώντ' ἐσώφεσθ' ἡ τεθνηκότ' ἀρτίως.
τοιαύτα, μήτερ, πατρὶ βουλεύσασο' ἐμῶ
καὶ δρῶσ' ἐληφθῆς, ὡν σε ποίνιμος Δίκη
τίσατ' Ἐρμώς τ'. εἰ θέμις δ', ἐπεύχομαι·
θέμις δ', ἐπεὶ μοι τὴν θέμιν σὺ προύβαλες,
pάντων ἀριστον ἄνδρα τῶν ἔπι χθονὶ
kτείνασ', ὅποιον ἄλλον οὐκ ὁφεὶ ποτέ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί σίγ᾿ ἀφέρπεις; οὐ κάτοις θ’ ὀθούνεκα
ξυνηγορείς σιγώσα τῷ κατηγόρῳ;

ΤΑΛΟΣ

ἐὰτ' ἀφέρπειν· οὐρος ὀφθαλμῶν ἐμῶν
αὐτῇ γένοιτ' ἀπωθεῖν ἐρπούσῃ καλός.
ὁγκον γὰρ ἄλλως ὅνοματος τί δεὶ τρέφειν
But when his agony had spent itself—
Now writhing prone, now making loud lament,
With curses on his marriage bed and thee,
The bride he won from Oeneus for his bane—
From out the cloud of smoke that compassed him
He wildly gazed and spied me in the throng
Weeping, and fixed his eye on me and spake:
"Come hither, boy, shun not my misery,
E'en if my son must share his father's death,
But bear me hence and set me, if thou wilt,
Where none shall see me more, no matter where;
Or if thou hast no heart for this, at least
Ferry me quickly hence, lest here I die."
So he enjoined. We laid him on the deck
In torment, groaning loud; and presently
Ye shall behold him living or just dead.

Such, mother, is the evil 'gainst my sire
That thou hast planned and wrought. Thy guilt is
plain:
May Vengeance and the Erinys visit thee!
So pray I, if 'tis right, and right it is,
For I have seen thee trample on the right,
Slaying the noblest man who ever lived,
Whose peer thou never shalt behold again.

[Exit Deianira.

CHORUS

Why dost thou steal away thus silently?
Such silence sure is eloquent of guilt.

HYLLUS

Let her depart and speed before the gale
Out of my sight. Why should the empty name
Of mother henceforth swell her vanity,
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

μητρῷον, ἡτίς μηδὲν ὡς τεκούσα δρά; ἀλλ' ἐρπτέτω χαίρουσα: τὴν δὲ τέρψιν ἦν τῶμῳ δίδωσι πατρί, τήμυδ' αὐτὴ λάβοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

'ιδ' οἶνον, ὡ παίδες, προσέμιξεν ἄφαρ στρ. α' τούπος τὸ θεοπρόπτον ἡμῖν τὰς παλαιφάτου προνοίας, ὅ τ' ἐλακεν, ὅποτε τελεομήνους ἐκφέροι δωδέκατος ἄρτος, ἀναδοχὰν τελεῖν πόνων τῷ Διός αὐτόπατῳ καὶ τάδ' ὀρθῶς ἐμπέδα κατουρίζει. πῶς γὰρ ἂν ὁ μὴ λεύσσων ἔτι ποτ' ἐτ' ἐπίπονον πόνων' ἔχοι θανῶν λατρείαν;

εἶ γάρ σφε Κενταύρου φονία νεφέλα ἀντ. α' χρῖει δολοποιῶς ἀνάγκα πλευρά, προστακέντος ἰού, διν δέκετο θάνατος, ἔτρεφε δ' αἰώλος δράκων, πῶς ὅδ' ἂν ἀέλιον ἔτερον ἡ τανῦν ἴδοι, δεινοτάτῳ μὲν ὑδρας προστετακὼς φάσματι; μελαγχαίτα δ' ἄμμιγα νυν αἰκίζει Νέσσου ὑποφόνια δολιόμυθα κέντρ' ἐπιξέσαντα.

στρ. β'

ὅν ᾖδ' ἀ τλάμων ἄσκνος μεγάλαν προορώσα δόμοισι βιλάβαν νέων ἀῖσσουσαν γάμων τὰ μὲν αὐτὰ προσέβαλε, τὰ δ' ἀπ' ἀλλόθρου

1 Gleditsch inserts τόνων. 2 ἔτεκε MSS., Lobeck corr. 3 νέσσου θ' ὑποφόνια δολιόμυθα MSS., Gleditsch corr. 4 αἰσσόντων MSS., Nauck corr. 5 οὐ τι MSS., Blaydes corr.

322
TRACHINIAE

Who in her deeds shows naught of motherhood?
Let her depart in peace, and may she share
Herself the happiness she brings my sire!

CHORUS

Lo, maidens, in our eyes
Fulfilled this day
The word inspired of ancient prophecies.
Did not the god's voice say,
The twelfth year, when its tale of months is run,
Shall end his toils for Zeus's true-born son?
That promise doth not fail,
'Tis wafted on the gale.

Can he when once the light of life has fled
Be subject still to bondage 'mongst the dead?

And if the mists of death enfold him now,
If the doom grips his heart,
Wrought by the Centaur's art;
How racked by venom bred
Of Death, on asp's blood fed,
How in the clutches of the Hydra, how
Can he survive to see to-morrow's sun,
When through each vein doth run
The leprous bane prepared
By the fell beast, black-haired
Nessus, his life to drain,
And vex him with tumultuous pain?

Of this our ill-starred queen,
All innocent, knew naught:
Only the curse to void, I ween,
Of a new bride she sought.
γυώμας μολόντ' ὀλεθρίαισι συναλλαγαῖς
ἡ ποι ὀλοὰ στένεις,
ἡ ποι ἀδινὼν χλωρὰν
tέγγει δακρύων ἄχυναν.
ἀ δ' ἐρχομένα μοῖρα προφαίνει δολίαν
καὶ μεγάλαν ἄταν.

ἀντ. β'

ἐρρωγεν παγὰ δακρύων· κέχυται νόσος, ὅ πόποι,
oiν ἀναρσίων
οὑπω Ἡρακλέους ἁ γακλειτὸν ἐπέμολε πάθος
οἰκτίσαι.
ἰώ κελαίνα λόγχα προμάχου δορός,
ἀ τότε θοὰν νῦμφαν
ἀγαγες ἄπτ' αἰπεινᾶς
tάνδ' Οἰχαλίας αἴχμα·
ἀ δ' ἀμφίπολος Κύπρις ἀναύδος φανερὰ
tάνδ' ἐφήνη πράκτωρ.

HMIXOPION α'

πότερον ἐγὼ μάταιος, ἡ κλῦω τινὸς
οἰκτοὺ δι' οἴκων ἀρτίως ὀρμωμένου;
τί φημι;

HMIXOPION β'

ἡχεὶ τις οὐκ ἄσημον, ἀλλὰ δυστυχῇ
cωκυτὸν εἶσω, καὶ τι καυνίζει στέγη.

HMIXOPION

ξύνες δὲ
τηνὸδ' ὡς κατηφής καὶ συνοφρυωμένη
χωρεῖ πρὸς Ἦμᾶς γραία σημανοῦσά τι.

1 Ἡρακλέους is clearly a gloss, and the true reading must remain conjectural.
2 ἁθύης MSS., Blaydes corr.
TRACHINIAE

Witless a stranger’s remedy she used.
How was her fond simplicity abused!
   Too late her error doth she rue,
   And pearly tears her eyes bedew:
Awe-stricken we await
The swoop of instant fate.

Our pent up tears outflow.  \(\text{\textit{Ant. 2}}\)
Ye gods! did e’er such blow
From his worst foes afflict our King before
As this fell plague? O bloodstained spear that bore
From proud Oechalia’s height
Stormed by the hero’s might,
A vanished bride, how clear
The Cyprian’s wiles appear!
Unseen, thy spear she steeled,
And now she stands revealed.

SEMI-CHORUS 1
Listen! I seem to hear—or do I dream?—
A cry of sorrow pealing through the house.
Heard you it?

SEMI-CHORUS 2
Yea, a despairing wail rings out within,
Distinct; the house has suffered something strange.

CHORUS
Mark ye that aged crone!
With what a cloud upon her puckered brow
She comes to bring us news of grave import!
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
δὲ παίδες, ὡς ἄρ’ ἦμιν οὐ σμικρῶν κακῶν ἦρξεν τὸ δῶρον Ἡρακλεῖ τὸ πόμπιμον.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tί δ’, ὡς γεραιά, καϊνοποιηθέν λέγεις;
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
βέβηκε Δημάνειρα τὴν πανυστάτην ὀδῶν ἀπασῶν ἐξ ἀκινήτου ποδός.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐ δὴ ποθ’ ὡς θανοῦσα;
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
πάντ’ ἀκήκοας.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tέθυηκεν ἡ τάλαινα;
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
dεύτερον κλύεις.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tάλαιν’ ὀλεθρία: τίνι τρόπῳ θανεῖν σφε φῆς;
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
σχετικώτατά γε πρὸς πράξιν.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
eἰπὲ τῷ μόρῳ,
γύναι, ἔνυντρέχει.
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
αὐτὴν διηστωσε.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tὸς θυμὸς ἢ τίνες νόσοι
τάνδ’ αἰχμαὶ 1 βέλεως κακοῦ ξυνείλε; πῶς ἐμήσατο πρὸς θανάτῳ θάνατον ἀνύσασα μόνα;
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
στουδεντὸς ἐν τομῇ σιδάρου.

1 aἰχμὰν MSS., Hermann corr.

326
TRACHINIAE

Enter nurse from the house.

NURSE

My daughters, what a crop of miseries
We are reaping from that gift to Heracles!

CHORUS

What new misfortune, mother, hast to tell?

NURSE

Deianira has departed hence
On her last journey, yet not stirred a step.

CHORUS

Thou canst not mean she is dead.

NURSE

My tale is told.

CHORUS

Poor lady, dead?

NURSE

I say it once again.

CHORUS

Alas, poor wretch! How came she by her end?

NURSE

O 'twas a gruesome deed!

CHORUS

Say woman, how?

NURSE

By her own hand.

CHORUS

What rage, what fit of madness,
Whetted the felon blade, how compassed she
This death on death, herself alone the cause?

NURSE

By the stroke of a dolorous sword.
TPAXINIAI

XOROS
έπείδις, ὦ ματαία, τάνδε τὴν ὑβρίν;
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
έπειδον, ὡς δὴ πλησία παραστάτης.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tίς ἤν; πῶς; φέρε ἐπέ.
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτῆς χειροποιεῖται τάδε.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
tί φωνεῖς;
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
σαφηνή.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἐτεκεν ἐτεκε δὴ μεγάλαν
ἀ νέορτος ἂδε νύμφα
δόμοισι τοῦδ' ἐρινῦν.
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
ἀγαν γε' μᾶλλον δ', εἰ παροῦσα πλησία
ἐλευσόσε οὐ' ἐδρασε, κάρτ' ἄν ἁκτισας.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
καὶ ταῦτ' ἐτλη τις χειρ γυναίκεια κτίσαι;
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
deινῶς γε' πεύσει δ', ὡστε μαρτυρεῖν ἐμοί.
ἐπεὶ γάρ ἦλθε δωμάτων εἰσω μόνη
καὶ παῖδ' ἐν αὐλαῖς εἶδε κοίλα δέμνα
στορινύνθ', ὅπως ἄφορρον ἀντώπ' πατρί,
κρύψασ' ἐαυτήν ἐνθα μὴ τις εἰσίδοι,
βρυχάτο μὲν βωμοῖσι προσπίπτουσ' ὅτι
γένοιτ' ἐρήμου, 'κλαίε δ' ὁργάνων ὅτου
ψαύσειςν οἷς ἑχρῆτο δειλαία πάρος;
ἀλλή δὲ κάλλη δωμάτων στρωφομένη,
TRACHINIAE

CHORUS
Saw'st thou the horror, beldam?

NURSE
I saw it; I was standing at her side.

CHORUS
Saw what? what did she? speak!

NURSE
Herself upon herself she did the deed.

CHORUS
What dost thou say?

NURSE
Plain truth.

CHORUS
Verily this new bride
Hath borne, as the fruit of her womb,
A curse, a curse to the house.

NURSE
Too true; and had you been at hand to see,
The pity of it would have touched you more.

CHORUS
Could woman's hand perform so bold a deed!

NURSE
'Twas passing strange, but when ye hear the tale
Ye'll bear me out.

She went indoors alone,
And in the court she came upon her son
Preparing a deep litter wherewithal
To bear his sire back. Seeing him she fled,
And, crouching by the altar out of sight,
She groaned aloud, "O altars desolate!"
Then each familiar chattel in the house
She fingered tenderly, poor wretch, and wept.
Then roaming through the palace, up and down,
ΤΡΑΞΙΝΙΑΙ

εὖ τον φίλων βλέψειεν οἰκετῶν δέμας,
ἐκλαίειν ἡ δύστηνος εἰσορῳμένη,
αὐτὴ τὸν αὐτῆς δαίμον' ἀνακαλουμένη
καὶ τὰς ἀπαίδας ἐς τὸ λοιπὸν οὐσίας.¹
ἐπεὶ δὲ τῶν ἐλήξεν, ἐξαίφνης σφ' ὀρὼ
τὸν Ἡράκλειον θάλαμον εἰσορῳμομένην.
κἂνω λαθραῖον ὤμ' ἐπεσκιασμένη
φρούριον· ὀρὼ δὲ τὴν γυναῖκα δεμνίοις
τοῖς Ἡρακλείοις στρωτὰ βάλλουσαν φάρη.
ὁποῖος δ' ἐτέλεσε τούτ', ἐπενθοροῦσ' ἀνω
καθέξετ' ἐν μέσοις εὔνατηρίοις,
καὶ δακρύων ῥῆξασα θερμὰ νάματα
ἐλέξεν· ὃ λέχη τε καὶ νυμφεὶ ἐμά,
τὸ λοιπὸν ἣν χαίρεθ', ὡς ἐμ' οὐποτε
dέξεσθ' ἐτ' ἐν κοίταισι ταιὸδ' εὐνάτριαν.
τοσαῦτα φωνήσασα συντόνῳ χερί
λυει τὸν αὐτῆς πέπλον, ἡ ² χρυσὴλατος
προὐκειτο μαστῶν περούσις, ἐκ δ' ἐλώπισεν
πλευράν ἀπασαν ὁλέην τ' εὐφωνυμον.
κἂνω δρομαία βᾶσ', ὀσονπερ ἐσθενου,
τῷ παιοί φράξω τῆς σεχυμένης τάδε.
κἂν ὃ τὸ κείσε δευρό τ' ἐξορμόμεθα,
ὁρὼμεν αὐτὴν ἀμφιπληγὴν φασγάνω
πλευράν υφ' ἵππαρ καὶ φρένας πεπληγμένην.
ἰδὼν δ' ὃ παῖς φ'μωξέν· ἐγνω γὰρ τάλας
tούργον κατ' ὄργην ὡς ἐφάβισεν τάδε,
ὁψ' εκδιδαχθεῖς τῶν κατ' οἶκον οὖνεικα
ἀκουσα πρὸς τοῦ θηρὸς ἐρέξειεν τάδε.
κανταῦθ' ὃ παῖς δύστηνος οὐτ' ὀδυμάτων

¹ The line is corrupt. The translation follows Jebb's conjecture, καὶ τῆς ἐπ' ἄλλοις ἐς τὸ λοιπὸν οὐσίας.
² ὃ MSS., Wakefield corr.
As one or other of her maids she met,
She gazed upon her long and wept again,
Bewailing her own fortunes and the house
Henceforth condemned to serve an alien lord.
Then she was silent, and I saw her speed
Within the bed chamber of Heracles.
I from a coign of spial, unobserved
Watched, and I saw her snatch a coverpane
And fling it on the bed of Heracles.
That done, she leapt upon it, sat her down
And loosed the floodgate of hot tears and spake:
"O bridal bed and chamber, fare ye well,
A long farewell; never again shall ye
Lap me to slumber in your soft embrace!"
That was her last word; with a sudden wrench
She tore the gold-wrought brooch above her breast
And laid her left arm and her side all bare.
I ran at once, as fast as age allowed,
In haste to warn the son of her intent.
Alack! between my going and return,
In that brief space, she had driven a two-edged sword
Home through the midriff to the very heart.

He saw and shrieked heart-stricken at the sight,
Knowing his wrath had goaded her to death.
For all too late from those about the queen
He learned that she in utter innocence
Had done according to the Centaur's word.
Since then, poor boy, his misery has no end:
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ἐλείπτετ' οὐδέν, ἀμφὶ νῦν γογμένος, ὑπ' ἀμφιπίπτοντος στόμασιν, ἀλλὰ πλευρόθεν πλευράν παρεῖ σκείτο πόλλ' ἀναστένων, ὡς νῦν ματαιὸς αἰτία βάλοι κακῆ, κλαίων ὀθούνεκ' ἐκ δυὸν ἔσοιθ' ἁμα, πατρὸς τ' ἐκείνης τ', ὦρφανισμένος βίον. τοιαῦτα τὰνθάδ' ἐστίν· ὡστ' εἰ τις δύο ἢ καὶ τι πλείους 1 ἡμέρας λογίζεται, μάταιος ἐστίν· οὐ γὰρ ἐσθ' ἢ γ' αὔριον, πρὶν εὗ πάθη τις τῆν παροῦσαν ἡμέραν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πότερα πρότερον ἐπιστένω, στρ. α'
πότερα μέλεᾳ 2 περαιτέρω, δύσκριτ' ἐμοιγε δυστάνῳ.

τάδε μὲν ἐξομεν ὄραν δόμοις, ἀντ. α' 950
τάδε δὲ μένομεν ἐπ' ἐλπίσιν κοινὰ δ' ἐχειν τε καὶ μέλλειν.

εἰθ' ἀνεμόσσᾳ τις στρ. β'
γένοιτ' ἔπονυροι ἐστιδώτις αὐρα, ἤτις μ' ἀποικίσειν ἐκ τόπων, ὅπως τὸν Διὸν 3 ἀλκιμον γόνον

μὴ ταρβαλέα θάνοιμῳ

μοῦνον εὐσίδους' ἀφαρ' ἐπεὶ ἐν δυσαπαλλάκτοις ὀδύναις

χωρεῖν πρὸ δόμων λέγουσιν ἀσπετόν τι θάυμα.

ἀγχοῦ δ' ἄρα κοῦ μακρὰν ἀντ. β'

προὐκλαίον, ὄξυφωνος ὡς ἀγδῶν.

1 καὶ πλείους τις MSS., Dindorf corr.
2 τέλεα MSS., Musgrave corr. 2 δίδς MSS., Nauck corr.

332
TRACHINIAE

He mourned for her with sighs and sobs and groans,
He kissed her lips, he clasped her in his arms,
And prone beside her railed against himself:
"By my foul slander have I stricken her,"
He cried, "and now am I bereaved of both,
Of father and of mother, in one day."
So fares it with us. And if any man
Counts on the morrow, or on morrows more,
He reckons rashly. Morrow is there none,
Until to-day its course has safely run.

CHORUS
Which first of woes, which next, (Str. 1)
Wherewith my soul is vext,
To wail, I am perplexed;
One here accomplished,
One hanging o'er my head,
One as the other dread.

O that a gale might suddenly upspring (Str. 2)
To waft me out of sight,
Lest when the Zeus-born hero home they bring,
I die of panic fright.
E'en now, they say, in pains no leech can quell,
Home is he borne, O piteous spectacle!

Ah, not far off, but nigh, (Ant. 2)
The woe that stirred my cry,
A boding wail
As of some shrill-voiced nightingale.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΟΙΑΙ

ξένων γὰρ ἔξωμιλος ἦδε τις βάσις.
πά δ’ αὖ φορεῖ γυν; ὥς φίλου
προκενδομένα βαρεῖαν
ἀψοφον φέρει βάσιν.
αἰαί, ὦ̄ ἀναύδατος φέρεται.
tί χρῆ θανόντα γυν ἢ καθ’
ὕπνου ὄντα κρίναι;

ΤΑΔΟΞ

οἷμοι ἐγὼ σοῦ,
πάτερ, οἷμοι ἐγὼ σοῦ μέλεος.
tί πάθω; τί δὲ μῆσομαι; οἷμοι.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

σίγα, τέκνου, μὴ κινήσῃς
ἀγρίαν ὀδύνην πατρὸς ὠμόφρονος.
ξῆ γὰρ προπετῆς· ἀλλ’ ἵσχε δακῶν
στόμα σὸν.

ΤΑΔΟΞ

πῶς φής, γέρον; ἢ ξῆ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

οὐ μὴ ἔγερεῖς τὸν ὑπνὸ κάτοχον
κάκκυνήσεις κάναστήσεις
φοιτάδα δεινὴν
νόσον, ὦ τέκνου.

ΤΑΔΟΞ

ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ μοι μελέω
βάρος ἀπλετοῦν ἐμμέμονεν φρήν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὁ Ζεὺς,
pοί γὰς ἢκώ; παρὰ τοῖς βροτῶν
κεῖμαι πεποιημένος ἀλλήκτους
ὀδύναις; οἷμοι μοι ἐγὼ τλάμων·
ἣ δ’ αὖ μιαρὰ βρύκει. φεύ.

1 Brunck adds μοι.
TRACHINIAE

Lo a foreign train appear,
And they move with muffled tread,
Mute as bearers of a bier.
Is it sleep, or is he dead?

Enter hyllus, an old man, and attendants bearing heracles on a litter.

HYLLUS

Ah woe is me,
Woe, father, woe for thee!
Alack! I am undone,
Help know I none.

OLD MAN

Hush, son, lest thou awake
The intolerable ache.
He lives, though nigh to death;
Hold hard thy breath.

HYLLUS

What, is he still alive?

OLD MAN

Hush, hush, lest thou revive
And waken from its fitful rest
The plague that racks his breast.

HYLLUS

Beneath this weight of misery
My spirit sinks; it maddens me.

HERACLES

O Zeus, where am I? who
These strangers standing by,
As tortured here I lie?
Ah me! the foul fiend gnaws anew.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΠΡΕΣΒΤΣ

/*! ἀρ’ ἐξήδη σ’ ὁσον ἤν κέρδος συγή κεύθειν καὶ μή σκεδάσαι τῷ ἀπὸ κρατὸς βλεφάρων θ’ ύπνον; */

ΤΑΛΩΣ

οὐ γὰρ ἐχὼ πῶς ἀν στέρξαιμι κακὸν τόδε λεύσσων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὁ Κηναία κρητῖς βωμῶν, ἱερῶν οίαν οίων ἐπὶ μοι μελέω χάριν ἡνύσων ὁ Ζεῦ. οίαν μ’ ἀρ’ ἐθοὺ λῶβαν, οίαν ἢν μή ποτ’ ἐγὼ προσιδεῖν ὁ τάλας ὀφελον ὄσσοις, τὸδ’ ἀκήλητον μανίας ἀνθὸς καταδερχῆναι.

τὸς γὰρ ἀοιδὸς, τὶς ὁ χειροτέχνης ἱατορίας, ὃς τὴν ἄτην χωρὶς Ζηνὸς κατακηλήσει; θαῦμ’ ἀν πόρρωθεν ἰδοίμην.

ἐ ἐ’, ἐστέ μ’, ἐστε με δύσμορον ύστατον, ἐάθ’ ύστατον εὐνάσθαι.1

πὰ πὰ μον ψαύεις; ποὶ κλίνεις; ἀπολεῖς μ’, ἀπολεῖς.

ἀνατέρροφας ὃ τι καὶ μύσῃ.

ἡπταὶ μον, τοτοτοῖ, ἥδ’ αὐθ’ ἔρπει. πόθεν ἐστ’, ὁ 1010 πάντων Ἑλλάνων ἀδικώτατοι ἀνέρες, οὺς δὴ

1 ἐστε με δύστατον εὐνάσθαι MSS., Wunder corr.
TRACHINIAE

OLD MAN
Did I not bid thee keep
Silence, nor scare the sleep
That over eyes and head
Awhile like balm was spread?

HYLLUS
Nay, how can I refrain
At sight of such grim pain?

HERACLES
O altar on Cenaean height,
How ill dost thou requite
My sacrifice and offerings!
O Zeus, thy worship ruin brings.
Accursed headland, would that ne'er
My eyes had seen thine altar-stair!
So had I 'scaped this frenzied rage
No incantation can assuage.
Where is the charmer, where the leech,
Whose art a remedy could teach,
Save Zeus alone? If one could tell
Of such a wizard, 'twere a miracle.

O leave me, let me lie (Str. 1)
In my last agony!

Ye touch me? have a care! (Str. 2)
Would turn me? O forbear!
To agony ye wake
The slumbering ache.
Once more it has me in its grip, the fiend comes on apace.
O Greeks, if ye be Greeks indeed, most faithless of your race!
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

πολλὰ μὲν ἐν πόντῳ κατὰ τε δρία πάντα καθαίρων ὀλεκόμαν ὁ τάλας, καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ τᾶδε νοσοῦντι οὐ πῦρ, οὐκ ἔγχος τις ὀνήσιμον οὐκ ἐπιτρέψει;

ἐ ἔ, ἀντ. α'
οὐδ' ἀπαράξαι κράτα βίας τοῦ στυγεροῦ; φεῦ φεῦ.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ὁ παῖ τοῦ δ' ἀνδρός, τοῦργον τόδε μείζον ἀνήκει ἥ κατ' ἐμὰν ρώμαν· σὺ δὲ σύλλαβε. σοὶ γὰρ ἑτοίμα ἐσ πλέον ἢ δι' ἐμοῦ σφέξειν.

ΤΑΔΟΣ

ψαύω μὲν ἔγωγε, λαβθίπονον δ' ὀδυνῶν οὔτ' ἐνδοθεὶν οὔτε θύραθεν ἔστι μοι ἔξαινοσαι βιότον· τοιαῦτα νέμει Ζεύς.

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὁ παῖ, ποῦ ποτ' ἐῖ; τὰδέ με τὰδέ με στρ. γ' πρόσλαβε κουφίσας. ἐ ἔ, ἵω δαίμον.

θρώσκει δ' αὖ, θρώσκει δειλαία ἀντ. β' διολοῦσ' ἡμᾶς ἀποτίβατος ἄγρια νόσος.

ὁ Παλλᾶς Παλλᾶς, τόδε μ' αὖ λωβάται. ἵω παί, τοῦ φύτορ' οἰκτίρας, ἀνεπίφθονον εὕρυσον ἔγχος, παῖσον ἐμὰς ὑπὸ κλῆδος· ἀκοῦ δ' ἄχος, ὃ μ' ἐχόλωσεν σὰ μάτηρ άθεος, τὰν ὃδ' ἐπίδοιμι πεσοῦσαν αὐτῶς, ὃδ' αὐτῶς ὡς μ' ὀλεσεν. ὃ γλυκὺς Λίδας, 1

1 βίου MSS., Wakefield corr.
2 σοὶ τε γὰρ ὅμμα ἐμπλεόν MSS., Jebb corr.

338
For you I laboured hugely and spent myself, to free
Your land from ravening beasts of prey and monsters
of the sea;
And now in long drawn agony ye leave me to expire.
Will none of you deliver me with sword or kindly fire?

Would God that I were dead! (Ant. 1)
Will no man sever at a stroke this head?

OLD MAN
O help me, son of Heracles, for I am all too frail
To ease him; if thou lend thine aid, perchance we
may prevail.

HYLLUS
That will I, but nor thou nor I can rid him of the
pain
That haunts him to the very end Such doom the
gods ordain.

HERACLES (Str. 3)
My son, where art thou? Raise me, hold me here,
here! (Ant. 2)
Ah me! once more the pest doth leap
Upon me and its fangs bite deep.

Pallas! 'tis torture. O for pity save
Thy father; son, unsheath an innocent glaive,
Pierce thy sire's heart and so the wild pain cure
That from thine impious mother I endure.
Thus may I see her die, like mine her end!
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ο Δίος αὐθαίρων, εὐνασον εὐνασον μ' ὀκυπέτα μόρῳ τὸν μέλεον φθίσασ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κλύουσ᾽ ἐφριξά τάσσει συμφοράς, φίλαι, ἀνακτος, οἷοις οἷος ὄν ἐλαύνεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ο πολλὰ δὴ καὶ θερμὰ κοῦ λόγῳ ¹ κακὰ καὶ χερσὶ καὶ νότοις μοχθήσας ἔγρω· κοῦπω τοιοῦτον οὐτ' ἀκοίτις ἡ Δίος προούθηκεν οὐθ' ὁ στυγνὸς Εὐρυσθέους ἐμοῖ, οἶον τὸδ' ἡ δολώτις Οἰνέως κόρη καθήψειν ὁμοίς τοῖς ἐμοῖς Ἔρωνον ὕφαιτον ἀμφίβλητρον, ὃ διϊλλυμαι. πλευραίσι γὰρ προσμαχθὲν ἐκ μὲν ἐσχάτας βέβρωκε σάρκας, πλεύρονὸς τ' ἀρτηρίας ῥοφεὶ ἵναοικοῦν, ἐκ δὲ χλωρὸν αἶμά μου πέτακεν ἤδη, καὶ διεφθαρμαι δέμας τὸ πάν, ἀφράστῳ τῷ δὲ χειρώθεις πέδη. κοῦ ταῦτα λόγῳ πεδιάς, οὔθ' ὁ γηγενὴς στρατὸς Γυγάντων οὔτε θῆρεος βία, οὔθ' Ἐλλάς οὔτ' ἀγλωσσὸς οὔθ' ὅσην ἐγὼ γαῖαν καθαίρων ικόμην, ἔδρασε πω· γυνῇ δὲ, θῆλυς φῦσα ² κοῦκ ἀνδρὸς φῦσιν, μόνη με δὴ καθεῖλε φασιγάνῳ δίχα. ὃ παῖ, γενοῦ μοι παῖς ἐτήτυμος γεγώς, καὶ μὴ τὸ μητρὸς ὄνομα πρεσβεύσῃς πλέον. δός μοι χεροίν σαῖν αὐτὸς ἐξ οἰκοῦ λαβὼν ἐς χείρα τὴν τεκοῦσαν, ὥς εἰδώ σάφα εἰ τούμον ἀλγεῖς μᾶλλον ἡ κείνης ὅρδων λαμβητὸν εἴδος ἐν δίκῃ κακούμενον.

'θ', ὃ τέκνου, τόλμησον· οἴκτηρόν τε με

¹ καὶ λόγῳ MSS., Bothe corr. ² οἶδα MSS., Nauck corr.
TRACHINIAE

Brother of Zeus, kind Death, be now my friend;
Lay me to rest and swift deliverance send.

CHORUS
I shudder, friends, to hear this woful plaint.
How great a hero, and how ill bestead!

HERACLES
Many and grievous, not in name alone,
The toils and burdens of these hands, these loins.
Yet trial like to this was never set me
By Heaven's Queen or grim Eurystheus' hate,
Such as the child of Oeneus, false and fair,
Hath fastened on my back, this hellish net
She wove to snare me, in whose coils I die.
It hugs me close, it eats into my flesh,
It sucks the channels of my breath, hath drained
My life-blood, and my whole frame wastes and withers,
Fast locked in these unutterable bonds.
And this my fall no warrior's lance hath wrought
Nor Giant's earth-born brood, nor savage beast,
Nor Grecian nor barbarian, nor the lands
Whither I fared to rid them of their pests;
No, but a woman, weak as all her sex,
Hath quelled me, single-handed and unarmed.
Son, show thyself thy father's son in deed,
Mine, not thy mother's—mother in name alone.
Hale her thyself, hand her thyself to me,
The wretch, that when she meets her righteous doom
I may make trial which sight moves thee more,
A mother's or a father's agony.
For pity's sake shrink not; to see me thus
πολλοίσιν οίκτρόν, ὃστις ὠστε παρθένος ἐβέβρυχα κλαίων, καὶ τόδ' οὐδ' ἀν εἰς ποτὲ τὸν ἀνδρα φαίη πρὸς θ' ἵδειν δεδρακότα, ἀλλ' ἀστένακτος αἰεν εἰπόμην κακοῖς. νῦν δ' ἐκ τοιοῦτον θῆλυς ηὐρήμαι τάλας. καὶ νῦν προσελθὼν στῆθι πλησίον πατρός, σκέψαι θ' ὅποιας ταύτα συμφόρας ὑπὸ πέπουθα: δείξω γὰρ τὰδ' ἐκ καλυμμάτων. ἰδοὺ, θεῶσθε πάντες ἀθλιον δέμας, ὃρατε τὸν δύστημον, ὡς οίκτρῶσ' ἔχω.

