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EURIPIDES

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# EURIPIDES

HELEN  
PHOENICIAN WOMEN  
ORESTES

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY  
DAVID KOVACS



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For Charles Willink

## PREFACE

The Greek text, as in earlier volumes, is my own, and my editorial principles are explained in the introduction in Volume One. I discuss in a forthcoming book called *Euripidea Tertia* some of the readings and translations adopted here. As usual, text enclosed between square brackets is deemed to be spurious, while text enclosed between angle brackets are words thought to have been accidentally omitted from the manuscripts. As in previous volumes, where I have marked a lacuna of a line or more I have usually filled in, purely by way of illustration, what the sense seems to require. Unattributed supplements are my own.

As in Volumes Three and Four I have marked passages written in lyric meters and sung in the original performance by translating them line-for-line to match the Greek. For spoken verse I use the ordinary typography of prose.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge debts of gratitude incurred. A grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities enabled me to devote the academic year 1996–7 to parts of this volume as well as its predecessor. I was also elected, for that year, to a Visiting Fellowship at Balliol College, Oxford. My deepest thanks to both bodies.

Work on parts of this volume and its successor were

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aided by a grant from the Earhart Foundation, research leave from the University of Virginia, and a Visiting Fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge. I am immensely grateful to the Master and Fellows of Trinity for their generosity and especially to Roger Dawe, who kindly discussed textual problems with me. Residence in Cambridge has also allowed me to benefit from the kindness, learning, and acuity of James Diggle. I have profited immensely over the years from discussions with Charles Willink, and it is to him that this volume is dedicated in thanks for his stimulating friendship.

University of Virginia

David Kovacs



## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AJP</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>ASNP</i>	<i>Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa</i>
<i>CP</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Classical Review</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>HSCP</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>RhM</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum</i>
<i>SIFC</i>	<i>Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica</i>
<i>SO</i>	<i>Symbolae Osloenses</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>



HELEN

## INTRODUCTION

Helen the virtuous and faithful wife, the Helen who never went to Troy but stayed in Egypt, falsely blamed for the actions of her divinely created *Doppelgänger* at Troy—these novel twists to the story of the Trojan War were not new with Euripides. Stesichorus, a lyric poet from Himera in Sicily who lived in the first half of the sixth century, wrote a famous palinode (i.e. a poem of recantation) in which he says, addressing Helen, “The tale is not true: you did not go on the well-benched ships and never reached the citadel of Troy” (*PMG* 192–3; see, in the Loeb series, David A. Campbell, ed., *Greek Lyric III*, pp. 92–7). The poem (or poems: there may have been two) is represented by a few paltry fragments, but according to one ancient report Stesichorus mentioned a phantom Helen. Legend has it that Stesichorus lost his sight after writing an earlier poem vituperating Helen, but that after his recantation the deified Helen restored it.

Euripides’ older contemporary Herodotus also mentions a version of the story that put Helen in Egypt, not in Troy, while the Trojan War was being fought. He claims (*Histories* 2.112–20) that priests at Memphis told him the following story: Paris and Helen stopped at Egypt on their way to Troy, Paris’ slave let it be known that his master was making off with his host’s wife and treasure, and King Pro-

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teus made Paris leave both Helen and treasure behind; then when the Greeks arrived at Troy, the Trojans could not persuade them that Paris had done so; only after Troy was sacked was it clear that the Trojans had been telling the truth; Menelaus then returned home by way of Egypt. Herodotus' story is a rationalizing one: there is no supernatural phantom and no evidence of divine intervention in affairs. But it furnished Euripides with the locale of his play.

The plot, as usual, shows evidence of careful construction. Helen speaks the prologue in which she outlines her situation. When the three goddesses, Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite, competed in a beauty contest before the Trojan prince Paris, the prince awarded the prize to Aphrodite, who had bribed him by promising him marriage to Helen of Sparta, the most beautiful woman alive. When it came time for Aphrodite to fulfill her promise, Hera substituted for the real Helen a phantom figure, which Paris took to Troy, and Hermes was despatched to convey the real Helen to safety in Egypt at the court of Proteus, who piously respected the trust made to him of another man's wife. Proteus' son, Theoclymenus, however, is not god-fearing like his father, and he wants to marry Helen himself. She has had to take refuge at the tomb of Proteus to escape his advances. All she knows of her husband is that he has mounted an expedition to Troy to recover her. But she has also heard a prophecy that one day she and he are fated to dwell in Sparta again—if she can escape the embraces of another man.

Next a Greek warrior named Teucer arrives, on his way into exile. From him Helen learns that the war is over and that, while sailing home, Menelaus was driven off from the

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others by a storm and is presumed dead. She also learns from Teucer's reaction to a woman he thinks merely resembles Helen how hated she is because of deeds she never committed. In sung verse she laments her fate, and a Chorus of Greek women join in her lament. After expressing sympathy, the Chorus persuade her not to despair before asking Theoclymenus' prophetic sister Theonoe whether her husband is still alive. They all go in, leaving the stage empty. This allows the audience to see and hear Menelaus before his reunion with his wife.

Menelaus arrives dressed in sailcloth, his clothes having been ruined at sea, and he delivers a sort of second prologue, telling of his shipwreck, which left him, a few comrades, and his wife on an unknown shore. He expresses horror at the shame of begging but means to present himself at the door of this rich house. He rouses the gatekeeper, an old woman with a rough tongue, who tells him to go away. Menelaus can make nothing of her warning that Theoclymenus kills all Greeks because Helen, daughter of Zeus, is in the house.

When Helen and the Chorus return, having heard from Theonoe that Menelaus is still alive, she recognizes her husband, but he, having just left the Helen he brought back from Troy in a cave by the shore, refuses to believe that Helen is his wife and the other woman a phantom. Finally one of his men comes and reports that the phantom Helen has flown off, and this convinces Menelaus that the woman before him is indeed his wife. Husband and wife sing a duet of recognition and reunion.

But after their rejoicing Helen informs her husband of the hopelessness of the situation: he had better run for his life and leave her behind rather than be killed for her sake.

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Menelaus refuses to do this, and the two pledge that they will die together if one dies. The biggest obstacle to any possible plan of escape is Theoclymenus' sister Theonoe, who, Helen says, already knows of Menelaus' arrival and might tell her brother. Helen promises to leave no form of entreaty untried to persuade her to keep this a secret.

Theonoe emerges from the palace. She is a slightly mysterious and forbidding figure with her ritual attendants purifying the air with sulphur. After reminding Helen of her accurate prophecy that Menelaus was alive, she describes the situation in heaven. Hera wants Helen to return, while Aphrodite does not, and so all depends on Theonoe. Helen and Menelaus take turns beseeching her to do the right thing and restore Helen to her husband, as her father would have wanted her to. Theonoe agrees to say nothing to her brother and departs.

Now it is time for husband and wife to plot their escape. As usual in Euripides, it is the woman who has the brains. Helen suggests that Menelaus pretend to be the messenger of his own death. Helen will profess grief but agree to marry Theoclymenus after the funeral. This, they will claim, must by Greek custom be conducted at sea. They will ask for a ship to take them out of sight of the shore, then Menelaus' men will overpower the crew and sail away. Theoclymenus, when he has learned of Menelaus' death and Helen's willingness to marry him, is all too happy to give her a ship and lots of precious gifts to be thrown overboard in honor of the deceased. After their departure the king learns from a messenger that Menelaus is alive and has rescued Helen. Just when he had decided to kill his sister for her disloyalty in not telling him of Menelaus' arrival, Castor and Polydeuces appear on the

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*mechane*. They forbid him to take vengeance on his sister, promise Helen and Menelaus a safe journey home, and predict that Helen will become a goddess and Menelaus live in the islands of the blest. Theoclymenus graciously accepts the *fait accompli*, and the play ends with five choral anapests that Euripides had used in *Alcestis*, *Andromache*, and (with a small change) in *Medea*, to the effect that with the gods in the picture mortal expectations are defeated.

*Helen* was produced in 412 B.C. Like the nearly contemporary *Iphigenia among the Taurians* and *Ion* it ends happily. But all three Athenian tragedians wrote such plays, and there is nothing paradoxical, from the ancient point of view, about a *tragoidia* that turns out happily for the principal characters. The similarities in plot between *Helen* and *Iphigenia* are striking. In both a woman finds herself in a foreign land, in one case with disagreeable duties (Iphigenia must participate in human sacrifice) and in the other with a disagreeable suitor (Theoclymenus, the new king of Egypt). In both cases the gods spirited the woman there, and her family does not know where she is. A close male relative arrives (Iphigenia's brother Orestes, Helen's husband Menelaus), and after the man and the woman have established their identities, they plot to rescue themselves from this hostile environment. The main blocking figure in each case is a local barbarian king. The two protagonists prevail over him by a ruse involving a religious ceremony: Iphigenia pretends that the statue of Artemis that Orestes has been instructed by Apollo to steal is in urgent need of cleansing because of contact with a murderer, while Helen pretends that she wants to give her husband a burial at sea. Thus each pair of Greeks manages to



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get away, and a god intervenes to see to it that those who are complicit in the escape are not punished.

Though *Iphigenia* and *Helen* show a striking structural similarity, there are differences as well, and these are important for the way the plays affect their audience. In *Iphigenia* it is crucial that brother and sister were separated when Orestes was a small child and that therefore brother and sister cannot recognize each other by sight. The Oedipus theme, that it is impossible to know who your parents or other relatives really are, and hence that it is possible under unpropitious circumstances to commit horrible crimes against one's kin, finds its counterpart in *Iphigenia*, for it is Iphigenia's duty to sacrifice all foreigners to Artemis, and she comes very close to assisting in her brother's sacrifice. In fact, however, both Orestes' capture and near sacrifice by Iphigenia, and the fact that the sacrifice does not take place, are the result of the kind of happy chance that can only be ascribed to the unseen guidance of events by the gods. The human perspective is extremely limited, but behind the phenomena of human life stand the fixed purposes of heaven.

In *Helen*, by contrast, a different version of the theme of human fallibility and weakness comes to the fore. The radical insecurity of a world in which one does not know who one's close relatives are does not appear here. Instead of this form of insecurity, the play introduces another, epistemological, one in which, because of the intervention of the gods, the real is always shadowed by the unreal. In the second half of the prologue, for example, Teucer is convinced that the woman he sees before him is not Helen, though in fact she is, and he is convinced that the real

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Helen is a morally reprobate person whose wantonness has caused immense destruction, when in fact she is not. As he leaves he congratulates his unknown informant on being, despite resemblance to her in looks, a better woman than Helen. When Menelaus comes on in the absence of Helen and is told by the gatekeeper that he'd better run for it since the local king Theoclymenus kills all foreigners because of a woman named Helen, daughter of Zeus, he tries to make sense of this by supposing mere homonymy. But though he tries the supposition that there is a local man called Zeus who fathered a woman called Helen, he knows that this will not cover the facts. When he finally meets his wife, he nearly leaves her behind, convinced that his real wife is the phantom Helen being kept in a cave, not the woman before him.

Contributing to the bewilderment of the situation is the discord among the gods. Theonoe tells Menelaus of a strife between Hera and Aphrodite, a strife that Theonoe will have to decide: it is up to her whether he can return, for if she tells her brother, return is impossible. Only at the end do we learn from Castor that Theonoe's decision to allow his return is also that of the whole assembly of gods.

There is also another mythical pattern that serves as a backdrop to the action, that of Persephone, carried off by Hades to the underworld. Helen sings (244–5) that Hermes carried her off as she was picking flowers, precisely the circumstances of Persephone's abduction. Helen's return from Egypt is thus a kind of return, like the annual return of Persephone that signals the fertile time of the year. The choral ode at 1301–68, often thought of as a pretty irrelevance, serves to underline this mythic pattern.

Mostly, though, the play gives pleasure by its polish and

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cleverness, the beauty of its lyrics, its shifts of mood from despair to elation, and the quick wit and presence of mind of the rehabilitated heroine, who fools Theoclymenus while uttering scarcely a single lie.

Within a year (or possibly two) of its first production, an extended parody of *Helen* was prominently featured in Aristophanes' *Women Celebrating the Thesmophoria* (lines 855–923). The premise of this play is that the women of Athens are conspiring at the women's festival of the Thesmophoria to punish Euripides for portraying women in a bad light. Euripides gets wind of the plot and persuades a kinsman to disguise himself as a woman and attend the festival. He is discovered and kept under guard, and his attempts to get Euripides to rescue him take the form of his impersonating Helen and Andromeda, while Euripides plays the role of their rescuers Menelaus and Perseus. It is thanks to this parody that we are able to restore *Helen* 561, omitted from our only manuscript.

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*Dramatis Personae*

ΕΛΕΝΗ	HELEN, daughter of Zeus and Leda and wife of Menelaus
ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ	TEUCER, a Greek warrior, brother of Ajax
ΧΟΡΟΣ	CHORUS of captive Greek women living in Egypt
ΜΕΝΕΛΑΕΩΣ	MENELAUS, husband of Helen
ΓΡΑΨ	OLD WOMAN, servant of Theoclymenus
ΘΕΡΑΠΙΩΝ	SERVANT of Menelaus
ΘΕΟΝΟΗ	THEONOE, sister of Theoclymenus
ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ	THEOCLYMENUS, king of Egypt
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ	Servant of Theoclymenus as MESSENGER
ΘΕΡΑΠΙΩΝ Β	SECOND SERVANT, slave of Theonoe
ΚΑΣΤΩΡ	CASTOR, deified brother of Helen

Nonspeaking role: Polydeuces, twin brother of Castor

*A Note On Staging*

The *skene* represents the palace of Theoclymenus in Egypt. Before it is the tomb of Theoclymenus' father Proteus. Eisodos A leads to the seashore, Eisodos B to the inland portions of Theoclymenus' kingdom.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

### ΕΛΕΝΗ

- Νείλου μὲν αἶδε καλλιπάρθενοι ῥοαί,  
 ὃς ἀντὶ δίας ψακάδος Αἰγύπτου γύας  
 λευκῆς τακείσης χιόνος ὑγραίνει δρόσῳ.  
 Πρωτεὺς δ' ὅτ' ἔζη τῆσδε γῆς τύραννος ἦν,  
 5 [Φάρον μὲν οἰκῶν νῆσον, Αἰγύπτου δ' ἀναξ,]  
 ὃς τῶν κατ' οἶδμα παρθένων μίαν γαμεί,  
 Ψαμάθην, ἐπειδὴ λέκτρ' ἀφήκεν Αἰακοῦ.  
 τίκτει δὲ τέκνα δισσὰ τοῖσδ' ἐν δώμασιν,  
 Θεοκλύμενον ἄρσεν' [†ὅτι δῆ† θεοὺς σέβων  
 10 βίον διήνεγκ'] εὐγενῆ τε παρθένον  
 Εἰδῶ, τὸ μητρὸς ἀγλαίσμ', ὅτ' ἦν βρέφος·  
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐς ἡβην ἦλθεν ὠραίαν γάμων,  
 καλοῦσιν αὐτὴν Θεονόην· τὰ θεῖα γὰρ  
 τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα πάντ' ἠπίστατο,  
 15 προγόνου λαβοῦσα Νηρέως τιμὰς πάρα.

2-3 γύας . . . δρόσῳ Heiland: πέδον . . . γύας L

5 del. Dingelstad 7 Αἰακοῦ Musgrave: αἰόλου L

8 τοῖσδ' ἐν Lenting: τοῖσδε L 9b-10a del. Nauck

11 Εἰδῶ Matthiae: εἶδος L

12 ὠραίαν Reiske: -ων L

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*Before the skene, representing the palace of the Egyptian king Theoclymenus, is the tomb of his father Proteus. When the action begins, HELEN is sitting at the tomb as a suppliant.*

### HELEN

Here flows the Nile with its fair nymphs! Fed by the melting of pale snow it drenches Egypt's fields with moisture in place of rain sent from Zeus. Proteus, while he lived, was king of this land [dwelling in the island of Pharos but lord of Egypt]. He married Psamathe, one of the maids of the water, when she had left the bed of Aeacus. In this house she bore two children, a boy named Theoclymenus [because he honored the gods throughout his life] and a fine maiden called Eido. When she was a babe she was her mother's glory, but when she came to womanhood and was old enough to marry they called her Theonoe: for she knew all that divination can tell, both present and future, receiving this office from her ancestor Nereus.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Theo-noe" indicates someone whose mind (*nous*) is divinely inspired. For her grandfather Nereus as a prophetic figure see Hesiod, *Theogony* 233-6.

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- ἡμῖν δὲ γῆ μὲν πατρὶς οὐκ ἀνώνυμος  
 Σπάρτη, πατὴρ δὲ Τυνδάρεως (ἔστιν δὲ δὴ  
 λόγος τις ὡς Ζεὺς μητέρ' ἔπτατ' εἰς ἐμὴν  
 Λήδα κύνου μορφώματ' ὄρνιθος λαβών  
 20 [ὃς δόλιον εὐνήν ἐξέπραξ' ὑπ' αἰετοῦ  
 δίωγμα φεύγων, εἰ σαφῆς οὗτος λόγος]),  
 Ἐλένη δ' ἐκλήθην. ἃ δὲ πεπόνθαμεν κακὰ  
 λέγοιμ' ἄν. ἦλθον τρεῖς θεαὶ κάλλους πέρι  
 Ἴδαίον ἐς κευθμῶν' Ἀλέξανδρον πάρα,  
 25 Ἥρα Κύπρις τε διογενῆς τε παρθένος,  
 μορφῆς θέλουσαι διαπεράνασθαι κρίσιν.  
 τοῦμόν δὲ κάλλος, εἰ καλὸν τὸ δυστυχές,  
 Κύπρις προτείνας' ὡς Ἀλέξανδρος γαμεί,  
 νικᾷ. λιπὼν δὲ βούσταθμ' Ἴδαίος Πάρις  
 30 Σπάρτην ἀφίκεθ' ὡς ἐμὸν σχήσων λέχος.  
 Ἥρα δὲ μεμφθείσ' οὐνεκ' οὐ νικᾷ θεὰς  
 ἐξηνέμωσε τᾶμ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ λέχη,  
 δίδωσι δ' οὐκ ἔμ' ἀλλ' ὁμοιώσασ' ἐμοὶ  
 εἶδωλον ἔμπνουν οὐρανοῦ ξυνθείσ' ἄπο  
 35 Πριάμου τυράννου παιδί· καὶ δοκεῖ μ' ἔχειν,  
 κενὴν δόκησιν, οὐκ ἔχων. τὰ δ' αὖ Διὸς  
 βουλευμάτων' ἄλλα τοῖσδε συμβαίνει κακοῖς:  
 πόλεμον γὰρ εἰσήνεγκεν Ἑλλήνων χθονὶ  
 καὶ Φρυγί δυστήνοισιν, ὡς ὄχλου βροτῶν  
 40 πλήθους τε κουφίσειε μητέρα χθόνα  
 γνωτὸν τε θείῃ τὸν κράτιστον Ἑλλάδος.

20-1 del. Kovacs

34 ἄπο Reiske: ὑπο L



## HELEN

As for me, glorious Sparta is my homeland, Tyndareus is my father (though there is a story that Zeus flew to my mother Leda in the shape of a swan [who was fleeing from an eagle and had his way with her by treachery, if that story is reliable]), and Helen is my name. I will tell you the troubles I have suffered. Three goddesses, Hera, Cypris,<sup>2</sup> and Zeus's maiden daughter,<sup>3</sup> came to a remote vale of Ida to Alexandros, and loveliness was the cause: they wanted to be judged in a beauty contest. Cypris offered marriage to my beautiful self—if what is unfortunate can be called beautiful—to Alexandros and won the contest. So Paris of Ida left his herds<sup>4</sup> and came to Sparta to take me as his wife.

But Hera, annoyed that she did not defeat the other goddesses, made Alexandros' union with me as vain as the wind: she gave to king Priam's son not me but a breathing image she fashioned from the heavens to resemble me. He imagines—vain imagination—that he has me, though he does not. Joined to these woes were further woes in turn, the plan of Zeus. He brought war upon the Greeks and the poor Trojans to relieve Mother Earth of the throng and press of humankind and also make plain who was the most valiant man in Greece.<sup>5</sup> And for the fight against the Tro-

<sup>2</sup> A frequent name for Aphrodite.      <sup>3</sup> Pallas Athena.

<sup>4</sup> Paris, also called Alexandros, though a prince of Troy, was herding cattle on Mt. Ida when he acted as judge of the goddesses.

<sup>5</sup> Here, as at *Orestes* 1639–42 and *Electra* 1281–2, Euripides follows the story of the lost epic *Cypria* (fr. 1) that Zeus fomented the Trojan War in order to relieve the goddess Earth, oppressed by overpopulation.

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<sup>38</sup> γένοι Herwerden

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Φρυγῶν δ' ἐς ἀλκὴν προυτέθην ἐγὼ μὲν οὐ,  
τὸ δ' ὄνομα τοῦμόν, ἄθλον Ἑλλησιν δορός.

- λαβὼν δέ μ' Ἑρμῆς ἐν πτυχαῖσιν αἰθέρος
- 45 νεφέλῃ καλύψας—οὐ γὰρ ἠμέλησέ μου  
Ζεὺς—τόνδ' ἐς οἶκον Πρωτέως ἰδρύσατο,  
πάντων προκρίνας σωφρονέστατον βροτῶν,  
ἀκέραιον ὡς σώσαιμι Μενέλεω λέχος.  
κἀγὼ μὲν ἐνθάδ' εἶμ', ὁ δ' ἄθλιος πόσις
- 50 στράτευμ' ἀθροίσας τὰς ἐμὰς ἀναρπαγὰς  
θηρᾶ πορευθεὶς Ἴλιου πυργώματα.  
ψυχαὶ δὲ πολλαὶ δι' ἔμ' ἐπὶ Σκαμανδρίοις  
ροαῖσιν ἔθανον· ἡ δὲ πάντα τλαῖσ' ἐγὼ  
κατάρατός εἰμι καὶ δοκῶ προδοῦσ' ἐμὸν
- 55 πόσιν συνάψαι πόλεμον Ἑλλησιν μέγαν.  
τί οὖν ἔτι ζῶ; θεοῦ τόδ' εἰσήκουσ' ἔπος  
Ἑρμοῦ, τὸ κλεινὸν ἔτι κατοικήσειν πέδον  
Σπάρτης σὺν ἀνδρὶ, γνότος ὡς ἐς Ἴλιον  
οὐκ ἦλθον, ἦν μὴ λέκτρ' ὑποστρώσω τι.
- 60 ἕως μὲν οὖν φῶς ἡλίου τόδ' ἔβλεπεν  
Πρωτεύς, ἄσυλος ἦ γάμων· ἐπεὶ δὲ γῆς  
σκοτῶ κέκρυπται, παῖς ὁ τοῦ τεθνηκότος  
θηρᾶ γαμῆν με. τὸν πάλαι δ' ἐγὼ πόσιν  
τιμῶσα Πρωτέως μνήμα προσπίτνω τόδε
- 65 ἱκέτις, ἵν' ἀνδρὶ τὰμὰ διασώσῃ λέχη,  
ὡς, εἰ καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ὄνομα δυσκλεῆς φέρω,  
μή μοι τὸ σῶμά γ' ἐνθάδ' αἰσχύνῃ ὄφλη.

<sup>42</sup> προυτέθην Musgrave: προϋθέμην L

## HELEN

jans I was put forward for the Greeks as a prize of war (though it was not me but only my name).

So Hermes took me up within the recesses of the sky, hiding me in a cloud (for Zeus had not forgotten me), and put me down at this house of Proteus, whom he judged the most virtuous man on earth, so that I might keep my bed unsullied for Menelaus. Here I am, but my poor husband, gathering an army, went to the towers of Ilium to win me back by force. Many lives were lost by Scamander's stream because of me. And I, who have suffered everything, am cursed by men, and all think that I have abandoned my husband and brought a great war upon the Greeks.

Why then do I still live? I have heard a prophecy from the god Hermes that I shall one day live in Sparta's plain with my husband, who will learn that I did not go to Ilium—provided I do not share my bed with anyone. While Proteus still looked on the light of the sun, no marriage threatened me. But now that he lies buried in earth's darkness, the late king's son wants to marry me. Hence honoring the husband I once had I have flung myself as a suppliant upon this tomb of Proteus so that it may keep me inviolate for him: even if my name is reviled in Greece, my body shall not here be put to shame.

*Enter by Eisodos A TEUCER.*

56 οὐν t: δῆτ' L

58 γνόντος] fort. γνωτὸν

59 ἦν Dobree: ἵνα L

67 μή μοι] οὐ μὴ Diggle

## EURIPIDES

## ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

τίς τῶνδ' ἐρμυνῶν δωμάτων ἔχει κράτος;  
 Πλούτῳ γὰρ οἶκος ἄξιος προσεικάσαι,  
 70 βασιλεία τ' ἀμφιβλήματ' εὐθριγκοί θ' ἔδραι.  
 ἔα·

ὦ θεοί, τίν' εἶδον ὄψιν; ἐχθίστης ὀρῶ  
 γυναικὸς εἰκὼ φόνιον, ἧ μ' ἀπόλεσεν  
 πάντας τ' Ἀχαιοῦς. θεοί σ', ὅσον μίμημ' ἔχεις  
 75 Ἑλένης, ἀποπτύσειαν. εἰ δὲ μὴ ἔν ξένη  
 γαίᾳ πόδ' εἶχον, τῶδ' ἂν εὐστόχῳ πτερῶ  
 ἀπόλαυσιν εἰκοῦς ἔθανες ἂν Διὸς κόρης.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

τί δ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ὅστις εἶ μ' ἀπεστράφης  
 καὶ ταῖς ἐκείνης συμφοραῖς ἐμὲ στυγεῖς;

## ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

80 ἤμαρτον ὀργῇ τ' εἶξα μᾶλλον ἧ μ' ἐχρήν·  
 μισεῖ γὰρ Ἑλλὰς πᾶσα τὴν Διὸς κόρην.  
 σύγγνωθι δ' ἡμῖν τοῖς λελεγμένοις, γύναι.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

τίς δ' εἶ; πόθεν γῆς τῆσδ' ἐπεστράφης πέδον;

## ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

εἰς τῶν Ἀχαιῶν, ὦ γύναι, τῶν ἀθλίων . . .

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

85 οὐ τᾶρα σ' Ἑλένην εἰ στυγεῖς θαυμαστέον.

<sup>69</sup> Πλούτῳ Nauck: -του L

<sup>71</sup> ἐχθίστης Dingelstad: -ην L

HELEN

TEUCER

Who is the master of these well fortified halls? The house is worthy to be compared with that of Plutus<sup>6</sup> himself, so royal is its circuit and so lovely the coping of its chambers!

Ah! O gods, what sight is this I see? The deadly image of a woman most hateful, her who ruined me and all the Greeks! The gods' hatred be yours for being Helen's double! If I were not standing on foreign soil, this unerring arrow would have killed you for looking like Zeus's daughter!

HELEN

Poor man, whoever you are, why do you recoil from me? Why loathe *me* for the troubles *she* has caused?

TEUCER

It was wrong of me, and I yielded too much to anger. All Hellas hates Zeus's daughter. Pardon me for what I have said, lady.

HELEN

Who are you? What has brought you to this land?

TEUCER

I, lady, one of the unlucky Greeks . . .

HELEN

No wonder, then, that you hate Helen! [But who are you

<sup>6</sup> God of wealth.

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<sup>77</sup> ἀπόλαυσιν Reiske: ἀπόλλυσ'. ἴν' L

<sup>78</sup> εἶ Cobet: ὦν L      <sup>80</sup> τ' Kovacs: δ' L

<sup>81</sup> suspectum habuit Nauck, del. Behrns

<sup>84</sup> τῶν] ὦν Herwerden

EURIPIDES

[ἀτὰρ τίς εἶ πόθεν; τίνος ἔξανδᾶν σε χρῆ;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

ὄνομα μὲν ἡμῖν Τεῦκρος, ὁ δὲ φύσας πατῆρ  
Τελαμῶν, Σαλαμῖς δὲ πατρὶς ἢ θρέψασά με.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

τί δῆτα Νείλου τούσδ' ἐπιστρέφῃ γύας;]

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

90 . . . φνυγὰς πατρώας ἐξελέλαμαι χθονός.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

τλήμων ἂν εἴης· τίς δέ σ' ἐκβάλλει πάτρας;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

Τελαμῶν ὁ φύσας. τίν' ἂν ἔχοις μᾶλλον φίλον;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐκ τοῦ; τὸ γάρ τοι πρᾶγμα συμφορὰν ἔχει.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

Αἴας μ' ἀδελφὸς ὤλεσ' ἐν Τροίᾳ θανών.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

95 πῶς; οὐ τί που σῶ φασγάνῳ βίου στερεΐς;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

οἰκεῖον αὐτὸν ὤλεσ' ἄλμ' ἐπὶ ξίφος.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

μανέντ'; ἐπεὶ τίς σωφρονῶν τλαίῃ τόδ' ἄν;

86-9 del. Diggle post Badham, qui 85-8 suspectos habuit

95 βίου Burges: βίον L

97 τόδ' Wecklein: τάδ' L

HELEN

and where have you come from? Whose son must I call you?

TEUCER

My name is Teucer, the father who begot me is Telamon, and Salamis is the land that brought me up.

HELEN

Then why have you come to this land of the Nile?]

TEUCER

. . . have been exiled from my native country.

HELEN

How terrible for you! Who exiled you?

TEUCER

Telamon my father. What closer relative does a man have?

HELEN

But why? There is unhappiness in this story.

TEUCER

My brother Ajax' death at Troy was my undoing.

HELEN

How? Surely it was not by your sword that he died?

TEUCER

It was leaping on his own sword that killed him.

HELEN

Was he mad? No sane man would have done this.

EURIPIDES

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

τὸν Πηλέως τιw οἶσθ' Ἀχιλλέα γόνου;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ναί·

μνηστήρ ποθ' Ἑλένης ἦλθεν, ὡς ἀκούομεν.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

100 θανὼν ὄδ' ὄπλων ἔριν ἔθηκε συμμαχοῖς.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

καὶ δὴ τί τοῦτ' Αἴαντι γίγνεται κακόν;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

ἄλλου λαβόντος ὄπλ' ἀπηλλάχθη βίου.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

σὺ τοῖς ἐκείνου δῆτα πῆμασιν νοσεῖς;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

ὀθούνεκ' αὐτῷ γ' οὐ ξυνωλόμην ὁμοῦ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

105 ἦλθες γάρ, ὦ ξέν', Ἰλίου κλεινὴν πόλιν;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

καὶ ξύν γε πέρσας αὐτὸς ἀνταπωλόμην.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἤδη γὰρ ἦπται καὶ κατείργασται πυρί;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

ὥστ' οὐδ' ἔχνος γε τειχέων εἶναι σαφές.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὦ τλήμον Ἑλένη, διὰ σ' ἀπόλλυνται Φρύγες.



HELEN

TEUCER

Do you know of a man called Achilles, Peleus' son?

HELEN

Yes: I heard he once came as Helen's suitor.

TEUCER

His death caused his comrades to quarrel for his armor.

HELEN

But how did this bring trouble upon Ajax?

TEUCER

When another man got the armor, he killed himself.

HELEN

And you suffer from his woes?

TEUCER

Yes, because I did not die with him.

HELEN

Did you really go to the renowned city of Ilium, stranger?

TEUCER

Yes: I helped sack it but came to grief myself.

HELEN

What, has it already been destroyed by fire?

TEUCER

Yes: you cannot even see for sure the footprint of its walls.

HELEN

Poor Helen! On your account the Trojans are ruined!

---

<sup>99</sup> 'Ελένης <γ> Willink deleto *ναί*

EURIPIDES

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

110 καὶ πρὸς γ' Ἀχαιοί· μεγάλα δ' εἴργασται κακά.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πόσον χρόνον γὰρ διαπεπόρθηται πόλις;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

ἑπτὰ σχεδόν τι καρπίμους ἐτῶν κύκλους.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

χρόνον δ' ἐμείνατ' ἄλλον ἐν Τροίᾳ πόσον;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

πολλὰς σελήνας, δέκα διελθούσας ἔτη.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

115 ἦ καὶ γυναῖκα Σπαρτιᾶτιν εἴλετε;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

Μενέλαος αὐτὴν ἦγ' ἐπισπάσας κόμης.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

εἶδες σὺ τὴν δύστηνον, ἣ κλυὼν λέγεις;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

ὥσπερ σέ γ', οὐδὲν ἦσσον, ὀφθαλμοῖς ὀρώ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

σκοπεῖ δὲ μὴ δόκησιν εἶχετ' ἐκ θεῶν.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

120 ἄλλον λόγον μέμνησο, μὴ κείνης ἔτι.

<sup>112</sup> καρπίμους Nauck

<sup>119</sup> σκοπεῖ δὲ A. Y. Campbell: σκοπεῖτε L

HELEN

TEUCER

Yes, and the Greeks as well: great woes have been brought to pass.

HELEN

How long has it been since Troy was destroyed?

TEUCER

Nearly seven cycles of seedtime and harvest have passed.

HELEN

And beyond that how long were you at Troy?

TEUCER

Many months: they made ten years in all.

HELEN

And did you also capture the Spartan woman?

TEUCER

Menelaus dragged her by the hair and led her off.

HELEN

Did you see the poor creature? Or do you speak at second hand?

TEUCER

I saw her with my eyes no less than I see you.

HELEN

Take care: you might have been under some divinely sent illusion.

TEUCER

Speak of some other subject: no more of her.

EURIPIDES

[ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὕτω δοκεῖτε τὴν δόκησιν ἀσφαλῆ;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

αὐτὸς γὰρ ὄσσοις εἰδόμην· καὶ νοῦς ὀρᾶ.]

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἤδη δ' ἐν οἴκοις σὺν δάμαρτι Μενέλεως;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

οὐκουν ἐν Ἄργει <γ' > οὐδ' ἐπ' Εὐρώτα ῥοαῖς.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

125 αἰαῖ· κακὸν τόδ' εἶπας οἷς κακὸν λέγεις.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

ὥς κείνος ἀφανῆς σὺν δάμαρτι κλήζεται.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐ πᾶσι πορθμὸς αὐτὸς Ἀργείοισιν ἦν;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

ἦν, ἀλλὰ χειμὼν ἄλλοσ' ἄλλον ὄρισεν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ποίοισιν ἐν νότοισι ποντίας ἁλός;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

130 μέσον περῶντας πέλαγος Αἰγαίου πόρου.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

κακ τοῦδε Μενέλαόν τις οἶδ' ἀφιγμένον;

121-2 del. W. Ribbeck

124 <γ' > Musgrave

130 περῶντας Reiske: περῶσι L

HELEN

[HELEN

Are you so convinced that your impression is right?

TEUCER

I saw her with my eyes. And my mind also sees.]

HELEN

So is Menelaus now home with his wife?

TEUCER

No: not in Argos nor on Eurotas' banks.

HELEN

Ah no! How dreadful! I mean for those it touches.

TEUCER

Yes: rumor is that he and his wife have vanished.

HELEN

Didn't all the Argives sail home together?

TEUCER

Yes, but a storm drove them in different directions.

HELEN

Where were they on the sea's broad surface?

TEUCER

They were making their way through the middle of the Aegean.

HELEN

Does anyone know of Menelaus' making land after that?

---

<sup>131</sup> Μενελάον τις Hermann: -ον οὔτις L: sed fort. Ἀτρείδην ποί τις

EURIPIDES

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

οὐδείς· θανῶν δὲ κλήζεται καθ' Ἑλλάδα.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἀπωλόμεσθα· Θεστιάς δ' ἔστιν κόρη;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

Λήδαν ἔλεξας; οἴχεται θανούσα δή.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

135 οὐ πού νιν Ἑλένης αἰσχρὸν ὤλεσεν κλέος;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

φασίν, βρόχῳ γ' ἄψασαν εὐγενῆ δέρην.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οἱ Τυνδάρειοι δ' εἰσὶν ἢ οὐκ εἰσὶν κόροι;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

τεθνᾶσι κοὺ τεθνᾶσι· δύο δ' ἔστων λόγῳ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πότερος ὁ κρείσσων; ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ κακῶν.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

140 ἄστροις σφ' ὁμοιωθέντε φάσ' εἶναι θεῶ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

καλῶς ἔλεξας τοῦτο· θάτερον δὲ τί;

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

σφαγαῖς ἀδελφῆς οὐνεκ' ἐκπνεῦσαι βίον.

ἄλις δὲ μύθων· οὐ διπλᾶ χρήζω στένειν.

ὦν δ' οὐνεκ' ἦλθον τούσδε βασιλείους δόμους,

145 τὴν θεσπιωδὸν Θεονόην χρήζων ιδεῖν,

HELEN

TEUCER

No: in Greece he is reported to be dead.

HELEN

I am undone! Is Thestias' daughter alive?

TEUCER

Do you mean Leda? She is dead and gone.

HELEN

What? Killed by Helen's shame?

TEUCER

So they say: she put a noose about her fair neck.

HELEN

Are the sons of Tyndareus alive or not?

TEUCER

Dead, not dead: there are two accounts.

HELEN

Which is the better one? Oh how miserable these woes make me!

TEUCER

That they have been made like stars and are gods.

HELEN

That at least is good news. But what is the other story?

TEUCER

That they killed themselves because of their sister.

But enough of stories: I do not want to double my tears. I came to this royal house because I wanted to see Theonoe, chanter of the gods' will. Arrange this visit for

## EURIPIDES

- σὺ προξένησον, ὡς τύχῳ μαντευμάτων  
 ὄπη νεὼς στείλαιμ' ἂν οὔριον πτερὸν  
 ἐς γῆν ἐναλίαν Κύπρον, οὐ μ' ἐθέσπισεν  
 οἰκεῖν Ἀπόλλων, ὄνομα νησιωτικὸν  
 150 Σαλαμίνα θέμενον τῆς ἐκεῖ χάριν πάτρας.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- πλοῦς, ὦ ξέν', αὐτὸς σημανεῖ· σὺ δ' ἐκλιπὼν  
 γῆν τήνδε φεῦγε πρὶν σε παῖδα Πρωτέως  
 ἰδεῖν, ὃς ἄρχει τῆσδε γῆς· ἄπεστι δὲ  
 κυσὶν πεποιθὼς ἐν φοναῖς θηροκτόνοις·  
 155 κτείνει γὰρ Ἑλλην' ὄντιν' ἂν λάβῃ ξένον.  
 ὅτου δ' ἕκατι, μήτε σὺ ζήτηί μαθεῖν  
 ἐγὼ τε σιγῶ· τί γὰρ ἂν ὠφελοῖμί σε;

## ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

- καλῶς ἔλεξας, ὦ γύναι· θεοὶ δέ σοι  
 ἐσθλῶν ἀμοιβὰς ἀντιδωρησαίαιτο.  
 160 Ἑλένη δ' ὅμοιον σῶμ' ἔχουσ' οὐ τὰς φρένας  
 ἔχεις ὁμοίας ἀλλὰ διαφόρους πολὺ.  
 κακῶς ὄλοιτο μῆδ' ἐπ' Εὐρώτα ῥοὰς  
 ἔλθοι· σὺ δ' εἴης εὐτυχῆς αἰεὶ, γύναι.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- ὦ μεγάλων ἀχέων καταβαλλομένα μέγαν οἶκτον  
 165 ποῖον ἀμιλλαθῶ γόον ἢ τίνα μοῦσαν ἐπέλθω  
 [δάκρυσιν ἢ θρήνοις ἢ πένθεσιν];  
 αἰαῖ.

162 κακῶς Wilamowitz: κ- δ' L

166 del. Willink



HELEN

me so that I can learn by prophecy how I must sail my ship to reach the seagirt land of Cyprus. It is there Apollo prophesied that I must live, calling the place by the island name of Salamis in honor of my far-off native land.

HELEN

The journeying itself will show you the way, stranger.<sup>7</sup> But leave this land quickly before Proteus' son, the country's ruler, sees you! He is away hunting wild beasts with his hounds, but he kills every Greek he catches. Just why, you should not try to learn, and I will not tell you. What good would it do you?

TEUCER

Thanks for your good advice, lady. And may the gods repay you for your kindness! Though you resemble Helen in body, your heart is not the same as hers but far different. May she die a painful death and never come to the streams of the Eurotas! But may your fortune always be good, lady!

*Exit TEUCER by Eisodos A.*

HELEN

Ah, as I begin a long plaint for my long woes  
what strenuous keening shall I make, or what Muse shall I  
call to my aid

[with tears or laments or cries of sorrow]?

Ah me!

<sup>7</sup> This might mean that Apollo will see to the fulfillment of his prophecy. There might also be an allusion to the belief (see *Bacchae* 402–8) that the Nile flowed under the sea from Egypt to Cyprus.

στρ. α

- πτεροφόροι νεάνιδες,  
 παρθένοι Χθονὸς κόραι  
 Σειρήνες, εἴθ' ἐμοῖς  
 170 ὀμιλοῖτ' ἔχουσαι  
 Λίβυν λωτὸν ἢ σύ-  
 ριγγας [ἢ φόρμιγγας] αἰλίνοις κακοῖς·  
 τοῖς <δ'> ἐμοῖσι σύνοχα δάκρυα,  
 πάθεσι πάθεα, μέλεσι μέλεα,  
 μουσεῖα θρηνήμα-  
 σι ξυνφδὰ πέμφαιτε,  
 175 Φερσέφασσα φόνιον ἄχαριν  
 ἔν' ἐπὶ δάκρυσι παρ' ἐμέθεν ὑπὸ  
 μέλαθρα νύχια παιᾶνα  
 νέκυσιν ὀλομένοις λάβη.

ἀντ. α

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- κυανοειδὲς ἀμφ' ὕδωρ  
 180 ἔτυχον ἑλικά τ' ἀνὰ χλόαν  
 φοίνικας ἀλίω  
 πέπλους χρυσέαισιν  
 <τ' ἐν> ἀυγαῖσι θάλπουσ'  
 ἀμφὶ δόνακος ἔρνεσιν  
 ἔνθεν οἰκτρὸν ὄμαδον ἔκλυον,  
 185 ἄλυρον ἔλεγον, ὅ τι ποτ' ἔλακεν

169 ἐμοῖς Aldina: ἐμοῖς γόοις L

170 ὀμιλοῖτ' Willink: μόλοιτ' L

## HELEN

You winged maids,  
 virgin daughters of Earth,  
 you Sirens, O  
 bring Libyan shawm or shepherd's pipe  
 [or lyre] and consort with me  
 in my terrible griefs:  
 as songsters harmonious  
 with my lamentations  
 send forth tears in accord with my tears,  
 woes with my woes, and songs with my songs,  
 that Persephone  
 in her halls of night  
 may receive from me with my tears a paean,  
 deathly and joyless, for the dead!

*Enter by Eisodos B the CHORUS, consisting of enslaved Greek women.*

### CHORUS

Near waters of deep blue  
 and shoots of tender green I chanced  
 to be drying on standing reeds  
 my deep-dyed  
 dresses in the sun  
 <and> its golden rays.  
 There I heard a noise to stir my pity,  
 a lament not fit for the lyre, uttered

---

171a ἢ φόρμιγγας del. Tr<sup>3</sup> αἰλίνους] ἐλείνοῖς Willink

172 <δ'> Willink 174b πέμψαιτε Bothe: -ψειε L

175 φόνιον ἄχαριν Willink: φονία χάριτας L

176 ἐμέθεν Seidler: ἐμέ θ' L 182 <τ' ἐν> Willink

184 οἰκτρὸν Badham: οἰ- ἀνεβόασεν L

<λαμπροῖσιν> αἰάγμα-  
 σι στένουσα νύμφα τις,  
 οἷα Ναῖς ὄρεσι φύγδα  
 νόμον ἰεῖσα γοερόν, ὑπὸ δὲ  
 πέτρινα γύαλα κλαγγαῖσι  
 190 Πανὸς ἀναβοᾶ γάμους.

στρ. β

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

ᾧ θήραμα βαρβάρου πλάτας,  
 Ἑλλανίδες κόραι,  
 ναύτας Ἀχαιῶν τις  
 195 ἔμολεν ἔμολε δάκρυα δάκρυσί μοι φέρων  
 Ἴλίου κατασκαφαῖ  
 πυρὶ μέλουσι δαΐφ  
 δι' ἐμέ τὰν πολυκτόνον,  
 δι' ἐμὸν ὄνομα πολύπονον,  
 200 Λήδα δ' ἐν ἀγχόναῖς  
 θάνατον ἔλαβεν αἰσχύ-  
 νας ἐμᾶς ὑπ' ἀλγέων,  
 ὃ δ' ἐμὸς ἐν ἀλὶ πολυπλανῆς  
 πόσις ὀλόμενος οἴχεται,  
 205 Κάστορός τε συγγόνου τε  
 διδυμογενὲς ἄγαλμα πατρίδος  
 ἀφανὲς ἀφανὲς ἰππόκροτα λέ-  
 λοιπε δάπεδα γυμνάσιά τε  
 δονακόεντος. Εὐρώ-  
 210 τα, νεανιᾶν πόνον.

## HELEN

in <loud> complaint  
 by some wife:  
 so would a Naiad in flight  
 on the mountains utter a woeful plaint  
 as in some rocky glen  
 she cries out that she is being ravished by Pan.

## HELEN

Spoil a barbarian ship has taken,  
 you women of Hellas:  
 a Greek sailor  
 has come, has come with a message of tears upon tears:  
 the ruins of Troy  
 are now consumed by hostile flame  
 because of me, murderer of many,  
 because of my name of many woes.  
 Leda has perished,  
 hanging herself from pain  
 at my disgrace;  
 my husband wandering on the sea  
 is lost and gone;  
 and Castor and his brother,  
 twin glories of their country,  
 have vanished, vanished, leaving behind the plains  
 their horses galloped over and the wrestling grounds  
 by the reedy Eurotas River  
 where young men toil.

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186 *lac. indic. Badham: <λαμπροῖσιν> Kovacs, <πολλοῖσιν>*  
 Lourenço 187 *φύδα Herwerden: φυγάδα L*  
 188 *νόμον Matthiae: γάμων L* 189 *γάλα Dindorf:*  
*μύχала γάλα L κλαγγαῖσι Murray: -ās L* 191 *ῶ Wil-*  
*amowitz: ἰὼ ἰὼ L* 196 *κατασκαφαῖ Murray: -ὰ L*

## EURIPIDES

ἀντ. β

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- αἰαὶ δαίμονος πολυστόνου  
μοίρας τε σᾶς, γύναι.  
αἰὼν δυσαίων τις  
ἔλαχεν ἔλαχεν, ὅτε σ' ἐτέκετο ματρόθεν
- 215 χιονόχρω κύκνου πτερῶ  
Ζεὺς πρέπων δι' αἰθέρος.  
τί γὰρ ἄπεστί σοι κακῶν;  
τί δ' ἀνὰ βίοτον οὐκ ἔτλας;  
μάτηρ μὲν οἴχεται,
- 220 δίδυμά τε Διὸς οὐκ εὐ-  
δαιμονεῖ τέκεα φίλα,  
χθόνα δὲ πάτριον οὐχ ὄρας,  
διὰ δὲ πόλιας ἔρχεται  
βάξις ἃ σε βαρβάροισι,
- 225 πότνια, παραδίδωσι λέχεσιν,  
ὁ δὲ σὸς ἐν ἀλὶ κύμασί τε λέ-  
λοιπε βίοτον οὐδέ ποτ' ἔτι  
πάτρια μέλαθρα καὶ τὰν  
Χαλκίοικον ὀλβιεῖ.

ἐπφδ.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- φεῦ φεῦ, τίς ἦ Φρυγῶν  
230 ἦ τίς Ἑλλαυίας ἀπὸ χθονὸς

215 χιονόχρω Wecklein: -ως L

218 τί δ' ἀνὰ Bruhn: τίνα δὲ L

HELEN

CHORUS

O what a sorrowful lot,  
what sorrowful fortunes are yours, lady!  
It was a *destiny of woe*  
that claimed you for its own the day when Zeus,  
flashing through the upper air with snowy swan's wing,  
sired you upon your mother!  
What trouble is not yours?  
What have you not suffered in your lifetime?  
Your mother is dead,  
Zeus's twin sons, whom you loved,  
enjoy no good fortune,  
you cannot see your native land,  
and throughout the cities of Greece  
runs the tale that puts you in the bed  
of a barbarian, my lady.  
And your husband has died  
on the deep and shall never  
gladden his ancestral halls  
or Athena of the Brazen House!<sup>8</sup>

HELEN.

Ah me, who of the Phrygians<sup>9</sup>  
or who from the land of Greece

<sup>8</sup> Athena as worshiped in Sparta in a temple with a shrine of bronze.

<sup>9</sup> The Trojans are called Phrygians and Troy Phrygia in Greek poetry.

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225 *πότνια, παραδίδωσι λέχουσιν* Nauck: *λέχεσι π- παρα-  
δίδωσιν* L

228 *ὀλβιεῖ* Bothe: *-οῖς* L

## EURIPIDES

- ἔτεμε τὰν δακρνώεσσαν  
 Ἴλίῳ πεύκαν;  
 ἔνθεν ὀλόμενον σκάφος  
 συναρμόσας ὁ Πριαμίδας  
 ἔπλευσε βαρβάρῳ πλάτῃ  
 235 τὰν ἐμὰν ἐφ' ἑστίαν  
 [ἐπὶ τὸ δυστυχέστατον  
 κάλλος ὡς ἔλοι γάμων ἐμῶν]  
 ἃ τε δόλιος ἂ πολυκτόνος Κύπρις  
 Δαναΐδαις ἄγουσα θάνατον  
 240 ᾧ τάλαινα συμφορᾶς.  
 ἂ δὲ χρυσέοις θρόνοισι  
 Διὸς ὑπαγκάλισμα σεμνὸν  
 Ἦρα τὸν ᾠκύπουν  
 ἔπεμψε Μαιάδος γόνον  
 ὃς με χλοερὰ δρεπομένην ἔσω πέπλων  
 245 ῥόδεα πέταλα Χαλκίοικον  
 ὡς Ἀθάναν μόλοιμ'  
 ἀναρπάσας δι' αἰθέρος  
 τάνδε γαῖαν εἰς ἄνολβον  
 ἔριν ἔριν τάλαιναν ἔθετο  
 Πριαμίδαισιν Ἑλλάδος.  
 250 τὸ δ' ἐμὸν ὄνομα παρὰ Σιμωνυτίοις ῥοαῖσι  
 μαψίδιον ἔχει φάτιν.

236-7 del. Dindorf, omnes 229-52 Lourenço

238 ἃ τε Matthiae: ἂ δὲ L



## HELEN

cut down the pine  
that brought tears to Ilium?  
From that pine the son of Priam  
fashioned a ruinous ship,  
and sailed with barbarian oar  
to my hearth  
[to the most woeful  
beauty so that he might win me as his bride],  
and with him came the treacherous, the murderous Cypris  
bringing death to the Greeks.  
Ah, woe is me!  
But she upon the golden throne,  
who sleeps in Zeus's arms and is revered,  
Hera, sent the swift-footed  
son of Maia.<sup>10</sup>  
As I gathered fresh within my garment's folds  
petals of roses to go to Athena,  
her of the Brazen House,  
he swooped me up and took me through the heavens  
to this unblest land  
and made of me a quarrel, quarrel of woe,  
Greece's quarrel with the sons of Priam.  
And my name beside the streams of Simois  
is falsely reviled.

<sup>10</sup> Hermes.

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<sup>239</sup> *θάνατον* Nauck: *θ- Πριαμίδαις* L

<sup>241</sup> *ἀ* Dindorf: *εἰ* L

## EURIPIDES

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔχεις μὲν ἀλγείν', οἶδα· σύμφορον δέ τοι  
ὡς ῥᾶστα τὰναγκαῖα τοῦ βίου φέρειν.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 255 φίλαι γυναῖκες, τίني πότμω συνεζύγη;  
257 γυνή γάρ οὔθ' Ἑλληνὶς οὔτε βάρβαρος  
τεῦχος νεοσσῶν λευκὸν ἐκλοχεύεται,  
259 ἐν ᾧ με Λήδαν φασὶν ἐκ Διὸς τεκεῖν.  
256 ἄρ' ἢ τεκοῦσά μ' ἔτεκεν ἀνθρώποις τέρας;  
260 τέρας γὰρ ὁ βίος καὶ τὰ πράγματ' ἐστὶ μου,  
τὰ μὲν δι' Ἥραν, τὰ δὲ τὸ κάλλος αἴτιον.  
εἴθ' ἐξαλειφθεῖς ὡς ἄγαλμ' αὐθις πάλιν  
αἰσχιον εἶδος ἔλαβον ἀντὶ τοῦ καλοῦ,  
καὶ τὰς τύχας μὲν τὰς κακὰς ἄς νῦν ἔχω  
265 Ἑλληνες ἐπελάθοντο, τὰς δὲ μὴ κακὰς  
ἔσωζον ὥσπερ τὰς κακὰς σφύζουσί μου.  
ὅστις μὲν οὖν ἐς μίαν ἀποβλέπων τύχην  
πρὸς θεῶν κακοῦται, βαρὺ μὲν, οἰστέον δ' ὅμως·  
ἡμεῖς δὲ πολλαῖς συμφοραῖς ἐγκείμεθα.  
270 πρῶτον μὲν οὐκ οὔσ' ἄδικός εἰμι δυσκλεής·  
καὶ τοῦτο μείζον τῆς ἀληθείας κακόν,  
ὅστις τὰ μὴ προσόντα κέκτηται κακά.  
ἔπειτα πατρίδος θεοί μ' ἀφιδρύσαντο γῆς  
ἐς βάρβαρ' ἦθη, καὶ φίλων τητωμένη  
275 δούλη καθέστηκ' οὔσ' ἐλευθέρων ἀπο-  
τὰ βαρβάρων γὰρ δοῦλα πάντα πλὴν ἐνός.  
ἄγκυρα δ' ἢ μου τὰς τύχας ὥχει μόνη,

## HELEN

### CHORUS LEADER

Your lot is painful, I admit. But it is best, you know, to bear life's harsh necessities as lightly as you can.

### HELEN

Dear women, to what fate have I been yoked? No woman, either Greek or barbarian, ever gave birth to a white-shelled bird's egg, yet it was in this, men say, that Leda bore me to Zeus. Did my mother bear me as a monstrosity in men's eyes? My life and fortunes *are* a monstrosity, partly because of Hera, partly because of my beauty. I wish I had been wiped clean like a painting and made plain instead of beautiful, and that the Greeks had forgotten the evil fate that I now have and remembered what is good, just as they now remember what is ill!

Now when a man, his eye fixed on one thing, is hurt by the gods, that, hard though it is, must be endured. I, however, am beset by many misfortunes. First, though I am innocent, I have an evil reputation: to be reviled for wrongs one has not done is worse than if the charges were true. Second, the gods have settled me far from my native soil to live with barbarians. I am deprived of my near and dear and have become a slave though I was born of free parents: in barbarian lands all except one man are slaves. The one anchor that steadied me in misfortune, that my husband

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<sup>253</sup> τοι L. Dindorf: σοι L

<sup>256</sup> post 259 trai. Renehan

<sup>263</sup> ἔλαβον ἄ- τοῦ καλοῦ Wilamowitz: ἄ- τοῦ κ- λαβεῖν L

<sup>264</sup> τὰς τύχας] κληδόνας F. W. Schmidt

## EURIPIDES

- πόσιν ποθ' ἤξειν καί μ' ἀπαλλάξειν κακῶν,  
 ἐπεὶ τέθνηκεν οὗτος, οὐκέτ' ἔστι δῆ.  
 280 μήτηρ δ' ὄλωλε καὶ φονεὺς αὐτῆς ἐγώ,  
 ἀδίκως μὲν, ἀλλὰ τᾶδικον τοῦτ' ἔστ' ἐμόν.  
 ἦ δ' ἀγλαίσμα δωμάτων ἐμόν τ' ἔφν,  
 θυγάτηρ ἄνανδρος πολιά παρθενεύεται.  
 τῷ τοῦ Διὸς δὲ λεγομένῳ Διοσκόρῳ  
 285 οὐκ ἐστόν. ἀλλὰ πάντ' ἔχουσα δυστυχή  
 τοῖς πράγμασι τέθνηκα, τοῖς δ' ἔργοισιν οὔ.  
 [τὸ δ' ἔσχατον τοῦτ', εἰ μόλοιμεν ἐς πάτραν,  
 κλήθροισ ἂν εἰργοίμεσθα τὴν ὑπ' Ἴλιῳ  
 δοκοῦντες Ἑλένην Μενελέῳ †μ' ἐλθεῖν† μέτα.  
 290 εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἔζη πόσις, ἀνεγνώσθημεν ἂν,  
 ἐς ξύμβολ' ἐλθόνθ' ἂ φανέρ' ἂν μόνοις ἂν ἦν.  
 νῦν δ' οὔτε τοῦτ' ἔστ' οὔτε μὴ σωθῆ ποτε.]  
 τί δῆτ' ἔτι ζῶ; τίν' ὑπολείπομαι τύχην;  
 γάμους ἐλομένη τῶν κακῶν ὑπαλλαγὰς,  
 295 μετ' ἀνδρὸς οἰκεῖν βαρβάρου πρὸς πλουσίαν  
 τράπεζαν ἴζουσ'; ἀλλ' ὅταν πόσις πικρὸς  
 ξυνηῖ γυναικί, καὶ τὸ σῶμ' ἔστιν πικρόν.  
 θανεῖν κράτιστον· πῶς θάνοιμ' ἂν οὐ καλῶς;  
 [ἀσχήμονες μὲν ἀγχόνοι μετάρσιοι,  
 300 κὰν τοῖσι δούλοις δυσπρεπὲς νομίζεται  
 σφαγαὶ δ' ἔχουσιν εὐγενές τι καὶ καλόν,  
 σμικρὸν δ' ὁ καιρὸς ἄρθρ' ἀπαλλάξαι βίου.]  
 ἐς γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἤλθομεν βάθος κακῶν·

279 ἐπεὶ Cobet: οὗτος L

## HELEN

would one day come and rescue me from misery, no longer exists since he has perished. My mother is dead, and I am her slayer: that is unfair, but the unfairness belongs to my lot. My daughter, who is our house's glory and mine, has no husband and grows old in maidenhood. The two Dioscuri, said to be the sons of Zeus, are no more. So since all I have is unblest, I am dead in my fortunes if not in deed. [And here is the worst of it: if I should reach home, I would find the gates barred against me since men would suppose that Helen from Troy perished with Menelaus.<sup>11</sup> For if he were alive, we could be recognized by having recourse to tokens known to us alone. But as it is, that is impossible, and he will never return home.]

Why then do I go on living? What fate is left for me? Choose marriage as an escape from trouble and live with a barbarian husband, sitting at his rich table? But when a woman is married to a man she dislikes, even her own body becomes distasteful to her. Death is best. How can it not be right to die? [To hang oneself is unseemly: it does not look good even in a slave. Death by the sword is noble and glorious, but it is hard to find the vital spot that will end the body's life.] That is the depth of misery to which I have

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<sup>11</sup> I translate Schmidt's *θανεῖν* for L's nonsensical *μ' ἐλθεῖν* without any confidence that this is what the interpolator wrote.

282 ἦ δ' Diggle: ὄδ' L      ἐμόν Cobet: ἐμοῦ L

287-92 del. Goguel

289 *θανεῖν* F. W. Schmidt

291 ἐλθόνθ' ἅ φανέρ' ἄν Porson: ἐλθόντες ἅ φανερά L

299-302 del. Hartung

302 ἄρθρ' Keil: ἄρτ' L

## EURIPIDES

αἰ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλαι διὰ τὸ κάλλος εὐτυχεῖς  
305 γυναῖκες, ἡμᾶς δ' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀπώλεσεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἐλένη, τὸν ἐλθόνθ', ὅστις ἐστὶν ὁ ξένος,  
μὴ πάντ' ἀληθῆ δοξάσης εἰρηκέναι.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

καὶ μὴν σαφῶς γ' ἔλεξ' ὀλωλέναι πόσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πόλλ' ἂν λέγοιτο καὶ διὰ ψευδῶν σαφῆ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

310 καὶ τοῦμπαλίν γε τῶνδ', ἀληθείας ἔπι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔς ξυμφορὰν γὰρ ἀντὶ τὰγαθοῦ φέρη.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

φόβος γὰρ ἐς τὸ δεῖμα περιβαλῶν μ' ἄγει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς δ' εὐμενείας τοισίδ' ἐν δόμοις ἔχεις;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πάντες φίλοι μοι πλὴν ὁ θηρεύων γάμου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

315 οἶσθ' οὖν ὁ δρᾶσον· μνήματος λιποῦσ' ἔδραν ...

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἔς ποῖον ἔρπεις μῦθον ἢ παραίνεσιν;

309 λέγοιτο Blaydes: γένοιτο L

309-10 σαφῆ ... ἔπι Jackson: ἔπη ... σαφῆ L

HELEN

sunk: while other women are made happy by their beauty,  
mine is the very thing that has destroyed me.

CHORUS LEADER

Helen, do not assume that the stranger, whoever he is,  
spoke the truth on all points.

HELEN

But he said plainly that my husband was dead.

CHORUS LEADER

Many things plainly said may be false.

HELEN

Yes, and conversely, they may be true.

CHORUS LEADER

You say this because you rush toward woe, not blessing.

HELEN

Yes: anxiety surrounds me, drives my thoughts toward fear.

CHORUS LEADER

How much good will do you have from those in the house?

HELEN

All are my friends except for the man who hunts down my  
love.

CHORUS LEADER

Here is what you must do: leaving your seat on this  
tomb . . .

HELEN

What are you saying? What advice are you giving me?

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<sup>310</sup> τοῦμπαλίν Stephanus: τᾶμπαλίν L

<sup>312</sup> τὰ δεινὰ Bothe

EURIPIDES

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- ... ἐλθούσ' ἐς οἴκους, ἢ τὰ πάντ' ἐπίσταται  
 τῆς ποντίας Νηρηΐδος ἐγγόνου κόρης  
 πυθοῦ πόσιν σὸν Θεονόης, εἴτ' ἔστ' ἔτι  
 320 εἴτ' ἐκλέλοιπε φέγγος· ἐκμαθοῦσα δ' εὖ  
 πρὸς τὰς τύχας τὸ χάρμα τοὺς γόους τ' ἔχε.  
 πρὶν δ' οὐδὲν ὀρθῶς εἰδέναί, τί σοι πλέον  
 λυπουμένη γένοιτ' ἄν; ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πιθοῦ.  
 [τάφον λιποῦσα τόνδε σύμμειξον κόρη,  
 325 ὅθενπερ εἶση πάντα· τάληθῆ φράσαι  
 ἔχουσ' ἐν οἴκοις τοῖσδε, τί βλέπεις πρόσω;]  
 θέλω δὲ καγὼ σοι συνεισελθεῖν δόμους  
 καὶ συμπυθέσθαι παρθένου θεσπίσματα·  
 γυναῖκα γὰρ δὴ συμπονεῖν γυναικὶ χρῆ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 330 φίλαι, λόγους ἐδεξάμαν·  
 βᾶτε βᾶτε δ' ἐς δόμους,  
 ἀγῶνας ἐντὸς οἴκων  
 ὡς πύθησθε τοὺς ἐμούς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θέλουσαν οὗ με δις καλεῖς.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 335 ἰὼ μέλεος ἀμέρα.  
 τίν' ἄρα τάλαινα τίνα λόγον  
 δακρυόεντ' ἀκούσομαι;

318 del. Goguel: cf. 1647 .



HELEN

CHORUS LEADER

. . . go into the house and ask the Nereid's omniscient daughter Theonoe whether your husband is alive or dead. When you have learned the truth, then weep or rejoice according to your fate. But before you know for sure, what good will it do you to grieve? Take my advice! [Leave this tomb and meet with the maiden: from her you will learn all. Since you have her to tell you the truth in this house, why do you look elsewhere?] I too am willing to go in and hear the maiden's prophecy with you: women must help one another.

HELEN

My friends, I accept your admonition:  
go, go into the house  
so that you may learn within  
what trials await me.

CHORUS

I do it willingly: you need not ask me twice.

HELEN

O unlucky day!  
What story of tears  
shall I in my unhappiness hear?