αια, ἄ τάλας,
ἐβαλ̓λυςς ἅτης σπασμὸς ἠρτίως ᾧ' αὐ, διήξε πλευρῶν, οὐδ' ἀγύμναστὸν μ' ἔαν ἐικεν ἡ τάλαινα διάβορος νόσοσ.
ἀναξ' Ἀὐθή, δέξαι μ', ὡ Δίος ἀκτίσ, ήαισον, ἐνσεισον, ὀναξ, ἐγκατάσκηψον βέλος, πάτερ, κεραυνοῦ. δαίνυται γὰρ αὐ πάλιν, ἦμθηκεν, ἐξόρμηκεν. ὡ χέρες χέρες, ὡ νότα καὶ στερν', ὡ φίλοι βραχίονες, ὑμεῖς δὲ κεῖνοι δὴ καθέσταθ', οὐ ποτε Νεμέας ἐνοικον, Βουκόλων ἀλάστορα λέων', ἀπλατον θρέμμα κάπτροσήγορον, βλα κατειργάσασθε, Δερναίαν θ' ὕδραν, διφυη τ' ἄμικτον ἱπποβάμονα στρατὸν θηρῶν, ὑβριστήν ἀνομον, ὕπεροχον βλαν, Ἐρυμανθίον τε θῆρα, τὸν θ' ὑπὸ χθονὸς ὅ' Αἰδον τρίκρανον σκύλακ', ἀπρόσμαχον τέρας, δεινὴς Ἐχίδνης θρέμμα, τὸν τε χρυσέων δράκοντα μῆλων φύλακ' ἐπε ἐσχάτοις τόποις. ἀλλων τε μόχθων μυρίων ἐγενοῦμην, κούδεις τροπαι' ἐστησε τῶν ἔμῶν χερῶν.
TRACHINIAE

(‘Twould move to pity e’en a heart of stone)  
Puling and weeping like a girl, unmanned.  
So none can boast to have seen me, for till now  
I took whate’er befell me with a smile.  
And now—’tis I who play the woman now.  
Come closer, stand beside me; see, my son,  
To what a pass ill fate hath brought thy sire.  
Lo, I will lift the veil; look all of you  
On this poor maimèd body, and declare  
Was ever wretch so piteous as I.  
Ah me!  
Again the deadly spasm; it shoots and burns  
Through all my vitals. Will it never end,  
This struggle with the never-dying worm?  
Lord of the Dead, receive me!  
Smite me, O fire of Zeus!  
Hurl, Father, on my head thy crashing bolt!  
Again it burgeons, blossoms, blazes forth,  
The all-consuming plague.  

O hands, my hands,  
Arms, breast and shoulders, once all puissant,  
Are ye the same whose thews of old subdued  
The scourge of herdsmen in his savage lair,  
The Nemean lion, a beast untamable;  
Slew the Lenaean hydra; overcame  
That twy-form multitude, half man, half horse,  
Rude, lawless, savage, unapproachable,  
Unmatched in might; and the Erymanthian boar;  
Tamed in the nether world the monstrous whelp  
Of dread Echidna, the three-headed hound  
Of Hades, and the dragon-guard who watched  
The golden apples at the world’s far end.  
These were my toils, and others manifold,  
And none could ever boast of my defeat.
νῦν δ' ὡδ' ἀναρθρος καὶ κατερρακωμένος
tυφλῆς ὑπ' ἀτης ἐκπεπόρθημαι τάλας,
ο τῆς ἀρίστης μητρὸς ὄνομασμένος,
ο τοῦ κατ' ἀστρα Ζηνὸς αὐθήθεις γόνος.
αλλ' εὑ γέ τοι τὸδ' ὑστε, κἀν τὸ μηδὲν ὡ
κἂν μηδὲν ἔρπω, τήν γε δράσασαν τάδε
χειρώσομαι κάκ τώνδε· προσμόλοι μόνον,
ἐν' ἐκδιδαχθῇ πᾶσιν ἀγγέλλειν ὦτι
καὶ ξῶν κακούς γε καὶ θανῶν ἐτισάμην.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὡ τλήμον 'Ελλάς, πένθος οἶον εἰσορὸ
ἐξουσαν, ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε γ' εἰ σφαλησται.
ΤΑΛΟΣ
ἐπεὶ παρέσχες ἀντιφωνήσαι, πάτερ,
συγὴν παρασχὼν κλύθι μον, νοσῶν ὦμως·
αἰτήσομαι γάρ σ' ὅν δίκαια τυγχάνειν.
δός μοι σεαυτόν, μὴ τοσοῦτον ὦς δάκνει
θυμῷ δύσοργος· οὗ γὰρ ἂν γνοίης ἐν ὦις
χαίρειν προθυμεί κάν ὥτοις ἀλγείς μάτην.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
εἰπὼν ὦ χρισζεῖς λῆξον· ὡς ἕγῳ νοσῶν
οὐδὲν ξυνύμμη ὅν σὺ ποικίλλεις πάλαι.
ΤΑΛΟΣ
τῆς μητρὸς ἥκω τῆς ἐμῆς φράσων ἐν ὦις
νῦν ἑστιν ὡς θ' ἡμαρτεν οὐχ ἐκουσία.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ὡ παγκάκιστε, καὶ παρεμνήσω γὰρ αὐ
tῆς πατροφόντοι μητρός, ὡς κλύειν ἐμὲ;
ΤΑΛΟΣ
ἕχει γὰρ οὔτως ὦστε μὴ συγᾶν πρέπειν.
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐ δῆτα τοῖς γε πρόσθεν ἡμαρτημένοις.
TRACHINIAE

Now out of joint, a thing of shreds I lie
Baffled by hands invisible, I who claim
A mother of the noblest, and for sire
The ruler of the starry heavens, Zeus.
But of one thing be sure, though I am naught
And cannot stir a step, yet even thus
I am a match for her who wrought my woe.
Let her but come that she may learn of me
This lesson to repeat to all, that I
Living and dying chastened all that's vile.

CHORUS
O hapless Greece, what mourning will be thine,
If thou must lose thy mightiest warrior?

HYLLUS
O father, since thy silence seems to invite
An answer, hear me, stricken though thou art.
I shall but ask what's fair; O be again
Thy true self, not by pain and rage distraught;
Else wilt thou never learn how vain thy thirst
For vengeance, how unjust thy bitterness.

HERACLES
Say what thou wilt and end; I am too sick
To catch the drift of all thy riddling words.

HYLLUS
'Tis of my mother I would tell thee—how
She fares, and how unwittingly she sinned.

HERACLES
O shameless reprobate, thou dar'st to name
Thy father's murderess, name her too to me?

HYLLUS
Her case is such that silence were unmeet.

HERACLES
Unmeet in truth, because of her past crimes.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΤΔΑΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὔδ' μὲν δὴ τοὺς γ' ἐφ' ἢμέραν ἐρεῖς.

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ

λέγ', εὐλαβοῦ δὲ μὴ φανής κακὸς γεγώς.

ΤΔΑΟΣ

λέγω· τέθυηκεν ἅρτιως νεοσφαγής.

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πρὸς τοῦ; τέρας τοι διὰ κακῶν ἐθέσπισας.

ΤΔΑΟΣ

αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτῆς, οὔδενὸς πρὸς ἐκτόπου.

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οίμοι· πρὶν ως χρήν σφ' ἔξ ἐμῆς θανεῖν χερός;

ΤΔΑΟΣ

κἂν σοῦ στραφεῖ θυμός, εἰ τὸ πᾶν μάθοις.

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ

δείνοι λόγου κατηρξάς· εἶπε δ' ἢ νοεῖς.

ΤΔΑΟΣ

ἀπαν τὸ χρῆμ', ἢμαρτε χρήστα μωμένη.

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χρήστ', ὦ κάκιστε, πατέρα σὸν κτείνασα δρα;

ΤΔΑΟΣ

στέργημα γὰρ δοκοῦσα προσβαλέιν σέθεν ἀπῆμπλαχ', ὡς προσεῖδε τοὺς ἐνδον γάμους.

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ τίς τοσσοῦτος φαρμακεύς Τραχινών;

ΤΔΑΟΣ

Νέσσος πάλαι Κένταυρος ἐξέπεισε νῦν τοιῷδε φίλτρῳ τὸν σὸν ἐκμῆναι πόθον.

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἰοῦ ἵον δύστηνος, οἰχομαι τάλας;

ὁλὼλ ὀλωλα, φέγγος οὐκέτ' ἔστι μοι.
TRACHINIAE

HYLLUS
And of her deeds this day, as thou wilt own.

HERACLES
Speak, but I fear thy speech will prove thee base.

HYLLUS
Hear then. She is dead, slain but an hour agone.

HERACLES
By whom? this portent likes me not; 'tis strange.

HYLLUS
By her own hand, none other, was she slain.

HERACLES
Out on her! she hath baulked my just revenge.

HYLLUS
E'en thou wouldst soften if thou knewest all.

HERACLES
A wondrous prologue! make thy meaning plain.

HYLLUS
The sum is this: she erred with good intent.

HERACLES
"Good," say'st thou, wretch? Was it good to slay thy sire?

HYLLUS
Nay, when she saw thy new bride, she devised
A charm to win thee back, but was misled.

HERACLES
Could Trachis boast a wizard of such might?

HYLLUS
The Centaur Nessus taught her long ago
How to enkindle in thy heart love's flame.

HERACLES
Alas, alas! I am undone, undone,
The light of day has left me; now I see

347
οὖμοι, φρονῶ δὴ ξυμφορᾶς ἵν' ἔσταμεν. ὅθ', ὡ τέκνου, πατὴρ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ἐστι σοι· κάλει τὸ πᾶν μοι σπέρμα σῶν ὀμαιμόνων, κάλει δὲ τὴν τάλαιναν Ἀλκμήνην, Διὸς μάτην ἄκοιτων, ὡς τελευταίαν ἐμοῦ φῆμην πῦθησθε θεσφάτων ὅς' οἶδ' ἐγώ.

ΤΑΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὖτε μήτηρ ἐνθάδ', ἀλλ' ἐπακτία
Τίρυνθι συμβέβηκεν ὡστ' ἔχειν ἔδραν.
παΐδων δὲ τοὺς μὲν ξυλλαβοῦσ' αὐτῇ τρέφει,
τοὺς δ' ἄν τὸ Θήβης ἀστὸν ναίοντας μάθοις·
ήμεις δ' ὅσοι πάρεσμεν, εἰ τι χρή, πάτερ,
πράσσεις, κλύουτες ἔξυπηρετήσομεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ δ' οὖν ἄκοιν τούργον· ἔξικείς δ' ἵνα
φανεῖς ὅποιος ὥν ἀνήρ ἐμὸς καλεῖ.
ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἂν πρόφαντον ἔκ πατρὸς πάλαι,
τῶν ἐμπυνεόντων 1 μηδενὸς θανεὶν ὕπο,
ἀλλ' ὡστὶς "Αἰδοὺ φθίμενος οἰκήτωρ πέλοι.
οδ' οὖν ὁ θηρ Κένταυρος, ὡς τὸ θείον ἂν πρόφαντον,
οὔτω ξωντὰ μ' ἐκτείνειν θανόν.
φανῷ δ' ἐγὼ τούτους συμβαίνοντ' ἵσα
μακτείνα καίνα, τοῖς πάλαι ξυνήγορα,
ἀ τῶν ὀρείνων καὶ χαμαικοτῶν ἐγὼ
Σελλῶν ἐσειλθὼν ἀλλ' εἰςεγραψάμην
πρὸς τὴς πατρφας καὶ πόλυνγλώσσον δρυός,
ἡ μοι χρόνῳ τὸ ἄντι καὶ παροντὶ νῦν
ἔφασκε μόχθων τῶν ἐφεστῶτων ἐμοὶ
λύσιν τελείσθαι· κάδοκουν πράξειν καλῶς.
τὸ δ' ἂν ἄρ' οὖνδὲν ἀλλὸ πλὴν θανεὶν ἐμέ.
τοῖς γὰρ θανούσι μόχθος οὐ προσγίγνεται.

1 πρὸς τῶν πνεύμτων MSS., Erfurdt corr.
TRACHINIAE

In what extremity of fate I stand.
Go, son, thy father is no more; go summon
Thy brethren one and all, go summon too
Alcmena, bride of Zeus—an empty name—
That from my dying lips ye all may learn
What oracles I know.

HYLLUS

I cannot call
Thy mother; she at Tiryns by the sea
Far hence abides; and of thy children some
She took to live with her; others at Thebes,
As thou may' st learn, are lodged; but all of us
Here present, father, will obey thy hest.

HERACLES

Then listen thou and heed me. Now's the hour
To prove thy breed—if thou art rightly called
My son. It was foreshown me by my sire
That I should perish by no living wight,
But by a dweller in the realms of Death.
So by this Centaur beast, as was foretold,
I perish, I the living by the dead.
A later oracle, as thou shalt learn,
Meets and confirms the ancient prophecy.
'Twas in the grove whose priests, the Selli, make
The earth their bed, rude hillsmen, that I heard it
Breathed by my Father's oak of many tongues;
Heard it, and wrote it down, my present doom,
Now at this living moment brought to pass.
Release it promised from my toils, and I
Augured a happy life, but it meant death,
For with the dead there can be no more toil.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ταύτ' οὖν ἔπειδή λαμπρὰ συμβαίνει, τέκνων, δει σ' αὖ γενέσθαι τῷ δὲ τάνδρι σύμμαχον καὶ μὴ 'πιμεῖναι τούμον ὡξύναι στόμα, ἄλλ' αὐτῶν εἰκαθόντα συμπράσσειν, νόμον κάλλιστον εξευρόντα, πειθαρχεῖν πατρί.

ΤΑΛΩΣ

ἄλλ', ὃ πάτερ, ταρβὼ μὲν εἰς λόγου στάσιν τοιάνδ' ἐπελθῶν, πείσομαι δ' ἂν σοι δοκεῖ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐμβαλλε χείρα δεξιὰν πρώτιστά μοι.

ΤΑΛΩΣ

ὡς πρὸς τί πίστιν τῆν ἄγαν ἐπιστρέφεις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ θᾶσσον οἷσεις μηδ' ἀπιστήσεις ἐμοί;

ΤΑΛΩΣ

ἴδον προτείνω, κούδεν ἀντειρήσεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὅμως Διός νυν τοῦ με φύσαντος κάρα,

ΤΑΛΩΣ

ἡ μὴν τί δράσειν; καὶ τὸδ' ἐξειρῆσεται;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἡ μὴν ἐμοὶ τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ἐκτελεῖν.

ΤΑΛΩΣ

ὅμως ἔγωγε, Ζην' ἔχων ἐπώμοτον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰ δ' ἐκτὸς ἔλθοις, πημονᾶς εὐχὸν λαβεῖν.

ΤΑΛΩΣ

οὐ μὴ λάβω· δράσω γάρ· εὐχομαι δ' ὀμοίς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἶσθ' οὖν τὸν Ὅιτης Ζηνὸς ὑψιστον πάγον;

350
Since, then, my weird thus plainly comes to pass,
Thou, son, must do thy part and lend thine aid.
Delay not till I goad thee in my wrath,
But aid me with a will as one who knows
The golden rule, a father to obey.

HYLLUS
Yea, father, though the issue gives me pause
And I misdoubt thy purport, I'll obey.

HERACLES
Well said, but first lay thy right hand in mine.

HYLLUS
Wherefore impose on me this needless pledge?

HERACLES
Thy hand at once; obey and argue not.

HYLLUS
Here is my hand; I do as I am bid.

HERACLES
Now by the head of Zeus my Father swear.

HYLLUS
What wouldst thou have me swear? May I not know?

HERACLES
Swear to perform the task that I enjoin.

HYLLUS
I will and take the oath, so help me Zeus.

HERACLES
And add thereto the curse on perjurers.

HYLLUS
No need, for I shall keep it; yet I will.

HERACLES
Thou know'st the peak of Oeta, shrine of Zeus?
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

ΤΑΛΟΣ

οἶδ', ὡς θυτήρ γε πολλὰ δὴ σταθεῖς ἀνώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐνταῦθα νῦν χρῆ τοῦμὸν ἔξαραντά σε σῶμα αὐτόχειρα καὶ ξὺν οἰς χρῆσεις φίλων.

πολλὴν μὲν ὑλὴν τῆς βαθυρρίζου δρυὸς κείραντα, πολλὸν δὲ ἄρσεν ἐκτεμόνθ' ὅμοιον ἔλαιον, σῶμα τοῦμὸν ἐμβαλεῖν, καὶ πενίκηνης λαβόντα λαμπάδος σέλας πρῆσαι. γόου δὲ μηδὲν εἰσίτω δάκρυ, ἀλλ' ἀστένακτος κἀδάκρυτος, εἶπερ εἰ τοῦτ' ἄνδρός, ἔρξον· εἰ δὲ μῆ, μενὸν σ' ἐγὼ καὶ νέρθεν ὃν ἄραῖος εἰςαεί βαρύς.

ΤΑΛΟΣ

οἶμοι, πάτερ, τί δ' εἴπας; οἶλα μ' εἰργασαί.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὁποῖα δραστεί ἐστίν· εἰ δὲ μῆ, πατρὸς ἄλλου γενοῦ του μηδ' ἐμὸς κληθής ἐτι.

ΤΑΛΟΣ

οἶμοι μάλ' αὖθις, οἶά μ' ἐκκαλεῖ, πάτερ, φονέα γενέσθαι καὶ παλαμαῖον σέθεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ δητ' ἐγγωγ', ἀλλ' ὅν ἐχὼ παιῶνιν καὶ μοῦνον ἰατῆρα τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν.

ΤΑΛΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ὑπαίθων σῶμ' ἀν ἱῷμην τὸ σῶν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ φοβεῖ πρὸς τοῦτο, τάλλα γ' ἐργασαί.

ΤΑΛΟΣ

φορᾶς γε τοι φθόνησις οὐ γενήσεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἡ καὶ πυρᾶς πλήρωμα τῆς εἰρημένης;
HYLLUS
Yea, I have climbed it oft to sacrifice.

HERACLES
Thither thyself, thou with what friends thou wilt,
Must carry me. From the deep-rooted oak
Lop many a branch, and many a faggot hew
From the wild-olive’s lusty stock, and lay me
Upon the pyre. Kindle a torch of pine,
And fire it. Not a tear or wail or moan!
Unweeping, un lamenting must thou do
Thy part and prove thou art indeed my son.
Fail, and my ghost shall haunt thee ever more.

HYLLUS
O father, canst thou mean it? Hear I right?

HERACLES
Thou hast thy charge. If thou refuse it, get
Another sire, be called no more my son.

HYLLUS
O woe is me! What dost thou ask, that I
Should be thy murderer, a parricide?

HERACLES
Not so, but healer of my sufferings,
The one physician that can cure my pains.

HYLLUS
How can I heal thy stricken frame by fire?

HERACLES
Well, if thou shrink from this, perform the rest.

HYLLUS
The task of bearing thee I will not grudge.

HERACLES
Nor yet to heap the pyre, as I have bid?
 Ipsum ipsum
TRACHINIAE

HYLLUS
So that I light it not with my own hands; All else I will perform and do my part.

HERACLES
That will suffice. But add one other boon, A little one, to crown the great ones given.

HYLLUS
It shall be granted, be it ne’er so great.

HERACLES
Thou know’st the maiden, child of Eurytus?

HYLLUS
Methinks thou meanest Iolè.

HERACLES
None else.
This is my charge to thee concerning her. When I am dead, if thou wouldst keep the oath Thou sworest to obey thy father’s will, Take her to wife, let not another have her Who by my side hath lain; but thine, my son— Thine let her be, joined in the marriage bond. Much hast thou granted, to refuse one more, One little boon, would cancel all the score.

HYLLUS
Ah me! ’tis ill to quarrel with one sick— But who could bear to see him in this mind?

HERACLES
Thy murmuring augurs disobedience.

HYLLUS
What her, the sole cause of my mother’s death, And worse, the cause of this thy grievous plight!
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

tis taiv't òn, osios, x' xalastorwn vosoi, eloiito; kreasoun kàmë, ò pàter, thaneiv ò toisvin échidstoisi synnaiein omou.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ánhri òd', òs éoikevn, ou vemeiv émou
phiinoi moirain alla ton thevon arà
mevei 'apisthesanta tois émois lógois.

ΤΑΛΟΣ
ômou, tâx', òs eoikeas, òs voses fрасeis.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ou gar m' âpi evnasthetaenos ekkineis kakou.

ΤΑΛΟΣ
dèilaios, òs ès pollà tâporein éxw.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ou gar dikaios tou futeusantos kliven.

ΤΑΛΟΣ
all' ekdidaxhò deita duosebein, pâter;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ou duosebeia, tou'mon ei térfeis kéar.

ΤΑΛΟΣ
prascein anwgas ou'n me pandikos tâde;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ëgoge: tou'ton márturas kalò theous.

ΤΑΛΟΣ
tougâr poi'son covk ápòsomai, to són theosì deiknus èrgon. ou gar òn pote
kakos faneïn sou ge pisteusas, pâter.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
kalòs teleutáas, kata' toisde tina xàrìn
tacheian, ò pài, prôseis, òs prin empestesin
sparagmon ò tina' oîstron, ès purán me òði.
TRACHINIAE

Who, were he not possessed of fiends, would do it? Better, my father, I with thee should die Than live united with our direst foe.

HERACLES

The boy, it seems, is not inclined to heed A father's dying prayer; but heaven's curse Awaits full sure a disobedient son.

HYLLUS

I fear thy frenzy soon will show itself.

HERACLES

Yea, for thou wakenest my pain that slept.

HYLLUS

O what a coil of dread perplexities!

HERACLES

Because thou wilt not deign to heed thy sire.

HYLLUS

What, must I learn impiety from thee?

HERACLES

'Tis piety to glad a father's heart.

HYLLUS

I have thy warrant then for what I do?

HERACLES

I call the gods to witness it is just.

HYLLUS

Then I consent and hesitate no more. Let heaven attest this act of thine, for I Cannot be blamed for filial piety.

HERACLES

Thou endest well. Now crown thy gracious words With action; haste and lay me on the pyre Before the spasms and fever-fit return.
ΤΡΑΧΙΝΙΑΙ

άγ' ἐγκονεῖτ', αὐρεσθε· παῦλα τοῖς κακῶν αὐτῆ, τελευτὴ τούδε τάυτρος ύστάτη.

ΤΑΛΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὔδεν εἴργει σω' τελειούσθαι τάδε, ἐπεὶ κελεύεις καξαναγκάζεις, πάτερ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀγε νυν, πρὶν τίνιδ' ἀνακινήσαι νόσουν, ὂς ψυχή σκληρᾶ, χάλυβος λιθοκόλλητον στόμιον παρέχουσι', ἀνάπαυε βοήν, ὡς ἐπίχαρτον τελέουσι' ἀκεούσιον ἔργον.

ΤΑΛΟΣ

αἰρετ', ὁπταδό, μεγάλην μὲν ἐμοὶ τούτων θέμενοι συγγρωμοσύνην, μεγάλην δὲ θεῶν ἀγνωμοσύνην εἰδότες ἔργων τῶν πρασσομένων, οἱ φύσαντες καὶ κληξόμενοι πατέρες τοιαῦτ' ἐφορῶσι πάθη. τὰ μὲν οὖν μέλλοντ' οὔδεις ἐφορᾶ, τὰ δὲ νῦν ἔστωτ' οἴκτρα μὲν ἡμῖν, αἰσχρὰ δ' ἐκείνοις, χαλεπώτατα δ' οὖν ἀνδρῶν πάντων τῷ τίνιδ' ἀτην ὑπέχοντι.

λείπον μυθε' σὺ, παρθεν', ἀπ' οἴκων, μεγάλους μὲν ἴδούσα νέους θανάτους, πολλὰ δὲ πήματα καὶ καυνοπαθῆ, κούδεν τούτων ὁ τι μὴ Ζεὺς.
(To attendants)

Ho, haste and lift me. Thus I find repose
The end and consummation of my woes.

HYLLUS

Since, father, this thou straitly dost command,
Naught hinders the fulfilment of thy will.

HERACLES

Rouse, arm thyself, O stubborn heart,
Before again the plague upstart;
Set on thy lips a curb of steel,
Thy mouth let stony silence seal;
Go meet thy doom without a cry,
A victim, happy thus to die.

HYLLUS

Lift him, men, nor take amiss
That I bear a part in this.
We are blameless, but confess
That the gods are pitiless.
Children they beget, and claim
Worship in a father's name,
Yet with apathetic eye
Look upon such agony.
What is yet to be none knows,
But the present's fraught with woes,
Woes for us, for them deep shame;
And of all beneath the sun
Worse than he hath suffered none.

Come, maidens, come away!
Horrors have ye seen this day,
Dire death and direr fall:
And Zeus hath wrought it all.

[Exeunt omnes.]
PHILOCTETES
ARGUMENT.

Nine years before the play begins Philoctetes, afflicted by a noisome wound, had been landed by the Greek chiefs on the desert island of Lemnos. He bore with him the famous bow and arrows of Heracles; and without these, as a seer afterwards declared to them, Troy could not be taken. So Odysseus was commissioned to bring back by force or fraud the hero and his arms, and he took with him, to aid him in his purpose, the son of Achilles, Philoctetes' dearest friend.

When the play begins Odysseus has landed and is instructing Neoptolemus in his part. He is to find Philoctetes and reveal who he is, but pretend that he has come to take him back, not to Troy, but home to Greece. Neoptolemus at first indignantly declines the task and is hardly persuaded to play the traitor. He meets Philoctetes coming forth from his cave, makes himself known, and, to gain his confidence, relates fictitious wrongs that he, too, has suffered at the hands of the Greeks. He consents to take Philoctetes home, but as they are starting for the ship a merchant-captain appears (a sailor disguised by Odysseus) who tells them that the Greek captains have sent in pursuit of both. They hasten their departure, but first visit the cave that Philoctetes may fetch away the simples he needs to dress his wound.
ARGUMENT

As he is leaving the cave Philoctetes is seized with a paroxysm of pain. Knowing that after such attacks deep slumber is wont to follow, he entrusts his bow and arrows to Neoptolemus who swears to keep them safe and restore them to their owner. On awakening he demands his bow, but Neoptolemus refuses to give it back and confesses the plot that Philoctetes now suspects. Stung by the denouncement of his treachery and the pathetic appeal to his better nature, Neoptolemus repents him and is in the act of restoring the bow, when Odysseus, who has been watching the scene in hiding, appears to prevent him. The bow Odysseus will have; Philoctetes may go or stay as he chooses. The pair depart together for the ships and Philoctetes is left behind with the chorus of sailors who endeavour to persuade him to return with them. But he is obdurate and they are about to leave him when Neoptolemus is seen hurrying back with the bow, closely followed by Odysseus who tries in vain to arrest him and threatens to denounce him as a traitor to the host. Philoctetes regains his bow and would have used it to let fly a mortal shaft at Odysseus, had not Neoptolemus stayed his hand. Again he is urged to go back to Troy and again he refuses. Neoptolemus true to his word, reluctantly agrees to convey him home. At this point an apparition is seen in the air above them, the divine form of Heracles, sent by Zeus from Olympus to bid Philoctetes go back to Troy with Neoptolemus and so fulfil the oracle. At last he bows to the will of Heaven.
TA TOY ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΩΔΣΣΣΕΤΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΣΚΟΠΟΣ & ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Odysseus.
Neoptolemus.
Philoctetes.
Sailor (disguised as Merchant Captain).
Heracles.
Chorus, Scyrian sailors of Neoptolemus' Crew.

Scene: Rocky Coast on the Island of Lemnos.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

'Ακτῆ μὲν ἦδε τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς
Λήμνου, βροτοῖς ἀστιππος οὐδ' οἰκουμένη,
ἐνθ', ὦ κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἑλλήνων τραφεὶς
'Αχιλλεῶς παῖ Νέοπτόλεμε, τὸν Μηλία
Ποιαντὸς ύδιν ἐξέθηκ', ἐγὼ ποτε,
tαχθεῖς τόδε ἔρδειν τῶν ἀνασσόντων ὕπο,
nόσῳ καταστάξοντα διαβόρφ πόδαν:
οτ' οὔτε λοιβῆς ἢμῖν οὔτε θυμάτων
παρὴν ἑκέλαιοις προσθυγεὶν, ἀλλ' ἀγρίαις
κατείχ' ἀεὶ πάν στρατόπεδον δυσφημίαις,
βοῶν, στενάζων. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τί δεῖ
λέγειν; ἀκμὴ γὰρ οὐ μακρῶν ἢμῖν λόγων,
μὴ καὶ μάθη μ' ἢκοιτα κάκχεω τὸ πάν
σόφισμα, τῶν νῦν αὐτίχ' αἰρήσειν δοκῶ.
ἀλλ' ἔργον ἤδη σὸν τὰ λοίφ' ὑπηρετεῖν
σκοπεῖν β' ὑπού στ' ἐνταῦθα δίστομος πέτρα
tοιάδ', ὕν' ἐν ψύχει μὲν ἡλίῳ διπλῇ
πάρεστιν ἐνθάκησις, ἐν θέρει δ' ὑπνον
dι' ἀμφιτρήτος αὐλίου πέμπει πυνήν.
βαιόν δ' ἐνερθεῖν ἐξ ἀριστερὰς τὰχ' ἀν
ἵδοις ποτὸν κρηναίον, εἴπερ ἑστὶ σῶν.
ά μοι προσελθὼν σίγα σήμαιν' εἵτ' ἐκεῖ
Enter Odysseus, Neoptolemus; in the background, a sailor.

Odysseus

Son of Achilles, Neoptolemus,
Sprung from the noblest of the Grecian host,
This is the beach of Lemnos, sea-girt isle,
A land untrod, untenanted, where once,
As bidden by the chiefs, I put ashore
The Malian, son of Poeas, grievously
Afflicted by his foot's envenomed wound.
For us there was no peace at sacrifice
Or at libations, but the whole camp rang
With his discordant screams and savage yells,
Moaning and groaning. But what skills it now
To tell this tale? No time for large discourse
That might betray our presence and undo
The plot I've laid to catch him presently.
To work! it rests with thee to play thy part,
And help me to discover hereabouts
A cave with double mouth by nature made
To catch on either side the winter sun,
Or by the breeze that through the archway blows
Invite in summer's heat to gentle sleep;
And lower down, a little to the left,
A spring, if still it flows, thou art like to find.
Go warily to work and bring me word,
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

χώρον τὸν αὐτὸν τὸν τόμον ἐτ' εἰτ' ἄλλη κυρεί, ὡς ταξίδουσα τῶν λόγων σὺ μὲν κλύσι, ἔγω δὲ φράζω, κοινά δ' ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἡ.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἀναξ Ὄδυσσεῦ, τοῦργον οὐ μακρὰν λέγεις: δοκῶ γὰρ οἶνον ἔπασ άντρον εἰσοράν.

ΟΔΣΣΕΤΣ
ἀνωθεν ἢ κάτωθεν; οὐ γὰρ ἐννοῶ.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
τόδ' ἐξύπερθε καὶ στίβου γ' οὐδεὶς κτύπος.