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324-6 del. Goguel

326 τήνδε Nauck

333 fort. ante 332 traiciendus

334 οὐ με δις Elmsley: οὐ μόλις L

336-7 λόγον δακρύνεντ' Hermann: δακρύνεντα λ- L

## EURIPIDES

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

μὴ πρόμαντις ἀλγέων  
 προλάμβαν', ὦ φίλα, γόους.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 340 τί μοι πόσις μέλεος ἔτλα;  
 πότερα δέρκεται φάος τέ-  
 θριππά θ' ἀλίον κέλευθά τ' ἀστέρων  
 ἢ <ν> νέκνυσι κατὰ χθονὸς  
 345 τὰν χρόνιον ἔχει τύχαν;

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐς τὸ φέρτερον τίθει  
 τὸ μέλλον, ὅ τι γενήσεται.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- σέ γ' ἀνεκάλεσα, σέ δὲ κατόμοσα,  
 τὸν ὑδρόεντι δόνακι χλωρὸν  
 350 Εὐρώταν· θανόντος  
 εἰ βάξις ἔτυμος ἀνδρὸς  
 ἄδε μοι (τί τὰδ' ἀσύνετα;),  
 φόνιον αἰώρημα  
 διὰ δέρης ὀρέξομαι,  
 ἢ ξιφοκτόνον διωγμὸν  
 355 αἰμορρύτου σφαγᾶς  
 αὐτοσίδαρον ἔσω πελάσω διὰ σαρκὸς ἄμιλλαν,  
 θῦμα τριζύγοις θεαῖσι

344 <ν> Jacobs

345 χρόνιον Bothe: χθόνιον L

348 σέ γ' ἀνεκάλεσα Badham: σέ γὰρ ἐκάλεσα L

HELEN

CHORUS

Do not be prophet of grief, my friend,  
or lament before you need to!

HELEN

What has my unhappy husband suffered?  
Does he yet look on the light,  
the sun's chariot, and the stars in their paths,  
or among the dead under the earth  
does he suffer that everlasting fate?

CHORUS

Whatever tomorrow shall bring,  
set down to the good.

HELEN

I call upon you, I make you my witness,  
Eurotas green with water reeds,  
that if the tale  
of my husband's death  
is true (but how is this unclear?),  
I shall fasten a deadly noose  
about my neck  
or thrust the sword  
of bloody death  
with self-slaughtering force into my flesh,  
a sacrifice to the three goddesses

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349 ὑδρόεντι Reiske: -τα L

352 τί τάδ' ] τίνα δ' Willink

354 διωγμὸν Nauck: δίωγμα L

355 αἰμορρύτου Bothe: λαιμορύτου L

356 ἄμιλλαν Musgrave: -α L

τῷ τε σήραγγας Ἰ-  
 δας ἐνίζοντι Πρια-  
 μίδα ποτ' ἀμφὶ βουστάθμους.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

360 ἄλλοσ' ἀποτροπὰ κακῶν  
 γένοιτο, τὸ δὲ σὸν εὐτυχές.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὦ Τροία τάλαινα,  
 δι' ἔργ' ἀνεργ' ὄλλυσαι μέλεά τ' ἔτλας·  
 τὰ δ' ἐμὰ δῶρα Κύπριδος ἔτεκε  
 365 πολὺ μὲν αἶμα, πολὺ δὲ δάκρυ  
 [ἄχεά τ' ἄχεσι δάκρυνα δάκρυσιν ἔλαβε πάθεα].  
 ματέρες τε παῖδας ὄλεσαν,  
 ἀπὸ δὲ παρθένοι κόμας  
 ἔθεντο σύγγονοι νεκρῶν Σκαμάνδριον  
 ἀμφὶ Φρύγιον οἶδμα.  
 370 βοὰν βοὰν δ' Ἑλλὰς <αἶ>  
 ἐκελάδησεν ἀνοτότυξεν,  
 ἐπὶ δὲ κρατὶ χέρας ἔθηκεν,  
 ὄνυχι δ' ἀπαλόχροα γένυν  
 ἔδενσεν φοινίαισι πλαγαῖς.

375 ὦ μάκαρ Ἀρκαδία ποτὲ παρθένε  
 Καλλιστοῖ, Διὸς ἅ λεχέων ἀπέ-

<sup>357-8</sup> σήραγγας Ἰδας ἐνίζοντι post Badham Diggle:  
 σύραγγ' αἰοιδὰὶ σέβιζον L <sup>362</sup> ὦ Kannicht: ἰὼ L  
<sup>364</sup> Κύπριδος L. Dindorf: κύπρις L

HELEN

and to Priam's son who once  
sat in the hollow caves  
of Ida with his cattle.

CHORUS

May misfortune be turned aside  
and go elsewhere! May your luck be good!

HELEN

O unhappy Troy,  
you perished, you suffered pitiable, for deeds never done.  
It was my allure that brought forth  
much blood, many tears  
[and grief upon grief and tears upon tears, sorrow it took]:  
mothers lost their sons,  
and maidens, sisters of the slain,  
cast their cut locks of hair  
into the Scamander, Troy's stream.  
And Greece raised a cry  
of grief and pain,  
struck her head with her hand,  
and with bloodying stroke of nail  
made her tender cheek run.

O lucky maid of Arcadia long ago  
Callisto,<sup>12</sup> who left the bed of Zeus

<sup>12</sup> Callisto, a beautiful Arcadian girl, beloved of Zeus, was turned into a bear (and eventually into the constellation of the Great Bear) so that she might evade the anger of Hera.

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365 δάκρυ Kovacs: δάκρνον L

369a Σκαμάνδριον del. Bothe

366 del. G. Müller

370 <αί> Paley

## EURIPIDES

- βασι τετραβάμοσι γυίοις,  
 ὡς πολὺ κηρὸς ἐμᾶς ἔλαχεσ πλέον,  
 ἅ μορφῆ θηρῶν λαχνογυίων  
 [ὄμματι λαβρῶ σχῆμα λεαίνης]  
 380 ἐξαλλάξασ' ἄχθεα λύπας·  
 ἄν τέ ποτ' Ἄρτεμις ἐξεχορεύσατο  
 χρυσοκέρατ' ἔλαφον Μέροπος Τιτανίδα κούραν  
 καλλοσύνας ἔνεκεν· τὸ δ' ἐμὸν δέμας  
 ὤλεσεν ὤλεσε πέργαμα Δαρδανίας  
 385 ὀλομένους τ' Ἀχαιοὺς.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- ὦ τὰς τεθρίππους Οἰνομάω Πῖσαν κάτα  
 Πέλοψ ἀμίλλας ἐξαμιλληθεῖς ποτε,  
 εἶθ' ὄφελος τότ' [ἡνίκ' ἔρανον ἐς θεοὺς  
 πεφθεῖς ἐποίεις] ἦθεος λιπεῖν βίον,  
 390 πρὶν τὸν ἐμὸν Ἄτρεα πατέρα γεννῆσαί ποτε,  
 ὃς ἐξέφυσεν Ἀερόπης λέκτρων ἄπο  
 Ἄγαμέμνον' ἐμέ τε Μενέλεων, κλεινὸν ζυγόν.

376 ἀπέβας apogr. Par., Hartung: ἐπέβας L

377 κηρὸς Diggle: μητρὸς L 379 del. Dingelstad, 378-

80 dubitanter Willink 380 ἄχθεα Hermann: ἄχθα L

388b-9a del. Nauck (τότ' pro τόθ' idem)

389 πεφθεῖς nescioquis apud Beck: πεισθεῖς L ἦθεος  
 Grégoire: ἐν θεοῖς L: ἐν δρόμοις Kannicht

13 No other telling of this legend is known. The girl is probably Cos, who gave her name to the Aegean island.

14 Oenomaus, king of Pisa near Olympia, set the suitors of his

## HELEN

with limbs that go on all four,  
how much your lot surpasses mine  
since by taking the form of a shaggy beast  
[with violent eye, the form of a lioness]  
you have put from yourself the burden of pain!  
And you too, Titan daughter of Merops, are blest,  
you whom Artemis once chased from her band as a golden  
stag  
because of her beauty.<sup>13</sup> Yet my loveliness  
has ruined, ruined Troy's citadel  
and the Greeks, doomed to death.

*Exit HELEN and CHORUS into the palace. Enter to the empty stage MENELAUS by Eisodos A. He is dressed in pieces of torn sail.*

## MENELAUS

O Pelops, who once in Pisa competed in the famous chariot race against Oenomaus,<sup>14</sup> how I wish that on that day, [when you were cooked and furnished a feast to the gods,] when you were still unmarried, you had lost your life before you had ever begotten my father Atreus! From his marriage with Aërope Atreus begot Agamemnon and me,

daughter Hippodamia a test: either defeat him in a chariot race and marry the girl or lose their lives. Pelops won the race and his bride by bribing Oenomaus' charioteer. Another story, referred to in the interpolated half lines, was that Pelops' father Tantalus, who was the favored associate of the gods, killed and cooked Pelops and fed him to the gods to test their omniscience. All of the gods recognized the trick at once except Demeter (she wasn't paying attention and ate some of Pelops' shoulder), and the boy was restored to life with a new shoulder of ivory.

## EURIPIDES

- πλείστον γὰρ οἶμαι—καὶ τόδ' οὐ κόμπῳ λέγω—  
 στράτευμα κώπη διορίσαι Τροίαν ἔπι,  
 395 τύραννος οὐδὲ πρὸς βίαν στρατηλατῶν,  
 ἐκούσι δ' ἄρξας Ἑλλάδος νεανίαις.  
 καὶ τοὺς μὲν οὐκέτ' ὄντας ἀριθμῆσαι πάρα,  
 τοὺς τ' ἐκ θαλάσσης ἀσμένους πεφηνγότας,  
 νεκρῶν φέροντας ὄνόματ' εἰς οἴκους πάλιν.  
 400 ἐγὼ δ' ἐπ' οἶδμα πόντιον γλαυκῆς ἀλὸς  
 τλήμων ἀλώμαι χρόνον ὅσονπερ Ἴλίου  
 πύργους ἔπερσα, κὰς πάτραν χρῆζων μολεῖν  
 οὐκ ἀξιούμαι τοῦδε πρὸς θεῶν τυχεῖν.  
 Λιβύης δ' ἐρήμους ἀξένους τ' ἐπίδρομας  
 405 πέπλευκα πάσας· χῶταν ἐγγὺς ᾧ πάτρας,  
 πάλιν μ' ἀπωθεῖ πνεῦμα κοῦποτ' οὔριον  
 ἐσῆλθε λαῖφος ὥστε μ' ἐς πάτραν μολεῖν.  
 καὶ νῦν τάλας ναυαγὸς ἀπολέσας φίλους  
 ἐξέπεσον ἐς γῆν τήνδε· ναῦς δὲ πρὸς πέτραις  
 410 πολλοὺς ἀριθμοὺς ἄγνυται ναυαγίων.  
 τρόπις δ' ἐλείφθη ποικίλων ἀρμοσμάτων,  
 ἐφ' ἧς ἐσώθην μόλις ἀνεπίστῳ τύχῃ  
 Ἑλένη τε, Τροίας ἦν ἀποσπάσας ἔχω.  
 ὄνομα δὲ χώρας ἧτις ἦδε καὶ λεῶ  
 415 οὐκ οἶδ'· ὄχλον γὰρ ἐσπεσεῖν ἧσχυνόμην,  
 [ὥσθ' ἱστορήσαι τὰς ἐμὰς δυσχλαινίας]  
 κρύπτων ὑπ' αἰδοῦς τὰς τύχας. ὅταν δ' ἀνήρ

395 οὐδὲ Dobree: οὐδὲν L

397 πάρα] βαρὺ Orelli, quo recepto post 399 post Wecklein



## HELEN

Menelaus, a glorious pair. It was, I think—and it is not boasting to say so—the world's greatest army that I took over by ship to Troy, not as a despot or leading my troops by force but commanding the young men of Greece with their consent. We can call the roll of those who perished and those who escaped sea perils and arrived home safely bearing the names of their dead comrades. But I wander in misery over the waves of the gray sea the whole time since I captured the towers of Ilium. Though I long to reach home, the gods do not see fit to grant me this boon. I have sailed to all the deserted and inhospitable landing places of Libya. Whenever I get near my own country, the wind forces me back and never fills my sail favorably so that I can get home.

And now, a poor shipwreck, having lost my companions, I have been cast up on this land. My ship is smashed into countless bits of flotsam. Of all its carefully fitted pieces only the keel remained, and on it, by a fate no one would have expected, I reached land safely, and with me Helen, whom I have taken from Troy by force. I do not know what this land and its people are called: shame kept me from mingling with the throng [and so being questioned about my shabby clothes], and I concealed my fate

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lac. fort. indicanda, e.g. <σμικρὸν λέγοις ἂν λείψανον στρατεύματος>, etiam δ' 398 recepto

398 τ' Rappold: δ' L

404 δ' Hermann: τ' L

409 πέτραις Heiland: -ας L

414 λεὼ Cobet: -ὼς L

416 del. Bothe

## EURIPIDES

- πράξει κακῶς ὑψηλός, εἰς ἀηθίαν  
 πίπτει κακίῳ τοῦ πάλαι δνσδαίμονος.  
 420 χρεία δὲ τείρει μ'· οὔτε γὰρ σίτος πάρα  
 οὔτ' ἀμφὶ χρώτ' ἐσθῆτες· αὐτὰ δ' εἰκάσαι  
 πάρεστι ναὸς ἔκβολ' οἷς ἀμπίσχομαι.  
 πέπλους δὲ τοὺς πρὶν λαμπρά τ' ἀμφιβλήματα  
 χλιδάς τε πόντος ἤρπασ'· ἐν δ' ἄντρον μυχοῖς  
 425 κρύψας γυναῖκα τὴν κακῶν πάντων ἐμοὶ  
 ἄρξασαν ἤκω, τοὺς γε περιλελειμμένους  
 φίλων φυλάσσειν τᾶμ' ἀναγκάσας λέχη.  
 μόνος δὲ νοστῶ, τοῖς ἐκεῖ ζητῶν φίλοις  
 τὰ πρόσφορ' ἦν πως ἐξερευνήσας λάβω.  
 430 ἰδὼν δὲ δῶμα περιφερὲς θριγκοῖς τόδε  
 πύλας τε σεμνὰς ἀνδρὸς ὀλβίου τινὸς  
 προσῆλθον· ἐλπίς δ' ἔκ γε πλουσίων δόμων  
 λαβεῖν τι ναύταις· ἐκ δὲ μὴ ἔχοντων βίον  
 οὐδ' εἰ θέλοιεν ὠφελεῖν ἔχοιμεν ἄν.  
 435 ὦή· τίς ἂν πυλωρὸς ἐκ δόμων μόλοι,  
 ὅστις διαγγείλειε τᾶμ' ἔσω κακά;

## ΓΡΑΥΣ

- τίς πρὸς πύλαισιν; οὐκ ἀπαλλάξῃ δόμων  
 καὶ μὴ πρὸς αὐλείοισιν ἐστηκῶς πύλαις  
 ὄχλον παρέξεις δεσπόταις; ἢ καθανῆ  
 440 Ἑλληὴν πεφυκῶς, οἷσιν οὐκ ἐπιστροφαί.

422 ἔκβολ' οἷς Reiske: ἐκβόλοις L

434 ἔχοιμεν Paley: ἔχοιεν L

## HELEN

out of embarrassment. When someone of high degree fares badly, he falls into an unfamiliar state, and this is a far worse fate than if a man has long been ill-starred. I am hard pressed by need: I have no food and no clothing about my body. You can tell from the look of them that it is just cast-ups from the wreck that I am wearing. My former garments, fine and luxurious, have been swallowed up by the sea. I have concealed in a cave the wife who caused me all this woe and have come here, compelling the last survivors of my friends to stand guard over her. I come here alone, trying to obtain for my friends there what they need. Since I saw this house, a rich man's house, its walls surmounted by coping all around and its impressive gates, I have approached. From a rich house there is hope of getting something for my sailors. From the poor we could get no benefit even if they wanted to give it.

Ho there! Gatekeeper! Come out of the house so that you may carry inside the message of my griefs!

*Enter from the palace an OLD WOMAN.*

### OLD WOMAN

Who is at the gate? Leave this house! Do not stand at our courtyard gate and bother my master! Otherwise you will be put to death! You are a Greek, and Greeks are not allowed here!

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ὦ γραῖα, ταῦτά ταυτ' ἔπη κάλλως λέγειν  
ἔξεστι, πείσομαι γάρ· ἀλλ' ἄνες χόλου.

ΓΡΑΥΣ

ἄπελθ'· ἐμοὶ γὰρ τοῦτο πρόσκειται, ξένε,  
μηδένα πελάζειν τοισίδ' Ἑλλήνων δόμοις.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

445 ἦ· μὴ †προσείλει† χεῖρα μηδ' ὤθει βία.

ΓΡΑΥΣ

πέιθη γὰρ οὐδὲν ὦν λέγω, σὺ δ' αἴτιος.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἄγγελον εἴσω δεσπόταισι τοῖσι σοῖς. . . .

ΓΡΑΥΣ

πικρῶς ἂν οἶμαι <σοί> γ' ἔσαγγέλλειν λόγους.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

. . . ναυαγὸς ἦκω ξένος, ἀσύλητον γένος.

ΓΡΑΥΣ

450 οἶκον πρὸς ἄλλον νῦν τιν' ἀντὶ τοῦδ' ἴθι.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ, ἀλλ' ἔσω πάρειμι· καὶ σύ μοι πιθοῦ.

441 κάλλως Herwerden: καλῶς L λέγειν Kirchhoff:  
λέγεις L

442 χόλου Clark: λόγον L

445 πρόσκειε Blomfield: ἦ· / μὴ <μοι> προσείλει Willink

447 fort. δεσπόταισι σοῖς ὅτι (vel 449 ναυαγὸν ἦκειν ξένον)

HELEN

MENELAUS

Ancient lady, you may say these same words in a different tone: I will obey. Stop being angry!

OLD WOMAN

Go away! It is my job, stranger, to see that no Greek approaches this house.

*She moves menacingly toward Menelaus.*

MENELAUS

Oh, don't lay hands on me! Don't thrust me away by force!

OLD WOMAN

You are to blame: you don't do as I say.

MENELAUS

Take the word inside to your master . . .

OLD WOMAN

You will regret it, I think, if I carry *your* message indoors!

MENELAUS

. . . that I have come as a shipwrecked foreigner, one under heaven's protection.

OLD WOMAN

So go to some other house, not this one.

MENELAUS

No, I mean to go in: do as I ask.

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448 <σσί> Kovacs  
τοὺς σοὺς λόγους L

ἔσαγγέλλειν λόγους Dale: ἀγγελεῖν

EURIPIDES

ΓΡΑΥΣ

ὀχληρὸς ἴσθ' ὦν· καὶ τάχ' ὠσθήσῃ βία.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

αἰαῖ· τὰ κλεινὰ ποῦ ἔστι μοι στρατεύματα;

ΓΡΑΥΣ

οὐκοῦν ἐκεῖ που σεμνὸς ἦσθ', οὐκ ἐνθάδε.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

455 ὦ δαίμον, ὡς ἀνάξι' ἠτιμώμεθα.

ΓΡΑΥΣ

τί βλέφαρα τέγγεις δάκρυσι; πρὸς τίν' οἰκτρὸς εἶ;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πρὸς τὰς πάροιθε συμφορὰς εὐδαίμονας.

ΓΡΑΥΣ

οὐκουν ἀπελθὼν δάκρυα σοῖς δώσεις φίλοις;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τίς δ' ἦδε χώρα; τοῦ δὲ βασιλῆιοι δόμοι;

ΓΡΑΥΣ

460 Πρωτέως τάδ' ἐστὶ δώματ', Αἴγυπτος δὲ γῆ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

Αἴγυπτος; ὦ δύστηνος, οἱ πέπλευκ' ἄρα.

ΓΡΑΥΣ

τί δὴ τὸ Νείλου μεμπτόν ἐστὶ σοι γάνος;

<sup>460</sup> Πρωτέως . . . ἐστὶ Kirchhoff ex t: Πρωτεὺς . . . οἰκεῖ L

HELEN

OLD WOMAN

I tell you, you are being troublesome. And soon you will be forced to leave.

MENELAUS

Ah me! My famous military campaigns, where are they now?

OLD WOMAN

You were evidently a person of importance somewhere, but not here.

MENELAUS

O fate, what undeserved scorn I suffer!

OLD WOMAN

Why drench your face with tears? In whose eyes do you deserve pity?

MENELAUS

In the eyes of my former blessed state.

OLD WOMAN

So go away and bestow your tears on your friends!

MENELAUS

What is this land? To whom does this palace belong?

OLD WOMAN

This is the house of Proteus, and the land is Egypt.

MENELAUS

Egypt? O misery! What a long way I have sailed!

OLD WOMAN

And why find fault with the Nile's gleaming water?

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οὐ τοῦτ' ἐμέμφθην· τὰς ἐμὰς στένω τύχας·

ΓΡΑΥΣ

πολλοὶ κακῶς πράσσουσιν, οὐ σὺ δὴ μόνος·

MENEΛΑΟΣ

465 ἔστ' οὖν ἐν οἴκοις ὄντιν' ὀνομάζεις ἀναξ;

ΓΡΑΥΣ

τόδ' ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ μνήμα, παῖς δ' ἄρχει χθονός·

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτ' ἂν εἶη; πότερον ἐκτὸς ἢ 'ν δόμοις;

ΓΡΑΥΣ

οὐκ ἔνδον· Ἑλλησιν δὲ πολεμιώτατος·

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τίν' αἰτίαν σχῶν ἧς ἐπηυρόμην ἐγώ;

ΓΡΑΥΣ

470 Ἑλένη κατ' οἴκους ἐστὶ τούσδ' ἢ τοῦ Διός·

MENEΛΑΟΣ

πῶς φῆς; τίν' εἶπας μῦθον; αὐθίς μοι φράσον·

ΓΡΑΥΣ

ἢ Τυνδαρις παῖς, ἢ κατὰ Σπάρτην ποτ' ἦν·

MENEΛΑΟΣ

πόθεν μολούσα; τίνα τὸ πρᾶγμ' ἔχει λόγον;

ΓΡΑΥΣ

Λακεδαίμονος γῆς δεῦρο νοστήσασ' ἄπο·



HELEN

MENELAUS

I wasn't: it was my fate I was lamenting.

OLD WOMAN

Many people have troubles: you are not the only one.

MENELAUS

The king you spoke of: is he in the house?

OLD WOMAN

This is his tomb. His son is the land's king.

MENELAUS

Where might he be? At home or out of doors?

OLD WOMAN

He's out, and he's most hostile to the Greeks.

MENELAUS

Why does he blame them—to *my* cost?

OLD WOMAN

Helen is in this palace, Zeus's daughter.

MENELAUS

What's this? What are you saying? Tell me again.

OLD WOMAN

Tyndareus' daughter, who was once in Sparta.

MENELAUS

Where did she come from? What is the explanation?

OLD WOMAN

She came here from Lacedaemon.

## EURIPIDES

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

475 πότε; οὐ τί που λελήσμεθ' ἐξ ἄντρων λέχος;

## ΓΡΑΥΣ

πρὶν τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς, ὦ ξέν', ἐς Τροίαν μολεῖν.  
ἀλλ' ἔρπ' ἀπ' οἴκων ἔστι γάρ τις ἐν δόμοις  
τύχη, τύραννος ἧ ταράσσεται δόμος.

καίρων γὰρ οὐδέν' ἦλθες· ἦν δὲ δεσπότης  
480 λάβη σε, θάνατος ξενία σοι γενήσεται.  
[εὖνους γάρ εἰμ' Ἑλλησιν, οὐχ ὅσον πικροὺς  
λόγους ἔδωκα δεσπότην φοβουμένη.]

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί φῶ; τί λέξω; συμφορὰς γὰρ ἀθλίας  
ἐκ τῶν πάροιθε τὰς παρεστώσας κλύω,  
485 εἰ τὴν μὲν αἰρεθείσαν ἐκ Τροίας ἄγων  
ἦκω δάμαρτα καὶ κατ' ἄντρα σῶζεται,  
ὄνομα δὲ ταῦτόν τῆς ἐμῆς ἔχουσά τις  
δάμαρτος ἄλλη τοισίδ' ἐνναίει δόμοις.  
Διὸς δ' ἔλεξε παῖδά νιν πεφυκέναί.  
490 ἀλλ' ἦ τις ἔστι Ζηνὸς ὄνομ' ἔχων ἀνὴρ  
Νείλου παρ' ὄχθας; εἷς γὰρ ὁ γε κατ' οὐρανόν.  
Σπάρτη δὲ ποῦ γῆς ἔστι πλὴν ἵνα ῥοαὶ  
τοῦ καλλιδόνακός εἰσιν Εὐρώτα μόνον;  
ἀπλοῦν δὲ Τυνδάρειον ὄνομα κλήζεται.  
495 Λακεδαίμονος δὲ γαῖα τίς ξυνώνυμος  
Τροίας τ'; ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἔχω τί χρῆ λέγειν.  
[πολλοὶ γάρ, ὡς εἶξασιν, ἐν πολλῇ χθονὶ  
ὀνόματα ταῦτ' ἔχουσι καὶ πόλις πόλει

## HELEN

### MENELAUS

When? Has my wife been stolen from the cave?

### OLD WOMAN

She came, stranger, before the Achaeans sailed to Troy. But leave this house. Something has happened here to throw all into confusion. You arrive at a bad time. If the master catches you, death will be the only hospitality you get. [I am well disposed toward the Greeks, to an extent not to be measured by the bitter words I spoke to you from fear of my master.]

*Exit OLD WOMAN into the palace.*

### MENELAUS

What am I to make of this? I hear of new troubles on the heels of old ones: I come bringing the wife I took from Troy, and she is being kept in a cave, and yet there's another woman, with the same name as my wife, living in this house. She said the woman was Zeus's daughter. Is there some man called Zeus by the banks of the Nile? No, there's only one, the one in heaven. And where on earth is there a Sparta except where the Eurotas flows past banks of lovely reeds? Tyndareus is the name of one man, not two. What other lands are called Lacedaemon and Troy? I do not know what to make of it. [Many men in the wide earth, it seems, have the same names as other men, and the same is

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475 λέχος Heath: -ους L

481-2 del. Kovacs

486 σῶζομαι Badham

497-9 del. Badham, post 488 trai. Pearson

## EURIPIDES

- γυνὴ γυναικί τ'· οὐδὲν οὖν θαυμαστόον.]  
 500 οὐδ' αὖ τὸ δεινὸν προσπόλον φευξόμεθα·  
 ἀνὴρ γὰρ οὐδεὶς ὧδε βάρβαρος φρένας  
 ὃς ὄνομ' ἀκούσας τοῦμὸν οὐ δώσει βοράν.  
 [κλεινὸν τὸ Τροίας πῦρ ἐγὼ θ' ὃς ἠψά νιν,  
 Μενέλαος, οὐκ ἄγνωστος ἐν πάσῃ χθονί.  
 505 δόμων ἀνακτα προσμενῶ· δισσὰς δέ μοι  
 ἔχει φυλάξεις· ἦν μὲν ὠμόφρων τις ἦ,  
 κρύψας ἐμαυτὸν εἶμι πρὸς νανάγια·  
 ἦν δ' ἐνδιδῶ τι μαλθακόν, τὰ πρόσφορα  
 τῆς νῦν παρούσης συμφορᾶς αἰτήσομαι.]  
 510 κακῶν δ' ἐν ἡμῖν ἔσχατον τῶν ἀθλίων,  
 ἄλλους τυράννους αὐτὸν ὄντα βασιλέα  
 βίον προσαιτεῖν· ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει.  
 λόγος γάρ ἐστιν οὐκ ἐμός, σοφῶν δέ του,  
 δεινῆς ἀνάγκης οὐδὲν ἰσχύειν πλέον.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 515 ἤκουσα τᾶς θεσπιωδοῦ κόρας  
 ἃ χηρῆζουσ' ἐπλάθην τυράννοις δόμοισιν,  
 ὡς Μενέλαος οὐ-  
 πω μελαμφαῆς οἴχεται  
 δι' ἔρεβος χθονὶ κρυφθεῖς,  
 520 ἀλλ' ἔτι κατ' οἶδμ' ἄλιον  
 τρυχόμενος οὐπω λιμένων  
 ψαύσειεν πατρίας γᾶς,

503-9 del. Willink

## HELEN

true of women and cities. So there is nothing to wonder at.]

Yet I will not run away from the danger the servant mentioned. No man has so uncivilized a heart that he will not give me food once he has heard my name. [The fire of Troy is famous, and so am I who lit it, Menelaus, well known throughout the whole world. I shall await the master of the house. He gives me two ways of guarding against him. If he proves to be a cruel fellow, I shall conceal myself and go back to the shipwreck. But if he shows some sign of kindness, I shall ask him for what my present misfortunes require.]

One thing caps all my other miserable woes, that I, myself a king, must beg my livelihood from other kings. But it can't be helped. It was some wise man who said it, not I: nothing has more power than cruel necessity.

*Enter CHORUS from the palace.*

### CHORUS

I have heard from the prophetic maiden  
 what I entered the palace to hear,  
 that Menelaus has not yet  
 been covered by earth  
 and gone down through the dark-shining gloom:  
 still buffeted by the sea wave  
 he has yet to grasp  
 the harbors of his native land,

---

509 τῆ νῦν παρούσῃ συμφορᾷ σφ' Hermann 510 δ' ἐν  
 Nauck: δέ θ' L τῶν ἀθλίων Kovacs: τοῖς ἀθλίοις L  
 513 δέ τον Dobree: δ' ἔπος L  
 516 ἐπλάθην Diggle: ἐφάνη L

ἀλατεία βιότου  
 ταλαίφρων, ἄφιλος φίλων,  
 525 παντοδαπᾶς ἐπὶ γᾶς πέδον  
 χριμπτόμενος εἰναλίῳ  
 κώπα Τρωάδος ἐκ γᾶς.

## ELEENH

ἦδ' αὖ τάφου τοῦδ' εἰς ἔδρας ἐγὼ πάλιν  
 στείχω, μαθοῦσα Θεονόης φίλους λόγους.  
 530 [ἦ πάντ' ἀληθῶς οἶδε· φησὶ δ' ἐν φάει  
 πόσιν τὸν ἀμὸν ζῶντα φέγγος εἰσορᾶν,  
 πορθμοὺς δ' ἀλάσθαι μυρίους πεπλωκότα  
 ἐκείσε κάκεισ', οὐδ' ἀγύμναστον πλάνοις  
 ἦξιεν ὅταν δὴ πημάτων λάβῃ τέλος.  
 535 ἐν δ' οὐκ ἔλεξεν, εἰ μολὼν σωθήσεται.  
 ἐγὼ δ' ἀπέστην τοῦτ' ἐρωτῆσαι σαφῶς,  
 ἦσθεις' ἐπεὶ νῦν εἶπέ μοι σεσωμένον.  
 ἐγγὺς δέ νῦν που τῆσδ' ἔφασκ' εἶναι χθονός,  
 ναυαγὸν ἐκπεσόντα σὺν παύροις φίλοις.  
 540 ὦμοι, πόθ' ἦξεις; ὡς ποθεινὸς ἂν μόλοις.]  
 ἔα, τίς οὗτος; οὐ τί που κρυπτεύομαι  
 Πρωτέως ἀσέπτου παιδὸς ἐκ βουλευμάτων;  
 οὐχ ὡς δρομαία πῶλος ἢ Βάκχη θεοῦ  
 τάφῳ ξυνάψω κῶλον; ἄγριος δέ τις  
 545 μορφὴν ὄδ' ἐστὶν ὅς με θηράται λαβεῖν.

525 πέδον Blaydes: πόδα L

530-40 del. Willink

## HELEN

but spends his life wandering,  
poor man, bereft of friends,  
going to lands of every sort  
with his seagoing ship  
since setting sail from Troy.

*Enter HELEN from the palace.*

## HELEN

I too am now returning to my seat upon the tomb, having had good news from Theonoe. [She knows the truth about everything. She says that my husband lives in the light and looks upon the daylight, but that he crisscrosses the sea endlessly, now here now there, and that he will come home, much worn out with wandering, when he has reached the end of his troubles. One thing she did not say: whether he will live once he reaches home. I did not ask her explicitly since I was so glad that she reported him safe. She also says he is somewhere near this land, cast up as a shipwreck with only a few of his companions. Ah, when will you come? You will be a welcome sight when you arrive!]

*(Catching sight of Menelaus)* Oh, oh, who is this? Can it be that I am being ambushed at the bidding of Proteus' godless son? Quick, to the tomb, run like a galloping colt or one of the god's bacchants! He's a savage, by the look of him, the man who hunts me!

*Helen runs toward the tomb, but Menelaus cuts off her retreat.*

## EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

σὲ τὴν ὄρεγμα δεινὸν ἡμιλλημένην  
τύμβου ἔπι κρηπῖδ' ἐμπύρους τ' ὀρθοστάτας,  
μείνον· τί φεύγεις; ὡς δέμας δείξασα σὸν  
ἔκπληξεν ἡμῖν ἀφασίαν τε προστίθης.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

550 ἀδικούμεθ', ὦ γυναῖκες· εἰργόμεσθα γὰρ  
τάφου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε, καὶ μ' ἐλὼν θέλει  
δοῦναι τυράννοις ὧν ἐφεύγομεν γάμους.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οὐ κλῶπές ἐσμεν οὐδ' ὑπηρέται κακῶν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

καὶ μὴν στολήν γ' ἄμορφον ἀμφὶ σῶμ' ἔχεις.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

555 στῆσον, φόβον μεθείσα, λαυσηρὸν πόδα.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἴστημ', ἐπεὶ γε τοῦδ' ἐφάπτομαι τάφου.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τίς εἶ; τίν' ὄψιν σὴν, γύναι, προσδέρκομαι;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

σὺ δ' εἶ τίς; αὐτὸς γὰρ σὲ κάμ' ἔχει λόγος.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οὐπώποτ' εἶδον προσφερέστερον δέμας.

553 οὐδ' Hermann: οὐχ L

555 φόβον Valckenaer: -ου L



HELEN

MENELAUS

You, the one trying so desperately to get to the steps of the tomb and the pillars where burnt offering is made, stay! Why do you run? By showing me yourself you have astonished me, made me speechless!

HELEN

Violence, women! This man is cutting me off from the tomb! He wants to take me and give me to the king I don't want to marry!

MENELAUS

I am no thief, and no doer of base services either.

HELEN

Well you are most villainously dressed.

MENELAUS

Don't be afraid! Halt where you are!

HELEN

*(reaching the tomb)* See, I am halting, now that I have my hand on the tomb.

MENELAUS

Who are you, lady? In you what sight do I see?

HELEN

And you, who are you? You and I both have the same question.

MENELAUS

Never have I seen a greater resemblance!

---

<sup>556</sup> τάφου Elmsley: τόπου L

<sup>559</sup> προσφεροστέραν Aldina

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

560 ὦ θεοί· θεὸς γὰρ καὶ τὸ γινώσκειν φίλους.

<ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

Ἑλληνὶς εἶ τις ἢ ἴπιχωρία γυνή;>

ΕΛΕΝΗ

Ἑλληνίς· ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ σὸν θέλω μαθεῖν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

Ἑλένη σ' ὁμοίαν δὴ μάλιστ' εἶδον, γυναί.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐγὼ δὲ Μενελέῳ γε σ' οὐδ' ἔχω τί φῶ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

565 ἔγνωσ ἄρ' ὀρθῶς ἄνδρα δυστυχεστάτον.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὦ χρόνιος ἐλθὼν σῆς δάμαρτος ἐς χέρας.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ποίας δάμαρτος; μὴ θίγῃς ἐμῶν πέπλων.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἦν σοι δίδωσι Τυνδάρεως, ἐμὸς πατήρ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ φωσφόρ' Ἑκάτη, πέμπε φάσματ' εὐμενῆ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

570 οὐ νυκτίφαντον πρόπολον Ἐνοδίας μ' ὀρᾶς.

561 ex t rest. Markland: om. L

565 ἄρ' t: γὰρ L

HELEN

HELEN

O gods! To recognize your own is also something divine!

< MENELAUS

Are you a Greek or a native here? >

HELEN

A Greek. But I too would know about you.

MENELAUS

You are more like Helen than any woman I have seen.

HELEN

So are you like Menelaus. I do not know what to say.

MENELAUS

So you recognize me, man of great misery that I am.

HELEN

*(trying to embrace him)* How long you have taken to come to your wife's arms!

MENELAUS

Wife? What wife? Do not touch my garments!

HELEN

The wife my father Tyndareus gave you.

MENELAUS

O Hecate with your torches,<sup>15</sup> send me kindly visions!

HELEN

It is no phantom attendant of Enodia that you see here.

<sup>15</sup> Hecate, also called Enodia, is the goddess of crossroads and goes about attended by ghostly apparitions.

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οὐ μὴν γυναικῶν γ' εἰς δυοῖν ἔφυν πόσις.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ποιῶν δὲ λέκτρων δεσπότης ἄλλων ἔφυσ;

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἦν ἄντρα κεύθει κακ Φρυγῶν κομίζομαι.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη σοί τις ἀντ' ἐμοῦ γυνή.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

575 οὐ που φρονῶ μὲν εἶ, τὸ δ' ὄμμα μου νοσεῖ;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐ γάρ με λεύσσω σὴν δάμαρθ' ὄραν δοκεῖς;

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τὸ σῶμ' ὅμοιον, τὸ δὲ σαφές γ' ἀποστατεῖ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

σκέψαι· τί σοι δεῖ πίστεως σαφεστέρας;

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἔοικας· οὗτοι τοῦτό γ' ἐξαρνήσομαι.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

580 τίς οὖν διδάξει σ' ἄλλος ἢ τὰ σ' ὄμματα;

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἐκεῖ νοσοῦμεν, ὅτι δάμαρτ' ἄλλην ἔχω.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐκ ἦλθον ἐς γῆν Τρωάδ', ἀλλ' εἶδωλον ἦν.

HELEN

MENELAUS

But I am one man: I cannot have two wives.

HELEN

Of what other woman are you lord and master?

MENELAUS

Her in the cave, the one I brought from Troy.

HELEN

You have no other wife but me.

MENELAUS

Can it be that my mind is sound but my eyes are bad?

HELEN

In seeing me aren't you convinced you see your wife?

MENELAUS

You look like her, but certainty eludes me.

HELEN

Just look! Why do you need clearer proof than that?

MENELAUS

You look like her: that I shall not deny.

HELEN

Who but your eyes should be your teacher?

MENELAUS

My trouble is this: I have another wife.

HELEN

That was an image: I never went to Troy.

---

574 σοί Lightfoot: σή L      577 γ' ἀποστατεῖ Paley: μ'  
ἀποστερεῖ L      578 τί σοι δεῖ πίστεως σαφεστέρας Bad-  
ham: τί σου δεῖ; τίς ἔστι σου σοφώτερος; L

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

καὶ τίς βλέποντα σώματ' ἔξεργάζεται;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

αἰθήρ, ὅθεν σὺ θεοπόνητ' ἔχεις λέχη.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

585 τίνος πλάσαντος θεῶν; ἄελπτα γὰρ λέγεις.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

Ἦρας, διάλλαγμ', ὡς Πάρις με μὴ λάβοι.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

πῶς οὖν; ἄμ' ἐνθάδ' ἦσθ' <ἄρ'> ἐν Τροίᾳ θ' ἄμα;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

τοῦνομα γένοιτ' ἂν πολλαχοῦ, τὸ σῶμα δ' οὔ.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

μέθες με λύπης ἄλις ἔχων ἐλήλυθα.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

590 λείψεις γὰρ ἡμᾶς, τὰ δὲ κέν' ἐξάζεις λέχη;

MENEΛΑΟΣ

καὶ χαῖρέ γ', Ἐλένη προσφερῆς ὀθούνεκ' εἶ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἀπωλόμην· λαβοῦσά σ' οὐχ ἔξω πόσιν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τοῦκέῃ με μέγεθος τῶν πόνων πείθει, σὺ δ' οὔ.

587 dist. A. Y. Campbell     ἄμ' . . . ἦσθ' <ἄρ'> anonymus: ἂν  
 . . . ἦσθ' L

HELEN

MENELAUS

And what craftsman can fashion a living body?

HELEN

The upper air: it was from there that you got this god-fashioned bride.

MENELAUS

Which of the gods made her? What you say is astonishing.

HELEN

Hera, as a substitute so that Paris would not get me.

MENELAUS

What? Were you at the same time both here and at Troy?

HELEN

A name may be in many places, though a body in only one.

MENELAUS

Let me go! I had enough grief when I came here!

HELEN

What? Will you leave me and take your phantom wife away?

MENELAUS

I wish you joy for so resembling Helen!

HELEN

O the misery! I have found you, husband, but may not keep you!

MENELAUS

I trust my many labors at Troy, not you.

## EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐ γὰρ τίς ἡμῶν ἐγένετ' ἀθλιωτέρα;  
 595 οἱ φίλτατοι λείπουσί μ' οὐδ' ἀφίξομαι  
 Ἕλληνας οὐδὲ πατρίδα τὴν ἐμήν ποτε.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

Μενέλαε, μαστεύων σε κιγχάνω μόλις,  
 πᾶσαν πλανηθεῖς τήνδε βάρβαρον χθόνα,  
 πεμφθεῖς ἐταίρων τῶν λελειμμένων ὕπο.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

600 τί δ' ἔστιν; οὐ που βαρβάρων συλᾶσθ' ὕπο;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

θαυμ' ἔστ', ἔλασσον τοῦνομ' ἢ τὸ πρᾶγμ' ἔχον.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

λέγ'. ὡς φέρεις τι τῆδε τῆ σπουδῆ νέον.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

λέγω πόνους σε μυρίους τλήναι μάτην.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

παλαιὰ θρηνεῖς πῆματ'. ἀγγέλλεις δὲ τί;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

605 βέβηκεν ἄλοχος σὴ πρὸς αἰθέρος πτυχὰς  
 ἀρθεῖσ' ἄφαντος· οὐρανῶ δὲ κρύπτεται  
 λιποῦσα σεμνὸν ἄντρον οὐ σφ' ἐσώζομεν,  
 τοσόνδε λέξασ'. ὦ ταλαίπωροι Φρύγες

597n Θεράπων Kannicht: Ἄγγελος L

601 θαυμ' ἔστ' Scaliger: θαυμάστ' L

607 λιποῦσ' ἐρεμνὸν Schneidewin



HELEN

HELEN

Ah, ah! Who is more ill-starred than I am? My dear husband deserts me, and I shall never reach Greece or my native city!

*Enter by Eisodes A a SERVANT of Menelaus.*

SERVANT

Menelaus, what trouble it has been to find you! I have been up and down this entire barbarian land looking for you, sent by the comrades you left behind.

MENELAUS

What is it? You aren't being plundered by the barbarians, I trust.

SERVANT

A strange thing has happened, stranger in fact than in the telling of it.

MENELAUS

Tell me: in your haste you must be bringing me something unusual.

SERVANT

My tale: your countless labors have been in vain.

MENELAUS

An old story, this lament of yours. What is your news?

SERVANT

Your wife has disappeared, swept out of sight into the sky's recesses, vanished into the heavens! She has left the holy cave where we were guarding her, having said only this: "You poor Phrygians and all you Greeks, day after day you

## EURIPIDES

- πάντες τ' Ἀχαιοί, δι' ἔμ' ἐπὶ Σκαμανδρίοις  
 610 ἀκταῖσιν Ἴφρας μηχαναῖς ἐθνήσκετε,  
 δοκοῦντες Ἑλένην οὐκ ἔχοντ' ἔχειν Πάριον.  
 ἐγὼ δ', ἐπειδὴ χρόνον ἔμειν' ὅσον μ' ἐχρήην,  
 τὸ μόρσιμον σώσασα πατέρ' ἐς οὐρανὸν  
 ἄπειμι· φήμας δ' ἢ τάλαινα Τυνδαρίς  
 615 ἄλλως κακὰς ἤκουσεν οὐδὲν αἰτία.  
 ὦ χαίρε, Λήδας θύγατερ, ἐνθάδ' ἦσθ' ἄρα.  
 ἐγὼ δέ σ' ἄστρον ὡς βεβηκυῖαν μυχοῦς  
 ἠγγελλον εἰδῶς οὐδὲν ὡς ὑπόπτερον  
 δέμας φοροίης. οὐκ ἔω σε κερτομεῖν  
 620 ἡμᾶς τόδ' αὐθις· ὡς ἄδην ἐν Ἰλίῳ  
 πόνους παρείχες σῶ πόσει καὶ συμμάχοις.

## MENEΛΑΟΣ

τοῦτ' ἔστ' ἐκείνο· ξυμβεβασί μοι λόγοι  
 οἱ τῆσδ' ἀληθείς. ὦ ποθεινὸς ἡμέρα,  
 ἢ σ' εἰς ἐμὰς ἔδωκεν ὠλένας λαβεῖν.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 625 ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν Μενέλεως, ὁ μὲν χρόνος  
 παλαιός, ἢ δὲ τέρψις ἀρτίως πάρα.  
 ἔλαβον ἀσμένα πόσιν ἐμόν, φίλαι,  
 περί τ' ἐπέτασα χέρα φίλιον ἐν μακρᾷ  
 φλογὶ φαεσφόρῳ.

## MENEΛΑΟΣ

- 630 κἀγὼ σέ· πολλοὺς δ' ἐν μέσῳ λόγους ἔχων

HELEN

perished for my sake on the banks of the Scamander by Hera's contrivance, thinking that Paris had Helen, which he never did! I have completed my allotted task and tarried here as long as I was meant to, and now I am departing for the heaven that begot me. The ill-starred daughter of Tyndareus has been falsely vilified: she is not to blame."

(*catching sight of Helen*) O hello, daughter of Leda! So this is where you were hiding! I was just bringing the news that you had left for the starry heaven. I did not know that you had wings. I'll not have you mocking us like this again. The troubles you gave your husband and his comrades in Troy are enough.

MENE LAUS

Why, this is just what she said! Her words turn out to be true! O day of love-longing fulfilled, that has brought you to my arms!

*Menelaus and Helen embrace.*

HELEN

O Menelaus, man I love best, the time  
has been long delayed, but now my joy is come!  
My friends, with what gladness do I greet my husband  
and put my arms about him  
after all the days that have dawned!

MENE LAUS

And I, how glad I am to have you! There is much I would  
speak of,

609 πάντες] τάλανές Hermann

622 ξυμβεβασί μοι

Willink: -σιν οί L

624 ἢ σ' Canter: ὡς L

628 περί τ' ἐπέτασα Hermann: περιπετάσασα L

EURIPIDES

οὐκ οἶδ' ὁποίου πρῶτον ἄρξωμαι τὰ νῦν.  
 γέγηθα, κρατὶ δ' ὀρθίους ἐθείρας  
 ἀνεπτέρωσα καὶ δάκρυ σταλάσσω,  
 περὶ δὲ γυῖα χέρας ἔβαλον, ἡδονᾶ  
 635 <νέα> σ' ὡς λάβω.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὦ πόσις·  
 ὦ φιλτάτα πρόσοψις.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἐμέμφθην·  
 †ἔχω τὰ τοῦ Διὸς λέκτρα Λήδας τε†.

<ΕΛΕΝΗ>

ἄ γ' ὑπὸ λαμπάδων κόροι λεύκιπποι  
 640 ξυνομαίμονες ὄλβισαν ὄλβισαν οὐ μάταν  
 τὸ πρόσθεν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

<τὸ πρόσθε>ν; πρὸς ἄλλαν γ' ἐλαύνει  
 θεὸς συμφορὰν τᾶσδε κρείσσω.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

τὸ κακὸν δ' ἀγαθὸν σέ τε κάμῃ συνάγαγεν, πόσι,

632-5 Menelao contin. Willink: Ελ. L

634-7 χέρας II, conl. Elmsley: χεῖρ' L ἡδονᾶ / <νέα> σ' ὡς  
 λάβω / ὦ πόσις / ὦ φιλτάτα Willink: ἡδονῆ / [3-4?]c ως λάβω /  
 [c. 6?] ω φιλτατα II: ἡδονᾶν / ὡς λάβω ὦ πόσις / ὦ φιλτάτη L

637b Menelao trib. L et u. v. II

638 fort. ἔχω τὰν Διὸς Λήδας τ' ἔκγονον

639n <Ελ.> Zuntz

HELEN

but for the moment I know not where to begin!  
My heart exults, the hair of my head  
stands on end, tears stream from my eyes!  
I throw my arms about you  
with pleasure <fresh>  
to receive you!

HELEN

O husband!  
O sight I look on with greatest joy!

MENELAUS

I am content!

I have my wife, daughter of Zeus and Leda!

<HELEN>

Yes, her whom by bridal torch light the lads of the white  
horses,  
my brothers, called blessed, blessed: their words were not  
false  
in time past.

MENELAUS

<In time past>? But it is to another fate,  
a better one than this, that heaven is leading you.

HELEN

Yes, it was fortunate misfortune that brought you and me  
together, husband,

---

639 ἄ γ' Willink: ἀν L

640 οὐ μάταν Willink: ἐμε σε τε ματαν Π: om. L

641 <τὸ πρόσθε>ν. Με. <τὸ πρόσθε>ν; Willink: [8-9]ν/[8-9]ν  
Π, altero versu Menelao tributo u. v.: τὸ πρόσθεν ἐκ δόμων δ'  
ἐνόσφισαν θεοί σ' ὁμοῦ L γ' Π: δ' L

EURIPIDES

645 χρόνιον, ἀλλ' ὅμως· ὀναίμαν τύχας.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ὄναιο δῆτα. ταῦτα δὲ ξυνεύχομαι·  
δνοῖν γὰρ ὄντοι οὐχ ὁ μὲν τλήμων, ὁ δ' οὔ.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

φίλαι φίλαι·  
τὰ πάρος οὐκέτι στένομεν οὐδ' ἀλγῶ.

650 πόσιν <γ> ἀμὸν ἔχομεν ἔχομεν ὄν ἔμενον  
ἔμενον ἐκ Τροίας πολυετῆ μολεῖν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἔχεις, ἐγὼ τε σ'. ἠλίους δὲ μυρίους  
μόλις διελθὼν ἤσθόμην τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ.  
ἐμὰ δὲ χαρμονᾶς δάκρυα· πλέον ἔχει

655 χάριτος ἢ λύπας.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

τί φῶ; τίς ἂν τάδ' ἤλπισεν βροτῶν ποτε;  
ἀδόκητον ἔχω σε πρὸς στέρνοις.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

κἀγὼ σὲ τὴν δοκοῦσαν Ἰδαίαν πόλιν  
μολεῖν Ἰλίου τε μελέους πύργους.

660 πρὸς θεῶν, δόμων πῶς τῶν ἐμῶν ἀπεστάλης;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἔ ἔ· πικρὰς ἐς ἀρχὰς βαίνεις,

ἔ ἔ· πικρὰν δ' ἐρευνᾶς φάτιν.

645 dist. Kannicht

650 <γ> ἀμὸν Willink: ἐμὸν L

653 τοῦ Kovacs: τῆς L

HELEN

however long it took: may I enjoy its blessing!

MENELAUS

Yes, may you enjoy it! That is the prayer I too make,  
for of a pair one cannot be in misery and the other happy.

HELEN

My friends, my friends:  
no longer do I mourn or grieve for the past.  
I have my husband, for whose return from Troy I waited,  
waited so many years!

MENELAUS

Yes, you have me, and I have you! It was hard to live  
through  
so many days, but now I recognize heaven's hand.  
My tears are those of joy: they have more in them  
of gratefulness than grief.

HELEN

What am I to say? What mortal ever expected this?  
I hold you all unlooked for to my breast!

MENELAUS

And I as well hold you, who I thought had gone  
to the city near Ida and the ill-starred towers of Ilium.

*Menelaus and Helen separate.*

In the gods' name, how were you taken from my house?

HELEN

Ah me, painful is the cause you seek!  
Ah me, painful the story you would hear!

---

<sup>654</sup> χαρμονᾶς Reiske: -ὰ L

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

λέγ' ὡς ἀκουστὰ πάντα δῶρα δαιμόνων.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἀπέπτυσσα μὲν λόγον, οἶον  
οἶον ἐσοισόμεθα.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

665 ὅμως δὲ λέξον· ἠδύ τοι μόχθων κλύειν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐκ ἐπὶ βαρβάρου λέκτρα νεανία  
πετομένας κόπας ἔποχον οὐδ' ἔρω-  
τος ἀδίκων γάμων . . .

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τίς <δῆ> σε δαίμων ἢ πότμος συλᾶ πάτρας;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

670 ὁ Διὸς ὁ Διὸς ᾧ πόσι με παῖς <Μαίας τ'>  
ἐπέλασεν Νείλω.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

θανμαστά· τοῦ πέμψαντος; ᾧ δεινοὶ λόγοι.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

κατὰ δ' ἔκλαυσα καὶ βλέφαρον ὑγραίνω  
δάκρυσιν· ἅ Διός μ' ἄλοχος ὤλεσεν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

675 Ἦρα; τί νῶν χρήζουσα προσθῆναι κακόν;

<sup>664</sup> ἐσοισόμεθα Willink: ἐσοίσομαι L

<sup>666</sup> βαρβάρου λ- Kluge: λ- βαρβάρου L



HELEN

MENELAUS

Tell me: all that the gods give can be listened to.

HELEN

I feel revulsion at the tale,  
the tale I now utter.

MENELAUS

Yet tell me: to hear of trouble past is a pleasure.

HELEN

Not to the bed of a young barbarian prince,  
borne on his flying oar, borne on the wings of desire  
for an unholy marriage . . .

MENELAUS

What power divine, what fate stole you from your country?

HELEN

It was Zeus's son, Zeus's <and Maia's>  
that brought me to the Nile.

MENELAUS

What a strange and terrible tale! At whose behest?

HELEN

I weep, I wet my eyes  
with tears: it was Zeus's wife who destroyed me.

MENELAUS

Hera? Why did she wish to cause us bane?

---

667 ἔποχον οὐδ' post Reiske Willink: πετομένου δ' L

669 <δῆ> Zuntz

670 με παῖς <Μαίας τ'> Hermann: παῖς μ' L

673 κατὰ δ' ἔκλαυσα Willink: κατέδακρυσα L

## EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ᾧμοι ἐγὼ κείνων λουτρῶν καὶ κρηνᾶν,  
 ἵνα θεαὶ μορφὰν ἐφαίδρυναν, εὐτ'  
 ἔμολον ἐς κρίσιν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

†τὰ δ' ἐς κρίσιν σοι τῶνδ' ἔθηχ' Ἥρα κακῶν;†

ΕΛΕΝΗ

680 Πάριν ὡς ἀφέλοιτο . . .

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πῶς; αὐδα.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

. . . Κύπρις φῖ μ' ἐπένευσεν . . .

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τλάμον.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

. . . τλάμονα τλάμον' ὦδ' ἐπέλασ' Αἰγύπτῳ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

εἶτ' ἀντέδωκ' εἶδωλον, ὡς σέθεν κλύω.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

685 τὰ δὲ <σὰ> κατὰ μέλαθρα πάθεα πάθεα, μᾶ-  
 τερ, οἶ' γώ.

676 ἐγὼ Badham: ἐμῶν L κείνων Dale: δεινῶν L

677 εὐτ' Diggle: ἔνθεν L

678 ἔμολον ἐς κρίσιν Willink: ἔμολε κρίσις L

679 fort. πόθεν ἔθηχ' Ἥρα κακόν;

680-1 Πάριν . . . Κύπρις Reiske: Κύπριν . . . Πάριν L

HELEN

HELEN

Ah, alas for those gushing springs, that bath  
where the goddesses made themselves beautiful  
when they came to be judged!

MENELAUS

Why did Hera make from the judgment a woe for you?

HELEN

So that she could take me from Paris . . .

MENELAUS

Tell me what you mean.

HELEN

. . . to whom Aphrodite had given me . . .

MENELAUS

O poor woman!

HELEN

. . . she sent me in misery, misery thus to Egypt!

MENELAUS

Then she gave him a phantom to replace you, I heard you  
say.

HELEN

But at home what sorrows, sorrows were <yours>, mother:  
ah woe is me!

---

680 ὥς <μ'> Bothe

682 τλάμονα τλάμον<sup>7</sup> Hermann: -μων -μων L

684 <σὰ> Hermann

## EURIPIDES

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί φῆς;

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐκ ἔστι μάτηρ· ἀγχόνιον δὲ βρόχον  
δι' ἐμὰν κατεδήσατο δύσγαμον αἰσχύναν.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦμοι· θυγατρὸς Ἑρμιόνης δὲ τίς βίος;

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἄγαμος ἄτεκνος, ὦ πόσι, καταστένει  
690 γάμον ἄγαμον <ἐμόν>.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ πᾶν κατ' ἄκρας δῶμ' ἐμόν πέρσας Πάρις.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

τάδε καὶ σὲ διώλεσε μυριάδας τε  
χαλκεόπλων Δαναῶν.  
ἐμὲ δὲ πατρίδος ἀπο<πρὸ> κακόποτμον ἀραϊ-  
695 ον ἔβαλε θεὸς ἀπὸ πόλεος ἀπὸ τε σέθεν,  
ὅτι μέλαθρα λέχεά τ' ἔλιπον οὐ λιπούσ'  
ἐπ' αἰσχροῖς γάμοις.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῆς τύχης εὐδαίμονος  
τύχοιτε, πρὸς τὰ πρόσθεν ἀρκέσειεν ἄν.

688 θυγατρὸς Ἑρμιόνης δὲ τίς βίος Willink: θ- Ἑρ- ἔστι L

690 ἄγαμον &lt;ἐμόν&gt; Hermann: ἄγαμον αἰσχύναν L

694 ἀπο&lt;πρὸ&gt; Diggle ἀραϊον Diggle: ἀραϊαν L

696 ὅτε Barnes

HELEN

MENELAUS

What do you mean?

HELEN

My mother is dead: she tied a noose  
about her neck for shame at my foul union.

MENELAUS

Ah me! And what is our daughter Hermione's life?

HELEN

Without husband or child she grieves, dear husband,  
for <my> disastrous marriage.

MENELAUS

O Paris, how thoroughly you have pillaged my house!

HELEN

Yes, this has been your death and that of countless others  
among the bronze-armored Danaans.  
But I was sent by heaven far from my country,  
far from my city and from you. I was ill-starred and cursed  
by men  
for leaving (though I did not leave) your house and your  
bed  
for a marriage of shame.

CHORUS LEADER

If you get good fortune in the future, it will be sufficient  
solace for all that is past.

---

698 εἰ καὶ] ἀλλ' εἰ Rauchenstein

## EURIPIDES

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

700 Μενέλαε, κάμοι πρόσδοτον τῆς ἡδονῆς,  
ἦν μανθάνω μὲν καυτός, οὐ σαφῶς δ' ἔχω.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλ', ὦ γεραιέ, καὶ σὺ κοινώνει λόγων.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐχ ἦδε μόχθων τῶν ἐν Ἰλίῳ βραβεύς;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐχ ἦδε, πρὸς θεῶν δ' ἡμῖν ἠπατημένοι  
705 [νεφέλης ἄγαλμ' ἔχοντες ἐν χεροῖν λυγρόν].

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

[τί φῆς;]

νεφέλης ἄρ' ἄλλως εἶχομεν πόνους πέρι;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

Ἦρας τὰδ' ἔργα καὶ θεῶν τρισσῶν ἔρις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δ'; ὡς ἀληθῶς ἐστὶν ἦδε σὴ δάμαρ;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

710 αὕτη· λόγοις ἐμοῖσι πίστευσον τάδε.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὦ θύγατερ, ὁ θεὸς ὡς ἔφν τι ποικίλον  
καὶ δυστέκμαρτον. εὖ δέ πως πάντα στρέφει  
ἐκείσε κἀκείσ' ἀναφέρων· ὁ μὲν πονεῖ,

700 πρόσδοτον Cobet: -δοτε L

705 del. Kirchhoff

706 del. Matthiae

HELEN

SERVANT

Menelaus, share your pleasure with me also. I have heard it myself, but I don't fully understand.

MENELAUS

Well, old man, take part in our conversation.

SERVANT

Was this woman not the author of all our toils in Troy?

MENELAUS

No, not this one: the gods had deceived us. [We had in our embrace a baleful image made of cloud.]

SERVANT

[What do you mean?] Do you mean we toiled in vain for a cloud?

MENELAUS

This was the doing of Hera and of the three goddesses' strife.

SERVANT

But then is this really your wife?

MENELAUS

Yes: you may take my word for that.

SERVANT

My daughter, how changeable and inscrutable is the divine! How thoroughly does it turn everything now this way, now that! One man has trouble <but afterwards finds hap-

---

709 τί δ'; ὡς F. W. Schmidt: ἡ δ' οὖσ' L

710 λόγοις Paley: λ- δ' L

712 πάντα στρέφει Herwerden: ἀναστρέφει L

## EURIPIDES

- <ὄλβου δ' ἔπειτα κεύμενων θεῶν κυρεῖ,>  
 ὁ δ' οὐ πονήσας αὐθις ὄλλυται κακῶς,  
 715 βέβαιον οὐδὲν τῆς αἰεὶ τύχης ἔχων.  
 σὺ γὰρ πόσις τε σὸς πόνων μετέσχετε,  
 σὺ μὲν λόγοισιν, ὁ δὲ δορὸς προθυμία.  
 σπεύδων δ' ὅτ' ἔσπευδ' οὐδὲν εἶχε· νῦν δ' ἔχει  
 αὐτόματα πράξας τὰγάθ' εὐτυχέστατα.  
 720 οὐκ ἄρα γέροντα πατέρα καὶ Διοσκόρω  
 ἦσχυνας οὐδ' ἔδρασας οἶα κλήζεται.  
 νῦν ἀνανεοῦμαι τὸν σὸν ὑμέναιον πάλιν  
 καὶ λαμπάδων μεμνήμεθ' ἄς τετραόροις  
 ἵπποις τροχάζων παρέφερον· σὺ δ' ἐν δίφροις  
 725 ξὺν τῷδε νύμφῃ δῶμ' ἔλειπες ὄλβιον.  
 κακὸς γὰρ ὅστις μὴ σέβει τὰ δεσποτῶν  
 καὶ ξυγγέγηθε καὶ συνωδίνει κακοῖς.  
 [ἐγὼ μὲν εἶην, κεῖ πέφυχ' ὅμως λάτρις,  
 ἐν τοῖσι γενναίοισιν ἠριθμημένος  
 730 δούλοισι, τοῦνομ' οὐκ ἔχων ἐλεύθερον,  
 τὸν νοῦν δέ· κρεῖσσον γὰρ τόδ' ἢ δυοῖν κακοῖν  
 ἐν' ὄντα χρῆσθαι, τὰς φρένας τ' ἔχειν κακὰς  
 ἄλλων τ' ἀκούειν δούλον ὄντα τῶν πέλας.]

## MENEΛΑΟΣ

- ἄγ', ὦ γεραιέ, πολλὰ μὲν παρ' ἀσπίδα  
 735 μοχθήματ' ἐξέπλησας ἐκπονῶν ἐμοί,  
 καὶ νῦν μετασχὼν τῆς ἐμῆς εὐπραξίας  
 ἄγγελον ἐλθὼν τοῖς λελειμμένοις φίλοις  
 τάδ' ὡς ἔχουθ' ἠῦρηκας οὐ τ' ἐσμέν τύχης,



## HELEN

piness and heaven's blessing, while another, who has had no trouble, dies a painful death, since nothing in the fate he enjoys can be relied on. You and your husband had your share of troubles, you in your reputation, he in the toils of war. For all his efforts he got nothing at the time. But now he gets blessing without exertion, by a great stroke of luck.

So you did not bring shame on your old father or the Dioscuri nor did you do the things that rumor speaks of. Now I sing your marriage song once more. Now I think of the torches I carried beside you in your chariot. It was a house of blessedness you left in that chariot with him beside you. Base is the man who does not revere his master, rejoice at his joys, and grieve at his sorrows. [Even if I am a slave, may I be one of the good slaves, one with a free man's heart even if he lacks a free man's name. Better that than to join two misfortunes in a single person: having a base heart and hearing yourself called another man's slave.]

## MENELAUS

Old man, you have done me much service in battle. Now share in my good fortune: go and tell my friends who are left how you have found things and where our fortunes

---

713 post h. v. lac. indic. Holzner (713-9 del. Diggle)

717 ψόγοισιν F. W. Schmidt

728-33 suspectos habuit Dale, del. Willink

738 οὔ Tyrwhitt: οἶ L

## EURIPIDES

μένειν τ' ἐπ' ἀκταῖς τούς τ' ἐμούς καταδοκεῖν  
 740 ἀγῶνας οἱ μένουσί μ', ὡς ἐλπίζομεν,  
 καὶ τήνδ' [πῶς δυναίμεθ' ἐκκλείψαι χθονὸς  
 φρουρεῖν] ὅπως ἂν εἰς ἐν ἐλθόντες τύχης  
 ἐκ βαρβάρων σωθῶμεν, ἣν δυνώμεθα.

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἔσται τάδ', ὦναξ. ἀλλά τοι τὰ μάντεων  
 745 ἐσείδον ὡς φαῦλ' ἐστὶ καὶ ψευδῶν πλέα.  
 [οὐδ' ἦν ἄρ' ὑγιᾶς οὐδὲν ἐμπύρου φλογὸς  
 οὐδὲ πτερωτῶν φθέγματ'· εὔηθες δέ τοι  
 τὸ καὶ δοκεῖν ὄρνιθας ὠφελεῖν βροτούς.]  
 Κάλχας γὰρ οὐκ εἶπ' οὐδ' ἐσήμηνε στρατῶ  
 750 νεφέλης ὑπερθνήσκοντας εἰσορῶν φίλους  
 οὐδ' Ἑλενος, ἀλλὰ πόλις ἀνηρπάσθη μάτην.  
 [εἴποις ἂν, οὐνεχ' ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἠβούλετο.  
 τί δῆτα μαντευόμεθα; τοῖς θεοῖσι χρῆ  
 θύοντας αἰτεῖν ἀγαθὰ, μαντείας δ' ἔαν·  
 755 βίου γὰρ ἄλλως δέλεαρ ἠνρέθη τόδε,  
 κούδεις ἐπλούτησ' ἐμπύροισιν ἀργὸς ὦν·  
 γνώμη δ' ἀρίστη μάντις ἢ τ' εὐβουλία.]

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐς ταῦτ' ἄμοι δόξα μάντεων πέρι  
 χωρεῖ γέροντι· τοὺς θεοὺς ἔχων τις ἂν  
 760 φίλους ἀρίστην μαντικὴν ἔχοι δόμοις.

<sup>740</sup> μένουσί μ', ὡς Musgrave: μένουσιν οὖς L

<sup>741-2</sup> πῶς . . . φρουρεῖν del. Jackson

<sup>746-8</sup> del. Wecklein (744-60 iam Hartung)

## HELEN

stand. Tell them to stay on the beach and watch for the outcome of the trials that I fear will be mine and hers, [and if I can somehow manage to steal her from this land, they should be ready and waiting] so that joining our fortunes together we may, if possible, escape this barbarian land.

### SERVANT

I will do it, my lord. But now I know about prophets: how worthless they are, what liars! [There's no truth in the flame of sacrifice or in the cries of birds. How foolish even to imagine that birds are mortals' benefactors!] Calchas said not a word to the army, nor did Helenus,<sup>16</sup> though they saw that their comrades were dying for a mere cloud. Instead, a city was sacked for nothing. [You might reply, "That was because the god did not wish the truth known." Well, then, why do we consult prophets? No, one should sacrifice to the gods and ask for blessings but leave prophecy alone. That invention is one of life's foolish traps. No idle man ever got rich by looking at burnt offerings. The best way to tell the future is to be intelligent and plan ahead.]

*Exit SERVANT by Eisodos A.*

### CHORUS LEADER

My opinion of prophecy is the same as this old man's. If a man has the gods' friendship, that is the best prophecy his house can have.

<sup>16</sup> Trojan seer, son of Priam.

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<sup>751</sup> οὐδ' Ἐλενος Porson: οὐδέν γε L

<sup>752-7</sup> del. Willink

<sup>757</sup> ἄριστος Dobree

## EURIPIDES

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

εἶέν· τὰ μὲν δὴ δεῦρ' αἰὲ καλῶς ἔχει.  
ὅπως δ' ἐσώθης, ᾧ τάλας, Τροίας ἄπο  
κέρδος μὲν οὐδὲν εἰδέναι, πόθος δέ τις  
τὰ τῶν φίλων φίλοισιν αἰσθέσθαι κακά.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- 765 ἦ πόλλ' ἀνήρου μ' ἐνὶ λόγῳ μιᾷ θ' ὀδῶ.  
τί σοι λέγοιμ' ἂν τὰς ἐν Αἰγαίῳ φθορὰς  
τὰ Ναυπλίου τ' Εὐβοικὰ πυρπολήματα  
Κρήτης τε Λιβύης θ' ἄς ἐπεστράφην πόλεις,  
σκοπιάς τε Περσέως; εἰ γὰρ ἐμπλήσαιμί σε  
770 μύθοις, λέγων τ' ἂν σοι κακ' ἀλγοίην ἔτι  
πάσχω· τ' ἔκαμνον· δις δὲ λυπηθεῖμεν ἂν.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

καὶ πλείον' εἶπας ἢ σ' ἀνηρόμην ἐγώ.  
ἐν δ' εἰπέ τᾶλλα παραλιπών, πόσον χρόνον  
πόντου ἔπι νότοις ἄλιον ἐφθείρου πλάνον;

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- 775 ἐν ναυσὶν ὧν πρὸς τοῖσιν ἐν Τροίᾳ δέκα  
ἔτεσι διήλθον ἑπτὰ περιδρομὰς ἐτῶν.

763 δέ τοι Kannicht

768 Κρήτης Kirchhoff: -ην L    Λιβύης Reiske: -ην L

769 εἰ Pearson: οὐ L

770 μύθοις Diggle: -ων L

772 καὶ πλείον' Nauck: κάλλιον L

773 τᾶλλα Herwerden: πάντα L

775 ἐν ναυσὶν ὧν Palmer: ἐνιαύσιον L

HELEN

HELEN

So: up to this point all is well. But, poor man, though it does me no good to know how you got safely away from Troy, still we somehow long to hear of the troubles that befall our dearest kin.

MENELAUS

By your single question you ask much. Why should I tell you of the many shipwrecks on the Aegean, the false beacons set by Nauplius on Euboea,<sup>17</sup> all the cities in Crete and Libya I visited, and the lookout place of Perseus? If I should give you your fill of my tale, I would be suffering still more in the telling of it, just as I suffered in the actual experience, and would be twice grieved.

HELEN

Your answer gives more than I asked for. But tell me one thing and leave out the rest: how long did your miserable wandering over the sea last?

MENELAUS

It was seven circling years I passed on shipboard, over and above the ten at Troy.

<sup>17</sup> Nauplius set false beacons to wreck the Greek fleet in revenge for the unjust death of his son Palamedes, who was falsely accused of treason. His trial was the subject of Euripides' *Palamedes*, put on in 415 together with *Alexandros* and *Trojan Women*.

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

φεῦ φεῦ· μακρόν γ' ἔλεξας, ᾧ τάλας, χρόνον.  
σωθεῖς δ' ἐκεῖθεν ἐνθάδ' ἦλθες ἐς σφαγὰς.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πῶς φῆς; τί λέξεις; ὧς μ' ἀπόλεσας, γύναι.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

780 [φεῦγ' ὡς τάχιστα τῆσδ' ἀπαλλαχθεῖς χθονός.]  
θανῆ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς οὐ τὰδ' ἐστὶ δώματα.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί χρῆμα δράσας ἄξιον τῆς συμφορᾶς;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἦκεις ἄελπτος ἐμποδῶν ἐμοῖς γάμοις.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἦ γὰρ γαμεῖν τις τὰμ' ἐβουλήθη λέχη;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

785 ὕβριον γ' ὕβρίζων ἐς τὰ σ', ἦν ἔτλην ἐγώ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ιδία σθένων τις ἢ τυραννέων χθονός;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὅς γῆς ἀνάσσει τῆσδε Πρωτέως γόνος.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τόδ' ἐστ' ἐκεῖν' αἰνιγμ' ὃ προσπόλου κλύω.

780 del. Valckenaer

783 ἐμποδῶν Badham: ἐμποδῶν τ' L 785 γ' ὕβρίζων  
Kirchhoff: τ' ὕβρίζειν L ἐς τὰ σ' Kovacs: εἰς ἔμ' L

HELEN

HELEN

Oh my! Poor man, what a long time! But you got safely away from those troubles only to be slaughtered here.

MENELAUS

What's this? What do you mean? Your words are the death of me, dear wife!

HELEN

[Flee with all speed from this land!] You will be killed by the master of this house.

MENELAUS

What have I done to deserve such a fate?

HELEN

Your unexpected arrival is a hindrance to my marriage.

MENELAUS

What? Does someone want to marry my wife?

HELEN

Yes, committing an outrage against your rights, an outrage directed against me.

MENELAUS

Is he a king or someone with private might?

HELEN

It is Proteus' son, this land's ruler.

MENELAUS

So that is the meaning of the gatekeeper's riddling words.

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ποίοις ἐπιστὰς βαρβάρους πυλώμασιν;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

790 τοῖσδ', ἔνθεν ὥσπερ πτωχὸς ἐξηλαυνόμεν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὗ που προσήγεις βίοτον; ᾧ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τοῦργον μὲν ἦν τοῦτ', ὄνομα δ' οὐκ εἶχεν τόδε.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πάντ' οἶσθ' ἄρ', ὡς ἔοικας, ἀμφ' ἐμῶν γάμων.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οἶδ'· εἰ δὲ λέκτρα διέφυγες, τόδ' οὐκ ἔχω.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

795 ἄθικτον εὐνήν ἴσθι σοι σεσωμένην.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τίς τοῦδε πειθῶ; φίλα γάρ, εἰ σαφῆ λέγεις.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὀρᾶς τάφου τοῦδ' ἀθλίους ἔδρας ἐμάς;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὀρῶ ταλαίνας στιβάδας· ᾧν τί σοὶ μέτα;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐνταῦθα λέκτρων ἱκετεύομεν φυγὰς.

792 εἶχεν Wecklein: εἶχον L

794 τόδ' Reeve: τάδ' L

798 ταλαίνας P<sup>2</sup>: τάλαινα L



HELEN

HELEN

At what barbarian gates were you standing?

MENELAUS

These, and was driven from them like a beggar.

HELEN

You weren't asking for food, were you? How dreadful for me!

MENELAUS

That was what I was doing, but it was not called by that name.

HELEN

Well, you know the whole story, I think, concerning my marriage.

MENELAUS

I know it, but I am not clear whether you have escaped his embraces.

HELEN

You can rest assured: my bed has been kept inviolate for you.

MENELAUS

How can I believe this? It's welcome news if true.

HELEN

Do you see this tomb, the joyless place where I sit?

MENELAUS

I see a miserable couch of leaves. What does it have to do with you?

HELEN

That is where I sit as suppliant to avoid marriage.

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

800 βωμοῦ σπανίζουσ' ἢ νόμοισι βαρβάροις;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐρρῦεθ' ἡμᾶς τοῦτ' ἴσον ναοῖς θεῶν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οὐδ' ἄρα πρὸς οἶκους ναυστολεῖν <σ> ἔξεστί μοι;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ξίφος μένει σε μᾶλλον ἢ τοῦμόν λέχος.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οὕτως ἂν εἶην ἀθλιώτατος βροτῶν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

805 μή νυν καταιδού, φεῦγε δ' ἐκ τῆσδε χθονός.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

λιπὼν σέ; Τροίαν ἐξέπερσα σὴν χάριν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

κρείσσον γὰρ ἢ σε τᾶμ' ἀποκτεῖναι λέχη.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἄνανδρά γ' εἶπας Ἴλίου τ' οὐκ ἄξια.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐκ ἂν κτάνοις τύραννον, ὃ σπεύδεις ἴσως.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

810 οὕτω σιδήρῳ τρωτὸν οὐκ ἔχει δέμας;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

εἶσθι· τὸ τολμᾶν δ' ἀδύνατ' ἀνδρὸς οὐ σοφοῦ.

HELEN

MENELAUS

Don't you have an altar? Or is this the local custom?

HELEN

This tomb protected me just like a temple.

MENELAUS

So I am not allowed to take <you> home by ship.

HELEN

A sword awaits you, not my bed.

MENELAUS

That would make me the most miserable of mortals.

HELEN

Don't let shame prevent you: flee this land!

MENELAUS

And leave you behind? I sacked Troy for your sake.

HELEN

Yes, leave me: far worse to be killed because of your wife.

MENELAUS

You make me out to be a coward, unworthy of Troy.

HELEN

Perhaps you want to kill the king. That is impossible.

MENELAUS

Is his body invulnerable to the sword, then?

HELEN

You'll find out. But a wise man does not undertake the impossible.

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

σιγῇ παράσχω δῆτ' ἐμὰς δῆσαι χέρας;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐς ἄπορον ἤκεις· δεῖ δὲ μηχανῆς τινος.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

δρῶντας γὰρ ἢ μὴ δρῶντας ἥδιον θανεῖν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

815 μί' ἔστιν ἐλπίς ἢ μόνῃ σωθεῖμεν ἄν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ὠνητὸς ἢ τολμητὸς ἢ λόγων ὕπο;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

εἰ μὴ τύραννός <σ' > ἐκπύθειτ' ἀφιγμένον.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οὐ γνώσεταιί μ' ὅς εἰμ', ἐγῶδ'. ἐρεῖ δὲ τίς;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἔστ' ἔνδον αὐτῷ ξύμμαχος θεοῖς ἴση.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

820 φήμη τις οἴκων ἐν μυχοῖς ἰδρυμένη;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐκ, ἀλλ' ἀδελφή· Θεονόην καλοῦσί νιν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

χρηστήριον μὲν τοῦνομ'. ὅ τι δὲ δρᾶ φράσον.

817 <σ' > Schaefer

818 sic Diggle: ἐρεῖ δὲ τίς μ'; οὐ γνώσεταιί γ' ὅς εἰμ' ἐγώ L

HELEN

MENELAUS

Shall I quietly hold out my hands for the shackles?

HELEN

Your situation is desperate: you need a clever ruse.

MENELAUS

Yes, better to die doing than not doing.

HELEN

There is one hope, our only salvation.

MENELAUS

Does it lie in bribery, or daring deeds, or argument?

HELEN

If only the king can be unaware of your arrival.

MENELAUS

I am sure he will not know who I am. And who will tell him?

HELEN

He has indoors an ally powerful as the gods.

MENELAUS

Some voice dwelling in the house's inmost recesses?

HELEN

No, his sister: she is called Theonoe.

MENELAUS

The name has a prophetic ring to it.<sup>18</sup> Tell me what she does.

<sup>18</sup> See note on line 15.

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πάντ' οἶδ' ἐρεῖ τε συγγόνῳ παρόντα σε.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

θνήσκουμεν ἄν· λαθεῖν γὰρ οὐχ οἶόν τέ μοι.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

825 ἴσως ἂν ἀναπέσαιμεν ἱκετεύοντέ νιν . . .

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί χρῆμα δρᾶσαι; τίν' ὑπάγεις μ' ἐς ἐλπίδα;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

. . . παρόντα γαῖα μὴ φράσαι σε συγγόνῳ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πέισαντε δ' ἐκ γῆς διορίσαιμεν ἂν πόδα;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

κοινη γ' ἐκείνη ῥαδίως, λάθρα δ' ἂν οὔ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

830 σὸν ἔργον, ὡς γυναικὶ πρόσφορον γυνή.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὡς οὐκ ἄχρωστα γόνατ' ἐμῶν ἔξει χερῶν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

φέρ', ἦν δὲ δὴ νῶν μὴ ἀποδέξεται λόγους;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

θανῆ· γαμοῦμαι δ' ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ βία.

825 ἴσως Kirchhoff: εἴ πως L

829 γ' Reiske: τ' L ἂν οὔ L. Dindorf: ὀμοῦ L

HELEN

HELEN

She knows everything and will tell her brother you are here.

MENELAUS

Then I'm dead. I cannot escape detection.

HELEN

Perhaps we could persuade her by entreaty . . .

MENELAUS

To do what? What hope do you raise in me?

HELEN

. . . not to tell her brother you are in the country.

MENELAUS

And once we have persuaded her, we could escape?

HELEN

With her help, easily. Without her knowledge, never.

MENELAUS

This is your task: nothing like a woman to deal with a woman.

HELEN

I will surely grasp her knees in supplication.

MENELAUS

Tell me, what if she is not won over?

HELEN

Then you will be killed. And I, to my sorrow, will be forcibly married.

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

προδοτίς ἂν εἴης· τὴν βίαν σκήψασ' ἔχεις.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

835 ἀλλ' ἄγνόν ὄρκον σὸν κάρη κατώμοσα . . .

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τί φῆς; θανείσθαι κούποτ' ἀλλάξειν λέχη;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ταυτῷ ξίφει γε· κείσομαι δὲ σοῦ πέλας.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἐπὶ τοῖσδε τοίνυν δεξιᾶς ἐμῆς θίγε.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ψαύω, θανόντος σοῦ τόδ' ἐκλείψειν φάος.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

840 κὰγὼ στερηθεῖς σοῦ τελευτήσειν βίον.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πῶς οὖν θανούμεθ' ὥστε καὶ δόξαν λαβεῖν;

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τύμβου 'πὶ νώτοις σὲ κτανῶν ἐμὲ κτενῶ.

πρῶτον δ' ἀγῶνα μέγαν ἀγωνιούμεθα

λέκτρων ὑπὲρ σῶν· ὁ δὲ θέλων ἴτω πέλας.

845 τὸ Τρωικὸν γὰρ οὐ καταισχνῶ κλέος

οὐδ' Ἑλλάδ' ἐλθὼν λήψομαι πολὺν ψόγον,

ὅστις Θέτιν μὲν ἐστέρησ' Ἀχιλλέως,

Τελαμωνίου δ' Αἴαντος εἰσείδον σφαγὰς

τὸν Νηλέως τ' ἄπαιδα· διὰ δὲ τὴν ἐμὴν

850 οὐκ ἀξιώσω κατθανεῖν δάμαρτ' ἐγώ;



HELEN

MENE LAUS

That would be betrayal. Mentioning force is only an excuse.

HELEN

I swear by your head a sacred oath . . .

MENE LAUS

What's this? That you will die? Never take a new husband?

HELEN

Yes, die, and by the same sword. I shall lie next to you.

MENE LAUS

Grasp my hand and swear to this.

HELEN

I grasp it: if you are killed I shall die as well.

MENE LAUS

And if I am deprived of you, I will end my life.

HELEN

How then shall we die so as to win glory?

MENE LAUS

On top of the tomb I will kill you and then myself. But first I shall fight a great fight for your love. I'll take on all comers! I shall never disgrace my Trojan reputation or bring shame on myself by returning to Greece! I am the man who deprived Thetis of Achilles, who saw the suicide of Telamonian Ajax, and saw Neleus' son Nestor bereft of his son. Shall I not think it right to die for my own wife? Most

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840 *τελευτήσειν* Musgrave: -σω L

842 *νώτοις* Herwerden cl. 984: -φ L

849 *Νηλέως* Musgrave: Θησέως L

## EURIPIDES

μάλιστά γ'· εἰ γάρ εἰσιν οἱ θεοὶ σοφοί,  
 εὐψυχον ἄνδρα πολεμίων θανόνθ' ὕπο  
 κούφη καταμπίσχουσιν ἐν τύμβῳ χθονί,  
 κακοὺς δ' ἐφ' ἔρμα στερεὸν ἐκβάλλουσι γῆς.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

855 ὦ θεοί, γενέσθω δὴ ποτ' εὐτυχὲς γένος  
 τὸ Ταντάλειον καὶ μεταστήτω κακῶν.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

οἶ' γὰρ τάλαινα· τῆς τύχης γὰρ ὦδ' ἔχω·  
 Μενέλαε, διαπεπράγμεθ'· ἐκβαίνει δόμων  
 ἢ θεσπιωδὸς Θεονόη· κτυπεὶ δόμος  
 860 κλήθρων λυθέντων. φεῦγ'· ἀτὰρ τί φευκτέον;  
 ἀποῦσα γάρ σε καὶ παροῦσ' ἀφιγμένον  
 δεῦρ' οἶδεν· ὦ δύστηνος, ὡς ἀπωλόμην.  
 Τροίας δὲ σωθεῖς κάπο βαρβάρου χθονὸς  
 ἐς βάρβαρ' ἐλθὼν φάσγαν' αὐθις ἐμπεσεῖ.

## ΘΕΟΝΟΗ

865 ἡγοῦ σύ μοι φέρουσα λαμπτήρων σέλας  
 θείου τε σεμνὸν θεσμὸν αἰθέρος μυχούς,  
 ὡς πνεῦμα καθαρὸν οὐρανοῦ δεξώμεθα·  
 σὺ δ' αὖ κέλευθον εἴ τις ἔβλαψεν ποδὶ  
 στείβων ἀνοσίῳ, δὸς καθαρσίῳ φλογί,  
 870 κροῦσόν τε πεύκη, ἵνα διεξέλθω, πάρος.  
 πόνον δὲ νόμιμον θεοῖσιν ἀποδοῦσαι πάλιν

854 ὑφ' . . . ἐμβάλλουσι Scaliger

857 del. Willink

866 τε Reiske: δὲ L

σεμνὸν Hermann: -οῦ L μυχούς

Wecklein: -ῶν L

HELEN

certainly. If the gods are wise, they cover the brave man, killed by the enemy, with earth that lies light upon him. But they cast out cowards on ridges of hard earth.

CHORUS LEADER

Gods, let the race of Tantalus be someday blessed and escape from misery!

*A sound is heard of the palace door being unbarred.*

HELEN

Oh, woe is me: that is what my fate is like! Menelaus, we are ruined! The prophet Theonoe is coming out of the house: the bolt is being drawn back and the house resounds. Run! But why should you run? Whether she is here or elsewhere she knows of your arrival. Oh, I am lost! And you, having escaped the barbarian land of Troy, shall now run once more into barbarian swords!

*Enter from the skene THEONOE accompanied by two servants.*

THEONOE

Go on before me with torch gleam and, as holy ordinance decrees, cleanse the sky's recesses with sulfur so that I may breathe heaven's pure air! And you, in case anyone has harmed the path by treading with unholy foot, apply to it the purifying flame and strike the torch against it so that I may pass through. When you have given the gods the ser-

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867 δεξώμεθα Schaefer: -αίμεθα L

870 τε Reiske: δὲ L πάρος Reiske: πυρός L

871 πόνον δὲ νόμιμον Kirchoff: νόμον δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν L

## EURIPIDES

ἑφέστιον φλόγ' ἐς δόμους κομίζετε.

Ἐλένη, τί τὰμὰ—πῶς ἔχει;—θεσπίσματα;  
ἦκει πόσις σοι Μενέλεως ὄδ' ἐμφανής,

875 νεῶν στερηθεὶς τοῦ τε σοῦ μιμήματος.

ὦ τλήμων, οἴους διαφυγῶν ἦλθες πόνους,  
οὐδ' οἴσθα νόστον οἴκαδ' εἴτ' αὐτοῦ μενεῖς·  
ἔρις γὰρ ἐν θεοῖς σύλλογός τε σοῦ πέρι  
ἔσται πάρεδρος Ζηνὶ τῶδ' ἐν ἡματι.

880 Ἦρα μὲν, ἦ σοι δυσμενῆς πάροιθεν ἦν,  
νῦν ἔστιν εὖνους κὰς πάτραν σῶσαι θέλει  
ξὺν τῇδ', ἵν' Ἑλλάς τοὺς Ἀλεξάνδρου γάμους  
δώρημα Κύπριδος ψευδονύμφευτον μάθῃ·  
Κύπρις δὲ νόστον σὸν διαφθεῖραι θέλει,

885 ὡς μὴ ἕλεγχθῆ μηδὲ πριαμένη φανῆ  
τὸ κάλλος Ἐλένης οὐκ ἀνυστοῖσιν γάμοις.  
τέλος δ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν εἴθ', ἃ βούλεται Κύπρις,  
λέξασ' ἀδελφῶ σ' ἐνθάδ' ὄντα διολέσω  
εἴτ' αὖ μεθ' Ἦρας στᾶσα σὸν σώσω βίον,

890 κρύψασ' ὁμαίμον', ὅς με προστάσσει τάδε  
εἰπεῖν, ὅταν γῆν τήνδε νοστήσας τύχῃς.  
[τίς εἶσ' ἀδελφῶ τόνδε σημανῶν ἐμῶ  
παρόνθ', ὅπως ἂν τοῦμὸν ἀσφαλῶς ἔχη;]

## ELENH

ὦ παρθέν', ἰκέτις ἀμφὶ σὸν πίτνω γόνυ  
895 καὶ προσκαθίζω θᾶκον οὐκ εὐδαίμονα

<sup>877</sup> νόστον (vel potius νόστος) οἴκαδ' εἴ σ' αὐτοῦ μένει Her-  
werden <sup>879</sup> παρέδροις Dawe

## HELEN

vice custom ordains, take the hearth fire back into the house.

*The servants perform the purification and exit into the skene.*

Helen, what about my prophecies? How are they faring? Your husband has come—here he is, plain to see—deprived of his ships and of your counterfeit image.

Poor man, what troubles you have escaped! Yet you do not know whether you will return home or remain here! There is strife this very day among the gods about you as they gather in Zeus's court. Hera, who previously was your enemy, is now your friend and wants to bring you and Helen safely home so that Greece may learn that Alexandros' marriage, the gift of Cypris, was no marriage at all. But Cypris wants to prevent your coming home. She does not want to be disgraced when it is known that she has bought the beauty prize with false coin, a marriage to Helen that could not be fulfilled. The outcome lies with me: shall I, as Cypris prefers, tell my brother of your arrival and end your life? Or shall I stand with Hera and save you by concealing it from my brother, who ordered me to tell him when you arrived? [Who will go and tell my brother that this man is here so that my welfare may be safeguarded?]

## HELEN

*(kneeling before Theonoe)* Maiden, I fall as a suppliant at your knees for myself and for this man, sitting before you

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883 ψευδονύμφετον Hermann: -φεύτου L      886 οὐκ  
 ἀνυστοῖσιν Kovacs: οὐνεκ' ὠνητοῖς L      892-3 del. Hartung

- ὑπέρ τ' ἔμαντῆς τοῦδέ θ', ὄν μόλις ποτὲ  
 λαβοῦσ' ἐπ' ἀκμῆς εἰμι κατθανόντ' ἰδεῖν·  
 μή μοι κατείπῃς σῶ κασιγνήτῳ πόσι  
 τόνδ' εἰς ἐμὰς ἤκοντα φίλτατον χέρας,  
 900 σῶσον δέ, λίσσομαί σε· συγγόνῳ δὲ σῶ  
 τὴν εὐσέβειαν μὴ προδοῶς τὴν σὴν ποτε,  
 χάριτας πονηρὰς κἀδίκους ὠνουμένην.  
 μισεῖ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὴν βίαν, τὰ κτητὰ δὲ  
 κτᾶσθαι κελεύει πάντας οὐκ ἐς ἀρπαγὰς.  
 905 [ἐατέος δ' ὁ πλοῦτος †ἀδίκος τις ὢν†.  
 κοινὸς γὰρ ἔστιν οὐρανὸς πᾶσιν βροτοῖς  
 καὶ γαῖ', ἐν ἧ' χρῆ δώματ' ἀναπληρουμένους  
 τὰλλότρια μὴ σχεῖν μηδ' ἀφαιρεῖσθαι βία.]  
 ἡμᾶς δὲ καιρίως μὲν, ἀθλίως δ' ἐμοί,  
 910 Ἑρμῆς ἔδωκε πατρὶ σῶ σῶζειν πόσει  
 τῷδ' ὃς πάρεστι κἀπολάζυσθαι θέλει.  
 [πῶς οὖν θανῶν ἂν ἀπολάβοι; κείνος δὲ πῶς  
 τὰ ζῶντα τοῖς θανούσιν ἀποδοίῃ ποτ' ἂν;  
 ἤδη τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὰ τοῦ πατρὸς σκόπει.]  
 915 πότερόν <σ' > ὁ δαίμων χῶ θανῶν τὰ τῶν πέλας  
 βούλουτ' ἂν ἢ οὐ βούλουτ' ἂν ἀποδοῦναι πάλιν;  
 δοκῶ μὲν. οὐκ οὐκ ἔστιν σὲ συγγόνῳ πλέον  
 νέμειν ματαίῳ μᾶλλον ἢ χρηστῷ πατρί.  
 εἰ δ' οὔσα μάντις καὶ τὰ θεῖ' ἡγουμένη  
 920 τὸ μὲν δίκαιον τοῦ πατρὸς διαφθερεῖς,  
 τῷ δ' οὐ δικαίῳ συγγόνῳ δώσεις χάριν,  
 αἰσχροὺς τὰ μὲν σε θεία πάντ' ἐξειδέναί  
 τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα, τὰ δὲ δίκαια μή.

## HELEN

in an attitude of misery. I have barely got him back, and now I am in danger of seeing him perish. Please do not tell your brother that my dear husband has come to my arms! Save him, I beg you! Do not sacrifice your own godliness for your brother's sake, buying with it tokens of gratitude that are wicked and unjust. God hates violence, and he bids all men acquire their goods without stealing. [Unjust wealth must be left alone. The sky is the common possession of all mortals, and so is the earth, on which men should not hold other men's property or take it by force as they fill their houses.] It was timely, though it meant misery for me, that Hermes gave me to your father to keep safe for my husband. Now he is here and wants to take me back. [How can he receive me if he is killed? And how can your brother give back the living to the dead? It is time to consider what belongs to the god and to your father.] Would the god and your dead father wish <you> to give back their neighbors' goods or not? I think they would. So you should not regard your foolish brother more highly than your good father. If you are a prophet and believe in the gods but yet corrupt your father's justice by doing your unjust brother a favor, it is a disgrace that you know from the gods the present and the future but not what is just.

898 *μοι* Lenting: *μου* L                      899 *φίλτατον* Cobet: *-τάτας* L

905-8 (*una cum* 903-4) del. Hartung

908 *σχέιν* Headlam: *χειν* L

909 *καυρίως* Badham: *μακαρίως* L

912-4 del. Schenkl

913 *ἀπ- ποτ' ἄν* Porson: *ἄν ἀπ- ποτέ* L

915 <*σ'*> Kovacs

921 *χάρω* Reiske: *δίκτην* L

## EURIPIDES

- τήν δ' ἀθλίαν ἔμ', οἷσιν ἔγκειμαι κακοῖς,  
 925 ῥύσαι, πάρεργον δοῦσα τοῦτο τῆς δίκης·  
 Ἑλένην γὰρ οὐδεὶς ὅστις οὐ στυγεῖ βροτῶν  
 ἢ κλήζομαι καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ὡς προδοῦσ' ἐμὸν  
 πόσιν Φρυγῶν ῥέκησα πολυχρύσους δόμους.  
 ἦν δ' Ἑλλάδ' ἔλθω κάπιβῶ Σπάρτης πάλιν,  
 930 κλυόντες εἰσιδόντες ὡς τέχναις θεῶν  
 ὄλοντ', ἐγὼ δὲ προδότις οὐκ ἄρ' ἦ φίλων,  
 πάλιν μ' ἀνάξουσ' ἐς τὸ σῶφρον αὐθις αὖ,  
 ἐδνώσομαί τε θυγατέρ', ἦν οὐδεὶς γαμεί,  
 τήν δ' ἐνθάδ' ἐκλιποῦσ' ἀλητείαν πικρὰν  
 935 ὄντων ἐν οἴκοις χρημάτων ὀνήσομαι.

- κεί μὲν θανῶν ὄδ' ἐν πυρᾷ κατεφθάρη,  
 πρόσω σφ' ἀπόντα δακρύοις ἂν ἠγάπων  
 νῦν δ' ὄντα καὶ σωθέντ' ἀφαιρεθήσομαι;  
 μὴ δῆτα, παρθέν', ἀλλά σ' ἱκετεύω τόδε·  
 940 δὸς τὴν χάριν μοι τήνδε καὶ μιμοῦ τρόπους  
 πατρός δικαίου· παισὶ γὰρ κλέος τόδε  
 κάλλιστον, ὅστις ἐκ πατρός χρηστοῦ γεγῶς  
 ἐς ταῦτόν ἦλθε τοῖς τεκοῦσι τοὺς τρόπους.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- οἰκτρὸν μὲν οἱ παρόντες ἐν μέσῳ λόγοι,  
 945 οἰκτρὰ δὲ καὶ σύ· τοὺς δὲ Μενέλεω ποθῶ  
 λόγους ἀκοῦσαι τίνας ἐρεῖ ψυχῆς πέρι.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- ἐγὼ σὸν οὔτ' ἂν προσπείειν τλαίην γόνυ  
 οὔτ' ἂν δακρῦσαι βλέφαρα· τὴν Τροίαν γὰρ ἂν



## HELEN

I am in misery from the troubles that surround me: rescue me, performing this as an extra to your deed of justice. All men hate Helen, every single one. It is reported throughout Hellas that I abandoned my husband and went to live in the Phrygians' gilded halls. But if I reach Greece and walk once more in Sparta, men will hear and see that they were ruined by the gods' contrivances and that I was not after all a traitor to my family. They will restore my virtue to me once more, and I shall betroth my unmarried daughter to a husband. Leaving behind this galling life of beggary here I shall have the enjoyment of what belongs to me at home.

If my husband here had been killed and consumed on a pyre, I would be honoring him with my tears though far away. But he is alive and safely returned to me: shall I then be robbed of him? Not so, maiden! I beg of you, grant me this favor and imitate the ways of your righteous father. For children the fairest renown is this, to be born of a noble father and to take after him in character.

### CHORUS LEADER

The pleas you make evoke pity, and so likewise do you yourself. But I want to hear what Menelaus will say in defense of his life.

### MENELAUS

For my part, I could not bring myself to fall at your knees or shed tears. Such cowardly behavior would bring the

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925 δίκης Wecklein: τύχης L

932 ἐς] ἐπὶ Diggle, casu felici u. v.: cf. Or. 617

936 κατεφθάρη Schenkl: κατεσφάγη L

944n Xo. L. Dindorf: Θε. L

## EURIPIDES

- 950 δειλοὶ γενόμενοι πλείστον αἰσχύνομεν ἄν.  
 καίτοι λέγουσιν ὡς πρὸς ἀνδρὸς εὐγενοῦς  
 ἐν ξυμφοραῖσι δάκρυν' ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν βαλεῖν.  
 ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τοῦτο τὸ καλόν, εἰ καλὸν τόδε,  
 αἰρήσομαι ἔγὼ πρόσθε τῆς εὐφυχίας.  
 ἀλλ', εἰ μὲν ἄνδρα σοι δοκεῖ σῶσαι ξένον  
 955 ζητούντά γ' ὀρθῶς ἀπολαβεῖν δάμαρτ' ἐμήν,  
 ἀπόδος τε καὶ πρὸς σῶσον· εἰ δὲ μὴ δοκεῖ,  
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὐ νῦν πρῶτον ἀλλὰ πολλάκις  
 ἄθλιος ἄν εἶην, σὺ δὲ γυνὴ κακὴ φανῆ.  
 ἂ δ' ἄξι' ἡμῶν καὶ δίκαι' ἠγοῦμεθα  
 960 καὶ σῆς μάλιστα καρδίας ἀνθάψεται,  
 λέξω τάδ' ἀμφὶ μνήμα σοῦ πατρὸς πεσόν·  
 ὦ γέρον, ὃς οἰκείς τόνδε λάϊνον τάφον,  
 ἀπόδος, ἀπαιτῶ τὴν ἐμήν δάμαρτά σε,  
 ἣν Ζεὺς ἔπεμψε δεῦρό σοι σφύζειν ἐμοί.  
 965 οἶδ' οὐνεκ' ἡμῖν οὐποτ' ἀποδώσεις θανάων·  
 ἀλλ' ἦδε πατέρα νέρθεν ἀνακαλούμενον  
 οὐκ ἀξιῶσει τὸν πρὶν εὐκλεέστατον  
 κακῶς ἀκοῦσαι· κυρία γάρ ἐστι νῦν.  
 ὦ νέρτερ' Ἄϊδη, καὶ σὲ σύμμαχον καλῶ,  
 970 ὃς πόλλ' ἐδέξω τῆσδ' ἕκατι σώματα  
 πεσόντα τῶμῳ φασγάνῳ, μισθὸν δ' ἔχεις·  
 ἢ νῦν ἐκείνους ἀπόδος ἐμφύχους πάλιν,  
 ἢ τήνδ' ἀνάγκασόν γε <μῆ> εὐσεβοῦς πατρὸς  
 χείρῳ φανείσαν τὰμά μοι δοῦναι λέχη.

953 εὐφυχίας Heath: εὐδαιμονίας L

## HELEN

greatest disrepute on what befell at Troy, though they do say that it belongs to a nobleman to weep in an hour of disaster. But I shall not choose such noble behavior—if noble it is—in preference to acting bravely. Well, if you think it best to save the life of a stranger properly trying to recover his wife, give her back and save my life in addition. But if not, I will be unfortunate not for the first time—I have been so many times before—whereas you will be shown to be a base woman.

But the words I think are worthy of me and fair and will touch your heart most closely—these I will say, falling at the tomb of your father. Old sir, who dwell in this monument of stone, I ask you for the return of my wife, whom Zeus sent to you to keep safe for me. Give her back! Since you are dead, you cannot give her back to me, I know. But this woman will not deem it right that her father, whom I invoke from the dead, should have a bad name when before it was good. That is now in her power.

Hades under the earth, on you too I call for help! You have received, as the price of this woman, many bodies slain by my sword, payment in full. Either therefore give these men back alive or compel this woman to show herself equal to her godly father by giving me my wife back!<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> That is, since you have received payment for Helen (in the form of the lives expended to get her back), either produce Helen or return the payment.

<sup>961</sup> *πεσών* Badham: *πόθω* L

<sup>973</sup> *γε <μη>* Hermann: *γε* L: *γ'* Tr<sup>2</sup>

<sup>974</sup> *χείρω* Nauck post Hermann (*ἥσσω*): *κρείσσω* L    *τάμά μοι δοῦναι* Wecklein: *τάμ' ἀποδοῦναι* L

## EURIPIDES

- 975 εἰ δ' ἐμὲ γυναῖκα τὴν ἐμὴν συλήσετε,  
 ἃ σοι παρέλιπεν ἤδε τῶν λόγων φράσω.  
 ὄρκους κεκλήμεθ', ὡς μάθης, ὦ παρθένη,  
 πρῶτον μὲν ἐλθεῖν διὰ μάχης σῶ συγγόνῳ,  
 κάκεινον ἢ 'μὲ δεῖ θανεῖν· ἀπλοῦς λόγος.
- 980 ἦν δ' ἐς μὲν ἀλκὴν μὴ πόδ' ἀντιθῆ ποδί,  
 λιμῶ δὲ θηρᾶ τύμβον ἰκετεύοντε νῶ,  
 κτανεῖν δέδοκται τήνδε μοι κάπειτ' ἐμὸν  
 πρὸς ἦπαρ ὦσαι δίστομον ξίφος τόδε  
 τύμβου 'πὶ νώτοις τοῦδ', ἵν' αἵματος ῥοαὶ
- 985 τάφον καταστάζωσι κεισόμεσθα δὲ  
 νεκρῶ δὺ' ἐξῆς τῶδ' ἐπὶ ξεστῶ τάφῳ,  
 ἀθάνατον ἄλγος σοί, ψόγον δὲ σῶ πατρί.  
 οὐ γὰρ γαμῆ τήνδ' οὔτε σύγγονος σέθεν  
 οὔτ' ἄλλος οὐδεὶς· ἀλλ' ἐγὼ σφ' ἀπάξομαι,
- 990 εἰ μὴ πρὸς οἴκους δυνάμεθ' ἀλλὰ πρὸς νεκρούς.  
 [τί ταῦτα; δακρύοις ἐς τὸ θῆλυ τρεπόμενος  
 ἐλεινὸς ἦν ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ δραστήριος.  
 κτείν', εἰ δοκεῖ σοι· δυσκλεᾶς γὰρ οὐ κτενεῖς·  
 μᾶλλον γε μέντοι τοῖς ἐμοῖς πείθου λόγοις,
- 995 ἵν' ἦς δικαία καὶ δάμαρτ' ἐγὼ λάβω.]

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐν σοὶ βραβεύειν, ὦ νεᾶνι, τοὺς λόγους·  
 οὔτω δὲ κρίνον, ὡς ἅπασιν ἀνδάνης.

## ΘΕΟΝΟΗ

ἐγὼ πέφυκά τ' εὖσεβεῖν καὶ βούλομαι  
 φιλῶ τ' ἐμαυτήν, καὶ κλέος τοῦμοῦ πατρὸς

## HELEN

But if you are going to rob me of my wife, I will tell you what she has left unsaid. You should know that we have bound ourselves by an oath, maiden, first that I should fight your brother: the simple truth is that either he or I must die. But if he refuses to meet me in battle and tries to capture us by starving suppliants at the tomb, I am resolved to kill her and then to thrust this two-edged sword through my own heart on top of this tomb, so that streams of blood will seep down into the grave. We shall lie here as two corpses upon this monument of dressed stone, an immortal grief to you and a reproach to your father. Neither your brother nor any other man shall ever marry her: I shall take her away, if not home then at least to the grave. [What is going on? If I incline to the womanish side with my tears, I will be pitiful rather than a man of action. Kill, if that is what you think best! You will not kill a man who has disgraced himself. But rather, do as I ask, so that you may be righteous and I may get my wife!]

### CHORUS LEADER

It is up to you, maiden, to be judge of what has been said.  
Render a judgment that will please everyone!

### THEONOE

As for me, both my nature and my will tend toward piety. I love my own self and will not stain the good reputation of

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980  $\pi\acute{o}\delta'$  Badham:  $\pi\omicron\tau'$  L

987  $\psi\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\nu$  Diggle:  $-\omicron\varsigma$  L

991-5 del. Schenk

993  $\delta\nu\sigma\kappa\lambda\epsilon\hat{\alpha}\varsigma$  Wilamowitz:  $-\epsilon\hat{\omega}\varsigma$  L

- 1000 οὐκ ἂν μιάναίμ', οὐδὲ συγγόνῳ χάριν  
δοίην ἂν ἐξ ἧς δυσκλεῆς φανήσομαι.  
ἔνεστι δ' ἱερὸν τῆς δίκης ἐμοὶ μέγα  
ἐν τῇ φύσει· καὶ τοῦτο Νηρέως πάρα  
ἔχουσα σώζειν, Μενέλεως, πειράσομαι.
- 1005 Ἦρα δ', ἐπίπερ βούλεται σ' εὐεργετεῖν,  
ἐς ταῦτόν οἶσω ψῆφον· ἡ Κύπρις δέ μοι  
ἴλεως μὲν εἶη, ξυμβέβηκε δ' οὐδαμοῦ.  
[πειράσομαι δὲ παρθένος μένειν αἰεί.]  
    ἂ δ' ἀμφὶ τύμβῳ τῷδ' ὄνειδίσεις πατρός,
- 1010 ἡμῖν ὄδ' αὐτὸς μῦθος· ἀδικοίημεν ἂν,  
εἰ μὴ ἀποδώσω· καὶ γὰρ ἂν κείνος βλέπων  
ἀπέδωκεν ἂν σοὶ τήνδ' ἔχειν, ταύτη δὲ σέ.  
[καὶ γὰρ τίσις τῶνδ' ἐστὶ τοῖς τε νερτέροις  
καὶ τοῖς ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· ὁ νοῦς  
τῶν κατθανόντων ζῆ μὲν οὐ, γνώμην δ' ἔχει  
ἀθάνατον εἰς ἀθάνατον αἰθέρ' ἐμπεσών.]  
    ὥς οὖν περαίνω μὴ μακράν, σιγήσομαι  
    ἃ μου καθικετεύσατ' οὐδὲ μωρία  
    ξύμβουλος ἔσομαι τῇ κασιγνήτου ποτέ.
- 1020 εὐεργετῶ γὰρ κείνον οὐ δοκοῦσ' ὅμως,  
ἐκ δυσσεβείας ὅσιον εἰ τίθημί νιν.  
αὐτοὶ μὲν οὖν εὐρίσκειτ' ἔξοδόν τινα,  
ἐγὼ δ' ἀποστᾶσ' ἐκποδὼν σιγήσομαι.  
ἐκ τῶν θεῶν δ' ἄρχεσθε χικετεύετε
- 1025 τὴν μὲν σ' εἶσαι πατρίδα νοστήσαι Κύπριν,  
Ἦρας δὲ τὴν ἔννοϊαν ἐν ταυτῷ μένειν  
ἦν ἐς σέ καὶ σὸν πόσιν ἔχει σωτηρίας.

## HELEN

my father. I shall not do a kindness to my brother that will bring me a bad name. I have in my nature a great temple to Justice. This, Menelaus, is my inheritance from Nereus, and I shall attempt to keep it intact. Since Hera wants to do you good, I shall cast my vote with her. May Cypris be propitious to me, though she does not suit me! [I shall attempt to remain a virgin forever.]

As for the reproaches you uttered around the tomb of my father, I take the same view: I would be doing wrong if I did not return your wife. If my father were alive, he would have given her to you and you to her. [In fact punishment for these deeds comes to those below and to all men above. For though the mind of dead men does not live, it has eternal sensation once it has been hurled into the eternal upper air.]

To make my tale brief: I shall keep silent, as you have begged me to do, and never help my brother's folly with my counsel. I am doing him a good turn (though he might not think so) if I cause him to be god-fearing instead of impious. So you yourselves find some way of escape: I shall stand out of the way and hold my peace. But begin by entreating the gods: pray to Cypris to allow you to reach home and to Hera that the thought she has of saving you

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1006 *Κύπρις* Canter: *χάρις* L

1008 del. Badham

1009 *πατρός* Wecklein: *-τρί* L

1010 *ἀδικοίην νιν ἄν* Porson

1013-6 del. Hartung

1019 *τῆ* Dobree: *τοῦ* L

1022 *εὐρίσκειτ' ἔξοδόν τινα* Hermann: *τὴν ἔξοδόν γ' εὐρίσκειτε* L

## EURIPIDES

σὺ δ', ὦ θανῶν μοι πάτερ, ὅσον γ' ἐγὼ σθένω,  
οὐποτε κεκλήσῃ δυσσεβῆς ἀντ' εὐσεβοῦς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1030 οὐδείς ποτ' ἠτύχησεν ἔκδικος γεγώς,  
ἐν τῷ δικαίῳ δ' ἐλπίδες σωτηρίας.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

Μενέλαε, πρὸς μὲν παρθένου σεσώμεθα  
τοῦνθένδε δ' εἰς ἐν τοὺς λόγους φέροντε χρῆ  
κοινὴν ξυνάπτειν μηχανὴν σωτηρίας.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1035 ἄκουε δὴ νυν' χρόνιος εἶ κατὰ στέγας  
καὶ συντέθραψαι προσπόλοισι βασιλέως.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; ἐσφέρεις γὰρ ἐλπίδας  
ὡς δὴ τι δράσων χρηστὸν ἐς κοινόν γε νῶν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1040 πείσειας ἂν τιν' οἷτινες τετραζύγων  
ὄχων ἀνάσσουσ' ὥστε νῶν δοῦναι δίφρους;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πέισαιμ' ἂν· ἀλλὰ τίνα φυγὴν φευξοῦμεθα  
πεδίῳν ἄπειροι βαρβάρου γ' ὄντες χθονός;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἀδύνατον εἶπας. φέρε, τί δ' εἰ κρυφθεὶς δόμοις  
κτάνοιμ' ἀνακτα τῷδε διστόμῳ ξίφει;

1033 δ' εἰς ἐν . . . φέροντε Jackson: δὴ σε . . . φέροντα L



HELEN

and your husband may last. My departed father, as far as in me lies you shall never be called impious instead of godly.

*Exit THEONOE into the skene.*

CHORUS LEADER

No unjust man has ever enjoyed good fortune. But in righteousness there is hope of rescue.

HELEN

Menelaus, our lives have been spared by the maiden. From here on we two must take common counsel and devise a way for us both to reach home safely.

MENELAUS

Listen, then. You have been in this house a long time and have shared meals with the king's servants.

HELEN

What is your drift? You raise hopes that you will benefit both of us.

MENELAUS

Could you persuade one of the chariot keepers to give us a chariot?

HELEN

I could. But what kind of escape could we make? We are on foreign soil and do not know our way.

MENELAUS

Impossible: you are right. Well then, what if I hid in the palace and killed the king with this two-edged sword?

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<sup>1042</sup> γ' Reiske: τ' L

## EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1045 οὐκ ἄν σ' ἀνάσχοιτ' οὐδὲ σιγήσειεν ἄν  
μέλλοντ' ἀδελφῆ σύγγονον κατακτανεῖν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μὴν ναῦς ἔστιν ἧ σωθεῖμεν ἄν  
φεύγοντες· ἦν γὰρ εἵχομεν θάλασσο' ἔχει.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἄκουσον, ἦν τι καὶ γυνὴ λέξῃ σοφόν.  
1050 βούλῃ λέγεσθαι μὴ θανῶν λόγῳ θανεῖν;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

κακὸς μὲν ὄρνις· εἰ δὲ κερδανῶ, λέγε·  
ἔτοιμός εἰμι μὴ θανῶν λόγῳ θανεῖν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

καὶ μὴν γυναικείοις <σ' > ἄν οἰκτισαίμεθα  
κουραῖσι καὶ θρήνοισι πρὸς τὸν ἀνόσιον.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1055 σωτηρίας δὲ τοῦτ' ἔχει τί νῶν ἄκος;  
ματαιότης γὰρ τῷ λόγῳ γ' ἔνεστί τις.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὡς δὴ θανόντα σ' ἐνάλιον κενῶ τάφῳ  
θάψαι τύραννον τῆσδε γῆς αἰτήσομαι.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

καὶ δὴ παρέικεν· εἶτα πῶς ἄνευ νεῶς  
1060 σωθησόμεσθα κενοταφούντ' ἐμὸν δέμας;

1050 λόγῳ θανεῖν] τεθνηκέαι Cobet

HELEN

HELEN

His sister would never allow you: she would tell him that you intended to kill him.

MENELAUS

Well, we have no ship to escape on either. The one we had is at the bottom of the sea.

HELEN

Listen and see whether a woman too might say something clever. Are you willing, though alive, to be reported dead?

MENELAUS

It is a bad omen. But if I am going to profit by the tale, tell it: I am willing, though alive, to die in report.

HELEN

Then I would mourn <you> before the godless man, cropping my hair and wailing as women do.

MENELAUS

But how does that help us to escape with our lives? Your story seems a bit pointless.

HELEN

Since you died at sea I shall ask the king's permission to bury you in a cenotaph.

MENELAUS

Well, suppose he agrees: how can giving me a cenotaph win our escape if we don't have a ship?

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1051 λέγε Seidler: -ειν L

1053 <σ'> Hermann

1056 ματαιότης Cobet: παλαιότης L

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

δοῦναι κελεύσω πορθμίδ', ἧ καθήσομεν  
κόσμον τάφῳ σῶ πελαγίους ἐς ἀγκάλας.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὡς εὖ τόδ' εἶπας πλήν ἔν· εἰ χέρσῳ ταφὰς  
θεῖναι κελεύσει σ', οὐδὲν ἡ σκῆψις φέρει.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1065 ἀλλ' οὐ νομίζειν φήσομεν καθ' Ἑλλάδα  
χέρσῳ καλύπτειν τοὺς θανόντας ἐναλίους.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τοῦτ' αὖ κατορθοῖς· εἶτ' ἐγὼ συμπλεύσομαι  
καὶ συγκαθήσω κόσμον ἐν ταυτῶ σκάφει.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1070 σὲ καὶ παρέιναι δεῖ μάλιστα τοὺς τε σοὺς  
πλωτῆρας οἵπερ ἔφυγον ἐκ ναυαγίας.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἐάνπερ ναῦν ἐπ' ἀγκύρας λάβω,  
ἀνὴρ παρ' ἄνδρα στήσεται ξιφηφόρος.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

σὲ χρὴ βραβεύειν πάντα· πόμπιμοι μόνον  
λαίφει πνοαὶ γένοιτο καὶ νεὼς δρόμος.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1075 ἔσται· πόνους γὰρ δαίμονες παύσουσί μου.  
ἀτὰρ θανόντα τοῦ μ' ἐρείς πεπυσμένη;

1061 καθήσομεν Heath: -σομαι L

HELEN

HELEN

I shall ask him to provide a vessel so that we may throw overboard adornment for your grave in the arms of the deep.

MENELAUS

What a good idea—except for one thing: if he tells us to perform the funeral on land, the pretext does us no good.

HELEN

Well, we will say that it is not our custom in Greece to give land burial to those who die at sea.

MENELAUS

Another good suggestion! Then I shall sail along on the same ship and help throw the adornment overboard.

HELEN

Yes, it is most important that you be there, and also those of your sailors who have escaped from the shipwreck.

MENELAUS

If I am provided with a ship at anchor, my men will stand by each other with ready swords.

HELEN

You must be in charge of everything. Now if only the winds will fill our sails and the ship run swiftly!

MENELAUS

It will be so: the gods are putting an end to my troubles. But who will you say told you of my death?

---

1064 *κελεύσει* L. Dindorf: -εύει L

1073 *πάντα* Kirchhoff

1074 *καὶ νεῶς*] *χίλων* Jackson      *δρόμῳ* H. Cron

## EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

σοῦ· καὶ μόνος γε φάσκει διαφυγεῖν μόρον  
Ἄτρεως πλέων σὺν παιδὶ καὶ θανόνθ' ὄραν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

καὶ μὴν τάδ' ἀμφίβληστρα σώματος ῥάκη  
1080 ξυμμάρτυρές σοι ναυτικῶν ἐρεπιπίων.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐς καιρὸν ἦλθε, τότε δ' ἄκαιρ' ἀπώλλυτο·  
τὸ δ' ἄθλιον κείν' εὐτυχὲς τάχ' ἂν πέσοι.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πότερα δ' ἐς οἴκους σοι συνεισελθεῖν με χρῆ  
ἢ πρὸς τάφῳ τῷδ' ἥσυχοι καθώμεθα;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1085 αὐτοῦ μὲν· ἦν γὰρ καὶ τι πλημμελές σε δρᾶ,  
τάφος σ' ὄδ' ἂν ρύσαιτο φάσγανόν τε σόν.  
ἐγὼ δ' ἐς οἴκους βᾶσα βοστρύχους τεμῶ  
πέπλων τε λευκῶν μέλανας ἀνταλλάξομαι  
παρῆδί τ' ὄνυχα φόνιον ἐμβαλῶ †χροός†.  
1090 μέγας γὰρ ἄγων καὶ βλέπω δύο ῥοπᾶς·  
ἦ γὰρ θανεῖν δεῖ μ', ἦν ἁλῶ τεχνωμένη,  
ἦ πατρίδα τ' ἐλθεῖν καὶ σὸν ἐκσῶσαι δέμας.

ὦ πότνι' ἦ Δίοισιν ἐν λέκτροις πίτνεις  
Ἥρα, δὴ οἰκτρῶ φῶτ' ἀνάψυξον πόνων,  
1095 αἰτούμεθ' ὀρθὰς ὠλένας πρὸς οὐρανὸν  
ρίπτονθ', ἵν' οἰκεῖς ἀστέρων ποικίλματα.  
σύ θ', ἦ πὶ τῶμῳ κάλλος ἐκτήσω γάμῳ,  
κόρη Διώνης Κύπρι, μή μ' ἐξεργάσῃ.

HELEN

HELEN

You: you will claim that you sailed with the son of Atreus, saw him perish, and were the only one to survive.

MENELAUS

Well, these rags I have cast about my body will second your story of my wreck at sea.

HELEN

The loss of your clothes was timely, though when it happened it seemed untimely. That misfortune may prove to be a blessing.

MENELAUS

Shall I go into the house with you or sit quietly here near the tomb?

HELEN

Stay here. If he acts violently against you, this tomb—and your own sword—will protect you. I shall go into the house, cut my hair, change my white robe for a black one, and bloody my cheeks with my nails. The contest before us is a great one, and I see two outcomes. Either I must die if my tricks are discovered, or return to my fatherland and save your life.

O lady Hera, sharer of Zeus's bed, relieve two pitiable creatures of their troubles! We entreat you, casting our hands straight up to heaven, where you dwell among the stars' splendor! And you, Cypris, daughter of Dione, who won the prize of beauty by the bribe of marriage with me,

---

1079 ἀμφιβλητὰ Boissonade  
Pearson: ξυμμαρτυρήσει L: -μάρτυρές μοι Willink  
1089 χερός Jacobs

1080 ξυμμάρτυρές σοι

## EURIPIDES

- ἄλις δὲ λύμης ἦν μ' ἐλυμήνω πάρος  
 1100 τοῦνομα παρασχούσ', οὐ τὸ σῶμ', ἐν βαρβάροις.  
 θανεῖν δ' ἕασόν μ', εἰ κατακτεῖναι θέλεις,  
 ἐν γῆ πατρώα. τί ποτ' ἄπληστος εἶ κακῶν,  
 ἔρωτας ἀπάτας δόλια τ' ἐξευρήματα  
 ἀσκούσα φίλτρα θ' αἵματηρὰ δωμάτων;  
 1105 εἰ δ' ἦσθα μετρία, τᾶλλα γ' ἠδίστη θεῶν  
 πέφυκας ἀνθρώποισιν· οὐκ ἄλλως λέγω.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α

- σὲ τὰν ἐναύλοις ὑπὸ δενδροκόμοις  
 μουσεῖα καὶ θάκουσ ἐνί-  
 ζουσιν ἀναβοάσω,  
 σὲ τὰν αἰοδοτάταν  
 1110 ὄρνιθα μελωδὸν ἀηδόνα δακρυνέουσαν,  
 ἔλθ' ὦ διὰ ξουθᾶν γενύων ἐλελιζομένα  
 θρήνων ἐμοὶ ξυνεργός,  
 Ἑλένας μελέουσ πόνουσ  
 τὸν Ἰλιάδων τ' αἰ-  
 1115 δούσα δακρυνέοντα πότμον  
 Ἀχαιῶν ὑπὸ λόγχαισ,  
 ὅτ' ἔδραμε ρόθια πολιά βαρβάρῳ πλάτα  
 ὃσ ἔμολεν ἔμολε μέλεα Πριαμίδαισ ἄγων

1111 ἔλθ' ὦ Musgrave ἐλθὲ L

1112 θρήνων ἐμοὶ Wilamowitz: θρήνοισ ἐμῶν L

1113 μελέουσ Hermann: -ασ L

1114-5 αἰειδούσα Lachmann: αἰειδουσα L



## HELEN

do not destroy me! You have already treated me spitefully enough when you gave my name, though not my person, to the barbarians. But if you mean to kill me, at least let me die in my own country! Why is your appetite for mischief so insatiable? Why bring about passions, deceits, treacherous devices, and loves that bring blood upon houses? If you were moderate, you would otherwise be—I admit it—the pleasantest of gods for mortals.

*Exit HELEN into the skene.*

## CHORUS

You that in your steading among the leaves  
keep your house of song,  
I call aloud to you,  
most gifted in music,  
bird of song, nightingale of tears:  
come, you that through tawny throat trill your lay of woe,  
share in my lamentation  
as I sing of Helen's grievous troubles  
and the sorrowful fate  
of the daughters of Troy  
at the hands of Greek spearmen:  
sing how he ran swiftly over the gray sea with barbarian  
oar,  
the man who came, who came bringing to the sons of  
Priam

---

1115 *πότμον* Badham: *πόνον* L

1117-8 *π- βαρβάρω πλάτα . . . μέλεα Πριαμίδαις ἄγων* O.  
Schultze: *μ- Π- ᾶ- . . . π- β- π- L*

1117 *πολιὰ* Herwerden: *πέδια* L

## EURIPIDES

- 1120 Λακεδαίμονος ἄπο λέχεια  
σέθεν, ὦ Ἑλένα, Πάρις αἰνόγαμος  
πομπαῖσιν Ἀφροδίτας.

ἀντ. α

- πολλοὶ δ' Ἀχαιῶν δορὶ καὶ πετρίναις  
ρίπαῖσιν ἐκπνεύσαντες ἄι-  
δαν μέλεον ἔχουσι,  
ταλαιῶν ἀλόχων  
1125 κείραντες ἔθειραν· ἄνυμφα δὲ μέλαθρα κείται·  
πολλοὺς δὲ πυρσεύσας φλογερὸν σέλας ἀμφιρύταν  
Εὐβοίαν εἶλ' Ἀχαιῶν  
μονόκωπος ἀνὴρ πέτραις  
Καφηρίσιν ἐμβαλῶν,  
1130 Αἰγαίαις ἐνάλοις δόλιον  
ἄκραις ἀστέρα λάμψας.  
ἀλίμενα δ' ὄρια μέλεα βαρβάρου στολᾶς  
τότ' ἔστυτο πατρίδος ἀποπρὸ χειμάτων πνοᾷ  
γέρας οὐ γέρας ἀλλ' ἔριν  
1135 Δαναῶν Μενέλας ἐπὶ ναυσὶν ἄγων,  
εἶδωλον ἱερὸν Ἥρας.

στρ. β

ὄ τι θεὸς ἦ μὴ θεὸς ἦ τὸ μέσον

1130 Αἰγαίαις Herwerden: Αἰ- τ' L ἐνάλοις Musgrave: -  
λίους L 1130-1 δόλιον ἄ- Hermann: ἄ- δ- L

1131 ἄκραις Bothe: ἀκταῖς L

1133 τότ' ἔστυτο Diggle: ὅτε σὺ τὸ L: ὅτ' ἔστυτο Musgrave

1134 γέρας οὐ γέρας Badham: τέρας οὐ τέρας L

1135 Μενέλας Wilamowitz: νεφέλαν L

## HELEN

you, Helen, as his bride from Lacedaemon,  
Paris the grimly wedded,  
by the sending of Aphrodite.

Many Greeks died by the sword  
and from great boulders hurled at them:  
they have grim death as their companion.  
In sorrow for them their luckless wives  
cut off their long hair, and from their houses bridal love is  
gone.

Many too were killed by an Achaean, who sent forth his  
bright gleam  
about seagirt Euboea,  
a solitary oarsman  
dashing them on the Capherean rocks,  
flashing his treacherous star  
on the Aegean headlands.<sup>20</sup>

It was then that to lands harborless and cruel, where men  
dress outlandishly,  
Menelaus was driven far from his home by storm winds,  
bringing on his ship  
his prize, no prize, but strife for the Greeks,  
Hera's divine phantom.

What mortal can search out and tell

<sup>20</sup> See note to line 767. Nauplius rowed out alone in a boat at night and lit a beacon near some rocks. A beacon, unlike the modern lighthouse which warns against dangerous coast, marked a harbor.

- τίς φησ' ἐρευνάσας βροτῶν;  
 1140 μακρότατον πέρας ἠῦρεν ὃς τὰ θεῶν ἔσορα  
 δεῦρο καὶ αὐθις ἐκέισε καὶ πάλιν ἀμφιλόγους  
 πηδῶντ' ἀνελπίστοις τύχαις.  
 σὺ Διὸς ἔφυς, ὦ Ἑλένα, θυγάτηρ·  
 1145 πτανὸς γὰρ ἐν κόλποις σε Λή-  
 δας ἐτέκνωσε πατήρ·  
 κακὰ δ' ἰαχῆ καθ' Ἑλλανίαν  
 προδότις ἄπιστος ἄδικος ἄθεος· οὐδ' ἔχω  
 ὅ τι σαφές, ὅ τι ποτ' ἐν βροτοῖς τῶν θεῶν  
 1150 ἔπος ἀλαθὲς εὔρω.  
 ἀντ. β  
 ἄφρονες ὅσοι τὰς ἀρετὰς πολέμῳ  
 λόγχαισί τ' ἀλκαίου δορὸς  
 κτᾶσθ', ἀμαθῶς θανάτῳ πόνους καταλνόμενοι.  
 1155 εἰ γὰρ ἄμιλλα κρινεῖ νιν αἵματος, οὔ ποτ' ἔρις  
 λείψει κατ' ἀνθρώπων πόλεις·  
 ἂ Πριαμίδος γὰς ἔλιπ' ἂν θαλάμους,  
 ἐξὸν διορθῶσαι λόγοις  
 1160 σὰν ἔριν, ὦ Ἑλένα.  
 νῦν δ' οἱ μὲν Ἄϊδα μέλονται κάτω  
 τείχεα δὲ †φλογοερὸς† ὥστε Διὸς ἐπέσυτο φλόξ,

1138 τίς φησ' Bothe: τί φῆς L

1140 ἠῦρεν Dindorf: εὐρέιν L

1141-2 δεῦρο Bothe: δεινὰ L ἀμφιλόγους Dobree: ἀντι-L

1147 κακὰ δ' ἰαχῆ Willink: καὶ ἰαχῆ σῆ L

1148 προδότις Hermann: ἀδίκως προδότης L

1149 ὅ τι (prius) Schenkel: τί τὸ L τῶν Willink: τὸ τῶν L

## HELEN

what is god, what is not god, and what lies between?  
 The farthest bourne is reached by him who sees that what  
     the gods send  
 veers first this way, then that, and once more this way,  
 with outcomes wavering and unexpected.  
 You, Helen, are Zeus's daughter:  
 your father came on wing to Leda  
 and in her embrace sired you.  
 Yet you are reviled throughout Greece  
 as traitor, faithless, lawless, and godless: and I do not know  
 what reliable, what true word about the gods  
 I can find among mortals.