ΟΔΣΣΕΤΣ
όρα καθ' ὑπνον μὴ καταυλισθεῖς κυρεί.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ὁρῶ κενὴν οἴκησιν ἀνθρώπων δίχα.

ΟΔΣΣΕΤΣ
οὐδ' ἐνδον οἰκοποιός ἐστί τις τροφή;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
στιπτὴ γε φυλλὰς ὡς ἐναιλίξουτί τω.

ΟΔΣΣΕΤΣ
τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔρημα, κοὐδέν ἐσθ' ὑπόστεγον;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
αὐτόξυλον γ' ἐκπώμα, φλάυρουργοῦ τινος τεχνῆματ' ἀνδρός, καὶ πυρεῖ ὀμοῦ τάδε.

ΟΔΣΣΕΤΣ
κείνον τὸ θησαύρισμα σημαίνεις τόδε.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἰοῦ ιοῦ καὶ ταῦτά γ' ἄλλα θάλπτεται ῥάκη, βαρείας τον νοσηλείας πλέα.

ΟΔΣΣΕΤΣ
ἀνὴρ κατοικεῖ τούς τοὺς τόπους σαφῶς, καὶστ' οὖχ ἐκάς που: πῶς γὰρ ἄν νοσῶν ἀνὴρ

1 πρὸς αὐτὸν MSS., Blaydes corr.
PHILOCTETES

Whether he still is there or further gone.
That done, thy part will be to listen, mine
To instruct, that both may gain our common end.

NEOPTOLEMUS

No distant quest, my lord Odysseus, this;
Here, if I err not, is the cave thou seek'st.

ODYSSEUS

Above me or below? I see it not.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Up there; but not a footfall can I hear.

ODYSSEUS

Look if he be not gone within to rest.

NEOPTOLEMUS

The chamber's empty; no man is within.

ODYSSEUS

And no provision for a man's abode?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Litter of trodden leaves as for a couch.

ODYSSEUS

And is that all—no other sign of life?

NEOPTOLEMUS

A cup of uncouth handiwork, rough hewn
From out a log; some tinder, too, I see.

ODYSSEUS

These are his household treasures.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Faugh! and here

Spread in the sun to dry, are filthy rags
Dank with the ooze of some malignant sore.

ODYSSEUS

This clearly is his dwelling-place, and he
Hard by, for how could any travel far

VOL. II.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
κώλον παλαιᾷ κηρὶ προσβαίη μακράν;
άλλ’ ἦ τι φορβῆς νόστον ἐξελήλυθεν
ἡ φύλλον εἰ τι νόδυνον κάτοιδε ποι.
τὸν οὖν παρόντα πέμψαν εἰς κατασκοπήν,
μὴ καὶ λάθη με προσπεσῶν. ὡς μᾶλλον ἄν
ἐλοιτό μ’ ἠ τοὺς πάντας Ἀργείους λαβεῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
άλλ’ ἔρχεται τε καὶ φυλάξεται στίβος.
σὺ δ’, εἴ τι χρῆσεις, φρύζε δευτέρῳ λόγῳ.

ΟΔΥΣΕΙΣ
'Αχιλλέως παῖ, δεῖ σ’ ἐφ’ οἴς ἐλήλυθας
δευναίον εἶναι, μὴ μόνον τῷ σώματι,
άλλ’ ἦν τι καινὸν ὄν πρὶν οὐκ ἄκηκοας
κλύης, ὑπουργεῖν, ὡς ὑπηρέτης πάρει.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
τί δὴτ’ ἀνώγας;

ΟΔΥΣΕΙΣ
τὴν Φιλοκτήτου σε δεῖ
ψυχὴν ὅπως δόλοισιν ἐκκλέψεις λέγων.
ὅταν σ’ ἔρωτά τίς τε καὶ πόθεν πάρει,
λέγειν, 'Αχιλλέως παῖς: τόδ’ οὐχὶ κλεπτέουν
πλεῖς δ’ ὡς πρὸς οἶκου, ἐκλιπὼν τὸ ναυτικὸν
στρατευμὸ 'Αχαιῶν, ἔχος ἔχθερας μέγα,
οἴ’ σ’ ἐν λιταῖς στείλαντες ἐξ οἰκῶν μολέων,
μόνην ἔχοντες τὴν’ ἀλωσὶν Ἰλίου,
οὐκ ἥξιοσαν τῶν 'Αχιλλέων ὀπλῶν
ἐλθόντες δοῦναι κυρίως αἰτουμένως,
ἀλλ’ αὐτ’ Ὅδυσσεῖ παρέδοσαν: λέγων ὅσ’ ἄν
θέλης καθ’ ἦμῶν ἐσχατ’ ἐσχάτων κακά.

1 λόγοισιν MSS., Gedike corr.
PHILOCTETES

Thus maimed and hobbled by an ancient wound?
Either in quest of food, or else to find
Some simples known to him as anodynes,
He’s gone abroad, and shortly will return;
So post thy henchman there to watch the path,
Lest he surprise me. I of all the Greeks
Am the one foe he liefest here would catch.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Guard shall be kept; my man is on his way;
And now if thou hast more to say, say on.

[Exit attendant

ODYSSEUS

Son of Achilles, not in theews alone
Or prowess must thou prove thy breed to-day.
If tasks be set thee that seem strange, no less
Thou must perform them; therefore wast thou sent.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What is thy hest?

ODYSSEUS

Thou must cajole and cheat
The soul of Philoctetes by fair words,
And when he asks thee who and whence thou art,
"Achilles' son," make answer; hide not this.
But add, "I am sailing homewards and have left
The fleet in dudgeon, wroth against the chiefs
Who first prevailed on me to quit my home,
Because without me Troy could ne'er be taken,
And then upon my coming basely spurned
My righteous title to Achilles' arms,
And gave them to Odysseus." At my name
Heap on me every scoff and scorn and taunt;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

touτω̣1 γαρ ουδέν μ’ ἀλγυνεῖς· εἰ δ’ ἐργύσει μὴ ταύτα, λύπην πᾶσιν Ἀργείων βαλεῖς.
εἰ γαρ τὰ τοῦδε τόξα μὴ ληφθῆσεται,
οὔκ ἔστι πέρσαι σοι τὸ Δαρδάνου πέδον.
ὡς δ’ ἔστ’ ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐχί, σοι δ’ ὀμιλία
πρὸς τόνδε πιστῇ καὶ βέβαιος, ἐκμαθε.
σὺ μὲν πέπλευκας οὔτ’ ἐνορκος οὐδενὶ
οὔτ’ ἐξ ἀνάγνης οὔτε τοῦ πρῶτον στόλου
ἐμοὶ δὲ τούτων οὐδὲν ἔστ’ ἀρνήσιμον.
ὡστ’ εἰ με τόξων ἐγκρατής αἰσθήσεται,
ὅλωλα καὶ σε προσδιαφθερῶ ἔσιν
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸ τοῦτο δεὶ σοφισθῆναι, κλοπεὺς
ὅπως γενήσει τῶν ἀνικήτων ὀπλῶν.
ἐξοίδα, παί, φύσει σε μὴ πεφυκότα
τοιαύτα φωνεῖν μηδὲ τεχνασθαι κακά.
ἀλλ’ ἦδυ γὰρ τὶ κτῆμα τῆς νίκης λαβεῖν,
τόλμα· δίκαιοι δ’ αὖθις ἐκφανοῦμεθα.
νῦν δ’ εἰς ἀναίδες ἡμέρας μέρος βραχῦ
δὸς μοι σεαυτόν, κάτα τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον
κέκλησο πάντων εὐσέβεστατος βροτῶν.

NEOPTOLEΜΟΣ
ἐγὼ μὲν οὐς ἂν τῶν λόγων ἀλγὼ κλύων,
Δαερτίου παί, τοῦσδε καὶ πρᾶσσειν στυγὼ·
ἔφυν γὰρ οὐδέν ἐκ τέχνης πράσσειν κακῆς,
οὔτ’ αὐτὸς οὗθ’, ὡς φασίν, οὐκφύσας ἐμέ.
ἀλλ’ εἰμ’ ἐτοίμοι πρὸς βίαν τὸν ἀνδρ’ ἄγειν
καὶ μὴ δόλοισιν· οὐ γὰρ εξ ἕνος ποδὸς
ἡμᾶς τοσούσδε πρὸς βίαν χειρώσεται.

πεμφθεῖς γε μέντοι σοι ἐυνεργάτης ὁκνῶ
προδότης καλεῖσθαι· βουλομαι δ’, ἀναξ, καλῶς
δρῶν ἐξαμαρτεῖν μᾶλλον ἡ νικᾶν κακῶς.

1 touτων MSS., Buttmann corr.
PHILOCTETES

It will not hurt me, but if thou should'st fail
'Twill sorely vex the Argives one and all.
This man's artillery we needs must have;
No hope to capture Troy-town otherwise.
Why thou canst hold free converse with the man
Securely and I cannot, thou shalt learn.
Thou wast not bound by oath or pledge to sail
Nor wast thou with the fleet that first embarked;
But naught of this, if taxed, can I deny.
Therefore, if, bow in hand, he counters me,
I die, and shall involve thee in my death.
How to possess us of those matchless arms—
There is the puzzle; set thy wits to that.
I know, my son, thy honest nature shrinks
From glozing words and practice of deceit;
But (for 'tis sweet to snatch a victory)
Be bold to-day and honest afterwards.
For one brief hour of lying follow me;
All time to come shall prove thy probity.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Son of Laertes, what upon my ear
Grates in the telling, I should hate to do.
Such is my nature; any taint of guile
I loathe, and such, they tell me, was my sire.
But I am ready, not by fraud, but force,
To bring the man; for, crippled in one foot,
Against our numbers he can prove no match.
Nathless, since I was sent to aid thee, prince,
I fear to seem a laggard; yet prefer
To fail with honour than succeed by fraud.

373
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖ, καυτὸς ὅν νέος ποτὲ γλῶσσαν μὲν ἄργον, χεῖρα δὲ εἶχον ἐργάτων· νῦν δὲ εἰς ἑλέγχον εξίων ὃρῶ βρότος τὴν γλῶσσαν, οὐχὶ τάργα, πάνθ' ἡγούμενην.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
τί μ' οὖν ἄνωγας ἄλλο πλήν ψευδῆ λέγειν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
λέγω σ' ἐγὼ δόλῳ Φιλοκτήτην λαβεῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
τί δ' ἐν δόλῳ δεῖ μᾶλλον ἥ πείσαντ' ἁγεῖν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
οὐ μὴ πίθηται: πρός βίαν δ' οὐκ ἂν λάβουσ.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
οὕτως ἔχει τι δεινὸν ἵσχύος θράσος;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
ιούς γ' ἀφύκτους καὶ προπέμποντας φόνον.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
οὐκ ἀρ' ἐκεῖνῳ γ' οὔδε προσμίξας θρασύ;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
οὔ, μὴ δόλῳ λαβόντα γ', ὡς ἐγὼ λέγω.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
οὐκ αἰσχρὸν ἥγει δήτα τὸ ψευδὴ λέγειν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
οὐκ, εἰ τὸ σωθῆναι γε τὸ ψεῦδος φέρει.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
πῶς οὖν βλέπων τις ταῦτα τολμήσει λακεῖν;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ
ὅταν τι δρᾶς εἰς κέρδος, οὐκ ὀκνεῖν πρέπει.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
κέρδος δ' ἐμοὶ τί τούτον ἐς Τροίαν μολεῖν;

374
PHILOCTETES

ODYSSEUS
Son of a gallant sire, I too in youth
Was slow of tongue and forward with my hand;
But I have learnt by trial of mankind
Mightier than deeds of puissance is the tongue.

NEOPTOLEMUS
It comes to this that thou would'st have me lie.

ODYSSEUS
Entangle Philoctetes by deceit.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Why not persuade him rather than deceive?

ODYSSEUS
Persuasion's vain, and force of no avail.

NEOPTOLEMUS
What arms hath he of such miraculous might?

ODYSSEUS
Unerring arrows, tipp'd with instant death.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Might not a bold man come to grips with him?

ODYSSEUS
No, as I told thee, guile alone avails.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Thou deem'st it, then, no shame to tell a lie?

ODYSSEUS
Not if success depends upon a lie.

NEOPTOLEMUS
With what face shall one dare to speak such words?

ODYSSEUS
If thou wouldst profit thou must have no qualms.

NEOPTOLEMUS
What gain to me, should he be brought to Troy?
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

αἵρεῖ τὰ τόξα ταῦτα τὴν Τροίαν μόνα.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ ἄρ’ ὁ πέρσων, ὡς ἐφάσκετ', εἰμὶ ἐγὼ;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

οὔτ’ ἀν σὺ κεῖνων χωρίς οὔτ’ ἐκείνα σοῦ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θηρατέ οὖν γύγνουτ’ ἀν, εἶπερ ὁ δ’ ἔχει.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ὡς τοῦτό γ’ ἔρξας δύο φέρει δωμήματα.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ποίω; μαθῶν γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ἄρνοιμην τὸ δρᾶν.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

σοφὸς τ’ ἂν αὐτὸς κάγαθὸς κεκλή’ ἄμα.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἵτω· ποίσω, πᾶσαν αἰσχύνην ἀφεῖς.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

ἡ μνημονεύεις οὖν ἂ σοι παρῆνεσα;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σάφ’ ἵσθ’, ἐπείπερ εἰσάπαξ συνήνεσα.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΤΣ

σὺ μὲν μένων νυν κεῖνον ἐνθάδ’ ἐκδέχον,

ἐγὼ δ’ ἀπειμ., μὴ κατοπτευθῶ παρὼν,

καὶ τόν σκοπῶν πρὸς ναῦν ἀποστελῶ πάλιν.

καὶ δεύρ’, εἰώ μοι τὸν χρόνον δοκήτε τι

κατασχολάζεων, αὖθις ἐκπέμψω πάλιν

τούτων τὸν αὐτὸν ἄνδρα, ναικλήρου τρόποις

μορφήν δολώσας, ὡς ἂν ἄγνοια προσή’

οὗ δῆτα, τέκνον, ποικίλως αὐδαμένου

dέχον τὰ συμφέροντα τῶν ἂεὶ λόγων.

ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς ναῦν εἰμὶ, σοὶ παρεῖς τάδε'.
PHILOCTETES

ODYSSEUS
Without these arms Troy-town cannot be sacked.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Ye told me I should take it. Was that false?

ODYSSEUS
Not thou apart from these nor these from thee.

NEOPTOLEMUS
The quarry's worth the chase, if this be so.

ODYSSEUS
Know that success a double meed shall win.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Make plain this twofold prize and I'll essay.

ODYSSEUS
Thou wilt be hailed as wise no less than brave.

NEOPTOLEMUS
I'll do it—here's my hand—and risk the shame.

ODYSSEUS
Good. My instructions—thou rememberest them?

NEOPTOLEMUS
I have consented; trust me for the rest.

ODYSSEUS
Stay here then and await his coming, whilst,
Lest I should be espied, I go away
And send back to the ship our sentinel;
But if ye seem to dally overmuch,
He shall return, the same man, but disguised
Past recognition, as a sailor clad.
When he accosts thee, mark each word, my son,
To catch the hid significance, for he
Will speak in riddles. This I leave to thee
And seek the vessel. Hermes aid us both,
Who sent us on our way, the God of cunning,
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

'Ερμής ὁ πέμπτων δόλιος ἥγησαίτο νῦν Νίκη τ' Ἀθάνα Πολιάς; ἡ σῶσει μ' ἄει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

τί χρὴ τί χρὴ με, δέσποτ', ἐν ξένα ξένον στέγειν ἢ τί λέγειν πρὸς ἄνδρ' ὑπόπταν; φράζε μοι. τέχνα γὰρ τέχνας ἑτέρας προύχει καὶ γυνῶμα παρ' ὅτῳ τὸ θείον Δίως σκῆττρον ἀνάσσεται.

Διὸς σκῆττρον ἀνάσσεται. σὲ δ', ὃ τέκνου, τὸδ' ἐληλυθέν πᾶν κράτος ὁγὐγιον. τὸ μοι ἐννεπε τί σοι χρεῶν ὑποργεῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

νῦν μέν, ἵσως γὰρ τὸτον ἐσχατιαῖς προσιδεῖν ἐθέλεις ὄντως κεῖται, δὲρκον θαρσῶν· ὁπόταν δὲ μόλη δευνὸς δότης, τῶνδ' οὐκ μελάθρων πρὸς ἐμὴν αἰεὶ χεῖρα προχωρῶν πειρῶ τὸ παρὸν θεραπεύειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μέλον πάλαι μέλημά μοι λέγεις, ἀναξ, ἀντ. α' 150 φρουρεῖν ὅμι' ἐπὶ σῷ μάλιστα καἰρῷ· νῦν δὲ μοι λέγ', αὐλᾶς ποίας ἐνεδρος ναίει
cαὶ χώρον τὴν ἐχεῖ. τὸ γὰρ μοι μαθεῖν οὐκ ἀποκαίριον,

μὴ προσπεσών με λάθη ποθέν· τὸς τόπος ἢ τὶς ἐδρα; τὴν ἐχεῖ στίβον, ἐναυλοῦ ἢ θυραῖον;

1 ἐκ MSS., Jebb corr.
And she who never failed me yet, my queen,  
Athenè Polias, queen of victory!  

[Exit Odysseus]

Enter chorus of scyrian sailors.

CHORUS  
(Str. 1)

What, O my master, what must I conceal  
And what reveal,  
In a strange land a stranger, by what wile  
His shrewd suspects beguile?  

Instruct me; for his art all art excels  
With whom there dwells  
The sovereignty of Zeus, the Kingly Crown  
That hath to thee come down,  

My son, by immemorial right divine;  
Such skill is thine;  
So teach me, master, how I best may speed  
Thy present need.

NEOPTOLEMUS

First to find his lair, no doubt,  
Ye are keen; so boldly scout.  
When the wild man ye have spied  
Who within this cave doth bide,  
Watch the motions of my hand;  
Prompt to act as I command.

CHORUS  
(Ant. 1)

Now, as at all times, Prince, I gladly heed;  
And serve thy need.  

But first to learn his common haunts t’were well;  
I pray thee tell,  
Lest he should light upon me unaware;  
His track, his lair.  
Say, if within his den he will be found,  
Or roaming round.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
οίκον μὲν ὤρας τόνδ᾽ ἀμφίθυρον πετρίνης κοίτης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ποῦ γὰρ ὁ τλῆμων αὐτὸς ἀπεστιν;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
dήλων ἐμουγ' ὡς φορβῆς χρείας
στίβου δὴμεύει τῇδε1 πέλας που.
ταύτην γὰρ ἐχειν βιοτῆς αὐτὸν
λόγος ἐστί φύσιν, θηροβολούντα
πτηνοῖς ἑαυτὶς στυγερὸν στυγερῶς,
οὐδὲ τιν' αὐτῷ
παιδώνα κακῶν ἐπινωμᾶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οἰκτήρων νυν ἐγωγ', ὅπως,
μή τοι κηδομένου βροτῶν
μηδὲ ξύντροφον ὃμι' ἐξων,
δύστανος, μόνος οἴει,
νοσεῖ μὲν ἱσόσον ἀγρίαν,
ἀλύει δ' ἐπὶ παντὶ τῷ
χρείας ἱσταμένῳ. πῶς ποτε πῶς δύσμορος ἀν-
tέχει;
ὡ παλάμαι θεῶν,2
ὡ δύστανα γένῃ βροτῶν,
οἷς μὴ μέτριος αἰών.

οὗτος πρωτογόνων ἔσως
οὐκον οὐδενὸς ύστερος,
πάντων ἅμμορος ἐν βίῳ
κεῖται μοῦνος ἀπ' ἄλλων,

1 τώνδε MSS., Blaydes corr.
2 θνητῶν MSS., Lachmann corr.
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
See you that two-mouthed cavern? There
His rocky dwelling-place.

CHORUS
And where
Is the sad inmate of the grot?

NEOPTOLEMUS
I doubt not somewhere near the spot,
Gone forth in search of daily food,
Dragging his steps through wold or wood;
For so, 'tis said, by toilsome pains
A painful sustenance he gains,
Shooting whatever living thing
Comes within reach of his dread bow.
The years go by and never bring
A leach to heal his woe.

CHORUS
O how piteous thy lot,                     (Str. 2)
Luckless man, by man forgot;
None thy solitude to share,
None to tend with loving care;
Plagued and stricken by disease,
Never knowing hour of ease,
Facing death each moment, how
Hast, poor wretch, endured till now?
O the crooked ways of heaven!
Hapless men to whom are given
Lots so changeful, so uneven.

He who with the best might vie,          (Ant. 2)
Of our Grecian chivalry.
On a desert island left,
Perishes, of all bereft;
στικτῶν ἢ λασίων μετὰ
θηρῶν, ἐν τῷ ὀδύναις ὤμοῦ
λιμῷ τῇ ὑκτρός, ἀνήκεστα μεριμνήματ' ἔχων· ὁρεῖ.
α ὁθ' ἀθυρόστομος
Ἄχω τηλεφανῆς πικραῖς
ὁμογαίς ὑπακούει.2

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ουδὲν τούτων θαυμαστῶν ἔμοι·
θεία γάρ, εἴπερ καγώ τι φρονῶ,
καὶ τὰ παθήματα κεῖνα πρὸς αὐτὸν
τῆς ὡμόφρονος Χρύσης ἑπέβη,
καὶ νῦν ἂ ποιεῖ δίχα κηδεμόνων,
οὐκ ἔσθο' ως οὐθέων τοῦ μελέτη
tοῦ μὴ πρότερον τόνδ' ἐπὶ Τρόλα
tεῖναι τὰ θεών ἀμάχητα βέλη,
πρὶν ὄδ' ἐξήκου χρόνος, ὃ λέγεται
χρήναι σφ' ὑπὸ τῶνδε δαμήναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
εὐστομ' ἔχε, παί.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
τί τόδε;
ΧΟΡΟΣ
προυφάνη κτύπος,

φωτὸς σύντροφος ὡς τειρομένου του,3
ἡ ποὺ τῷ ἢ τῇδε τόπων.
βάλλει βάλλει μ' ἔτυμα
φθογγά του στίβουν κατ' ἀνάγκαιν
ἐρποντος, οὐδὲ με λάθει
βαρεία τηλόθεν αὐδὰ τρυσάνωρ· διάσημα γὰρ
θρηνεῖ.

1 βαραία δ' MSS., Mekler corr.
2 πικραὶ οἰμωγαὶ ὑπόκειται MSS., Blaydes corr.
3 τοῦ added by Porson.
With the savage beasts doth dwell
Of spotted hide or shaggy fell;
Pangs of hunger doth endure,
Racked with aches that know no cure.
Ech, too, with babbling tongue,
As she sits her hills among,
Iterates in undertones
His interminable groans.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Nothing strange I see in this
By heaven ordained (if not amiss
I augur) comes this punishment,
By the unpitying Chryse\(^1\) sent;
And what he suffers now must be
Designed by some wise deity,
Lest too soon 'gainst Troy should go
The arrows of his wizard bow,
For when the fated hour has come
By them must Troy-town find its doom.

CHORUS

Hush, my son! \((Str. 3)\)

NEOPTOLEMUS

Wherefore?

CHORUS \((back)\)

Hist! there comes a sound
As of one sore afflicted. Is it here
Or here? 'Tis nearer now, I look around,
The footfall of a laboured tread grows clear;
And now, though distant still, I catch a cry
Distinct, the voice of human agony.

\(^1\) The nymph by whose guardian serpent Philoctetes was bitten. See I. 1326.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

άλλ’ ἔχε, τέκνον,

ἀντ. γ’

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

λέγ’ ὦ τι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φροντίδας νέας.

ὁς οὐκ ἔξεδρος, ἄλλ’ ἔντοπος ἰνήρ,

οὔ μολπᾶν σύριγγος ἔχων,

ὁς ποιμήν ἀγροβότας, ἄλλ’ ἡ που πταίων ὑπ’ ἀνάγκας

βοᾷ τηλωπόν ἱωάν,

ἡ ναὸς ἄξενον αὐγάζων ὀρμον’ προβοᾷ τι γὰρ δεινόν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἳ ὥ ξένου,

tίνες ποτ’ ἐς γῆν τὴνδέ κἀκε ποίας πάτρας

cατέσχετ’ οὔτ’ εὐόρμον οὔτ’ οἰκουμένην;

ποίας ἂν χμᾶς πατρίδος ἡ γένους ποτὲ
tύχουμ’ ἀν εἰπών; σχῆμα μὲν γὰρ Ἑλλάδος

στολής ὑπάρχει προσφιλεστάτης ἐμοί;

φωνῆς δ’ ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι καὶ μὴ μ’ ὁκνῳ
dεῖσαντες ἐκπλαγῇ ἀπηγρωμένοιν,

ἄλλ’ οἰκτίσαντες ἄνδρα δύστηνων, μόνον,

ἐρημον ὡδε καφίλον κακούμενον,2

φωνήσατ’, εὐπερ ὡς φίλοι προσήκετε.

.getCurrentUser

῾Ελληνες ἐσμεν’ τοῦτο γὰρ βούλει μαθεῖν.

1 πάτρας ἂν χμᾶς MSS., Dindorf corr.
2 καλούμενον MSS., Brunck corr.

384
PHILOCTETES

CHORUS
Bethink thee, Prince. (Ant. 3)

NEOPTOLEMUS
Of what?

CHORUS
Some fresh device;

For now the man approaches very near.
This is no shepherd-swain who homeward hies,
No melody of pastoral pipe I hear;
But as he stumbles 'mid the jagged stones
He rends the air with far resounding groans,
Or as he eyes the sea without a sail,
He utters (hear his voice!) a hideous wail.

Enter PHILOCTETES.

PHILOCTETES
Sirs, who are ye and whence, who have landed here
Upon this harbourless and desolate shore?
What countrymen and of what race? If I
Might make conjecture by your garb and mien,
Ye are Greeks—a sight most welcome to my eyes;
But I would hear your voices. Shrink not back
In horror at my savage aspect; speak;
Pity a lonely, friendless, stricken man
Thus stranded; if indeed as friends ye come,
Make answer, I entreat ye; fair reply
I may expect from you, as you from me.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Well, I will answer first thy question, Sir;
Thou hast conjectured rightly, we are Greeks.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ φίλτατον φώνημα. φεῦ τὸ καὶ λαβεῖν πρόσφθεγμα τοιοῦτο ἀνδρὸς ἐν χρόνω μακρῷ
tὸς σ', ὁ τέκνον, προσέσχε, τὶς προσήγαγεν χρεία; τὶς ὀρμῇ; τὶς ἀνέμων ὁ φίλτατος;
γέγονε μοι πᾶν τοῦθ', ὄπως εἰδὼ τὶς εἰ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐγὼ γένος μὲν εἰμὶ τῆς περιπρότου
Σκύρου πλέω δ' ἐς οίκον ἀνδώμαι δὲ παϊς Ἀχιλλέως, Νεοπτόλεμος. οἶσθα δὴ τὸ πᾶν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ φίλτατον παῖ πατρός, ὁ φίλης χθονός, ὁ τοῦ γέροντος θρέμμα Λυκομήδους, τίνι
στόλῳ προσέσχες τὴνδε γῆν πόθεν πλέων;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐξ Ἰλίου τοῦ δὴ τανῦν γε ναυστολῶ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πῶς εἴπας; οὐ γὰρ δὴ σὺ γ', ἡσθα ναυβάτης ἡμῖν κατ' ἄρχῃν τοῦ πρὸς Ἰλιον στόλου.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἡ γὰρ μετέσχες καὶ σὺ τοῦδε τοῦ πόνου;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ τέκνον, οὐ γὰρ οἰσθά μ' ὄντων εἰσορᾶς;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ κάτωδ' ὄν γ' εἴδον οὐδεπώποτε;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐδ' ὄνομ' ἀρ' ὁδὲ τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν κλέως ἡσθοῦ ποτ' οὐδέν, οῖς ἐγὼ διωλλύμην;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὡς μηδὲν εἰδότ' ἴσθι μ' ὃν ἀνιστορεῖς.

1 ἀρ' added by Erfurdt.
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES
O welcome utterance! Ah, how good to hear
Those accents, long unheard, from one like thee!
What quest, my son, what venture brought thee here,
What breeze compelled thy canvas? Happy breeze!
Speak, tell me all, that I may know my friend.

NEOPTOLEMUS
My home's the wave-lapped Scyros, and I sail
Homewards; my name is Neoptolemus,
My sire Achilles. Now thou knowest all.

PHILOCTETES
Son of a sire most dear, and land most dear,
Old Lycomedes' foster-child, what quest
Has brought thee hither, from what port didst sail?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Hither I sailed direct from Ilium.

PHILOCTETES
From Ilium? Surely thou wast not on board
When first our expedition sailed for Troy.

NEOPTOLEMUS
What, wert thou partner in that enterprise?

PHILOCTETES
Dost thou not know with whom thou speak'st, my son?

NEOPTOLEMUS
How should I know a man ne'er seen before?

PHILOCTETES
Know'st thou not e'en my name? hast never heard
How I was wasting inch by inch away?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Of all thou questionest I nothing know.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ πόλις ἐγὼ μοχθηρός, ὁ πικρὸς θεώς,
οὐ μηδὲ κληρῶν ὡδ' ἔχοντος οὐκαδε
μηδ' Ἐλλάδος γῆς μηδαμοῦ διῆλθε που.
ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν ἐκβαλόντες ἀνοσίως ἐμὲ
γελώσι σὺν ἔχοντες, ἡ δ' ἐμὴ νόσος
ἀεὶ τέθηλε κατὶ μείζον ἐρχεται.

ὁ τέκνον, ὁ παῖ πατρὸς ἐξ 'Αχιλλέως,
ὁδ' εἰμ' ἐγὼ σοι κεῖνος, ὃν κλυεῖς ἵσως
tῶν Ἡρακλείων ὄντα δεσπότην ὅπλων,
ὁ τοῦ Ποιάντος παῖς Φιλοκτήτης, ὃν οἱ
dιασοὶ στρατηγοὶ χω Κεφάλληνων ἀναξ
ἐρριψαν αἰσχρῶς ὡδ' ἔρημον, ἀγρίᾳ
νόσῳ καταφθίνοντα, τῆς ἀνδροφθόρου
πληγείντ' ἐχίδνης ἀγρίῳ χαράγματι
ἐξιν ἢ μ' ἐκεῖνοι, παῖ, προθέντες ἐνθάδε
ὠχοντ' ἔρημον, ἡμί' ἐκ τῆς ποντίας
Χρύσης κατέσχον δεῦρο ναυβάτη στόλῳ.

τοτ' ἄσμενοι μ' ὡς εἴδον ἐκ πολλοῦ σάλου
εὐδοντ' ἐπ' ἀκτῆς ἐν κατηρεφεὶ πέτρα,
λιπόντες ὀχοῦθ', οἷα φατὶ δυσμόρῳ
ῥάκη προθέντες βαιὰ καὶ τι καὶ βορᾶς
ἐπωφελήμα σμικρόν, οἱ ἀυτοὶς τῦχοι.