All men are fools who by war  
 and the spear of stout-heart battle  
 acquire renown for valor, foolishly winning release from  
     toil in death.  
 If contests of blood shall always decide, never will strife  
 cease among the cities of men.  
 Strife would have spared the bedchambers of Priam's land  
 had it been possible, Helen, to end  
 with words the quarrel you caused.  
 But now the men are in Hades' care below,  
 their walls are overrun by violent flame, like Zeus's light-  
     ning,

---

1150 εὔρω Willink: εὔρον L

1153-4 ἄ- θανάτῳ πόνους κατα- Willink: κατα- πόνους  
 θνατῶν ἄ- L καταλυόμενοι Herwerden: -πανόμενοι L

1158 ἄ Willink: αἰ L ἔλιπ' ἄν Willink: ἔλιπον L

1162 φόνιος Herwerden: μαλερός Kannicht

## EURIPIDES

ἐπὶ δὲ πάθεα πάθεσι φέρεις ἀθλία  
συμφοραῖς ἐλεινοῖς.

## ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

- 1165 ὦ χαῖρε, πατρὸς μνήμ᾽ ἐπ' ἐξόδοισι γὰρ  
ἔθαψα Πρωτεῦ σ' ἔνεκ' ἐμῆς προσρήσεως·  
αἰὶ δέ σ' ἐξίων τε κἀσιῶν δόμους  
Θεοκλύμενος παῖς ὄδε προσεννέπω, πάτερ.  
ὕμεις μὲν οὖν κύνας τε καὶ θηρῶν βρόχους,  
1170 δμῶες, κομίζετ' ἐς δόμους τυραννικούς·  
ἐγὼ δ' ἐμαντὸν πόλλ' ἐλοιδόρησα δῆ·  
οὐ γάρ τι θανάτῳ τοὺς κακοὺς κολάζομεν.  
καὶ νῦν πέπυσμαι φανερόν Ἑλλήνων τινα  
ἐς γῆν ἀφίχθαι καὶ λεληθέναι σκοπούς,  
1175 ἦτοι κατόπτην ἢ κλοπαῖς θηρώμενον  
Ἑλένην· θανέεται δ', ἣν γε δῆ ληφθῆ μόνον.  
ἔα.  
ἀλλ', ὡς ἔοικε, πάντα διαπεπραγμένα  
ἠῦρηκα· τύμβου γὰρ κενὰς λιποῦσ' ἔδρας  
ἢ Τυνδαρις παῖς ἐκπεπόρθμενται χθονός.  
1180 ὦή, χαλᾶτε κλῆθρα· λυέθ' ἵππικὰς  
φάτνας, ὀπαδοί, κάκκομίζεθ' ἄρματα,  
ὡς ἂν πόνου γ' ἕκατι μὴ λάθῃ με γῆς  
τῆσδ' ἐκκομισθεῖσ' ἄλοχος ἧς ἐφίεμαι.  
ἐπίσχετ'· εἰσορῶ γὰρ οὖς διώκομεν  
1185 παρόντας ἐν δόμοισι κοῦ πεφευγότας.  
αὕτη, τί πέπλους μέλανας ἐξήψω χρὸς

1164 ἀθλία Dale: -ίοις L ἔλεινοῖς Nauck: αἰλίνους L

## HELEN

and you endure grief upon grief,  
made luckless by pitiable woes.

*Enter by Eisodos B THEOCLYMENUS with servants carrying nets and leading dogs.*

### THEOCLYMENUS

Tomb of my father, greeting! I have buried you near my gates, father Proteus, so that I may greet you: I, Theoclymenus, always have a word for you as I go in and out of my house! You servants, take the dogs and the hunting nets into the palace! (*Exit the servants into the skene.*)

I have often criticized myself: we are not putting the evildoers to death. And now I learn that a Greek has slipped by the guards and showed his face here. He is either a spy or has come to steal Helen away. He will be killed if only he is caught.

But what is this? I have come too late, it seems, and the whole business has already been carried out! Tyndareus' daughter has left her seat on the tomb and been spirited away! Ho, there, servants, unbar the gates, open the stables, and bring the chariots out! If my efforts can stop her, the wife I desire will not be carried secretly from this country!

*Enter HELEN from the skene.*

But wait! My quarry, I see, is at home, not fled. You, why have you changed your white clothes for black? Why

---

1168 προσεννέπω Lenting: -ει L

1172 θανάτῳ] πάντας Herwerden

1173 φανερόν] φλαῦρον Reiske

EURIPIDES

- λευκῶν ἀμείψασ' ἔκ τε κρατὸς εὐγενοῦς  
κόμας σίδηρον ἐμβαλοῦσ' ἀπέθρισας  
χλωροῖς τε τέγγεις δάκρυσι σὴν παρηίδα  
1190 κλαίουσα; πότερον ἐννύχοις πεπεισμένη  
στένεις ὀνείροις; ἢ φάτιν τιν' οἴκοθεν  
κλυοῦσα λύπη σὰς διέφθαρσαι φρένας;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὦ δέσποτ'—ἤδη γὰρ τόδ' ὀνομάζω σ' ἔπος—  
ὄλωλα· φροῦδα τὰμὰ κούδέν εἶμ' ἔτι.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

- 1195 ἐν τῷ δὲ κείσαι συμφορᾶς; τίς ἢ τύχη;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

Μενέλαος—οἴμοι, πῶς φράσω;—τέθνηκέ μοι.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

[οὐδέν τι χαίρω σοῖς λόγοις, τὰ δ' εὐτυχῶ.]  
πῶς οἶσθα; μῶν σοι Θεονόη λέγει τάδε;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

κείνη τε φησὶν ὃ τε παρῶν ὄτ' ὄλλυτο.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

- 1200 ἦκει γὰρ ὅστις καὶ τὰδ' ἀγγέλλει σαφῆ;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἦκει· μόλοι γὰρ οἱ σφ' ἐγὼ χρήζω μολεῖν.

1197 del. Hartung

1201 δ' ἄρ' Dobree

οἱ σφ' Lenting: ὡς L



HELEN

did you take the knife and cut the hair from your noble head? Why are you weeping, moistening your cheek with pale tears? Has a persuasive dream in the night made you weep? Or have you heard a report from home that rends your heart with grief?

HELEN

Master—for that is the name I will call you from now on—I am undone! My fortunes are ruined, and I am dead!

THEOCLYMENUS

What has happened? What is the trouble that besets you?

HELEN

My Menelaus—ah, how can I say it?—is dead!

THEOCLYMENUS

[Not at all do I rejoice at your words, though my fortune is good.] How do you know? Do you have this from Theonoe?

HELEN

Yes, and from one who was there when he died.

THEOCLYMENUS

What? Is someone here who can confirm the truth of this?

HELEN

Yes. And I wish he would go to a place I have in mind!<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Helen pretends to wish him, as the bearer of bad news, an evil destination. (In tragedy bearers of good news are treated as deserving reward and bearers of bad as deserving punishment.) To herself, of course, her words mean "May he get home safely."

EURIPIDES

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τίς ἐστι; ποῦ ἔστιν; ἵνα σαφέστερον μάθω.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὄδ' ὅς κἀθηται τῷδ' ὑποπτήξας τάφω.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

Ἄπολλον, ὡς ἐσθῆτι δυσμόρφω πρέπει.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1205 οἴμοι, δοκῶ μὲν κάμὸν ᾧδ' ἔχειν πόσιν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ποδαπὸς δ' ὄδ' ἀνὴρ καὶ πόθεν κατέσχε γῆν;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

Ἕλλην, Ἀχαιῶν εἰς ἐμῷ σύμπλους πόσει.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

θανάτῳ δὲ ποίω φησὶ Μενέλεων θανεῖν;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οἰκτρόταθ', ὑγροῖσιν ἐν κλυδωνίοις ἀλός.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1210 ποῦ βαρβάρουσι πελάγεσιν ναυσθλούμενοι;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

Λιβύης ἀλιμένοις ἐκπεσόντα πρὸς πέτραις.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ὄδ' οὐκ ὄλωλε κοινωνῶν πλάτης;

1207 Ἕλλην abundat: fort. ἐς Φρύγας

HELEN

THEOCLYMENUS

Who is he? Where is he? Let me get a clearer report.

HELEN

That man there, who sits cowering at the foot of the tomb.

THEOCLYMENUS

Apollo! How ugly his clothing is!

HELEN

Ah me! I think my husband must be dressed like him.

THEOCLYMENUS

What is his nation? From where did he arrive at our shores?

HELEN

He is Greek, one of the Achaeans who sailed with my husband.

THEOCLYMENUS

What kind of death does he say your husband died?

HELEN

A most miserable one, death at sea.

THEOCLYMENUS

Where was he sailing in barbarian waters?

HELEN

He was cast out upon Libya's harborless cliffs.

THEOCLYMENUS

How did this man survive? He shared the same ship.

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἔσθλων κακίους ἐνίσιτ' εὐτυχέστεροι.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

λιπὼν δὲ ναὸς ποῦ πάρεστιν ἔκβολα;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1215 ὅπου κακῶς ὄλοιτο, Μενέλεως δὲ μή.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ὄλωλ' ἐκείνος. ἦλθε δ' ἐν ποίῳ σκάφει;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ναῦταί σφ' ἀνείλουτ' ἐντυχόντες, ὡς λέγει.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ποῦ δὴ τὸ πεμφθὲν ἀντὶ σοῦ Τροία κακόν;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

νεφέλης λέγεις ἄγαλμ'; ἐς αἰθέρ' οἴχεται.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1220 ὦ Πρίαμε καὶ γῆ Τρωάς, <ὡς> ἔρρεις μάτην.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

κὰ γὰρ μετέσχον Πριαμίδαις δυσπραξίας.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

πόσιν δ' ἄθαπτον ἔλιπεν ἢ κρύπτει χθονί;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἄθαπτον οἷ' γὰρ τῶν ἐμῶν τλήμων κακῶν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τῶνδ' οὐνεκ' ἔτεμες βοστρύχους ξανθῆς κόμης;

HELEN

HELEN

The lowly are often luckier than their betters.

THEOCLYMENUS

Where has he left the remnants of his ship?

HELEN

Where I pray it may be cursed! But not Menelaus!

THEOCLYMENUS

Menelaus is dead. But on what ship did this man come here?

HELEN

Sailors, he says, found and rescued him.

THEOCLYMENUS

Where then is that curse sent in your place to Troy?

HELEN

You mean that image made of cloud? Gone up into the sky.

THEOCLYMENUS

O Priam and Troy, how pointless was your death!

HELEN

I too shared in misfortune with the sons of Priam.

THEOCLYMENUS

Did he bury your husband or leave him unburied?

HELEN

Unburied. Oh what woe is mine!

THEOCLYMENUS

So that is why you have cut your blond locks?

---

1217 ἀνείλουτ' Cobet: ἀνέλου L

1220 <ὡς> Scaliger

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1225 φίλος γάρ †έστιν ὅς ποτ' ἐστὶν ἐνθάδ' ὦν†.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ὀρθῶς μὲν ἦδε συμφορὰ δακρύεται.

<ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὄλωλ' ἐγὼ τάλαινα κούδ' ἐν εἴμ' ἔτι.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ὄρα δὲ μὴ τάδ' οὐ σαφῶς ἠγγελέμεν' ἦ.>

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐν εὐμαρεῖ γοῦν σὴν κασιγνήτην λαθεῖν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

οὐ δῆτα. πῶς οὔν; τόνδ' ἔτ' οἰκήσεις τάφον;

<ΕΛΕΝΗ

θανῶν ἔτ' ἔστ' ἐκείνος· οὐ τιμητέος;>

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τί κερτομέεις με, τὸν θανόντα δ' οὐκ ἐὰς;

<ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐ πόσις, ἐκεῖ γυναῖκα συνναίειν χρεῶν.>

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1230 πιστὴ γὰρ εἶ σὺ σῶ πόσει φεύγουσά με;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἀλλ' οὐκέτ' ἤδη δ' ἄρχε τῶν ἐμῶν γάμων.

<sup>1225</sup> ἐστ' ἔθ' ὅσπερ (melius ὡσπερ) ἦν ποτ' ἐνθάδ' ὦν A. Y. Campbell

<sup>1226</sup> post h. v. lac. indic. Dale

HELEN

HELEN

Yes: he is still dear to me as he was in life.

THEOCLYMENUS

This is indeed cause for tears.

<HELEN

I am undone: my life is over!

THEOCLYMENUS

But take care: the tale of his death may be false.>

HELEN

Is it so easy then to fool your sister?

THEOCLYMENUS

No indeed! But what follows? Will you still make this tomb  
your home?

<HELEN

Though dead, he lives still: should he not be honored?>

THEOCLYMENUS

Why do you provoke me? Why not let the dead be?

<HELEN

Where a husband is, there must his wife dwell with him.>

THEOCLYMENUS

Are you being faithful to your husband in running from  
me?

HELEN

I will be so no more: begin the wedding arrangements.

---

1227 λαθεῖν Jacobs: θανεῖν L

1229, 1230 ante hos vv. lacc. indic. Willink

1230 εἶ σὺ Elmsley: ἐσσὶ L

EURIPIDES

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

χρόνια μὲν ἦλθεν, ἀλλ' ὅμως αἰνῶ τάδε.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οἶσθ' οὖν ὃ δράσον τῶν πάρος λαθώμεθα.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ἐπὶ τῷ; χάρις γὰρ ἀντὶ χάριτος ἐλθέτω.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1235 σπονδὰς τέμωμεν καὶ διαλλάχθητί μοι.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

μεθίημι νείκος τὸ σόν, ἴτω δ' ὑπόπτερον.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πρὸς νῦν σε γονάτων τῶνδ', ἐπείπερ εἶ φίλος . . .

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τί χρῆμα θηρῶσ' ἰκέτις ὠρέχθης ἐμοῦ;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

τὸν κατθανόντα πόσιν ἐμὸν θάψαι θέλω.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1240 τί δ'; ἔστ' ἀπόντων τύμβος; ἢ θάψεις σκιάν;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

Ἕλλησίν ἐστι νόμος, ὃς ἂν πόντῳ θάνη . . .

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τί δρᾶν; σοφοί τοι Πελοπίδαι τὰ τοιάδε.

1232 ἦλθεν Musgrave: -ες L



HELEN

THEOCLYMENUS

This has been long in coming, but I thank you for it!

HELEN

Here is what you must do: let us forget what is past.

THEOCLYMENUS

On what terms? Favor must answer favor.

HELEN

Let's make a truce. Be reconciled with me.

THEOCLYMENUS

I renounce my quarrel with you: let it take wing and vanish!

HELEN

*(kneeling and grasping Theoclymenus' knees)* By your knees, then, if you are my friend . . .

THEOCLYMENUS

What does your suppliant grasp aim to gain?

HELEN

I want to give my dead husband a burial.

THEOCLYMENUS

How? Can you bury a man who is missing? Will you inter his shade?

HELEN

The Greeks have a custom: whenever someone dies at sea . . .

THEOCLYMENUS

What do you do? The descendants of Pelops are skilled in such things.

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

. . . κενόισι θάπτειν ἐν πέπλων ὑφάσμασιν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

κτέριζ· ἀνίστη τύμβον οὐ χρήζεις χθονός.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

1245 οὐχ ᾧδε ναύτας ὀλομένους τυμβεύομεν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

πῶς δαί; λέλειμμαι τῶν ἐν Ἑλλησιν νόμων.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐς πόντον ὅσα χρῆ νέκυσιν ἐξορμίζομεν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τί σοι παράσχω δῆτα τῷ τεθνηκότι;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὄδ' οἶδ', ἐγὼ δ' ἄπειρος, εὐτυχοῦσα πρίν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1250 ᾧ ξένε, λόγων μὲν κληδόν' ἤνεγκας φίλην.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὔκουν ἐμαντῷ γ' οὐδὲ τῷ τεθνηκότι.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

πῶς τοὺς θανόντας θάπτει' ἐν πόντῳ νεκρούς;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὡς ἂν παρούσης οὐσίας ἕκαστος ἦ.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

πλούτου λάβ' οὐνεχ' ὅ τι θέλεις ταύτης χάριν.

HELEN

HELEN

. . . we bury the body in effigy with fine robes.

THEOCLYMENUS

Bury him! Raise a funeral mound wherever you like in the land!

HELEN

That is not the way we bury sailors who have died.

THEOCLYMENUS

How then? I am ignorant of Greek custom.

HELEN

We take out to sea all that the dead require.

THEOCLYMENUS

What shall I provide then for your dead husband?

HELEN

This man knows: I have no experience, being fortunate until now.

THEOCLYMENUS

Stranger, you have brought us welcome news.

MENELAUS

Not welcome to me or to him who died.

THEOCLYMENUS

How do you bury those who die at sea?

MENELAUS

As well as each man's wealth allows.

THEOCLYMENUS

Take what you want for her sake: spare no expense.

---

<sup>1254</sup> λάβ' Kovacs: λέγ' L

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

1255 προσφάζεται μὲν αἶμα πρῶτα νερτέροις.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τίνος; σύ μοι σήμαινε, πείσομαι δ' ἐγώ.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

αὐτὸς σὺ γίγνωσκ'· ἀρκέσει γὰρ ἂν διδῶς.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ἐν βαρβάροις μὲν ἵππον ἢ ταῦρον νόμος.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

διδούς γε μὲν δὴ δυσγενὲς μηδὲν δίδου.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1260 οὐ τῶνδ' ἐν ἀγέλαις ὀλβίαις σπανίζομεν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

καὶ στρωτὰ φέρεται λέκτρα σώματος κενά.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ἔσται· τί δ' ἄλλο προσφέρειν νομίζεται;

MENEΛΑΟΣ

χαλκήλαθ' ὄπλα (καὶ γὰρ ἦν φίλος δορί) . . .

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ἄξια τὰδ' ἔσται Πελοπιδῶν ἃ δώσομεν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

1265 . . . καὶ τ' ἄλλ' ὅσα χθὼν καλὰ φέρει βλαστήματα.

1260 οὐχ ᾧδ' Bruhn

HELEN

MENELAUS

The blood of an animal is the first offering to the dead.

THEOCLYMENUS

What animal? Say, and I shall do as you ask.

MENELAUS

You decide yourself: whatever you give will be sufficient.

THEOCLYMENUS

Among the barbarians, a horse or a bullock is customary.

MENELAUS

If you are giving one, make sure it is in no way malformed.

THEOCLYMENUS

Our rich herds do not lack for proper victims.

MENELAUS

Bedding—with no body therein—is also offered.

THEOCLYMENUS

You shall have it. What other offering does custom ordain?

MENELAUS

Armor of bronze, since Menelaus loved the spear . . .

THEOCLYMENUS

What we will provide will be worthy of Pelops' descendants.

MENELAUS

. . . and other good fruits the earth brings forth.

EURIPIDES

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

*πῶς οὖν; ἐς οἶδμα τίνι τρόπῳ καθίετε;*

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

*ναῦν δεῖ παρεῖναι κἀρετμῶν ἐπιστάτας.*

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

*πόσον δ' ἀπέργειν μῆκος ἐκ γαίας δόρυ;*

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

*ᾧστ' ἐξοράσθαι ρόθια χερσότηεν μόλις.*

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1270 *τί δή; τόδ' Ἑλλάς νόμιμον ἐκ τίνος σέβει;*

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

*ὡς μὴ πάλιν γῆ λύματ' ἐκβάλῃ κλύδων.*

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

*Φοίνισσα κώπη ταχύπορος γενήσεται.*

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

*καλῶς ἂν εἴη Μενελέῳ τε πρὸς χάριν.*

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

*οὔκουν σὺ χωρὶς τῆσδε δρῶν ἀρκεῖς τάδε;*

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1275 *μητρὸς τόδ' ἔργον ἢ γυναικὸς ἢ τέκνων.*

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

*ταύτης ὁ μόχθος, ὡς λέγεις, θάπτειν πόσιν.*

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

*ἐν εὐσεβεῖ γοῦν νόμιμα μὴ κλέπτειν νεκρῶν.*

HELEN

THEOCLYMENUS

What then? How will you commit these things to the deep?

MENELAUS

We must have a ship and skilled rowers.

THEOCLYMENUS

To take the ship how far out from the land?

MENELAUS

To where you can barely see the waves beating on the shore.

THEOCLYMENUS

Why does Greece observe this custom?

MENELAUS

So that the tide may not wash pollution back to the land.

THEOCLYMENUS

A speedy Phoenician ship will be provided.

MENELAUS

That will be good—and gratifying to Menelaus.

THEOCLYMENUS

Will it not be enough if you perform this task without her?

MENELAUS

It must be done by mother, wife, or children.

THEOCLYMENUS

You mean it is her job to bury her husband.

MENELAUS

It is a pious thing not to cheat the dead of their due.

---

1268 ἀπείργειν Matthiae: -ει L

1271 θύματ' Hermann

## EURIPIDES

## ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

- ἴτω πρὸς ἡμῶν ἄλοχον εὐσεβῆ τρέφειν.  
 ἔλθων δ' ἐς οἴκους ἐξελοῦ κόσμον νεκρῶ·  
 1280 καὶ σ' οὐ κεναῖσι χερσὶ γῆς ἀποστελῶ,  
 δράσαντα τῆδε πρὸς χάριν φήμας δ' ἐμοὶ  
 ἐσθλὰς ἐνεγκῶν ἀντὶ τῆς ἀχλαινίας  
 ἐσθῆτα λήψη σῖτά θ', ὥστε σ' ἐς πάτραν  
 ἐλθεῖν, ἐπεὶ νῦν γ' ἀθλίως <σ'> ἔχονθ' ὀρώ.  
 1285 σὺ δ', ὦ τάλαινα, μὴ πὶ τοῖς ἀνηνύτοις  
 τρύχουσα σαντῆν <Μενέλεων ἄγαν στένε·  
 σὺ μὲν βλέπεις φῶς,> Μενέλεως δ' ἔχει πότμον,  
 κοῦκ ἂν δύναίτο ζῆν ὁ κατθανὼν γόοις.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- σὸν ἔργον, ὦ νεᾶνι τὸν παρόντα μὲν  
 στέργειν πόσιν χρή, τὸν δὲ μηκέτ' ὄντ' ἔαν·  
 1290 ἄριστα γάρ σοι ταῦτα πρὸς τὸ τυγχάνον.  
 ἦν δ' Ἑλλάδ' ἔλθω καὶ τύχῳ σωτηρίας,  
 1293 παύσω ψόγου σε τοῦ πρίν, ἦν γυνὴ γένη  
 1292 οἶαν γενέσθαι χρή σε σῶ ξυνευνέτη.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- ἔσται τάδ' οὐδὲ μέμψεται πόσις ποτὲ  
 1295 ἡμῖν σὺ δ' αὐτὸς ἐγγὺς ὦν εἴσῃ τάδε.  
 ἀλλ', ὦ τάλας, εἴσελθε καὶ λουτρῶν τύχῃ  
 ἐσθῆτά τ' ἐξάλλαξον οὐκ ἐς ἀμβολὰς  
 εὐεργετήσω σ'. εὐμενέστερον γὰρ ἂν  
 τῷ φιλτάτῳ μοι Μενέλεω τὰ πρόσφορα  
 1300 δρώης ἂν, ἡμῶν τυγχάνων οἶων σε χρή.



## HELEN

### THEOCLYMENUS

She may go: it is to my advantage to encourage my wife's piety. Go into the house and choose adornment for the dead man. You also will not be sent away empty-handed once you have performed this service for her. Since you brought good news to me, you will receive clothing to replace your rags, and also food, so that you can return to your own land. Your present state, I see, is a sorry one.

And you, poor lady, do not wear yourself down to no purpose <or grieve excessively for Menelaus: you look on the light,> but he has met his fate, and weeping can never bring him back.

### MENELAUS

Now you know your task, young lady. You must be content with the husband you have and pay no attention to him who is no more. That is the best you can do in the present circumstances. If I reach Greece safely, I will free you from the old slander, provided you prove to be a good wife to your husband.

## HELEN

It shall be so: my husband shall have nothing to complain of in me. You yourself shall stand by and be my witness. So, poor man, go in, bathe yourself, and put on fresh clothes. My benefactions to you will begin at once. You will perform the rites for my dear Menelaus in a kindlier spirit if you receive proper treatment from me.

---

1279 ἐξελού Cobet: -ὦ L post h. v. lac. indic. Diggle  
1284 <σ'> Lenting 1286 post σαυτήν lac. indic. Badham,  
suppl. Diggle 1287 γόοις Jackson: πόσις L: πάλιν Reiske  
1293 ante 1292 trai. Canter

στρ. α

- ὀρεία ποτὲ δρομάδι κώ-  
 λῳ Μάτηρ ἐσύθη θεῶν  
 ἀν' ὑλᾶντα νάπη  
 ποτάμιόν τε χεῦμ' ὑδάτων  
 1305 βαρύβρομόν τε κῦμ' ἄλιον  
 πόθῳ τᾶς ἀποιχομένας  
 ἀρρήτον κούρας.  
 κρόταλα δὲ βρόμια διαπρύσιον  
 ἰέντα κέλαδον ἀνεβόα,  
 1310 θηρῶν ὅτε ζυγίους  
 ζεύξασα θεὰ σατίνας  
 τὰν ἀρπασθείσαν κυκλίων  
 χορῶν ἔξω παρθενίων  
 κούραν <ᾠρμα σωσομένα>  
 μετὰ δ' <ἦξαν> ἀελλόποδες,  
 1315 ἃ μὲν τόξοις Ἄρτεμις, ἃ δ'  
 ἔγχει Γοργῶπις πάνοπλος,  
 ἀυγάζων δ' ἐξ οὐρανίων  
 <Ζεὺς ὁ παντάρχας ἐδράνων>

1302 ἐσύθη θεῶν Diggle: θ- ἐ- L

1311 σατίνας Musgrave: -αν L

1314-14a post κούραν et μετὰ δ' lacunas indic. Maas: μετὰ  
κούραν δ' ἀελλόποδες L 1314a <ἦξαν> Maas

1316 Γοργῶπις Heath: Γοργῶ L

1317 post h. v. lac. indic. L. Dindorf in qua Ζεὺς et ἐδράνων  
desiderabat, suppl. Wilamowitz

## HELEN

*Exit into the skene MENELAUS, HELEN, and THEOCLYMENEUS.*

### CHORUS<sup>22</sup>

Once upon a time the mountain-dwelling  
Mother of the Gods rushed on swift feet  
along the wooded glens  
and the gushing streams of water  
and the deep-thundering breakers of the sea  
in longing for her vanished  
daughter whose name is never spoken.<sup>23</sup>  
The roaring cymbals, their sharp note uttering,  
cried aloud  
when she yoked her chariot  
with its team of wild beasts  
and <darted off to find> her daughter  
snatched away from the circling  
dances of maidens;  
after her <there darted> on feet like the wind storm  
Artemis with her bow  
and the Grim-eyed One<sup>24</sup> in full armor.  
But looking down from his heavenly <abode  
Zeus the all-ruler>

<sup>22</sup> The Mother of the Gods, whose worship was imported into Greece from Asia Minor, is often called Rhea or Cybele or the Mountain Mother. In this lovely ode she is identified with Demeter, who grieves for her daughter Persephone, abducted by Hades. The ode is only lightly attached to its context, and the idea (1335-7) that Helen is in trouble because of neglect of the goddess is without answering echo elsewhere in the play.

<sup>23</sup> The Athenians avoided calling Persephone by her name, calling her "the Maiden" instead.      <sup>24</sup> Athena.

ἄλλαν μοῖραν ἔκραινεν.

ἀντ. α

- 1320 δρομαῖον τότε πολυπλάνη-  
τον μάτηρ ἔπαυσε πόνον,  
ματεύουσα φίλας  
θυγατρὸς ἀρπαγὰς δολίους,  
χιονοθρέμμονάς τ' ἐπέρας'  
Ἰδαίαν Νυμφᾶν σκοπιὰς
- 1325 ῥίπτει τ' ἐν πένθει  
πέτρινα κατὰ δρῖα πολυνηφέα.  
βροτοῖσι δ' ἄχλοα πεδία γὰς  
<ἔθηκε, πυροφόρους>  
οὐ καρπίζουσ' ἀρότους  
λαῶν δὲ φθείρει γενεάν·
- 1330 ποιίμναις δ' οὐχ ἴει θαλερὰς  
βοσκὰς εὐφύλλων ἐλίκων·  
πόλεων δ' ἀπέλειπε βίος,  
οὐδ' ἦσαν θεῶν θυσίαι,  
βωμοῖς δ' ἄφλεκτοι πελανοί·
- 1335 παγὰς δ' ἀμπαύει δροσερὰς  
λευκῶν ἐκβάλλειν ὑδάτων  
πένθει παιδὸς ἀλάστῳ.

στρ. β

ἐπεὶ δ' ἔπασσ' εἰλαπίνας

1319-20 δρομαῖον . . . πολυπλάνητον . . . πόνον Murray  
(δρομαῖον iam Herwerden, πόνον Nauck): -αίων . . . -ήτων . . .  
-ων L            1319 τότε Diggle: δ' ὅτε L

## HELEN

brought a different fate to fulfillment.

Then her labor of aimless rushing about  
the mother brought to an end,  
the search for her dear  
daughter, craftily taken away.

As she passed through the snow-nurturing  
peaks where the nymphs of Ida keep watch,  
she hurled herself in grief  
down the stony copses filled with snow.

For mortals all grassless the fields  
<she rendered and>

did not make fertile their <grain-bearing> lands:  
she was destroying the human race.

For the herds she did not send  
the increase of their fodder in shoot and leaf;  
the cities' food was running out,  
the gods had no sacrifices,  
and on their altars no cakes flamed;  
the dewy springs of clear water  
she ceased to pour forth  
in grief unassuageable for her daughter.

When she had stopped all feasting

- 1321 φίλας Nauck: πόρους L      1323 τ' Elmsley: δ' L  
1325 τ' Elmsley: δ' L      1327 post h. v. lac. indic. Maas  
1328 ἀρότους Maas: -οις L  
1329 γενεάν Seidler: γένναν L  
1334 δ' Murray: τ' L  
1335 δ' Hartung: τ' L  
1336b ἀλάστῳ L. Dindorf: -τωρ L

- θεοῖς βροτείῳ τε γένει,  
 Ζεὺς μειλίσσων στυγίους
- 1340 Ματρὸς ὀργὰς ἐπέει·  
 Βᾶτε, σεμναὶ Χάριτες,  
 ἴτε, τᾶ περὶ παρθένῳ  
 Δηοῖ θυμωσαμένα  
 λύπαν ἐξαιρείτ' ἀλαλᾶ,
- 1345 Μοῦσαί θ' ὕμνοισι χορῶν.  
 χαλκοῦ δ' αὐδὰν χθονίαν  
 τύπανά τ' ἔλαβε βυρσοτενῆ  
 καλλίστα τότε πρῶτα μακά-  
 ρων Κύπρις· γέλασεν δὲ θεὰ
- 1350 δέξατό τ' ἐς χέρα  
 βαρύβρομον αὐ-  
 λὸν τερφθέϊσ' ἀλαλαγμῶ.

ἀντ. β

- †ὦν οὐ θέμις οὔθ' ὅσια  
 ἐπύρωσας ἐν θαλάμοις, †
- 1355 μῆνιν δ' ἔσχεσ μεγάλας  
 Ματρὸς, ᾧ παῖ, θυσίας  
 οὐ σεβίζουσα θεᾶς.  
 μέγα τοι δύννεται νεβρῶν

1342-3 τᾶ . . . Δηοῖ Musgrave: τὰν . . . Δηίῳ L

1344 ἐξαιρείτ' Willink: ἐξαλλάξατ' L

1345 χορῶν Matthiae: -ὸν L

1347 τ' ἔλαβε Hermann: τε λάβετε L

1349 δὲ Seidler: τε L

1350 χέρα Hermann: -ας L

## HELEN

by gods and mortal men,  
Zeus trying to soften the grim  
wrath of the Mother said,  
"Go, you august Graces,  
go and from the heart  
of Deo<sup>25</sup> angered for her daughter  
drive the grief by loud cries,  
and you, Muses, by dance and song."  
It was then that Cypris, loveliest of the blessed ones,  
first took up the rumbling voice of bronze  
and the drums of stretched hide.  
The goddess laughed  
and took into her hand  
the deep-sounding pipe,  
delighting in its loud cry.

Right and holiness neglecting,  
you tarried nightlong in your chamber<sup>26</sup>  
and have incurred the wrath of the Great  
Mother, my child, by not honoring  
the goddess' sacrifices.  
Great is the power of the dappled

<sup>25</sup> Another name for Demeter.

<sup>26</sup> These two lines, together with the last three of this stanza, are desperately corrupt, and not even their approximate sense is known.

---

1353-4 fort. ὁ δ' οὐ θέμις <σ' > οὔθ' ὀσία / νύχουσας ἐν <σοῖς>  
θαλάμοις (<σ' > iam Heinisch, <σοῖς> Hermann)

1355 ἔσχεσ Hermann: ἔχεις L

1358 δύνεται Musgrave: -νται L

## EURIPIDES

- παμποίκιοι στολίδες  
 1360 κισσοῦ τε στεφθεῖσα χλόα  
 νάρθηκας εἰς ἱεροῦς  
 ῥόμβου θ' εἰλισσομένα  
 κύκλιος ἔνοσις αἰθερία  
 βακχεύουσά τ' ἔθειρα Βρομί-  
 1365 ω καὶ παννυχίδες θεᾶς,  
 †εὐδ' δέ νιν ἄμασιν  
 ὑπέρβαλε σελάνα  
 μορφᾶ μόνον ἠὔχεις.†

## EAENH

- τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκους εὐτυχοῦμεν, ᾧ φίλαι·  
 1370 ἢ γὰρ συνεκκλέπτουσα Πρωτέως κόρη  
 πόσιν παρόντα τὸν ἐμὸν ἱστορουμένη  
 οὐκ εἶπ' ἀδελφῶ· κατθανόντα δ' ἠλίου  
 οὐ φησιν ἀγὰς εἰσορᾶν ἐμὴν χάριν.  
 κάλλιστα δ' αὖ τήνδ' ἤρπασεν τύχην πόσις·  
 1375 ἂ γὰρ καθήσειν ὄπλ' ἔμελλεν εἰς ἄλα,  
 ταῦτ' ἐμβαλὼν πόρπακι γενναίαν χέρα  
 αὐτὸς κομίζει δόρυ τε δεξιᾷ λαβῶν,  
 ὡς τῶ θανόντι χάριτα δὴ συνεκπονῶν.  
 προύργου δ' ἐς ἀλκὴν σῶμ' ὄπλοις ἠσκήσατο,  
 1380 ὡς βαρβάρων τροπαῖα μυρίων χερὶ  
 θήσων, ὅταν κωπῆρες ἐσβῶμεν σκάφος.

1360 κισσοῦ Musgrave: -ῶ L 1366-8 fort. εὔτε σὺν  
 ἄρμασι / πρέπη σελά- / να ἔν ὄρφνα μελαναυγεί (εὔτε et  
 ἄρμασι Heath, ὄρφνα μελαναυγεί Hermann)



HELEN

garb of deerskin,  
 the ivy shoots wound about  
 the sanctified hollow reed,  
 the din in the air  
 of the bull-roarer whirled in a circle,  
 the long hair leaping in bacchic joy  
 for Bromius, and the goddess' nightlong feasts<sup>27</sup>  
 when the moon  
 with her chariot shines forth  
 in the dark gloom of night.

*Enter from the palace HELEN.*

HELEN

My friends, events in the house have gone well for us. Proteus' daughter, who joins in concealing my husband's arrival, did not tell her brother, but when questioned said for my sake that he was dead and no longer saw the light of the sun. My husband for his part has snagged a fine bit of luck here: the armor he was to sink into the sea he is bringing himself, and he has his noble arm through the shield strap and the spear in his right hand, pretending to join in pleasing the dead man. And most conveniently for battle he wears the defensive panoply, meaning to make countless barbarians turn tail and run when we board the vessel.

<sup>27</sup> The cult of Rhea is here assimilated to the cult of Dionysus. For a similar mixture see *Bacchae* 78–134.

<sup>1372</sup> ἡλίου Wecklein: ἐν χθονὶ L

<sup>1374</sup> δ' αὖ τήνδ' ἤρπασεν τύχην Willink (δ' αὖ) et Wecklein:  
 δῆτ' ἀνῆρπασ' ἐν τύχη L

## EURIPIDES

πέπλους δ' ἀμείψασ' ἀντὶ ναυφθόρου στολῆς  
 ἐγὼ νιν ἐξήσκησα καὶ λουτροῖς χρῶα  
 ἔδωκα, χρόνια νίπτρα ποταμίας δρόσου.

- 1385 ἄλλ', ἐκπερᾶ γὰρ δωμάτων ὁ τοὺς ἐμοὺς  
 γάμους ἐτοίμους ἐν χεροῖν ἔχειν δοκῶν,  
 σιγητέον μοι καὶ σὲ προσποιούμεθα  
 <δόλου συνεργὸν τοῦδέ μοι μένειν δὲ χρῆ>  
 εὖνουν κρατεῖν τε στόματος, ἦν δυνώμεθα  
 σωθέντες αὐτοὶ καὶ σὲ συσσωσαί ποτε.

## ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

- 1390 χωρεῖτ' ἐφεξῆς, ὡς ἔταξεν ὁ ξένος,  
 δμῶες, φέροντες ἐνάλια κτερίσματα.  
 Ἐλένη, σὺ δ', ἦν σοι μὴ κακῶς δόξω λέγειν,  
 πείθου, μὲν' αὐτοῦ ταῦτα γὰρ παροῦσά τε  
 πράξεις τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν σὸν ἦν τε μὴ παρῆς.  
 1395 δέδοικα γάρ σε μὴ τις ἐμπεσῶν πόθος  
 πείση μεθεῖναι σῶμ' ἐς οἶδμα πόντιον  
 τοῦ πρόσθεν ἀνδρὸς χάρισιν ἐκπεπληγμένην  
 ἄγαν γὰρ αὐτὸν οὐ παρόνθ' ὅμως στένεις.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 1400 ὦ καινὸς ἡμῖν πόσις, ἀναγκαίως ἔχει  
 τὰ πρῶτα λέκτρα νυμφικὰς θ' ὁμιλίας  
 τιμᾶν· ἐγὼ δὲ διὰ τὸ μὲν στέργειν πόσιν  
 καὶ ξυνθάνομι' ἄν' ἀλλὰ τίς κείνῳ χάρις  
 ξὺν κατθανόντι κατθανεῖν <μ'>; ἔα δέ με  
 αὐτὴν μολοῦσαν ἐντάφια δοῦναι νεκρῷ.

## HELEN

I took off his shipwrecked clothes and gave him fine new ones, and bathed him, fresh water at last from a stream.

But since he is coming out, the man who thinks he has me safely in his possession, I must say nothing. I call on you <to help in this deception: you must remain> well-disposed toward me and hold your tongue. It may be that when we ourselves have escaped we will be able to rescue you as well.

*Enter from the palace THEOCLYMENUS followed by MENELAUS, now dressed in new clothes and armor, who heads the party of servants bringing offerings.*

### THEOCLYMENUS

Servants, you are to go in good order and carry these offerings for a sea funeral according to the foreigner's instructions!

Helen, if you think my advice is not bad, do as I say and stay here. Whether you are present or not you will do the same service to your husband. I am afraid that you will be seized by a desire to throw yourself into the waves, overcome by the memory of the joy you had in him. Though he is gone, you still mourn him too much.

### HELEN

My new husband, it is inevitable that I honor my first marriage and the love I gave him as his bride. For the love of my husband I would even die. But what favor is it to him to join him in death? Let me go and give funeral honors to the

---

1387 post h. v. lac. indic. Hartung, suppl. Diggle

1399 *καινός* Reiske: *κλεινός* L

1403 <μ'> Lenting

## EURIPIDES

- 1405 θεοὶ δὲ σοὶ τε δοῖεν οἷ' ἐγὼ θέλω,  
καὶ τῷ ξένῳ τῷδ', ὅτι συνεκπονεῖ τάδε.  
ἕξεις δέ μ' οἶαν χρή σ' ἔχειν ἐν δώμασιν  
γυναῖκ', ἐπειδὴ Μενέλεων εὐεργετείς  
κάμ'. ἔρχεται γὰρ δὴ τιν' ἐς τύχην τάδε.  
1410 ὅστις δὲ δώσει ναῦν ἐν ἧ' τάδ' ἄξομεν,  
πρόσταξον, ὡς ἂν τὴν χάριν πλήρη λάβω.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

χώρει σὺ καὶ ναῦν τοῖσδε πεντηκόντερον  
Σιδωνίαν δὸς κἀρετῶν ἐπιστάτας.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐκ οὐκ ὄδ' ἄρξει ναὸς ὅς κοσμεῖ τάφον;

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

- 1415 μάλιστ' ἀκούειν τοῦδε χρή ναύτας ἐμούς.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

αὐθις κέλευσον, ἵνα σαφῶς μάθωσί σου.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

αὐθις κελεύω καὶ τρίτον γ', εἴ σοι φίλον.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὄναιο· καγὼ τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

μή νυν ἄγαν σὸν δάκρυσιν ἐκτήξῃς χροά.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 1420 ἦδ' ἡμέρα σοι τὴν ἐμὴν δείξει χάριν.

HELEN

dead man myself. May the gods grant you the blessings I wish you, and likewise this stranger here, for helping us in the task! You will find me to be the kind of wife you ought to have in your house since you are benefitting Menelaus and me. Things are working out for the best. But just tell someone to give us a ship to carry these offerings, and my pleasure will be full.

THEOCLYMENUS

(*to a servant*) Go and give them a Sidonian penteconter and rowers.

HELEN

Shouldn't the one conducting the funeral command the ship?

THEOCLYMENUS

Of course: my sailors must obey his orders.

HELEN

Tell him again, so that they may get your instructions clear.

THEOCLYMENUS

I give the order again and three times, if you like.

HELEN

Blessings on you! And may the task I have in mind bring me blessing!

THEOCLYMENUS

So do not waste your cheeks with too much weeping.

HELEN

This day will show you how grateful I am!

<sup>1407</sup>  $\chi\rho\eta\sigma'$  Matthiae:  $\chi\rho\eta\nu$  L

<sup>1415</sup>  $\chi\rho\eta$  Reiske:  $\chi\rho\eta\nu$  L

EURIPIDES

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τὰ τῶν θανόντων οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἄλλως πόνος.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἴεστιν τι κακῆὶ κἀνθάδ' ὧν ἐγὼ λέγω.†

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

οὐδὲν κακίῳ Μενέλεώ μ' ἕξεις πόσιν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐδὲν σὺ μεμπτός· τῆς τύχης με δεῖ μόνον.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1425 ἐν σοὶ τόδ', ἣν σὴν εἰς ἔμ' εὐνοίαν διδώς.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

οὐ νῦν διδαξόμεσθα τοὺς φίλους φιλεῖν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

βούλη ξυνεργῶν αὐτὸς ἐκπέμψω στόλον;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἤκιστα· μὴ δούλευε σοῖς δούλοις, ἄναξ.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἶα· τοὺς μὲν Πελοπιδῶν ἐὼ νόμους·

1430 καθαρὰ γὰρ ἡμῖν δώματ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐνθάδε  
ψυχὴν ἀφήκε Μενέλεως· ἴτω δέ τις  
φράσων ὑπάρχοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς φέρειν γάμων  
ἀγάλματ' οἴκους εἰς ἐμούς· πᾶσαν δὲ χρῆ  
1435 ὑμέναιος Ἑλένης κἀμὸς ὡς ζηλωτὸς ἦ.

<sup>1422</sup> κακῆὶ κἀνθάδ', ὡς Herwerden

HELEN

THEOCLYMENUS

Care for the dead is labor wasted.

HELEN

What we do here has some effect, I think, on the other world.

THEOCLYMENUS

You will find me no worse a husband than Menelaus.

HELEN

I find no fault with you. All I need now is fortune's blessing.

THEOCLYMENUS

That lies in your own hands: just show your good will toward me.

HELEN

I do not have to be taught at this point to love my friends.

THEOCLYMENUS

Do you want me to conduct this expedition myself and help you?

HELEN

Certainly not! No need to serve your own slaves, my lord!

THEOCLYMENUS

Very well, then. The rituals of the sons of Pelops I shall leave to you: my own house is free of stain since Menelaus did not die here. But let someone go and tell my subjects to bring wedding decorations into the house! All the land must be filled with the sound of happy singing so that Helen's marriage and mine may be truly enviable.

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<sup>1424</sup> με δεῖ Musgrave: μέλει L  
χρηῆν L

<sup>1433</sup> χρηῆ Matthiae:  
<sup>1435</sup> ὑμέναιος . . . κάμδος Paley: -ον . . . -ὸν L

## EURIPIDES

- σὺ δ', ὦ ξέν', ἐλθὼν πελαγίους ἐς ἀγκάλας  
 τῷ τῆσδε πρὶν ποτ' ὄντι δούς πόσει τάδε  
 πάλιν πρὸς οἴκους σπεύδ' ἐμὴν δάμαρτ' ἔχων,  
 ὡς τοὺς γάμους τοὺς τῆσδε συνδαίσας ἐμοὶ  
 1440 στέλλῃ πρὸς οἴκους ἢ μένων εὐδαιμονῆς.

## MENEΛΑΟΣ

- ὦ Ζεῦ, πατήρ τε καὶ σοφὸς κλήζῃ θεός,  
 βλέπον πρὸς ἡμᾶς καὶ μετάστησον κακῶν.  
 ἔλκουσι δ' ἡμῖν πρὸς λέπας τὰς συμφορὰς  
 σπουδῇ σύναψαι· κἂν ἄκρα θίγῃς χερί,  
 1445 ἤξομεν ἴν' ἐλθεῖν βουλόμεσθα τῆς τύχης.  
 ἄλις δὲ μόχθων οὖς ἐμοχθοῦμεν πάρος.  
 κέκλησθέ μοι, θεοί, πόλλ' ἄχρηστά που κλύειν  
 καὶ λύπρ'· ὀφείλω δ' οὐκ αἰὲν πράσσειν κακῶς,  
 ὀρθῶ δὲ βῆναι ποδί· μίαν δέ μοι χάριν  
 1450 δόντες τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχῆ με θήσετε.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α

- Φοίνισσα Σιδωνιάς ὦ  
 ταχεῖα κόπα, ῥοθίοισι Νηρέως  
 εἰρεσία φίλα,  
 χοραγὲ τῶν καλλιχόρων  
 1455 δελφίνων, ὅταν αὔρας

1441 τε] γὰρ Kirchhoff

1443 λέπας Musgrave: λύπας L

1447 πόλλ' ἄχρηστά που Willink: πολλὰ χρήστ' ἐμοῦ L



HELEN

*Exit a servant by Eisodos B.*

You, stranger, go and deliver these offerings into the arms of the sea to her former husband, then hurry back to the house again with my wife. You will be my guest at the marriage feast and then set out for home, or else stay here and have a happy life.

*Exit THEOCLYMENUS into the skene.*

MENELAUS

O Zeus, since you are called father and wise god, look on us and rescue us from trouble. As we pull our misfortunes up the steep cliff, help us with your good will! If you touch us with just the tip of your finger, we will arrive at the good fortune we desire. We have suffered enough in the past! You gods, I have called you many hard and unpleasant names. But I should not always be unfortunate but should be allowed to walk erect. If you grant me this one favor, you will make me blessed for all time to come.

*Exit MENELAUS and HELEN with servants by Eisodos A.*

CHORUS

O swift ship  
of Sidon in Phoenicia, oared vessel  
dear to Nereus' waves,  
you lead in their lovely dances  
the graceful dolphins when the sea

---

1452 Νηρέως Badham cl. IT 425-6: μῆρ̄ (h. e. μήτηρ) L

1455 αἴρας Badham: -αις L

- πέλαγος ἀνήνεμον ἦ,  
 γλαυκὰ δὲ Πόντου θυγάτηρ  
 Γαλάνεια τὰδ' εἶπη·  
 Κατὰ μὲν ἰστία πετάσειτ' αὖ-  
 1460 ραις πλέοντες εἰναλίσαις,  
 λάβετε δ' εἰλατίνας πλάτας,  
 ὦ ναῦται <ἴτε> ναῦται,  
 πέμποντες εὐλιμένους  
 Περσείων οἴκων Ἑλέναν ἐπ' ἀκτάς.
- ἀντ. α
- 1465 ἦ που κόρας ἂν ποταμοῦ  
 παρ' οἶδμα Λευκιππίδας ἦ πρὸ ναοῦ  
 Παλλάδος ἂν λάβοι,  
 χρόνῳ ξυνελθοῦσα χοροῖς  
 ἦ κώμοις Ἑακίνθου  
 1470 νύχιον ἐς εὐφροσύναν,  
 ὃν ἐξαμιλλασάμενος  
 τροχὸν ἀτέρμονα δίσκου  
 ἔκανε Φοῖβος, εἶτα Λακαί-  
 να γὰ βούθυτον ἀμέραν  
 1475 ὁ Διὸς εἶπε σέβειν γόνος·  
 μόςχον θ' ἂν λίπειτ' οἴκοις  
 <δέρκοιτ' ἂν Ἑρμιόναν,>  
 ἄς οὔπω πεῦκαι πρὸ γάμων ἔλαμψαν.

1456 ἀνήνεμον Murray: νήνεμον L

1459 πετάσειτ' Willink: -σατ' L

1460 πλέοντες Willink: λιπόντες L

1462 &lt;ἴτε&gt; Jackson cl. Ba. 83

1467 λάβοι Pflugk: -οις L

## HELEN

is calm and windless  
and the Sea's gray-eyed daughter  
Galeneia<sup>28</sup> says:  
"You will spread your sails  
and run before the sea breezes,  
but take now your oars of pine,  
O sailors, <go> sailors,  
as you bring Helen home to the fair-harbored strand  
settled by Perseus."

I think she will find the daughters  
of Leucippus by the river or before  
the temple of Pallas,  
as she arrives home at the time of the dances  
or revels of Hyacinth  
and their nightlong feasting,  
Hyacinth, whom Phoebus,  
trying to hurl far the round discus,  
killed, and thereafter to the land  
of Lacedaemon the son of Zeus  
gave order to keep a day of sacrifice.  
And <she may see> the calf she left  
in the house, <Hermione,>  
whose marriage torches have not yet gleamed.

<sup>28</sup> Goddess of windless calm.

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<sup>1470</sup> εὐφροσύναν Matthiae: -φρόναν L

<sup>1472</sup> τροχὸν ἀτέρμονα Willink: τροχῶ τέρμονι L

<sup>1473</sup> εἶτα Willink: τᾶ L: ὄθεν Hermann

<sup>1475</sup> Διὸς Heath: Δ- δ' L

<sup>1476</sup> λίπειτ' Jackson: λίποιτ' L post h. v. lac. indic. Heath

στρ. β

- δι' αἰθέρος εἶθε ποτανοὶ  
 γενοίμεθ' ὅπα Λιβύας  
 1480 οἰωνῶν στιχάδες  
 ὄμβρον χειμέριον λιπού-  
 σαι νίσονται πρεσβυτάτου  
 σύριγγι πειθόμεναι  
 1485 ποιμένος, ὃς ἄβροχα πεδία καρποφόρα τε γὰς  
 ἐπιπετόμενος ἰαχεῖ.  
 ᾧ πταναὶ δολιχαύχενες,  
 σύννομοι νεφέων δρόμου,  
 βᾶτε Πλειάδας ὑπὸ μέσας  
 1490 Ὀρίωνά τ' ἐννύχιον,  
 καρύξατ' ἀγγελίαν,  
 Εὐρώταν ἐφεζόμεναι,  
 Μενέλεως ὅτι Δαρδάνου  
 πόλιν ἐλὼν δόμον ἤξει.

ἀντ. β

- 1495 μόλοιτέ ποθ' ἵππιον οἶμον  
 δι' αἰθέρος ἰέμενοι  
 παῖδες Τυνδαρίδαι,  
 λαμπρῶν ἀστέρων ὑπ' ἀέλ-  
 λαις οἱ ναίετ' οὐράνιοι,  
 1500 σωτήρη τὰς Ἑλένας  
 ἄλιον ἐπ' οἶδμα κυανόχροά τε κυμάτων

<sup>1478</sup> αἰθέρος J. H. H. Schmidt: ἀέρος L      <sup>1479</sup> γενοίμεθ'  
 ὅπα Pearson: -μεθα L      Λιβύας Hartung: Λίβυες L

## HELEN

Could I but wing through the firmament  
 to where the Libyan  
 birds, rank on rank,  
 fleeing the wintry weather,  
 fly obedient  
 to the piping of their eldest,  
 their shepherd, who flies to the rainless and fruitful lands  
 and shrills as he goes!  
 O winging long-necks,  
 consorts of the racing clouds,  
 pass beneath the Pleiades in mid sky  
 and Orion aloft in the night  
 and speak out your news,  
 as you settle on the Eurotas,  
 that Menelaus, having taken Dardanus' city,  
 will be coming home.

On the path your horses make  
 go winging through the heavens,  
 you sons of Tyndareus,  
 who dwell above under the whirling  
 of the bright stars:  
 go as Helen's saviors  
 over the salty billows and the dark

---

1480 οἰωνῶν Bothe: -οὶ L     στιχάδες Burges: στολάδες L

1481 ὄμβρον χειμέρον λιπούσαι Hermann: ὄ- λ- χ- L

1482 πρεσβυτάτου Paley: -τάτα L

1495 οἶμον Blaydes: οἶμα L

1500 σωτήρη Musgrave: -ες L     τᾶς] βᾶθ' Kannicht

1501 ἄλιον ἐπ' οἶδμα Fritzsche: γλαυκὸν ἐπ' οἶδμ' ἄλιον L

EURIPIDES

- ῥόθια πολιά θαλάσσας,  
 ναύταις εὐαεῖς ἀνέμων  
 1505 πέμποντες Διόθεν πνοάς,  
 δύσκλειαν δ' ἀπὸ συγγόνου  
 βάλετε βαρβάρων λεχέων,  
 ἂν Ἰδαιῶν ἐρίδων  
 ποιναθείσ' ἐκτήσατ' ἄγαν,  
 1510 οὐκ ἔλθοῦσά ποτ' Ἴλίου  
 Φοιβείους ἐπὶ πύργους.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

† ἄναξ, τὰ κάκιστ' ἐν δόμοις εὐρήκαμεν·†  
 ὡς καὶν' ἀκούσῃ πῆματ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ τάχα.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

- ἄλλης ἐκπώνει μνηστεύματα  
 1515 γυναικός· Ἐλένη γὰρ βέβηκ' ἔξω χθονός.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

πτεροῖσιν ἀρθεῖσ' ἢ πεδοστιβεῖ ποδί;

1508 Ἰδαιῶν Diggle: -δαίων L

1509 ἐκτήσατ' ἄγαν Willink: -σατο τὰν L

1510 ἔλθοῦσά ποτ' Bothe: -σαν ἐς L

1512 del. Dindorf ut lacunae resarciendae gratia confictum

## HELEN

gray waves of the sea,  
bringing the sailors  
fair breezes from Zeus.  
Strike from your sister's name  
the reproach of a barbarian marriage,  
reproach she had to bear in full measure,  
punishment for the strife on Ida,  
though she never went to the towers  
of Troy built by Phoebus.

*Enter from the skene THEOCLYMENUS. Enter by Eisodos  
A a servant of Theoclymenus as MESSENGER.*

### MESSENGER

[My lord, we have found things very ill in the house.]<sup>29</sup> So  
strange is the trouble you will soon hear from me.

### THEOCLYMENUS

What is it?

### MESSENGER

Arrange for a marriage with someone else: Helen has left  
the country!

### THEOCLYMENUS

Flying on wings, or walking on the earth?

<sup>29</sup> This line, which is deficient both in meter and in sense, was doubtless intended as a stopgap replacement for several lines lost accidentally. We would expect the entrance of Theoclymenus to be handled roughly thus: <MESS: Where's the king? I must speak with him. CHO. LEADER: Here, he's just coming out. MESS: My lord, I have just come from the seashore with news. THEO: News of the funeral rites of Menelaus? MESS: News to astonish you,> so strange is the trouble you will soon hear from me.

## EURIPIDES

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Μενέλαος αὐτὴν ἐκπεπόρθμενται χθονός,  
ὃς αὐτὸς αὐτὸν ἦλθεν ἀγγέλλων θανεῖν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1520 ὦ δεινὰ λέξας· τίς δέ νιν ναυκληρία  
ἐκ τῆσδ' ἀπήρε χθονός; ἄπιστα γὰρ λέγεις.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἦν γε ξένω δίδως σύ· τοὺς δὲ σοὺς ἐλὼν  
ναύτας βέβηκεν, ὡς ἂν ἐν βραχεῖ μάθης.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1525 πῶς; εἰδέναι πρόθυμος· οὐ γὰρ ἐλπίδων  
ἔσω βέβηκε μίαν ὑπερδραμεῖν χέρα  
τοσοῦσδε ναύτας ὧν ἀπεστάλης μετὰ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐπεὶ λιπούσα τούσδε βασιλείους δόμους  
ἢ τοῦ Διὸς παῖς πρὸς θάλασσαν ἐστάλη,  
σοφώταθ' ἀβρὸν πόδα τιθείσ' ἀνέστενευ  
πόσιν πέλας παρόντα κού τεθνηκότα.

1530 ὡς δ' ἦλθομεν σῶν περίβολον νεωρίων,  
Σιδωνίαν ναῦν πρωτόπλου καθείλκομεν  
ζυγῶν τε πεντήκοντα κἀρετμῶν μέτρα  
ἔχουσαν. ἔργου δ' ἔργον ἐξημείβετο·

1535 ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἰστόν, ὁ δὲ πλάτην καθίστατο  
†ταρσόν τε χειρὶ† λευκά θ' ἰστί† τῆς ἐν ἦν†  
πηδάλιά τε ζεύγλαισι παρακαθίετο.

κάν τῶδε μόχθῳ, τοῦτ' ἄρα σκοπούμενοι,  
Ἕλληνες ἄνδρες Μενέλεω ξυνέμποροι



## HELEN

### MESSENGER

Menelaus has ferried her out of the land, Menelaus who came bearing the news of his own death!

### THEOCLYMENUS

This is dreadful! What ship carried them from here? Your report is incredible.

### MESSENGER

The ship you gave the foreigner. He took your sailors captive and has gone. That is the story in brief.

### THEOCLYMENUS

How? I must know. It is beyond all reckoning that one man should overcome so many sailors, the whole crew that went with you.

### MESSENGER

Zeus's daughter left the palace and set off for the sea, and as she walked delicately along she cleverly lamented for her husband—who was not dead but nearby. When we reached your dockyard walls, we launched a new Sidonian vessel fitted for fifty rowers. And now one task succeeded another. One man put on board the mast, and another the oars; the white sails were put in place, and the rudders were let down into the sea on their crossbars.

While the men were performing these tasks, some Greeks, Menelaus' crew, who it seems had been waiting

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1521 δὲ Kirchhoff: τε L      ἐλὼν Schenk: ἔχων L

1524 βέβηκε Murray: -κα L

1534-5 πλάτης . . . ταρσὸν κατήρη Wecklein

## EURIPIDES

- προσήλθον ἀκτὰς ναυφθόροις ἡσκημένοι  
 1540 πέπλοισιν, εὐειδέϊς μὲν, αὐχμηροὶ δ' ὄραν.  
 ἰδὼν δέ νιν παρόντας Ἀτρέως γόνος  
 προσεῖπε δόλιον οἶκτον ἐς μέσον φέρων·  
 ὦ τλήμονες, πῶς ἐκ τίνος νεὼς ποτε  
 Ἀχαιίδος θραύσαντες ἤκετε σκάφος;  
 1545 ἀλλ' Ἀτρέως παιδ' ὀλόμενον συνθάπτετε,  
 ὃν Τυνδαρὶς παῖς ἦδ' ἀπόντα κενοταφεῖ.  
 οἱ δ' ἐκβαλόντες δάκρυα ποιητῶ τρόπῳ  
 ἐς ναῦν ἐχώρουν Μενέλεω ποντίσματα  
 φέροντες. ἡμῖν δ' ἦν μὲν ἦδ' ὑποψία  
 1550 λόγος τ' ἐν ἀλλήλοισι, τῶν ἐπεσβατῶν  
 ὡς πλήθος εἶη· διεσιωπῶμεν δ' ὅμως  
 τοὺς σοὺς λόγους σφύζοντες· ἄρχειν γὰρ νεὼς  
 ξένον κελεύσας πάντα συνέχεας τάδε.  
 καὶ τᾶλλα μὲν δὴ ραδίως ἔσω νεὼς  
 1555 ἐθέμεθα κουφίζοντα· ταύρειος δὲ ποὺς  
 οὐκ ἤθελ' ὀρθὸς σανίδα προσβῆναι κάτα,  
 ἀλλ' ἐξεβρυχᾶτ' ὅμμ' ἀναστρέφων κύκλῳ,  
 κυρτῶν τε νῶτα καὶς κέρας παρεμβλέπων  
 μὴ θιγγάνειν ἀπείργεν. ὁ δ' Ἑλένης πόσις  
 1560 ἐκάλεσεν· ὦ πέρσαντες Ἰλίου πόλιν,  
 οὐχ εἶ' ἀναρπάσαντες Ἑλλήνων νόμῳ  
 νεανίαις ὤμοισι ταύρειον δέμας  
 ἐς πρῶραν ἐμβαλεῖτε (φάσγανον δ' ἅμα  
 πρόχειρον αἶρει) σφάγια τῷ τεθνηκότι;  
 1565 οἱ δ' ἐς κέλευσμ' ἐλθόντες ἐξανήρπασαν  
 ταῦρον φέροντές τ' εἰσέθεντο σέλματα.

## HELEN

for this moment, came to the beach. Their clothes had been ruined by shipwreck, and although they were handsome, their appearance was squalid. Atreus' son saw them arrive and called to them, producing a deceptive display of pity: "Poor men, from what Greek vessel were you shipwrecked? But help me bury the son of Atreus, who has died. Tyndareus' daughter here is giving him a funeral in effigy."

The men shed feigned tears and embarked, bringing offerings to throw overboard for Menelaus. We began to be suspicious and noted to each other the large number of passengers we had taken on. But with your commands in mind we raised no objection: it was you who ruined it all by putting the foreigner in charge of the ship.

All the other things, which were light, we easily brought on board. But the bull refused to walk straight up the plank. He bellowed, rolling his eyes and arching his back. He looked fiercely through his horns, warning us not to touch him. But Helen's husband called out, "Come, sackers of Ilium, pick up the bull, Greek fashion, on your young shoulders and put him in the prow," and here he raised his drawn sword, "as an offering to the dead man."

They obeyed his order, picked up the bull, and set it amid the rowing benches. As for the horse, Menelaus

1539 ἀκτὰς Heiland: -αῖς L      ἡσκημένοι Porson: ἦσθ- L

1543 νεώς] fort. πόλεως

1545 ἀλλ' Zuntz: ἄρ' L

1550 τ' L. Dindorf: δ' L

1563 δ' Diggle: τ' L

1564 αἶρει Hartung: ὄσει L

EURIPIDES

- μονάμπυκος δὲ Μενέλεως ψήχων δέρην  
 μέτωπά τ' ἐξέπεισεν ἐσβῆναι δόρῳ.  
 τέλος δ', ἐπειδὴ ναῦς τὰ πάντ' ἐδέξατο,  
 1570 πλήσασα κλιμακτῆρας εὐσφύρω ποδὶ  
 Ἑλένη καθέζετ' ἐν μέσοις ἐδωλίοις  
 ὃ τ' οὐκέτ' ὦν λόγοισι Μενέλεως πέλας·  
 ἄλλοι δὲ τοίχους δεξιούς λαιούς τ' ἴσοι  
 ἀνὴρ παρ' ἀνδρ' ἔζονθ', ὑφ' εἵμασι ξίφη  
 1575 λαθραῖ' ἔχοντες, ρόθιά τ' ἐξεπίμπλατο  
 βοῆς, κελευστοῦ φθέγμαθ' ὡς ἠκούσαμεν.  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ γαίας ἦμεν οὔτ' ἄγαν πρόσω  
 οὔτ' ἐγγύς, οὔτως ἦρετ' οἰάκων φύλαξ·  
 Ἔτ', ὦ ξέν', ἐς τὸ πρόσθεν—ἦ καλῶς ἔχει;—  
 1580 πλεύσωμεν; ἀρχαὶ γὰρ νεὼς μέλουσι σοί.  
 ὁ δ' εἶφ' Ἄλις μοι. δεξιᾶ δ' ἐλὼν ξίφος  
 ἐς πρῶραν εἶρπε κἀπὶ ταυρείῳ σφαγῇ  
 σταθεὶς νεκρῶν μὲν οὐδενὸς μνήμην ἔχει,  
 τέμνων δὲ λαιμὸν ἠὔχετ' ὦ ναίων ἄλα  
 1585 πόντιε Πόσειδον Νηρέως θ' ἀγναὶ κόραι,  
 σώσατέ μ' ἐπ' ἀκτὰς Ναυπλίας δάμαρτά τε  
 ἄστυλον ἐκ γῆς. αἵματος δ' ἀπορροαὶ  
 ἐς οἶδμ' ἐσηκόντιζον οὔριοι ξένῳ.  
 καὶ τις τόδ' εἶπε· Δόλιος ἦ ναυκληρία.  
 1590 πάλιν πλέωμεν· δεξιᾶν κέλευε σύ,  
 σὺ δὲ στρέφ' οἶακ'. ἐκ δὲ ταυρείου φόνου·  
 Ἄτρεως σταθεὶς παῖς ἀνεβόησε συμμάχους·  
 Τί μέλλετ', ὦ γῆς Ἑλλάδος λωτίσματα,  
 σφάζειν φονεύειν βαρβάρους νεὼς τ' ἀπο

stroked its neck and forehead and persuaded it to get on board. Finally, when the ship had received all its cargo, Helen, climbing the ladder with her dainty feet, sat down in the middle of the rowing benches, and next to her sat Menelaus, the supposed dead man. The rest of the Greeks sat down in close formation on the right and left bulkheads, with swords hidden beneath their cloaks. The surge was filled with our shouting as we obeyed the boatswain's orders.

When we were neither too far from the land nor too near, the steersman asked, "Stranger, shall we row further, or is this good enough? You are in charge of the boat." And Menelaus replied, "That's enough." Then taking his sword in his right hand he went up to the prow. Standing there for the bull sacrifice he said nothing about any dead man but as he cut its throat he prayed, "O Poseidon, dweller in the sea, and all you holy daughters of Nereus, bring me and my wife safe and inviolate from this land to Nauplia's shore!" The streams of blood leapt from the animal's neck into the water, a good omen for the foreigner.

Someone said, "This voyage is a trick. Let's row back to land! You, order the ship to starboard, and you, turn the rudder!" But Atreus' son, the bull sacrifice completed, shouted to his friends from where he stood, "Picked fighting men of Greece, no more delaying now! Kill, cut down the barbarians, throw them from the ship into the brine!"

1567-8 del. W. G. Clark

1567 *μονάμπυκος* Schenkl: -ον L

1576 *κελευστοῦ* Pierson: *κελεύθου* L

1583 *ἔχει* Murray: *ἔχων* L

1588 *οὔριοι* Elmsley: -ια L

1590 *δεξιὰν* Faehse: *ἀξίαν* L

## EURIPIDES

- 1595 *ρίπτειν ἐς οἶδμα; ναυβάταις δὲ τοῖσι σοῖς  
βοῶ̄ κελουστῆς τὴν ἐναντίαν ὄπα·  
Οὐχ εἶ' ὁ μὲν τις λοῖσθον ἀρείται δόρυ,  
ὁ δὲ ζύγ' ἄξας, ὁ δ' ἀφελὼν σκαλμοῦ πλάτην  
καθαιματώσει κρᾶτα πολεμίων ξένων;*
- 1600 *ὀρθοὶ δ' ἀνῆξαν πάντες, οἱ μὲν ἐν χεροῖν  
κορμούς ἔχοντες ναυτικούς, οἱ δὲ ξίφη·  
φόνῳ δὲ ναῦς ἐρρείτο. παρακέλευσμα δ' ἦν  
πρύμνηθεν Ἑλένης· Ποῦ τὸ Τρωικὸν κλέος;  
δείξατε πρὸς ἄνδρας βαρβάρους. σπουδῆς δ' ὕπο*
- 1605 *ἔπιπτον, οἱ δ' ὠρθοῦντο, τοὺς δὲ κειμένους  
νεκροὺς ἂν εἶδες. Μενέλεως δ' ἔχων ὄπλα,  
ὄπη νοσοῖεν ξύμμαχοι κατασκοπῶν,  
ταύτη προσῆγε χειρὶ δεξιᾷ ξίφος,  
<πάντας καθιστὰς ἐς φυγὴν ἐναντίους>  
ὥστ' ἐκκολυμβᾶν ναός· ἠρήμωσε δὲ*
- 1610 *σῶν ναυβατῶν ἐρέτμ'· ἐπ' οἰάκων δὲ βὰς  
ἄνακτ' ἐς Ἑλλάδ' εἶπεν εὐθύνειν δόρυ.  
οἱ δ' ἰστὸν ἦραν, οὔριοι δ' ἦκον πνοαί.  
βεβᾶσι δ' ἐκ γῆς. διαφυγῶν δ' ἐγὼ φόνον  
καθῆκ' ἐμαντὸν εἰς ἄλ' ἄγκυραν πάρα·*
- 1615 *ἦδη δὲ κάμνουθ' ὀρμιατόνων μέ τις  
ἀνείλετ' ἐς δὲ γαίαν ἐξέβησέ σοι  
τάδ' ἀγγελοῦντα. σῶφρονος δ' ἀπιστίας  
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν χρησιμώτερον βροτοῖς.*

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

*οὐκ ἂν ποτ' ἠύχουν οὔτε σ' οὔθ' ἡμᾶς λαθεῖν*

## HELEN

The boatswain shouted the opposite order to your sailors, "Quick! You take a spar as a weapon, you break off one of the thwarts, and you take an oar from its thole! Bloody the heads of these foreign enemies!"

Everyone stood up, one side with oars in their hands, the other with swords. The ship ran with blood. Helen from the stern urged them on: "Where is the glory you won at Troy? Show these barbarians!" In the hard fight men fell down or kept their feet, but those who fell you could see were dead. Menelaus, clothed in armor, watched to see where his friends were weakest and there he plied the sword in his right hand, <putting all his adversaries to flight> so that they leapt into the water from the ship: no oar was left with a rower to man it. Going to the steersman he ordered him to make for Greece. His men raised the mast, and the winds blew favorable.

They have left the country. I myself escaped being killed by throwing myself into the sea near the anchor. I was already worn out when a fisherman picked me up and brought me to land to bring you this news. The best thing for a mortal man is to be sober and skeptical.

*Exit MESSENGER by Eisodos B.*

### CHORUS LEADER

I would never have expected, my lord, that Menelaus

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1607 ὄπη Elmsley: ὄποι L

1608 post h. v. lac. indic. Rassow

1612 ἦραν Diggle: ἦρον L οὔριοι Hermann: -αι L

EURIPIDES

1620 Μενέλαον, ὦναξ, ὡς ἐλάνθανεν παρών.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ὦ γυναικείαις τέχναισιν αἰρεθεὶς ἐγὼ τάλας·  
ἐκπεφεύγασιν γάμοι με. κεῖ μὲν ἦν ἀλώσιμος  
ναῦς διώγμασιν, ποιήσας εἶλον ἂν τάχα ξένους·  
νῦν δὲ τὴν προδοῦσαν ἡμᾶς τεισόμεσθα σύγγονον,

1625 ἥτις ἐν δόμοις ὀρώσα Μενέλεων οὐκ εἶπέ μοι.  
τοιγὰρ οὔποτ' ἄλλον ἄνδρα ψεύσεται μαντεύμασιν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

οὔτος, ὦ, ποῖ σὸν πόδ' αἴρεις, δέσποτ', ἐς ποῖον  
φόνον;

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

οἵπερ ἢ δίκη κελεύει μ'. ἀλλ' ἀφίστασ' ἐκποδῶν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

οὐκ ἀφήσομαι πέπλων σῶν· μεγάλα γὰρ σπεύδεις  
κακά.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1630 ἀλλὰ δεσποτῶν κρατήσεις δούλος ὢν;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

φρονῶ γὰρ εὖ.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

οὐκ ἔμοιγ', εἰ μή μ' ἐάσεις...

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

οὐ μὲν οὖν σ' ἐάσομεν.

1627n Θεράπων Clark: Xo. L



## HELEN

could be here without your and our knowing it, but so he was.

### THEOCLYMENUS

Woe is me, undone by womanish tricks! My bride has escaped! If pursuit could catch the ship, I would make the effort and capture these foreigners. But as things are, I will punish the sister who has betrayed me. She saw that Menelaus was in the house but did not tell me. Never will she dupe another man with her prophecies!

*Theoclymenus starts to go inside. Enter from the skene a SECOND SERVANT, who bars his way.*

### SECOND SERVANT

You there, master, where are you going? What murder are you going to commit?

### THEOCLYMENUS

I'm going where justice bids me go. Get out of my way!

### SECOND SERVANT

*(Taking hold of his cloak)* I will not let go of your garments: you are trying to do a grave wrong.

### THEOCLYMENUS

Will you, a slave, control your master?

### SECOND SERVANT

Yes, since I have sense.

### THEOCLYMENUS

Not in my eyes you don't, unless you allow me . . .

### SECOND SERVANT

But I won't allow you.

EURIPIDES

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

. . . σύγγονον κτανεῖν κακίστην . . .

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

εὐσεβεστάτην μὲν οὖν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

. . . ἧ με προύδωκεν . . .

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

καλήν γε προδοσίαν, δίκαια δρᾶν.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

. . . τὰμὰ λέκτρ' ἄλλω διδοῦσα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

τοῖς γε κυριωτέροις.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

1635 κύριος δὲ τῶν ἐμῶν τίς;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

ὄς ἔλαβεν πατρὸς πάρα.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἔδωκεν ἡ τύχη μοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

τὸ δὲ χρεῶν ἀφείλετο.

ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

οὐ σὲ τὰμὰ χρῆ δικάζειν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

ἦν γε βελτίω λέγω.

HELEN

THEOCLYMENUS

. . . to kill my vile sister . . .

SECOND SERVANT

No, your god-fearing sister.

THEOCLYMENUS

. . . who has played traitor to me . . .

SECOND SERVANT

And a noble piece of treachery it was, a righteous act.

THEOCLYMENUS

. . . by giving my bride to another.

SECOND SERVANT

Another with a better claim.

THEOCLYMENUS

Who has a claim to what is mine?

SECOND SERVANT

The man who received her from her father.

THEOCLYMENUS

But chance gave her to me.

SECOND SERVANT

And fate took her away.

THEOCLYMENUS

You should not act as judge in what belongs to me.

SECOND SERVANT

Yes, if I am in the right.

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<sup>1637</sup> λέγω] φρονῶ F. W. Schmidt

## EURIPIDES

### ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

*ἀρχόμεσθ' ἄρ', οὐ κρατούμεν.*

### ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

*ὄσια δρᾶν, τὰ δ' ἔκδικ' οὔ.*

### ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

*καθθανεῖν ἐρᾶν ἔοικας.*

### ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ Β

*κτεῖνε· σύγγονον δὲ σῆν*

- 1640 *οὐ κτενεῖς ἡμῶν ἐκότων ἀλλ' ἔμ'· ὡς πρὸ δεσποτῶν  
τοῖσι γενναίοισι δούλοις εὐκλέεστατον θανεῖν.*

### ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

*ἐπίσχεσ ὀργὰς αἴσι· οὐκ ὀρθῶς φέρη,  
Θεοκλύμενε, γαίης τῆσδ' ἀναξ· δισσοὶ δέ σε  
Διόσκοροι καλοῦμεν, οὓς Λῆδα ποτὲ*

- 1645 *ἔτικτεν Ἑλένην θ', ἣ πέφευγε σοὺς δόμους.*

- 1646 *οὐ γὰρ πεπρωμένοισιν ὀργίζη γάμοις·*

- 1650 *οὐ μὲν γὰρ αἰεὶ, τὸν παρόντα δ' ἐς χρόνον*

*κείνην κατοικεῖν σοῖσιν ἐν δόμοις ἐχρήν.*

*ἐπεὶ δὲ Τροίας ἐξανεστάθη βάρθρα*

*καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς παρέσχε τοῦνομ', οὐκέτι*

*ἐν τοῖσι δ' αὐτοῖς δεῖ νιν ἐξεῦχθαι γάμοις*

- 1655 *ἐλθεῖν τ' ἐς οἴκους καὶ συνοικῆσαι πόσει.*

- 1647 *οὐδ' ἡ θεᾶς Νηρηίδος ἔκγονος κόρη*

*ἀδικεῖ σ' ἀδελφῆ Θεονόη, τὰ τῶν θεῶν*

- 1649 *τιμῶσα πατρός τ' ἐνδίκους ἐπιστολάς.*

1638 τὰ δ' ἔκδικ' οὔ Porson: τάνδ' ἔκδικῶ L

## HELEN

### THEOCLYMENUS

So I am a subject, not the master.

### SECOND SERVANT

You are master—but only to act piously, not wrongfully.

### THEOCLYMENUS

You seem to be in love with death.

### SECOND SERVANT

Kill me! I will not allow you to kill your sister but only me: it is a glorious thing for a noble slave to die for his mistress.

*Enter on the mechane CASTOR and Polydeuces.*

### CASTOR

Theoclymenus, king of this land, halt! Cease from the anger that unjustly controls you! It is the two Dioscuri who call you, sons whom Leda once bore along with Helen, who has fled your house. The marriage you are angry about is one not destined to be. It was not fated that Helen should live for all time in your house but only up to the present: now that Troy's foundations have been destroyed and she has lent her name to the gods, she will live here no longer. She must remain yoked in the same marriage, return home, and live with her husband. And your sister Theonoe, daughter of the Nereid, did you no wrong in honoring the gods' laws and the just behests of her father.

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1640 ἔμ' ὡς Porson: ἐμὲ L

1641 δούλων Dawe

1642<sup>n</sup> Κάστωρ Bothe: Διόσκοροι L

1650-5 post 1646 trai. Kovacs, del. Willink

1650 οὐ . . . δ' ἐς H. Cron: εἰ . . . νῦν L

1647 ἔκγονος Matthiae: -γόνη L

## EURIPIDES

- 1656 ἄλλ' ἴσχε μὲν σῆς συγγόνου μέλαν ξίφος,  
νόμιζε δ' αὐτὴν σωφρόνως πράσσειν τάδε.  
πάλαι δ' ἀδελφὴν κἄν πρὶν ἐξεσώσαμεν,  
ἐπεὶπερ ἡμᾶς Ζεὺς ἐποίησεν θεοῦς·
- 1660 ἄλλ' ἦσσον' ἡμεῖν τοῦ πεπρωμένου θ' ἅμα  
καὶ τῶν θεῶν, οἷς ταῦτ' ἔδοξεν ᾧδ' ἔχειν.  
σοὶ μὲν τὰδ' αὐδῶ, συγγόνῳ δ' ἐμῇ λέγω·  
πλεῖ ξὺν πόσει σῶ· πνεῦμα δ' ἔξειτ' οὐριον·  
σωτῆρε δ' ἡμεῖς σὼ κασιγνήτῳ διπλῷ
- 1665 πόντον παριππεύοντε πέμφομεν πάτραν.  
ὅταν δὲ κάμψῃς καὶ τελευτήσῃς βίον,  
θεὸς κεκλήσῃ [καὶ Διοσκόρων μέτα  
σπονδῶν μεθέξεις] ξενία τ' ἀνθρώπων πάρα  
ἔξεις μεθ' ἡμῶν· Ζεὺς γὰρ ᾧδε βούλεται.
- 1670 οὐ δ' ὄρμισέν σε πρῶτα Μαιάδος τόκος  
Σπάρτης ἀπάρας τὸν κατ' οὐρανὸν δρόμον,  
κλέψας δέμας σὸν μὴ Πάρις γήμειέ σε,  
φρουρὸν παρ' Ἀκτὴν τεταμένην νῆσον λέγω,  
Ἐλένη τὸ λοιπὸν ἐν βροτοῖς κεκλήσεται,
- 1675 ἐπεὶ κλοπαίαν σ' ἐκ δόμων ἐδέξατο.  
καὶ τῷ πλανήτῃ Μενέλεω θεῶν πάρα  
μακάρων κατοικεῖν νῆσόν ἐστι μόρσιμον·  
τοὺς εὐγενεῖς γὰρ οὐ στυγοῦσι δαίμονες,  
τῶν δ' ἀναριθμῆτων μάλλον φείσιν οἱ πόνοι†.

1659 del. Nauck

1660 ἦσσον' Pierson: -νες L

1667b-8a del. F. W. Schmidt

## HELEN

So take your dark sword away from your sister: you must realize that she acted virtuously in this. We might have saved our sister long ago since Zeus made us gods. But we were overruled by fate and the other gods, who decided that these things should be thus.

Those are my words to you. To my sister I say, Sail on with your husband (you will have a favoring breeze), and we, your two brothers, galloping over the sea beside you, will escort you to your own country. When you come to the last lap of your life and die, you will be called a goddess [and in company with the Dioscuri you will receive libations] and like us you will receive gifts from mortals: Zeus wishes it so. The place the son of Maia first brought you on your journey through the sky from Sparta, stealing you away so that Paris might not have you—I mean the island that lies off Akte<sup>30</sup> and guards it—mortals shall henceforth call by the name Helen since it received you stolen from your home. As for the wanderer Menelaus, fate and the gods have ordained for him a life on the Island of the Blest. The gods do not hate the nobly born. But they endure more hardship than do men of no account.

<sup>30</sup> Akte, meaning “promontory” or “headland,” was an older name of Attica.

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1670 ὄρμισέν Rauchenstein: ὄρισέν L

1671 δρόμον Wilamowitz: δόμων L

1673 φρουρὸν Hermann: -οὔ L    τεταμένην Reiske: τεταγ-  
μένη L

1675 κλοπαίαν σ' Herwerden: κλοπὰς L

1679 εἰσιν ἐν πόνοις Madvig: ἀσκούσιν πόνοι Dale

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ΘΕΟΚΛΥΜΕΝΟΣ

- 1680 ὦ παῖδε Λήδας καὶ Διός, τὰ μὲν πάρος  
 νείκη μεθήσω σφῶν κασιγνήτης πέρι·  
 ἐγὼ τ' ἀδελφὴν οὐκέτ' ἂν κτάνοιμ' ἐμήν,  
 κείνη τ' ἴτω πρὸς οἶκον, εἰ θεοῖς δοκεῖ.  
 ἴστον δ' ἀρίστης σωφρονεστάτης θ' ἅμα  
 1685 γεγῶτ' ἀδελφῆς μονογενοῦς† ἀφ' αἵματος.  
 καὶ χαίρεθ' Ἑλένης οὔνεκ' εὐγενεστάτης  
 γνώμης, ὃ πολλαῖς ἐν γυναιξίν οὐκ ἔνι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,  
 πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·  
 1690 καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,  
 τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον ἤϊρε θεός.  
 τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

1682 τ' Willink: δ' L

1683 τ' Lenting: δ' L

1685 fort. ἀδελφῶ (Willink) διογενοῦς



## HELEN

### THEOCLYMENUS

O sons of Leda and Zeus, I give up my previous grudge in the matter of your sister! And I will not kill my sister, and Helen may go home if that is the gods' will! Know that you are brothers to a sister who is at once most brave and most virtuous. I wish you joy for the sake of Helen's most noble heart! Not many women have a heart like hers!

*Exit CASTOR and Polydeuces by the mechane and THEOCLYMENUS and SECOND SERVANT into the skene.*

### CHORUS LEADER

What heaven sends has many shapes, and many things the gods accomplish against our expectation. What men look for is not brought to pass, but a god finds a way to achieve the unexpected. Such was the outcome of this story.

*Exit CHORUS by Eisodos B.*



PHOENICIAN WOMEN



## INTRODUCTION

The story of the siege of Thebes—its attack by Oedipus' son Polynices with his Peloponnesian allies and its defense by his brother Eteocles—was part of the old epic tradition. The story is alluded to by characters in the *Iliad*, and for Hesiod it was, together with the war at Troy, the culminating battle of the heroic age. There were two epic poems, written after Homer but using pre-Homeric materials, that treated Theban legend, the *Oedipodea* and the *Thebaid*, both lost. The sixth-century lyric poet Stesichorus treated the quarrel of the brothers, and a fragment of this poem survives on papyrus. (See the Loeb *Greek Lyric III*, pp. 136–43.) Finally, Aeschylus in his *Seven against Thebes* (467 B.C.) and Sophocles in his *Antigone* (probably late 440s) dramatized this conflict and its aftermath.

*Phoenician Women*, Euripides' treatment of this story, was probably produced in 410 or 409. It may be the most varied in incident of his plays. It contains, for example, a scene where Antigone in a tower asks her servant to identify the attacking champions, a debate about justice between Eteocles and Polynices cast in the language of the fifth-century sophists, a scene of voluntary self-sacrifice where a divinity demands a young man as a victim and he offers himself, and a scene in which the blind Oedipus ap-

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pears. Even though the play was already packed with incident when it came from the hand of Euripides, there is evidence that it was expanded in the fourth century and later, and scholarly controversy about the extent of interpolation complicates the task of the interpreter. An overview of the scenes of the play, with remarks on Euripides' mythical innovations, seems the best way to proceed.

Jocasta speaks the prologue. That she is still alive even after the discovery that she married her son and her husband's slayer is a striking innovation vis-à-vis Sophocles, who has her commit suicide. In the Stesichorus fragment, however, she may be the one who gives advice to her sons and tries to avert the dire events prophesied by Teiresias, the role she has in this play. She starts by outlining the history of the Theban royal house, beginning with Cadmus' arrival from Phoenician Tyre to found the city. After describing the fateful birth and exposure of Oedipus, his parricide and incest, his discovery of the truth and self-blinding, and the curse he laid on his sons, she reveals the present situation of the brothers: Eteocles and Polynices, in an attempt to avoid their father's curse, have made a deal that each is to rule Thebes in turn for a year; but Eteocles, his year being over, refused to give up power and banished Polynices, who went to Argos, married the daughter of King Adrastus, and returned with an army to vindicate his claim to the throne. And now Jocasta, in an attempt to avoid war, has arranged a truce so that the two brothers can parley. She prays that Zeus may save Thebes and grant her sons peace and concord. The audience are aware that Thebes will be saved but that the only concord her sons will find is in death. In the next scene Antigone appears with a servant on top of the *skene*. She asks him to identify

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

the leaders of the seven contingents attacking the city, and their excited dialogue, Antigone singing and the servant speaking, makes vivid the danger besetting Thebes. The servant points out gloomily that the attackers have justice on their side and that the gods may take notice.

After their departure the Chorus enters. They are women of Phoenician Tyre who have been sent by their city to serve Apollo in Delphi as temple slaves (presumably for a fixed period) and have stopped at the kindred city of Thebes, where their visit has been unexpectedly prolonged because of the siege. They sing in honorific terms of Delphi, where not only Apollo but also Dionysus is worshiped, and of their blood tie to the city of Thebes. They too note that Polynices' cause is a just one.

Thereafter Polynices enters nervously, sword in hand. He has come to parley but is worried about an ambush. He has a tearful reunion with his mother in which she laments his absence and he the hardships of exile. It is quite characteristic of both Jocasta and Polynices to relate events whose significance they do not understand, though it would be unmistakable to the audience. Polynices' narrative of how he came to Argos and was chosen by Adrastus as his son-in-law shows all the hallmarks of divine guidance of events, and the role of Apollo is explicit in the oracle given to Adrastus that he should marry his daughters to a lion and a boar. But neither mother nor son seems to have any idea that these events are the work of Apollo, who is bringing to pass the second part of his prophecy to Laius, that the whole house would go down in bloody ruin.

Jocasta's attempt at reconciliation thus stands no chance of success, as becomes plain when Eteocles appears. Both brothers are under a curse, but in Eteocles this

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takes the form of naked ambition. Like some of the sophists in the late fifth century, he says self-aggrandizement, unfettered by justice, is the highest aim of human life and proclaims that since he can take the throne away from Polynices, it would be unmanly to let piety (i.e. his sworn agreement) stand in the way. He is deaf to his mother's appeal to the equality to be found in nature, where daylight and darkness share equally in their yearly round. Polynices, likewise, will not obey his mother's request that he give up besieging his own city. The scene concludes with an exchange of insults and threats conducted in excited trochaic tetrameters.

In their first choral ode, the Chorus had established themselves as pious worshipers of the gods, glorifying Apollo and Delphi. In spite of the grim situation developing in the parley scene, this same stance persists as they tell of the divine origins of Thebes. It was founded, they say, by Apollo's command and is the birthplace of Dionysus. Where Jocasta had seen Thebes as cursed from the beginning (lines 3-5), they tell a different story, one of god-blessed beginnings whose effects continue. They tell the story of the dragon slain by Cadmus, whose teeth he sowed in the soil at Athena's behest. This was the origin of the ruling nobility of Thebes, the Spartoi or "Sown Men," who are its glory, as the Chorus later say. Epaphus, Persephone, Demeter as Mother Earth—all are bidden to come to the defense of this glorious city. All this evokes Thebes' better self, the part that will be saved when the cursed sons of Oedipus are no more.

Then Eteocles comes out accompanied by a messenger he is sending to find Creon: he has, he says, both public and private concerns to discuss with him. (The authorship



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of this scene opening is disputed: if it was written by Euripides, as the close parallel at *Suppliant Women* 381–98 suggests, the private concern is his sister's marriage to Haemon, which he is afraid he may not live to see.) Creon, for his part, appears at just this moment looking for Eteocles. In the ensuing discussion between the two men two decisions are made: Eteocles decides to choose seven Theban commanders to face the seven Argive champions at the seven gates of Thebes; and he arranges for Teiresias to be consulted, sending Creon's son Menoeceus to fetch him. Since the first decision will cause the fatal meeting of the brothers in battle and the second, as we will see, will secure the salvation of the city, the twofold outcome of the plot is already set in train. The cursed offspring of Oedipus must die, and the other, nobler, side of Thebes' heritage will save the city.

The contrast between the accursed sons of Oedipus and the noble and god-blessed part of Thebes' heritage figures prominently in the following stasimon. In the end of the second stanza the Chorus apparently reflect (the lines are desperately corrupt) on the pollution that attaches to the offspring of Oedipus' incestuous union with his mother. In the third stanza they call the birth of the Sown Men "fairest reproach that Thebes can hear," allude to the miraculous building of Thebes' walls, and hymn the military prowess of the city.

Teiresias arrives next, brought on his way by Menoeceus, Creon's son. In answer to Creon's question, the seer tells him that to save the city he must sacrifice Menoeceus: as a result of the killing of the dragon several generations ago Ares is angry (the dragon was his offspring), and only if a pure-bred Sown Man is sacrificed will Ares (and Earth)

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be appeased and the city saved. Creon reacts with horror to the idea of sacrificing Menoeceus, and Menoeceus agrees to make a run for it, leaving the country to save his life. Only when Creon has departed does he reveal to the Chorus that he intends to go to the sacred precinct where the dragon was born and slit his own throat, showing thereby the same bravery as a soldier in battle, who is willing to die for his country.

After a choral ode that ends in admiration for his selfless deed the first of two messengers arrive to tell Jocasta of the victory of the Thebans and the rout of the Argives. The city is thus saved. But the messenger has other news of her sons, news he is reluctant to share: they have decided to fight each other in single combat. Jocasta calls Antigone out of the palace, and together they rush to try to stop the duel. After a brief choral ode a second messenger tells an interlocutor (the Chorus in the original version, Creon in the revised text we have) that the brothers have killed one another and that Jocasta in grief has slain herself on top of them. Antigone then arrives with the three corpses and sings a lament, which is followed by a lamentation duet with Oedipus.

Just how Euripides ended his play we cannot tell: the transmitted ending, dubious in grammar and style and contradictory in its dramatic impetus (Antigone wants *both* to follow her father into exile *and* to stay in Thebes and bury Polynices), is unlikely to be from his hand. He need not have written much more: the "salvation of the city" motif has been adequately treated, and the death of the royal brothers has been lamented in sung verse. Perhaps Oedipus with Antigone went off into exile and the

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

Chorus uttered a final reflection on the inscrutable ways of divinity. We will probably never know.

One motif that runs through much of the play is what could be called the "I know not how" theme, where someone says he doesn't know how a certain ostensibly chance event happened, thereby inviting the audience to speculate on the reason. The reason in this play is always a supernatural one: see 33 (the motive for Oedipus' search for his parents, coinciding with Laius' visit to Delphi), 49 (Oedipus' success with the Sphinx's riddle), 408ff. (how Polynices happened to marry Adrastus' daughter), 1466 (how the Thebans routed the Argives). A related theme is the ironic prayer: 85 (Jocasta prays for concord for her sons), 467-8 (Jocasta prays that "one of the gods" be judge and reconciler, fulfilled when Hades takes this role), 586-7 (the Chorus Leader prays for agreement between the sons). Finally, in the Second Messenger's speech we see how Apollo's prophecy (68) is ironically fulfilled: the brothers "divide" their patrimony when each of them takes a mouthful of dirt.

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*Dramatis Personae*

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ	JOCASTA, mother and wife of Oedipus
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ	SERVANT
ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ	ANTIGONE, daughter of Oedipus and Jocasta
ΧΟΡΟΣ	CHORUS of Phoenician temple slaves
ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ	POLYNICES, son of Oedipus living in exile
ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ	ETEOCLES, son of Oedipus living in Thebes
ΚΡΕΩΝ	CREON, brother of Jocasta
ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ	TEIRESIAS, a seer of Thebes
ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ	MENOECEUS, son of Creon
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Α	MESSENGER
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Β	SECOND MESSENGER
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ	OEDIPUS

Nonspeaking role: Teiresias' daughter

*A Note On Staging*

The *skene* represents the royal palace of Thebes. *Eisodos* A leads to places within Thebes, *Eisodos* B to the battlefield and foreign parts.

## ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

- [<sup>ς</sup>Ω τὴν ἐν ἄστροις οὐρανοῦ τέμνων ὁδὸν  
καὶ χρυσοκολλήτοισιν ἐμβεβῶς δίφροις]  
Ἥλιε, θααῖς ἵπποισιν εἰλίσσων φλόγα,  
ὡς δυστυχῆ Θήβαισι τῇ τόθ' ἡμέρα  
5 ἀκτῖν' ἐφήκας, Κάδμος ἠνίκ' ἦλθε γῆν  
τῆνδ', ἐκλιπὼν Φοίνισσαν ἐναλίαν χθόνα·  
ὃς παῖδα γήμας Κύπριδος Ἀρμονίαν ποτὲ  
Πολύδωρον ἐξέφυσε, τοῦ δὲ Λάβδακον  
φῦναι λέγουσιν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦδε Λάϊον.  
10 ἐγὼ δὲ παῖς μὲν κλήζομαι Μενοικέως,  
[Κρέων τ' ἀδελφὸς μητρὸς ἐκ μιᾶς ἔφν.]  
καλοῦσι δ' Ἰοκάστην με· τοῦτο γὰρ πατὴρ  
ἔθετο. γαμεί δὲ Λαίός μ'· ἐπεὶ δ' ἅπαις  
ἦν χρόνια λέκτρα τᾶμ' ἔχων ἐν δώμασιν,  
15 ἐλθὼν ἐρωτᾷ Φοῖβον ἐξαιτεῖ θ' ἅμα  
παίδων ἐς οἴκους ἀρσένων κοινωνίαν.  
ὁ δ' εἶπεν· <sup>ς</sup>Ω Θήβαισιν εὐίπποις ἀναξ,  
μὴ σπέῖρε τέκνων ἄλοκα δαιμόνων βία·

<sup>1-2</sup> om. papyri, del. Haslam

<sup>11</sup> suspectum habuit Geel, del. Paley

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

*From the door of the skene JOCASTA emerges. She is dressed in dark robes, and her hair is cut as if she were in mourning.*

### JOCASTA

[O you that cut your heavenly path through the stars and ride in a chariot inlaid with gold,] Sun, who on swift steeds whirl your blaze in an arc, how unblest for Thebes was the beam you shed the day when Cadmus came to this country, leaving his seagirt land in Phoenicia!<sup>1</sup> He married Cypris' daughter Harmonia and begot Polydorus, father, they tell us, of Labdacus, who sired Laius.

I am called daughter of Menoeceus, [and Creon is my brother, born of the same mother,] and my name is Jocasta (for that is what my father named me). Laius was my husband. He had no child, though long married to me, and so he went and inquired of Phoebus, begging him as he did so that we two should get male heirs for the house. But Phoebus replied, "King of Thebes, city of fair horses, do not keep sowing the child-begetting furrow against the gods'

<sup>1</sup> I.e. the day Cadmus came to found Thebes was inauspicious. Tyre, Cadmus' old city, is called "seagirt" because it was an island until the time of Alexander the Great, who joined it to the mainland by a mole.

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- εἰ γὰρ τεκνώσεις παῖδ', ἀποκτενεῖ σ' ὁ φύς,  
 20 καὶ πᾶς σὸς οἶκος βήσεται δι' αἵματος.  
 ὁ δ' ἠδονῆ ἴνδους ἔς τε βακχείαν πεσῶν  
 ἔσπειρεν ἡμῖν παῖδα, καὶ σπείρας πατῆρ  
 γνοὺς τὰμπλάκημα τοῦ θεοῦ τε τὴν φάτιν  
 λειμῶν' ἔς Ἑρας καὶ Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας  
 25 δίδωσι βουκόλοισιν ἐκθεῖναι βρέφος,  
 σφυρῶν σιδηρᾶ κέντρα διαπέρας μέσων·  
 ὅθεν νιν Ἑλλὰς ὠνόμαζεν Οἰδίπουν.  
 Πολύβου δέ νιν λαβόντες ἵπποβουκόλοι  
 φέρουσ' ἔς οἴκους ἔς τε δεσποίνης χέρας  
 30 ἔθηκαν. ἡ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν ὠδίνων πόνον  
 μαστοῖς ὑφέιτο καὶ πόσιν πείθει τρέφειν.  
 ἦδη δὲ πυρσαῖς γένυσιν ἔξανδρούμενος  
 παῖς οὐμὸς ἢ γνοὺς ἢ τινος μαθὼν πάρα  
 ἔστειχε τοὺς φύσαντας ἐκμαθεῖν θέλων  
 35 πρὸς δῶμα Φοῖβου, Δαίος θ' οὐμὸς πόσις  
 τὸν ἐκτεθέντα παῖδα μαστεύων μαθεῖν  
 εἰ μηκέτ' εἴη. καὶ ξυνάπτετον πόδα  
 ἔς ταῦτόν ἄμφω Φωκίδος σχιστῆς ὁδοῦ.  
 καὶ νιν κελεύει Λαῖου τροχηλάτης·  
 40 ὦ ξένε, τυράννοις ἐκποδῶν μεθίστασο.  
 ὁ δ' εἶρπ' ἀναυδος, μέγα φρονῶν. πῶλοι δέ νιν  
 χηλαῖς τένοντας ἐξεφοίνισσον ποδῶν.

21 ἴνδους Markland: δοὺς C

22 πατῆρ Herwerden: βρέφος C

23 del. Zipperer 26-7 del. Paley (27 iam Valckenaer)

31 τρέφειν Nagel: τεκεῖν C



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

will: if you sire a son, your own offspring will kill you, and the whole house will be embroiled in bloodshed." But he yielded to pleasure in a drunken moment and sired our child, and having done so, the father, realizing his error and remembering the god's pronouncement, gave the babe to herdsmen to expose in Hera's meadow on rocky Cithaeron, having first passed an iron stake through the middle of his ankles: hence Greece called him Oedipus.<sup>2</sup> The horseherders of Polybus<sup>3</sup> picked him up, brought him to the palace, and placed him in the hands of their mistress. She had him put to the breast, the child my labor pains brought forth, and persuaded her husband to raise him.

When he had come to manhood and his cheeks were tawny with his first beard, my son, discovering something or hearing it from others, went off to the temple of Phoebus to find out who his parents were, and Laius my husband also went there, wishing to learn whether the exposed child was still alive. Their paths coincided at a point on Phocis' Cloven Way.<sup>4</sup> Laius' driver called out to the young man, "Stranger, make way for royalty!" But he just kept walking without a word, being very proud, and the horses' hooves bloodied the tendons of his feet. As a result

<sup>2</sup> Oedipus' name (from *oidao*, "swell") alludes to the swelling of his feet that resulted from this operation. <sup>3</sup> In Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* Polybus is king of Corinth, though other versions of the myth put him in Boeotia, not far from Thebes.

<sup>4</sup> The Cloven Way (*σχιωτή ὁδός*) was a portion of the road leading to Delphi from the east: see Pausanias 10.5.3-4. In Euripides' version Oedipus and Laius are traveling in the same direction, the latter more rapidly in a chariot.

## EURIPIDES

- ὄθην (τί τὰκτὸς τῶν κακῶν με δεῖ λέγειν;)  
 παῖς πατέρα καίνει καὶ λαβῶν ὀχήματα  
 45 Πολύβῳ τροφῆί δίδωσιν. ὡς δ' ἐπέζαρει  
 Σφιγξ ἄρπαγαῖσι πόλιν ἐμός τ' οὐκ ἦν πόσις,  
 Κρέων ἀδελφὸς τὰμὰ κηρύσσει λέχη,  
 ὅστις σοφῆς αἰνιγμα παρθένου μάθοι,  
 τούτῳ ξυνάψειν λέκτρα. τυγχάνει δέ πως  
 50 μούσας ἐμὸς παῖς Οἰδίπους Σφιγγὸς μαθὼν  
 [ὄθην τύραννος τῆσδε γῆς καθίσταται]  
 καὶ σκῆπτρ' ἔπαθλα τῆσδε λαμβάνει χθονός,  
 γαμεί δέ τὴν τεκοῦσαν οὐκ εἰδὼς τάλας  
 οὐδ' ἢ τεκοῦσα παιδιὶ συγκοιμωμένη.  
 55 τίκτω δὲ παῖδας παιδιὶ δύο μὲν ἄρσενας,  
 Ἐτεοκλέα κλεινὴν τε Πολυνείκους βίαν,  
 κόρας τε δισσάς· τὴν μὲν Ἴσμήνην πατῆρ  
 ὠνόμασε, τὴν δὲ πρόσθεν Ἀντιγόνην ἐγώ.  
 μαθὼν δὲ τὰμὰ λέκτρα μητρῶν γάμων  
 60 ὁ πάντ' ἀνατλὰς Οἰδίπους παθήματα  
 ἐς ὄμμαθ' αὐτοῦ δεινὸν ἐμβάλλει φόνον,  
 χρυσηλάτοις πόρπαισι αἰμάξας κόρας.  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ τέκνων γένυς ἐμῶν σκιάζεται,  
 κλήθροισ ἐκρυψαν πατέρ', ἵν' ἀμνήμων τύχη  
 65 γένοιτο πολλῶν δεομένη σοφισμάτων.  
 ζῶν δ' ἔστ' ἐν οἴκοις. πρὸς δὲ τῆς τύχης νοσῶν

51 del. Valckenaer (51–2 del. Leutsch, 52 om. II)

60 del. Valckenaer

62 del. Fraenkel

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

(why should I dwell on irrelevant troubles?) the son killed the father, took his chariot, and gave it to Polybus his foster father. Now when the Sphinx was plundering and vexing the city<sup>5</sup> and my husband was dead, my brother Creon proclaimed that he would give me in marriage to whoever solved the wise maiden's riddle. My son somehow or other managed to learn her song's meaning, [and hence he became king of this land,] took the scepter of this country as his prize, and thus, poor man, unwittingly married his mother, and his mother too was unaware that she was sleeping with her son.

To my own son I bore two sons, Eteocles and glorious Polynices,<sup>6</sup> and two daughters. One daughter her father called Ismene<sup>7</sup> and her elder sister I named Antigone. Now when Oedipus, who endured all manner of sufferings, learned that in marrying me he had married his mother, he committed dreadful slaughter upon his own eyes, bloodying them with brooches of beaten gold. But when my sons' cheeks were darkened with their first beards, they hid their father away behind locked doors so that his fate would be forgotten, though it took much ingenuity to conceal it. He now lives in the palace. Made

<sup>5</sup> The Sphinx, a winged monster with a woman's head and a lion's or dog's body, assailed Thebes, carrying off as prey anyone who could not solve her riddle. <sup>6</sup> The epithet "glorious" belongs etymologically to Eteocles, whose name means "man of true glory," and who is normally portrayed as being in the right. Euripides in this play portrays Eteocles as a usurper and Polynices as having juster claim on the throne.

<sup>7</sup> Ismene and the river Ismenus are properly spelled Hismene and Hismenus (see Mastronarde's commentary on line 101), but I have retained the customary English spelling.

EURIPIDES

ἀρὰς ἀράται παισὶν ἀνοσιωτάτας,  
θηκτῷ σιδήρῳ δῶμα διαλαχεῖν τόδε.

- τὼ δ' ἐς φόβον πεσόντε, μὴ τελεσφόρους
- 70 εὐχὰς θεοὶ κραίνωσιν οἰκούντων ὁμοῦ,  
ξυμβάντ' ἔταξαν τὸν νεώτερον πάρος  
φεύγειν ἐκόντα τήνδε Πολυνεΐκη χθόνα,  
Ἐτεοκλέα δὲ σκῆπτρ' ἔχειν μένοντα γῆς,  
ἐνιαυτὸν ἀλλάσσουντ'. ἐπεὶ δ' ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς
- 75 καθέζετ' ἀρχῆς, οὐ μεθίσταται θρόνων,  
φυγάδα δ' ἀπωθεῖ τῆσδε Πολυνεΐκη χθονός.  
ὁ δ' Ἄργος ἐλθὼν, κῆδος Ἀδράστου λαβὼν,  
πολλὴν ἀθροίσας ἀσπίδ' Ἀργείων ἄγει  
ἐπ' αὐτὰ δ' ἐλθὼν ἐπτάπυλα τείχη τάδε
- 80 πατρῷ' ἀπαιτεῖ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη χθονός.  
ἐγὼ δ' ἔριν λύουσ' ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν  
ἔπεισα παιδὶ παῖδα πρὶν ψαῦσαι δορός.  
ἦξει δ' ὁ πεμφθείς φησιν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος.  
ἀλλ', ὦ φαεινὰς οὐρανοῦ ναίων πτυχὰς
- 85 Ζεῦ, σῶσον ἡμᾶς, δὸς δὲ σύμβασιν τέκνοις.  
χρῆ δ', εἰ σοφὸς πέφυκας, οὐκ ἔαν βροτῶν  
τὸν αὐτὸν αἰεὶ δυστυχῆ καθεστάναι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- ὦ κλεινὸν οἶκος Ἀντιγόνη θάλος πατρί,  
ἐπεὶ σε μήτηρ παρθενώνας ἐκλιπεῖν
- 90 μεθῆκε μελάθρων ἐς διήρες ἔσχατον

70 οἰκούντων Elmsley: -των C

88n Θεράπων Mastronarde: Παιδαγωγός C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

sick by what had befallen him, he pronounced an impious curse on his sons, that they should divide this house with the whetted sword.

The sons, becoming afraid that the gods would bring the curse to fulfillment if they lived together, reached an agreement that Polynices, as younger brother, should be the first to leave the country voluntarily, that Eteocles should stay behind and be king, and that the two should trade places year by year. But once Eteocles was settled on the seat of power, he would not give it up and thrust Polynices from the land as an exile. And he, going to Argos and marrying Adrastus' daughter, gathered together a large force of Argive hoplites and brought them here. Coming to the very walls of this seven-gated city he is demanding his father's scepter and a share in the land. To try to end their strife I persuaded the one son to come to the other under a truce before taking up the spear. The messenger I sent says that he will come.

O Zeus, who inhabit the bright recesses of heaven, save us and grant my sons peace! If you are a wise god, you ought not to allow the same mortal to be always in misery!

*Exit JOCASTA into the palace. By means of a ladder behind the skene a SERVANT ascends to its roof. He speaks to Antigone, climbing up behind him.*

### SERVANT

Antigone, offspring bringing glory to your father's house, since you begged your mother, she has permitted you to leave your maiden quarters and go to this outermost upper

## EURIPIDES

- στράτευμ' ἰδεῖν Ἀργεῖον ἰκεσΐαισι σαῖς,  
 ἐπίσχες, ὡς ἂν προυξερευνήσω στίβον,  
 μή τις πολιτῶν ἐν τρίβῳ φαντάζεται,  
 κάμοι μὲν ἔλθῃ φαῦλος ὡς δούλῳ ψόγος,  
 95 σοὶ δ' ὡς ἀνάσση· πάντα δ' ἐξειδῶς φράσω  
 ἅ τ' εἶδον εἰσήκουσά τ' Ἀργείων πάρα,  
 σπονδὰς ὅτ' ἦλθον σῶ κασιγνήτῳ φέρων  
 ἐνθένδ' ἐκείσε δευρό τ' αὖ κείνου πάρα.  
 ἀλλ' οὔτις ἀστῶν τοῖσδε χρίμπτεται δόμοις·  
 100 κέδρον παλαιὰν κλίμακ' ἐκπέρα ποδί,  
 σκόπει δὲ πεδία καὶ παρ' Ἴσμηνοῦ ῥοὰς  
 Δίρκης τε νᾶμα πολεμίων στράτευμ' ὅσον.

## ANTIGONH

- ὄρεγέ νιν ὄρεγε γεραιὰν νέα  
 χεῖρ' ἀπὸ κλιμάκων  
 105 ποδὸς ἴχνος ἐπαντέλλων.

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἰδοῦ ξύναιψον, παρθέν'· ἐς καιρὸν δ' ἔβης·  
 κινούμενον γὰρ τυγχάνει Πελασγικὸν  
 στράτευμα, χωρίζουσι δ' ἀλλήλων λόχους.

## ANTIGONH

- ἰὼ πότνια παῖ  
 110 Λατοῦς Ἐκάτα, κατάχαλκον ἅπαν  
 πεδίον ἀστράπτει.

<sup>8</sup> In Athens women of the upper classes lived a secluded life,

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

room of the house to see the Argive army: halt there so that I can look to see whether any citizens are to be seen in the street. Blame might attach to me as a slave and you as my mistress.<sup>8</sup> Since I am well informed, I shall tell you all that I saw and heard from the Argives when I went from here to there bearing a truce to your brother and also when I brought his truce here.

Well, since none of the citizens is near the house, climb up the ancient cedarwood ladder! Look at the plains and see by the streams of Ismenus and the waters of Dirce the size of the enemy army!

*ANTIGONE begins climbing onto the roof.*

ANTIGONE

Stretch forth, then, stretch forth your aged hand to my young one, raising my foot from the ladder!

SERVANT

*(helping her ascend to the roof)* Here, grasp it, maiden! You have arrived at the right time. The Pelasgian army is now stirring, and they are separating the companies one from another.

ANTIGONE

O lady Hecate,  
daughter of Leto,<sup>9</sup> how the whole plain  
flashes with bronze!

not usually seen by men who were not relatives. Unmarried girls were closely guarded from the gaze of strangers.

<sup>9</sup> Originally a distinct figure, Hecate is blended in the fifth century with Artemis. Her invocation here suggests the desire to avert disaster.

## EURIPIDES

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐ γάρ τι φαύλως ἦλθε Πολυνείκης χθόνα,  
πολλοῖς μὲν ἵπποις, μυρίοις δ' ὄπλοις βρέμων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

115 ἄρα πυλᾶν κλήθροισι χαλκόδετ' ἔμβολ' <έν>  
λαϊνέοισιν Ἀμφίονος ὀργάνοισι  
τείχεος ἤρμουςται;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

θάρσει τά γ' ἔνδον ἀσφαλῶς ἔχει πόλις.  
[ἀλλ' εἰσόρα τὸν πρῶτον, εἰ βούλη μαθεῖν.]

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

120 τίς οὗτος ὁ λευκολόφος,  
πρόπαρ ὃς ἀγείται στρατοῦ  
πάγχαλκον ἀσπίδ' ἀμφὶ βραχίονι κουφίζων;

[ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

λοχαγός, ὦ δέσποινα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τίς, πόθεν γεγώς;  
αὔδασον, ὦ γεραιέ, τίς ὀνομάζεται;]

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

125 οὗτος Μυκηναῖος μὲν αὔδαται γένος,  
Λερναῖα δ' οἰκῆ νάμαθ', Ἴππομέδων ἀναξ.

114 πυλᾶν Diggle: πύλαι C χαλκόδετ' ἔμβολ' a: χαλκό-  
δετά τ' ἔμ- fere ceteri codd. <έν> Fritzsche

118 del. Diggle

123-4 del. Dindorf



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### SERVANT

Polynices has come to this land in no mean style: what a din he makes with his many horsemen and his footsoldiers beyond count!

### ANTIGONE

Have the bronze-bound bars been fitted  
<to> the door barriers  
in the stone walls Amphion<sup>10</sup> fashioned?

### SERVANT

Have no fear: the inner part of the city is safe. [But look at the first man, if you are desirous to learn who he is.]

### ANTIGONE

Who is he of the white plume  
who stands in front of the army to lead it,  
bearing lightly upon his arm a shield all of bronze?

### [SERVANT

A captain, lady.

### ANTIGONE

Who and whence sprung? Tell me, old man, what is his name?]

### SERVANT

He is said to be a Mycenaean by birth, and he dwells by the waters of Lerna: he is Lord Hippomedon.

<sup>10</sup> Legendary builder of Thebes' walls. His lyre-playing is said to have charmed rocks into forming the walls.

EURIPIDES

ANTIGONH

ἔ ἔ,

ὡς γαῦρος, ὡς φοβερὸς εἰσιδεῖν,  
γίγαντι γηγενέτα προσόμοιος,  
ἀστερωπὸς <ὥσπερ> ἐν

130 γραφαῖσιν, οὐχὶ πρόσφορος ἀμερίῳ γέννα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τὸν δ' ἐξαμείβοντ' οὐχ ὀράς Δίρκης ὕδωρ;  
[λοχαγόν;]

ANTIGONH

[ἄλλος ἄλλος ὅδε τευχέων τρόπος.]

τίς δ' οὗτός ἐστι;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

παῖς μὲν Οἰνέως ἔφυ  
Τυδεύς, Ἄρη δ' Αἰτωλὸν ἐν στέρνοισι ἔχει.

ANTIGONH

135 οὗτος ὁ τὰς Πολυνείκεος, ὦ γέρον,  
ἀντοκασιγνήτα νύμφας  
ὁμόγαμος κυρεῖ;  
ὡς ἀλλόχρως ὄπλοισι, μειξοβάρβαρος.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

140 σακεσφόροι γὰρ πάντες Αἰτωλοί, τέκνον,  
λόγχαις τ' ἀκοντιστήρες εὐστοχάτατοι.

[ANTIGONH

σὺ δ', ὦ γέρον, πῶς αἰσθάνη σαφῶς τάδε;

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### ANTIGONE

Ah, ah!  
How grim, how fearful to look upon,  
like a giant born of the earth,  
with dazzling visage, <as> in a picture,  
not like men of mortal begetting!

### SERVANT

Do you not see the man crossing the water of Dirce [, a captain]?

### ANTIGONE

[Other, other is the fashion of his arms.] Who is he?

### SERVANT

He is Tydeus, son of Oeneus, and Aetolian is the war spirit  
he bears within his breast.

### ANTIGONE

Is this the man  
who married the sister  
of Polynices' wife?  
How strange his weapons are, half-barbarian!

### SERVANT

Yes: all the Aetolians, my child, carry light shields and hurl  
javelins with great accuracy.

### [ANTIGONE

But, old sir, how do you come to know so much about these  
things?

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<sup>129</sup> <ὠσπερ> Nauck

<sup>132</sup> suspectum habuit Nauck, del. Leutsch

<sup>141-4</sup> del. Stahl

## EURIPIDES

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

σημεῖ' ἰδὼν τότ' ἀσπίδων ἐγνώρισα,  
 σπουνδὰς ὅτ' ἦλθον σῶ κασιγνήτῳ φέρων  
 ἂ προσδεδορκῶς οἶδα τοὺς ὀπλισμένους.]

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- 145 τίς δ' οὗτος ἀμφὶ μνήμα τὸ Ζήθου περᾶ  
 καταβόστρυχος, ὄμμασι γοργὸς  
 εἰσιδεῖν νεανίας,  
 λοχαγός, ὡς ὄχλος νιν ὑστέρω ποδὶ  
 πάνοπλος ἀμφέπει;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- 150 ὄδ' ἐστὶ Παρθενοπαῖος, Ἀταλάντης γόνος.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλά νιν ἂ κατ' ὄρη μετὰ ματέρος  
 Ἄρτεμις ἰεμένα τόξοις δαμάσασ' ὀλέσειεν,  
 ὃς ἐπ' ἐμὰν πόλιν ἔβα πέρσων.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- 155 εἶη τάδ', ὦ παῖ. σὺν δίκη δ' ἤκουσι γῆν'  
 ὃ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ σκοπῶσ' ὀρθῶς θεοί.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῦ δ' ὃς ἐμοὶ μιᾶς ἐγένετ' ἐκ ματρὸς  
 πολυπόνῳ μοίρα;  
 ὦ φίλτατ', εἰπέ, ποῦ 'στι Πολυνείκης, γέρον;

<sup>153</sup> ἐμὰν <ἐμὰν> Diggle

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### SERVANT

I recognized the emblems on their shields, having seen them before when I went carrying the truce to your brother. Since I looked at them I know who the armed men are.]

### ANTIGONE

But who is the one who walks near the tomb of Zethus, a young man with long curls, grim of face to look upon? He is a captain, to judge by the armed throng who follow on his heels.

### SERVANT

This is Parthenopaeus, son of Atalanta.

### ANTIGONE

May Artemis of the mountains destroy him, and his mother with him, shooting and felling them with her arrows! He has come to my city to sack it!

### SERVANT

That is my prayer too, my child! But they are coming to the land with justice on their side. And I am afraid that the gods may see this all too clearly.

### ANTIGONE

But where is he that was born of one mother with me, by a fate full of woe? Dearest old man, tell me, where is Polynices?

## EURIPIDES

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- ἐκεῖνος ἐπὶ τὰ παρθένων τάφου πέλας  
 160 Νιόβης Ἀδράστῳ πλησίον παραστατεί.  
 ὀρᾶς;

## ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- ὀρῶ δῆτ' οὐ σαφῶς, ὀρῶ δέ πως  
 μορφῆς τύπωμα στέρνα τ' ἐξεικασμένα.  
 ἀνεμώκεος εἶθε δρόμον νεφέλας  
 ποσὶν ἐξανύσαιμι δι' αἰθέρος  
 165 πρὸς ἐμὸν ὁμογενέτορα, περὶ δ' ὠλένας  
 δέρα φιλάτα βάλοιμεν χρόνῳ,  
 φυγάδα μέλεον. ὥς  
 ὄπλοισι χρυσέοισιν ἐκπρεπῆς, γέρον,  
 ἐφοῖς ὅμοια φλεγέθων βολαῖς.

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- 170 ἤξει δόμους τοῦσδ', ὥστε σ' ἐμπλήσαι χαρᾶς,  
 ἔνσπονδος.

## ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- οὗτος δ', ὦ γεραιέ, τίς κυρεῖ,  
 ὃς ἄρμα λευκὸν ἠνιοστροφεῖ βεβῶς;

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- ὁ μάντις Ἀμφιάραος, ὦ δέσποιν', ὅδε·  
 σφάγια δ' ἄμ' αὐτῷ, γῆ φιλαιμάτῳ ῥοαί.

## ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- 175 ὦ λιπαροζώνου θύγατερ Ἀλίου,  
 <πότνα> Σελαναία, χρυσόκυκλον φέγγος,

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### SERVANT

He stands over there near the tomb of Niobe's seven daughters, next to Adrastus. Do you see him?

### ANTIGONE

I do not see clearly, but I see somehow,  
the outline of his form and the semblance of his chest.  
How I wish I could tread, in the sky,  
the path of some wind-borne cloud,  
go to my own brother, and cast  
my arms at long last about his beloved neck,  
luckless exile that he is!  
How he blazes forth in his golden armor, old man,  
gleaming like the rays of the dawn!

### SERVANT

He will come to this house under truce to gladden your heart.

### ANTIGONE

But who is this, old man, mounted on a white chariot and holding the reins?

### SERVANT

That is the seer Amphiaraus, my lady. With him are sacrificial victims, to provide streams for the earth, which thirsts for blood.

### ANTIGONE

Daughter of gleaming-belted Sun,  
<Lady> Moon, orb of golden light,

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<sup>166</sup> βάλοιμεν Diggle: βάλοιμι fere C <sup>169</sup> βολαῖς  
Wecklein: β- ἡλίου fere C <sup>174</sup> γῆ φιλαιμάτῳ Paley: γῆς  
φιλαιμάτοι fere C <sup>176</sup> <πότνα> Paley

EURIPIDES

ὡς ἀτρεμαῖα κέντρα πώλοισ νέμων  
 ἰθύνει <δρόμον>.

ποῦ δ' ὄς τὰ δεινὰ τῆδ' ἐφνβρίζει πόλει

180 Καπανεύς;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἐκείνος προσβάσεις τεκμαίρεται  
 πύργων, ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω τείχη μετρῶν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰώ, Νέμεσι καὶ βαρύβρομοι βρονταὶ  
 Διὸς κεραύνιον τε φῶς αἰθαλόεν, σύ τοι  
 μεγαλαγορίαν ὑπεράνορα κοιμίζεις·

185 ὄδ' ἐστίν, αἰχμαλωτίδας ὄς δορὶ Θηβαίας  
 Μυκηῖσι <γυναιξὶ κομπεῖ κόρας>

Λερναίᾳ τε δώσειν τριαίνα,  
 Ποσειδανίοις Ἀμμωνίοις  
 ὕδασι δουλείαν περιβαλῶν·

190 μήποτε μήποτε τάνδ', ὦ πότνια,  
 χρυσεοβόστρυχον ὦ Διὸς ἔρνος  
 Ἄρτεμι, δουλοσύναν τλαίην.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὦ τέκνον, ἔσβα δῶμα καὶ κατὰ στέγας  
 ἐν παρθενῶσι μίμνε σοῖς, ἐπεὶ πόθου

177 κέντρα Paley: κ. καὶ σῶφρονα C νέμων Diggle:  
 μεταφέρων C 178 <δρόμον> Paley

182-3 βαρύβρομοι βρονταὶ Διὸς Willink: Δ-βα-βρ- C

184 μεγαλαγορίαν Matthiae: μεγαλανορίαν fere C

186 <γυναιξὶ κομπεῖ κόρας> West



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

how firmly he applies the goad to his horses  
and guides <his course>!

But where is he who uttered the terrible proud words  
against the city,  
Capaneus?

### SERVANT

He is calculating the approaches to the battlements, measuring the walls from top to bottom.

### ANTIGONE

Hear me, Nemesis<sup>11</sup> and the deep-booming thunders  
of Zeus and his lightning fire all gleaming!

It is you who lull proud boasting to rest.

This is the man who <boasted> he would give  
<the maidens> of Thebes as spear captives to <women> of  
Mycenae

and to the Trident of Lerna,

casting upon them servitude

to the waters of Poseidon and Amymone!<sup>12</sup>

Never, never, O lady Artemis,

golden-tressed offshoot of Zeus,

may I suffer this slavery!

### SERVANT

My child, go into the house and stay in your maiden chamber in the palace, since you have seen what you wished to

<sup>11</sup> The goddess of retribution, who was thought to punish overconfident boasting.

<sup>12</sup> The spring of Lerna, also called Amymone, was said to have been created by a blow from Poseidon's trident. Fetching water from a spring was a task of slave women.

## EURIPIDES

- 195 ἐς τέρψιν ἤλθες ὦν ἔχρηζες εἰσιδεῖν.  
 ὄχλος γάρ, ὡς ταραγμὸς εἰσηλθεν πόλιν,  
 χωρεῖ γυναικῶν πρὸς δόμους τυραννικούς,  
 φιλόψογον δὲ χρῆμα θηλειῶν ἔφν,  
 σμικράς τ' ἀφορμὰς ἦν λάβωσι τῶν λόγων  
 200 πλείους ἐπεσφέρουσιν· ἡδονὴ δέ τις  
 γυναιξὶ μηδὲν ὑγιὲς ἀλλήλας λέγειν·

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α

- Τύριον οἶδμα λιποῦσ' ἔβαν  
 ἀκροθίνια Λοξία  
 Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου  
 205 Φοίβῳ δούλα μελάθρων,  
 ἴν' ὑπὸ δειράσι νιφοβόλοις  
 Παρνασσοῦ κατενάσθη,  
 Ἴόνιον κατὰ πόντον ἐλά-  
 τα πλεύσασα περιρρύτων  
 210 ὑπὲρ ἀκαρπίστων πεδίων  
 Σικελίας Ζεφύρου πνοαῖς  
 ἰππεύσαντος ἐν οὐρανῷ  
 κάλλιστον κελάδημα.

ἀντ. α

- πόλεος ἐκπροκριθεῖσ' ἐμᾶς  
 215 καλλιστεύματα Λοξία

<sup>13</sup> The Chorus describe themselves as slaves of Loxias (Apollo), chosen from among their people for their beauty. It is

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

see. For because the city is in confusion, a crowd of women has come to the royal palace. Women by nature love to criticize, and once they have found trifling reasons to find fault, they invent still more, such is the pleasure they take in speaking ill of one another.

*Exit SERVANT and ANTIGONE into the palace. Enter a group of Phoenician women as CHORUS by Eisodes A.*<sup>13</sup>

### CHORUS

Leaving the Tyrian sea behind  
I have come as choicest offerings for Loxias  
from Phoenicia's island city<sup>14</sup>  
to serve in Phoebus' temple  
where under Parnassus' snow-laden peaks  
he has made his home.  
By ship through the Ionian sea<sup>15</sup>  
I sailed as the West Wind  
galloped over Sicily's encircling  
barren sea water  
and made with its blasts in the sky above  
a lovely music.

Chosen from our city  
as the fairest gift to Loxias,

likely that we are meant to think of them not as slaves captured in war but as free women serving Apollo for a fixed period in thanks to Apollo for some blessing he gave Tyre.

<sup>14</sup> See note on line 6 above.

<sup>15</sup> This sea extends west from Greece to Italy and Sicily. The ship must be imagined as sailing around the Peloponnesus and into the Corinthian Gulf.

Καδμείαν ἔμολον γὰν,  
 κλεινῶν Ἀγηνοριδᾶν  
 ὁμογενεῖς ἐπὶ Λαΐου  
 πεμφθείς ἐνθάδε πύργους.

- 220 ἴσα δ' ἀγάλμασι χρυσοτεύ-  
 κτοῖς Φοῖβῳ λάτρῖς ἐγερόμαν·  
 ἔτι δὲ Κασταλίας ὕδωρ  
 περιμένει με κόμας ἐμᾶς  
 δεῦσαι παρθένιον χλιδᾶν  
 225 Φοιβείαισι λατρείαις.

ἐπῶδ.

- ὦ λάμπουσα πέτρα πυρὸς  
 δικόρυφον σέλας ὑπὲρ ἄκρων  
 βακχείων Διονύσου,  
 οἶνα θ' ἂ καθαμέριον  
 230 στάζεις, τὸν πολύκαρπον  
 οἰνάνθας ἰεῖσα βότρυν,  
 ζᾷθεά τ' ἄντρα δράκοντος οὐ-  
 ρεαί τε σκοπιαὶ θεᾶν  
 νιφόβολόν τ' ὄρος ἱερόν, εἰ-  
 235 λίσσων ἀθανάτους θεοῦ  
 χορὸς γενοίμαν ἄφοβος  
 παρὰ μεσόμφαλα γύαλα Φοί-  
 βου Δίρκαν προλιπούσα.

233 θεᾶν West: -ῶν C

235 ἀθανάτους Wecklein: -τας vel -του C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

I have come to the land of Cadmus,  
sent to the towers of Laius,  
towers that are kin  
to the glorious Agenoridae.<sup>16</sup>  
Like one of his gold-wrought statues  
I entered the service of Phoebus.  
The waters of Castalia still await me  
to moisten the maidenly  
luxuriance of my hair  
in the service of Phoebus.

O cliff, shedding a twin-peaked gleam  
of fire upon the lofty  
sites of Dionysiac transport,<sup>17</sup>  
O vine that day by day  
drips wine, putting forth  
the full-fruited cluster of grape blossom,  
O holy cave of the serpent<sup>18</sup>  
and mountain lookout of the goddesses,  
O sacred mount overspread with snow,  
may I dance in honor of the deathless ones  
and dance in the god's honor free from fear,  
leaving Dirce for Phoebus' vale  
at the earth's navel.

<sup>16</sup> Agenoridae (descendants of Agenor) means Tyrians. The kinship is by way of Cadmus, originally a Tyrian.

<sup>17</sup> The two peaks of Parnassus that rise above Delphi were the scene of dances in honor of Dionysus.

<sup>18</sup> The Corycian Cave, abode of the serpent Python, whom Apollo slew. Afterwards it became the haunt of nymphs, alluded to as "goddesses."

στρ. β

- νῦν δέ μοι πρὸ τειχέων  
 240 θούριος μολὼν Ἄρης  
 αἶμα δάιον φλέγει  
 τᾶδ', ὃ μὴ τύχοι, πόλει·  
 κοινὰ γὰρ φίλων ἄχη,  
 κοινὰ δ', εἴ τι πείσεται  
 245 ἐπτάπυργος ἄδε γὰ,  
 Φοινίσσα χώρα. φεῦ φεῦ.  
 κοινὸν αἶμα, κοινὰ τέκεα  
 τᾶς κερασφόρου πέφυκεν Ἴουῶς·  
 ὧν μέτεστί μοι πόνων.