σὺ δῆ, τέκνον, πολαν μ' ἀνάστασιν δοκεῖς
αὐτῶν βεβάτων ἐξ ὑπνοῦ στήναι τότε;
ποι' ἐκδακρύσαι, ποί' ἀπομῶξαί κακά;
ὁρώντα μὲν ναῦς, ὃς ἔχων ἐναυστόλουν,
πάσας βεβῶσας, ἀνδρὰ δ' οὐδὲν ἐντοποῦν,
οὐχ ὡστὶς ἀρκέσειεν οὐδ' ὡστὶς νόσου
κάμνουτι συλλάβοιτο. πάντα δὲ σκοπῶν
ηὔρισκον οὐδὲν πλήν ἀνιᾶσθαι παρόν,
tοῦτον δὲ πολλήν εὐμάρειαν, ὃ τέκνον.
PHILOCTETES

O what a heaven-forsaken wretch am I,
Of whose disastrous plight no rumour yet
Hath reached my home or any Grecian land!
But they, the godless knaves who cast me forth,
Laugh and are mute. My malady the while
Rankles, and daily grows from bad to worse.
O boy, O son sprung from Achilles’ loins,
I am that man, of whom thou mayst have heard,
Heritor of the bow of Heracles,
The son of Poeas, Philoctetes, whom
The Atridae and the Cephallenian prince
Cast forth thus shamelessly, a derelict,
Plague-stricken, wasting slowly, marked for death
By a man-slaying serpent’s venomous fangs.
Thus plagued, my son, they left me here, what time
Their fleet from sea-girt Chrysè touched this shore.
Tired with long tossing I had fallen asleep
Beneath a rock upon the beach; they laughed
To see me witless, laughed and sailed away,
Flinging me, as they went, some cast-off rags,
A beggar’s alms, and scraps of food. God grant
That they may some day come to fare like me!
Picture, my son, when I awoke and found
All gone, what waking then was mine; what tears,
What lamentations, when I saw the ships
In which I sailed all vanished; not a soul
To share my solitude or tend my wound.
All ways I gazed and nothing found but pain,
Pain, and of pain, God wot, enow, my son.
ο μὲν χρόνος δὴ διὰ χρόνου προύβαινε μοι, 
κάδει τι βαία τῇδ’ ύπὸ στέγη μόνον 
dιακονείσθαι. γαστρὶ μὲν τὰ σύμφορα 
tόξον τόδ’ ἔξηνυρίσκε, τὰς ύποπτέρους 
βάλλων πελείας. πρὸς δὲ τοῦθ’, ὃ μοι βάλοι 
νευροσπαδῆς ἀτρακτος, αὐτὸς ἂν τάλας 
eἰλυόμην, δύστην ἔξελκων πόδα, 
πρὸς τοῦτ’ ἂν’ εἶ’ ἐδεί τι καὶ ποτὸν λαβεῖν, 
καὶ που πάγον χυθέντος, ὅλα χείματι, 
ἐύλον τι θραύσαι, ταύτ’ ἂν ἐξέρπων τάλας 
ἐμηχανώμην. εἰτα πῦρ ἄν ὦν παρῆν, 
ἀλλ’ ἐν πέτροισι πέτρον ἐκτρίβων μόλις 
ἐφην’ ἀφαντὸν φῶς, ὃ καὶ σφόξει μ’ ἀεὶ. 
οἰκουμένη γὰρ οὐν στέγη πυρὸς μέτα 
πάντ’ ἐκπορίζει πλὴν τὸ μῆ νοσεῖν ἐμε. 
φέρ’, ὃ τέκνου, νῦν καὶ τὸ τῆς νησίου μάθης. 

ταύτη πελάζει ναιβάτης οὐδεὶς ἐκών’ 
οὐ γὰρ τις ὦμος ἔστων οὐδ’ ὅποι πλέων 
ἔξεμπολήσει κέρδος ἦ ξενώσεται. 

οὐκ ἐνθάδ’ οἱ πλοὶ τοίσι σώφροσιν βροτῶν. 

τάχ’ ὄν τις ἀκών ἔσχε’ πολλά γὰρ τάδε 
ἐν τῷ μακρῷ γένοιτ’ ἂν ἀνθρώπων χρόνῳ’ 
οὕτοι μ’, ὅταν μόλωσιν, ὃ τέκνου, λόγοις 
ἐλεοῦσι μὲν, καὶ πού τι καὶ βορᾶς μέρος 
προσέδοσαν οἰκτίραντες ἢ τινα στολήν’ 
ἐκεῖνο δ’ οὕδεις, ἥνικ’ ἂν μυσθόω, θέλει, 
σῶσαι μ’ ἐς οἶκους, ἀλλ’ ἀπόλλυμαι τάλας 
ἔτος τόδ’ ἦδη δεκατον ἐν λιμῷ τε καὶ 
κακοίσι βόσκων τῇ ἀδηφάγου νόσου. 

τοιαύτ’ Ἀτρείδαι μ’ ἢ τ’ Ὀδυσσέως βία, 
ὁ παῖ, δεδράκας’, ὁ’ Ὀλύμπιοι θεοὶ 
δοῖεν ποτ’ αὐτοῖς ἀντίποιν ἐμοῦ παθεῖν.
PHILOCTETES

So passed the crawling hours, day upon day,
Year after year. I shifted for myself
Beneath this homeless, solitary roof.
To sate my hunger with this bow I shot
The wingèd doves and ever when my bolt
Sped from the taut string to the mark, I crawled
Thither my lamed foot trailing painfully.
And if of water I had need, or when
In winter time the ground was hoar with frost,
And firewood must be fetched, forth would I creep
Somewise to compass this. I had no fire,
But from the hard rock striking flint on flint
Brought forth the hidden spark that keeps me alive.
For, look ye, a bare roof and fire withal
Serve all my needs, save healing of my sore.

Now let me tell thee of this isle, my son.
No mariner sails hither of his will,
For anchorage is none, nor mart whereat
He may find lodging and exchange his wares
For profit; prudent men sail not this way.
Yet a stray visitor—such accidents
Must happen in long years—puts in perforce.
From such, my son, when they do come, I get
Kind words of pity and perchance an alms
Of food or raiment, but at the first hint
Of passage home, they one and all refuse.
So here for ten long years I linger on,
Consumed with hunger, dying inch by inch;
Only the worm that gnaws me dieth not.
To the Atridae and Odysseus, boy,
I owe this misery. God in heaven requite
In kind the wrongs that they have done to me!
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔσικα κάγω τοῖς ἀφιγμένοις ἵσα
ξένους ἐποικτήρειν σε, Ποιάντος τέκνον.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ καύτως τοῦσδε μάρτυς ἐν λόγοις,
ὡς εἰδ' ἄληθεὶς οἴδα, συντυχὼν κακῶν
ἀνδρῶν Ἀτρείδῶν τῆς τ' Ὀδυσσέως βίας.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἡ γὰρ τι καὶ σὺ τοῖς πανωλέθροις ἔχεις
ἐγκλημ' Ἀτρείδας, ὡστε θυμοῦσθαι παθῶν;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θυμὸν γένοιτο χειρὶ πληρῶσαι ποτε,
ίν' αἰ Μυκήναι γνοίεν ή Ἱσπάρτη θ' ὅτι
χ' Σκύρος ἀνδρῶν ἀλκίμων μήτηρ ἐφυ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

εῦ γ', ὦ τέκνου τίνος γὰρ ὅδε τὸν μέγαν
χόλου κατ' αὐτῶν ἐγκαλὸν ἐλήλυθας;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὁ παῖ Ποιάντος, ἐξερῷ, μόλις ὁ ἔρῳ,
ἀγωγ' ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἐξελωβήθησιν μολὼν.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἐσχε μοῦ Ἀχιλλέα θανείν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἴμου φράσης μοι μή πέρα, πρὶν ἂν μάθω
πρῶτον τὸδ', ἤ τέθυνχ' ὁ Πηλέως γόνος;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

tέθυνκέν, ἀνδρὸς οὐδενός, θεοῦ ὀ̄ ὑπό,
tοξευτός, ὡς λέγουσιν, ἐκ Φοίβου δαμεῖς.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἄλλ' εὐγενῆς μὲν ὁ κτανῶν τε χῶ θανῶν-
ἀμηχανῶ δὲ πότερον, ὦ τέκνου, τὸ σὸν
πάθημ' ἐλέγχω πρῶτον ἢ κεῖνον στένω.
PHILOCTETES

CHORUS
O son of Poeas, I too pity thee
No less methinks than did those visitors.

NEOPTOLEMUS
And I myself am witness that thy tale
Is true; for I have proved the villainy
Of the Atridae, and Odysseus too.

PHILOCTETES
What have those cursed Atridae wrongèd thee?
Art thou too stirred to anger by some wrong?

NEOPTOLEMUS
O that my wrath might vent itself in deeds!
Mycenae then and Sparta both would learn
That Scyros too is mother of brave sons.

PHILOCTETES
Well said, my son! But I would know the grounds
Of thy resentment, what the charge thou bring'st,
Why thou art here.

NEOPTOLEMUS
I scarce know how, O son
Of Poeas, yet I'll tell the tale of wrongs
I suffered on my coming at their hands.
When by the doom of Fate Achilles died—

PHILOCTETES
Woe's me! No more; first tell me, is he dead,
The son of Peleus?

NEOPTOLEMUS
He is dead indeed,
Slain by no man but by a god; a shaft
Pierced him; by Phoebus sped, so runs the tale.

PHILOCTETES
Noble alike the slayer and the slain!
I know not whether first, my son, to make
Inquiry of thy woes or weep for him.
ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οἶμαι μὲν ἀρκεῖν σοὶ γε καὶ τὰ σ’, ὡ τάλας, ἀλγήμαθ’, ὡστε μὴ τὰ τῶν πέλας στένειν. 340

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὀρθῶς ἐλέεις· τουγαροῦν τὸ σὸν φράσον αὕθις πάλιν μοι πρᾶγμ’, ὅτω σ’ ἐνύβρισαν.

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἡλθόν με νηὶ ποικιλοστόλῳ μέτα δόος τ’ Ὀδυσσεὺς χώ τροφεῖς τοῦμοι πατρός, λέγοντες, εἰτ’ ἀληθές εἰτ’ ἀρ’ οὖν μάτην, ὡς οὐ θέμις γίγνοντ’, ἐπεὶ κατέφθιτο πατήρ ἔμος, τὰ πέργαμ’ ἄλλον ἦ μ’ ἐλεῖν. ταῦτ’, ὦ ἔξεν’, οὔτως ἐννέποτες οὐ πολὺν χρόνον μ’ ἐπέσχον μὴ μὲ ναυστολεῖν ταχῦ, μάλιστα μὲν ὅ τ’ θανόντος ἰμέρῳ, ὁπως ἐδομὶ ἁθαπτοῦν οὐ γὰρ εἰδόμην· ἐπείτα μὲντοι χὼ λόγος καλὸς προσῆν, εἰ τάπι Ἰρόλα πέργαμ’ αἱρήσοιμ’ ἱῶν. ἦν δ’ ἡμαρ ἡδ’ δεύτερον πλέουτι μοι, κἀγὼ πικρὸν Σίγειον οὐρίῳ πλάτη κατηγόμην· καὶ μ’ εὐθὺς ἐν κύκλῳ στρατὸς ἐκβάντα πᾶς ἢςπάξετ’, ὁμωῦν τε βλέπειν τὸν οὐκέτ’ ὄντα ἕωντ’ Ἀχιλλέα πάλιν. κεῖνος μὲν οὖν ἐκεῖτ’. ἐγὼ δ’ ὁ δύσμορος ἐπεὶ ἀδάκρυσα κεῖνον, οὐ μακρῷ χρόνῳ ἐλθὼν Ἀτρείδας πρὸς φίλους, ὡς εἰκὸς ἦν, τὰ θ’ ὁ πλ’ ἀπῄτον τοῦ πατρός ταῦτ’ ἄλλ’ ὅσ’ ἦν. οἱ δ’ ἐποῦν, οἶμοι, ἀληθεύεστεν λόγον· ὃ σπέρμ’ Ἀχιλλέως, τάλλα μὲν πάρεστὶ σοι πατρῷ’ ἐλέεσθαι, τῶν δ’ ὅπλων κεῖνων ἀνὴρ ἄλλος κρατύνει νῦν, ὁ Δαέρτου γόνος. 350

394
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
Thou hast enough of thine own pains, poor soul,
Without lamenting for another’s woe.

PHILOCTETES
True, true indeed! So tell me once again
From the beginning how they outraged thee.

NEOPTOLEMUS
To fetch me in a gay decked galley came
Odysseus and my father’s foster-sire.¹
They told me (if the tale was true or feigned
I know not) that, my father having fallen,
No hand but mine could take the Citadel.
Thus urged I did not dally or delay.
Forthwith I sailed. Chiefly I longed to see
My father whom in life I had not seen,
Before his burial, and in part, I own,
The promise fair that I should take Troy-town
Flattered my pride. Well, on the second day,
With oars and breeze to speed us, we had reached
Sigeum (hateful name) and when I landed
The whole host pressed to greet me, and they swore
They saw Achilles come to life again.
There lay my sire in death, and I, poor fool,
When I had mourned for him a while, betook me
To the Atridae as my natural friends,
Claiming my sire’s arms and what else was his.
O ’twas a sorry answer that they made:
“Child of Achilles, all that was thy sire’s
Is thine and welcome—all except his arms;
These to Laertes’ son have been assigned.”

¹ Phoenix.
κάγω δακρύσας εὐθὺς ἔξανισταμαι ὅργῃ βαρείᾳ, καὶ καταλγήσας λέγω· ὦ σχέτλι, Ἡ 'τολμήσατ' ἀντ' ἐμοῦ τινι δούναι τὰ τεῦχη τὰμά, πρὶν μαθείν ἐμοῦ; 370
ὁ δ' εἰπ' ὁδυσσεύς, πλησίον γὰρ ὄν κυρεῖ, ναί, παῖ, δεδώκασ' ἐνδίκως οὔτοι τάδε· ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτ' ἔσωσα κάκεινον παρῶν.
κάγῳ χολωθείς εὐθὺς ηρασσον κακοῖς τοῖς πᾶσιν, οὐδὲν ἐνδὲῖς ποιούμενος, εἰ τάμα κεῖνοι ὅπλ' ἀφαιρήσοιτό με.
ὁ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἥκων, καίπερ οὗ δύσοργος ὄν, δηχθείς πρὸς ἀξίηκουσέν ὅδ' ἡμεὶψατο· 380
οὐκ ἦσθ' ἣν ἡμεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀπῆσθ' ἣν οὐ σ' ἐδει· καὶ ταῦτ', ἑπειδὴ καὶ λέγεις θρασυστομῶν, οὐ μὴποτ' ἐς τὴν Σκύρον ἐκπλεύσης ἔχων.
τοιαύτ' ἀκούσας κάξονειδοσθεῖς κακά πλέων πρὸς οὐκοὺς, τῶν ἐμῶν τητώμενος πρὸς τοῦ κακίστου κάκ κακῶν 'Οδυσσέως.
κοῦκ αὐτιώμαι κεῖνον ὡς τοὺς ἐν τέλει· 390
πόλις γὰρ ἐστὶ πᾶσα τῶν ἡγουμένων στρατός τε σύμπασ' οἱ δ' ἀκοσμοῦντες βροτῶν διδασκάλων λόγοισι γίγνονται κακοί.
λόγος λέλεκται πᾶσ' ὁ δ' Ἀτρείδας στυγῶν ἐμοὶ θ' ὁμοίως καὶ θεοῖς εἰη φίλους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

ὁρεστέρα παμβώτι Γᾶ, μάτερ αὐτοῦ Διὸς, ἂ τὸν μέγαν Πακτώλδν εὗρισαν νέμεις, σὲ κάκει, μάτερ πότνι', ἐπηυδώμαν,
I wept, I started to my feet in wrath,  
And bitterly I spake, "O tyrannous men,  
How dare ye give these arms, my own by right,  
My leave unasked, to any man but me?"
Then said Odysseus who was standing by,  
"Yes, boy, and rightly are they given to me,  
Who rescued both their master and his arms."  
I boiled with rage, I hurled at him abuse  
The bitterest tongue could frame, I cursed the man  
Who would defraud me of my rightful arms.  
He, though not choleric, challenged thus direct,  
Stung to the quick by my retort, replied:  
"Thou wast not with us, a malingerer thou!  
Take this for answer to thy blustering boasts:  
To Scyros with these arms thou ne'er shalt sail."
Thus flouted and abused I left the host,  
And now am sailing homewards, robbed by him,  
Odysseus, the base villain, basely born.  
Yet is he less to blame than those who rule;  
For like a commonwealth each armed host  
Perforce is subject to authority,  
And all the lawless doings in the world  
Spring from ill teaching. All my tale is told.  
But whoso hates the Atridae, as do I,  
May he find Heaven, no less than me, his friend!

CHORUS

O mother Earth, enthronèd on the hills,  
Mother of Zeus himself, who feedest all;  
From thee Pactolus draws his brimming rills,  
His golden sands; Mother, to thee I call,

1 According to the tradition that Ovid followed (Met. 13. 284) Odysseus rescued the body and arms of Achilles from the fray.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οτ' ες τόνδ' ἀτρειδᾶν ύβρις πᾶς' ἐχώρει, οτε τὰ πάτρια τεύχεα παρεδίδοσαν, ἵω μάκαιρα ταυροκτόνων λεόντων ἐφεδρε, τῷ Δαρτίου σέβας ὑπέρτατον.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐχοντες, ὡς ἐοικε, σύμβολον σαφὲς λύπης πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὅ εἶνοι, πεπλεύκατε, καὶ μοι προσάδεθ' ὡστε γυμνώσκειν ὅτι ταῦτ' ἐξ ἀτρειδῶν ἔργα κα' ὦ ὜δυσσέως.

ἔξοδα γὰρ νῦν παντὸς ἀν λόγου κακοῦ γλώσση θυγότα καὶ πανουργίας, ἀφ' ἢς μηδὲν δίκαιον ἐς τέλος μέλλοι ποεῖν. ἀλλ' οὐ τι τοῦτο θαῦμα ἐμοί', ἀλλ' εἰ παρῶν ἀν' ἀν' ὁ μείζων ταῦθ' ὀρῶν ἥνειχετο.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὖκ ἦν ἐτι ζων, ὅ ξέν'. οὐ γὰρ ἀν ποτὲ ξώντος γ' ἐκείνου ταῦτ' ἐσυλήθην ἑγώ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πῶς εἶπας; ἀλλ' ἦ χοῦτος οὐχεταὶ θανῶν;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὡς μηκέτ' οὐντα κεῖνον ἐν φάει νόει.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὖμοι τάλας. ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁ Τυδέως γόνος οὐδ' οὐμπολητὸς Σισύφου Δαερτίῳ, οὐ μὴ θάνωσιν τοῦσε δὰρ μη γιν' ἐδει.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ' ἐπίστω τοῦτό γ'. ἀλλ' καὶ μέγα θάλλοντες εἰσὶ νῦν ἐν ἀργεῖων στρατῷ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τὶ δ' ; οὐ παλαιὸς κἀγαθὸς φίλος τ' ἐμὸς, 1
tὶ δ' ὡ παλαιὸς (ὁρ ὃς π.) MSS., Meineke corr.

398
PHILOCTETES

As once I called when, flushed with upstart pride,
   The fierce Atridae 'gainst my master raged,
(0 lady who on yokèd lions doth ride,
   Their bloody ravening by thee assuaged,) What time the tyrants to Laertes' son
The guerdon gave, those arms his sire had won.

PHILOCTETES

Good sirs, ye bring me as a talisman,
A common grief; a plaint attuned to mine.
Full well I recognise in this your tale
The Atridae and Odysseus. He, I warrant, Would have a hand and lend his tongue to abet
Any conspiracy, any deep-laid plot, If he could compass some dishonest end. This is not wonderful; but was indeed
The greater Ajax by, to see and brook it?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Ajax, my friend, was dead; had he been living They would not thus have robbed me and despoiled.

PHILOCTETES

What say'st thou, boy? is he too dead and gone?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Yea he hath left the light.

PHILOCTETES

Alas, alas!
But not the son of Tydeus, nor the son Named of Laertes, bred of Sisyphus; They die not who should never have been born.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Not they indeed, I warrant; they live on, And in the Argive host are mighty men.

PHILOCTETES

And what of him, my good old friend and true,
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

Νέστωρ ὁ Πύλιος, ἔστιν; οὗτος γὰρ τὰ γε κεῖνων κακε' ἐξήρυκε, βουλεύων σοφά.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
κεῖνος γε πράσσει νῦν κακῶς, ἐπεὶ θανῶν Ὁ Ἀντίλοχος αὐτῷ φροῦδος, ὅς παρῆν, γόνος.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οἷμοι, δὴ αὐ τῶν ἀνδρ' ἐλέξας, οἶν ἐγὼ ἥκιστ' ἀν ἧθελησ' ὀλωλότοιν κλύειν.

φεῦ φεῦν τί δὴτα δεῖ σκοπεῖν, ὃθ' οἴδε μὲν τεθνάσ', Ὁ Ὑδυσσέους δ' ἔστιν αὐ κάνταυθ' ἵνα χρὴν ἀντὶ τούτων αὐτὸν αὐδᾶσθαι νεκρῶν;

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
σοφὸς παλαιστῆς κεῖνος· ἀλλὰ χαί σοφαὶ γνῶμαι, Φιλοκτῆτ' ἐμποδίζονται θαμαί.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
φέρ' εἰπὲ πρὸς θεῶν, ποῦ γὰρ ἤν ἐνταῦθα σοι Πάτροκλος, δὲ σοῦ πατρὸς ἤν τὰ φίλτατα;

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
χοῦνος τεθνήκως ἤν' λόγῳ δὲ σ' ἐν βραχεὶ τοῦτ' ἐκδιδάξων τὸλεμος οὐδέν' ἀνδρ' ἐκὼν ἀἱρεῖ ποιηρόν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς χρηστοὺς ἄεί.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ζυμμαρτυρῶ σοι' καὶ κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτό γε ἀναξίου μὲν φωτὸς ἐξερήσομαι, γλώσσῃ δὲ δεινοῦ καὶ σοφοῦ, τί νῦν κυρεῖ.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΜΟΣ
ποῖον δὲ τούτου πλὴν γ' Ὁ Ὑδυσσέως ἔρεις;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οὐ τούτου εἰπον, ἀλλὰ Θερσίτης της ἤν, δὲς οὐκ ἂν εἶλετ' εἰσάπαξ εἰπεῖν, ὅπτον μηδεὶς ἐξήν' τοῦτον οἴσθ' εἰ καὶ κυρεῖ;

1 αὐτῶς δεῖν' ἐλεξα MSS., Jebb corr.
PHILOCTETES

The Pylian Nestor, lives he not? for he
Oft by his wisdom checked their ill designs.

NEOPTOLEMUS

He is not what he once was, since he lost
His best beloved son, Antilochus.

PHILOCTETES

Alas! thou tell'st me of a double loss,
The two men whom of all I least could spare.
Ah me! What hope is there when two such men
Are taken and Odysseus lives, whose death
Instead of theirs thou hadst by rights announced?

NEOPTOLEMUS

A cunning gamester, but the cunningest,
O Philoctetes, are full often thrown.

PHILOCTETES

But tell me, prithee, where was he the while,
Patroclus, once thy father's bosom friend?

NEOPTOLEMUS

Dead like the rest, for this in sooth is true:
War never slays an evil man by choice,
But still the good.

PHILOCTETES

In that I'll bear thee out.
By the same token, I would ask of one,
A worthless wight, but shrewd and glib of tongue.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Thou mean'st Odysseus, surely?

PHILOCTETES

Not of him
I asked, but of Thersites, one whose tongue
Was ever wagging most when wanted least,
An empty babbler. Know'st thou if he lives?
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ εἶδον αὐτὸν, ἡσθόμην δ' ἐτ' ὤντα νῦν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐμελλεν' ἐπεὶ οὐδὲν πώς κακὸν γ' ἀπώλετο, ἀλλ' εὖ περιστέλλουσιν αὐτὰ δαίμονες, καὶ πῶς τὰ μὲν πανοῦργα καὶ παλιντριβῆ χαίροντα ἀναστρέφοντες εἰς ο' Ἀιδοὺ, τὰ δὲ δίκαια καὶ τὰ χρήστ' ἀποστέλλουσ' ἀεί. 450

πό χρή τίθεσθαι ταῦτα, ποῦ δ' αἰνεῖν, ὅταν τὰ θεῖ' ἐπανών τοὺς θεοὺς εὔρω κακοὺς;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν, ὃ γένεθλον Οἰταῖον πατρός, τὸ λοιπὸν ἢδη τηλόθεν τὸ τ' Ἡλιον καὶ τοὺς Ἀτρείδας εἰσορῶν φυλάξομαι ὅπου δ' ὃ χειρων τάγαθοι μεῖζον σθένει κατοφθίνει τὰ χρηστὰ χω δείδος κρατεῖ, τούτους ἐγὼ τοὺς ἀνδρας οὐ στερξὼ ποτε ἀλλ' ἡ πετραία Σκύρος ἑξαρκοῦσα μοι ἔσται τὸ λοιπὸν, ὡστε τέρπεσθαι δόμῳ. 460

νῦν δ' εἴμι πρὸς ναῦν' καὶ σὺ, Πολαῦτος τέκνον, χαῖρ' ὡς μέγιστα, χαῖρε' καὶ σε δαίμονες νόσου μεταστήσειαν, ὡς αὐτὸς θέλεις, ἢμεῖς δ' ὅμως, ὡς ὀπηνικ' ἀν θεος πλοῦν ἡμῖν εἰκη, τηνικαῦθ' ὀρμώμεθα.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἡδη, τέκνον, στέλλεσθε;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

καιρὸς γὰρ καλέσ

πλοῦν μὴ ξ ἀπόπτου μᾶλλον ἥ γγύθεν σκοπεῖν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πρὸς νῦν σε πατρὸς πρὸς τε μητρὸς, ὃ τέκνον, πρὸς τ' εἲ τί σοι κατ' οἰκόν ἐστι προσφιλές,
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
I saw him not, but heard he was alive.

PHILOCTETES
I thought as much; for evil never dies,
Fostered too well by gods who take delight,
Methinks, to turn back from the gates of hell
All irredeemable rascality,
But speed the righteous on their downward way.
What should I deem of this, how justify
The ways of Heaven, finding Heaven unjust?

NEOPTOLEMUS
For my part, son of an Oetean sire,
I shall take heed henceforward to behold
Troy and the two Atridae from afar.
Where villany to goodness is preferred,
And virtue withers, and the base hold sway,
Such company I never will frequent.
Enough for me henceforth my native rocks,
My island home in Scyros; there I'll bide.
Now to the ships. Farewell, a fond farewell,
O son of Poeas; may the gods fulfil
Thy heart's desire and heal thee of thy wound!
Now we must leave thee and prepare to sail
Whene'er the gods shall send a favouring breeze.

PHILOCTETES
So soon, my son, departing?

NEOPTOLEMUS
'Tis high time,
Not here, but from the strand to watch the tide.

PHILOCTETES
Oh! in thy father's, in thy mother's name,
By all the sanctities of home, my son,
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ικέτης ἰκνούμαι, μὴ λέπης μ’ οὖτω μόνον,
ἐρημον ἐν κακοίσι τοίσδ’ οὔς ὁρᾷς
ὀσοίσι τ’ ἔξηκουσαι ἐνναύοντά με.
ἀλλ’ ἐν παρέργῳ θοῦ με. δυσχέρεια μέν,
ἐξοίδα, πολλὴ τούδε τοῦ φορήματος.
ὅμως δὲ τλῆθι: τοῖσι γενναίοισι τοι
τό τ’ αἰσχρόν ἔχθρον καὶ τὸ χρηστὸν εὐκλεές.
σοὶ δ’ ἐκλιπόντι τοῦτ’ οὔνείδος οὐ καλόν,
δράσαντι δ’, ὃ παῖ, πλεῖστον εὐκλείας γέρας,
εάν μόλω γὰρ ζῶν πρὸς Οὐταίαν χθόνα.
ι’ ῥμέρας τοιὶ μόχθος ὦν ὀληρη μίᾶς.
τὸλμησον, ἐμβαλοῦ μ’ ὀτηθελείς ἁγῶν,
eἰς ἀντλίαι, εἰς πρόβραν, εἰς πρύμνην, ὅποι
ἡκιστά μέλλω τοὺς ἐξούντας ἀλγυνεῖν.
νεῦσον, πρὸς αὐτοῦ Ἀμνὸς ἰκεσίου, τέκνων,
πείσθητι προσπίτων σε γόνασί, καὶπερ ἄν
ἀκράτωρ ὁ τλῆμων, χολός.
ἀλλὰ μὴ μ’ ἀφῆς ἐρήμον οὔτω χωρίς ἄνθρωπον στίβου,
ἀλλ’ ἢ πρὸς οἴκον τὸν σὸν ἐκσωσόν μ’ ἁγῶν
ἡ πρὸς τὰ Χαλκόδοντος Ἐυβοίας σταθμαν
cάκειθεν οὐ μοι μακρὸς εἰς Οὐτὴν στόλος.
Τραχινῶν τε δεράδα 1 καὶ τὸν εὐροον
Σπερχειῶν ἐσται: πατρὶ μ’ ὡς δεῖξης φίλω,
ὅν δὴ παλαίον ἐξ ὅτου δέδοικ’ ἐγὼ
μὴ μοι βεβήκῃ. πολλὰ γὰρ τοῖς ἵγμενοις
ἐστελλὼν αὐτὸν ἰκεσίους πέμπτων λιτάς,
αὐτόστολον πέμψαντα μ’ ἐκσωσάι δόμους.
ἀλλ’ ἢ τέθυμηκεν ἢ τὰ τῶν διακόνων,
ὡς εἰκός, οἴμαι, τούμων ἐν σμικρῷ μέρος
ποιούμενοι τὸν οἰκαδ’ ἤπειρουν στόλον.
νῦν δ’, εἰς σε γὰρ πομπὸν τε καύτον ἄγγελον

470
480
490
500

1 δειράδα MSS., Toup corr. Jebb read as δειράδ’ ἢδ’ ἐς εὐροον.
PHILOCTETES

Leave me not, I adjure thee, here alone,
Abandoned to such ills as thou hast seen
And others worse whereof thou hast been told.
Think of me as a stowaway! well I know
The irksomeness of such a passenger.
Bear it! to true nobility of soul
All shame is shameful, honour honourable.
And it would smirch thine honour to decline
This task, my son; to do it, bring thee fame
And glory, if ye carry me alive
To Oeta. Come, 'tis but a day's annoy.
Take heart of courage; stow me where thou wilt—
The hold, the bows, the stern, no matter where—
Wherever I shall least offend my mates.
By Zeus, the god of suppliants, O consent,
O hearken! at thy knees I fall, albeit
A cripple maimed and helpless. Leave me not
An outcast in a land where no man dwells;
But either take me safe to thine own home,
Or to Euboea and Chalcodon's realm,
Whence I may cross to Oeta ('tis not far)
And the Trachinian passes and the stream
Of broad Spercheius, and behold once more
My father. Ah! these weary years I've feared
He must be dead, for messages full oft
I sent by those who passed my way, entreating
That he would fetch me in his own ship home.
But either he is dead, or, like enough,
My envoys ('tis the way of envoys) recked
Little of my concerns and hastened home.
But now to thee, my messenger at once
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ήκω, σὺ σώσον, σὺ μ' ἐλέησον, εἰσορῶν ὡς πάντα δεινὰ κάπικινδύνως βροτοῖς κεῖται παθεῖν μὲν εὖ, παθεῖν δὲ θάτερα. χρὴ δ' ἐκτὸς ὠντα πημάτων τὰ δεῖν' ὅραν, χῶταν τὶς εὖ ζῆ, τηνικαῦτα τὸν βίον σκοπεῖν μάλιστα, μὴ διαφθαρεῖς λάθη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ.