ἀντ. β

- 250 ἀμφὶ δὲ πτόλιν νέφος  
 ἀσπίδων πυκνὸν φλέγει,  
 σῆμα φοινίου μάχας,  
 ἂν Ἄρης τάχ' εἴσεται  
 παισὶν Οἰδίπου φέρων  
 255 πημονὰν Ἐρινύων.  
 Ἄργος ὦ Πελασγικόν,  
 δειμαίνω τὰν σὰν ἀλκὰν  
 καὶ τὸ θεόθεν οὐ γὰρ ἄδικον  
 εἰς ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἔνοπλος ὄρμᾶ  
 260 ὃς μετέρχεται δόμους.

259 τάνδ' . . . ὄρμᾶν Hermann

260 ὃς Triclinius: παῖς ὃς C: παῖς Battier

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

But now before the walls  
grim Ares has come  
and sets war and bloodshed ablaze  
for this city: may heaven avert it!  
For friends share the woes of friends,  
and if this seven-gated city  
suffers misfortune,  
Phoenicia will share the hurt. Ah ah!  
Shared blood, common children  
were born from horned Io.<sup>19</sup>  
In these troubles I partake.

About the city a thick  
cloud of shields flashes,  
the sign of murderous battle.  
This battle Ares will soon decide  
as he brings to Oedipus' sons  
the woes of the Erinyes.<sup>20</sup>  
O Pelasgian Argos,  
I fear your might  
and what the gods send. For not unjust  
is this contest toward which he presses in armor,  
he who comes to recover his house.

<sup>19</sup> Io, daughter of the river god Inachus, was loved by Zeus, who turned her into a heifer to disguise her from his wife Hera. She became the mother of Epaphus, ancestor both of the Tyrians and the Argives. Her connection is not with Thebes in particular but with the Greek race in general.

<sup>20</sup> The agents of divine justice, with particular concern for offenses against kin.

## EURIPIDES

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

- τὰ μὲν πυλωρῶν κληῖθρά μ' εἰσεδέξατο  
 δι' εὐπετείας τειχέων ἔσω μολεῖν.  
 ὁ καὶ δέδοικα μὴ με δικτύων ἔσω  
 λαβόντες οὐκ ἐκφρῶσ' ἀναίμακτον χροά.  
 265 ὦν οὐνεκ' ὄμμα πανταχῆ διοιστέον  
 κάκεισε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο, μὴ δόλος τις ἦ.  
 ὠπλισμένος δὲ χεῖρα τῶδε φασιγάνῳ  
 τὰ πίστ' ἔμαντῶ τοῦ θράσους παρέξομαι.  
 ὦή, τίς οὗτος; ἦ κτύπον φοβούμεθα;  
 270 ἅπαντα γὰρ τολμῶσι δεινὰ φαίνεται,  
 ὅταν δι' ἐχθρᾶς πούς ἀμείβηται χθονός.  
 πέποιθα μέντοι μητρὶ κοῦ πέποιθ' ἄμα,  
 ἥτις μ' ἔπεισε δεῦρ' ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν.  
 ἀλλ' ἐγγὺς ἀλκή (βῶμιοι γὰρ ἐσχάροι  
 275 πέλας πάρεισι) κοῦκ ἔρημα δώματα·  
 φέρ' ἐς σκοτεινὰς περιβολὰς μεθῶ ξίφος  
 καὶ τάσδ' ἔρωμαι, τίνες ἐφεστᾶσιν δόμοις.  
 ξέναί γυναῖκες, εἶπατ', ἐκ ποίας πάτρας  
 Ἑλληνικοῖσι δώμασιν πελάζετε;

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 280 Φοῖνισσα μὲν γῆ πατρὶς ἢ θρέψασά με,  
 Ἀγήνορος δὲ παῖδες ἐκ παίδων δορός  
 Φοῖβῳ μ' ἔπεμψαν ἐνθάδ' ἀκροθίνιον.  
 μέλλων δὲ πέμπειν μ' Οἰδίου κλεινὸς γόνος  
 μαντεῖα σεμνὰ Λοξίου τ' ἐπ' ἐσχάρας,  
 285 ἐν τῶδ' ἐπεστράτευσαν Ἀργεῖοι πόλιν.



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

*Enter by Eisodos B POLYNICES, without a retinue, sword in hand, peering in every direction as if afraid of an attack.*

### POLYNICES

The gatekeepers' bolts have allowed me to pass easily inside the walls. And so I am afraid that having taken me within their net they will not let me go again without a wound. For this reason I must turn my eyes this way and that for fear of trickery. With this sword in my hand I shall give myself the confidence to venture on.

Ah, who is that? Or am I starting at a mere noise? Everything seems frightful to bold men when their feet tread on enemy territory. Still, I trust my mother—and at the same time mistrust her. She persuaded me to come here under a truce. But help is at hand (for an altar stands nearby) and the house is not without inhabitants: come, let me put up my sword into the dark of its encasement and ask these women standing near the house who they are. (*He sheathes his sword.*)

Foreign ladies, tell me, what country have you left to draw near this Greek house?

### CHORUS LEADER

My fathers' land, the land that nurtured me, is Phoenicia; the descendants of Agenor have sent me here to Phoebus in thanks for victory in war. When Oedipus' glorious son was about to send me to Loxias' holy oracle and altars, just then the Argives marched against the city. But you, tell me

## EURIPIDES

σὺ δ' ἀντάμειψαί μ', ὅστις ὦν ἐλήλυθας  
ἐπτάστομον πύργωμα Θηβαίας χθονός.

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πατὴρ μὲν ἡμῖν Οἰδίπους ὁ Λαῖον,  
ἔτικτε δ' Ἰοκάστη με, παῖς Μενουκίως·  
290 καλεῖ δὲ Πολυνείκη με Θηβαῖος λεώς.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

[ὦ συγγένεια τῶν Ἀγήνορος τέκνων,  
ἐμῶν τυράννων, ὦν ἀπεστάλην ὑπο.]  
γονυπετεῖς ἔδρας προσπίτνω σ', ἀναξ,  
τὸν οἴκοθεν σέβουσα νόμον·  
295 ἔβας ὦ χρόνῳ γὰρ πατρώαν.  
ἰὼ ἰώ·  
πότνια, μόλε πρόδομος, ἀμπέτασον πύλας.  
κλύεις, ὦ τεκούσα τόνδε μάτηρ;  
τί μέλλεις ὑπώροφα μέλαθρα περὰν  
300 θιγεῖν τ' ὠλέναισιν τέκνου;

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

Φοίνισσαν βοὰν  
κλυοῦσ', ὦ νεάνιδες, γηραιοῦ  
ποδὸς τρομερὸν ἔλκω <πρὸ δόμων> βάσιν·  
ἰὼ τέκνον, χρόνῳ σὸν ὄμ-  
305 μα μνρίαις τ' ἐν ἀμέραις  
προσεῖδον· ἀμφίβαλλε μα-

291-2 om. Π, del. Haslam

294 σέβουσα νόμον Diggle: ν-σ- C

302-3 γηραιοῦ ποδὸς τρομερὸν ἔλκω <πρὸ δόμων> βάσιν

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

in your turn who you are that have come to the seven-gated fortress of Thebes.

### POLYNICES

My father is Oedipus, son of Laius, and Menoeceus' daughter Jocasta is my mother. The people of Thebes call me Polynices.

### [CHORUS LEADER

O kinsman of the sons of Agenor, my royal family, by whom I was sent!]

### CHORUS

*(kneeling before Polynices)* I fall at your knees, my lord, honoring my native custom!

Ah, you have come at last to your native land!

*(standing up)* Ho there, within!

My queen, come out before the house, open its gates wide!

Do you hear, mother of this man?

Why don't you leave at once your high-roofed house and take your son in your embrace?

*Enter from the skene* JOCASTA.

### JOCASTA

Your Phoenician cry,

O maidens, I have heard, and my aged and trembling step I bring slowly <out of doors>.

O my son, how long the time, how many the days since I last saw your face! Clasp your mother's

---

post Kirchhoff ([ποδὸς] βάσιw) Willink: γηραιῶ ποδὶ τρομερὰν ἔλκω ποδὸς βάσιw C

## EURIPIDES

- στὸν ὠλέναισι ματέρως,  
 παρηίδων τ' ὄρεγμα δὸς  
 τριχῶν τε, κυανόχρωτι χαί-  
 τας πλοκάμφω δέραν σκιάζων ἀμάν.  
 310 ἰὼ ἰώ, μόλις φανείς  
 ἄελπτα κἀδόκητα ματρὸς ὠλέναις.  
 τί φῶ σε; πῶς ἀπάντα  
 καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λόγοισιν,  
 πολυέλικτον ἀδονὰν  
 315 ἐκείσε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο περι-  
 χορεύουσα τέρψιν  
 παλαιᾶν λάβω χαρμονᾶν;  
 ἰὼ τέκος,  
 ἔρημον πατρῶον ἔλιπες δόμον  
 φυγὰς ἀποσταλεῖς ὀμαίμον λῶβα,  
 320 ἦ ποθεινὸς φίλοις,  
 ἦ ποθεινὸς Θήβαις.  
 ὄθεν ἐμάν τε λευκόχροα κείρομαι  
 δακρυνόεσσ' ἀνείσα πένθει κόμαν,  
 [ἄπεπλος φαρέων λευκῶν, τέκνον,]  
 325 δυσόρφναιά τ' ἀμφὶ τρύχη τάδε  
 σκότι' ἀμείβομαι.  
 ὁ δ' ἐν δόμοισι πρέσβυς ὀμματοστερηῆς  
 ἀπήνας ὀμοπτέρου τᾶς ἀπο-  
 ζυγείσας δόμων  
 330 πόθον ἀμφιδάκρυτον αἰεὶ κατέχων

307-8 δὸς τριχῶν Camper: βοστρύχων C

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

breast to yours,  
 let me put my hand to your cheeks  
 and hair, casting the shadow  
 of your dark curls upon my neck!  
 (*Embracing him*) Oh, oh, child so late appearing,  
 unhopèd, unlooked for, to your mother's embrace!  
 (*Circling about him*) What am I to say of you? How can I in  
 every way,  
 by deed of hand and spoken word,  
 dancing about you  
 to this side and that  
 through many turns that give me pleasure,  
 win the delight of joys long missed?  
 O my son,  
 you have left your father's house bereft,  
 sent into exile by your brother's outrage,  
 much missed by your friends,  
 much missed by Thebes!  
 Hence in grief I have let loose my tresses  
 and cut this white hair of mine,  
 [not dressed in white garments, my son,]  
 and have changed my clothes, pütting about my body  
 these tattered robes, dusky and gloomy.  
 He in the house, the old man blind,  
 ever feeling a tearful longing  
 for the kindred pair  
 unyoked from the house,

308-9 κνανόχρωτι . . . πλοκάμω Geel: -τα . . . πλόκαμον C

309 δέραν σκιάζων Fritzsche: σκ- δ- C

323 δακρυόεσσ' άνείσα πένθει Hermann: δακρυόεσσαν  
 ίείσα πενθήρη fere C 324 del. Hartung

- ἀνῆξεν μὲν ξίφους  
 ἐπ' αὐτόχειρά τε σφαγὰν  
 ὑπὲρ τέραμνά τ' ἀγχόνας,  
 στενάζων ἀρὰς τέκνοισ·  
 335 σὺν ἀλαλαῖσι δ' αἰὲν αἰαγμάτων  
 σκότια κρύπτεται.  
 σὲ δ', ὦ τέκνον, γάμοισι δὴ  
 κλύω ζυγέντα παιδοποιὸν ἀδονὰν  
 ξένοισιν ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν,  
 340 ξένον δὲ κῆδος ἀμφέπειν,  
 ἄλαστα ματρὶ τᾶδε Λα-  
 ῖου τε τοῦ πάλαι γένει,  
 γάμων ἐπακτὸν ἄταν.  
 ἐγὼ δ' οὔτι σοι πυρὸς ἀνήψα φῶς  
 345 νόμιμον [ἐν γάμοις], ὡς πρέπει ματέρι μακαρία·  
 ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἴσμηνὸς ἐκηδεύθη  
 λουτροφόρου χλιδᾶς, ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίων  
 πόλιν ἐσίγαθεν σᾶς ἔσοδοι νύμφας.  
 350 ὄλοιτο τὰδ' εἴτε σίδαρος  
 εἴτ' Ἔρις εἴτε πατὴρ  
 ὁ σὸς αἴτιος, εἴτε τὸ δαιμόνιον  
 κατεκώματε δώμασιν Οἰδιπόδα·  
 πρὸς ἐμὲ γὰρ κακῶν ἔμολε τῶνδ' ἄχη.

337 γάμοισι Brunck, Hermann: καὶ γάμοισι fere C

341-2 Λαῖου τε τοῦ πάλαι γένει Hermann: Λαῖω τε τῷ  
 παλαιγενεῖ fere C

345-6 ἐν γάμοις del. Wilamowitz, ὡς πρέπει Nauck

349 ἐσίγαθεν Willink et fort. Π: ἐσιγάθη vel -άθησαν C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

rushes now to the sword  
of self-slaughter,  
now to nooses hung from the rafters,  
lamenting the curse on his sons.  
With continual cries of woe  
he hides himself in the dark.  
But you, my son, I hear are yoked  
in marriage and have the pleasure of childbegetting  
in a foreign house,  
with foreigners for kin by marriage,  
woe past forgetting to your mother here  
and to the race of old Laius,  
a marriage curse brought from abroad.  
I did not kindle for you the blazing torch  
that custom requires [in marriages], as befits a mother  
blessed.<sup>21</sup>

The Ismenus River made this alliance  
without the luxurious bath, and in the city  
of Thebes none cried aloud at the entrance of your bride.  
A curse upon the cause of these things, whether it was the  
sword  
or Eris<sup>22</sup> or your father,  
or if the power of heaven has run riot  
in the house of Oedipus:  
for upon me has come the pain of these woes.

<sup>21</sup> In the Greek marriage ceremony, the mother of the groom held up torches and also (cf. 348) provided a ritual bath for her son. Thebes' own river is felt to be involved in the latter.

<sup>22</sup> Goddess of strife.

## EURIPIDES

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 355 δεινὸν γυναιξὶν αἰ δι' ὠδίνων γοναί,  
καὶ φιλότεκνόν πως πᾶν γυναικείον γένος.

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

- μητέρα, φρονῶν εὖ κοῦ φρονῶν ἀφικόμην  
ἐχθροὺς ἐς ἄνδρας· ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει  
πατρίδος ἐρᾶν ἅπαντας· ὅς δ' ἄλλως λέγει,  
360 λόγοισι χαίρει, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἐκείσ' ἔχει.  
οὕτω δ' ἐτάρβησ' ἐς φόβον τ' ἀφικόμην  
μή τις δόλος με πρὸς κασιγνήτου κτάνη,  
ὥστε ξιφήρη χεῖρ' ἔχων δι' ἄστεως  
κυκλῶν πρόσωπον ἦλθον. ἐν δέ μ' ὠφελεί,  
365 σπονδαί τε καὶ σὴ πίστις, ἧ μ' ἐσήγαγεν  
τείχη πατρῶα· πολύδακρυς δ' ἀφικόμην,  
χρόνιος ἰδὼν μέλαθρα καὶ βωμοὺς θεῶν  
γυμνάσιά θ' οἴσιw ἐνεγράφηw Δίρκης θ' ὕδωρ  
ᾧw οὐ δικαίως ἀπελαθεῖς ξένην πόλιν  
370 ναίω, δι' ὅσων νᾶμ' ἔχων δακρύρροον.  
ἀλλ', ἐκ γὰρ ἄλγους ἄλγος αὖ, σὲ δέρκομαι  
κάρα ξυρήκες καὶ πέπλους μελαγχίμους  
ἔχουσαν· οἴμοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐγὼ κακῶν.  
ὥς δεινὸν ἔχθρα, μητέρα, οἰκείων φίλων.  
375 [καὶ δυσλύτους ἔχουσα τὰς διαλλαγάς.  
τί γὰρ πατήρ μοι πρέσβυς ἐν δόμοισι δρᾶ,  
σκότον δεδορκώς; τί δὲ κασίγνηται δύο;  
ἧ που στένουσι τλήμονες φυγὰς ἐμάς;]



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### CHORUS LEADER

Childbirth and its labor pangs have a surprising effect on women, and all womankind are somehow drawn to their children.

### POLYNICES

Mother, it was sensible of me to come to meet my enemy—and also mad. But all men necessarily love their country. Whoever says otherwise takes joy in disputation while his true belief lies elsewhere.

But I am terribly afraid that my brother may kill me by some trick, and so I have come through the city sword in hand and constantly looking around me. Only one thing benefits me, our truce and your trustworthiness. It is this that has brought me into my father's walls. But I arrive in tears: after so long a time I look on the temples and altars of the gods, the gymnasia in which I was trained, and the waters of Dirce. I am unjustly deprived of these things and live in a strange city, my eyes overflowing with tears.

But—here one grief crowns another—I see you with shorn head and garments of black! What misery for me! What a dreadful thing, mother, is hatred between members of one family! [It is hard to settle and reach an understanding. What is my old father doing in the house, blind as he is? What are my two sisters doing? No doubt in their misery lamenting my exile?]

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361 δ' ἐράβησ' a, coni. Hermann: δὲ τάρβους ceteri codd.

369-70 del. West

370 νᾶμ' Musgrave: ὄμμ' fere C

375 suspectum habuit Valckenaer, del. Usener, cl. Σ

376-8 del. Usener

## EURIPIDES

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

- κακῶς θεῶν τις Οιδίπου φθείρει γένος·  
 380 οὔτω γὰρ ἤρξατ', ἄνομα μὲν τεκεῖν ἐμέ,  
 κακῶς δὲ γῆμαι πατέρα σὸν φῦναί τε σέ.  
 ἀτὰρ τί ταῦτα; δεῖ φέρειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν.  
 ὅπως δ' ἔρωμαι, μή τι σὴν δάκω φρένα,  
 δέδοιχ', ἃ χρήζω· διὰ πόθου δ' ἐλλήλυθα.

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

- 385 ἀλλ' ἐξερῶτα, μηδὲν ἐνδεὲς λίπης·  
 ἃ γὰρ σὺ βούλη, ταῦτ' ἐμοί, μήτηρ, φίλα.

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

[καὶ δὴ σ' ἐρωτῶ πρῶτον ὧν χρήζω τυχεῖν·]  
 τί τὸ στέρεσθαι πατρίδος; ἢ κακὸν μέγα;

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μέγιστον· ἔργω δ' ἐστὶ μείζον ἢ λόγῳ.

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

- 390 τίς ὁ τρόπος αὐτοῦ; τί φυγάσιν τὸ δυσχερές;

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἐν μὲν μέγιστον· οὐκ ἔχει παρρησίαν.

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

δούλου τόδ' εἶπας, μὴ λέγειν ἅ τις φρονεῖ.

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τὰς τῶν κρατούντων ἀμαθίας φέρειν χρεῶν.

387 om. Π, del. Haslam

393-4 del. Czwaliņa

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

JOCASTA

Some god is sending the progeny of Oedipus to a terrible ruin. This is how he began: I gave birth unlawfully,<sup>23</sup> your father married me for ill, and thus you were begotten. Yet why should I dwell on this? One must endure what the gods send.

But I am afraid to ask you what I want to know, afraid to grieve your heart. Yet I feel a great longing to ask.

POLYNICES

Ask away, leave nothing out: your desire is mine as well.

JOCASTA

[See, I ask you the first thing I want to know.] What is it like to be deprived of your country? Is it a great calamity?

POLYNICES

The greatest: the reality far surpasses the description.

JOCASTA

What is its nature? What is hard for exiles?

POLYNICES

One thing is most important: no free speech.

JOCASTA

A slave's lot this, not saying what you think.

POLYNICES

You must endure the follies of your ruler.

<sup>23</sup> She had a child contrary to Apollo's will.

EURIPIDES

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τοῦτο λυπρὸν, συνασοφείν τοῖς μὴ σοφοῖς.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

395 ἄλλ' ἐς τὸ κέρδος παρὰ φύσιν δουλευτέον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

αἰ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φνγάδας, ὡς λόγος.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καλοῖς βλέπουσαί γ' ὄμμασιν, μέλλουσι δέ.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

399 ἔχουσιν Ἀφροδίτην τιν' ἠδείαν κακῶν.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

398 οὐδ' ὁ χρόνος αὐτὰς διεσάφησ' οὔσας κενάς;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

400 πόθεν δ' ἐβόσκου, πρὶν γάμοις εὐρεῖν βίον;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποτὲ μὲν ἐπ' ἡμαρ εἶχον, εἴτ' οὐκ εἶχον ἄν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

φίλοι δὲ πατρὸς καὶ ξένοι σ' οὐκ ὠφέλουσι;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εὖ πρᾶσσε· τὰ φίλων δ' οὐδέν, ἦν τις δυστυχή.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐδ' ἠγύγεια σ' ἦρην εἰς ὕψος μέγαν;

397 βλέπουσαί Hermann, scholiis fretus: βλέπουσί fere C

399 ante 398 trai. anon. Cantabr. fort. ἔχουσι δ'

398 fort. εὖ δ' ὁ χρόνος

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

JOCASTA

That too is hard, to join fools in their folly.

POLYNICES

Well, to get what he wants a man must suppress his nature  
and play the slave.

JOCASTA

Exiles, they say, live on hopes.

POLYNICES

Yes, hopes with loveliness in their glance but delay in their  
step.

JOCASTA

They make a man pleasantly in love with his woes.

POLYNICES

But hasn't time shown up their emptiness?

JOCASTA

How did you live before marriage brought you livelihood?

POLYNICES

Sometimes I had enough for the day, sometimes not.

JOCASTA

But did your father's foreign friends not help you?

POLYNICES

You must prosper! Friends vanish if your luck turns sour.

JOCASTA

And did your noble birth not raise you high?

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<sup>401</sup> *av* Reiske, Valckenaer

<sup>404</sup> *μέγαν* Wecklein: *μέγα* C

EURIPIDES

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

405 κακὸν τὸ μὴ ἔχειν τὸ γένος οὐκ ἔβωσκε με.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἢ πατρίς, ὡς ἔοικε, φίλτατον βροτοῖς.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐδ' ὀνομάσαι δύναί' ἂν ὡς ἐστὶν φίλον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

408 πῶς δ' ἦλθες Ἄργος; τί ν' ἐπίνοιαν ἔσχεθες;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

413 οὐκ οἶδ'· ὁ δαίμων μ' ἐκάλεσεν πρὸς τὴν τύχην.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

414 σοφὸς γὰρ ὁ θεός· τίνι τρόπῳ δ' ἔσχες λέχος;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

409 ἔχρησ' Ἀδράστῳ Λοξίας χρησμόν τινα.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

410 ποῖον; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; οὐκ ἔχω μαθεῖν.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κάπρῳ λέοντί θ' ἀρμόσαι παίδων γάμους.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

412 καὶ σοὶ τί θηρῶν ὀνόματος μετῆν, τέκνον;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

415 νύξ ἦν, Ἀδράστου δ' ἦλθον ἐς παραστάδας.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κοίτας ματεύων, ἦ φυγὰς πλανώμενος;

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

POLYNICES

Want is a curse: my lineage did not feed me.

JOCASTA

Dearest to men, it seems, is native soil.

POLYNICES

Your words could not describe how dear it is.

JOCASTA

How did you come to Argos? With what purpose?

POLYNICES

I do not know: heaven called me to my fate.

JOCASTA

The god is wise. But how did you win your bride?

POLYNICES

Loxias gave an oracle to Adrastus.

JOCASTA

What oracle do you mean? I am unclear.

POLYNICES

"To lion and to boar thy daughters marry."

JOCASTA

What share had you, son, in the name of beast?

POLYNICES

It was night: to Adrastus' vestibule I came.

JOCASTA

Seeking a bed, as wandering exile would?

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413-4 post 408 traî. Jacobs

EURIPIDES

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἦν ταῦτα· κᾶτά γ' ἦλθεν ἄλλος αὖ φυγᾶς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τίς οὗτος; ὡς ἄρ' ἄθλιος κἀκείνος ἦν.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

Τυδεύς, ὃν Οἰνέως φασὶν ἐκφῦναι πατρός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

420 τί θηρσὶν ὑμᾶς δῆτ' Ἄδραστος ἤκασεν;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

στρωμνῆς ἐς ἀλκὴν οὔνεκ' ἦλθομεν πέρι.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐνταῦθα Ταλαοῦ παῖς συνῆκε θέσφατα;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

κᾶδωκέ γ' ἡμῖν δύο δυοῖν νεάνιδας.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἄρ' εὐτυχεῖς οὖν τοῖς γάμοις ἢ δυστυχεῖς;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

425 οὐ μεμπτὸς ἡμῖν ὁ γάμος ἐς τόδ' ἡμέρας.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πῶς δ' ἐξέπεισας δεῦρό σοι σπέσθαι στρατόν;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

δισσοῖς Ἄδραστος ὤμοσεν γαμβροῖς τόδε,  
[Τυδεῖ τε κάμοί, σύγγαμος γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός,]

428 del. Jortin



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

POLYNICES

Just so. And then another exile came.

JOCASTA

Who? He too must have suffered misery!

POLYNICES

Tydeus, who's said to be the son of Oeneus.

JOCASTA

So why did Adrastus liken you to beasts?

POLYNICES

Because we came to blows about a bed.

JOCASTA

Then Talaus' son<sup>24</sup> perceived Apollo's meaning?

POLYNICES

Yes: to us two he married his two daughters.

JOCASTA

Are you happy with your wife, then, or unhappy?

POLYNICES

Up to this hour I make no complaint.

JOCASTA

How did you get an army to come with you?

POLYNICES

Adrastus swore to his two sons-in-law [, Tydeus and me, for he is a sharer with me in marriage,] that he would bring us

<sup>24</sup> I. e. Adrastus.

## EURIPIDES

- ἄμφω κατάξειν ἐς πάτραν, πρόσθεν δ' ἐμέ.  
 430 πολλοὶ δὲ Δαναῶν καὶ Μυκηναίων ἄκροι  
 πάρεισι, λυπρὰν χάριν, ἀναγκαίαν δέ μοι  
 διδόντες· ἐπὶ γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν στρατεύομαι  
 πόλιν. θεοὺς δ' ἐπώμοσ' ὡς ἀκουσίως  
 τοῖς φιλτάτοις ἐκοῦσιν ἡράμην δόρυ.  
 435 ἄλλ' ἐς σέ τείνει τῶνδε διάλυσις κακῶν,  
 [μῆτερ, διαλλάξασαν ὁμογενεῖς φίλους]  
 παῦσαι πόνων σέ καμὲ καὶ πᾶσαν πόλιν.  
 [πάλαι μὲν οὖν ὑμνηθέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἐρῶ·  
 τὰ χρήματ' ἀνθρώποισι τιμιώτατα  
 440 δύναμίν τε πλείστην τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἔχει.  
 ἀγῶ μεθήκω δεῦρο μυρίαν ἄγων  
 λόγῃην· πένης γὰρ οὐδὲν εὐγενῆς ἀνήρ.]

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- καὶ μὴν Ἐτεοκλῆς ἐς διαλλαγὰς ὄδε  
 χωρεῖ· σὸν ἔργον, μῆτερ Ἰοκάστη, λέγειν  
 445 τοιούσδε μύθους οἷς διαλλάξεις τέκνα.

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

- μῆτερ, πάρειμι· τὴν χάριν δέ σοι διδοὺς  
 ἦλθον. τί χρῆ δρᾶν; ἀρχέτω δέ τις λόγου.  
 [ὡς ἀμφὶ τείχη καὶ ξυνωρίδας λόχων  
 τάσσω ἐπέσχον πόλιν, ὅπως κλύοιμί σου  
 450 κοινὰς βραβείας, αἷς ὑπόσπονδον μολεῖν  
 τόνδ' εἰσεδέξω τειχέων πείσασά με.]

436 om. Π, del. Nauck

438-42 del. Leidloff

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

both back from exile, beginning with me. Many nobles of Argos and Mycenae are here, rendering me a favor that I need but that brings me pain: it is my country I am marching against. I swear by the gods that I fight my brother against my will: it is he who wills it. But the ending of these woes depends upon you: [mother, by reconciling those of kindred blood,] rescue yourself and me and the whole city from calamity. [It was said long ago, but I will say it nevertheless: money is held in the highest esteem by mortals, and of all that is in the world of men it has the greatest power. It is to get this that I have come here with ten thousand spearmen. The nobleman who is poor is nothing.]

*Enter ETEOCLES with retinue by Eisodos A.*

### CHORUS LEADER

But see, here comes Eteocles to parley. It is your task, mother Jocasta, to say such words as will reconcile your sons.

### ETEOCLES

Mother, I am here. I have come as a favor to you. What must be done? Let someone begin the discussion. [For around the walls with their paired divisions I have suspended my marshalling of the citizens so that I may hear from you the judgments you are sharing with us, judgments by which you induced this man, after winning my consent, to come inside the walls under truce.]

*He glares fiercely at his brother, who turns away.*

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448-51 del. Diggle (450-1 suspectos habuit Wecklein)

## EURIPIDES

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

- ἐπίσχε· οὔτοι τὸ ταχὺ τὴν δίκην ἔχει,  
 βραδεῖς δὲ μῦθοι πλείστον ἀνύτουσιν σοφόν.  
 σχάσον δὲ δεινὸν ὄμμα καὶ θυμοῦ πνοάς·  
 455 οὐ γὰρ τὸ λαιμότμητον εἰσοράς κára  
 Γοργόνος, ἀδελφὸν δ' εἰσοράς ἦκοντα σόν.  
 σύ τ' αὖ πρόσωπον πρὸς κασίγνητον στρέφε,  
 Πολύνεικες· ἐς γὰρ ταῦτ' ὄμμασιν βλέπων  
 λέξεις τ' ἄμεινον τοῦδέ τ' ἐνδέξῃ λόγους.  
 460 παραινέσαι δὲ σφῶν τι βούλομαι σοφόν·  
 ὅταν φίλος τις ἀνδρὶ θυμωθεῖς φίλῳ  
 ἐς ἓν συνελθὼν ὄμματ' ὄμμασιν διδῶ,  
 ἐφ' οἴσιν ἦκει, ταῦτα χρὴ μόνον σκοπεῖν,  
 κακῶν δὲ τῶν πρὶν μηδενὸς μνείαν ἔχειν.  
 465 λόγος μὲν οὖν σὸς πρόσθε, Πολύνεικες τέκνον·  
 σὺ γὰρ στράτευμα Δαναϊδῶν ἦκεις ἄγων,  
 ἄδικα πεπονθώς, ὡς σὺ φῆς· κριτῆς δέ τις  
 θεῶν γένοιτο καὶ διαλλακτῆς κακῶν.

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

- ἀπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφν,  
 470 κοῦ ποικίλων δεῖ τάνδιχ' ἐρμηνευμάτων·  
 ἔχει γὰρ αὐτὰ καιρόν· ὁ δ' ἄδικος λόγος  
 νοσῶν ἐν αὐτῷ φαρμάκων δεῖται σοφῶν.  
 ἐγὼ δ' ἀπάρας δωμάτων προυσκεψάμην  
 τοῦμόν τε καὶ τοῦδ', ἐκφυγεῖν χρήζων ἀρὰς  
 475 ἄς Οἰδίπους ἐφθέγγεατ' εἰς ἡμᾶς ποτε·  
 ἐξῆλθον ἔξω τῆσδ' ἐκὼν αὐτὸς χθονός,

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### JOCASTA

Hold on! Haste does not produce justice. It is deliberate words that most often produce a wise result. Stop your fierce glaring and your angry panting! You are not looking at the severed head of the Gorgon but at your own brother, who has come here. And you, Polynices, turn your face toward your brother. If your glances meet, you will not only speak better but also be better at listening to his words. (*They face one another.*)

Now I want to give the two of you some wise advice. When friend is angry with friend and goes to meet him face to face, he must consider only the business that brought him there and say nothing of any wrongs that happened before.

It is your turn to speak first, Polynices my son. You have come bringing an army of the sons of Danaus, having suffered, as you claim, unjust treatment. May one of the gods be the judge and arbitrator of your troubles!

### POLYNICES

Truth's argument is simple, and justice needs no elaborate presentation: all by itself it shows the proper measure. But unjust argument, being diseased in itself, requires clever medicines.

I for my part in leaving home took thought for his interests and mine and tried to escape from the curses Oedipus once uttered against us. I left this land myself of my own

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<sup>453</sup> ἀνύπουσιν Hermann: ἀνύουσιν C

<sup>473</sup> δ' ἀπάρας Diggle: δὲ πατρὸς C

## EURIPIDES

δοὺς τῷδ' ἀνάσσειν πατρίδος ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον  
 [ὥστ' αὐτὸς ἄρχειν αὐθις ἀνὰ μέρος λαβῶν  
 καὶ μὴ δι' ἔχθρας τῷδε καὶ φθόνου μολῶν  
 480 κακόν τι δράσαι καὶ παθεῖν, ἃ γίγνεται].  
 ὁ δ' αἰνέσας ταῦθ' ὀρκίους τε δοὺς θεοὺς  
 ἔδρασεν οὐδὲν ὧν ὑπέσχετ', ἀλλ' ἔχει  
 τυραννίδ' αὐτὸς καὶ δόμων ἐμὸν μέρος.

καὶ νῦν ἔτοιμός εἰμι τὰμαντοῦ λαβῶν  
 485 στρατὸν μὲν ἔξω τῆσδ' ἀποστεῖλαι χθονός,  
 οἰκεῖν δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν οἶκον ἀνὰ μέρος λαβῶν  
 καὶ τῷδ' ἀφείναι τὸν ἴσον αὐθις <ἐς> χρόνον,  
 καὶ μῆτε πορθεῖν πατρίδα μῆτε προσφέρειν  
 πύργοισι πηκτῶν κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις·  
 490 ἃ μὴ κυρήσας τῆς δίκης πειράσομαι  
 δρᾶν. μάρτυρας δὲ τῶνδε δαίμονας καλῶ,  
 ὡς πάντα πράσσωσιν σὺν δίκη δίκης ἄτερ  
 ἀποστεροῦμαι πατρίδος ἀνοσιώτατα.

ταῦτ' αὖθ' ἕκαστα, μῆτερ, οὐχὶ περιπλοκάς  
 495 λόγων ἀθροίσας εἶπον ἀλλὰ καὶ σοφοῖς  
 καὶ τοῖσι φαύλοις ἔνδιχ', ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμοὶ μὲν, εἰ καὶ μὴ καθ' Ἑλλήνων χθόνα  
 τεθράμμεθ', ἀλλ' οὖν ξυνετά μοι δοκεῖς λέγειν.

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

εἰ πᾶσι ταὐτὸ καλὸν ἔφν σοφόν θ' ἅμα,  
 500 οὐκ ἦν ἂν ἀμφίλεκτος ἀνθρώποις ἔρις·  
 νῦν δ' οὐθ' ὅμοιον οὐδὲν οὐτ' ἴσον βροτοῖς

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

accord, granting this man the right to govern the country for a year. [I was to rule again, taking my turn, and not to come in hatred and ill will toward this man and inflict and suffer harm, which is what is happening.] He agreed to this and swore an oath by the gods but then failed utterly to keep his promises. Instead he holds onto the kingship himself and keeps my share of the house.

Now I am prepared, if I get what is my own, to send the army away from this land, to administer my house, taking my turn, and to relinquish it to this man later <for> the same period, not sacking my country or applying scaling ladders to its towers. But if I do not receive justice, I shall attempt to do these things. I call on the gods to witness that though I am acting justly in all respects, I am being deprived of my country contrary to justice and piety.

I have spoken the precise facts, plain and simple, mother, not marshaling deceitful rhetoric but only saying what is just, it seems to me, in the eyes both of the wise and the simple.

### CHORUS LEADER

Though I was not brought up in Greece, to me you seem to be speaking sensibly.

### ETEOCLES

If everyone defined justice and wisdom the same way, there would be no quarreling or strife among men. As things stand, the only similarity or equality mortals show is

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478-80 del. Diggle

487 <ἐς> Jackson

- πλὴν ὀνόμασιν· τὸ δ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε.  
 ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐδέν, μήτηρ, ἀποκρύψας ἐρῶ  
 ἄστρον ἂν ἔλθοιμ' αἰθέρος πρὸς ἀντολὰς  
 505 καὶ γῆς ἔνερθε, δυνατὸς ὢν δρᾶσαι τάδε,  
 τὴν θεῶν μεγίστην ὥστ' ἔχειν Τυραννίδα.  
 τοῦτ' οὖν τὸ χρηστόν, μήτηρ, οὐχὶ βούλομαι  
 ἄλλω παρῆναι μᾶλλον ἢ σώζειν ἐμοί·  
 ἀνανδρία γάρ, τὸ πλέον ὅστις ἀπολέσας  
 510 τοῦτ' ἔλαβε. πρὸς δὲ τοῖσδ' αἰσχύνομαι  
 ἐλθόντα σὺν ὅπλοις τόνδε καὶ πορθούντα γῆν  
 τυχεῖν ἂν χρήζει· ταῖς γὰρ ἂν Θήβαις τόδε  
 γένοιτ' ὄνειδος, εἰ Μυκηναίου δορὸς  
 φόβω παρῆν σκῆπτρα τὰμὰ τῷδ' ἔχειν.  
 515 χρῆν δ' αὐτὸν οὐχ ὅπλοισι τὰς διαλλαγὰς,  
 μήτηρ, ποιείσθαι· πᾶν γὰρ ἐξαιρεῖ λόγος  
 ὃ καὶ σίδηρος πολεμίων δράσειεν ἂν.  
 ἀλλ', εἰ μὲν ἄλλως τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν θέλει,  
 ἔξεστ'· ἐκείνου δ' οὐχ ἐκὼν μεθήσομαι·  
 520 ἄρχειν παρόν μοι, τῷδε δουλεύσω ποτέ·  
 πρὸς ταῦτ' ἴτω μὲν πῦρ, ἴτω δὲ φάσγανα,  
 ζεύγνυσθε δ' ἵππους, πεδία πίμπλαθ' ἀρμάτων,  
 ὥς οὐ παρήσω τῷδ' ἐμὴν τυραννίδα.  
 εἶπερ γὰρ ἀδικεῖν χρή, τυραννίδος πέρι  
 525 κάλλιστον ἀδικεῖν, τᾶλλα δ' εὖσεβεῖν χρεῶν.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εὖ λέγειν χρή μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς ἔργοις καλοῖς·  
 οὐ γὰρ καλὸν τοῦτ' ἀλλὰ τῇ δίκῃ πικρόν.



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

in their use of words: the reality to which these refer is not the same.

I shall speak, mother, and hold nothing back. I would go to where heaven's constellations rise, go beneath the earth, if it lay in my power, in order to possess Tyranny,<sup>25</sup> greatest of the gods. Hence, mother, I do not want to yield this good to another: I want to keep it myself. It is unmanly to give up the greater thing and take the lesser. Furthermore I feel shame at the thought that this man, coming with an army and trying to sack the city, should get what he wants. This would be a disgrace for Thebes if from fear of Mycenae's spear<sup>26</sup> I should yield my scepter for him to possess. He ought not to be trying to reach an agreement by force of arms: speech accomplishes everything an enemy's arms might accomplish. Well, if he wants to dwell in this land on other terms, he may do so. But this point I shall never willingly give up: when I can rule, shall I be this man's slave?

Since this is so, let swords advance, yoke your horses, fill the plains with chariots! For I shall never surrender my kingship to him. If one must commit injustice, it is best to do so for the sake of tyranny, being god-fearing in all else.

### CHORUS LEADER

Men should not speak fair about ignoble deeds. That is dishonorable and hateful to justice.

<sup>25</sup> I. e. autocratic rule.      <sup>26</sup> Mycenae is used as a virtual synonym for Argos in Greek tragedy.

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502 *ὀνόμασιν* Markland, Porson: *ὀνομάσαι* C

504 *αἰθέρος* t: *ἡλίου* C

516 fort. *λόγους*

520 del. Kirchhoff

## EURIPIDES

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

- ᾧ τέκνον, οὐχ ἅπαντα τῷ γήρα κακά,  
 Ἐτεόκλεες, πρόσσεστιν ἄλλ' ἡμπειρία  
 530 ἔχει τι λέξαι τῶν νέων σοφώτερον.  
 τί τῆς κακίστης δαιμόνων ἐφίεσαι  
 Φιλοτιμίας, παῖ; μὴ σύ γ' ἄδικος ἢ θεός·  
 πολλοὺς δ' ἐς οἴκους καὶ πόλεις εὐδαιμόνας  
 ἐσῆλθε κάξῃλθ' ἐπ' ὀλέθρῳ τῶν χρωμένων·  
 535 ἐφ' ἧ σὺ μαίνῃ. κείνο κάλλιον, τέκνον,  
 Ἴσότητα τιμᾶν, ἢ φίλους αἰεὶ φίλοις  
 πόλεις τε πόλεσι συμμάχους τε συμμάχοις  
 συνδεῖ· τὸ γὰρ ἴσον νόμιμον ἀνθρώποις ἔφν,  
 τῷ πλέονι δ' αἰεὶ πολέμιον καθίσταται  
 540 τοὔλασσον ἐχθρᾶς θ' ἡμέρας κατάρχεται.  
 καὶ γὰρ μέτρ' ἀνθρώποισι καὶ μέρη σταθμῶν  
 Ἴσότης ἔταξε κἀριθμὸν διώρισε,  
 νυκτός τ' ἀφεγγές βλέφαρον ἡλίου τε φῶς  
 ἴσον βαδίζει τὸν ἐνιαύσιον κύκλον,  
 545 κούδέτερον αὐτοῖν φθόνον ἔχει νικώμενον.  
 εἶθ' ἥλιος μὲν νύξ τε δουλεύει βροτοῖς  
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέξῃ δωμάτων ἔχων ἴσον  
 καὶ τῷδε νείμαι; κᾶτα ποῦ ἴστιν ἢ δίκη;  
 [τί τὴν τυραννίδ', ἀδικίαν εὐδαιμόνα,  
 550 τιμᾶς ὑπέρφεν καὶ μέγ' ἡγησάσθαι τόδε;  
 περιβλέπεσθαι τίμιον; κενὸν μὲν οὖν.  
 ἢ πολλὰ μοχθεῖν πόλλ' ἔχων ἐν δώμασιν  
 βούλη; τί δ' ἔστι τὸ πλέον; ὄνομ' ἔχει μόνον·

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### JOCASTA

My son Eteocles, not all that attends old age is bad: the old have experience, which can speak more wisely than youth.

Why do you strive for Ambition, the basest of divinities, my son? Do not do so: she is an unjust goddess! Often she goes in and out of prosperous cities and houses and ruins those who have dealings with her! Yet for her you have lost your senses. Far finer, my son, to honor Equality, which binds friends to friends, cities to cities, and allies to allies. For Equality, men find, conduces to lawfulness,<sup>27</sup> whereas the lesser is always hostile to the greater and making war against it. In fact, it is Equality that has established measures and weights for mankind and given them number. For Night's rayless eyelid walks an equal portion of the yearly round with the light of Day, and neither of them feels envy when bested. So then, while daylight and darkness serve mankind's needs, will you, having an equal share of the house, refuse to accord it to this man? Where then is justice?

[Why do you so excessively honor tyranny, which is prosperous injustice? Why regard this as a great thing? Is it worthwhile to be the object of every gaze? No, it is an empty thing. Or do you wish to toil mightily because of the mighty possessions in your house? What is the advantage

<sup>27</sup> Or, reading *μόνιμον*, "stability."

538 *μόνιμον* t                      546 *βροτοῖς*] *μέτροις* Weil

548 *νέμωμαι* Salmasius: *ἀπονείμωμαι* a: *-νέμειν* b: *-νέμων* c

v. del. Schoene

549-67 del. Kovacs (552-8 Zipperer, 563-5 Willink, 566-7 Dindorf)

## EURIPIDES

- ἐπεὶ τά γ' ἀρκοῦνθ' ἱκανὰ τοῖς γε σῶφροσιν.  
 555 οὔτοι τὰ χρήματ' ἴδια κέκτηνται βροτοί,  
 τὰ τῶν θεῶν δ' ἔχοντες ἐπιμελούμεθα·  
 ὅταν δὲ χρήζωσ' αὐτ' ἀφαιροῦνται πάλιν·  
 ὁ δ' ὄλβος οὐ βέβαιος ἀλλ' ἐφήμερος.  
 ἄγ', ἦν σ' ἔρωμαι δύο λόγῳ προθεῖς' ἅμα,  
 560 πότερα τυραννεῖν ἢ πόλιν σῶσαι θέλεις,  
 ἐρεῖς τυραννεῖν; ἦν δὲ νικήσῃ σ' ὅδε  
 Ἄργεῖά τ' ἔγχη δόρυ τὸ Καδμείων ἔλη,  
 ὄψῃ δαμασθὲν ἄστῳ Θηβαίων τόδε,  
 ὄψῃ δὲ πολλὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας κόρας  
 565 βία πρὸς ἀνδρῶν πολεμίων πορθουμένας.  
 δαπανηρὸς ἄρ' ὁ πλοῦτος ὃν ζητεῖς ἔχειν  
 γενήσεται Θήβαιοι, φιλότιμος δὲ σύ.]  
 σοὶ μὲν τάδ' αὐδῶ. σοὶ δέ, Πολύνεικες, λέγω·  
 ἀμαθεῖς Ἄδραστος χάριτας ἐς σ' ἀνήψατο,  
 570 ἀσύνητα δ' ἤλθες καὶ σὺ πορθήσων πόλιν.  
 φέρ', ἦν ἔλῃς γῆν τήνδ', ὃ μὴ τύχοι ποτέ,  
 πρὸς θεῶν, τρόπαια πῶς ἄρα στήσεις Δί;  
 πῶς δ' αὖ κατάρξῃ θυμάτων, ἐλὼν πάτραν,  
 καὶ σκῦλα γράψεις πῶς ἐπ' Ἰνάχου ῥοαῖς;  
 575 Θήβας πυρώσας τάσδε Πολυνεΐκης θεοῖς  
 ἀσπίδας ἔθηκε; μήποτ', ὦ τέκνον, κλέος  
 τοιόνδε σοι γένοιθ' ὑφ' Ἑλλήνων λαβεῖν.  
 ἦν δ' αὖ κρατηθῆς καὶ τὰ τοῦδ' ὑπερδράμη,  
 πῶς Ἄργος ἤξεις μυρίους λιπῶν νεκρούς;  
 580 ἐρεῖ δὲ δὴ τις· ὦ κακὰ μνηστεύματα

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

of that? An advantage in name only. A sufficiency is enough for the self-controlled. Mortals do not own wealth as their own property: we merely hold what is the gods' and look after it. When they want it, they take it away again. Wealth is not secure but fleeting.

Come, if I ask you a question, setting two accounts before you at once, whether you would prefer to be king or to save your city, would you say "be king"? But if this man defeats you and the Argive sword conquers the Theban spear, you will see the city of Thebes defeated and see many captive women forcibly carried off as booty by the enemy. And so the wealth you desire to possess will prove costly to Thebes, and you are an ambitious man.]

Those are my words to you. To you, Polynices, I say this. It was a foolish favor Adrastus did you, and your coming here to sack the city was a fool's errand. Come, if you conquer this land—and heaven forbid you should—in the name of the gods how will you set up trophies to Zeus,<sup>28</sup> how will you make burnt offerings, having destroyed your country? What will you inscribe on the spoils by the streams of Inachus?<sup>29</sup> "Having set fire to Thebes Polynices dedicates these shields to the gods"? Never, my son, may you win fame like this from the Greeks! On the other hand, if you are beaten and his forces are superior, how will you return to Argos, having left behind countless dead? Someone will say, "O Adrastus, inflicter on us of ruinous mar-

<sup>28</sup> After a battle the victorious general set up a marker in honor of Zeus Tropaios, "Zeus of the Rout," as thanks for victory.

<sup>29</sup> Chief river of Argos.

## EURIPIDES

Ἄδραστε προσθείς, διὰ μιᾶς νύμφης γάμον  
ἀπωλόμεσθα. δύο κακῶ σπείδεις, τέκνον,  
κείνων στέρεσθαι τῶνδ' ἐν μέσῳ πεσεῖν.

μέθετον τὸ λίαν, μέθετον· ἀμαθία δυοῖν,  
585 ἐς ταῦθ' ὅταν μόλητον, ἔχθιστον κακόν.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ θεοί, γένοισθε τῶνδ' ἀπότροποι κακῶν  
καὶ ξύμβασίν τιν' Οἰδίπου τέκνοις δότε.

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μητέρα, οὐ λόγων ἔθ' ἀγών, ἀλλ' ἀναλοῦται χρόνος  
οὐν μέσῳ μάτην, περαίνει δ' οὐδὲν ἢ προθυμία·  
590 οὐ γὰρ ἂν ξυμβαίμεν ἄλλως ἢ πρὸς τοῖς εἰρημένους,  
ὥστ' ἐμὲ σκήπτρων κρατοῦντα τῆσδ' ἄνακτ' εἶναι  
χθονός·

τῶν μακρῶν δ' ἀπαλλαγείσα νουθητημάτων μ' ἔα.  
καὶ σὺ τῶνδ' ἔξω κομίζου τειχέων, ἢ κατθανῆ.

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

πρὸς τίνας; τίς ὦδ' ἄτρωτος ὅστις εἰς ἡμᾶς ξίφος  
595 φόνιον ἐμβαλὼν τὸν αὐτὸν οὐκ ἀποίσεται μόρον;

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγγύς, οὐ πρόσω, βέβηκεν· ἐς χέρας λεύσσεις ἐμάς;

## ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἰσορῶ· δειλὸν δ' ὁ πλοῦτος καὶ φιλόψυχον κακόν.

596 ἐς] fort. ἦ

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

riages, because of the marriage of one bride we have been ruined." It is a double misfortune you are pursuing, my son, losing what you have there and falling short of your goal here.

Let go of this excess, let it go, both of you! When two fools come together, the result is calamity most bitter.

### CHORUS LEADER

O gods, avert this calamity and provide some kind of reconciliation for the sons of Oedipus!

### ETEOCLES

Mother, it's too late for contests of words: time until the battle is time wasted, and your efforts do no good. We can never reach an agreement except on the terms already named: I hold the scepter and I rule this land. Give up your long admonitions and let me go. (*To Polynices*) And you, take yourself outside the walls—or you're a dead man.

### POLYNICES

And who's going to kill me? Who is so invulnerable that he can thrust his murderous sword at me and not receive the death he would inflict?

### ETEOCLES

He is standing nearby, not far off. Are you looking at my hands? (*He grasps the hilt of his sword as if to draw it.*)

### POLYNICES

I am looking. But Mr. Wealth's a cowardly warrior, afraid to lose his life.

EURIPIDES

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κᾶτα σὺν πολλοῖσιν ἦλθες πρὸς τὸν οὐδὲν ἐς  
μάχην;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀσφαλῆς γάρ ἐστ' ἀμείνων ἢ θρασὺς στρατηλάτης.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

600 κομπὸς εἶ σπονδαῖς πεποιθώς, αἶ σε σῶζουσιν  
θανεῖν.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σέ· δεύτερον δ' ἀπαιτῶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη  
χθονός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἀπαιτούμεσθ'· ἐγὼ γὰρ τὸν ἐμὸν οἰκήσω δόμον.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

τοῦ μέρους ἔχων τὰ πλείω;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

φήμ'· ἀπαλλάσσου δὲ γῆς.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ θεῶν βωμοὶ πατρῶων . . .

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὓς σὺ πορθήσων πάρει.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

605 . . . κλύετέ μου . . .

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τίς δ' ἂν κλύοι σου πατρίδ' ἐπεστρατευμένου;



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

ETEOCLES

And so you came with many men against such a contemptible fighter?

POLYNICES

Yes, for better a safe general than a brash one.

ETEOCLES

You talk big, with the truce to keep you from being killed.

POLYNICES

It keeps you as well. For the second time: I demand the scepter and my share of the land.

ETEOCLES

I don't allow any such demand! I shall manage my own house.

POLYNICES

With more than your share?

ETEOCLES

Yes, that's right. Now leave the country.

POLYNICES

You altars of our fathers' gods . . .

ETEOCLES

Altars you came to ravage!

POLYNICES

. . . hear me!

ETEOCLES

What god would listen to you, on the march against your country?

EURIPIDES

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ θεῶν τῶν λευκοπόλων δώμαθ' . . .

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οἱ στυγοῦσί σε.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

. . . ἐξελαυνόμεσθα πατρίδος . . .

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἦλθες ἐξελῶν.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

. . . ἀδικία γ', ὦ θεοί.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

Μυκήναις, μὴ ἴθάδ' ἀνακάλει θεούς.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀνόσιος πέφυκας . . .

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ πατρίδος ὡς σὺ πολέμιος.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

610 . . . ὅς μ' ἄμοιρον ἐξελαύνεις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ κατακτενῶ γε πρὸς.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ πάτερ, κλύεις ἅ πάσχω;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ οἶα δρᾶς κλύει.

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

POLYNICES

And you temples of the white-horsed gods<sup>30</sup> . . .

ETEOCLES

Gods *who detest you!*

POLYNICES

. . . I am being driven from my country . . .

ETEOCLES

Yes: you came to drive us from it!

POLYNICES

. . . unjustly, O gods!

ETEOCLES

Call on the gods in Mycenae, not here!

POLYNICES

You are godless . . .

ETEOCLES

But not my country's foe, as you are!

POLYNICES

. . . since you expel me without my portion.

ETEOCLES

Yes, and I will kill you into the bargain!

POLYNICES

Father, do you hear what is being done to me?

ETEOCLES

Yes, for he also hears what you are doing!

<sup>30</sup> Amphion and Zethus, sons of Zeus, worshiped as gods.

EURIPIDES

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

καὶ σύ, μήτηρ;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἀθέμιτόν σοι μητρὸς ὀνομάζειν κάρα.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ πόλις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

μολὼν ἐς Ἄργος ἀνακάλει Λέρνης ὕδωρ.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

εἶμι, μὴ πόνει· σὲ δ' αἰνῶ, μήτηρ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔξιθι χθονός.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

615 ἔξιμεν· πατέρα δέ μοι δὸς εἰσιδεῖν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν τύχοις.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀλλὰ παρθένους ἀδελφάς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

οὐδὲ τάσδ' ὄψη ποτέ.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ὦ κασίγνηται.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί ταύτας ἀνακαλείς ἔχθιστος ὢν;

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

POLYNICES

And you, mother?

ETEOCLES

You may not call her mother: the gods' law forbids it!

POLYNICES

O city!

ETEOCLES

Go to Argos and call upon the waters of Lerna!

POLYNICES

I'm going, don't worry! I thank you, mother!

ETEOCLES

Leave the country!

POLYNICES

I'm leaving, but give me permission to see my father.

ETEOCLES

That you shall never get!

POLYNICES

Well, at least my maiden sisters.

ETEOCLES

You will never see them either.

POLYNICES

O sisters!

ETEOCLES

Why do you call on them when you are their enemy?

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615 *ἔξιμεν* Musgrave: *ἔξιμι* C

EURIPIDES

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

μη̄τερ, ἀλλά μοι σὺ χαίρε.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

χαρτὰ γοῦν πάσχω, τέκνον.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

οὐκέτ' εἶμι παῖς σός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐς πόλλ' ἀθλία πέφυκ' ἐγώ.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

620 ὄδε γὰρ εἰς ἡμᾶς ὑβρίζει.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

καὶ γὰρ ἀνθυβρίζομαι.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ποῦ ποτε στήση πρὸ πύργων;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ὡς τί μ' ἱστορεῖς τόδε;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἀντιτάξομαι κτενῶν σε.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

κάμῃ τοῦδ' ἔρωσ ἔχει.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ· τί δράσετ', ὦ τέκν';

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

αὐτὸ σημανεῖ.

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

POLYNICES

Mother, you at least I wish joy!

JOCASTA

Yes, much joy have I in what befalls me, my son!

POLYNICES

You have lost your son.

JOCASTA

I am miserable in many ways.

POLYNICES

Yes, since he commits outrage against me.

ETEOCLES

Outrage is being committed against me in turn.

POLYNICES

Where will your station before the battlements be?

ETEOCLES

Why do you ask me that?

POLYNICES

I shall take my stand opposite you to kill you!

ETEOCLES

I too long to do this!

JOCASTA

O unhappy me! What are you going to do, my sons?

ETEOCLES

The event will make it plain.

## EURIPIDES

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

πατρός οὐ φεύξεσθ' Ἐρινύς;

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ

ἔρρέτω πρόπας δόμος·

- 625 ὡς τάχ' οὐκέθ' αἱματηρὸν τοῦμὸν ἀργήσει ξίφος.  
 τὴν δὲ θρέψασάν με γαίαν καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρομαι  
 ὡς ἄτιμος οἰκτρὰ πάσχων ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός,  
 δούλος ὡς ἄλλ' οὐχὶ ταύτου πατρός Οἰδίπου γεγώς·  
 κἂν τί σοι, πόλις, γένηται, μὴ 'μέ, τόνδε δ' αἰτιῶ·
- 630 οὐχ ἑκὼν γὰρ ἦλθον, ἄκων δ' ἔξελαύνομαι χθονός†.  
 καὶ σύ, Φοῖβ' ἀναξ' Ἀγνιεύ, καὶ μέλαθρα, χαίρετε,  
 ἦλικές θ' οὐμοί, θεῶν τε δεξίμηλ' ἀγάλματα.  
 οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' εἴ μοι προσειπεῖν αὐθις ἔσθ' ὑμᾶς ποτε  
 ἐλπίδες δ' οὐπω καθεύδουσ', αἷς πέποιθα σὺν θεοῖς
- 635 τόνδ' ἀποκτείνας κρατήσειν τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔξιθ' ἐκ χώρας· ἀληθῶς δ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκη πατήρ  
 ἔθετό σοι θεία προνοία νεικέων ἐπώνυμον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

Κάδμος ἔμολε τάνδε γᾶν  
 Τύριος, ᾧ τετρασκελές

630 verba ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός ex 627 huc irrepsisse vidit  
 Schoene, qui ἔριν ἐπαίρομαι χθονί scribit v. del. Valckenaer  
 639-40 τετρασκελές ... ἀδάματος Bergk: -ῆς ... -αστον C: cf.  
 Ov. Met. 3.16



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### JOCASTA

Will you not flee from your father's Erinyes?

### POLYNICES

Let the whole house go to ruin! My sword will have blood: it will not long be idle. But I call on the land that nourished me and on the gods, to witness that I am being driven, dishonored and in misery, from the country, like a slave, not the son of Oedipus, who is my father no less than his! If anything befalls you, O city, blame this man, not me. I came here not of my own will, and it is under compulsion that I wage this war.

Farewell to you, Phoebus, Lord of the Ways,<sup>31</sup> farewell, my house, my agemates, and the statues of the gods, receivers of sacrifice. I do not know whether I shall ever again address you. But hope never sleeps, hope which makes me confident that with the gods' help I will kill this man and rule Thebes.

*Exit POLYNICES by Eisodos B, JOCASTA into the skene.*

### ETEOCLES

Leave the country! It was all too truly that your father, prophetically inspired, called you Polynices, "man of strife!"<sup>32</sup>

*Exit ETEOCLES with retinue into the skene.*

### CHORUS

Cadmus came to this land,  
the man of Tyre, for whom a calf, on its four legs,

<sup>31</sup> Apollo Agnieus, god of ways, may have been represented on stage as a statue. Apollo's role in the action is, of course, a significant one. <sup>32</sup> Polynices' name means "much strife."

- 640 μόσχος ἀδάματος πέσημα  
 δίκε τελεσφόρον διδοῦσα  
 χρησμόν, οὗ κατοικίσαι  
 πεδία νιν τὸ θέσφατον  
 πυροφόρα μολόντ' ἔχρη,  
 645 καλλιπόταμος ὕδατος ἵνα τε  
 νοτὶς ἐπέρχεται ῥοαῖς  
 Δίρκας χλοηφόρους  
 καὶ βαθυσπόρους γύας·  
 Βρόμιον ἔνθα τέκετο μά-  
 650 τηρ Διὸς γάμοισιν,  
 κισσὸς ὃν περιστεφῆς  
 ἐλικτὸς εὐθύς ἔτι βρέφος χλοηφόροι-  
 σιν ἔρνεσιν κατασκίοι-  
 σιν ὀλβίσας ἐνώτισεν,  
 655 βάκχιον χόρευμα παρθέ-  
 νοισι Θηβαῖταισι  
 καὶ γυναιξὶν εὐίοις.

ἀντ.

- ἔνθα φόνιος ἦν δράκων  
 Ἄρεος, ὠμόφρων φύλαξ,  
 νάματ' ἔνυδρα καὶ ῥέεθρα  
 660 χλοερὰ δεργμάτων κόραισι  
 πολυπλάνοις ἐπισκοπῶν·

643 νιν Dindorf: μὲν C

644 μολόντ' Wilamowitz: δόμων

C ἔχρη Bergk: ἔχρησε C

646 ῥοαῖς Willink: γυῖαις C; γάνος Mastronarde

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

unbent to the yoke,  
threw itself down, fulfilling  
prophecy in the place  
where the oracle ordained he should come  
to live in the wheat-bearing fields,<sup>33</sup>  
the place where by Dirce's stream  
the dew of lovely rivers  
visits the grassy  
and luxuriant plains.  
There it was that Bromius' mother<sup>34</sup> gave birth to him  
when she had lain with Zeus,  
and about him, though still a babe,  
forthwith the curling ivy  
with its shoots of shady green  
covered him in blessedness,  
the Bacchic god worshiped in dancing  
by maids and matrons  
of Thebes in their ecstasy.

In that place was the deadly serpent  
of Ares, fierce-tempered guardian:  
over the watery eddies  
and fresh streams he kept watch  
with gazing eye that ever moved.

<sup>33</sup> Cadmus, ordered by his father Agenor to find his sister Europa, who had been abducted by Zeus, went to Delphi. Apollo told him to follow a calf and to found a city where the animal lay down.

<sup>34</sup> Semele, impregnated by Zeus, gave birth to Dionysus, also called Bromius.

- ὄν ἐπὶ χέρνιβας μολῶν  
 Κάδμος ὄλεσε μαρμάρῳ,  
 κρᾶτα φόνιον ὀλεσίθηρος  
 665 ὠλένας κιχῶν βολαῖς,  
 δίας <δ' > ἀμάτορος  
 Παλλάδος <δίκεν > φραδαῖς  
 669 ἐς βαθυσπόρους γύας  
 668 γαπετεῖς ὀδόντας.  
 670 ἔνθεν ἔξανῆκε γᾶ  
 πάνοπλον ὄψιν ὑπὲρ ἄκρων ὄρων χθονός·  
 σιδαρόφρων δέ νιν φόνος  
 φίλα ξυνῆψε γᾶ πάλιν.  
 αἵματος δ' ἔδευσε γαῖαν,  
 ἄ νιν εὐαλίοισι  
 675 δεῖξεν αἰθέρος πνοαῖς.  
 ἐπῳδ.  
 καὶ σέ, τὸν προμάτορος  
 Ἴουῖς ποτ' ἔκγονον  
 Ἐπαφον, ᾧ Διὸς γένεθλον,  
 ἐκάλεσ' ἐκάλεσ',  
 <ἰώ, > βαρβάρῳ βοᾶ,  
 680 ἰώ, βαρβάρους λιταῖς·  
 665 κιχῶν Kock: δικῶν C                      666 <δ' > Brunck  
 667 <δίκεν > post Wilamowitz Mastronarde  
 669 ante 668 trai. Mastronarde  
 668 ὀδόντας Conradt: δικῶν ὀδόντας C  
 673 φίλα ξυνῆψε γᾶ πάλιν Kovacs: π- ξ- φ- γ- fere C  
 677 Ἴουῖς] πόρτιός Willink                      679 <ἰώ > Willink

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

Going in quest of lustral water  
Cadmus slew him with a stone,  
smiting and bloodying his head with the cast  
of his beast-slaying arm.  
<And> at the word of the bright one,  
her of no mother, Pallas, <he threw>  
onto the luxuriant plains  
the teeth that fell to earth.  
Then earth put forth  
on its topmost bourne a vision of men full-armed.  
But cruel slaughter  
joined them once more to dear earth's embrace.  
It moistened with blood the earth  
that had brought them forth  
to the lovely sun and the air of heaven.<sup>35</sup>

You also, offspring  
of our foremother Io,  
Epaphus, son of Zeus,<sup>36</sup>  
you I invoke, invoke,  
<halloo,> with barbarian shout,  
halloo, with barbarian prayer:

<sup>35</sup> This myth tells the origin of the Theban aristocracy, the Spartoi or Sown Men. The warlike men who sprang from the dragon's teeth were mostly killed in battle with each other, but some survived to beget the best fighters of Thebes. Thebes' warriors therefore can be called Sown Men, for instance in lines 795 and 1245 below.

<sup>36</sup> See note on line 248 above.

## EURIPIDES

βᾶθι βᾶθι τάνδε γᾶν  
 σοί νιν ἔκγονοι κτίσαν,  
 καὶ διώνυμοι θεαί,  
 Περσέφασσα καὶ φίλα  
 685 Δαμάτηρ θεά,  
 πάντων ἄνασσα,  
 πάντων δὲ Γᾶ τροφός,  
 κτήσαντο· πέμπε πυρφόρους  
 θεάς, ἄμυνε τᾶδε γᾶ·  
 πάντα δ' εὐπετῆ θεοῖς.

## ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

690 χώρει σὺ καὶ κόμιζε τὸν Μειοικέως  
 Κρέοντ', ἀδελφὸν μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης ἐμῆς,  
 λέγων τὰδ', ὡς οἰκεία καὶ κοινὰ χθονὸς  
 θέλω πρὸς αὐτὸν συμβαλεῖν βουλευμάτα  
 πρὶν ἐς μάχην τε καὶ δορὸς τάξιν μολεῖν.  
 695 καίτοι ποδῶν σῶν μόχθον ἐκλύει παρών·  
 ὀρῶ γὰρ αὐτὸν πρὸς δόμους στείχοντ' ἐμούς.

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἦ πόλλ' †ἐπήλθον† εἰσιδεῖν χρήζων σ', ἄναξ  
 Ἐτεόκλεες, πέριξ δὲ Καδμείων πύλας  
 φυλακάς τ' ἐπήλθον σὸν δέμας θηρώμενος.

683 καὶ Major: ᾗ C

690-6 del. Willink

697 ἐμόχθησ' Geel

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

come, O come to the land,  
for your offspring founded it,  
and the goddesses called the Twain,  
Persephassa and the dear  
goddess Demeter,  
mistress of all,  
all-nurturing earth,<sup>37</sup>  
have won it for their own.<sup>38</sup> Escort the torch-bearing  
goddesses and protect this land:  
all things are easy for gods.

*Enter from the skene ETEOCLES, speaking to one of his retinue.*

### ETEOCLES

Go and fetch Creon, son of Menoeceus, the brother of my mother Jocasta, and tell him that I wish to confer with him on private matters and state affairs before we begin battle.

But he has saved you trouble by appearing: I see him coming to my house.

*Enter CREON by Eisodos B.*

### CREON

It has been hard work to find you, my lord Eteocles: I walked all around the Theban walls and guard posts looking for you.

<sup>37</sup> Demeter is here identified with Ge (Earth), as if her name were Gemeter (Earth-mother).

<sup>38</sup> Demeter Thesmophoros had a shrine on the citadel of Thebes.

EURIPIDES

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

700 καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σ' ἔχρηζον εισιθεῖν, Κρέον·  
πολλῶν γὰρ ἠῦρον ἐνδεεῖς διαλλαγάς,  
ὡς ἐς λόγους συνῆψα Πολυνείκει μολῶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἤκουσα μείζον αὐτὸν ἐς Θήβας φρονεῖν,  
κῆδει τ' Ἀδράστου καὶ στρατῶ πεποιθότα.

705 ἀλλ' ἐς θεοὺς χρῆ ταῦτ' ἀναρτήσαντ' ἔχειν·  
ἂ δ' ἐμποδὼν μάλιστα, ταῦθ' ἤκω φράσων.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα; τὸν λόγον γὰρ ἀγνοῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἦκει τις αἰχμάλωτος Ἀργείων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λέγει δὲ δὴ τί τῶν ἐκεῖ νεώτερον;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

710 μέλλειν πέριξ πυκνοῖσι Καδμείων πόλιν  
ὄπλοις ἐλίξειν αὐτίκ' Ἀργείων στρατόν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐξοιστέον τάρ' ὄπλα Καδμείων πόλει.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποῖ; μῶν νεάζων οὐχ ὀράς ἂ χρῆ σ' ὀράν;

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐκτὸς τάφρων τῶνδ', ὡς μαχουμένους τάχα.

703 ἐς Wecklein: ἦ C



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

ETEOCLES

Well, I wanted to see you as well, Creon. I found the truce to be very unsatisfactory when I went to parley with Polynices.

CREON

I have heard that he has become haughty toward Thebes: his marriage tie with Adrastus and his army give him confidence.

But we must commit all that to the gods. I have come to tell you what is most immediate.

ETEOCLES

What's that? I do not know what you're reporting.

CREON

We have a prisoner from the Argive side.

ETEOCLES

What does he say that's new of matters there?

CREON

They mean to encircle Thebes with close-ranked arms.

ETEOCLES

Thebes then must take its arms outside the walls.

CREON

Where? Are you too young to see what you should see?

ETEOCLES

Outside the moat, to fight our foes at once.

---

<sup>708</sup> fort. *αὐτομόλος ἐναντίων πάρα*

<sup>710</sup> *πυκνοῖσι* Reiske: *πύργοισι* C

EURIPIDES

ΚΡΕΩΝ

715 σμικρὸν τὸ πλῆθος τῆσδε γῆς, οἱ δ' ἄφθονοι.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἐγῶδα κείνους τοῖς λόγοις ὄντας θρασεῖς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔχει τιν' ὄγκον τᾶργος Ἑλλήνων πάρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει τάχ' αὐτῶν πεδίον ἐμπλήσω φόνου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

θέλοιμ' ἄν· ἀλλὰ τοῦθ' ὀρώ πολλοῦ πόνου.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

720 ὡς οὐ καθέξω τειχέων ἔσω στρατόν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ μὴν τὸ νικᾶν <γ'> ἔστι πᾶν εὐβουλίας.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

βούλη τράπωμαι δῆθ' ὁδοὺς ἄλλας τινάς;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πάσας γε, πρὶν κίνδυνον εἰσάπαξ μολεῖν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

724 εἰ νυκτὸς αὐτοῖς προσβάλομεν ἐκ λόχου;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

727 ἐνδυστυχήσαι δεινὸν εὐφρόνης κνέφας.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

726 ἴσον φέρει νύξ, τοῖς δὲ τολμῶσιν πλέον.

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CREON

Thebes' force is slight, the enemy army large.

ETEOCLES

Yes, but their bravery is all in words.

CREON

Argos' prestige among the Greeks is great.

ETEOCLES

No fear! I'll fill the plain soon with their blood!

CREON

I hope you may: but this requires much work.

ETEOCLES

Know this: I shall not coop my men within.

CREON

But victory lies entirely with good counsel.

ETEOCLES

You wish me then to ponder other routes?

CREON

Yes, all of them before you risk your all.

ETEOCLES

How if by night we attack them from an ambush?

CREON

It's easy in the dark to come to grief.

ETEOCLES

Night levels and to bold men gives advantage.

---

721 <γ> Lenting εὐβουλίας Schoene et fort. Σ: -ία vel -ία  
C 724-32 hoc ordine Wecklein

EURIPIDES

ΚΡΕΩΝ

725 εἶπερ σφαλεῖς γε δεῦρο σωθήσῃ πάλιν.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

730 βαθύς γέ τοι Διρκαῖος ἀναχωρεῖν πόρος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

731 ἅπαν κάκιον τοῦ φυλάσσεσθαι καλῶς.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

728 ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ δείπνον οὔσι προσβάλω δόρυ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

729 ἔκπληξις ἂν γένοιτο· νικῆσαι δὲ δεῖ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

732 τί δ' εἰ καθιππέυσαιμεν Ἀργείων στρατόν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

κάκεῖ πέφαρκται λαὸς ἄρμασιν πέριξ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα δράσω; πολεμίοισι δῶ πόλιν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

735 μὴ δῆτα· βουλεύου δ', ἐπέειπερ εἶ σοφός.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τίς οὖν πρόνοια γίγνεται σοφωτέρα;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔπτ' ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς φασιν, ὡς ἤκουσ' ἐγώ . . .

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

τί προστετάχθαι δρᾶν; τὸ γὰρ σθένος βραχύ.

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CREON

Yes, if you get home safely from disaster.

ETEOCLES

Well, Dirce's ford *is* deep for a retreat.

CREON

Best counsel is to be well on one's guard.

ETEOCLES

Shall I attack them, then, while they're at dinner?

CREON

That would cause fright, but victory's what we need.

ETEOCLES

Why not tread down the Argives with our cavalry?

CREON

There too they're guarded well, ringed round by chariots.

ETEOCLES

What shall I do? Put Thebes in enemy hands?

CREON

No, no! If you are wise, deliberate!

ETEOCLES

What wiser plan is there than what I've said?

CREON

I've heard report that seven of their men . . .

ETEOCLES

Are ordered to do what? This force is slight.

EURIPIDES

ΚΡΕΩΝ

. . . λόχων ἄνακτας ἐπτά προσκείσθαι πύλαις.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

740 τί δῆτα δρώμεν; ἀπορίαν γὰρ οὐ μινῶ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔπτ' ἄνδρας αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ πρὸς πύλαις ἐλοῦ.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

λόχων ἀνάσσειν ἢ μονοστόλου δορός;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόχων, προκρίνας οὔπερ ἀλκιμώτατοι.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ξυνηκ' ἀμύνειν τειχέων προσαμβάσεις.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

745 καὶ ξυστρατήγους <γ>· εἷς δ' ἀνὴρ οὐ πάνθ' ὄρα.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

θάρσει προκρίνας ἢ φρενῶν εὐβουλία;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἀμφότερ' ἐν ἀπολειφθὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν θατέρου.

ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ

ἔσται τάδ'· ἐλθὼν ἐπτάπυργον ἐς κύκλον  
τάξω λοχαγούς πρὸς πύλαισιν, ὡς λέγεις,

750 ἴσους ἴσοισι πολεμίοισιν ἀντιθείς.

ὄνομα δ' ἐκάστου διατριβὴ πολλὴ λέγειν,  
ἐχθρῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῖς τείχεσιν καθημένων.

739 ἄνακτας Matthiae: ἀνάσσειν C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CREON

. . . are placed before the seven gates as captains.

ETEOCLES

What shall we do? I can't stand helplessness.

CREON

Choose seven yourself to meet them at the gates.

ETEOCLES

To captain companies or to fight alone?

CREON

To captain: choose the bravest of your men.

ETEOCLES

I see: to keep the enemy from the walls.

CREON

And share command: one man cannot see all.

ETEOCLES

For bravery shall I choose them or for prudence?

CREON

Both: neither's any good without the other.

ETEOCLES

It shall be so. I shall go to the city's seven-towered circuit and station the captains at the gates, as you recommend, setting an equal number of defenders to face the enemy. To tell you the name of each man would consume too much time with the enemy encamped at our very gates.

---

<sup>742-3</sup> del. Czwalina      <sup>745</sup> <γ'> Lenting      δ' del. Polle

<sup>747</sup> ἀμφοτέρ' ἐν . . . θατέρου Wecklein: ἀμφοτέρον . . .  
θάτερον C

<sup>748</sup> κύκλον Musgrave: πόλιν C

## EURIPIDES

- [ἀλλ' εἶμ', ὅπως ἂν μὴ καταργῶμεν χέρα.  
καί μοι γένοιτ' ἀδελφὸν ἀντήρη λαβεῖν  
755 καὶ ξυσταθέντα διὰ μάχης ἐλείν δορὶ  
κτανεῖν θ', ὃς ἦλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν.]  
γάμουσ δ' ἀδελφῆς Ἀντιγόνης παιδὸς τε σοῦ  
Αἴμονος, εἴαν τι τῆς τύχης ἐγὼ σφαλῶ,  
σοὶ χρὴ μέλεισθαι τὴν δόσιν δ' ἐχέγγυον  
760 τὴν πρόσθε ποιῶ νῦν ἐπ' ἐξόδοις ἐμαῖς.  
[μητρὸς δ' ἀδελφὸς εἶ· τί δεῖ μακρηγορεῖν;  
τρέφ' ἀξίως νιν σοῦ τε τὴν τ' ἐμὴν χάριν.  
πατὴρ δ' ἐς αὐτὸν ἀμαθίαν ὀφλισκάνει,  
ὄψιν τυφλώσας· οὐκ ἄγαν σφ' ἐπήνεσα·  
765 ἡμᾶς δ' ἀραῖσιν, ἣν τύχη, κατακτενεῖ.]  
ἐν δ' ἐστὶν ἡμῖν ἀργόν, εἴ τι θέσφατον  
οἰωνόμαντις Τειρεσίας ἔχει φράσαι,  
τοῦδ' ἐκπυθέσθαι ταῦτ'· ἐγὼ δὲ παῖδα σὸν  
Μενοικέα, σοῦ πατρὸς αὐτεπώνυμον,  
770 ἄξοντα πέμψω δεῦρο Τειρεσίαν, Κρέον·  
σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἡδὺς ἐς λόγους ἀφίξεται,  
ἐγὼ δὲ τέχνην μαντικὴν ἐμεμψάμην  
ἤδη πρὸς αὐτόν, ὥστε μοι μομφὰς ἔχειν.  
[πόλει δὲ καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ' ἐπισκῆπτω, Κρέον·  
775 ἥνπερ κρατήσῃ τὰμά, Πολυνείκουσ νέκυν  
μήποτε ταφῆναι τῆδε Θηβαίᾳ χθονί,  
θνήσκειν δὲ τὸν θάψαντα, κἂν φίλων τις ᾗ·  
σοὶ μὲν τὰδ' εἶπον· προσπόλοις δ' ἐμοῖς λέγω·]  
ἐκφέρετε τεύχη πάνοπλά τ' ἀμφιβλήματα  
780 ὡς εἰς ἀγῶνα τὸν προκείμενον δορός



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

[Well, I shall go so that my hand may not be idle. May it be my lot to find my brother facing me, close with him, conquer him in battle, and kill him, since he came to sack my city!]

As for the marriage of my sister Antigone and your son Haemon, you must see to it if I have one of Fortune's falls. My previous betrothal of her I now confirm as I go forth. [You are the brother of my mother. Need I say more? Maintain her in appropriate style for your sake and mine. My father wins the name of fool with regard to himself since he put out his own eyes. I do not praise him overmuch. But it may be that he will kill us with his curses.]

One thing I have left undone, asking the prophet Teiresias to tell us any prophecies he has. But I will send your son Menoecus, your father's namesake, to bring him here, Creon. He will gladly come to talk to you. I, however, have already criticized his mantic art to his face, and so he bears me a grudge. [But upon you and the city I lay this charge, Creon: If I am successful, let Polynices' body never be buried in this land of Thebes, and let anyone who buries him be put to death, though it be one of his kin. To you I say this. To my servants I say:]

(*to servants*) Bring forth my weapons and my armor for the spear fight that lies before me [so that I may now set

753-6 del. Paley

761-5 del. West (763-5 Paley, Fraenkel, 753-65 dos Santos Alves)

770 ἀξόντα Markland: λαβόντα C

774-7 del. Walter

778 om. II, del. Kirchhoff

## EURIPIDES

[ὄρμώμεθ' ἤδη ξὺν δίκη νικηφόρῳ].  
τῇ δ' Εὐλαβείᾳ, χρησιμωτάτῃ θεῶν,  
προσευχόμεσθα τήνδε διασῶσαι πόλιν.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

- ὦ πολύμοχθος Ἄρης, τί ποθ' αἵματι  
785 καὶ θανάτῳ κατέχη Βρομίου παράμουςος ἑορταῖς;  
οὐκ ἐπὶ καλλιχόροις στεφάνοισι νεάνιδος ὥρας  
βόστρυχον ἀμπετάσας λωτοῦ κατὰ πνεύματα μέλπη  
μοῦσαν ἐν ᾗ χάριτες χοροποιοί,  
ἀλλὰ σὺν ὄπλοφόροις, στρατὸν Ἀργείων  
ἐπιπνεύσας  
790 αἵματι Θήβας,  
κῶμον ἀναυλότατον προχορεύεις,  
οὐ ποδὶ θυρσομανεῖ νεβρίδων μέτα,  
δίνας <δ' > ἄρμασι καὶ ψαλίῳ  
τετραβάμοσι μωνυχοπῶλων  
ἰππέαις ἐπὶ χεύμασι βαίνων  
Ἴσμηνοῖο θοάζεις·  
Ἀργείους <δ' > ἐπέπνευσας

781 om. Π, del. Haslam      785 κατέχεις . . . ἑορτάς Jack-  
son      789 ὄπλοφόφω Schenkl (tum 790 ἄλματι Schenkl;  
οἷματι Willink, ἄσματι Badham)

790a ἄλμασι Leutsch      791 οὐ ποδὶ Zakas: οὐδ' ὑπὸ C  
792 δίνας <δ' > Willink: δινεύεις C      μωνυχοπῶλων Weid-  
gen: μώνυχα πῶλων fere C      793-4 ἰππέαις . . . Ἴσμηνοῖο  
Murray (Ἴσμ- Mastronarde): Ἴσμηνοῦ τ' . . . ἰππέαισι C  
794 <δ' > ἐπέπνευσας Willink: ἐπιπνεύσας C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

out with the aid of justice that brings victory!] I pray to Lady Caution, most beneficial of the gods, to bring this city through to safety!

*Servants bring armor out of the skene. Exit ETEOCLES with retinue by Eisodos B.*

### CHORUS

O Ares, god of toils, why are you possessed  
by bloodshed and death, why jar discordantly with  
Bromius' feasts?<sup>39</sup>  
Not for you, amid the fair garlands that lovely youth wear  
to the dance,  
to spread your loosened locks and sing, to the breathed  
melody of pipes,  
the songs in which resides the grace of dancing;  
no, you breathe the Argive army  
upon Thebes' race,  
and with armed men you lead the chorus in revelry unfit  
for the pipe,  
not on ecstatic feet, dressed in fawnskin.  
<Rather> with chariots and the four-foot  
riding of bridled horses  
you make eddies whirl  
as you tread Ismenus' streams.  
<And> against the Argives your breath hurls forth to meet  
them

<sup>39</sup> Dionysus is here mentioned as patron of music and dance, his role at the City Dionysia, at which tragedy was performed.

EURIPIDES

- 795 Σπαρτῶν γένναν,  
 ἀσπιδοφέρμονα κῶμον ἀρήιον  
 ἀντίπαλον, κατὰ λάινα τείχεα  
 χαλκῶ κοσμήσας.  
 ἦ δεινά τις Ἔρις θεός, ἃ τάδε  
 μήσατο πῆματα γὰς βασιλεῦσιν,
- 800 Λαβδακίδαις πολυμόχθοις.  
 ἀντ.  
 ὦ ζαθέων πετάλων πολυθηρότα-  
 τον νάπος, Ἄρτέμιδος χιονοτρόφον ὄμμα Κιθαιρών,  
 μήποτε τὸν θανάτῳ προτεθέντα, λόχευμ' Ἰοκάστας,  
 ὄφελος Οἰδιπόδαν θρέψαι, βρέφος ἔκβολον οἴκων,  
 805 χρυσοδέτοις περόναις ἐπίσαμον·  
 μηδὲ τὸ παρθένιον πτερόν, οὔρειον τέρας, ἐλθεῖν  
 πένθεα γαίας  
 Σφίγγ' ἀπομουσοτάταισι σὺν ὤδαϊς,  
 ἃ ποτε Καδμογενῆ τετραβάμοσι  
 χαλαῖς τείχεσι χριμπτομένα  
 φέρειν αἰθέρος εἰς ἄβατον φῶς
- 810 γένναν· τάνδ' ὁ κατὰ χθονὸς Ἄιδας  
 Καδμείους ἐπιπέμπει·  
 δυσδαίμων δ' ἔρις ἄλλα  
 θάλλει παίδων  
 Οἰδιπόδα κατὰ δώματα καὶ πόλιν.

796 κῶμον ἀρήιον West: θίασον ἔνοπλον C

800 om. Π, del. Nauck

807b Σφίγγ' ἀπομουσοτάταισι Nauck: Σφιγγὸς ἀμουσ- C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

the race of the Sown Men,<sup>40</sup>  
shield-bearing revelers of war,  
whom you have decked  
in bronze along the battlements of stone.  
Dread is the goddess Strife, she  
who wrought these woes for this land's royal house,  
the Labdacids of many sorrows.

O glade of sacred foliage, glade of many beasts,  
Artemis' delight, snow-nurturing Cithaeron,  
would that you had never reared Jocasta's offspring  
Oedipus,  
the child exposed for death and cast from the house,  
child with the mark of the golden brooch upon him!  
Would that the winged maid, portent brought forth by the  
mountain, had not come  
to vex the land,  
the Sphinx with her song unblessed by the Muse,<sup>41</sup>  
who with her four taloned feet,  
hovering over the walls,  
carried off to the pathless realms of sky  
the youth of Cadmus' city. Hades who dwells below  
sent her against the Cadmeans.  
But it is another strife,  
the strife of sons, that blooms in misery  
in the house and city of Oedipus.

<sup>40</sup> See note on line 675 above.

<sup>41</sup> See note on line 46 above.

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810 τάνδ' Willink: ἄν fere C

οὐ γὰρ ὁ μὴ καλὸν οὐποτ' ἔφν καλόν,  
 815 τοῦδ' οἱ μὴ νόμιμοι  
 παῖδες ματρὶ λόχευμα μίασμα πατρός·  
 ἢ δὲ συναίμονος εἰς λέχος ἦλθεν†  
 < . . . . . >.

ἐπωδ.

ἔτεκες, ὦ Γαῖ', ἔτεκές ποτε,  
 βάρβαρον ὡς ἀκοὰν ἐδάην ἐδάην ποτ' ἐν οἴκοις,  
 820 τὰν ἀπὸ θηροτρόφου φοινικολόφοιο δράκοντος  
 γένναν ὄδοντοφυᾶ, Θήβαις κάλλιστον ὄνειδος·  
 Ἄρμονίας δέ ποτ' εἰς ὑμεναίους  
 ἦλυθον οὐρανίδαί, φόρμιγγί τε τείχεα Θήβας  
 τὰς Ἀμφιονίας τε λύρας ὑπο πύργος ἀνέστα  
 825 διδύμων ποταμῶν πόρον ἀμφὶ μέσον,  
 Δίρκα χλοεροτρόφον ἠ πεδίου  
 πρόπαρ Ἴσμηνοῦ καταδέυει,  
 Ἴώ θ' ἀκερόεσσα προμάτωρ  
 Καδμείων βασιλῆας ἐγείνατο·  
 830 μυριάδας δ' ἀγαθῶν ἐτέροις ἐτέ-  
 ρας μεταμειβομένα πόλις ἄδ' ἐπ' ἄκροις  
 στεφάνοις ἔστακεν Ἀρείοις.

815-7 desperati: fort. ἴνες δ' οὐκ ὀρθοὶ / [παῖδες] <πικρὸν>  
 ματρὶ λόχευμα, μίασμά <τε> / πατρὶ, συναίμον ὡς ἐς λέχος  
 ἦλθεν <πατροφόνος πολυπενθής> ([παῖδες] Kirchhoff,  
 συναίμον ὡς Paley, <πατροφόνος πολυπενθής> Mastronarde)

817 post h. v. lac. indic. edd.

818 ὦ ἔτεκές <ποτε> Γαῖ',

ἔτεκές ποτε Willink

826 Δίρκα Burges: -ας C

832 στεφάνοις ἔστακεν Ἀρείοις Diggle, Willink: ἔστακ'  
 Ἀρηίοις στεφάνοισιν fere C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

What is not fine is never fine,<sup>42</sup>  
and sons so unlawfully begotten  
are <an unwelcome> embrace to their mother <and> a  
    stain  
to their father, who shared her incestuous bed  
<as a luckless parricide>.

You bore, O Earth, you bore long ago  
(so runs the barbarian tale I heard at home)  
the race sprung from the beast-brood serpent with crim-  
    son crest,  
race which grew from its teeth, fairest reproach that  
    Thebes can hear.<sup>43</sup>

There came to the marriage of Harmonia once  
the gods, sons of Heaven, and with the lyre  
and the charm of Amphion's strings the fortress arose<sup>44</sup>  
on the narrow land between the two rivers,  
where Dirce alongside Ismenus  
waters the fruitful plain.

Io, my horned ancestress  
begat the kings of the Cadmeans,  
Getting countless blessings on top of countless others,  
this city stands high  
in the crowns Ares bestows.

<sup>42</sup> The next three lines of this stanza are desperately corrupt, and a line is probably missing at the end. I translate my illustrative conjecture without any confidence that it is even approximately right.

<sup>43</sup> Birth from the teeth of a serpent can be treated as a reproach of bestial origins, but to Thebes it is a source of pride.

<sup>44</sup> See note on line 115 above.

## EURIPIDES

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

- 835 ἡγοῦ πάροιθε, θύγατερ· ὡς τυφλῷ ποδὶ  
ὀφθαλμὸς εἶ σύ, ναυβάταισιν ἄστρον ὥς·  
δεῦρ' ἐς τὸ λευρὸν πέδον ἴχνος τιθεῖσ' ἐμὸν  
πρόβαινε, μὴ σφαλῶμεν· ἀσθενῆς πατήρ·  
κλήρους τέ μοι φύλασσε παρθένῳ χερὶ,  
οὓς ἔλαβον οἰωνίσματ' ὀρνίθων μαθὼν
- 840 θάκοισιν ἐν ἱεροῖσιν οὐ μαντεύομαι.

τέκνον Μενοικεῦ, παῖ Κρέοντος, εἶπέ μοι  
πόση τις ἢ ἴπιλοιπος ἄστεως ὁδὸς  
πρὸς πατέρα τὸν σόν· ὡς ἐμὸν κάμνει γόνυ,  
πυκνὴν δὲ βαίνων ἤλυσι μόλις περῶ.

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

- 845 θάρσει· πέλας γάρ, Τειρεσία, φίλοισι σοῖς  
ἔσθ' ὀρμίσαι σὸν πόδα· λαβοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ, τέκνον·  
ὡς παῖς ἔτ' ἀπτήν πούς τε πρεσβύτου φιλεῖ  
χειρὸς θυραίας ἀναμένειν κουφίσματα.

## ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

εἰέν, πάρεσμεν· τί με καλεῖς σπουδῇ, Κρέον;

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

- 850 οὔπω λελήσμεθ'· ἀλλὰ σύλλεξαι σθένος

846 ἔσθ' ὀρμίσαι Κνίcala: ἔξορμίσαι fere C

847 παῖς ἔτ' ἀπτήν Hermann: πᾶς ἀπήνη C

45 We do not know how these "lot tablets" were used in divination.



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

*Enter by Eisodos A TEIRESIAS, a staff in his hand and a wreath of gold on his head. His other hand rests on the shoulder of his daughter, who goes before him and carries the lot tablets her father uses in divination. MENOECEUS accompanies them.*

### TEIRESIAS

Lead on, my daughter! You are the eyes that guide my blind steps, as a star guides sailors. Now as you set my feet here on this level ground, go before me to keep me from stumbling (your father is weak) and guard with your maiden hand my lot tablets of divination, the ones I took when I heard what the bird omens were in the holy seat where I prophesy.<sup>45</sup>

My lad, Menoeceus, son of Creon, tell me how long a city road still remains until we reach your father. My knees are growing weary, and as I must take so many steps, my progress is slow.

### CREON

Courage, Teiresias! You can now moor your footsteps near your friends. Take his arm, my son. For like a child still unfledged, the step of an old man usually awaits the help of another's hand.

*Menoceus helps Teiresias move forward to face Creon, then releases him.*

### TEIRESIAS

Well then, here I am. Why did you summon me so urgently, Creon?

### CREON

I have not yet forgotten the reason. But collect your

EURIPIDES

καὶ πνεῦμ' ἄθροισον, αἶπος ἐκβαλὼν ὁδοῦ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

κόπῳ παρείμαι γοῦν Ἐρεχθιδῶν ἄπο  
 δεῦρ' ἐκκομισθεὶς τῆς πάροιθεν ἡμέρας·  
 κακέῃ γὰρ ἦν τις πόλεμος Εὐμόλπου δορός,  
 855 οὐ καλλινίκους Κεκροπίδας ἔθγκ' ἐγώ·  
 καὶ τόνδε χρυσοῦν στέφανον, ὡς ὄραῖς, ἔχω  
 λαβῶν ἀπαρχὰς πολεμίων σκυλευμάτων.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἰωνὸν ἐθέμην καλλίνικα σὰ στέφη·  
 ἐν γὰρ κλύδωνι κείμεθ', ὥσπερ οἶσθα σύ,  
 860 δορὸς Δαναϊδῶν, καὶ μέγας Θήβαις ἀγών.  
 βασιλεὺς μὲν οὖν βέβηκε κοσμηθεὶς ὄπλοις  
 ἤδη πρὸς ἀλκὴν Ἐτεοκλῆς Μυκηνίδα·  
 ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπέσταλκ' ἐκμαθεῖν σέθεν πάρα  
 τί δρῶντες ἂν μάλιστα σώσασιν πόλιν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

865 Ἐτεοκλέους μὲν οὐνεκ' ἂν κλήσας στόμα  
 χρησιμοῦς ἐπέσχον· σοὶ δ', ἐπεὶ χρήζεις μαθεῖν,  
 λέξω. νοσεῖ γὰρ ἠδε γῆ πάλαι, Κρέον,  
 ἐξ οὗ τεκνώθη Δάιος βία θεῶν  
 πόσιν τ' ἔφυσε μητρὶ μέλεον Οἰδίπουν·

861-3 del. Willink propter 865-7a

869-80 del. Fraenkel, 868-80 Reeve

<sup>46</sup> "Land of the Erechthidae" is a poetic periphrasis for Athens, and "sons of Cecrops" for the Athenians. Erechtheus was

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

strength and recover your breath, putting your steep journey behind you.

### TEIRESIAS

It is true that I am weary: I traveled here from the land of the Erechthidae<sup>46</sup> yesterday. There too there was war, led by Eumolpus,<sup>47</sup> and I caused the sons of Cecrops to win a glorious victory over him. I wear this golden chaplet, as you see, which I received as first fruits of the enemy spoils.

### CREON

I regard your victory chaplet as a good omen. War with the sons of Danaus surges about us, as you know, and for Thebes the stakes are high. Our king Eteocles has already gone off, decked with armor, to fight the Myceneans. He has bidden me ask you what we must do to save the city.

### TEIRESIAS

Were it for Eteocles' sake, I would have held my tongue and refused to prophesy. But to you, since you ask me, I will speak. The land has been diseased for a long time, Creon, ever since Laius had a child against the gods' wishes and begot unlucky Oedipus as husband to his

one of the most important of the legendary kings of Athens. His temple, the Erechtheum, stood next to the temple of Athena Parthenos (the Parthenon) on the Athenian acropolis. Cecrops was another early king.

<sup>47</sup> Eumolpus, king of Thrace, attacked Athens during the reign of Erechtheus. The attack was averted when, on the advice of seers, Erechtheus' daughter gave herself as a voluntary sacrificial victim, much as Menoeceus does at the end of this scene. Euripides had dramatized this story in his *Erechtheus*, put on probably in 422.

## EURIPIDES

- 870 αἶ θ' αἵματωποι δεργμάτων διαφθοραὶ  
 θεῶν σόφισμα κάπιδειξις Ἑλλάδι.  
 ἂ συγκαλύφαι παῖδες Οἰδίπου χρόνω  
 χρήζοντες, ὡς δὴ θεοὺς ὑπεκδραμούμενοι,  
 ἤμαρτον ἀμαθῶς· οὔτε γὰρ γέρα πατρὶ  
 875 οὔτ' ἔξοδον διδόντες ἄνδρα δυστυχή  
 ἐξηγρίωσαν· ἐκ δ' ἔπνευσ' αὐτοῖς ἀρὰς  
 δεινάς, νοσῶν τε καὶ πρὸς ἠτιμασμένος.  
 ἀγὼ τί οὐ δρῶν, ποῖα δ' οὐ λέγων ἔπη  
 ἐς ἔχθος ἦλθον παισὶ τοῖσιν Οἰδίπου;
- 880 ἐγγὺς δὲ θάνατος αὐτόχειρ αὐτοῖς, Κρέον.  
 πολλοὶ δὲ νεκροὶ περὶ νεκροῖς πεπτωκότες  
 Ἀργεῖα καὶ Καδμεία μείξαντες μέλη  
 πικροὺς γόους δώσουσι Θηβαίᾳ χθονί.  
 σύ τ' ὦ τάλαινα συγκατασκάπτῃ πόλι,  
 885 εἰ μὴ λόγοις τις τοῖς ἐμοῖσι πείσεται.  
 [ἐκείνο μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον ἦν, τῶν Οἰδίπου  
 μηδένα πολίτην μηδ' ἄνακτ' εἶναι χθονός,  
 ὡς δαιμονῶντας κἀνατρέφοντας πόλιν.  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ κρείσσον τὸ κακὸν ἔστι τἀγαθοῦ,  
 890 μί' ἔστιν ἄλλη μηχανὴ σωτηρίας.]  
 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ εἰπεῖν οὔτ' ἐμοὶ τὸδ' ἀσφαλὲς  
 πικρὸν τε τοῖσι τὴν τύχην κεκτημένοις  
 πόλει παρασχέειν φάρμακον σωτηρίας,  
 ἄπειμι. χαίρεθ'· εἷς γὰρ ὢν πολλῶν μέτα  
 895 τὸ μέλλον, εἰ χρή, πείσομαι· τί γὰρ πάθω;

871 σωφρόνισμα Herwerden

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

mother. The bloody destruction of his eyes is the gods' subtle contrivance for giving a lesson to Greece. The sons of Oedipus, wishing to cover this up, thinking that they could outstrip the gods, erred grievously. Since they did not grant their father his privileges or allow him to go out, they made the unhappy man violently angry. He breathed out terrible curses on them, being sick and also treated insultingly. I did and said everything I could but came to be hated by the sons of Oedipus. Death by their own hand is near them, Creon. Corpse falling upon corpse in great numbers, Argive and Theban limbs mingled together, will cause the land of Thebes bitter keening. And you, poor city, will be destroyed together with your soldiery unless someone pays heed to my words. [The best thing would be that no son of Oedipus should be either citizen or ruler of the land since they are under a divine curse and will overturn the city. But since the evil part is stronger than the good, there is one other way to secure safety.]

But it is unsafe for me to speak these words, and it will be galling to those who are touched by this fate that I should give the city its life-saving medicine: I'm going away. Farewell! If I must I will suffer, as one man among many, what is to come. What can I do?

*He turns to go, but Creon restrains him.*

---

878 *κἀγὼ* King

882 *μέλη* Markland: *βέλη* C

885 *λόγοις τις τοῖς ἐμοῖσι* Porson: *λόγοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς τις* C

886-90 del. Fraenkel

EURIPIDES

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐπίσχεσ ἀυτοῦ, πρέσβυ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

μῆ ἴπιλαμβάνου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

μείνον, τί φεύγεις μῖ;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἢ τύχη σ', ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

φράσον πολίταις καὶ πόλει σωτηρίαν.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

βούλη σὺ μέντοι κοῦχι βουλήση τάχα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

900 καὶ πῶς πατρώαν γαίαν οὐ σώσαι θέλω;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

θέλεις ἀκοῦσαι δῆτα καὶ σπουδὴν ἔχεις;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐς γὰρ τί μάλλον δεῖ προθυμίαν ἔχειν;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

[κλύοις ἂν ἤδη τῶν ἐμῶν θεσπισμάτων.]  
905 πρῶτον δ' ἐκεῖνο βούλομαι σαφῶς μαθεῖν,  
ποῦ ἴστιν Μεινοικεύς, ὅς με δεῦρ' ἐπήγαγεν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὄδ' οὐ μακρὰν ἄπεστι, πλησίον δὲ σοῦ.

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CREON

Stop where you are, old sir!

TEIRESIAS

Unhand me!

CREON

Stay, why do you run from me?

TEIRESIAS

It is not I who do so but your fate.

CREON

Tell the city and its citizens how they may survive.

TEIRESIAS

You wish it now, but soon you will not.

CREON

How can I not wish to save my country?

TEIRESIAS

You want to hear it? You are eager?

CREON

What should I be more eager for?

TEIRESIAS

[You will soon hear my prophecies.] But first I want to know this: where is Menoeceus, who brought me here?

CREON

He stands near you, not far off.

---

<sup>903</sup> del. Diggle (903-4 iam Zipperer)

EURIPIDES

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀπελθέτω νυν θεσφάτων ἐμῶν ἐκάς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐμὸς πεφυκὼς παῖς ἂ δεῖ σιγήσεται.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

βούλη παρόντος δῆτά σοι τούτου φράσω;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

910 κλύων γὰρ ἂν τέρποιτο τῆς σωτηρίας.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν θεσφάτων ἐμῶν ὁδόν  
[ἂ δρῶντες ἂν σώσαιτε Καδμείων πόλιν].  
σφάξαι Μενοικέα τόνδε δεῖ σ' ὑπὲρ πάτρας,  
σὸν παῖδ', ἐπειδὴ τὴν τύχην αὐτὸς καλείς.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

915 τί φῆς; τίν' εἶπας τόνδε μῦθον, ὦ γέρον;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄπερ πέφηνε· ταῦτα κανάγκη σε δρᾶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ πολλὰ λέξας ἐν βραχεῖ λόγῳ κακά.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

σοί γ', ἀλλὰ πατρίδι μεγάλα καὶ σωτήρια.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οὐκ ἔκλυον, οὐκ ἤκουσα· χαιρέτω πόλις.

912 om. codex unus, del. Kirchhoff cl. 864

916 πέφηνε Camper: πέφυκε C



PHOENICIAN WOMEN

TEIRESIAS

Let him then withdraw, far from my prophecies.

CREON

He is my son and will keep any secrets he must.

TEIRESIAS

Then you want me to speak in his presence?

CREON

Yes: he will be glad to hear what will keep us safe.

TEIRESIAS

Hear then the course of my prophecies [by performing which you will save the city]: you must slaughter your son Menoeceus here, for the country's sake: you yourself asked for your fate.

CREON

What are you saying? What tale is this, old sir?

TEIRESIAS

The one that has been revealed: this is what you must do.

CREON

Such woe in so few words!

TEIRESIAS

Woe for you, but for your country the great secret of its survival.

CREON

I have not heard it, not listened! Country be damned!

---

<sup>917</sup> λόγῳ Nauck: χρόνῳ C

EURIPIDES

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

920 ἀνὴρ ὄδ' οὐκέθ' αὐτός· ἐκνεύει πάλιν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

χαίρων ἴθ'· οὐ γὰρ σὼν με δεῖ μαντευμάτων.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀπόλωλεν ἀλήθει', ἐπεὶ σὺ δυστυχεῖς;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ πρὸς σε γονάτων καὶ γερασμίου τριχὸς . . .

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

τί προσπίτνεις με; δυσφύλακτ' αἶνει κακά.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

925 . . . σίγα, πόλει δὲ τούσδε μὴ λέξης λόγους.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀδικεῖν κελεύεις μ'· οὐ σιωπήσοιμεν ἄν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δή με δράσεις; παῖδά μου κατακτενεῖς;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἄλλοις μελήσει ταῦτ', ἐμοὶ δ' εἰρήσεται.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐμοὶ τόδ' ἦλθε καὶ τέκνω κακόν;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

930 [ὀρθῶς μ' ἐρωτᾶς κὰς ἀγῶν' ἔρχη λόγων.]  
δεῖ τόνδε θαλάμαις, οὐ δράκων ὁ γηγενής

<sup>924</sup> αἶνει anon. Cantabr.: αἰτῆ fere C

<sup>930</sup> del. Herwerden

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

TEIRESIAS

This man is much changed: he shies back!

CREON

Farewell and be gone! I have no need of prophecies from  
*you!*

TEIRESIAS

Has truth been destroyed because you are suffering?

CREON

*(kneeling before him as a suppliant)* By your knees I beg  
you and by your white hair . . .

TEIRESIAS

Why do you supplicate me? Your woes cannot be avoided:  
accept them!

CREON

. . . say nothing: do not tell the city these prophecies!

TEIRESIAS

What you ask is wrong: I shall not be silent.

CREON

What will you do to me? Kill my son?

TEIRESIAS

Others will see to that: I shall speak.

CREON

Why has this woe come upon me and my son?

TEIRESIAS

[You are right to ask me and to enter a contest of words.]  
This boy must be slaughtered in the chamber where the

- ἐγένετο Δίρκης ναμάτων ἐπίσκοπος,  
 σφαγέντα φόνοιον αἷμα γῆ δοῦναι χοάς,  
 Κάδμω παλαιῶν Ἄρεος ἐκ μνημάτων,  
 935 ὃς γηγενεῖ δράκοντι τιμωρεῖ φόνον·  
 καὶ ταῦτα δρώντες σύμμαχον κτήσεσθ' Ἄρη.  
 χθῶν δ' ἀντὶ καρποῦ καρπὸν ἀντί θ' αἵματος  
 αἶμ' ἦν λάβη βρότειον, ἕξετ' εὐμενῆ  
 Γῆν, ἣ ποθ' ἡμῖν χρυσοπήληκα στάχυν  
 940 Σπαρτῶν ἀνήκεν· ἐκ γένους δὲ δεῖ θανεῖν  
 τοῦδ' ὃς δράκοντος γέννος ἐκπέφυκε παῖς.  
 σὺ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἡμῖν λοιπὸς εἶ Σπαρτῶν γένους  
 ἀκέραιος ἐκ τε μητρὸς ἀρσένων τ' ἄπο  
 [οἱ σοί τε παῖδες. Αἴμονος μὲν οὖν γάμοι  
 945 σφαγὰς ἀπείργουσ'. οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἦθεος.  
 κεῖ μὴ γὰρ εὐνῆς ἦψατ', ἀλλ' ἔχει λέχος].  
 οὗτος δὲ πῶλος τῆδ' ἀνειμένος πόλει  
 θανῶν πατρώαν γαῖαν ἐκσώσειεν ἄν.  
 πικρὸν δ' Ἀδράστῳ νόστον Ἀργείοισί τε  
 950 θήσει, μέλαιναν κῆρ' ἐπ' ὄμμασιν βαλῶν,  
 κλεινάς τε Θήβας. τοῖνδ' ἐλοῦ δυοῖν πότμου  
 τὸν ἕτερον· ἦ γὰρ παῖδα σῶσον ἦ πόλι.  
 τὰ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν πάντ' ἔχεις· ἡγοῦ, τέκνον,  
 πρὸς οἶκον. ὅστις δ' ἐμπύρῳ χρῆται τέχνη  
 955 μάταιος· ἦν μὲν πικρὰ σημήνας τύχη,  
 ἐχθρὸς καθέστηχ' οἷς ἄν οἰωνοσκοπή·  
 ψευδῆ δ' ὑπ' οἴκτου τοῖσι χρωμένους λέγων  
 ἀδικεῖ τὰ τῶν θεῶν. Φοῖβον ἀνθρώποις μόνον  
 χρῆν θεσπιωδεῖν, ὃς δέδοικεν οὐδένα.

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

earthborn snake, guardian of Dirce's waters, came to birth: he must give the earth a libation of blood because of the ancient grudge of Ares against Cadmus: Ares is now avenging the death of the earthborn snake. If you do this, you will have Ares as your ally. And if the ground receives offspring in place of offspring and mortal blood for blood, Earth will be propitious to you, Earth who once sent forth the gold-helmeted harvest of the Sown Men. One of this race must die, one begotten from the jaw of the snake. You are one of the last remaining members of the Sown Men here, of pure lineage on your mother's and father's side. [And so are your children. Haemon's coming marriage prevents him from being slaughtered, for he is not a man unwed. Even if he has not yet experienced the bed of love, still he has a wife.] This colt, sacrificial animal for the city, will rescue his fatherland by his death. Sorry is the homecoming he will give Adrastus and the Argives, casting black death upon their eyes, and glorious will he make Thebes. Of these two fates choose one: save your son or your city.

You have heard all I have to say. Lead me home, daughter! Anyone who practices divination is a fool. If he happens to give unwelcome prophecies, the recipients regard him as an enemy. But if he pities those who consult him and tells them lies, he wrongs the gods. Only Phoebus should prophesy to men: he fears no man.

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934 Κάδμω Valckenaer: -ου C

944-6 del. Willink (946 iam Valckenaer)

955 πικρὰ Valckenaer: ἐχθρὰ fere C

EURIPIDES

ΧΟΡΟΣ

960 Κρέον, τί σιγᾶς γῆρυν ἄφθογγον σχάσας;  
κάμοι γὰρ οὐδὲν ἦσσον ἔκπληξις πάρα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' ἂν τις εἴποι; δῆλον οἷ γ' ἐμοὶ λόγοι.  
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐποτ' ἐς τόδ' εἶμι συμφορᾶς  
ὥστε σφαγέντα παῖδα προσθῆναι πόλει.  
965 πᾶσιν γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι φιλότεκνος βίος,  
οὐδ' ἂν τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδά τις δοίη κτανεῖν.  
μή μ' εὐλογείτω τὰμά τις κτείνων τέκνα·  
αὐτὸς δ', ἐν ὠραίῳ γὰρ ἔσταμεν βίου,  
θνήσκειν ἔτοιμος πατρίδος ἐκλυτήριον.  
970 ἄλλ' εἶα, τέκνον, πρὶν μαθεῖν πᾶσαν πόλιν,  
ἀκόλαστ' ἔασας μάντεων θεσπίσματα,  
φεύγ' ὡς τάχιστα τῆσδ' ἀπαλλαχθεῖς χθονός.  
[λέξει γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ στρατηλάταις τάδε,  
πύλας ἐφ' ἑπτὰ καὶ λοχαγέτας μολών.]  
975 κἂν μὲν φθάσωμεν, ἔστι σοι σωτηρία·  
ἦν δ' ὑστερήσης, οἰχόμεσθα, καθθανῆ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

ποῖ δῆτα φεύγω; τίνα πόλιν; τίνα ξένων;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὅπου χθονὸς τῆσδ' ἐκποδῶν μάλιστ' ἔσῃ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

οὐκουν σὲ φράζειν εἰκός, ἐκπονεῖν δ' ἐμέ;

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

*Exit TEIRESIAS and his daughter by Eisodos A.*

### CHORUS LEADER

Creon, why are you silent, uttering no sound? I am no less startled than you.

### CREON

What can one say? Yet what I must say is clear. Never shall I go so far in wretchedness as to offer my child to the city for slaughter! All men alive love their children, and no one would give his own child to be killed. I do not want the praise of someone who kills my children! I myself am ready to die to rescue my country: I am a fitting age to do so.

But quick, my son! Before the whole city learns of this, abandon these wanton oracles of seers and leave the country as fast as you can! [For he will report these things to the authorities and the generals, going to the seven gates and their captains.] If we are quick, your life may be saved. But if you are too late, we are done for, you will be killed!

### MENOECEUS

Where shall I flee? To what city or what host?

### CREON

Where you will be furthest from this land.

### MENOECEUS

Should you not give the orders and I carry them out?

---

973-4 del. Willink (974 suspectum habuit Valckenaer cl. Σ, del. Wecklein)

EURIPIDES

ΚΡΕΩΝ

980 Δελφοὺς περάσας . . .

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

ποῖ με χρῆ, πάτερ, μολεῖν;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

. . . Αἰτωλίδ' ἐς γῆν.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

ἐκ δὲ τῆσδε ποῖ περῶ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

Θεσπρωτὸν οὐδας.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

σεμνὰ Δωδώνης βάθρα;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔγνωσ.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

τί δὴ τόδ' ἔρυμά μοι γενήσεται;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πόμπιμος ὁ δαίμων.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

χρημάτων δὲ τίς πόρος;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

985 ἐγὼ πορεύσω χρυσόν.

ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

εὖ λέγεις, πάτερ.

χώρει νυν ὡς σὴν πρὸς κασιγνήτην μολών,



PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CREON

Pass through Delphi . . .

MENOECEUS

And then where must I go, father?

CREON

. . . and go to Aetolia.

MENOECEUS

Where shall I go from there?

CREON

To the land of Thesprotia.

MENOECEUS

The holy sanctuary of Dodona?

CREON

That's it.

MENOECEUS

How will this protect me?

CREON

The god will convey you.

MENOECEUS

What money shall I have?

CREON

I will send money.

MENOECEUS

Your plan is good, father. Go on your way. I shall go to your

---

983 δὴ τὸδ' Musgrave: δῆτ' C

## EURIPIDES

ἥς πρῶτα μαστὸν εἴλκυσ', Ἰοκάστην λέγω,  
μητρὸς στερηθεὶς ὀρφανός τ' ἀποζυγεῖς,  
προσηγορήσας εἶμι καὶ σώσω βίον.

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

990 ἀλλ' εἶα, χώρει μὴ τὸ σὸν κωλυέτω.

## ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΥΣ

- γυναῖκες, ὡς εὖ πατρὸς ἐξείλον φόβον,  
κλέψας λόγοισιν, ὥσθ' ἂ βούλομαι τυχεῖν·  
ὅς μ' ἐκκομίζει, πόλιν ἀποστερῶν τύχης,  
καὶ δειλία δίδωσι. καὶ συγγνωστὰ μὲν
- 995 γέροντι, τοῦμὸν δ' οὐχὶ συγγνώμην ἔχει,  
προδότῃ γενέσθαι πατρίδος ἢ μ' ἐγείνατο.  
ὡς οὖν ἂν εἰδῆτ', εἶμι καὶ σώσω πόλιν  
ψυχὴν τε δώσω τῆσδ' ὑπερθανῶν χθονός.  
αἰσχροὺν γάρ· οἱ μὲν θεσφάτων ἐλεύθεροι
- 1000 κοῦκ εἰς ἀνάγκην δαιμόνων ἀφιγμένοι  
στάντες παρ' ἀσπίδ' οὐκ ὀκνήσουσι θανεῖν,  
πύργων πάροιθε μαχόμενοι πάτρας ὕπερ,  
ἐγὼ δέ, πατέρα καὶ κασίγνητον προδοὺς  
πόλιν τ' ἔμαντοῦ, δειλὸς ὡς ἔξω χθονὸς
- 1005 ἄπειμ', ὅπου δ' ἂν ζῶ, κακὸς φανήσομαι;  
μὰ τὸν μετ' ἄστρον Ζῆν' Ἄρη τε φοίνιον,  
ὅς τοὺς ὑπερτίλαινας ἐκ γαίας ποτὲ  
Σπαρτοὺς ἀνακτας τῆσδε γῆς ἰδρύσατο.  
ἀλλ' εἶμι καὶ στὰς ἐξ ἐπάλξεων ἄκρων
- 1010 σφάξας ἔμαντὸν σηκὸν ἐς μελαμβαθῆ  
δράκοντος, ἔνθ' ὁ μάντις ἐξηγήσατο,

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

sister Jocasta, whose breast I first sucked when I was left orphaned from my mother. I shall say goodbye to her and then go and save my life.

### CREON

Then go quickly: let her not prevent your departure!

*Exit CREON by Eisodos A. Menoeceus is silent until he is out of earshot.*

### MENOECEUS

Women, how effectively I took my father's fear away, stealing it from him by talk so that I could get my heart's desire! He is trying to send me away, depriving the city of its fate and making me out to be a coward. To be sure, in an old man this is pardonable, but there would be no pardon for me if I betrayed the country that begot me. Know this: I shall go and save the city, giving my life for the country and dying for it. The contrast would otherwise be disgraceful. On the one hand, men under no compulsion from oracles or the gods stand by their shields and do not shrink from death. And on the other, shall I betray father, brother, and my own city, leave the country like a coward, and be shown up as base wherever I live? No, by Zeus enthroned among the stars and by Ares, god of slaughter, who established the Sown Men, rising out of the earth, as rulers of this land! I shall go now, take my stand upon the high battlements, slit my own throat above the deep black precinct of the serpent, the place the seer named, and set the city free. You

---

989 *προσηγορήσας* Hartung et Σ: *-ήσων* C et Σ alter

995 fort. *τεκόντι*

998 *ὑπερθανών* Barnes: *-εἶν* C

999 *αἰσχρῶς* Heimsoeth

## EURIPIDES

ἐλευθέρωσω γαίαν· εἴρηται λόγος.

[στείχω δέ, θανάτου δῶρον οὐκ αἰσχροὺν πόλει  
δώσω, νόσον δὲ τήνδ' ἀπαλλάξω χθόνα.

- 1015 εἰ γὰρ λαβὼν ἕκαστος ὃ τι δύναίτο τις  
χρηστὸν διέλθοι τοῦτο κὰς κοινὸν φέροι  
πατρίδι, κακῶν ἂν αἱ πόλεις ἐλασσόνων  
πειρώμεναι τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχοῖεν ἄν.]

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

ἔβας ἔβας,

ὦ πτεροῦσσα, Γᾶς λόχευμα

- 1020 νερτέρον τ' Ἐχίδνας,

Καδμείων ἄρπαγά,

πολύφθορος πολύστονος

μειξοπάρθενον δάιον τέρας,

φοιτάσι πτεροῖς

- 1025 χαλαῖσί τ' ὠμοσίτοις·

Διρκαίων ἅ ποτ' ἐκ τόπων νέους

πεδαίρουσ' ἄλνυρον ἀμφὶ μούσαν,

ὀλομέναν γ' Ἐρινύν,

- 1030 ἔφερες ἔφερες ἄχεα πατρίδι

φόνια· φόνιος ἐκ θεῶν

ὅς τάδ' ἦν ὁ πράξας.

ιάλεμοι δὲ ματέρων,

ιάλεμοι δὲ παρθένων

1013-8 del. Scheurleer

1016 fort. φέρων

1023 μειξοπάρθενον a (coni. Valckenaer): -ος ceteri codd.

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

have heard all I have to say. [I go in order to give the city the not ignoble gift of my death, and I shall free this land from plague. If each man were to take whatever useful thing he might do, examine it thoroughly, and contribute it to the common good, cities would have less trouble and prosper henceforth and forever.]

*Exit MENOECEUS by Eisodos A.*

### CHORUS

You came, you came,  
O winged one, offspring of Earth  
and of the Snake of the Underworld,  
plunderer of the Cadmeans,  
killer of many, source of many tears,  
half-maiden portent of ruin!  
On roving wings you came  
and with talons for eating raw flesh!  
From the region of Dirce you took  
young men away by plying your lyreless Muse,  
a cursed Erinys,<sup>48</sup>  
and brought upon the country  
woes murderous: murderous was the god's hand  
who wrought all this.  
Keening of mothers,  
keening of maids

<sup>48</sup> The Sphinx's "Muse" was her riddle (in verse), and she killed those who could not solve it. It is called an Erinys because an Erinys too is sent by the gods for destruction.

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1029 γ' Diggle: τ' C: del. Hartung

## EURIPIDES

- 1035 ἐστέναζον οἴκοις·  
 ἰηήιον βοάν,  
 ἰηήιον μέλος  
 ἄλλος ἄλλοτ' ἐποτότυζε  
 διαδοχαῖς ἀνὰ πτόλιν.  
 βροντᾶ δὲ στεναγμὸς
- 1040 ἀχά τ' ἦν ὅμοιος,  
 ὅποτε πόλεος ἀφανίσειεν  
 ἃ πτεροῦσσα παρθένος τιν' ἀνδρῶν.  
 ἀντ.  
 χρόνῳ δ' ἔβα  
 Πυθίαις ἀποστολαῖσιν  
 Οἰδίπους ὁ τλάμων
- 1045 Θηβαίαν τάνδε γᾶν  
 τότ' ἀσμένους, πάλιν δ' ἄχη·  
 ματρὶ γὰρ γάμους δυσγάμους τάλας  
 καλλίνικος ὦν  
 αἰνιγμάτων συνάπτει,
- 1050 μιαίνει δὲ πτόλιν, δι' αἱμάτων δ'  
 ἀμείβει μυσαρὸν εἰς ἀγῶνα  
 καταβαλὼν ἀραῖσι  
 τέκεα μέλεος. ἀγάμεθ' ἀγάμεθ',
- 1055 ὃς ἐπὶ θάνατον οἴχεται  
 γᾶς ὑπὲρ πατρώας,  
 Κρέοντι μὲν λιπῶν γόους,

<sup>1038a</sup> ἄλλοτ' Diggle: ἄλλον C

<sup>1040</sup> ἀχά Musgrave (ἀχαί Π): ἰα- C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

broke forth in their houses.  
The cry "Ah me!"  
the song "Ah me!"  
by different voices at different times  
was uttered in succession in the city.  
The groans and lamentations  
were like the sound of thunder  
whenever the winged maid  
took from the city one of its men.

In time there came  
by the sending of Pytho<sup>49</sup>  
Oedipus the doomed  
to this land of Thebes,  
at first bringing joy, then later grief.  
For with his mother he made a marriage that was no  
marriage, poor man,  
glorious in victory  
over the riddle,  
and brought pollution upon the city, and now in deeds of  
blood  
his sons he brings into a blood-stained contest,  
hurling them into it with his curse,  
luckless man. I marvel, marvel,  
at him who goes to his death  
to save his country,  
leaving lamentation to Creon

<sup>49</sup> Apollo "sent" Oedipus to Thebes in that he wanted Laius to be killed by his son.

## EURIPIDES

τὰ δ' ἐπτάπυργα κλήθρα γὰς  
καλλίνικα θήσων.

- 1060 γενοίμεθ' ὦδε ματέρες  
γενοίμεθ' εὐτεκνοι, φίλα  
Παλλάς, ἃ δράκοντος αἶμα  
λιθόβολον κατηργάσω,  
Καδμείαν μέριμναν  
ὀρμάσασ' ἐπ' ἔργον,  
1065 ὅθεν ἐπέστυτο τάνδε γαίαν  
ἀρπαγαῖσι δαιμόνων τις ἄτα.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

- ὦή, τίς ἐν πύλαισι δωμάτων κυρεῖ;  
ἀνοίγετ'· ἐκπορεύετ' Ἰοκάστην δόμων.  
ὦή μάλ' αὐθις· διὰ μακροῦ μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως.  
1070 [ἔξελθ', ἄκουσον, Οἰδίπου κλεινὴ δάμαρ,  
λήξασ' ὀδυρμῶν πενθίμων τε δακρῦων.]

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

- ᾧ φίλτατ', οὐ που ξυμφορὰν ἤκεις φέρων  
Ἐτεοκλέους θανόντος, οὐ παρ' ἀσπίδα  
βέβηκας αἰεὶ πολεμίων εἴργων βέλη;  
1075 [τί μοί ποθ' ἤκεις καινὸν ἀγγελῶν ἔπος;]  
τέθνηκεν ἢ ζῆ παῖς ἐμός; σήμαινέ μοι.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ζῆ, μὴ τρέσης, τοῦδ' ὡς σ' ἀπαλλάξω φόβου.

1069 in fine dist. Jackson 1070-1 post Bruhn et Harber-  
ton del. Reeve 1072 οὐ που Kirchhoff: ἢ που fere C  
1075 del. Hartung cl. Σ



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

but making the land's seven-towered fortress  
glorious in victory.

May we be mothers, may we,  
of fair children like these,  
dear Pallas! It was you who inspired  
the serpent's bloody death by stoning  
and set the tensed effort of Cadmus  
on the path to completion.<sup>50</sup>

From this deed there rushed against the land  
the snatching ruinous hand of heaven.

*Enter by Eisdos B a soldier of Eteocles as MESSENGER.*

### MESSENGER

(*knocking on the door*) Ho there! Who is manning the  
palace gate? Open up: bring Jocasta out! (*silence*) Ho there  
once more, though far off you be! [Illustrious wife of Oedi-  
pus, come out and hear! Cease your lamentations and your  
tears of grief!]

*Enter JOCASTA from the skene.*

### JOCASTA

Dear man, you have not come, I trust, to bring the bad  
news of Eteocles' death? You always stood by his shield  
hand and protected him from enemy weapons. [What un-  
toward event have you come to report?] Is my son dead or  
alive? Tell me.

### MESSENGER

Alive, no fear: of that care I will free you.

<sup>50</sup> See above, lines 657-68.

EURIPIDES

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

τί δ'· ἐπτάπυργοι πῶς ἔχουσι περιβολαί;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐστᾶσ' ἄθραυστοι κούκ ἀνήρπασται πόλις.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1080 ἦλθον δὲ πρὸς κίνδυνον Ἄργείου δορός;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀκμήν γ' ἐπ' αὐτήν· ἀλλ' ὁ Καδμείων Ἄρης  
κρείσσων κατέστη τοῦ Μυκηναίου δορός.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἐν εἰπέ πρὸς θεῶν, εἴ τι Πολυνείκους πέρι  
οἴσθ'· ὡς μέλει μοι καὶ τόδ', εἰ λεύσσει φάος.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1085 ζῆ σοι ξυνωρίς ἐς τόδ' ἡμέρας τέκνων.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

εὐδαιμονοίης. πῶς γὰρ Ἄργεῖον δόρυ  
πυλῶν ἀπεστήσασθε πυργηρούμενοι;  
λέξον, γέροντα τυφλὸν ὡς κατὰ στέγας  
ἐλθούσα τέρψω, τῆσδε γῆς σεσωμένης.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1090 ἐπεὶ Κρέοντος παῖς ὁ γῆς ὑπερθανὸν  
πύργων ἐπ' ἄκρων στὰς μελάνδετον ξίφος  
λαιμῶν διήκε, τῆσδε γῆ σωτηρίαν,  
λόχους ἔνειμεν ἐπτά καὶ λοχαγέτας  
πύλας ἐφ' ἐπτά, φύλακας Ἄργείου δορός,

1095 σὸς παῖς, ἐφέδρους <θ'> ἱππότας μὲν ἱππόταις

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

JOCASTA

And how are the seven-gated battlements?

MESSENGER

Unbreached: the city has not been taken.

JOCASTA

Did they come into danger from the Argive spear?

MESSENGER

Yes, to the utmost pitch: but Cadmean war spirit vanquished the Mycenaean spear.

JOCASTA

One thing more, by the gods: do you know anything about Polynices? It matters greatly to me that he is living.

MESSENGER

Your two sons are alive until this hour.

JOCASTA

Blessings on you! But how, when you were besieged, did you force the Argive army from the gates? Tell me so that I may go and gladden the blind old man in the house with the news that this land has been rescued.

MESSENGER

When Creon's son, who died on the land's behalf, had stood on the top of the battlements and plunged the dark sword into his throat, achieving survival for this land, your son allotted seven companies and seven captains to the seven gates to ward off the Argive spear. <And> he stationed reserves for both cavalry and hoplite forces so

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1092 *σωτηρίαν* Diggle: *σωτήριον* C

1095 <θ'> Valckenaer

ἔταξ', ὀπλίτας δ' ἀσπιδηφόροις ἔπι,  
 ὡς τῷ νοσοῦντι τειχέων εἴη δορὸς  
 ἀλκῆ δι' ὀλίγου. περγάμων δ' ἀπ' ὀρθίων  
 λεύκασπιν εἰσορῶμεν Ἀργείων στρατὸν  
 1100 Τευμησσὸν ἐκλιπόντα, καὶ τάφρου πέλας  
 †δρόμῳ ξυνηψαν† ἄστν Καδμείας χθονός.  
 παιᾶν δὲ καὶ σάλπιγγες ἐκελάδουν ὁμοῦ  
 ἐκείθεν ἔκ τε τειχέων ἡμῶν πάρα.

[καὶ πρῶτα μὲν προσῆγε Νηίσταις πύλαις  
 1105 λόχον πυκναῖσιν ἀσπίσιν πεφρικότα  
 ὁ τῆς κυναγοῦ Παρθενοπαῖος ἔκγονος,  
 ἐπίσημ' ἔχων οἰκείον ἐν μέσῳ σάκει,  
 ἐκηβόλοις τόξοισιν Ἀταλάντην κάπρον  
 χειρουμένην Αἰτωλόν. ἐς δὲ Προιτίδας  
 1110 πύλας ἐχώρει σφάγι' ἔχων ἐφ' ἄρματι  
 ὁ μάντις Ἀμφιάραος, οὐ σημεῖ' ἔχων  
 ὑβρισμέν' ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως ἄσημ' ὄπλα.

Ἐγγύγια δ' ἐς πυλώμαθ' Ἴππομέδων ἀναξ  
 ἔστειχ' ἔχων σημεῖον ἐν μέσῳ σάκει  
 1115 στικτοῖς Πανόπτῃν ὄμμασιν δεδορκότα,  
 τὰ μὲν σὺν ἄστρων ἐπιτολαῖσιν ὄμματα  
 βλέποντα, τὰ δὲ κρύπτοντα δυνόντων μέτα,  
 ὡς ὕστερον θανόντος εἰσορᾶν παρῆν.

Ὅμολώισιν δὲ τάξιν εἶχε πρὸς πύλαις  
 1120 Τυδεὺς, λέοντος δέρος ἔχων ἐπ' ἀσπίδι  
 χαίτη πεφρικός· δεξιᾷ δὲ λαμπάδα  
 Τιτὰν Προμηθεὺς ἔφερεν ὡς πρήσων πόλιν.  
 ὁ σὸς δὲ Κρηναίαισι Πολυνείκης πύλαις

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

that any part of the wall that was in trouble should have relief close at hand. Then from the lofty battlements we espied the Argive army with its white shields coming from Teumessus: at the circle of our trench they broke into a run and ringed the Cadmean citadel about. The paeon of war and the trumpet resounded from the enemy side and from ours within the fortifications.