ὁικτιρ', ἀναξ· πολλῶν ἔλεξεν δυσοίστων πόνων ἄθλ', ὅτα μὴδεὶς τῶν ἔμων τύχων φίλων. εἰ δὲ πικρῶν, ἀναξ, ἔχθεις Ατρείδας, ἕγὼ μὲν, τὸ κείμων κακὸν τὰ δὲ κέρδος μετατιθέμενος, ἐνθαπερ ἐπιμέμονεν, ἐπὶ εὐστόλου ταχείοις νεώς πορεύσαμί' ἀν ἐς δόμους, τὰν θεῶν νέμεσιν ἐκφυγῶν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὁρὰ σὺ μὴ νῦν μὲν τὶς εὐχερῆς παρῆς, ὅταν δὲ πλησθῆς τῆς νόσου ἔνυνοσία, τὸτ' οὐκέθ' αὐτὸς τοῖς λόγοις τούτοις φανῆς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡκιστα· τοῦτ' οὐκ ἔσοθ' ὅπως ποτ' εἰς ἐμὲ τούνειδος ἔξεις ἐνδίκως ὑνειδίσαι.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' αἰσχρὰ μέντοι σοῦ γέ μ' ἐνδεέστερον ἔνῳς φανῆναι πρὸς τὸ καίριον πονεῖν. ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ, πλέωμεν, ὀρμάσθω ταχύς· χὴ ναῦς γὰρ ἄξει κοῦκ ἀπαρνηθήσεται. μόνον θεοὶ σφώξουεν ἐκ τε τῇσδε γῆς ἡμᾶς ὅποι τ' ἐνθένδε βουλοίμεσθα πλεῖν.

406
PHILOCTETES

And saviour, I appeal; save, pity me,
Seeing upon how slippery a place
Fortune for mortals and misfortune stand.
Therefore the man that lives at ease should look
For rocks ahead, and when he prospers most
Watch lest he suffer shipwreck unawares.

CHORUS

Pity, my chief!
Pity a tale of agonizing grief!
Pray God no friend
Of mine may ever come to such an end!
O pity him!
I know thou hatest, prince, the Atridae grim;
Turn to his gain
The villainy they plotted for his bane.
O take him home!
With him let our brave vessel cleave the foam;
There would he be;
Thus from the dread Avengers shall we flee.

NEOPTOLEMUS

See that your present kindliness be not
A passing mood, lest after, when ye come
In closer contact with his malady,
Ye falter and belie these promises.

CHORUS

No, I shall ne’er be open to such charge.

NEOPTOLEMUS

’Twere shame indeed should I less zealous prove
Than thou to help a stranger in his need.
So, if you please, we’ll sail; let him aboard;
Our ship methinks will not refuse her aid.
Only may heaven convey us from this shore
Safe to the haven whither we would sail!
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ω φίλτατον μεν ἡμαρ, ἡδιστός δ' ἀνήρ, 530
φίλοι δὲ ναύται, πῶς ἂν ύμιν ἐμφανής
ἐρογω γενοίμην, ὡς μ' ἐθεσθε προσφιλή; ίωμεν, οδ' παί, προσκύσαnte τὴν ἔσω
ἀοίκον εἰςοίκησιν, ὡς με καὶ μάθης
αὐ' ὄν διέξων ὡς τ' ἐφυν εὐκάρδιος.
οίμαι γὰρ οὔδ' ἂν ὄμμασιν μόνην θέαν
ἀλλον λαβόντα πλήν ἐμοῦ τιλήναι τάδε
ἐγὼ δ' ἀνάγκη προύμαθον στέργειν κακά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐπίσχετον, μάθωμεν' ἀνδρε γὰρ δύο,
ὁ μὲν νεώς σῆς ναυβάτης, ὁ δ' ἀλλόθρους,
χωρείτον, ὃν μαθόντες σιδής εἰσιτον.

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

'Αχιλλέως παί, τόνδε τὸν ἔννεμπορον,
ὅς ἂν νεώς σῆς σὺν δυοίν ἀλλοιν φύλαξ,
ἐκέλευν' ἐμοὶ σε ποὺ κυρῶν εὕς φράσαι,
ἐπείπερ ἀντέκυρσα, δοξάζων μὲν οὖ,
τύχη δὲ πως πρὸς ταύτων ὁμμισθεῖς πέδουν.
πλέων γὰρ ὃς ναύκληρος οὐ πολλῷ στόλῳ
ἀν Ἰλίου πρὸς οἴκον ἐς τὴν εὔβοτρυν
Πεπάρηθον, ὃς ἡκουσα τοὺς ναύτας ὅτι
σοὶ πάντες εἶν τυν νυνεναιστολήκοτες,
ἐδοξέ μοι μὴ σίγα, πρῖν φράσαμι σοι,
τὸν πλοῦν πολείσθαι, προστυχοῦντι τῶν ἴσων.
οὔδέν συ ποὺ κάτοισθα τῶν σαντού πέρι,
ἀ τοίσιν Ἀργείσιων ἄμφι σοὺ νέα
βουλεύματ' ἐστί, κοῦ μόνον βουλεύματα,
ἀλλ' ἔργα δρώμεν', οὐκέτ' ἐξαργούμενα.
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

O gladdest day, O dearest, dearest friend,
And ye, kind sailors, would that I could prove
By acts my heartfelt gratitude! My son,
Let us be going, but before I go
Salute this homeless home, that thou mayst learn
How hard my life, how great my hardihood.
I think scarce any other man than I,
Had he but seen it once, could have endured;
But I was schooled by hard necessity.

[NEOPTOLEMUS is about to enter the cave with him.]

CHORUS

Stay, for I see two men approach, the one
A sailor from thy ship, and one a stranger.
First let us learn their errand, then go in.

Enter two sailors, one disguised as a Merchant Captain

SAILOR

Son of Achilles, finding I was moored
In the same roadstead as thyself (by chance
Not of intent), I asked thy shipmate here,
Who with two other hands was left aboard
On guard, to tell me where thou might'st be found.
For I, the captain of a single craft,
Was on my way from Ilium, homeward bound,
To Peparethus, for its vintage famed;
And learning that the crew I met ashore
Were all thy fellow-voyagers, I thought
It would be well, before I sailed away,
To have a word with thee and earn my dues.
I doubt thou knowest naught of thy concerns—
What new designs the Argives have upon thee:
Designs, say I? Nay rather, plots full hatched.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
άλλ' ἦ χάρις μὲν τῆς προμηθείας, ξένε, εἰ μὴ κακὸς πέφυκα, προσφίλης μενεῖ: φράσον δ' ἀπερ, η' ἐλεξα, ὡς μάθω τί μοι νεώτερον βούλευμ' ἀπ' Ἀργείων ἔχεις.

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
φρούδοι διώκοντές σε ναυτικὸ στόλῳ Φοῖνιξ ὁ πρέσβυς οὔ τε Θησέως κόροι.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ὡς ἐκ βίας μ' ἡξοντες ἦ λόγοις πάλιν;

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
οὐκ οἶδ' ἀκούσας δ' ἄγγελος πάρειμί σοι.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἡ ταύτα δή Φοῖνιξ τε χοί ἡμιαπώδια τοῦ χαίρεις καθ' ὁρμὴν δρώσιν Ἀτρειδῶν χάριν;

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
ὡς ταύτ' ἐπίστω δρόμεκ', οὔ μέλλοντ' ἐτι.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
πῶς οὖν Ὄδυσσεὺς πρὸς τάδ' οὐκ αὐτάγγελος πλεῖν ἦν ἐτοιμός; ἢ φόβος τις ἐκαθένει νῦν;

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
κεῖνος γ' ἐπ' ἄλλον ἄνδρ' ὁ Τυδέως τε πάλις ἐστελλόν, ἥμικ' ἐξανθήμον ἐγώ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
πρὸς ποίον αὕ τόνδ' αὐτὸς Ὅδυσσεὺς ἐπλεί;

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
ἡν δὴ τις—ἄλλα τόνδε μοι πρώτον φράσον τίς ἐστίνιν ἄν λέγῃς δὲ μὴ φώνει μέγα.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
οὖ' ἐσθ' ὁ κλεινὸς σοι Φιλοκτήτης, ξένε.
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
I shall remember, sir, thy zealous care
On my behalf; I am no graceless churl.
But tell me more precisely: let me learn
These strange designs against me of the Greeks.

SAILOR
Old Phoenix has embarked with Theseus’ sons
On a war galley in pursuit of thee.

NEOPTOLEMUS
To bring me back by force or of my will?

SAILOR
I know not; I report but what I heard.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Are Phoenix and his co-mates fired with zeal
To pleasure the Atridae? can this be?

SAILOR
’Tis no surmise of mine; they are on the way.

NEOPTOLEMUS
How came it that Odysseus had no mind
To sail on his own business? Was he afraid?

SAILOR
He and the son of Tydeus were engaged
In quest of yet another, when I sailed.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Another? Who this second man for whom
Odysseus sailed himself?

SAILOR
A certain one . . .
Stay, who is this beside thee? tell me first
His name, and breathe it softly in my ear.

NEOPTOLEMUS
This, sir, is Philoctetes of world fame.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
μὴ νῦν μ’ ἑρή τὰ πλείον’, ἄλλ’ ὡςον τάχος ἔκπλεισε σεαυτὸν ἄγιλαβὼν εἰκ τῇ ἁδὶ γῆς.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
τί φησιν, ὦ παῖ; τί με κατὰ σκότον ποτὲ διεμπολά λόγουσι πρὸς σ’ ὁ ναυβάτης;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
οὐκ οἶδά πω τί φησιν’. δεῖ δ’ αὐτὸν λέγειν εἰς φῶς ὃ λέξει, πρὸς σὲ κἀκεῖ τούσδε τε.

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
δ’ στέρμ’ Ἀχιλλέως, μὴ με διαβάλης στρατῷ λέγονθ’ ἃ μὴ δεῖ. πόλλ’ ἐγὼ κείνων ὑπὸ δρῶν ἀντιπάσχω χρηστά θ’, οἱ’ ἀνήρ πένης.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἐγὼ εἰμ’ Ἀτρέιδαις δυσμενῆς. οὔτος δέ μοι φίλος μέγιστος, οὔνεκ’ Ἀτρέιδαις στυγεῖ. δεῖ δῆ σ’ ἔμοιγ’ ἐλθόντα προσφιλῆ, λόγων κρύψαι πρὸς ἵμας μηδέν’ ὑν ἀκήκοας.

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
ὅρα τί ποιεῖς, παῖ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
σκοπῶ κἀγὼ πάλαι.

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
σε θῆσομαι τῶν’ αἵτιον.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ποιοῦ λέγων.

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
λέγω. ’τι τούτον ἀνδρε τῶ’ ὥπερ κλύεις, ὁ Τυδέως παῖς ἢ τ’ Ὄδυσσεώς βία, διώμοτοι πλέονσιν ἢ μὴν ἢ λόγῳ πείσαντες ἀξείν ἢ πρὸς ἴσχύος κράτος.
PHILOCTETES

SAILOR
Stop not for further questioning! Remove!
Fly with all speed thou mayest from this land.

PHILOCTETES
What says he, boy? What does he whisper thee,
As though I were a piece of merchandise.

NEOPTOLEMUS
I know not yet, but he shall tell his tale
Aloud, for thee and me and these to hear.

SAILOR
Child of Achilles, charge me not to the host
For blabbing secrets. I'm a poor man and
Greatly beholden to the generals,
Who've paid me for my service handsomely.

NEOPTOLEMUS
The Atridae are my enemies, and this man
Because he hates them is my dearest friend.
And, if indeed thou comest as a friend,
Thou art bound to tell me all that thou hast learnt.

SAILOR
Take heed, boy, what thou'rt asking.

NEOPTOLEMUS
I have heeded.

SAILOR
Then thou must bear the consequence.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Say on.

SAILOR
Hear then: the two I named, Odysseus and
The son of Tydeus now are hither bound
To fetch this man, and they have sworn an oath
To bring him by persuasion or by force.
καὶ ταῦτ’ Ἀχαιοὶ πάντες ἥκουν σαφῶς Ἄνδυσσεός λέγοντος· οὕτος γὰρ πλέον τὸ θάρσος εἰχε βατέρου δράσεις τάδε.

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
tίνος δ’ Ἀτρείδαι τοῦτ’ ἄγαν οὗτῳ χρόνῳ τοσώδ’ ἐπεστρέφοντο πράγματος χάριν, ὅν ἡ εἰχον ἥδη χρόνουν ἐκβεβλήκοτες; τίς ὁ πόθος αὐτοὺς ἵκετ’; ἡ θεών βία καὶ νέμεσις, οὕπερ ἔργ’ ἀμύνουσιν κακά;

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
ἐγὼ σε τοῦτ’, ἵσως γὰρ οὐκ ἀκήκοας, πάν ἐκδιδάξω. μάντις ἦν τις εὐγενής, Πριάμου μὲν νίός, ὁνομα δ’ ὁνομάζετο Ἑλεος, ὅν οὗτός νυκτὸς ἐξελθὼν μόνος, ὁ πάντ’ ἀκούων αὐξχρα καὶ λωβήτ’ ἔπη δόλιος Ὁδυσσεύς εἶλε· δέσμιον τ’ ἀγων ἐδειξ’ Ἀχαιοὶς ἐς μέσου, θῆραν καλὴν· ὅς δ’ τὰ τ’ ἀλλ’ αὐτοῦς πάντ’ ἔθεσπισεν καὶ τᾶπὶ Τροία πέργαμ’ ὡς οὐ μὴ ποτε πέρσοιεν, εἰ μὴ τόνδε πείσαντες λόγῳ ἀγωντο νῆσου τῆσδ’ ἐφ’ ἂς φαίει ταυτίν. καὶ ταῦθ’ ὅπως ἥκουσ’ ὁ Δαέρτου τόκος τὸν μάντιν εἰπόντ’, εὐθέως ὑπέσχετο τὸν ἄνδρ’ Ἀχαιοὶς τόνδε δηλώσειν ἄγων’ οἰοτο μὲν μάλισθ’ ἐκούσιον λαβών, εἰ μὴ θέλοι δ’, ἀκοντα’ καὶ τούτων κάρα τέμνειν ἐφείτο τῷ θέλοντι μὴ τυχών. ἥκουσας, ὃ παί, πάντα’ τὸ σπεύδειν δὲ σοι καύτῳ παραινῷ κεῖ τινος κήδει πέρι.

ΠΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οἶμοι τάλας· ἥ κεῖνος, ἡ πᾶσα βλάβη, ἐμ’ εἰς Ἀχαιοὺς ὁμοσεν πείσας στελεῖν;
PHILOCTETES

This by Odysseus plainly was professed
In presence of the host; for he, more bold
Than his co-partner, staked his credit on it.

NEOPTOLEMUS

But wherefore now, after the lapse of years
Should the Atridae be concerned about
A man they had abandoned and forgot?
Was it compassion touched them, or the dread
Of retribution and the avenging gods?

SAILOR

A matter that perchance to thee is strange
I will unfold. There was a high born seer,
A son of Priam, Helenus was his name.
Him that vile wretch—what epithet can match
His utter villainy?—that sly old fox,
Odysseus, on a nightly prowl waylaid,
Bound, and displayed him to the Argive host,
A goodly prize. Much else of grave import
The prophet uttered, and he spake this word:
"Ne'er can ye take the citadel of Troy
Till by persuasion ye have won him over
And brought him from the island where he bides."
Hearing the prophet's word, Odysseus straight
Engaged himself to bring the man away
And show him to the host. "Willing" (he said),
"I hope, but at the worst, against his will."
He staked his head on the venture; any one
Who chose might be his headsman if he failed.
Thou hast heard all, my son; be warned in time;
Take heed for thine own safety and thy friend's.

PHILOCTETES

Ah me! did that arch-felon swear indeed
To bring me by persuasion to the Greeks?
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πεισθήσομαι γὰρ ὡδε καὶ ἢ "Λιδοὺ θανῶν πρὸς φῶς ἀνελθεῖν, ὦστερ οὐκείνου πατήρ.

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ' ἐγὼ ταῦτ'. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμ' ἐπὶ ναῦν, σφῶν δ' ὅπως ἀριστα συμφέροι θεός.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐκοῦν τάδ', ὦ παῖ, δεινά, τὸν Δαερτίου ἐμ' ἐλπίσαι ποτ' ἀν λόγοι συ μαλθακοῖς δείξαι νεώς ἀγων' ἐν Ἀργείων μέσοις; οὐ. θάσσον ἂν τῆς πλείστον ἐχθίστης ἐμοί κλύσιμυ ἐχίδνης, ἢ μ' ἔθηκεν ὡδ' ἀπον. ἀλλ' ἔστ' ἐκείνῳ πάντα λεκτά, πάντα δὲ τολμητά· καὶ νῦν οἶδ' ὥθούνει ἧ' ἐκται. ἢ' ὦ τέκνον, χωρῶμεν, ὥς ἡμᾶς πολύ πέλαγος ὅριζη τῆς Ὀδυσσέως νεῶς. ἰόμεν' ἢ τοι καιρίος σπουδὴ πόνου λήξαντος ὑπ'νου κανάπαυλαν ἡγαγεν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκοῦν ἐπειδὰν πνεῦμα τοῦκ πρόφαρας ἀνή, τότε στελοῦμεν· νῦν γὰρ ἀντιοστατεῖ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀεὶ καλὸς πλούς ἔσθ', ὅταν φεύγης κακά.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ, ἀλλ' κάκεινοισι ταῦτ' ἐναντία.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστι λησταῖς πνεῦμ' ἐναντιούμενον, ὅταν παρῇ κλέψαι τι χάρπάσαι βία. 

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ, χωρῶμεν, ἐνδοθεν λαβὼν ὅτου σε χρεία καὶ πόθος μάλιστ' ἐχει.
PHILOCTETES

As soon by prayers shall I be brought again
From death, as was his father, to the light.

SAILOR
That’s not for me to say, I must be going
To join my ship. Farewell, and may the gods
Be with you both and order all things well.

PHILOCTETES
What say’st thou, boy? That he, Laertes’ son,
Should think to wheedle me aboard his ship,
And make a show of me to the Greek host!
Is it not monstrous? Sooner would I heed
My mortal foe, the snake that crippled me.
But he—no word, no practice is too vile
For him to stick at. He will come for sure.
Haste thee, my son, and put a many leagues
Of ocean ’twixt Odysseus and our ship.
Bestir ye! Who in season labours best,
His labours ended, has the sweetest rest.

NEOPTOLEMUS
All in good time; soon as the headwind drops
We will weigh anchor; now ’tis in our teeth.

PHILOCTETES
To those who fly from ill all winds are fair.

NEOPTOLEMUS
But this wind’s contrary for them no less.

PHILOCTETES
For pirates no wind’s adverse, when there’s chance
Of pillaging or robbery under arms.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Well, as thou will’st, we’ll sail; but from the cave
Take anything thou needest or dost prize.

1 Sisyphus, the reputed father of Odysseus, ordered his
wife to leave his body unburied and so obtained leave from
Pluto to return to earth in order to punish her impiety.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

άλλ' ἐστίν ὅν δεῖ, καίπερ οὐ πολλῶν ἀπο.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί τοῦθ' ὃ μὴ νεώς γε τής ἐμῆς ἐπί;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

φῦλλον τί μοι πάρεστιν, ὃ μάλιστ' ἀεὶ
κοιμῶ τόδ' ἐλκος, ὥστε πραύνειν πάνυ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

άλλ' ἐκφερ' αὐτό. τί γὰρ ἐτ' ἀλλ' ἐρᾶς λαβεῖν;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

eἰ μοι τί τόξον τῶν' ἀπημελημένον
παρερρύηκεν, ὡς λίπω μή τῷ λαβεῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἡ ταύτα γὰρ τὰ κλεινὰ τόξ' ἀ νόν ἔχεις;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ταῦτ', οὗ γὰρ ἀλλ' ἔστ', ἀλλ' ἄ βαστάζω χεροῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀρ' ἐστιν ὥστε κἂν γύθευν θέαν λαβεῖν
καὶ βαστάσαι με προσκύσαι θ' ὥσπερ θεόν;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

σοὶ γ', ὃ τέκνον, καὶ τοῦτο κἀλλο τῶν ἐμῶν
ὅποιον ἂν σοι ξυμφέρη γενήσεται.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἐρῶ γε, τὸν δ' ἐρωθ' οὔτως ἐχώ·
eἰ μοι θέμις, θέλοιμ' ἂν. εἰ δὲ μή, πάρεσ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁσιά τε φωνεῖς ἐστὶ τ', ὃ τέκνον, θέμις,
ὁς γ' ἡλιον τὸδ' εἰσοράν ἐμοὶ φάος
μόνος δέδωκας, ὃς χθόν' Οἰταίαν ἱδεῖν,
δὸς πατέρα πρέσβυν, δὸς φίλους, δὸς τῶν ἐμῶν

418
PHILOCTETES

My store is scant, but certain things I need.

NEOPTOLEMUS

What that thou wilt not find on board my ship?

PHILOCTETES

A herb of wondrous virtue wherewithal
I use to mollify and lull my wound.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Then bring it with thee. What else wouldst thou take?

PHILOCTETES

Some shafts, that may have dropped by accident,
Lest a chance-comer find them, I would fetch.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Is that then in thy hands the famous bow?

PHILOCTETES

This and none other is the famous bow.

NEOPTOLEMUS

May I have leave to gaze upon it close,
Handle it, aye adore it as a god?

PHILOCTETES

Right willingly, my son, and aught beside
That I can do to profit thee, command.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I have this longing, I confess, but if
My longing seem not lawful, let it be.

PHILOCTETES

A pious scruple; but this privilege,
My son, is thine by right, for thou alone
Hast given me to behold the light of day,
And Oeta, and my aged sire, and friends;
For when I lay beneath my enemies' heel,
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

έχθρῶν μὲ ἐνερθεὶν ὁντὶ ἀνέστησας πέρα. θάρσει, παρέσται ταῦτά σοι καὶ θυγγάνειν καὶ δόντι δοῦναι καξεπεύξασθαι βροτῶν ἀρετῆς ἐκατι τῶν ἐπιφανεῖς μόνον ἐνεργετῶν γὰρ καύτος αὐτῷ ἐκτησάμην.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ ἀχθομαί σ’ ἱδών τε καὶ λαβῶν φίλον. ὅστις γὰρ εὖ δρᾶν εὖ παθῶν ἐπισταται, παντὸς γένοιτ’ ἀν κτήματος κρείσσων φίλος. χωροῖς ἀν εἴςω.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

καὶ σὲ γ’ εἰσάξω. τὸ γὰρ νοσοῦν ποθεὶ σε ἐξιμπαραστάτην λαβείν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

λόγῳ μὲν ἔξηκον’ ὅπωτα δ’ οὐ μάλα, στρ. α’ τῶν πελάταν λέκτρων ποτὲ τῶν Διὸς κατὰ δρομάδ’ ἀμπυκα δέσμιον ὡς ἐβαλεν 1 παγ- κρατῆς Κρόνου παῖς; ἀλλον δ’ οὔτιν ἑγωγ’ οίδα κλύων οὐδ’ ἐσιδών μοίρα τοῦτ’ ἐκθλιν' συντυχόντα θνατῶν, ὃς οὔτ’ ἐρέξας τιν’ οὔ τι 2 νοσφίσας, ἀλλ’ ἵσος ὃν ἵσοις ἄνηρ, ὀλλυθ’ ὅδ’ ἀναξίως. τὸ δ’ τι ϑαῦμα μ’ ἔχει, πὼς ποτὲ πὼς ποτ’ ἀμφιπλάκτων ῥοθίων μόνος κλύων, πὼς ἀρά πανδάκρυτον οὔτω βιοτὰν κατέσχεν. 690 ἀντ. α’ ἵν’ αὐτὸς ἢν πρόσουρος, οὐκ ἔχων βάσιν, οὐδὲ τιν’ ἐγχώρων κακογείτονα,

1 ἤξιονα κατ’ ἀμπυκα δὴ δρομάδα δέσμιον ὡς ἐλαβ’ δ’ MSS., Schneidewin corr.
2 οὔτε MSS., Schneidewin corr.

420
'Twas thou upliftedst me above their heads,  
It shall be thine to handle and return;  
Fear not, and thou shalt boast that thou alone  
Of mortals, for thy worth, hast handled it.  
'Twas for a service done it came to me.  

NEOPTOLEMUS  
'Tis pleasant to have found and proved a friend;  
For him who good for good returns I hold  
A friend more precious than unnumbered gold.  
Now go within.  

PHILOCTETES  
That will I, and entreat  
Thine escort, for my ailment craves thine aid.  
(They enter the cave.)  

CHORUS  
I saw him not, yet fame affirms the tale  
Of one who dared the bed of Zeus assail.  
Him to the wheel that never stays its round  
Of torture, the great son of Kronos bound.  
But, save of him alone,  
'To me no sadder fate is known  
Than of this saddest wight,  
Or by report or sight:  
Poor innocent who here to death art done!  
He robbed or wrongèd none  
I marvel how thus desolate, all forlorn,  
These long long years of anguish he hath borne,  
Hearing the breakers gride the cold grey stones,  
Himself for neighbour to himself he groans;  
Limping with crippled feet,  
He treads his weary beat;  

1 For kindling the funeral-pyre of Heracles on Mount Oeta.
παρ' ὧν στόνον ἀντίτυπον βαρυβρῶτ' ἀποκλαύσειν αἰματηρῶν
δὲ τὰν θερμοτάταν αἰμάδα κηκιομέναν ἐλκέων ἐνθήρου ποῦδος ἑπίοιςι
φύλλοις κατευνάσειεν, εἰ τις ἐμπέσοι, φορβάδος ἐκ γαλας ἐλῶν
εἰρπε γὰρ ἀλλοτ' ἀλλαχ' τότ' ἀν εἰλνόμενος
παῖς ἄτερ ὡς φίλας τιθήμας θευν εὐμάρει' ὑπάρχοι πόρουν, ἀνίκ' ἐξανείη δακέθυμος ἀτα.

στρ. β'

οὐ φορβάν ἰερὰς γᾶς σπόρον, οὐκ ἀλλων αἴρων τῶν νεμόμεσθ᾽ ἀνέρες ἀλφησταί,
πλὴν ἔξ ὠκυβόλων εἴ ποτε τόξων
πτανοῖς ίοῖς ἀνύσεει γαστρὶ φορβάν.
ὁ μελέα ψυχᾶ,
ὁς μηδ' οἰνοχύτου πώματος ἥσθη δεκέτει χρόνω,
λεύσσων δ' ὅπον γνοίη στατὼν εἰς ὕδωρ,
ἀεὶ προσενώμα.

ἀντ. β'

νῦν δ' ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν παιδὸς ὑπαντήσας
ἐυδαίμων ἀνύσει καὶ μέγας ἐκ κεινών
ὁς νῦν ποντοπόρος δούρατι, πλήθει
πολλῶν μηνῶν, πατρίαν ἁγεὶ πρὸς αὐλὰν
Μαλιάδων νυμφὰν
Σπερχείου τε παρ' ὀχθας, ἵν' ὁ χάλκασπις ἀνὴρ
θεοῖς
πλάθει πατρὸς ¹ θείῳ πυρὶ παμφαῖς,
Οἴτας ὑπὲρ ὁχθων.

¹ τὰς MSS., Jebb corr.
PHILOCTETES

No comrade by
To give him sigh for sigh,
No friend in whose responsive ear to pour
His woes—the anguish of his festering sore;
To quell the burning rage,
The throbs assuage
With simples gathered from the kindly soil;
But 'twixt the spasms he must crawl and moil
To find the herb, a spell to lay the curse,
Like some weak infant parted from its nurse.

Not his to sow the seed
Or on the largesse feed
That boon earth showers on all the sons of men;
Happy, if now and then
The bolt from his unerring bow can wing
Some living thing.
Poor wretch, who ten long years athirst did pine,
Without one draught of soul-refreshing wine,
But sought some stagnant pool
His parchèd throat to cool.

Now hath he found a champion good and true,
And by his woes ennobled shall renew
His pristine fame. The tale of months complete,
Home shall he journey with our homing fleet.
There on Spercheios' marge, his ancient home,
The haunt of Malian naiads, he shall roam,
Where the famed hero of the brazen shield,
His full divinity in flames revealed
And in a fiery car ascending high
O'er Oeta was translated to the sky.
φιλοκτητης

νεοπτολεμος
εµπ', ει θελεις. τι δ' ηθν ουδ' εξ ουδενος
λογον σιωπας καποπληκτος ουδ' εχει;
φιλοκτητης
αα, αα.

νεοπτολεμος
τι δ' 1 εστιν;
φιλοκτητης
ουδεν δεινον άλλ' ιθ', ο τεκνον.

νεοπτολεμος
μων άλγος ισχεις της παρεστωσης νοσου;
φιλοκτητης
ου δητ' έγωγ', άλλ' άρτι κουφιζειν δοκω.
ω θεοί.

νεοπτολεμος
τι τους θεους οδ' αναστενων καλεις;
φιλοκτητης
σωτηρας αυτους ηπιους θ' ήμιν μολειν.
αα, αα.

νεοπτολεμος
τι ποτε πετονθας; ουκ έρεις, άλλ' οδ' έσει
σιγηλος; εν κακω δε τω φαινει κυρων.
φιλοκτητης
απολωλα, τεκνον, κου δυνησομαι κακων
κρυψαι παρ' υμιν, ατταται διερχεται
diérχetai. δυστηνος, ο ταλας έγω.
απολωλα, τεκνον, βρυκομαι, τεκνον, παπαι,
apapapaipai, papapapappapappapai.
προς θεων, προχειρον ει τι σοι, τεκνον, παρα
ξίφος χεροιν, παταξον εις άκρον ποδα.
apamxouin ως ταχιστα μη φειση βιου.
ιθ', ω παι.

1 Erfurdt added 8'.
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
Be moving if it please thee... Why, what means
This sudden silence, this amazedness?

PHILOCTETES
Ah me! Ah me!

NEOPTOLEMUS
What is it?

PHILOCTETES
A mere nothing, boy; go on.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Thou feelest thine old malady again?

PHILOCTETES
No, a mere twinge; I think 'tis passing now—
O God!

NEOPTOLEMUS
Why groan aloud and call on God?

PHILOCTETES
To save me and deliver me... Ah me!

NEOPTOLEMUS
What ails thee? Wilt not tell me? Wilt not speak?
That something troubles thee is very plain.

PHILOCTETES
My son, I am lost, undone! Impossible
To hide it longer from you; lost, undone!
It stabs me, stabs me through and through and
through.
Ah me! ah me! ah me!
For heaven's sake, if thou hast a sword at hand,
Draw it, my son, strike swiftly, at a stroke
Cut off this foot, no matter if it kill me;
Quick, quick, my son!
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
tí δ' ἔστιν οὕτω νεοχμόν ἔξαίφνης, ὁτου
tοσῆνυ' ἱυγῆν καὶ στόνου σαυτοῦ ποεῖ;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οἶσθ' ὁ τέκνον;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
tí δ' ἔστιν;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οἶσθ', ὁ παῖ;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
tí σοί;

οὐκ οἶδα.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
πῶς οὐκ οἶσθα; παππαπαππαπαὶ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
dεινόν γε τοῦτοσαγμα τοῦ νοσήματος.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
dεινόν γὰρ οὐδὲ ρητόν· ἀλλ' οὐκτιρέ με.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
tí δῆτα δράσω;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
μὴ με ταρβῆσας προδῆς;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

760

βούλει λάβωμαι δῆτα καὶ θίγω τί σου;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
μὴ δῆτα τούτο γ'· ἀλλὰ μοι τὰ τόξ' ἐλὼν
tάδ', ὡσπερ ἦτον μ' ἀρτίως, ἐὼς ἄνὴ

426
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
What is this sudden fit
That makes thee moan so and bewail thyself?

PHILOCTETES
Thou knowest, boy.

NEOPTOLEMUS
What is it?

PHILOCTETES
Thou knowest.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Nay,

What ails thee?

PHILOCTETES
Knowest thou not? Ah me! Ah me!

NEOPTOLEMUS
The burden of thy pain is terrible.

PHILOCTETES
Yea, terrible, past words. O pity me.

NEOPTOLEMUS
What shall I do?

PHILOCTETES
Fear me not, leave me not:
My ailment loves to play the truant, stray
Awhile, and then come home again, belike
Tired with its holiday.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Alas! poor wretch,
Wretched indeed in all thy suffering proved.
Wilt lean on me? Shall I take hold of thee?

PHILOCTETES
Nay touch me not, I beg, but take this bow
Which thou didst crave to handle, and until


to píma toúto ths nósoù to vín parón, σως' autà kai filasmì. λamβánei γάρ οὖν ύπνοι κ', όταν περ το κακὸν εξῆς τόδε:

κοῦκ ἐστὶ λῆξαι πρότερον' ἀλλ' ἐὰν χρεῶν ἐκήλουν εὐδεῖν. ἦν δὲ τῶδε τῷ χρόνῳ

μόλωσ' ἐκεῖνοι, πρὸς θέων ἐφίλεμι ἐκόντα μηδ' ἀκοντα μηδὲ τῷ τέχνῃ

κεῖνοις μεθείναι ταῦτα, μὴ σαυτὸν θ' ἀμα κάμ', ὄντα σαυτοῦ πρόστροπον, κτείνας γένη.


NEOPITOLEMOS

θάρσει προνοίας οὖνκ' οὐ δοθήσεται πλὴν σοι τε κάμοι' ξίνν τύχῃ δὲ πρόσφερε.


ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ιδοὺ δέχου, παί' τὸν φθόνον δὲ πρόσκυψον μὴ σοι γενέσθαι πολύπον' αὐτὰ μηδ' ὀπὼς ἐμοὶ τε καὶ τῷ πρόσθε' ἐμοὶ κεκτημένῳ.


NEOPITOLEMOS

ὡ θεοί, γένοιτο ταῦτα νῦν' γένοιτο δὲ πλούσις οὐρίος τε κευστάλης ὅποι ποτὲ θεός δικαίοις χῶ στόλος πορσύνεται.


ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὖν δέδοικα μὴ ἀτέλεστ' εὐχη, τέκνον.1

στάξει γάρ αὐ τοι φοίνιον τὸδ' ἐκ βυνθοῦ

κηκέον αἴμα, καὶ τι προσθοκῶ νέον.

παπαί, φεῦ.

παπαὶ μάλ', ὃ ποὺς, οἶκα μ' ἐργάσει κακά.

προσέρπει,

προσέρχεται τόδ' ἐγγύς. οὐμοι μοι τάλας.

ἐχετε τὸ πράγμα μὴ φύγητε μηδαμῇ.

ἀπαταί.

1 ἀλλὰ δέδοικ' ὃ παί, μὴ μ' ἀτελῆς εὐχή MSS. The text is a combination of Triclinius and Jebb.
PHILOCTETES

The spasm that now disables me is gone,
Keep it and guard it well; for when the fit
Passes, a drowsiness comes over me;
And sleep's the only medicine that gives ease.
So let me slumber undisturbed, and if
*They* come the while, I charge thee, boy, by heaven,
Let them not have it, yield not up the bow,
Willing or nilling, or by force or fraud;
Lest thou should'st prove a double murderer,
And slay thyself and me thy suppliant.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I will be vigilant, fear not; none shall have it
But thou and I alone; so give it to me.
Good luck attend it!

PHILOCTETES

'Take it then, my son,
But first propitiate the Jealous God,
Lest it should prove to thee a bane, as erst
To me and to its former lord it proved.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Heaven grant this prayer to both of us, and grant
A fair and prosperous voyage whithersoe'er
Our destined course is set and heaven ordains!

PHILOCTETES

Alas, my son! I fear thy prayers are vain;
For once again upwelling from the wound
The black blood trickles auguring a relapse.
Out, out upon thee, damned foot! Alack!
What plague hast yet in store for me? Alack!
It prowl's, it stalks amain, ready to spring.
Woe! Now ye know my torture, leave me not!
Ah me! Ah me!
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ω ξένε Κεφάλλην, είθε σου διαμπερές στέρνον ἔχοιτ’ ἀλγησίς ήδε. φεῦ, παπαί, παπαί μάλ’ αὖθις. ὁ διπλοὶ στρατηλάται, Ἀγάμεμνον, ὁ Μενέλαε, πῶς ἄν ἀντ’ ἐμοῦ τὸν ὦσον χρόνον τρέφοιτε τῇδε τῇν νόσον; ἵῳ μοι.

ὁ Θάνατε Θάνατε, πῶς ἀεὶ καλούμενος οὔτω κατ’ ἡμαρ, οὐ δύνα μολεῖν ποτε; ὁ τέκνον ὁ γενναῖον, ἀλλὰ συλλαβῶν τῷ Δημνῷ τῷ ἀνακαλούμενῳ πυρὶ ἐμπρήσον, ὁ γενναίε: κἀγὼ τοῖ ποτε τὸν τοῦ Δίως παϊδ’ ἀντὶ τῶντε τῶν ὀπλῶν, ἃ νῦν σὺ σώζεις, τοῦτ’ ἐπηξίωσα δράν. τί φής, παῖ; τί φής; τί συγάς; ποῦ ποτ’ ὡν, τέκνον, κυρεῖς;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἄλγῳ πάλαι δὴ τὰπὶ σοὶ στένων κακά.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ’, ὁ τέκνον, καὶ θάρσος ἵςχ’. ὡς ἢδε μοι ὁξεία φοιτᾶ καὶ ταχεῖ ἀπέρχεται.

ἀλλ’ ἀντιαίζω, μὴ με καταλύπης μόνον.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θάρσει, μενοῦμεν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἡ μενεῖς;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σαφῶς φρόνει.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐ μὴν σ’ ἐνορκῶν ἥ ἀξιωθέσθαι, τέκνον.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ὡς οὐ θέμις ἥ ἐμοῦστι σοῦ μολεῖν ἄτερ.
PHILOCTETES

Would God, O Cephalenian, through thy breast
This spasm might pass and hold thee in its grip!
Woe's me and woe once more! Ye generals twain,
Menelaus, Agamemnon, might this worm
Devour your vitals no less time than mine!
O Death, Death, Death! how is it that invoked
Day after day, thou canst not heed my call?
Boy, noble boy, of thy nobility
Take me and in yon fires, as Lemnian famed,
Consume me: even as when myself I dared
To do like service for the son of Zeus,
And won for meed the bow thou bearest now.
Speak! answer! why thus absent, O my son?

NEOPTOLEMUS

My heart was heavy, musing on thy woes.

PHILOCTETES

Nay, be of better cheer, my son; this pain,
As in its onset sudden, so departs.
Only, I pray thee, leave me not alone.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Take heart; we'll stay.

PHILOCTETES

Thou wilt?

NEOPTOLEMUS

In sooth I will.

PHILOCTETES

It were not meet to bind thee with an oath.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I am bound in honour not to leave thee here.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐμβάλλει χειρὸς πίστιν.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐμβάλλω μενεῖν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐκεῖσε νῦν μ', ἐκεῖσε

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ποί λέγεις;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἄνω

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί παραφρονεῖς αὖ; τί τὸν ἄνω λεύσσεις κύκλον;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

μέθες μέθες με.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ποὶ μεθώ;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

μέθες ποτε.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐ φημ' ἐάσειν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀπὸ μ' ὀλεῖς, ἥν προσθίγγης.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

καὶ δὴ μεθίμη', εἰ τί 1 δὴ πλέον φρονεῖς.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ γαῖα, δέξαι θανάσιμον μ' ὀπως ἔχω τὸ γὰρ κακὸν τὸν ὡκέτ' ὀρθοῦσθαι μ' ἐὰ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τὸν ἄνδρ' ἐοικεν ὕπνοις οὐ μακρὸν χρόνου ἐξειν. κάρα γὰρ ὑπτιάζεται τόδε ιδρῶς γέ τοῖς νῦν πὰν καταστάξει δέμας,

1 μεθίμην τί δὴ MSS., Hermann corr.
PHILOCTETES

Thy hand upon it.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Here's my hand in pledge.

PHILOCTETES
Then yonder, let me yonder—

NEOPTOLEMUS
Whither then?

PHILOCTETES
Up higher—

NEOPTOLEMUS
Art thou wandering once again?

Why starest at the firmament on high?

PHILOCTETES
Let me go.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Whither?

PHILOCTETES
Let me go, I say.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Thou shalt not.

PHILOCTETES
Touch me not, 'twould be my death.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Well, I release thee. Thou art calmer now.

PHILOCTETES
Take me, O Earth, a dying man, so near

His end with sickness that he cannot stand.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Methinks in no long time he'll be asleep;
For, see, his head sinks backward, and o'er all
His body, look you, trickle beads of sweat,
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

μέλανα τ’ ἀκρον τις παρέρρωγεν ποδὸς
αἰμορραγῆς φλέψ. ἀλλ’ ἐάσωμεν, φίλοι,
ἐκηλον αὐτὸν, ὡς ἂν εἶς ὑπνον πέσῃ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

"Τπν’ ὀδύνας ἀδαῖς,“Τπνε δ’ ἀλγέων, στρ.
εὐαῖς 1 ἡμῖν ἐλθοῖς,
εὐαῖων εὐαῖων, ὄναξ.
ομμασι δ’ ἀντίσχοις
τάνδ’ αὐγάλαν, ἢ τέταται τανῦν.
ἵθι ἰδι μοι παϊῶν.

ὡ τέκνον, ὅρα ποῦ στάσει,
ποὶ δὲ μοι τάνθεύνδε βάσει,2
φροτίδος. ὅρας ἡδη.
πρὸς τί μενοῦμεν πράσσειν;
καιρὸς τοι πάντων γνώμαν ἵσχων
πολὺ τι πολὺ παρὰ πόδα κράτος ἀρνυται.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ’ ὦδε μὲν κλύει οὔδέν, ἐγὼ δ’ ὦρῳ οὐνεκα θήραν
τηροῦ ἀλίους ἐχομεν τόξων, δίχα τοῦδε πλέοντες. 840
tοῦδε γὰρ ὁ στέφανος, τοῦτον θέος εἶπε κομίζειν.
κομπεῖν δ’ ἐστ’ ἀτελῆ σὺν ψεύδεσιν αἰσχρὸν
ὀνείδος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλὰ, τέκνον, τάδε μὲν θεοὶ ὀψεταιν· ἀντ.

ὡν δ’ ἂν ἄμειβη μ’ αὖθις,
βαιάν μοι, βαιάν, ὥ τέκνον,
πέμπτε λόγων φάμαν·

1 εὐαῖς MSS., Hermann corr.
2 ποὶ δὲ βάσει, πῶς δὲ μοι τάντεύθεν MSS., Jebb corr.
And from an artery in his wounded foot
The black blood spurts. So let us leave him, friends
In peace and quiet till he fall asleep.

CHORUS
Sleep immune of cares,

Sleep that knows not cumber,

Breathe thy softest airs,

Prince of painless slumber!
O’er his eyes alway
Let thy dream-light play;
Healer come, we pray.

My son, bethink thee how
Thou standest, and what next
Thou purposest; not now
The time to halt perplexed.
Why longer here remain?
Ever occasion ta’en
At the full flood brings gain.

NEOPTOLEMUS
We might escape and steal his bow indeed
(He hears us not); but little should we speed
Without the man. Himself he must be brought,
So the God bade; he is the prize we sought;
He crowns our triumph, and ’twere double shame
Falsely a fraud-won victory to claim.

CHORUS
Far things with Heaven lie,

Look thou to what is near,
And, when thou mak’st reply,

Low breathe it in my ear:
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

wód πάντων ἐν νόσῳ εὐθρακῆς
ὕπνος ἄϋπνος λεύσσειν.

ἀλλ’ ὦτι δύνα μάκιστον
κεῖνο δὴ μοι κεῖνο λάθρα
ἐξιδοῦ ὅτα πράξεις.

οἶοσθα γὰρ ἂν auxōμαι,
ei ταῦταν τούτων γνώμαν ἔσχεις,
μάλα τοι ἄπορα πυκνοῖς ἐνιδεῖν πάθη.

οὐρός τοι, τέκνου, οὐρός·
ἀνὴρ δ’ ἀνόμματος οὐδ’ ἔχων
ἀρωγὰν ἐκτέταται νύχιος,
(άλειψ ὑπνος ἔσθιλος,)

οὐ χερός, οὐ ποδός, οὐ τινος ἄρχων,
ἀλλὰ τὶς ὡς Ἀἴδα παρακείμενος.

όρα, βλέπ’ εἰ καῖρα
φθέγγει τὸ δ’ ἀλώσιμον
ἐμὰ φροντίδι, παῖ,
τόνος ὁ μὴ φοβῶν κράτιστος.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΔΕΜΟΣ
σιγαῖν κελεύω μηδ’ ἀφεστάναι φρενῶν·
kinei γάρ ἀνὴρ ὄμμα κανάγει κάρα.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ φέγγος ὑπνοῦ διάδοχον τὸ τ’ ἐπτίδων
ἀπιστοῦν οἰκοῦρμα τῶν ἐν ἔνων.

οὐ γάρ ποτ’, ὃ παῖ, τοῦτ’ ἄν ἐξηὖχης’ ἐγὼ,
τλήναι σ’ ἐλευνῶσ ὥδε τάμα πήματα
κεῖναι παρόντα καὶ ξυνωφελοῦντά μοι.

οὐκοῦν Ἀτρείδαι τοῦτ’ ἔτηλησαν εὐφόρως
οὔτως ἐνεγκεῖν, ἀγαθοὶ στρατηλάται.

1 ἂν or ὑν MSS., Hermann corr.
2 εὐφόρως MSS., Brunck corr.
PHILOCTETES

Sleepless the sick man’s sleep,
Quick-eared to catch each sound;
His eyes, though closed, yet keep
Sharp watch around.

Wherefore explore in stealth, my son,
How what thou dost may best be done.
If thy plan be still the same,
What it is I need not name,
Plain to one who looks before
Are his troubles vast and sore.

The breeze sets fair, sets fair, my son,
And there outstretched he lies
As one who hath nor ears nor eyes.
(How good to sleep i’ the sun!)
Of hand or foot, no motion has he, none
More than the dead who in Earth’s bosom rest.
Then look, my son, look that thou utterest
Sane counsels. If a plain man might advise
Thy wisdom, the discreetest way is best.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Silence, and keep your wits; his eyes begin
To open and he raises now his head.

PHILOCTETES

O sweet to wake to the broad day and find,
What least I hoped, my kindly guardians by.
For this, my son, I never had presumed
To hope, that thou would’st thus compassionately
Wait to attend my woes and minister.
The Atridae, those brave captains never showed
Courage to bear them patiently. But thou
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' εὐγενής γὰρ ἡ φύσις κἀξ εὐγενῶν,
ἢ τέκνου, ἢ σή, πάντα ταύτ' ἐν εὐχερεί
ἐθου, βοής τε καὶ δυσοσμίας γέμων.
καὶ νῦν ἔπειδη τούδε τοῦ κακοῦ δοκεῖ
λήθη τις ἐينαι κανάπαυλα δή, τέκνου,
σὺ μ' αὐτὸς ἄρον, σὺ με κατάστησον, τέκνου,
ἀν, ἠρίκ' ἀν κόπος μ' ἀπαλλάξῃ ποτὲ,
DMINOΔME ης ναῦν μηδ' ἐπίσχωμεν τὸ πλεῦν.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἰδομαί μὲν σ' εἰσιδῶν παρ' ἐλπίδα
ἀνώδυνον βλέποντα κάμπνεον' ἐτην
ὡς οὐκέτ' ὄντος γὰρ τὰ συμβόλαια σου
πρὸς τὰς παρούσας ξυμφόρας ἐφαίνετο.
νῦν δ' αἷρε σαυτόν· εἰ δὲ σοι μᾶλλον φίλοιν,
οἰσουσί σ' οἴδε· τοῦ πόνου γὰρ οὐκ ὀκνος,
ἐπείπερ οὐτω σοί τ' ἐδοξ' ἐμοί τε δράν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

αἰών τάδ', ὃ παί, καὶ μ' ἔπαιρ', ὅσπερ νοεῖς·
τούτους δ' ἐκασον, μὴ βαρυνθώσων κακῆ
ὅσμὴ πρὸ τοῦ δέοντος· οὐπὶ νητ' γὰρ
ἀλίς πόνος τούτοις συνναίειν ἐμοί.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἔσται τάδ'. ἀλλ' ἵστω τε καῦτος ἀντέχου.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

θάρσει· τὸ τοι σύνθες ὁρθώσει μ' ἔθοσ.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

παπαί· τι δήτ' ἀν δρὼμ' ἐγὼ τοῦνθένυε γε;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τι δ' ἐστιν, ὃ παί; ποι ποτ' ἔξεβης λόγω;

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ' ὅποι χρῆ τάπορον τρέπειν ἔτοσ.
PHILOCTETES

By nature noble as by birth, my son,
Mad'st light of all the sores to eye and ear,
And nostrils, that my malady inflicts.
But now at last, 'twould seem, a lull has come,
A respite and oblivion of my ills;
Raise me thyself, boy, set me on my feet,
That, when the attack has wholly spent itself,
We may aboard and instantly set sail.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Right glad am I to see thee breathing still,
Alive, beyond all hope, and freed from pain;
For to appearance thou didst bear the seal
And signature of death. Now raise thyself,
Or if thou choosest, these shall carry thee;
Such service will they readily perform,
Since thou and I alike are thus resolved.

PHILOCTETES

I thank thee, son, and, if it pleaseth thee,
Raise me thyself and spare thy men this task,
Lest they be sickened with my fetidness
Before the time; they'll have enough to bear
With me for messmate when we are aboard.

NEOPTOLEMUS

So be it; now, stand up, lay hold of me.

PHILOCTETES

Fear not, long use and wont has taught me how.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Ye Gods! What now remains for me to do?

PHILOCTETES

What is it, my son, what mean these whirling words?

NEOPTOLEMUS

I speak perplexly, know not how to speak.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ὑπορεῖς δὲ τοῦ σὺ; μὴ λέγ', ὦ τέκνου, τάδε.
NEOPTOLEMOS
ἀλλ' ἐνθάδ' ἢδη τούδε τοῦ πάθους κυρώ.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οὗ δὴ σε δυσχέρεια τοῦ νοσήματος
ἐπεισεν ὡστε μὴ μ' ἀγεῖν ναῦτην ἑτί;
NEOPTOLEMOS
ἀπαντα δυσχέρεια, τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν
ὅταν λιπών τις δρᾷ τὰ μὴ προσεικότα.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ἀλλ' οὔδεν ἐξὼ τοῦ φυτεύσαντός σὺ γε
δρᾶς οὔδε φωνεῖς, ἐσθλὸν ἄνδρ' ἐπωφελῶν.
NEOPTOLEMOS
αἰσχρὸς φανοῦμαι· τοῦτ' ἀνιῶμαι πάλαι.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οὖκον ἐν οἷς γε δρᾶς· ἐν οἷς δ' αὐδαὶς ὁκνῶ.
NEOPTOLEMOS
ὁ Ζεῦ, τί δράσω; δεύτερον ληφθῶ κακός,
κρύπτων θ' ὧ μὴ δεῖ καὶ λέγων αἰσχρῶ στ' ἐπῶν;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ἀνὴρ ὁδ', εἰ μὴ 'γὼ κακὸς γνώμων ἐφιν,
προδοὺς μ' ἐσικε κάκληπτων τὸν πλοῦν στελεὶν.
NEOPTOLEMOS
λιπῶν μὲν οὔκ ἐγὼγε· λυπηρῶς δὲ μὴ
πέμπω σε μᾶλλον, τοῦτ' ἀνιῶμαι πάλαι.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
τί ποτε λέγεις, ὦ τέκνου; ὡς οὐ μανθάνω.
NEOPTOLEMOS
οὔδεν σε κρύψω· δεῖ γὰρ ἐς Τροίαν σε πλεῖν
πρὸς τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς καὶ τὸν Ἀτρειδῶν στόλον.
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES
What can perplex thee? say not so, my son.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Too deep involved, I cannot otherwise.

PHILOCTETES
What! the offensiveness of my complaint
Will stay thee now from taking me aboard?

NEOPTOLEMUS
All is offensive when a man is false
To his true self and, knowing right, does wrong.

PHILOCTETES
But thou dost naught in word or deed to shame
Thy birth in succouring a worthy man.

NEOPTOLEMUS
I shall be proved a rogue; this tortures me.

PHILOCTETES
Not in thy deeds—thy words do give me pause.

NEOPTOLEMUS
God help me now! Must I appear twice base,
Hide what I should not and my shame reveal?

PHILOCTETES
The youth, if I misjudge him not, intends
To play me false and leave me stranded here.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Leave thee? Not so, but what will irk thee more,
Convey thee hence. 'Tis this that tortures me.

PHILOCTETES
Thy words are dark, I cannot catch their drift.

NEOPTOLEMUS
I will be plain and round with thee. To Troy
Thou sailest, to the Atridae and the host.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἱμοι, τὰ εἴπας;

ΛΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
μὴ στέναξε, πρὶν μάθης.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ποῖον μάθημα; τί μὲ νοεῖς δράσαί ποτε;

ΛΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
σῶσαι κακοῦ μὲν πρῶτα τοῦδ’, ἔπειτα δὲ
ξὺν σοὶ τὰ Τροίας πεδία πορθήσαι μολῶν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
καὶ ταῦτ’ ἀληθῆ δράν νοεῖς;

ΛΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
πολλὴ κρατεῖ
toῦτων ἀνάγκη, καὶ σὺ μὴ θυμοῦ κλύων.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ἐπόλωλα τλῆμων, προδέδομαι. τί μ’, ὦ ξένε,
dédrakas; ἀπόδος ὡς τάχος τὰ τόξα μοι.

ΛΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἀλλ’, οὐχ οἶον τε’ τῶν γὰρ ἐν τέλει κλύειν
tὸ τ’ ἐνδικὸν με καὶ τὸ συμφέρον ποεῖ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ὠ πῦρ σὺ καὶ πᾶν δείμα καὶ πανουργίας
dεινῆς τέχνημ’ ἔχθιστον, οἵα μ’ εἰργάζω,
o’ ἡπάτηκας: οὐδ’ ἐπαινεῖσθαι μ’ ὀρῶν
tὸν προστρόπαιον, τὸν ἰκέτην, ὥ σχέτλιε;
ἀπεστέρηκας τὸν βίον τὰ τὸξ’ ἐλὼν.
ἀπόδος, ἰκνοῦμαι σ’, ἀπόδος, ἰκετεύω, τέκνον
πρὸς θεῶν πατρίσων, τὸν βίον μὲ μὴ ἀφελη.”

1 μὴ μ’ ἀφέλης MSS., Elmsley corr.
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES
Alas! What say'st thou?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Murmur not but hear me.

PHILOCTETES
Hear me, quoth he! what wilt thou do with me?

NEOPTOLEMUS
First from this misery rescue thee, and then,
With thee to aid me, ravage Ilium.

PHILOCTETES
Wilt thou indeed do this?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Necessity
Leaves me no choice; so take it not amiss.

PHILOCTETES
Me miserable! I am undone, betrayed
How hast thou used me, sir! I charge thee straight
Give back my bow!

NEOPTOLEMUS
That cannot be, for I
By policy and duty both am bound
To obey my chiefs.

PHILOCTETES
Thou fire, thou utter monster,
Abhorred masterpiece of knavery,
How hast thou served me, cheated me, abused?
Art not ashamed to look on me, thou wretch,
Thy suppliant, thy bedesman? Robbing me
Of this my bow thou robbest me of life.
Restore it, I beseech thee, O my son,
Oh, an thou lov'st me, give me back my bow;
Rob me not, by thy gods I pray, of life!

443
ΦΙΔΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

όμων τάλας. ἀλλ' οὔδὲ προσφωνεὶ μ' ἐτι, ἀλλ' ὡς μεθήσων μήποθ', ὡδ' ὀρᾷ πάλιν. ὡ λιμένες, ὡ προβλήτες, ὡ ξυνουσίαι θηρῶν ὄρεών, ὡ καταρρωγεῖς πέτραι, ὑμῖν τάδ', οὖ γὰρ ἄλλον οἶδ' ὅτω λέγω, ἀνακλαίομαι παροῦσι τοῖς εἰωθόσιν, οἳ ἐργ' ὁ παῖς μ' ἔδρασεν οὗ 'Αχιλλέως· ὁμόσας ἀπάξειν οἶκαδ', ἐς Τροίαν μ' ἄγει προσθείς τε χείρα δεξίαν, τὰ τόξα μου ίερὰ λαβῶν τοῦ Ζηνὸς 'Ἡρακλέους ἔχει, καὶ τοῖσιν Ἀργείουσι φήνασθαι βέλεις· ὃς ἀνδρ' ἐλῶν ἵσχυρὸν ἐκ βίας μ' ἄγει, κοῦκ ὁδ' ἐναίρων νεκρὸν ἡ καπνοῦ σκιάν, εἴδωλον ἄλλως· οὐ γὰρ ἀν σθένουτ' γε εἰλέων μ'· ἐπεὶ οὔδ' ἄν ὡδ' ἔχοντ', εἰ μὴ δόλῳ ὑνίν δ' ἥπατημαι δύσμορος. τί χρή με δρᾶν; ἀλλ' ἀπόδος, ἀλλὰ νῦν ἔτ' ἐν σαυτῷ γενοῦ. τί φής; σιωπᾶς; οὔδεν εἰμ' ὁ δύσμορος. ὁ σχῆμα πέτρας δίπυλον, αὖθις αὖ πάλιν εἰσειμὶ πρὸς σὲ ψιλός, οὐκ ἔχων τροφήν· ἀλλ' αὐνανοῦμαι τῶδ' ἐν αὐλίῳ μόνος, οὐ πτημον ὄρνιν οὔδὲ θηρ' ὀρειβάτην τόξους ἐναίρων τοισίδ', ἀλλ' αὐτὸς τάλας θανῶν παρέξω δαίθ' ύφ' ὃν ἐφερβόμεν, καὶ μ' οὐς ἐθηρῶν πρόσθε θηράσουσι νῦν· φόνον φόνου δὲ ῥύσιον τίσω τάλας πρὸς τοῦ δοκοῦντος οὔδεν εἰδέναι κακὸν. ὅλοιο—μή πω, πρὶν μάθοιμ' εἴ καὶ πάλιν γνώμην μετοίσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, θάνοις κακῶς.
Ah me! he turns away, he will not speak; His silence says he will not give it back. Ye creeks, ye promontories, dens and lairs Of mountain beasts, ye cliffs precipitous, To you—none else will heed me—I appeal, On you, familiars of my woes, I call; Hear what I suffer from Achilles' son! He swore to bring me home again, and now To Troy he takes me; on his plighted troth I gave, he keeps my bow, the sacred bow That erst to Zeus-born Heracles belonged, To flout it 'fore the Argive host as his; He takes me hence his prisoner, as if His arm had captured some great warrior, And sees not he is slaying a dead man, A shade, a wraith, an unsubstantial ghost; For in my strength he had not ta'en me, no, Nor as I am, disabled, save by guile. But now, entrapped, ah whither shall I turn? Have pity, give me, give me back my bow! Be once again thy true self, even now. What answer? None. O woe is me, I am lost! O cave with double mouth, to thee I turn; Stripped of my arms and lacking means of life, Here shall I wither in this lonely cell. No bird of air, no beast of the upland wold Yon bow shall slay, but dying I shall make A feast for those who fed me when alive, A quarry for the creatures I pursued, My blood for their blood shed. And this I owe To one who seemed a child in innocence. My curse upon thee—nay I will forbear, Till first I hear whether thou wilt repent Or not; if no, die blasted by my curse! 
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τι δρôμεν; εν σοι και το πλείν ἡμᾶς, ἀναξ,
ηδη στι και τοῖς τούδε προσχωρεῖν λόγοις.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΛΜΟΣ
ἐμοι μὲν οἴκτος δεινὸς ἐμπέπτωκε τις
tουδ' ἀνδρὸς οὐ νῦν πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάλαι.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ἐλέγκον, ὁ παῖ, πρὸς θεῶν, καὶ μὴ παρῆς
σαυτοῖ βροτοῖς ὀνείδος, ἐκκλέψας ἐμε.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΛΜΟΣ
οἴμοι, τί δρᾶσο; μὴ ποτ' ὄφελον λυπεῖν
tην Σκύρον· οὕτω τοῖς παροῦσιν ἄχθομαι.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οὐκ εἰ κακὸς σὺ, πρὸς κακῶν ὃ ἀνδρῶν μαθῶν
ἐοικας ἥκειν αἰσχρά· νῦν ὃ ἀλλοιαὶ δοὺς
οἷς εἰκὸς ἐκπλει, τὰμά μοι μεθεὶς ὀπλα.

ΝΕΟΠΟΔΕΛΜΟΣ
τι δρôμεν, ἀνδρεῖς;

ΟΔΤΣΕΤΣ
ὅ κάκιστ' ἀνδρῶν, τί δρᾶς;
oὐκ εἰ μεθεὶς τὰ τόξα ταύτ' ἐμοὶ πάλιν;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οἴμοι, τίς ἀνήρ; ἄρ' Ὄδυσσεώς κλύω;

ΟΔΤΣΕΤΣ
"Οδυςσέως, σάφ' ἵσθ', ἐμοῦ γ', ὃν εἰσορᾶς.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
οἴμοι: πέτραμαι κάπολωλ', ὃδ' ἦν ἄρα
ὁ ξυλλαβῶν με κάπονοσφήσας ὀπλων.

ΟΔΤΣΕΤΣ
ἐγώ, σάφ' ἵσθ', οὐκ ἄλλος: ὄμολογό τάδε.
PHILOCTETES

CHORUS
What shall we do, prince? 'tis for thee to say Whether we sail or hearken to his prayer.

NEOPTOLEMUS
My heart is strangely wrought, and from the first I have been moved with pity for the man.

PHILOCTETES
In heaven's name show mercy, let not men Brand thee as my betrayer, O my son!

NEOPTOLEMUS
What shall I do? Would I had never left Scyros, to fall into this desperate plight.

PHILOCTETES
Thou art not base, but coming here wast schooled To play the rogue by villains; leave that part To others framed by nature to be rogues. Sail hence, but ere thou sail give back my arms.

NEOPTOLEMUS
What shall we do, friends?

ODYSSEUS appears suddenly from behind the cave.

ODYSSEUS
Wretch, what art thou at? Back with thee, sirrah! give the bow to me.

PHILOCTETES
Ah who is here? Is that Odysseus' voice?

ODYSSEUS
Odysseus, as thou seeest. Here am I.

PHILOCTETES
Oh I am sold, betrayed. So it was he Who trapped me and bereft me of my arms.

ODYSSEUS
I and no other. I avow 'twas I.
ΦΙΑΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΑΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀπόδοσ, ἄφες μοι, παῖ, τὰ τόξα.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
tοῦτο μέν,
οὐδ' ἦν θέλη, δράσει ποτ' ἄλλα καὶ σὲ δεὶ στείχειν ἃμ' αὐτοῖς, ἡ βία στελοῦσι σε.

ΦΙΑΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐμ', ὁ κακῶν κάκιστο καὶ τολμήστατε, οἴδ' ἐκ βίας ἄξουσιν;

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

ἡν μὴ ἔρπης ἐκὼν.

ΦΙΑΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ Δημνία χθὼν καὶ τὸ παγκρατές σέλας Ἡφαιστότευκτον, ταῦτα δήτ' ἀνασχετά, εἰ μ' οὕτος ἐκ τῶν σῶν ἀπάξεται βία;

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

Ζεύς ἐσθ', ἤν' εἰδῆς, Ζεύς, ὁ τῆς δε γῆς κρατῶν, Ζεύς, ὃ δέδοκται ταῦθ'. ὑπηρετῶ δ' ἐγώ.

ΦΙΑΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ μῖσος, οὐα κάζανευρίσκεις λέγεις· θεοὺς προτείνων τοὺς θεοὺς ψευδεῖς τίθης.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ, ἄλλ' ἁληθεῖς· ἢ δ' ὄδός πορευτεά.

ΦΙΑΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὗ φημ'.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

ἐγώ δὲ φημι. πειστέον τάδε.

ΦΙΑΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἴμοι τάλας. ἡμᾶς μὲν ὡς δούλους σαφῶσ πατήρ ἀρ' ἐξέφυσεν οὐδ' ἐλευθέρους.
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES
Give back my bow, son, give it.

ODYSSEUS
That he shall not,
E'en if he would; and what is more, thou with it
Must go, or these shall drag thee hence by force.

PHILOCTETES
Thou brazen-faced villain, shall thy knaves
Drag me by force?

ODYSSEUS
Yea, if thou'lt not consent.

PHILOCTETES
O Lemnian land, O all-subduing fires
Lit by Hephaestus,¹ will ye suffer it,
That yonder man should hale me from your realm?

ODYSSEUS
'Tis Zeus, I tell thee, Zeus who rules this land,
Zeus thus ordains; I am his minister.

PHILOCTETES
O monstrous fiend, what pleas thou canst invent!
Gods thou invokest and wouldst make them liars.

ODYSSEUS
Nay, they are true. But thou must march with us.

PHILOCTETES
Never!

ODYSSEUS
But I say yes; consent thou must.

PHILOCTETES
Oh I was born to sorrow, so it seems;
No free man but a slave my sire begot.

¹ Lemnos was the island on which Hephaestus fell when hurled from heaven (II. i. 593) and Moschylus on the east coast seems to have been an active volcano in historic times.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΟΔΥΣΕΟΣ

οὔκ, ἀλλ' ὀμοίους τοῖς ἀρίστουσιν, μεθ' ὄνν
Τροίαν σ' ἑλείν δεῖ καὶ κατασκάψαι βία.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐδέποτε γ'· ὦν ἄρρη μὲ πᾶν παθεῖν κακόν, ἐώς ἄν ἦ μοι γῆς τόδ' αἰτπεινόν βάθρον.

ΟΔΥΣΕΟΣ

τί δ' ἐργασθεῖς;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

κράτ' ἐμὸν τόδ' αὐτίκα
πέτρα πέτρας ἀνωθεν αἰμάξω πεσών.

ΟΔΥΣΕΟΣ

ξυλλάβετον αὐτόν· μή 'πι τῶδ' ἐστώ τάδε.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὡ χεῖρες, οἷα πᾶσχετ' ἐν χρείᾳ φίλης
νευρᾶς, ὑπ' ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε συνθηρώμεναί.
ὡ μηδὲν ύγίες μηδ' ἐλεύθερον φρονών,
οἳ' ἄν' μ' ύπτήλθες, ὦς μ' ἑθηράσω, λαβῶν
πρόβλημα σαυτοῦ παιὰ τόνδ' ἀγνώτ' ἐμοί,
ἀνάξιον μὲν σοῦ, κατάξιον δ' ἐμοῦ,
δι' ὦν ῥεῖ πλην ὅ το προσταχθὲν ποιέων,
δήλοις δὲ καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν ἀλγεώνως φέρων
οἷς τ' αὐτὸς ἐξῆμαρτεν οἷς τ' ἐγὼ παθοῦν.
ἀλλ' ἢ κακὴ σ' ἡ διὰ μνημὸν βλέπονος' ἀεὶ
ψυχῇ νιν ἀφυα τ' οὐτα κοῦ θέλονθ' ὦμώς
ἐν προντιδάξεσθ' ἐν κακοῖς εἶναι σοφόν.
καὶ νῦν ἐμ', ὦ δύστημε, συνήθεσας νοεῖς
ἀγεῖν ἀπ' ἀκτῆς τῆςδ', ἐν ἦ μὲ προῦβαλον
ἀφίλον ἐρήμου ἀπόλων, ἐν ζώσων νεκρόν.

φεῦ.

ὁλοίρ' καὶ σιὶ πολλάκις τόδ' ἡξάμην.
ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ οὔδεν θεόι νέμουσιν ἦδυ μοι,
PHILOCTETES

ODYSSEUS
Nay, but a peer of paladins, ordained
To storm proud Troy and lay it in the dust.

PHILOCTETES
Never! not even in my utmost need,
Whilst under me I feel this steep of rock.

ODYSSEUS
What would' st thou do?

PHILOCTETES
Leap from the crags above
And dash my brains out on the crags below.

ODYSSEUS
Lay hold of him, seize either arm, prevent him!

PHILOCTETES
Oh hands, how ill ye fare, made prisoners
By that man, all for lack of my good bow.
Thou very churl, corrupt in heart and soul,
How hast thou circumvented me again,
Making this stranger boy thy stalking horse,
Fit mate for me, too good for thine ally,
Thy tool who merely did as he was bidden,
And even now is plainly penitent
Both for his error and the wrong to me.
But thou, like some vile prompter in the dark,
Wast ever by to give the cue, and though
Unapt and loth, he learnt thy villainy.
And now thou think' st to bind me hand and foot,
Monster, and take me from this shore whereon
Thou erst did' st cast me, friendless, homeless, lorn,
A living corpse.

I curse thee; when have I
Not cursed thee these long years? But since the Gods
Grant nothing sweet to me, thou livest on
Exultant; and to me, with endless woes

451
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

σὺ μὲν γέγηθας ξῶν, ἐγὼ δ' ἀλγύνομαι
tούτ' αὐθ', ὅτι ξῶ σὺν κακοῖς πολλοῖς τάλας,
γελώμενος πρὸς σοῦ τε καὶ τῶν Ἀτρέως
dιπλῶν στρατηγῶν, οἷς σὺ ταῦθ' ὑπηρετεῖς.
καίτοι σὺ μὲν κλοπῇ τε καὶ κανάγηκεν ξύγεις
ἐπλείσας ἀμ' αὐτοῖς, ἐμὲ δὲ τῶν πανάθλιον,
ἐκόντα πλεύσανθ' ἐπτὰ ναυσὶ ναυβάτην,
ἀτιμον ἐβαλον, ὡς σὺ φῆς, κεῖνοι δὲ σέ.
καὶ νῦν τί μ' ἀγετε; τί μ' ἀπάγεσθε; τοῦ χάριν;
ὅς οὐδέν εἰμι καὶ τέθυχ' ὑμῖν πάλαι.

πῶς, ὦ θεοὶς ἔχθιστε, νῦν οὐκ εἰμὶ σοι
χωλός, δυσώδης; πῶς θεοὶς ἔξεσθ', ὡμοῦ
πλεύσαντος αἴθειν ἱερά; πῶς σπένδειν ἐτι;
αὕτη γὰρ ἦν σοι πρόφασις ἐκβαλεῖν ἐμέ.
κακῶς ὧλοισθ' ὥλεισθε δ' ἡδικηκότες
τοῦ ἄνδρα τόνδε, θεουσιν εἰ δίκης μέλει.

ἐξοίδα δ' ὃς μέλει γ'. ἐπει ὡπτοτ' ἄν στόλον
ἐπλέυσατ' ἄν τόνδ' εἶνεκ' ἄνδρος ἁθλίου,
εἰ μὴ τι κέντρον θεῖον ἦγ' ὑμᾶς εἴμοι.

ἀλλ', ὦ πατρῴα γῇ θεοὶ τ' ἐπόψιοι,
tίσασθε τίσασθ' ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ ποτὲ
ξύμπαντας αὐτοὺς, εἰ τι καμ' οἰκτηρετε·
ὡς ξῶ μὲν οἰκτρῶς, εἰ δ' ὢδοιμ' ὀλωλότας
tούτους, δοκοὶμ' ἄν τῆς νόσου πεφευγέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βαρὺς τε καὶ βαρεῖαν ὁ ξένος φάτων
tήνυ' εἰπ', Ὄδυσσεῦ, κοῦχ ὑπείκουσαν κακοῖς.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ

πόλλ' ἄν λέγειν ἔχοιμι πρὸς τὰ τοῦτ' ἐπη,

1 εὔξεστ' ἐμὸν MSS., Pierson and Gernhard corr.
Encompassed, life itself is misery;
Mocked as I am by thee and the two sons
Of Atreus whose abettor now thou art.
Thou of constraint and by a stratagem
Wert forced to join their flag and sail with them;¹
I with my seven ships volunteered, and yet
(O miserable me!) I was cast forth
In scorn—by them thou say'st, they say by thee.
And now why seize, why hale me to your ships,
Me who am naught, dead long ago to you?
How can I serve you? Heaven-abhorred wretch!
Am I not lame and noisome now as then?
How will ye render, if I sail with you,
Burnt sacrifices and drink-offerings?
That was the pretext when ye cast me forth.
My curse upon you for your wrongs to me,
And, if the gods are just, ye shall be cursed.
And they are just, I know it; never else
Would ye have sailed for such a wretch as I,
But that they pricked your heart to think of me.
My native land, ye ever-watchful gods,
Your vengeance, vengeance sure though it tarry long,
Fall on them all, if aught you pity me;
And I am piteous. Yet could I behold
Their ruin, I should half forget my plague.

CHORUS

His mood is bitter, bitter his reply
To thee, Odysseus; suffering tames him not.

ODYSSEUS

Much could I answer, did the time permit;

¹ Odysseus to escape service feigned madness but was detected by Palamedes, who laid the infant Telemachus in front of the plough which he was driving with a yoked ox and ass.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

εἰ μοι παρείκονεν νῦν ὑμὸς κρατῶ λόγον.
οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτων δεῖ, τοιοῦτός εἰμὶ ἐγὼ.
χῶπον δικαίων κάγαθώς ἄνδρῶν κρίσις,
οὐκ ἂν λάβοις μου μᾶλλον οὐδενείς ἐυσεβῆ.

φιλοκτῆς
οὐκ ὅτι ηδίως σύμμορφος; σὺ τοῖς ἐμοῖς
σπλογοίς κοσμηθεῖσαν ἔν Ἀργείοις φανεῖς;

οἰκοθέτη
μὴ μὴ ἀντιφῶνει μηδέν, ὥς στείχοντα δή.

φιλοκτῆς
οὐ σπέρμα Ἀχιλλέως, οὐδὲ σοῦ φωνής ἐτι
γενηθοίμαι προσφθεικτός, ἀλλὰ σύντως ἄπει;

οἰκοθέτη
χωρεῖ σὺ μὴ πρόσλευσε, γενναῖος περ ὅν,
ημῶν ὅπως μὴ τὴν τύχην διαφθειρέωσ.
PHILOCTETES

One word must now suffice. I am a man
Who can adapt his humour to the hour.
When justice and plain-dealing are required,
Ye will not find a man more scrupulous.
My one concern is ever to prevail—
Save in thy case; to thee right willingly
I will give way. (To sailors) Unhand him, let him go!
He may stay here.

(To PHILOCTETES)
We have no need of thee,
Having thy bow, for Teucer will be there
A master archer, and myself who boast
That I can draw a bow with hand as firm
And point it with as true an eye as thine.
What use for thee then? Lemnos shall be thine.
Sole Monarch, hail! Go, pace thy bounds at peace;
We leave thee. This thy prize methinks will earn
For me the honour that were rightly thine.

PHILOCTETES

Unhappy wretch, what can I do? Shalt thou
Strut like a popinjay in arms of mine?

ODYSSEUS

Bandy no more words; I am going now.

PHILOCTETES

Son of Achilles, wilt thou leave me thus,
Thou too in silence, deaf to my appeal?

ODYSSEUS

(To NEOPTOLEMUS)
Away! and look not on him lest thou mar
Our stroke of fortune by thy quixotry.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ν καὶ πρὸς ὑμῶν ὡδ' ἐρήμος, ὡς ἔνοι, λειβθῆσομαι δὴ κοῦκ ἐποικτερεῖτέ με;  
ΧΟΡΟΣ
οδ' ἐστὶν ἡμῶν ναυκράτωρ δ' παῖς· ὡς ἄν ὦτος λέγη σοι, ταῦτά σοι χήμεις φαμέν.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἀκούσομαι μὲν ὡς ἐφυν οὐκτον πλέως πρὸς τοῦδ' ὡμος δὲ μείνατ', εἰ τούτῳ δοκεῖ, χρόνον τοσοῦτον, εἰς ὅσον τὰ τ' ἐκ νεῶς στείλωσι ναῦται καὶ θεοῖς εὐξώμεθα.  
χοῦτος τάχ' ἂν φρόνησιν ἐν τούτῳ λάβοι λάω τιν' ἡμῖν. νω μὲν οὖν ὅρμωμεθαν, ὑμεῖς δ', οταν καλῶμεν, ὀρμᾶσθαι ταχεῖς.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
ο κοίλας πέτρας γύαλον στρ. α' θερμὸν καὶ παγετῶδες, ὡς σ' οὖκ ἐμελλον ἁρ', ὁ τύλας, λείψεων οὐδέποτ', ἀλλὰ μοι καὶ θυησκοντι συνείσει. ὁμοί μοί μοι.

ὁ πληρεστατον αὐλιον λύπας τάς ἄπ' ἐμοῦ τύλαν, τίπτ' αὖ μοι τὸ κατ' ἅμαρ ἐσται; τοῦ ποτε τεῦξομαι σιτονόμου μέλεος πόθεν ἐλπίδοις; πέλειαι δ' ἄνω πτωκάδες ὄξυτόνον διὰ πνεύματος ἐλώσιν· οὐκέτ' ἵσχω.  
ΧΟΡΟΣ
σὺ τοι σὺ τοι κατηξίωσας, ὦ βαρύποτμε, κοῦκ

1 εἰθ' αἰθέρος ἄνω | πτωκάδες ὄξυτόνον διὰ πνεύματος | ἐλώσι

ω' οὐ γὰρ ἵσχων MSS., Erfurdt, Heath, Jebb corr.

456
Ye also, friends, will ye abandon me
And show no pity for my sad estate?

CHORUS
This stripling is our captain, and whate’er
He says, we say the same; his word is law.

NEOPTOLEMUS
I know I shall be twitted by my chief
As weak and tender-hearted; but what odds?
If our friend wills it, tarry here until
Our crew have made all tight and yare, and we
Have offered prayers, as fitting. He the while
Perchance may come to a better mind and melt.
So we will hasten forward, he and I,
And ye, make haste to follow when we call.

[Exeunt Odysseus and Neoptolemus.

PHILOCTETES
O cavern’d rock, my cell
Now hot, now icy chill,
How long with thee it was my lot to dwell:
To thee till death I shall be constant still.
Tell me, sad lodging, haunted by my pain,
How shall I day by day my life sustain?
Ye timorous doves whose flight
Whirrs in the air o’erhead,
Now where ye will unharmed alight;
No shafts of mine henceforward need ye dread.

CHORUS.
’Tis thou hast willed it thus, infatuate,
Thou art the author of thy sad estate;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

άλλοθεν ἔχει τύχα τάδ' ἀπὸ μείζονος,
εὐτέ γε παρὸν φρονήσαι
τοῦ λόγου δαίμονος ἐίλου τὸ κάκιον αἰνεῖν. 1

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ πλάμων πλάμων ἄρ' ἐγὼ ἀντ. α'
καὶ μόχθω λωβατός, ὃς ἦδη μετ' οὐδενὸς ύστερον
ἀνδρῶν εἰσοπίσω τάλας ναίων ἐνθάδ' ὄλούμαι,
ἀλαὶ αλαὶ,
οὐ φορβάν ἐτι προσφέρων,
οὐ πτανῶν ἀπ' ἐμῶν ὀπλῶν
κραταίαις μετὰ χερσιν
ὕσχων' ἀλλὰ μοι ἁσκοπα
κρυπτά τ' ἐπη δολερᾶς ὑπέδυ φρενός'
ἵδοίμαν δὲ νιν,
τὸν τάδε μησάμενον, τὸν ἵσον χρόνον
ἐμὰς λαχόντ' ἀνίας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πότμος, πότμος σὲ δαίμόνων τάδ',
οὐδὲ σὲ γε δόλος,
ἔσχεν ὑπὸ χειρὸς ἀμᾶς. 2
στυγερὰν ἔχε
δύσποτμον ἄραν ἐπ' ἄλλοις.
καὶ γὰρ ἐμοὶ τούτο μέλει, μὴ φιλότητ' ἀπώση.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οἴμοι μοι, καὶ που πολιᾶς
πότου θινὸς ἐφήμενος
ἐγγελᾶ, χερὶ πάλλων
τὰν ἐμὰν μελέον τροφάν,
τὰν οὐδείς ποτ' ἐβάστασεν.
ὁ τόξον φίλον, ὁ φίλων
χειρῶν ἐκβεβιασμένον,

1 ἐλεῖν MSS., Hermann corr.
2 ἔσχ' ὑπὸ χειρὸς ἐμᾶς MSS., Bergk corr.
PHILOCTETES

Nor to some higher force canst thou assign
Thy woes, but, when free choice was thine,
    The good thou did'st reject,
    The worse elect.

PHILOCTETES

Ah wretched, wretched then am I, (Ant. 1)
Consumed with utter misery,
Doomed for all time to linger on.
Without one friend, one comrade, one,
    To aid me till I die.
    No more my arrows fleet
    Shall win my daily meat;
Poor unsuspecting fool,
A base intriguers tool,
By his forged legend caught!
Wretch who my ruin wrought,
Would I might see him pine
Long years like me in agony like mine!

CHORUS

By destiny, by destiny 'twas sent.
To treachery my hand was never lent;
Point not at me thy baleful curse, for fain
Thy friend, as heretofore, I would remain.

PHILOCTETES

Ah me! he's sitting now (Str. 2)
    Upon the grey sea sands,
And laughs at me, I trow;
    My bow is in his hands,
The bow that was my life, the bow
That never lord save me did know.

My bow, my matchless bow of yew,
    If thou canst feel, how must thou grieve,
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

η που ἔλειψεν ὁρᾶς, φρένας εἰ τινας ἔχεις, τὸν Ἡράκλειον ἀρθμοὶν ὀδέ σοι ὀὐκέτι χρησόμενον τὸ μεθύστερον, ἀλλοῦ δ' εὖ μεταλλαγὰ πολυμιχάνου ἀνδρὸς ἐρέσσει, ὀρῶν μὲν αἰσχρὰς ἀπατας, στυγνῶν δὲ φῶτ' ἐχθο- δοτῶν,

μυρί', ἀπ' αἰσχρῶν ἀνατέλλονθ', ὅς ἐφ' ἥμιν κάκ' ἐμήσατ', ὦ Ζεῦ.¹

ΧΩΡΟΣ

ἀνδρὸς τοι τα μὲν ἔνδικ' αἰεν ² εἰπεῖν, εἰπόντος δὲ μὴ φθονερὰν ἐξώσαι γιλώσσας ὄδυναν.
κείνος δ' εἰς ἀπὸ πολλῶν ταχθεὶς τῶν ἐφημοσύνας κοινῶν ἥμυσεν ἐς φίλους ἀρωγάν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὁ πταναὶ θῆραι χαροτῶν τ' ἀντ. β'
ἐθνῃ θηρῶν, οὐς ὅδ' ἔχει χώρος οὐρεσιβώτας,
μηκέτ' ἀπ' αὐλίων φύγα πηδάτ'. ³ οὐ γὰρ ἔχω χερῶν
tὰν πρόσθεν βέλεων ἀλκάν,
ὁ δύστανος ἐγὼ τανῦν,
ἀλλ' ἀνέδην, ὅ δὲ χώρος ἄρ' οὐκέτι φοβητός οὐκέθ' ἥμιν, ⁴ ἔρπετε· νῦν καλὸν
ἀντίφωνον κορέσαι στόμα πρὸς χάριν

¹ ὀδυσσεύς MSS., Dindorf corr.
² τὸ μὲν εὖ δίκαιον MSS., Arndt corr.
³ φυγα μ' οὐκέτ' ἀπ' αὐλίων | πελάτ' MSS., Jebb corr.
⁴ οὐδὲ χώρος ἐρύκεται | οὐκέτι φοβητός ἥμιν MSS., Jebb corr.
PHILOCTETES

Thus wrested from thy master true,
Constrained his loving hands to leave,
Thy master who, through Hellas famed,
The friend of Heracles was named.

Now art thou handled by a knave,
Past master in each cunning art,
Must do his bidding, as a slave,
In all his misdeeds take thy part.
And aid the unrelenting foe,
The source and spring of all my woe.

CHORUS
A man should aye his rightful cause maintain,
But from malign and venomous taunts refrain;
And he but serves the common interest,
Speaks for the host, obeying their behest.

PHILOCTETES

Ye feathered tribes, my prey, (Ant. 2)
Ye bright-eyed beasts who roam
The hills, start not away
Scared from the hunter's home.
Stray where ye will, secure, unharmed;
Why shun a helpless man unarmed?

Gone is the mighty bow;
Flock hither without dread,
Why should ye fear a foe
So weak, so ill bestead.
Draw near your gluttonous mouths to fill,
Mangle my carrion flesh at will.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐμᾶς σαρκὸς αἰώλας·
ἀπὸ γὰρ βίου αὐτίκα λείψω.
πόθεν γὰρ ἐσται βιοτὰ; τίς ὅδ' ἐν αὕραις τρέφεται;
μηκέτι μηδενὸς κρατύνων ὅσα πέμπει βιῶδωρος
αἰα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς θεῶν, εἰ τι σέβει ξένου, πέλασσον,
εὔνοια πάσα πελάταιν·
ἀλλὰ γυνῶθ’, εὖ γυνῶθ’ ἐπὶ σοι ἡ
κῆρα τάνδ’ ἀποφεύγειν.
οίκτρα γὰρ βόσκειν, ἀδαῖς δ’
ἐχειν μυρίον ἄχθος, δ’ ἕλενοικεί.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πάλιν πάλιν παλαιὸν ἀλγημ’ ὑπέμνασας, ὥ
λῶστε τῶν πρὸν ἐντόπων.
τί μ’ ὥλεσας; τί μ’ ἔργασαι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί τούτ’ ἐλεξας;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

eἰ σοῦ τὰν ἐμοὶ στυγερὰν
Τρφάδα γὰν μ’ ἡλπισάς ἄξειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

tόδε γὰρ νοῦ κράτιστον.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἀπὸ νῦν με λείπτετ’ ἡδή.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φίλα μοι, φίλα ταῦτα παρήγγειλας ἐκόντι τε
πράσσειν.

τιμεν’ ἰὁμεν
ναὸς ἕν ἡμῖν τέτακται.

1 ὅτι σοὶ MSS., Seyffert corr.
PHILOCTETES

Here shall I waste away,
    Soon will ye eye me dead;
Who can survive one day
    By airs of heaven fed?
Of all that Earth affords each son,
Herb, root and fruit, possessing none.

CHORUS
If thou regardest a well-wishing friend,
Draw near and to his kindly rule attend.
Think well; from this intolerable bane,
That thou dost feed, and aggravate thy pain,
With thee it rests deliverance to gain.

PHILOCTETES
O why recall my ancient grief once more,
Kindest of all who e'er have touched this shore?
Why twice undo a wretch undone before?

CHORUS
What meanest thou?

PHILOCTETES
I mean that thou wast fain
To take me to the Troy I hate again.

CHORUS
'Tis for thy good.

PHILOCTETES
O leave me then, begone!

CHORUS
Thanks for that word. We will be off anon,
Back to the ship, and each man to his oar.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
μη, πρὸς ἀραίου Δίος, ἐλθης, ἰκετεύω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
μετρίας.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὦ ξένοι,
μείνατε, πρὸς θεῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
tί θροεῖς;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

αἰαὶ αἰαὶ, δαίμων δαίμων;
ἀπόλωλ' ὁ τάλας:
ὦ ποὺς ποὺς, τί σ' έτ' ἐν βίῳ
tεῦξω τῷ μετόπιν τάλας;
ὦ ξένοι, ἐλθεῖτ' ἐπήλυτες αὐθις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
tί ἰέσοντες ἀλλοκότῳ
gνώμα τῶν πάρος, ὃν προύφαινες;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὔτοι νεμεσητῶν,
ἀλύνοντα χειμερίῳ
λύτα καὶ παρὰ νοῦν θροεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βαθί νυν, ὃ τάλαν, ὃς σε κελεύομεν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐδέποτ' οὐδέποτ', ὥσθι τὸδ' ἐμπεδον,
οὖ' εὶ πυρφόρος ἀστεροπητῆς
βροντᾶς αὐγαῖς μ' εἴσι φλογίζων.
ἐρρέτω 'Ἰλιον οὐ θ', ὑπ' ἐκεῖνῳ
πάντες ὡσοι τὸδ' ἐτλασαν ἐμοὶ ποδὸς ἄρθρον
ἀπώσατε.

ἄλλ', ὃ ξένοι, ἐν γε μοι εὐχὸς ὰρέξατε.
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES
O leave me not, for God's sake, I implore.

CHORUS
Calm thyself.

PHILOCTETES
Stay, O stay!

CHORUS
Why should we wait?

PHILOCTETES
O woe is me! Out on my fate, my fate!
Accursed foot, what shall I make of thee?
I am undone! O friends, come back to me.

CHORUS
What would'st thou? First thou bid'st us go, and then
In the same breath thou biddest us remain.

PHILOCTETES
O be not wrath if one distraught with pain
Blurts out discordant words beside the mark.

CHORUS
Come then, unhappy man, with us embark.

PHILOCTETES
Never, no never, though the King of Heaven
Should threat to blast me with his fiery leven.
No, perish rather Ilium, perish all
The Achaean host that batter at its wall;
Hard hearts who cast me forth as halt and maim.
From you, my friends, one parting boon I claim.

465
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ποίον ἐρείς τόδ᾽ ἔπος;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
ξίφος, εἴ ποθεν,
ἡ γέννῃ ἡ βελέων τι προπέµψατε.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὡς τίνα δὴ ῥέξης παλάμαν ποτέ;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
χρῶτ᾽ ἀπὸ πάντα καὶ ἀρθρα τέμω χερί·
φονὰ φονὰ νόσος ἕδη.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί ποτε;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
πατέρα ματεύων.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ποι γὰς;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
ἐσ᾽ Ἀιδοῦν·
οὐ γὰρ ἐστ᾽ ἐν φάει γ’ ἔτι.
ἤ πόλις, ὁ πατρία,
πῶς ἂν εἰσίδοιμ᾽ ἄθλιος σ’ ἀνήρ,
ὅς γε σὰν λιπών ἱερὰν
λιβάδ᾽ ἔχθροῖς ἐβαν Δαναοῖς
ἀρωγός· ἔτ᾽ οὐδὲν εἴμι.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἐγὼ μὲν ἤδη καὶ πάλαι νεῶς ὁμοῦ
στείχων ἂν ἡ σοι τῆς ἐμῆς, εἰ μὴ πέλας
'Οδυσσέα στείχοντα τὸν τ᾽ Ἀχιλλέως
γόνον πρὸς ἡμᾶς δεῦρ᾽ ἱοντ' ἐλεύσομεν.
ΟΔΥΣΣΕΤΣ
οὐκ ἂν φράσειας ἤμνων αὐ παλιντροπος
κέλευθον ἔρπεις ὡδε σὺν στουδῆ ταχύς;
1 κράτ᾽ MSS., Hermann corr.
PHILOCTETES

CHORUS
What would' st thou ask?

PHILOCTETES
An axe, a spear, a brand,
No matter what—the weapon first to hand.

CHORUS
Wherefore! What deed of violence wouldst thou do?

PHILOCTETES
Hack, mangle, limb by limb my body hew;
My thoughts are bloody.

CHORUS
Wherefore?

PHILOCTETES
I would go
To seek my father.

CHORUS
In what land?

PHILOCTETES
Below;
For I shall find him nowhere on this earth.
My native land, fair land that gave me birth,
Might I but see thee! Wherefore did I roam
And leave the sacred stream that guards my home?
To help the Greeks those stormy seas I crossed,
My mortal foes, by them undone, lost, lost!

CHORUS
I should have left thee long ago and now
Be near my ship, but that I saw Odysseus
Advancing towards us and Achilles' son.
Enter Neoptolemus followed by Odysseus.

ODYSSEUS
Wilt thou not tell me why thou huriest back
In such hot haste and on what errand bound?
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
λύσων ὁσ' ἕξιςμαρττον ἐν τῷ πρὸν χρόνῳ.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΣ"ΕΣ
δεινον γε φωνεῖς· ἢ δ' ἀμαρτία τίς ἦν;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἥν σοὶ πιθόμενος τῷ τε σύμπαντι στρατῷ

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΣ"ΕΣ
ἐπραξας ἐργον ποιον ὄν ποιεῖν νῦν σοι πρέπουν;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἀπάταισιν αἰσχραῖς ἄνδρα καὶ δόλοις ἐλών.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΣ"ΕΣ
τὸν ποιον; ὃμοι· μῶν τι βουλεύει νέον;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
νέον μὲν οὖδέν, τῷ δὲ Πολιάντος τόκῳ,

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΣ"ΕΣ
τί χρήμα δράσεις; ὃς μ' ὑπῆλθέ τις φόβος.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
παρ' οὗτος ἔλαβον ταύτε τὰ τῶν', αὖθις πάλιν

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΣ"ΕΣ
ὁ Ζεύς, τί λέγεις; οὐ τί ποιεῖ δούναι νοεῖς;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
αἰσχρῶς γὰρ αὐτὰ κοῦ δίκη λαβῶν ἔχω.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΣ"ΕΣ
πρὸς θεῶν, πότερα δὴ κερτομῶν λέγεις τάδε;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
εἰ κερτόμησίς ἔστι τάληθη λέγειν.

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΣ"ΕΣ
τί φῆς, Ἀχιλλέως παῖ; τίν' εἰρήκας λόγον;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
δῖς ταῦτα βούλει καὶ τρὶς ἀναπολεῖν μ' ἔπη;

ΟΔΤΣΣΕΣ"ΕΣ
ἀρχὴν κλίειν ἃν οὖδ' ἀπαξ ἐβουλόμην.
NEOPTOLEMUS
I come to expiate all former wrongs.

ODYSSEUS
A strange reply. What wrong did'st thou commit?

NEOPTOLEMUS
When in obedience to the host and thee—

ODYSSEUS
Prithee, what did'st thou that beseemed thee not?

NEOPTOLEMUS
I snared a man by base deceit and guile.

ODYSSEUS
What man? Thou hast not something rash in hand?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Naught rash, but to the son of Poeas I—

ODYSSEUS
What wilt thou do? My soul forbodes some ill.

NEOPTOLEMUS
From whom I took the bow, to him again—

ODYSSEUS
Great Zeus! What meanest thou? Not give it back?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Yes, for I got it basely, shamefully.

ODYSSEUS
In Heaven's name, say'st thou this to mock at me?

NEOPTOLEMUS
If it be mockery to speak the truth.

ODYSSEUS
What now? What meanest thou, Achilles' son?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Must I repeat the same words twice and thrice?

ODYSSEUS
Far better had I never heard them once.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

εὐ νῦν ἐπίστω πάντ' ἀκηκοὺς λόγου.

ΟΔΤΣΞΕΤΣ

ἐστὶν τις, ἐστὶν ὡς σε κωλύσει τὸ δρᾶν.

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τί φής; τίς ἐσται μ' οὐπικωλύσων τάδε;

ΟΔΤΣΞΕΤΣ

ξύμπας 'Αχαίων λαός, εὖ δὲ τοῖς ἑγώ.

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

σοφὸς πεφυκὼς οὐδὲν ἐξαινᾶς σοφόν.

ΟΔΤΣΞΕΤΣ

σὺ δ' οὐτε φωνεῖς οὐτε δρασείεις σοφά.

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ δίκαια, τῶν σοφῶν κρείσσων τάδε.

ΟΔΤΣΞΕΤΣ

καὶ πῶς δίκαιον, ἂ γ' ἔλαβες βουλαῖς ἑμαῖς, πάλιν μεθεῖναι ταῦτα;

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τὴν ἀμαρτίαν

ἀἰσχρὰν ἀμαρτῶν ἀναλαβεῖν πειράσομαι.

ΟΔΤΣΞΕΤΣ

στρατὸν δ' 'Αχαίων οὐ φοβεῖ, πράσσων τάδε;

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ξὺν τῷ δίκαιῳ τὸν σὸν οὐ ταρβῶ φόβον.

ΟΔΤΣΞΕΤΣ

[ξὺν τῷ δίκαιῳ χειρ ἐμή σ' ἀναγκάσει.]¹

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τοι σῇ χειρὶ πείθομαι τὸ δρᾶν.

ΟΔΤΣΞΕΤΣ

οὐ τάρα Τρῳσίν, ἀλλὰ σοὶ μαχούμεθα.

¹ Hermann pointed out that a verse is here missing. The line in the text (one of Jebb's suggestions) with the same beginning would explain the omission.
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
Rest well assured I have nothing more to add.

ODYSSEUS
There is, I tell thee, one to stay thy hand.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Who prithee? who to stay me or prevent?

ODYSSEUS
The whole Achaeian host, and I for one.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Thy words lack wisdom though thou lack'st not wits.

ODYSSEUS
Unwisdom marks thy words and actions both.

NEOPTOLEMUS
If just, 'tis better than unjust and wise.

ODYSSEUS
Can it be justice to give back the prize
Won by my policy?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Shameful was my fault,
And I will try to make amends for it.

ODYSSEUS
Hast thou no terror of the Achaean host?

NEOPTOLEMUS
A bugbear this with justice on my side.

ODYSSEUS
[Justice must yield if I resort to force.]

NEOPTOLEMUS
Not even thou canst force me 'gainst my will.

ODYSSEUS
Then not with Trojans must we war, but thee.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

孬 onslaughts.

οδηγεῖται

Χείρα δεξιὰν ὄρις
κόπης ἐπιψανουσαν;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλὰ κἀκεῖ τοι
tαὐτὸν τόδ’ ὄψει δρώντα κοῦ μέλλοντ’ ἔτι.

οδηγεῖται

καίτοι σ’ ἐάσω. τῷ δὲ σύμπαντι στρατῷ
λέξω τάδ’ ἐλθὼν, ὦς σε τιμωρήσεται.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἐσωφρόνησας. κὰν τὰ λοίφ’ οὕτω φρονῆσι,
Ἣσως ἀν ἐκτὸς κλαμαματῶν ἔχοις πόδα.
σὺ δ’, ὦ Ποιαντὸς παῖ, Φιλοκτήτην λέγω,
ἐξέλθ’, ἀμείψας τάσσε πετρήρεις στέγας.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

τίς αὕ παρ’ ἀντροῖς θόρυβος ἵσταται βοής;
τί μ’ ἐκκαλείσθε; τοῦ κεχρημένοι, ξένοι;
ἢμοι κακὸν τὸ χρήμα. μῶν τί μοι νέα
πάρεστη πρὸς κακοῖσι πέμπτοντες κακά;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

θάρσει. λόγους δ’ ἀκουσοῦν οὕς ἦκῳ φέρων.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

dédoik’ ἐγὼγε. καὶ τὰ πρὶν γὰρ ἐκ λόγων
καλῶν κακῶς ἐπραξα, σοὶς πεισθεῖς λόγοις.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὕκουν ἔνεστι καὶ μεταγνώναι πάλιν;

1 ἔστω MSS., Wecklein corr.
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
So be it, if it must be.

ODYSSEUS
See'st my hand

Upon my sword-hilt?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Me too shalt thou see

Ready to follow suit and keen to draw.

ODYSSEUS
Well, I will leave thee, but I shall report
To the whole army. They shall punish thee.

NEOPTOLEMUS
A wise discretion. Keep this prudent mind,
So mayest thou henceforth with a whole skin live.

[Exit ODYSSEUS

Ho! Philoctetes, son of Poeas, leave
The shelter of thy rocky home; come forth!

PHILOCTETES
What means this hubbub at my cave again?
Why summon me, what would ye with me, Sirs?

(Appears at mouth of cave and sees NEOPTOLEMUS.)

Ha! I mislike the look of it. Are ye come
As heralds of new woes to crown the old?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Take heart and listen to the news I bring.

PHILOCTETES
I am afraid. Thou camest once before;
I trusted thy fair words and ill I sped.

NEOPTOLEMUS
May not a man repent him?
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

toioutos ήσθα tois logoi moi χωτε μου
ta tox ekleptes, piostos, atpheros lathera.

NEOPTOLEMOS

all' ou ti miun vun. Bouloimai de sou kluein,
potereta dedoktais sou menonti karterein
η plein meb' hmov;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

pave, mi lezeis pera:
mattin gar an euiphis ye pant' eirhsetai.

NEOPTOLEMOS

ouw dedoktais;

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

kai pera y' isθ' h lew.

NEOPTOLEMOS

all' 'htheta mou an se peissei hnoi
emiois: ei de mi ti prdos kairod
leignov kuroi, pepaumai.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

panta gar frasseis mattin.

ou gar pot euinoun thn emi kthsei ferena,
ostis y' emou doloi toun blou labw
apestherikas, kata noubetais eme
elthou, aristou patros aisxistos geigos.
holoseth, 'Atreidai men malist', epieita de
o Dartoou pai's kai su.

NEOPTOLEMOS

mu 'puezi pera:
dexou de cheiros ex emis bely tade.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

wos epitas; ara deuterou doloumeba;
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES

Such thou wast,
No less fair-spoken, when thou wert about
To steal my bow, black treachery in thy heart.

NEOPTOLEMUS

But now another man, who fain would learn
Whether thou still persistest to stay here,
Or wilt embark with us.

PHILOCTETES

Stop, say no more!
All that thou sayest will be wasted breath.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Art resolute?

PHILOCTETES

More resolute than words can tell.

NEOPTOLEMUS

Well, I would gladly have persuaded thee
By argument, but if thou wilt not heed,
Why, I have done.

PHILOCTETES

Thou needs must speak in vain.
How canst thou win me o'er to friendliness,
Thou who didst rob me of my life by fraud,
And then dost come to counsel me? Base son
Of noblest sire! Perdition on you all;
The Atridae first, Odysseus then, and thee!

NEOPTOLEMUS

Forbear thy curses. Take from me thy bow.

PHILOCTETES

What say'st thou? Am I tricked a second time?
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀπόκοιμος ἂγνος Ζηνός ψίστο σέβας.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ὡς φίλτατ' εἴπών, εἰ λέγεις ἐτήτυμα.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

τούργον παρέσται φανερόν ἀλλὰ δεξιὰν

προτεινε χείρα, καὶ κράτει τῶν σῶν ὁπλῶν.

ΟΔΤΣΕΤΣ

ἐγὼ δ' ἀπανδώ γ', ὥς θεοὶ ἔννοιστορεῖς,

ὑπέρ τ' Ἀτρειδῶν τοῦ τε σύμπαντος στρατοῦ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

τέκνου, τίνος φώνημα, μῶν Ὁδυσσέως,

ἐπησθόμην;

ΟΔΤΣΕΤΣ

στῇ ἵσοι καὶ πέλας γ' ὀρᾶς,

ὁς σ' ἐς τὰ Τροίας πεδῆ ἀποστελῶ βίας,

ἐὰν τ' Ἀχιλλέως παῖς ἐάν τε μὴ θέλῃ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ τι χαίρων, ἢν τὸ δ' ὀρθωθῆ βέλος.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἄ, μηδαμῶς, μῆ, πρὸς θεῶν, μεθῆς βέλος.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

μέθεσ με, πρὸς θεῶν, χείρα, φίλτατον τέκνου.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν μεθείην.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

φεῦ τί μ' ἄνδρα πολέμιου

ἐχθρόν τ' ἀφείλου μὴ κτανεῖν τόξους ἐμοῖς;

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὗτ' ἐμοὶ τοὔτ' ἐστίν οὔτε σοὶ καλὸν.
PHILOCTETES

NEOPTOLEMUS
No, by the name of Zeus most high, I swear it.

PHILOCTETES
O comfortable words, if they be true.

NEOPTOLEMUS
The deed shall follow to attest this truth
Reach hither thy right hand and take thy bow.
(As he is handing the bow to PHILOCTETES, ODYSSEUS appears.)

ODYSSEUS
Hold! I protest 'fore Heaven, and in the name
Of the Atridae and the host forbid it.

PHILOCTETES
Who spake, my son, was that Odysseus' voice
I heard?

ODYSSEUS
None other; and he's hard at hand,
Ready to take thee back to Troy by force,
Whether it please Achilles' son or no.

PHILOCTETES
But at thy peril, if this shaft fly straight.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Hold, hold! in heaven's name let not fly thy shaft!

PHILOCTETES
Let go my hand in heaven's name, dearest son!

NEOPTOLEMUS
I will not.

PHILOCTETES
Why, O why didst thou prevent me
From slaying with my bow the man I hate?

NEOPTOLEMUS
That were dishonourable for thee and me.

[Exit ODYSSEUS.]
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

άλλ' οὖν τοσούτων γ' ἵσθι, τοὺς πρῶτους στρατοῦ, τοὺς τῶν Ἀχαιῶν ψευδοκῆρυκας, κακοὺς ὄντας πρὸς αἰχμῆν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς λόγοις θρασεῖς.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

εἶεν· τὰ μὲν δὴ τὸξ' ἔχεις, κοῦκ ἐσθ' ὅτου ὀργήν ἔχοις ἀν οὐδὲ μέμψθιν εἰς ἐμὲ.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ξύμφημι· τὴν φύσιν δ' ἐδειξας, ὃ τέκνον, ἔξ ἢς ἔβλαστες, ὦ χιλ Σισύφου πατρός, ἀλλ' ἔξ Ἀχιλλέως, ὃς μετὰ ζώντων ὅτ' ἵν ἰκού' ἁριστα, νῦν δὲ τῶν τεβυκότων.

ΝΕΟΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ήσθην πατέρα τὸν ἄμμον εὐλογοῦντά σε αὐτὸν τ' ἐμ'. ὃν δὲ σου τυχεῖν ἐφίεμαι, ἄκουσον. ἀνθρώποις τὰς μὲν ἐκ θεῶν τύχας δοθείσας ἐστ' ἀναγκαίον φέρειν ὁσοὶ δ' ἐκουσίοισιν ἔγκευνται βλάβαις, ώσπερ σὺ, τοῦτος οὔτε συγγνώμην ἔχειν δίκαιον ἐστιν οὔτ' ἐποικτέρειν τινά. 

σὺ δ' ἡγρίωσαι, κοῦτε σύμβουλον δέχει, εάν τε νουθετή τις εὐνοια λέγων, στυγεῖς, πολέμιου δυσμενῆ θ' ἡγούμενος. ὃμως δὲ λέξω· Ζήνα δ' ἄρκιον καλῶ· καὶ ταῦτ' ἐπίστω καὶ γράφου φρενῶν ἔσω. σὺ γὰρ νοσεῖς τοῦ ἅλγος ἐκ θείας τύχης, Χρύσης πελάσθεις φύλακος, ὃς τὸν ἄκαλυφη σηκὸν φυλάσσει κρύφιος οἰκουρῶν ὁφις· καὶ παῦλαν ἵσθι τήσδε μὴ ποτ' ἄν τυχεῖν νόσου βαρείας, ἐως ἄν αὐτὸς ἡλιος ταῦτῃ μὲν αἴρῃ, τῇδε δ' αὐ δύνῃ πάλιν, πρὶν ἄν τὰ Ἰροίας πεδί' ἐκών αὐτὸς μόλης, 478
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES
Well of one thing thou may'st be sure, the chiefs, Those lying heralds of the Achaean host, Are brave in words and cowards in the fight.

NEOPTOLEMUS
So be it. The bow is thine again, and now Thou hast no grief or quarrel against me.

PHILOCTETES
None, my brave boy, for thou hast proved this day Thy race and lineage, not of Sisyphus, But of Achilles, noblest once of men In life, and now the noblest of the dead.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Sweet to my ears the praises of my sire, And of myself; but now I crave of thee A boon. What fates the gods allot to men They needs must bear, but whoso hug their griefs, As thou dost,—who can pity or condone Such self-tormentors? Thou, inexorable, Wilt tolerate no counsel, deemest him Who would admonish thee in love a foe; Yet will I speak the truth, so help me Zeus! Write on the table of thy memory These words: thy sore plague is a heaven-sent doom; With foot profane, in Chrysè's roofless shrine, Thou didst insult her tutelary snake. For this sin wast thou stricken, and no relief Canst win from thy affliction, whilst the sun Shall run from East to West his daily course, Before of thy free will thou com'st to Troy.
καὶ τοῖν παρ' ἡμῖν ἐντυχῶν Ἀσκληπίδαι
νόσου μαλαχθῆς τῆςδ, καὶ τὰ πέργαμα
ξὺν τοίσδε τὸξίος ξὺν τ' ἐμοὶ πέρσας φανῆς.
ὡς δ' οἶδα ταύτα τῇδ' ἔχοντ' ἐγὼ φράσω.
ἀνὴρ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐστιν ἐκ Τροίας ἀλούσις,
'Ελεῦς ἀριστόμαντις, ὃς λέγει σαφῶς
ὡς δεῖ γενέσθαι ταύτα· καὶ πρὸς τοῖσδ' ἐτι
ὡς ἐστ' ἀνάγκη τοῦ παρεστῶτος θέρους
Τροίαν ἀλῶναι πᾶσαν· ἡ δίδωσ' ἐκών
κτείνειν ἑαυτόν, ἣν τάδε ψευσθῇ λέγων.
ταυτ' οὖν ἐπεὶ κάτοιςθα, συγχώρει θέλων.
καλῇ γὰρ ἡ πίκτησις, 'Ελλήνων ἕνα
κριθέντ' ἀριστον τοῦτο μὲν παιωνίας
ἐς χεῖρας ἐλθεῖν, εἴτα τὴν πολυστοιον
Τροίαν ἐλόντα κλέως ὑπέρτατον λαβεῖν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΝΗΣ

ὁ στυγνὸς αἰών, τι με, τι δὴτ' ἔχεις ἄνω
βλέποντα κοῦκ ἀφήκας εἰς "Αἰδοῦ μολεῖν;
οἶμοι, τί δράσω; πῶς ἀπιστήσον Λόγοις
τοῖς τοῦδ', ὃς εὐνούς ὅν ἔμοι παρήκνεσον;
ἀλλ' εἰκάθω δήτ'; εἴτα πῶς ὁ δύσμορος
eἰς φῶς τάδ' ἔρξας εἴμι; τῷ προσήγορος;
πῶς, ὃ τὰ πάντ' ἱδοντες ἀμφ' ἐμοὶ κύκλον;
ταυτ' ἔξανασχήσεσθε, τοῖσιν Ἀτρέως
ἐμὲ ἕξωντα παισίν, οἳ μ' ἀπώλεσαν;
πῶς τῷ πανώλει παιδὶ τῷ Λαερτίου;
οὐ γὰρ με τάλγος τῶν παρελθόντων δάκνει,
ἀλλ' οία χρή παθείν με πρὸς τούτων ἔτι
δοκῶ προλέυσειν· οὐς γὰρ ἡ γνώμη κακῶν
μῆτηρ γένηται, τάλλα παιδεύει κακοὺς.
καὶ σοῦ δ' ἔγωγε βαυμάσας ἔχω τόδε.
χρῆν γὰρ σε μῆτ' αὐτὸν ποτ' ἐς Τροίαν μολεῖν

480
PHILOCTETES

There shalt thou find our famed Asclepiadae,
And healed by them, with thy bow's aid and mine,
Shalt take and sack the towers of Ilium.
Thou askest how I know all this. Attend:
We have a Trojan prisoner, Helenus,
Chiepest of seers, who plainly prophesied
All I have told thee, and revealed besides
That, ere this summer passes, Troy must fall;
His life the forfeit if his word proved false.
Now that thou know'st this, yield with a good grace.
How fair a vision—to be singled out
As bravest of the host, and, first made whole
By healing hands, as conqueror of Troy,
Woe-wearied city, win undying fame!

PHILOCTETES
O hateful life that keep'st me lingering on
In this vile world and wilt not let me join
The world of shades! Ah me! What can I do?
How turn a deaf ear to the kindly words
Of one who counsels well and seeks my good?
Shall I then yield? How, having yielded, face
The public gaze? Will not all turn from me?
Ye eyes, so long the witness of my wrongs,
How will ye brook to see me once again
Consorting with my torturers, the sons
Of Atreus and Odysseus, the arch-fiend?
'Tis not resentment for the past that stings,
But a prevision of the ills to come;
For when a mind is warped it takes the ply,
And evil-doers will be evil still.
Thee too, my son, I marvel much at thee;
Never should'st thou have gone thyself to Troy,
Ημᾶς τ' ἀπείργειν, οἳ γέ σου καθύβρισαν, πατρός γέρας συλὼντες, εἰτα τοίσδε σὺ εἰ ξυμμαχήσων, κἂν' ἀναγκάζεις τόδε; μὴ δήτα, τέκνον· ἀλλ' ἡ μοι ξυνόμοςας, πέμψων πρὸς οἴκους· καύτος ἐν Σκύρῳ μένων ἐν κακῶς αὐτοὺς ἀπόλλυσθαι κακοὺς. Χοῦτω διπλῆν μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ κτήσει χάριν, διπλῆν δὲ πατρός, καὶ κακοὺς ἐπωφελῶν δῶξεις ὁμοῖος τοῖς κακοῖς πεφυκέναι.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

λέγεις μὲν εἰκότι, ἀλλ' ὁμοῖος σε βούλομαι θεοῖς τε πιστεύσαντα τοῖς τ' ἐμοῖς λόγοις φίλου μετ' ἀνδρὸς τούδε τῆς δ' ἐκπλείων χθονός.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἡ πρὸς τὰ Τροίας πεδία καὶ τὸν Ἀτρέως ἐχθιστον υἱὸν τῶδε δυστήνῳ ποδὶ; ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πρὸς τοὺς μὲν οὖν σε τῷδε τ' ἐμπυνον βάσιν παύσοντας ἀλγοὺς κάποσώσοντας νόσου.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὡ δεινὸν αἰνον αἰνέσας, τί φῆς ποτε; ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀ σοὶ τε κάμοι λῶσθ' ὀρῶ τελούμενα.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

καὶ ταῦτα λέξας οὐ καταισχύνει θεοὺς; ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ τις αἰσχύνοιτ' ἀν ὀφελῶν φίλους; 2

1 l. 1365: [οἴ τὸν ἄθλιον Ἀλανθ' ὄπλων σοῦ πατρός ὑστερον δίκη Ἐσταφσέως ἐκρίμαν.] These lines, clearly an interpolation, have been omitted. 2 ὀφελοῦμενος MSS., Buttman corr.
PHILOCTETES

Nor sought to bring me thither. How could'st thou, When they had robbed thee of thy father's meed And flouted thee? 1 How can'st thou after that Fight at their side thyself, or bid me fight? Not so, my son, but do as thou hast sworn, Convey me home; thyself in Scyros bide; Leave those ill-doers to their evil doom. Thus shalt thou win a double thanks from me And from my sire; nor will men say of thee: Abetting base men he himself is base.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Thy words are reasonable; nathless I Would have thee trust my promise and the god's, And confidently sail with me, thy friend.

PHILOCTETES
What! to the plains of Troy, to him I loathe, The son of Atreus, with this cursed foot?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Nay, but to kind physicians who will treat Thy ulcered limb and heal thee of thy hurt.

PHILOCTETES
O wondrous weird! What means this mystery?

NEOPTOLEMUS
One fraught with happy issue for us both.

PHILOCTETES
Hast thou no fear of heaven, thus to speak?

NEOPTOLEMUS
Why should a man feel fear who helps his friends?

1 The omitted lines are:
Who judged Odysseus of thy father's arms
More worthy than the hapless Ajax.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

λέγεις δ’ Ἀτρείδας ὀφελοσ ἢ ’π’ ἐμοὶ τόδε;

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΕΛΕΜΟΣ

σοὶ ποι, φίλοι γ’ ὤν, χα λόγος τοιόσδε μοι.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

πῶς, ὦ γε τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ὑ’ ἐκδοῦναί θέλεις;

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΕΛΕΜΟΣ

ὁ τάν, διδάσκον μηθὶ θρασύνεσθαι κακοῖς.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ὅλεῖς με, γυναϊκῶς σε, τοῖσδε τοῖσ λόγοις.

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΕΛΕΜΟΣ

οὐκονν ἡγωγε’ φημὶ δ’ οὔ σε μανθάνειν.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἐγὼ οὐκ Ἀτρείδας ἐκβαλόντας οἴδα με;

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΕΛΕΜΟΣ

ἀλλ’ ἐκβαλόντες εἰ πάλιν σώσουσ’ ὀρα.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

οὐδεποθ’ ἐκόντα γ’ ὡστε τὴν Τροίαν ἱδεῖν.

ΝΕΟΠΟΤΕΛΕΜΟΣ

τὶ δὴ τ’ ἄν ἡμεῖς δρῶμεν, εἰ σε γ’ ἐν λόγοις

πείσειν δυνησόμεσθα μηδὲν ὄν λέγω;

ὡς ράστ’ ἐμοὶ μεν τῶν λόγων ληξαί, σε δὲ

ξῆν, ὡσπερ ἤδη ξῆσ, ἀνευ σωτηρίας.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

ἔα με πάσχειν ταῦθ’ ἀπερ παθεῖν με δεῖν.

ἀ δ’ ἡνεσάς μοι δεξιᾶς ἐμῆς θυγών,

πέμπτειν πρὸς οἶκους, ταῦτα μοι πρᾶξον, τέκνον,

καὶ μή βράδυνε μηθ’ ἐπιμνησθῆς ἐτὶ

Τροίας· ἀλλ’ γὰρ μοι τεθρήνηται γόσις.

484
PHILOCTETES

PHILOCTETES
Help for the sons of Atreus, or for me?

NEOPTOLEMUS
For thee, as these my words attest, thy friend.

PHILOCTETES
A friend, when thou would'st hand me to my foes?

NEOPTOLEMUS
O let not suffering make thee truculent.

PHILOCTETES
I know thou would'st undo me pleading thus.

NEOPTOLEMUS
Not I, but thou thyself, who wilt not learn.

PHILOCTETES
Do I not know the Atridae cast me forth?

NEOPTOLEMUS
'Tis true, but now they would deliver thee.

PHILOCTETES
Not with my will, if first I must to Troy.

NEOPTOLEMUS
What must I do, if all persuasion fails
To make thee budge an inch? 'Twere easier
To cease from words and leave thee here to live,
As thou hast lived, a hopeless castaway.

PHILOCTETES
Well, let me dree my weird; but thou, my son,
Perform the promise made with clasp of hands,
Take me straight home, and talk no more of Troy.
My cup of lamentations I have drained.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
εἰ δοκεῖ, στείχωμεν.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
ὡς γενναῖον εἰρηκῶς ἔτοσ.
ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
ἀντέρειτε νῦν βάσιν σήν.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
εἰς ὅσον γ' ἐγώ σθένω.
ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
αἰτίαν δὲ πῶς Ἀχαιῶν φεύξομαι;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
μὴ φροντίσης.
ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
τί γάρ, ἕαν πορθῶσι χώραν τῆν ἐμὴν;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
ἐγώ παρὼν
ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
τίνα προσωφέλησιν ἐρξεῖσι;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
βέλεσι τοῖς Ἦρακλέους
ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
πῶς λέγεις;
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ
εἰρξό πελάζειν.
ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
στείχε προσκύσασα χθόνα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
μὴπτω γε, πρὶν ἄν τῶν ἤμετέρων
ἀῖς μύθου, παῖ Ποιαντος:
φάσκειν δ' αὐθήν την Ἦρακλέους

1410
PHILOCTETES  

NEOPTOLEMUS  
As thou wilt then; let us forward.

PHILOCTETES  
Nobly spoken, let us go.

NEOPTOLEMUS  
Forward! plant thy footsteps firmly.

PHILOCTETES  
To my utmost will I so.

NEOPTOLEMUS  
But the wrath of the Achaeans will pursue me.

PHILOCTETES  
Never care.

NEOPTOLEMUS  
What if they lay waste my borders?

PHILOCTETES  
Never fear, I shall be there.

NEOPTOLEMUS  
What assistance canst thou render?

PHILOCTETES  
Heracles, his mighty bow—

NEOPTOLEMUS  
Say'st thou?

PHILOCTETES  
Will prevent their landing.

NEOPTOLEMUS  
Kiss the earth and let us go.

Apparition of Heracles behind the stage.

HERACLES  
Go not yet till thou hast heard,  
Son of Poeas, first my word:  
Heracles to thee appears,
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ

άκοη τε κλύειν λεύσειν τ' ὄψιν. 1420
τὴν σήν δ' ἦκω χάριν οὐρανίας
ἐδρας προλιπών,
tὰ Διὸς τε φράσων βουλεύματά σοι
κατερητύσων θ' ὄδον ἢν στέλλειν
σὺ δ' ἐμῶν μῦθων ἐπάκουσον.

καὶ πρώτα μὲν σοι τὰς ἐμὰς λέξω τύχας,
όσους ποιήσας καὶ διεξελθὼν πόνους
ἀθάνατον ἀρετὴν ἐσχον, ὃς πάρεσθ' ὁρᾶν.
καὶ σοὶ, σάφ' ἵσθι, τοῦτ' ὀφείλεται παθεῖν,
ἐκ τῶν πόνων τῶν εὐκλεᾶ θέσθαι βίον.
ἐδῶν δὲ σὺν τῷ ἀνδρὶ πρὸς τὸ Τρωικὸν
πόλισμα, πρῶ̂τον μὲν νόσου παύσει λυγρᾶς,
ἀρετῆ τε πρῶτος ἐκκριθεῖσι στρατεύματος,
Pάριν μὲν, ὃς τῶν' αἴτιος κακῶν ἔφυ,
tόξους τοὺς ἐμοὶ νοσφεῖς βίον,
πέρσεις τε Τροίαν, σκῦλά τ' εἰς μέλαθρα σὰ
πέμψεις, ἀριστεὶ ἐκλαβῶν στρατεύματος,
Ποίαντι πατρὶ πρὸς πάτρας Οὔτης πλάκα.

ἀ δ' ἄν λάβῃς σὺ σκῦλα τοῦτε τοῦ στρατοῦ,
tόξων ἐμῶν μυσμεία πρὸς πυρὰν ἐμὴν
κόμῳζε. καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ', Ἀχιλλέως τέκνων,
παρῆνεσ'. οὕτε γὰρ σὺ τοῦτ' ἄτερ σθένεις
ἐλεῖν τὸ Τροίας πεδίον οὕθ' οὗτος σέθειν.
ἀλλ' ὃς λεόντε συννόμω φυλάσσετον
οὕτος σὲ καὶ σὺ τὸν' έγὼ δ' Ἀσκληπιὸν
πανοστήρα πέμψω σῆς νόσου πρὸς Ἰλιοῦ.
τὸ δεύτερον γὰρ τοὺς ἐμοὶς αὐτὴν χρεὼν

488
His the voice that thrills thine ears.
'Tis for thy sake I have come,
Leaving my Olympian home.
Mandate from high Zeus I bring
To forbid thy journeying:
Hear the will of heaven's King.

But first I'll mind thee of my own career,
How, having laboured hugely and endured,
I won immortal glory, as thou seest.
Know that thy fortune like to mine shall be,
Through suffering to glorify thy life.
Go with yon man to Ilium. There first
Thou shalt be healèd of thy grievous sore;
Then, chosen as the champion of the host,
With these my arrows thou shalt pierce to the heart
Paris, the guilty cause of all that woe.
Troy shalt thou sack, and, winning from the host
The meed of bravest, carry home rich spoils
To glad old Poeas and the Oetaean halls.
But of the spoils, whate'er the host assigns thee,
Bring to my pyre, as tribute to my bow,
A tithe.

I have a message too for thee,
Son of Achilles. Thou without his aid
Can'st not take Troy, nor he apart from thine;
But like two lions together on the prowl,
Either the other guards.

To cure thy wounds
Asclepius, the healer, will I send
To Troas; for a second time Troy towers
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ ΗΣ

τόξοις ἀλώνιαί. τούτο δ’ ἐννοεῖθ', ὅταν
πορθήτε γαῖαν, εὔσεβεῖν τὰ πρὸς θεοῦς:
ὡς τάλλα πάντα δεύτερ’ ἥγεται πατήρ
Ζεὺς: οὐ γὰρ εὔσεβειν συνθυνήσκει βροτοῖς:
κἂν ξοσὶ κἂν θάνωσιν, οὐκ ἀπόλλυται.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

ὁ φθέγμα ποθεών ἐμοὶ πέμψας
χρόνιος τε φανεῖς,
οὐκ ἀπιθήσω τοῖς σοῖς μῦθοις.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

καγὼ γνώμην ταύτη τίθεμαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μὴ νυν χρόνιοι μέλλετε πρᾶσσειν:
καιρὸς καὶ πλοῦς
ὅδ’ ἐπείγει γὰρ κατὰ πρύμνην.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

φέρε νυν στείχοις χώραν καλέσω.
χαῖρ’, ὃ μέλαθρον ξύμφρουρον ἐμοὶ,
νῦμφαι τ’ ἐνυδροι λειμουνάδες,
καὶ κτύπος ἄρσην πόντου πρόβολῆς,1
οὐ πολλάκι δὴ τούμον ἐτέγχθη
κράτ’ εὐδόμυχον πληγαίσι νότον,
pολλὰ δὲ φωνῆς τῆς ἡμετέρας
Ἐρμαίων ὅρος παρέπεμψεν ἐμοὶ
στόνον ἀντίτυπον χειμαζομένῳ.

νῦν δ’, ὃ κρήναι Δῦκιόν τε ποτόν,
λείπομεν ύμᾶς, λείπομεν ἡδὴ
dόξης οὐ ποτε τῆςδ’ ἐπιβάντες.

1 προβλῆς MSS., Hermann corr.
PHILOCTETES

Must fall before my shafts. Only take heed.
In laying waste the land to reverence
Its gods; all else by Zeus my sire is less
Regarded. Piety can never die;
It lives on earth and blossoms in the grave.

PHILOCTETES

Voice for which I long have yearned,
Form, long visioned, now discerned!
Thee I cannot disobey.

NEOPTOLEMUS

I too obey.

HERACLES

Then to work! No time to spare;
Seize the hour; the wind sets fair.

PHILOCTETES

Yet ere I part I fain would bid farewell.
Home of my vigils, rocky cell,
Nymphs of the streams and grass-fringed shore,
Caves where the deep-voiced breakers roar,
When through the cavern’s open mouth,
Borne on the wings of the wild South,
E’en to my dwelling’s inmost lair,
The rain and spray oft drenched my hair;
And oft responsive to my groan
Mount Hermaeum made his moan;
O Lycian fount, O limpid well,
I thought with you all time to dwell;
And now I take my last farewell.
ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΣ

χαίρ', ὁ Δήμου πέδων ἀμφιάλον,
καὶ μ' εὐπλοία πέμψον ἀμέμπτως,
ἐνθ' ἡ μεγάλη Μοῖρα κομίζει
γνώρη τε φίλων χῶ πανδαμάτωρ
δαίμων, ὅσ ταύτ' ἐπέκρανεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χωρώμεν δὴ πάντες ἀολλεῖς,
νύμφαις ἀλλαῖσιν ἐπευξάμενοι
νόστου σωτῆρας ἱκέσθαι.

1470
PHILOCTETES

Sea-girt Lemnos, hear my prayer,
Bid thy guest a voyage fair
Speed him to the land where he,
Borne by mighty Destiny,
And the god at whose decree
All was ordered, fain would be.

CHORUS
Let us to the Sea Nymphs pray
To waft us on our Troy-ward way.
Mariners, attend my call;
Let us voyage, one and all.

END OF VOL. II
PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED,
BRUNSWICK STREET, STAMFORD STREET, S.E. 1,
AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.