[And first the huntswoman's son Parthenopaeus brought his company, bristling with close-ranked shields, to the Neïstan Gate. He had a fitting symbol in the middle of his shield, Atalanta overcoming the Aetolian boar with her far-darting arrows. To the Proetid Gate came the seer Amphiarus with sacrificial victims on his chariot. He had no arrogant device but a shield modestly unmarked.

Hippomedon marched to the Ogygian Gate. In the center of his shield was the all-seeing Argus, with eyes dappling his body, some opening in concert with rising stars and some closing with setting ones, as we later could see after his death.

Tydeus was stationed near the Homoloïd Gate, wearing on his shield the pelt of a lion with bristling mane. In his right hand he carried a torch, a Titan Prometheus, in order to burn the city.

Your son Polynices brought his soldiery against the

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1101 fort. βρόχου συνήψαν ἄστν Καδμείων δίκην v. del.  
Kirchhoff  
1104-40 del. Morus

- Ἄρη προσήγε· Ποτνιαδες δ' ἐπ' ἀσπίδι  
 1125 ἐπίσημα πῶλοι δρομάδες ἐσκίρτων φόβῳ,  
 εὖ πως στρόφιγξιν ἔνδοθεν κυκλούμεναι  
 πόρπαχ' ὑπ' αὐτόν, ὥστε μαινέσθαι δοκεῖν.  
 ὁ δ' οὐκ ἔλασσον Ἄρεος ἐς μάχην φρονῶν  
 Καπανεὺς προσήγε λόχον ἐπ' Ἥλέκτραις πύλαις·  
 1130 σιδηρονώτοις δ' ἀσπίδος κύκλοις ἐπῆν  
 γίγας ἐπ' ὤμοις γηγενῆς ὄλην πόλιν  
 φέρων μοχλοῖσιν ἐξανασπάσας βάθρων,  
 ὑπόνοιαν ἡμῖν οἶα πείσεται πόλις.  
 ταῖς δ' ἐβδόμαις Ἄδραστος ἐν πύλαισιν ἦν,  
 1135 ἑκατὸν ἐχίδναις ἀσπίδ' ἐκπληρῶν γραφῆ,  
 ὕδρας ἔχων λαιοῖσιν ἐν βραχίουσιν  
 Ἄργεῖον αὔχημ'· ἐκ δὲ τειχέων μέσων  
 δράκοντες ἔφερον τέκνα Καδμείων γνάθοις.  
 παρῆν δ' ἐκάστον τῶνδὲ μοι θεάματα  
 1140 ζύνθημα παραφέρουσι ποιμέσιν λόχων.]  
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν τόξοισι καὶ μεσαγκύλοις  
 ἐμαρνάμεσθα σφενδόνας θ' ἐκηβόλοις  
 πέτρων τ' ἀραγμοῖς· ὡς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ,  
 ἔκλαγξε Τυδεὺς καὶ σὸς ἐξαίφνης γόνος·  
 1145 ὦ τέκνα Δαναῶν, πρὶν κατεξάνθαι βολαῖς,  
 τί μέλλετ' ἄρδην πάντες ἐμπίπτειν πύλαις,  
 γυμνήτες ἱππῆς ἀρμάτων τ' ἐπιστάται;  
 ἡχῆς δ' ὅπως ἤκουσαν, οὔτις ἀργὸς ἦν·  
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιπτον κρᾶτας αἱματούμενοι,  
 1150 ἡμῶν τ' ἐς οὐδας εἶδες ἂν πρὸ τειχέων  
 πυκνοὺς κυβιστητῆρας ἐκπέπνευκότας·

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

Crenaean Gate. Upon his shield pranced in panic the wild mares of Potniae,<sup>51</sup> skillfully twisting upon pivots from inside the shield, below the shield strap itself, so that they seem to be insane.

Capaneus, whose pride in war is like that of Ares himself, brought his company against the Electran gates. Upon the iron-backed circle of his shield was an earthborn Giant, who had pried up the whole city from its foundations with a crowbar and was carrying it on his back, an indication of what our city would suffer.

At the seventh gate was Adrastus, who had pictured on his shield a hundred snakes, hydras he bore on his left arm, an Argive boast. And from the middle of the battlements the snakes were bearing off with their teeth the Thebans' children. I got to see each of these sights when I took round the watchword to the captains of the companies.]

At first we fought with bows, javelins, and slings, distance weapons, and with showers of stones. When we were prevailing in the fight, at once Tydeus and your son shouted out, "Sons of the Danaans, before we are torn to pieces by missiles, quick, charge the gates all in a body, light-armed troops, cavalry, chariot drivers, and all!" When they heard this cry, no one was idle: many fell to the ground with bloodied heads, and you could have seen on our earth large numbers of divers, their life's breath gone,

<sup>51</sup> The flesh-eating horses of Glaucus of Potniae, which Heracles had to overcome.

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1151 ἐκπεπτωκότας Madvig, ἐκνενευκότας Markland

ξηρὰν δ' ἔδενον γαίαν αἵματος ῥοαῖς.

ὁ δ' Ἄρκας, οὐκ Ἀργεῖος, Ἀταλάντης γόνος  
τυφῶς πύλαισιν ὡς τις ἐμπεσὼν βοᾷ

- 1155 πῦρ καὶ δικέλλας, ὡς κατασκάψων πόλιν·  
ἀλλ' ἔσχε μαργῶντ' αὐτὸν ἐναλίου θεοῦ  
Περικλύμενος παῖς λᾶαν ἐμβαλὼν κάρα  
ἀμαξοπληθῆ, γεῖσ' ἐπάλξεων ἄπο·  
ξανθὸν δὲ κρᾶτα διεπάλυνε καὶ ῥαφὰς  
1160 ἔρρηξεν ὀστέων, ἄρτι δ' οἰνωπὸν γένυν  
καθημάτωσεν· οὐδ' ἀποίσεται βίον  
τῇ καλλιτόξῳ μητρὶ Μαινάλου κόρη.

ἐπεὶ δὲ τάσδ' ἐσείδεν εὐτυχεῖς πύλας,  
ἄλλας ἐπήει παῖς σός, εἰπόμην δ' ἐγώ.

- 1165 ὀρώ δὲ Τυδέα καὶ παρασπιστὰς πυκνοὺς  
Αἰτωλίσιν λόγχαισιν εἰς ἄκρον στόμα  
πύργων ἀκοντίζοντας, ὥστ' ἐπάλξεων  
λιπεῖν ἐρίπνας φύλακας· ἀλλά νιν πάλιν  
κυναγὸς ὡσεὶ παῖς σὸς ἐξαθροΐζεται,  
1170 πύργοις δ' ἐπέστησ' αὐθις. ἐς δ' ἄλλας πύλας  
ἠπειγόμεσθα, τοῦτο παύσαντες νοσοῦν.

Καπανεὺς δὲ πῶς εἶποιμ' ἂν ὡς ἐμαίνετο;  
μακραύχενος γὰρ κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις  
ἔχων ἐχώρει, καὶ τοσόνδ' ἐκόμπασεν,

- 1175 μῆδ' ἂν τὸ σεμνὸν πῦρ νιν εἰργαθεῖν Διὸς  
τὸ μὴ οὐ κατ' ἄκρων περγάμων ἐλεῖν πόλιν.  
καὶ ταῦθ' ἄμ' ἠγόρευε καὶ πετρούμενος  
ἀνεῖρφ' ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἀσπίδ' εἰλίξας δέμας,  
κλίμακος ἀμείβων ξέστ' ἐνηλάτων βάθρα.



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

before the walls. They dampened the thirsty earth with streams of their blood.

The son of Atalanta, an Arcadian, not an Argive, hurled himself against the gates like a whirlwind and shouted for fire and pickaxes to raze the city to the ground. But in his fury he was checked by Periclymenus, son of the seagod, who hurled at his head a rock that would fill a wagon, a coping stone from the battlements. It shattered his blond head, broke the sutures of the skull, and bloodied his cheeks, with the new bloom of youth upon them. He will not return alive to his mother of the lovely bow, the girl of Maenalus.

When he saw that these gates were doing well, your son went to others, and I with him. I saw Tydeus and his massed companions hurling their Aetolian lances at the topmost edge of the gate so that the guards left the high battlements. But your son like a master of hounds brought them back together and set them upon the tower again. When we had cured this malady, we rush off to other gates.

How can I describe the way Capaneus raged? With a long-necked ladder in his hands he came on and uttered this boast, that not even the holy fire of Zeus would stop him from razing the city's topmost towers to the ground. With these words on his lips up he climbed, pelted with stones and coiling his body under his shield, passing from

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1168 *φύλακας* nescioquis ap. Valckenaer: *φνγάδας* C

## EURIPIDES

- 1180 ἤδη δ' ὑπερβαίνοντα γείσα τειχέων  
βάλλει κεραυνῶ Ζεὺς νιν· ἐκτύπησε δὲ  
χθών, ὥστε δεῖσαι πάντας· ἐκ δὲ κλιμάκων  
[ἐσφενδονᾶτο χωρὶς ἀλλήλων μέλη,  
κόμαι μὲν εἰς Ὀλυμπον, αἶμα δ' ἐς χθόνα,  
1185 χεῖρες δὲ καὶ κῶλ' ὡς κύκλωμ' Ἰξίουτος]  
εἰλίσσεται· ἐς γῆν δ' ἔμπυρος πίπτει νεκρός.  
ὡς δ' εἶδ' Ἀδραστος Ζῆνα πολέμιον στρατῶ,  
ἔξω τάφρου καθείσεν Ἀργείων στρατόν.  
οἱ δ' αὖ παρ' ἡμῶν δεξιὸν Διὸς τέρας  
1190 ἰδόντες ἐξήλαντον, ἀρμάτων ὄχοι  
ἰππῆς ὀπλίται, κὰς μέσ' Ἀργείων ὄπλα  
συνῆψαν ἔγχη· πάντα δ' ἦν ὁμοῦ κακά·  
ἔθρωσκον ἐξέπιπτον ἀντύγων ἄπο,  
τροχοὶ τ' ἐπήδων ἄξονές τ' ἐπ' ἄξοσιν  
1195 νεκροὶ τε νεκροῖς ἐξεσωρεύονθ' ὁμοῦ.  
πύργων μὲν οὖν γῆς ἔσχομεν κατασκαφὰς  
ἐς τὴν παροῦσαν ἡμέραν· εἰ δ' εὐτυχῆς  
ἔσται τὸ λοιπὸν ἦδε γῆ, θεοῖς μέλει.  
[καὶ νῦν γὰρ αὐτὴν δαιμόνων ἔσωσέ τις.]

[ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 1200 καλὸν τὸ νικᾶν· εἰ δ' ἀμείνον' οἱ θεοὶ  
γνώμην ἔχουσιν, εὐτυχῆς εἶην ἐγώ.]

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καλῶς τὰ τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὰ τῆς τύχης ἔχει·

1183-5 del. Nauck

1188 στρατόν] fort. λεών

1190 ὄχοι Musgrave: ὄχους fere C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

one smooth rung to the next. Now, as he mounted the top of the battlements, Zeus struck him with his lightning bolt. The earth resounded and everyone grew afraid. From the ladder<sup>52</sup> he rolled, and his corpse fell in flames to the ground.

When Adrastus saw that Zeus was his army's enemy, he withdrew the Argive forces beyond the ditch. Our side, seeing Zeus's favorable omen, moved out after them, chariots, cavalry, and hoplites, and rushing into the midst of the Argive army they charged their spears. In one place could be seen all manner of ruin: men leapt or were thrown from their chariots, wheels hurtled through the air, and axles were piled upon axles, corpses upon corpses.

We have checked the destruction of this land's towers for today. Whether the country will be fortunate henceforth lies with the gods. [For even now some god has saved it.]

[CHORUS LEADER

Victory is a fine thing. If the gods have a better disposition than before, may I be happy!]

JOCASTA

What the gods and fortune have done is good: my sons are

<sup>52</sup> After this phrase the manuscripts give (bracketed words deleted by Nauck) "[his limbs were hurled in opposite directions, his hair to Olympus, his blood to the ground, while like Ixion on his wheel his arms and legs] rolled, and his corpse fell in flames to the ground."

<sup>1193</sup> ἔθρωσκον Earle: ἔθνησκον C  
δὲ C <sup>1199</sup> om. plerique codd.

<sup>1200-1</sup> suspectos habuit Paley, del. Harberton

<sup>1195</sup> τε Fritzsche:

EURIPIDES

1205 παῖδες τε γάρ μοι ζῶσι κάκπέφευγε γῆ.  
 Κρέων δ' ἔοικε τῶν ἐμῶν νυμφευμάτων  
 τῶν τ' Οἰδίου δύστηνος ἀπολαῦσαι κακῶν,  
 παιδὸς στερηθεῖς, τῇ πόλει μὲν εὐτυχῶς,  
 ἰδίᾳ δὲ λυπρῶς. ἀλλ' ἀνελθέ μοι πάλιν,  
 τί τὰπὶ τούτοις παῖδ' ἐμῶ δρασεῖετον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἔα τὰ λοιπά· δεῦρ' αἶε γὰρ εὐτυχεῖς.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

1210 τοῦτ' εἰς ὑπόπτον εἶπας· οὐκ ἑατέον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μείζον τί χρήζεις παῖδας ἢ σεσωμένους;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

καὶ τὰπίλοιπά γ' εἰ καλῶς πράσσω κλυεῖν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

μέθες μ'· ἔρημος παῖς ὑπασπιστοῦ σέθεν.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

κακόν τι κεύθεις καὶ στέγεις ὑπὸ σκότῳ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1215 οὐκ ἄν γε λέξαιμ' ἐπ' ἀγαθοῖσί σοι κακά.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἦν μή γε φεύγων ἐκφύγῃς πρὸς αἰθέρα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

αἰαί· τί μ' οὐκ εἶσας ἐξ εὐαγγέλου  
 φήμῃς ἀπελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ μηνῦσαι κακά;

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

alive and the land has escaped harm. Poor Creon, it seems, has reaped misfortune from my marriage to Oedipus since he has lost his son: it was good fortune for the city but pain for him personally. But go back to your story: what are my two sons planning to do after this?

MESSENGER

Do not ask the sequel! Up to this point your fortune is good.

JOCASTA

Your words raise fears: I must not let them go.

MESSENGER

Do you crave more than that your sons should live?

JOCASTA

I want to hear if the rest of my fortune is good.

MESSENGER

Let me go: your son needs his subordinate.

JOCASTA

You keep some trouble hidden in the dark.

MESSENGER

I will not tell you woe on top of blessing.

JOCASTA

(*restraining him*) You will unless you fly to the upper air.

MESSENGER

Ah, ah! Why not let me go away after bringing good news, why compel me to reveal misfortune? Your two sons, with

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1215 *σολ* Reiske: *σολ̄ς* fere C

## EURIPIDES

- τὰ παῖδε τὼ σὼ μέλλετον, τολμήματα  
 1220 αἴσχιστα, χωρὶς μονομαχεῖν παντὸς στρατοῦ.  
 [λέξαντες Ἀργείοισι Καδμείοισί τε  
 ἐς κοινὸν οἶον μήποτ' ὄφελον λόγον.  
 Ἐτεοκλέης δ' ὑπήρξ' ἀπ' ὀρθίου σταθεῖς  
 πύργου, κελύσας σίγα κηρύξαι στρατῶ·  
 1225 ἔλεξε δ' ὦ γῆς Ἑλλάδος στρατηλάται,  
 Δαναῶν ἀριστῆς, οὔπερ ἦλθετ' ἐνθάδε,  
 Κάδμου τε λαός, μήτε Πολυνείκους χάριν  
 ψυχὰς ἀπεμπολᾶτε μήθ' ἡμῶν ὑπερ.  
 ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτὸς τόνδε κίνδυνον μεθεῖς  
 1230 μόνος συνάψω συγγόνῳ τῷμῳ μάχην·  
 κὰν μὲν κτάνω τόνδ', οἶκον οἰκήσω μόνος,  
 ἡσώμενος δὲ τῷδε παραδώσω μόνῳ·  
 ὑμεῖς δ' ἀγῶν' ἀφέντες, Ἀργεῖοι, χθόνα  
 νίσεσθε, βίοντον μὴ λιπόντες ἐνθάδε·  
 1235 Σπαρτῶν τε λαὸς ἅλις ὃς κείται νεκρός.  
 τοσαῦτ' ἔλεξε· σὸς δὲ Πολυνείκης γόνος  
 ἐκ τάξεων ὤρουσε κἀπήνει λόγους.  
 πάντες δ' ἐπερρόθησαν Ἀργεῖοι τάδε  
 Κάδμου τε λαὸς ὡς δίκαι' ἠγούμενοι.  
 1240 ἐπὶ τοῖσδε δ' ἐσπείσαντο κὰν μεταιχμίοις  
 ὄρκους συνῆψαν ἐμμενεῖν στρατηλάται.  
 ἦδη δ' ἔκρυπτον σῶμα παγχάλκοις ὄπλοις  
 δισοῖ γέροντος Οἰδίου νεανία·  
 φίλοι δ' ἐκόσμου, τῆσδε μὲν πρόμον χθονὸς  
 1245 Σπαρτῶν ἀριστῆς, τὸν δὲ Δαναϊδῶν ἄκροι.  
 ἔσταν δὲ λαμπρῷ χρώμα' τ' οὐκ ἠλλαξάτην

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

shameful brashness, mean to separate from their armies and fight in single combat. [To the Argive and the Cadmeans together they spoke words I wish they had never spoken. Eteocles began it: standing on the high battlements he ordered the herald to call for silence, saying "You generals of the land of Greece, princes of the Danaans who have come here, and you people of Cadmus, you need not sell your lives for Polynices or for me. I myself, averting this danger, shall join in single combat with my brother. And if I kill him, I shall manage our house by myself, but if I am defeated I shall give it into his sole possession. You Argives, abandoning the struggle, will go back to your land and not leave your lives behind here. Enough too of the Sown Men are lying dead."

Those were his words. Your son Polynices rushed from the ranks and praised this speech. And all the Argives and all the people of Cadmus roared their approval, thinking the terms just. On these terms the generals poured libations, and in the space between the lines they gave oaths that they would abide by them.

And now they proceeded to cover their bodies in their bronze panoplies, these two young sons of old Oedipus. They were adorned in armor by their friends, Thebes' champion by the Sown Men's champions, his brother by the chiefs of the sons of Danaus. They stood there gleaming and did not blanch as they yearned eagerly to hurl their

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1221-58 del. Paley

1232 ἡσσημένος Diggle

1235 δς] ὄσος aliquot recentiores

EURIPIDES

μαργῶντ' ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἰέναι δόρν.  
 παρεξίοντες δ' ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν φίλων  
 λόγοις ἐθάρσυνόν τε καῖξηύδων τάδε·

1250 Πολύνεικες, ἐν σοὶ Ζηνὸς ὀρθῶσαι βρέτας  
 τρόπαιον Ἄργει τ' εὐκλεᾶ δοῦναι λόγον·  
 Ἐτεοκλέα δ' αὖ· Νῦν πόλεως ὑπερμαχεῖς,  
 νῦν καλλίνικος γενόμενος σκῆπτρων κρατεῖς.

τάδ' ἠγόρευον παρακαλοῦντες ἐς μάχην.  
 1255 μάντις δὲ μῆλ' ἔσφαζον, ἐμπύρου τ' ἀκμῆς  
 ῥήξεις ἐνώμων, ὑγρότητ' ἐναντίαν,  
 ἄκραν τε λαμπάδ', ἣ δυοῖν ὄρους ἔχει,  
 νίκης τε σῆμα καὶ τὸ τῶν ἠσσωμένων.]

ἀλλ', εἴ τιw' ἀλκὴν ἢ σοφοὺς ἔχεις λόγους  
 1260 ἢ φίλτρ' ἐπφδῶν, στεῖχ', ἐρήτυσον τέκνα  
 δεινῆς ἀμίλλης· ὡς ὁ κίνδυνος μέγας  
 [καὶ τᾶθλα δεινά· δάκρυνά σοι γενήσεται  
 δισσοῖν στερεΐση τῆδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τέκνου].

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ τέκνον ἔξελθ' Ἀντιγόνη δόμων πάρος.  
 1265 [οὐκ ἐν χορείαις οὐδὲ παρθευέμασιν  
 νῦν σοι προχωρεῖ δαιμόνων κατάστασις,  
 ἀλλ' ἄνδρ' ἀρίστω καὶ κασιγνήτῳ σέθεν  
 ἐς θάνατον ἐκνεύοντε κωλύσαι σε δεῖ  
 ξὺν μητρὶ τῆ σῆ μὴ πρὸς ἀλλήλουιν θανεῖν.]

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1270 τίν', ὦ τεκοῦσα μῆτερ, ἔκπληξιν νέαν  
 φίλοις ἀντεῖς τῶνδε δωμάτων πάρος;



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

spears at one another. From one quarter and another came one and another of their friends and spoke these encouraging words: "Polynices, it lies in your power to raise aloft the trophy of Zeus and to bring glory to Argos"; and to Eteocles: "Now you are the city's champion; now when you have won a glorious victory you will hold the scepter."

That is what they said, exhorting them to battle. The seers proceeded to sacrifice victims and observed the fissures at the tips of sacrificial flame, denoting an unfavorable moistness, and the peak of the fire, which portends two things, either victory or defeat.]

So if you have any strength to save them or clever words or incantatory charms, go, rescue your sons from the dread contest: the danger is great [and the prize is a terrible one: tears will be your portion if you lose your two sons today]!

### JOCASTA

Daughter Antigone, come out before the palace! [It is not in choral dances or girlish pursuits that the fortune sent by the gods proceeds for you: the two heroes, your brothers, are veering toward death, and you and your mother must prevent their being killed each at the other's hand.]

*Enter ANTIGONE from the skene.*

### ANTIGONE

Mother who bore me, what startling news are you announcing to your near and dear before the house?

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1255 ἐμπύρου τ' ἀκμῆς Geel: -ους τ' -ὰς C

1256 ῥήξεις Geel: ῥ- τ' C 1262-3 del. Valckenaer

1263 στερείση Reiske: -ήση fere C

1265-9 del. Fraenkel

EURIPIDES

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ὦ θύγατερ, ἔρρει σῶν κασιγνήτων βίος.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

πῶς εἶπας;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

αἰχμὴν ἐς μίαν καθέστατον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οἶ ᾗ γώ, τί λέξεις, μήτερ;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐ φίλ', ἀλλ' ἔπου.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1275 ποῖ, παρθενώνας ἐκλιπούσ';

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ἀνὰ στρατόν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

αἰδούμεθ' ὄχλον.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

οὐκ ἐν αἰσχύνῃ τὰ σά.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δράσω δὲ δὴ τί;

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

συγγόνων λύσεις ἔριν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί δρῶσα, μήτερ;

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

JOCASTA

My daughter, your brothers' lives rush to ruin.

ANTIGONE

What do you mean?

JOCASTA

They are set to fight one another.

ANTIGONE

What can you mean, mother? Ah me!

JOCASTA

No welcome meaning. But come with me.

ANTIGONE

Where shall I go, leaving my maiden chamber?

JOCASTA

To the battlefield.

ANTIGONE

I feel shame before the crowd.

JOCASTA

Your circumstances do not allow shame.

ANTIGONE

But what shall I do?

JOCASTA

End your brothers' quarrel.

ANTIGONE

How, mother?

## EURIPIDES

## ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

προσπίτνουσ' ἐμοῦ μέτα.

- ἡγοῦ σὺ πρὸς μεταίχμι· οὐ μελλητέον.  
 1280 ἔπειγ' ἔπειγε, θύγατερ· ὦς, ἦν μὲν φθάσσω  
 παῖδας πρὸ λόγχης, οὐμὸς ἐν φάει βίος·  
 [ἦν δ' ὑστερήσης, οἰχόμεσθα, καθθανῆ·]  
 θανούσι δ' αὐτοῖς συνθανούσα κείσομαι.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

- αἰαῖ αἰαῖ, τρομερὰν φρίκα  
 1285 τρομερὰν φρέν' ἔχω· διὰ σάρκα δ' ἐμὰν  
 ἔλεος ἔλεος ἔμολε μα-  
 τέρος δειλαίας.  
 δίδυμα τέκεα πότερος ἄρα  
 πότερον αἰμάξει—  
 1290 ἰὼ μοι πόνων, ἰὼ Ζεῦ καὶ γὰ—  
 ὁμογενῆ δέραν, ὁμογενῆ ψυχὰν  
 δι' ἀσπίδων, δι' αἱμάτων;  
 τάλαιν' ἐγὼ τάλαινα,  
 1295 πότερον ἄρα νέκυν ὀλόμενον ἀχήσω;

ἀντ.

- φεῦ δᾶ φεῦ δᾶ, δίδυμοι θήρες,  
 φόνιαι ψυχαὶ δορὶ παλλομένῳ  
 πέσεια πέσεια δαί' ἀν-  
 τίχ' αἰμάξεται·  
 1300 τάλανες, ὅτι ποτὲ μονομάχον

<sup>1282</sup> (=976) om. aliquot codd., del. Grotius

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### JOCASTA

Join me in supplicating them. (*to the Messenger*) You, lead us to the battlefield: we must not delay. Hurry, hurry, daughter: if I reach my sons before their battle, I will still live in the sun's light. [But if you are too late, you will be killed—woe is me.] But if they are dead, I shall lie next to them in death.

*Exit by Eisodes B* JOCASTA, ANTIGONE, and MESSENGER.

### CHORUS

Ah, ah, ah, ah, trembling with fear,  
trembling is my heart in my breast, and through my flesh  
runs pity, pity for  
the woeful mother.

The two sons—which of them  
will draw blood from the other  
(alas for my woes, alas Zeus and Earth),  
draw blood from his brother's neck, his brother's life  
by weapons, by deed of slaughter?

Ah, luckless me,  
for whose death, whose corpse, shall I lament?

O woe, O woe, twin beasts,  
murderous hearts, with the brandished spear  
they will at once  
accomplish their fell slaying slaying:  
luckless men, whatever brought them

---

1290 καὶ Diggle et Willink: ἰὼ C      1293 τάλαινα] τάλαιν'.  
<αἰαῖ> Willink      1294-5 ἀχῆσω Elmsley: ἰαχ- C  
1297 παλλομένῳ Diggle: -όμεναι C

## EURIPIDES

ἐπὶ φρέν' ἠλθέτην.

βοᾷ βαρβάρῳ στενακτὰν ἀχὰν

μελομένηαν νεκροῖς δάκρυσι θρηνήσω.

σχεδὸν τύχα, πέλας φόνος·

1305 κρινεῖ ξίφος τὸ μέλλον.

πότμος ἄποτμος ὁ φόνος ἔνεκ' Ἐρινύων.

[—ἀλλὰ γὰρ Κρέοντα λεύσσω τόνδε δεῦρο συννεφεῆ  
πρὸς δόμους στείχοντα, παύσω τοὺς παρεστῶτας  
γούους.

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

1310 οἴμοι, τί δράσω; πότερ' ἐμαντὸν ἢ πόλιν

στένω δακρύσας, ἣν πέριξ ἔχει νέφος

τοιούτου ὥστε δι' Ἀχέροντος ἰέναι;

ἐμός τε γὰρ παῖς γῆς ὄλωλ' ὑπερθανών,

τοῦνομα λαβὼν γενναῖον, ἀνιαρὸν δ' ἐμοί·

1315 ὄν ἄρτι κρημνῶν ἐκ δρακοντείων ἐλὼν

αὐτοσφαγῆ δύστηνος ἐκόμισ' ἐν χεροῖν.

βοᾷ δὲ δῶμα πᾶν· ἐγὼ δ' ἦκω μετὰ

γέρων ἀδελφῆν γραῖαν Ἰοκάστην, ὅπως

λούση προθῆται τ' οὐκέτ' ὄντα παῖδ' ἐμόν.

1320 τοῖς γὰρ θανούσι χρῆ τὸν οὐ τεθνηκότα

τιμὰς διδόντα χθόνιον εὐσεβεῖν θεόν.

1302 ἀχὰν Wecklein: ἰαχὰν C

1305 ξίφος Hermann:

φάος C

1306 πότμος Dindorf: ἄποτμος C: τὸ μέλλον ᾗ /  
πότμος Willink (vide ad 1293)

1308-53 Creontis personam hic interpolatam esse vidit Di

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

to the thought of single combat!  
With barbarian clamor I shall utter in tears  
a groaning cry fit for the dead.  
Their fate is nigh, the slaughter near:  
the sword shall give verdict for the future.  
How grim a fate is this slaughter the Erinyes have made!

[Enter by *Eisodos* A CREON.<sup>53</sup>

### CHORUS LEADER

But I see Creon coming to the palace with clouded brow: I shall cease from my present lamentations.

### CREON

Ah, ah, what shall I do? Shall I weep and groan for myself or my city, so set about by a cloud of woe as to send it down to Acheron? My son is dead, perished for his country, having won a name that is noble but painful for me. I have just now taken him, self-slain, from the dragon cliffs and brought him back in my arms. My whole house is wailing. And now I, old man that I am, have come in search of old Jocasta so that she may wash my dead son's body and lay it out for burial. For the living must honor the dead and reverence the god of the underworld.

<sup>53</sup> The scene preceding the entrance of the second messenger seems to have been reworked to accommodate another appearance of Creon. New lines have been added and original lines cut. I have marked the whole of 1308-53 as spurious while realizing that the new scene may contain some lines salvaged from the old.

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Benedetto (praeunte Leidloff), quo auctore 1308-34 et fere 1338-53 del. Fraenkel, 1335-7 Kovacs

EURIPIDES

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βέβηκ' ἀδελφῆ σὴ δόμων ἔξω, Κρέον,  
κόρη τε μητρὸς Ἀντιγόνη κοινῶ ποδί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ποῖ καπὶ ποίαν συμφοράν; σήμαινέ μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1325 ἤκουσε τέκνα μονομάχῳ μέλλειν δορὶ  
ἔς ἀσπίδ' ἤξειν βασιλικῶν δόμων ὕπερ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πῶς φῆς; νέκυν τοι παιδὸς ἀγαπάζων ἐμοῦ  
οὐκ ἐς τόδ' ἦλθον ὥστε καὶ τάδ' εἰδέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1330 ἀλλ' οἴχεται μὲν σὴ κασιγνήτη πάλαι  
δοκῶ δ' ἀγῶνα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς, Κρέον,  
ἤδη πεπράχθαι παισὶ τοῖσιν Οἰδίπου.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἴμοι, τὸ μὲν σημεῖον εἴσορῶ τόδε,  
σκυθρωπὸν ὄμμα καὶ πρόσωπον ἀγγέλου  
στείχοντος, ὃς πᾶν ἀγγελεῖ τὸ δρώμενον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Β

1335 ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, τίν' εἶπω μῦθον ἢ τίνας γόους;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

οἰχόμεσθ'· οὐκ εὐπροσώποις φροιμίους ἄρχη λόγου.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Β

ὦ τάλας, δισσῶς αὐτῷ μεγάλα γὰρ φέρω κακά.



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### CHORUS LEADER

Your sister has left the house, Creon, and with her Antigone, her daughter.

### CREON

Left for where and with what event in view? Tell me.

### CHORUS LEADER

She heard that her sons were about to fight a duel for the royal palace.

### CREON

What? I was tending the body of my son and did not know of this.

### CHORUS LEADER

Well, your sister went off some time ago, Creon. I think that the sons of Oedipus have already accomplished their deadly struggle.

*Enter by Eisodes B a follower of Eteocles as SECOND MESSENGER.*

### CREON

Ah, ah, I see a sign here, the gloomy eye and expression of the arriving messenger, who will tell everything that has happened.

### SECOND MESSENGER

O misery, what word shall I utter, what lament?

### CREON

We are undone: it is with joyless prelude that you begin your tale.

### SECOND MESSENGER

O misery! I say it twice, for terrible is the news I bear.

EURIPIDES

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πρὸς πεπραγμένους ἄλλοις πῆμασιν. λέγεις δὲ τί;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Β

οὐκέτ' εἰσὶ σῆς ἀδελφῆς παῖδες ἐν φάει, Κρέον.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1340 αἰαῖ·

μεγάλα μοι θροεῖς πάθεα καὶ πόλει.  
ὦ δῶματ' εἰσηκούσατ' Οἰδίπου τάδε,  
παίδων ὁμοίαις συμφοραῖς ὀλωλότων;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὥστ' ἂν δακρῦσαί γ', εἰ φρονοῦντ' ἐτύγχανεν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1345 οἴμοι ξυμφορᾶς βαρνοπομωτάτας,  
οἴμοι κακῶν δύστηνος, ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Β

εἰ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοισί γ' εἰδείης κακά.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ πῶς γένοιτ' ἂν τῶνδε δυσποτμώτερα;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Β

τέθνηκ' ἀδελφῆ σῆ δυοῖν παίδων μέτα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1350 ἀνάγετ' ἄγετε κωκυτόν, ἐπὶ κάρᾳ  
κτίθετε λευκοπήχεις κτύπους χεροῖν.

1344 ὥστ' ἂν δακρῦσαί Hartung: ὥστε δ- vel ὥστ' ἐκδ- C

1350 ἄγετε Mastronarde: ἀνάγετε C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CREON

In addition to other past woes. What is your news?

SECOND MESSENGER

Your sister's sons look no more on the light, Creon.

CREON

Ah, ah!

Great are the sufferings you utter, for me and for my city.  
O house of Oedipus, do you hear these words,  
that the sons are dead by like misfortune?

CHORUS LEADER

Yes, it hears and would weep if it were conscious.

CREON

Alas for calamity most grievous,  
alas for disaster, what misery!

SECOND MESSENGER

And how if you were to learn of further misfortunes?

CREON

What misfortune beyond this can there be?

SECOND MESSENGER

Your sister is dead along with her two sons.

CHORUS

Raise, raise the lament, strike  
the head with your pale hands!

## EURIPIDES

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὦ τλήμων, οἶον τέρμον', Ἰοκάστη, βίου  
γάμων τε τῶν σῶν Σφιγγὸς αἰνιγμοῖς ἔτλης.]

## &lt;ΧΟΡΟΣ&gt;

1355 πῶς καὶ πέπρακται διπτύχων παίδων φόνος  
ἀράς τ' ἀγώνισμ' Οἰδίπου; σήμαινέ μοι.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Β

τὰ μὲν πρὸ πύργων εὐτυχήματα χθονὸς  
οἶσθ'· οὐ μακρὰν γὰρ τειχέων περιπτυχαί  
[ὥστ' οὐχ ἅπαντά σ' εἰδέναι τὰ δρώμενα].

1360 ἐπεὶ δὲ χαλκέοις σῶμ' ἔκοσμήσανθ' ὄπλοις  
οἱ τοῦ γέροντος Οἰδίου νεανίαι,  
ἔστησαν ἐλθόντ' ἐς μέσον μεταίχμιον  
[δισσῶ στρατηγῶ καὶ διπλῶ στρατηλάτα]  
ὡς εἰς ἀγῶνα μονομάχου τ' ἀλκὴν δορός.  
βλέψας δ' ἐπ' Ἄργος ἦκε Πολυνείκης ἀράς·  
1365 ὦ πότνι Ἥρα, σὸς γάρ εἰμ', ἐπεὶ γάμοις  
ἔζευξ' Ἀδράστου παῖδα καὶ ναίω χθόνα,  
δὸς μοι κτανεῖν ἀδελφόν, ἀντήρη δ' ἐμὴν  
καθαιματῶσαι δεξιὰν νικηφόρον.

[αἰσχιστον αἰτῶν στέφανον, ὁμογενῆ κτανεῖν.  
1370 πολλοῖς δ' ἐπήγει δάκρυα τῆς εὐχῆς ὄση,  
κάβλειψαν ἀλλήλοισι διαδόντες κόρας.]

Ἐτεοκλέης δὲ Παλλάδος χρυσάσπιδος  
βλέψας πρὸς οἶκον ἠῤῥξατ'· ὦ Διὸς κόρη,  
δὸς ἔγχος ἡμῖν καλλίνικον τέκ χερσὶ†  
1375 ἐς στέρν' ἀδελφοῦ τῆσδ' ἀπ' ὠλένης βαλεῖν

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### CREON

Poor Jocasta, what a death, what an ending to your marriage you endured because of the Sphinx's riddles.]

### <CHORUS LEADER>

How was the slaughter of the two sons accomplished, their struggle with the curse of Oedipus? Tell me.

### SECOND MESSENGER

You know the country's successes before the towers: the encircling wall is not far off [so that you know all that has happened].

When old Oedipus' young sons had decked themselves in bronze armor, they went to the space between the armies [, the two generals and two leaders,] and took their stand to fight in single combat. Looking toward Argos Polynices spoke this prayer: "Lady Hera, I am yours since I have married Adrastus' daughter and dwell in the land. Grant that I may kill my brother and bloody my right hand, his enemy, in victory!" [He asked for a disgraceful crown, killing a brother. Many wept at the enormity of the prayer, exchanging glances with one another.]

Eteocles, looking toward the temple of Pallas of the Golden Shield, prayed, "Daughter of Zeus, grant that I may hurl my victorious spear from my hand into my

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1353 *αἰνυμοῖς* Geel: -οὺς C

1354n <Χο.> Di Benedetto, Fraenkel

1358 del. Wecklein

1362 del. Valckenaer

1369-71 del. Valckenaer

1370 *εὐχῆς* Hermann: *τύχης* C

1374 *εὐστόχως* Wecklein

## EURIPIDES

- [κτανεῖν θ' ὃς ἦλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν].  
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνήφθη πυρσὸς ὧς Τυρσηνικῆς  
 σάλπιγγος ἠχή, σῆμα φοινίου μάχης,  
 ἦξαν δράμημα δεινὸν ἀλλήλοις ἔπι.
- 1380 κάπροι δ' ὅπως θήγοντες ἀγρίαν γένυν  
 ξυνῆψαν, ἀφρῶ διάβροχοι γενειάδας.  
 ἦσσον δὲ λόγχαις· ἀλλ' ὑφίζανον κύκλους,  
 ὅπως σιδήρος ἐξολισθάνοι μάτην.  
 εἰ δ' ὄμμ' ὑπερσχὸν ἴτυος ἄτερος μάθοι,  
 1385 λόγχην ἐνώμα, στόματι προφθῆναι θέλων.  
 ἀλλ' εὖ προσῆγον ἀσπίδων κεγχρώμασιν  
 ὀφθαλμόν, ἀργὸν ὥστε γίγνεσθαι δόρυν.  
 [πλείων δὲ τοῖς ὀρώσιν ἐστάλασσε ἰδρῶς  
 ἢ τοῖσι δρῶσι διὰ φίλων ὀρρωδίαν.]
- 1390 Ἐτεοκλέης δὲ ποδὶ μεταψαίρων πέτρον  
 ἵχνους ὑπόδρομον, κῶλον ἐκτὸς ἀσπίδος  
 τίθησι· Πολυνεΐκης δ' ἀπήντησεν δορί,  
 πληγὴν σιδήρῳ παραδοθείσαν εἰσιδῶν,  
 κνήμην τε διεπέρασεν Ἀργεῖον δόρυν.
- 1395 στρατὸς δ' ἀνηλάλαξε Δαναϊδῶν ἅπας.  
 κὰν τῶδε μόχθῳ γυμνὸν ὦμον εἰσιδῶν  
 ὁ πρόσθε τρωθεὶς ἰστέρινα Πολυνεΐκους βία†  
 διῆκε λόγχην, κάπέδωκεν ἠδονὰς  
 Κάδμου πολίταις, ἀπὸ δ' ἔθραυσε ἄκρον δόρυν.
- 1400 ἐς δ' ἄπορον ἦκων δορὸς ἐπὶ σκέλος πάλιν  
 χωρεῖ, λαβῶν δ' ἀφῆκε μάρμαρον πέτρον  
 μέσον δ' ἄκουτ' ἔθραυσεν· ἐξ ἴσου δ' Ἄρης  
 ἦν, κάμακος ἀμφοῖν χεῖρ' ἀπεστερημένοι.

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

brother's chest [and kill the man who came to sack my country]!"

When the voice of the Etruscan trumpet, sign of murderous battle, was set ablaze like a torch, they hurtled upon each other in a dread rush. Like wild boars that sharpen their savage tusks they clashed, with foam dripping down their beards. They lunged at each other with lances but each hid behind the circle of his shield so that the iron would slip off harmlessly. If one saw the other's face above the rim, he aimed his spear, wishing to hit him first with his spearpoint. But each effectively covered his eyes with the embossed shield rim so that the spear did no harm. [More sweat dripped from the spectators than from the combatants, so fearful were they for their friends.]

Eteocles, brushing aside with his foot a stone that was slipping beneath his tread, stuck his leg outside his shield. Polynices, seeing that his iron point had a chance to strike, went at him with his spear, and his Argive weapon pierced the shinguard. The whole army of the sons of Danaus raised a shout. While this was going on, the one already wounded, seeing an exposed shoulder, thrust his spear at Polynices and gave pleasure to the citizens of Cadmus, but his spear point broke off. Since he now had no spear, he retreated step by step, then taking up a gleaming stone he hurled it and broke Polynices' spear in the middle. The battle was now equal since both their hands had been deprived of spears.

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1376 (= [756]) om. codex unus, del. Valckenaer

1377 ἀνήφθη Diggle: ἀφείθη C

1386 κερχνώμασιw Valckenaer

1388-9 del. Wecklein

## EURIPIDES

- ἐνθένδε κώπας ἀρπάσαντε φασγάνων  
 1405 ἔς ταῦτόν ἤκον, συμβαλόντε δ' ἀσπίδας  
 πολλὸν ταραγμὸν ἀμφιβάντ' εἶχον μάχης.  
 καί πως νοήσας Ἐτεοκλῆς τὸ Θεσσαλὸν  
 ἐσήγαγεν σόφισμ' ὀμιλία χθονός·  
 ἐξαλλαγεῖς γὰρ τοῦ παρεστῶτος πόνου,  
 1410 λαιὸν μὲν ἔς τοῦπισθεν ἀναφέρει πόδα,  
 πρόσω τὰ κοῖλα γαστρὸς εὐλαβούμενος,  
 προβάς δὲ κῶλον δεξιὸν δι' ὀμφαλοῦ  
 καθήκεν ἔγχος σφονδύλοις τ' ἐνήρμοσεν.  
 ὁμοῦ δὲ κάμψας πλευρὰ καὶ νηδὺν τάλας  
 1415 σὺν αἱματηραῖς σταγόσι Πολυνείκης πίτνει.  
 ὁ δ', ὡς κρατῶν δῆ καὶ νενικηκῶς μάχῃ,  
 ξίφος δικῶν ἔς γαῖαν ἐσκύλευέ νιν,  
 τὸν νοῦν πρὸς αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔχων, ἐκείσε δέ.  
 ὃ καὶ νιν ἔσφηλ' ἔτι γὰρ ἐμπνέων βραχύ,  
 1420 σῶζων σίδηρον ἐν λυγρῷ πεσήματι,  
 μόλις μὲν, ἐξέτεινε δ' εἰς ἦπαρ ξίφος  
 Ἐτεοκλέους ὁ πρόσθε Πολυνείκης πεσῶν.  
 γαῖαν δ' ὀδαξ ἐλόντες ἀλλήλοιν πέλας  
 πίπτουσιν ἀμφω καὶ διώρισαν κράτος.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 1425 φεῦ φεῦ, κακῶν σῶν σ', Οἰδίπους, ὅσον στένω·  
 τὰς σὰς δ' ἀρὰς ἔοικεν ἐκπλήσσαι θεός.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Β

ἄκουε δὴ νιν καὶ τὰ πρὸς τούτοις κακά.  
 ἐπεὶ τέκνω πεσόντ' ἐλειπέτην βίον,



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

Now they grasped their sword hilts and closed on each other, and the dashing together of their shields as they stood against each other caused a great battle din. And somehow Eteocles thought of the Thessalian stratagem (he had visited that country) and applied it: he let up on pressing his enemy, drew his left foot back while carefully guarding his abdomen in front, advanced his right leg, and thrust his sword through the navel to the backbone. With flanks and belly doubled over the luckless Polynices falls, gushing blood. His brother, thinking he was now master, victorious in the fight, threw his sword on the ground and proceeded to strip off Polynices' armor, paying attention to the task and not to himself. This was his undoing. Polynices still had a little breath in him and in his death fall had kept his sword. And thus Polynices, who had fallen first, managed with great effort to run his sword through Eteocles' liver. They lie fallen near each other, mouthfuls of earth between their teeth: thus they divided the sovereignty.

### CHORUS LEADER

Ah, Oedipus, how I grieve for your misfortunes: it seems that some god has fulfilled your curse.

### SECOND MESSENGER

Hear then the woes that followed on these. At the point when the two sons had fallen and were dying, their luckless

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<sup>1422</sup> suspectum habuit Paley, del. Paulson

<sup>1424</sup> *καὶ* t, conl. Denniston: *κού* C: cf. 68

<sup>1425</sup> *σῶν σ', Οἰδίπους, ὅσον* Blaydes: *σῶν, Οἰδίπου, σ' ὅσον*

## EURIPIDES

- ἐν τῷδε μήτηρ ἢ τάλαινα †προσπίτνει†  
 1430 [σὺν παρθένῳ τε καὶ προθυμίᾳ ποδός].  
 τετρωμένους δ' ἰδοῦσα καιρίουσ φφαγάσ  
 ᾧμωξεν· ὦ τέκν', ὑστέρα βοηδρόμος  
 πάρειμι. προσπίτνουσα δ' ἐν μέρει τέκνα  
 1435 ἔκλαι' ἐθρήνει, τὸν πολὺν μαστῶν πόνον  
 στένουσ', ἀδελφή θ' ἢ παρασπίζουσ' ὁμοῦ·  
 ὦ γηροβοσκῶ μητρός—ὦ γάμους ἐμοὺς  
 προδόντ' ἀδελφῶ φιλάτω. στέρνων δ' ἄπο  
 φύσημ' ἀνεὶς †δύσκλητον† Ἐτεοκλῆς ἀναξ  
 ἦκουσε μητρός, κάπιθεὶς ὑγράν χέρα  
 1440 φωνὴν μὲν οὐκ ἀφήκεν, ὀμμάτων δ' ἄπο  
 προσεῖπε δακρύοις, ὥστε σημήναι φίλα.  
 ὁ δ' ἦν ἔτ' ἔμπνους, πρὸς κασιγνήτην δ' ἰδὼν  
 γραϊάν τε μητέρ' εἶπε Πολυνεΐκης τάδε·  
 Ἄπωλόμεσθα, μητερ· οἰκτίρω δέ σε  
 1445 καὶ τήνδ' ἀδελφὴν καὶ κασίγνητον νεκρόν.  
 φίλος γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ἐγένετ', ἀλλ' ὅμως φίλος.  
 θάψον δέ μ', ᾧ τεκοῦσα, καὶ σύ, σύγγονε,  
 ἐν γῆ πατρώα, καὶ πόλιν θυμουμένην  
 παρηγορεῖτον, ὡς τοσόνδε γούν τύχω  
 1450 χθονὸς πατρώας, κεί δόμους ἀπώλεσα.  
 ξυνάρμοσον δὲ βλέφαρά μου τῇ σῆ χειρί,  
 μήτηρ—τίθησι δ' αὐτὸς ὀμμάτων ἐπι—  
 καὶ χαίρετ'· ἦδη γάρ με περιβάλλει σκότος.  
 ἄμφω δ' ἄμ' ἐξέπνευσαν ἄθλιον βίον.  
 1455 μήτηρ δ', ὅπως ἐσεῖδε τήνδε συμφοράν,  
 ὑπερπαθήσασ' ἤρπασ' ἐκ νεκρῶν ξίφος

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

mother came suddenly on the scene [with maiden daughter and eagerness of foot]. When she saw that they were mortally wounded, she cried out in pain, "O children, my help has come too late!" Falling on her sons in turn she wept and lamented, sighing for the lost effort of suckling them, and so did their sister, who accompanied her: "Sons, support of your mother's old age!" and "Dear brothers, who have not seen to my marriage." Lord Eteocles, his breath coming labored from his chest, heard his mother. He laid a damp hand upon her, and though he said no word, yet with the tears in his eyes he spoke, uttering his love. His brother Polynices still had breath, and looking at his sister and aged mother he said, "My life is over, mother. But it is you I pity and my sister here and my dead brother. My brother became my foe, but he was brother still. Bury me, my mother and sister, in my native soil, assuaging the city's anger, so that I may get at least this much of my native land even if I have lost my house. Close my eyes with your hand, mother"—here he laid her hand himself upon his eyes—"and farewell! Already darkness is covering me."

Both thus together breathed out the last of their unblest lives. And seeing this the mother, in a fit of passion, snatched up a sword from the corpses and did a dreadful

1429 ἐπέρχεται Wecklein

1430 del. Markland

1434 μαστῶν] μάτην Nauck

## EURIPIDES

- κάπραξε δεινά· διὰ μέσου γὰρ αὐχένος  
 ὠθεῖ σίδηρον, ἐν δὲ τοῖσι φιλτάτοις  
 θανοῦσα κείται περιβαλοῦσ' ἀμφοῖν χέρας.
- 1460 ἀνῆξε δ' ὀρθὸς λαὸς εἰς ἔριν λόγων,  
 ἡμεῖς μὲν ὡς νικῶντα δεσπότην ἐμόν,  
 οἱ δ' ὡς ἐκείνον ἦν δ' ἔρις στρατηλάταις.  
 [οἱ μὲν πατάξαι πρόσθε Πολυνείκη δορί,  
 οἱ δ' ὡς θανόντων οὐδαμοῦ νίκη πέλοι.]
- 1465 κὰν τῷδ' ὑπέξῃλθ' Ἀντιγόνη στρατοῦ δίχα.]  
 οἱ δ' εἰς ὅπλ' ἦσσαν· εὖ δέ πως προμηθία  
 καθῆστο Κάδμου λαὸς ἀσπίδων ἔπι,  
 κάφθημεν οὐπω τεύχεσιν πεφαργμένον  
 Ἀργείων ἐσπεσόντες ἐξαίφνης στρατόν.
- 1470 κούδεις ὑπέστη, πεδία δ' ἐξεπίπλασαν  
 φεύγοντες, ἔρρει δ' αἷμα μυρίον νεκρῶν  
 λόγχαις πιτνόντων. ὡς δ' ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ,  
 οἱ μὲν Διὸς τροπαῖον ἴστασαν βρέτας,  
 οἱ δ' ἀσπίδας συλῶντες Ἀργείων νεκρῶν
- 1475 σκυλεύματ' εἶσω τειχέων ἐπέμπομεν.  
 ἄλλοι δὲ τοὺς θανόντας Ἀντιγόνης μετὰ  
 νεκροὺς φέρουσιν ἐνθάδ' οἰκτίσαι φίλοις.  
 πόλει δ' ἀγῶνες οἱ μὲν εὐτυχέστατοι  
 τῆδ' ἐξέβησαν, οἱ δὲ δυστυχέστατοι.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 1480 οὐκ εἰς ἀκοὰς ἔτι δυστυχία  
 δώματος ἦκει· πάρα γὰρ λεύσσειν

1463-4 del. Harberton

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

deed. She thrust the iron blade through the middle of her throat and now lies dead among her beloved sons, embracing them both in her arms.

The soldiery rose to their feet and began to quarrel, with our side claiming victory for my master, and the other side for Polynices: the leaders were wrangling. [Some said that Polynices struck first with his spear, but others that dead men are in no wise victorious. At this point Antigone withdrew quietly from the army.] The men rushed for their weapons. By some happy providence the Cadmean host had been sitting next to their shields, and we fell on the Argive army quickly when they were still unprotected. None of them stood his ground: they covered the plain in their flight, and blood flowed copiously from those slain with the spear. When we were victorious, some of us proceeded to raise the trophy image of Zeus, while others stripped off the shields from the Argive dead and took them inside the walls as prizes of war. Others together with Antigone are carrying the dead here for their kin to mourn.

For this city some of its struggles have ended in good fortune, others in bad.

*Exit SECOND MESSENGER by Eisodos A. Enter by Eisodos B ANTIGONE with a retinue of soldiers bearing the corpses of Eteocles, Polynices, and Jocasta.*

### CHORUS LEADER

Now no longer do we hear of the house's misfortune: our

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1465 del. Valckenaer

1478-9 τῆ μὲν . . . / οἷδ' . . . τῆ δὲ Kock cl. Σ

## EURIPIDES

πτώματα νεκρῶν τρισσῶν ἤδη  
τάδε πρὸς μελάθροισ κοινῶ θανάτῳ  
σκοτίαν αἰῶνα λαχόντων.

## ANTIGONE

- 1485 οὐ προκαλυπτομένα  
βοτρυνχώδεος ἀβρὰ παρῆδος  
οὐδ' ὑπὸ παρθενίας τὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάρους  
φοίνικ', ἐρύθημα προσώπου,  
αἰδομένα φέρομαι βάκχα νεκύων,  
1490 κράδεμνα δικούσα κόμας ἀπ' ἐμᾶς,  
στολίδος κροκόεσσαν ἀνείσα τρυφάν,  
ἀγεμόνευμα νεκροῖσι πολύστονον. αἰαί, ἰώ μοι.  
ὦ Πολύνεικες, ἔφυς ἄρ' ἐπώνυμος ὦμοι, Θῆβαι·  
1495 σὰ δ' ἔρις—οὐκ ἔρις, ἀλλὰ φόνῳ φόνος—  
Οἰδιπόδα δόμον  
ᾧλεσε κρανθείσ' αἵματι δεινῶ,  
αἵματι λυγρῶ.  
†τίνα προσφδὸν†  
ἢ τίνα μουσοπόλον στοναχὰν ἐπὶ  
1500 δάκρυσι δάκρυσιν, ᾧ δόμος, ᾧ δόμος,  
ἀγκαλέσωμαι,  
τρισσὰ φέρουσα τὰδ' αἵματα σύγγονα,  
ματέρα καὶ τέκνα, χάρματ' Ἑρινύος;  
ἂ δόμον Οἰδιπόδα πρόπαρ ᾧλεσε,  
1505 τᾶς ἀγρίας ὅτε

1491 στολίδος . . . τρυφάν Porson: -ίδα . . . -ās C

1494 Θῆβαις Hermann

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

eyes can see here near the house three bodies of the slain,  
who have lost in shared death the light of life.

ANTIGONE

Not covering up  
the delicate skin of my cheek adorned with curls  
nor concealing from maiden modesty  
the crimson below my eyes, my face's blush,  
I rush forth a bacchant of the dead,  
hurling my mantilla from my tresses  
and loosening my luxuriant saffron-colored robe,  
a mournful escorter of the dead: alas, ah me!  
O Polynices, how true your name has proved:<sup>54</sup> ah ah,  
Thebes!

Your strife—no strife but bloodshed upon bloodshed—  
destroyed the house of Oedipus,  
being brought to fulfillment in murder dread,  
in murder grim.

What tuneful,  
what muse-inspired groan amidst  
weeping weeping, O house, O house,  
shall I summon to my aid  
as I bear these three slain bodies of kinsmen,  
mother and sons, to gladden the Erinys?  
She destroyed Oedipus' house long before  
when he solved the intelligible song

<sup>54</sup> See above, note on line 637.

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<sup>1498</sup> τίνα πρώτ' ᾔδαν Willink

## EURIPIDES

- δυσξυνέτου ξυνετὸν μέλος ἔγνω  
 Σφιγγὸς αἰοιδοῦ σῶμα φονεύσας.  
 ἰὼ μοί μοι  
 τίς Ἑλλάς ἢ βάρβαρος ἦ  
 1510 τῶν προπάροιθ' εὐγενετᾶν  
 ἕτερος ἔτλα κακῶν τοσῶνδ'  
 αἵματος ἀμερίου  
 τοιάδ' ἄχεα φανερά;  
 τάλαιν', ὡς ἐλελίξῃ  
 1515 τίς ἄρ' ὄρνις δρυὸς ἦ  
 ἐλάτας ἀκροκόμοις ἄμ πετάλοις  
 μονομάτορσιν ὄδνρμοί-  
 σιν ἐμοῖς <εἶς' > ἄχεσιν συνωδός;  
 αἴλινον αἰάγμασιν ἂ τούσδε προκλαίω,  
 1520 μονάδ' αἰῶνα διάξουσα τὸν αἰεὶ  
 χρόνον ἐν λειβομένοισιν δακρῦοις·  
 αἰαῖ·  
 τίτιν' ἐπὶ πρῶτον ἀπὸτ' χαίτας  
 1525 σπαραγμοῖσιν ἀπαρχὰς  
 βάλω, ματρὸς ἐμᾶς ἢ διδύμοις  
 ἀγαλάκτοις παρὰ μαστοῖς  
 ἢ πρὸς ἀδελφῶν  
 οὐλόμεν' αἰκίσματα νεκρῶν;

1516 ἄμ πετάλοις Willink: ἐμ πεταλοῖς Π: ἀμφὶ κλάδοις  
fere C

1517 μονομάτορσιν Wilamowitz: -μάτερος C

1518 <εἶς' > post Paley (<εἶσιν> ἐμοῖς) Willink

1524 αἰαῖ Willink: ε Π: om. C τίνα πρῶτ' ἐπι Willink



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

of the fierce and baffling creature  
and slew the singer Sphinx's body.

Ah me, ah me,  
what woman Greek or foreign or  
what other scion of ancient nobility  
has endured of mortal bloodshed's  
woes so many,  
such manifest pains?

Poor woman, what keening you raise!  
What bird then on oak's or  
fir tree's lofty mane of leaves  
will <come> to sing with lonely mother's plaint  
in concert with my woes?

These my dead I mourn here with woeful cries of "Sing  
sorrow,"

I who am doomed to live a life bereft  
with streaming tears for all time to come.

*She tears out some of her hair.*

Ah me!

On whom first shall I cast  
first fruits of the tearing of my hair,  
on my mother's two  
milkless breasts  
or on my brothers'  
poor ravaged bodies?

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1526 ἦ King: ἐν C

1527 ἀγαλάκτοις Headlam: γάλακτος C

## EURIPIDES

- 1530 ὄτοτοτοῖ  
 λείπε σὺς δόμους, ὄμμ' ἀλαὸν φέρων,  
 πάτερ γεραιέ, δείξον, <ὦ>  
 Οἰδιπόδα, σὸν αἰῶνα μέλεον, ὅς ἔτι  
 δώμασιν ἀέριον ὄμμασι σκότον
- 1535 σοῖσι βαλὼν ἔλκεις μακρόπονον ζόαν.  
 κλύεις, ὦ κατ' αὐλὰν  
 ἀλαίνων γεραιὸν  
 πόδ' ἢ δεμνίοις δύ-  
 στανος ἰαύων;

## ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- τί μ', ὦ παρθένε, βακτρεύμασι τυφλοῦ
- 1540 ποδὸς ἐξάγαγες ἐς φῶς  
 λεχήρη σκοτίων ἐκ θαλάμων οἰκ-  
 τροτάτοισιν δακρῦοισιν,  
 πολὺν αἰθερώδες εἶδωλον ἢ  
 νέκυν ἔνερθεν ἢ
- 1545 πτανὸν ὄνειρον;

## ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δυστυχὲς ἀγγελίας ἔπος εἶση,  
 πάτερ, οὐκέτι σοι τέκνα λεύσσει  
 φάος οὐδ' ἄλοχος, παραβάκτροις

1531 ὄμμ' ἀλαὸν Willink: ἀ. ὄμμα C

1532 <ὦ> Willink

1534 ὄμμασι σκότον Willink: σ- ὄ- C

1535 μακρόπονον Nauck: μακρόπνονν fere C

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

*She throws it on the corpses*

Alas!

Leave your house behind, blind though your eyes be,  
<O> aged father Oedipus, and show  
your miserable fate, you that still  
within the house, having cast upon your eyes  
a murky darkness, drag out your life of long toil!  
Do you hear, you that in the courtyard  
wander with aged step  
or in your wretchedness  
lie abed?

*Enter OEDIPUS from the skene, supported by a staff.*

OEDIPUS

Why, daughter, have you brought me out  
into the light, my blind footsteps guided by a stick,  
bedridden though I am, from my dark chamber  
by your pitiable cries,  
a gray and insubstantial phantom,  
a dead man from the nether world,  
or a winged dream?

ANTIGONE

Luckless is the message you will hear,  
father: your sons no longer look on the light,  
nor your wife, who toiled in caring for you

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1537 πόδ' ἢ Schoene: πόδα C

1543 αἰθερώδες Willink: αἰθέρος ἀφανές C

1545 ὄνειρον <ὄς> Willink

1546 εἶση Battier: οἶση C

EURIPIDES

1550 ἂ πόδα σὸν τυφλόπουν θεραπεύμασιν αἰὲν ἐμόχθει,  
 <ᾦ> πάτερ, ὦμοι.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ὦμοι ἐγὼ παθέων· πάρα γὰρ στοναχαῖς τάδ' ἀντεῖν.  
 τρισσαὶ ψυχαὶ ποῖα μοῖρα,  
 πῶς ἔλιπον φάος; ᾦ τέκνον, αὔδα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1555 οὐκ ἐπ' ὀνείδεσιν οὐδ' ἐπιχάρμασιν,  
 ἀλλ' ὀδύνασι λέγω· σὸς ἀλάστωρ  
 ξίφεσιν βρίθων  
 καὶ πυρὶ καὶ σχετλῖασι μάχαις ἐπὶ παῖδας ἔβα  
 σούς,  
 ᾦ πάτερ, ὦμοι.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

1560 αἰαῖ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί τόδε καταστένεις;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

τέκνα.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας·  
 εἰ δὲ τέθριππά γ' ἔθ' ἄρματα λεύσσων  
 ἀελίου τάδε σώματα νεκρῶν  
 ὄμματος αὐγαῖς σαῖς ἐπενώμας;

1550 <ᾦ> Hermann, Seidler

1551 στοναχαῖς Geel: στενάχειν C

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

and like a staff tended your blind footsteps,  
alas, dear father!

OEDIPUS

O misery! That is what I must groan and shout aloud.  
What fate made three souls  
leave the light? Tell me, my child!

ANTIGONE

Not to reproach you nor to rejoice at your misfortune  
but in grief I tell you: the avenging spirit you sent forth,  
with its cargo of swords  
and fire and cruel battle, went against your sons,  
alas, dear father!

OEDIPUS

Ah me!

ANTIGONE

What is this sigh you make?

OEDIPUS

My sons!

ANTIGONE

You are in pain!  
But how if still seeing the sun's chariot  
you had cast your eyes' gaze  
on these corpses?

---

1561 τέρν'· Av. <οἶδα> δι' Jackson

1562 δὲ Wilamowitz: τὰ C ἔθ' Seidler, Hermann: ἐς C

## EURIPIDES

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- 1565 τῶν μὲν ἐμῶν τεκέων φανερόν κακόν·  
 ἅ δὲ τάλαιν' ἄλοχος τίνι μοι, τέκνον, ὤλετο μοίρα;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- δάκρυα γοερά  
 φανερά πᾶσι τιθεμένα,  
 τέκεσι μαστὸν ἔφερον ἔφερον  
 ἰκέτις ἰκέτιν ὀρομένα.
- 1570 ἦῤυρε δ' ἐν Ἡλέκτραισι πύλαις τέκνα  
 λωτοτρόφον κατὰ λείμακα λόγχαις  
 κοινὸν ἐνυάλιον †μάτηρ† ὥστε λέοντας ἐναύλους  
 μαρναμένους, ἐπὶ τραύμασι δ' αἵματος
- 1575 ἦδη ψυχρὰν λειβὰν φονίαν,  
 ἂν ἔλαχ' Ἄιδας, ὥπασε δ' Ἄρης·  
 χαλκόκροτον δὲ λαβοῦσα νεκρῶν πάρα φάσγανον  
 εἶσω  
 σαρκὸς ἔβαψεν, ἄχει δὲ τέκνων ἔπεσ' ἀμφὶ  
 νεκροῖσιν·  
 πάντα δ' ἐν ἅματι τῷδε συνάγαγεν,
- 1580 ὦ πάτερ, ἀμετέροισιν ἄχη μελάθροισιν  
 θεὸς τάδ' ὅς τελευτᾷ.

[ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλῶν κακῶν κατήρξεν Οἰδίπου δόμοις  
 τόδ' ἡμάρ· εἴη δ' εὐτυχέστερος βίος.

1570-6 del. Diggle, def. Cropp, *CQ* 47 (1997), 570-4

1573 ἐνυαλίον μέρος Willink

1574 τραύμασι δ' Musgrave: τραύμασι τ' α: τραύμασιν rell.

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### OEDIPUS

My sons' woe is clear.

But my poor wife—child, what fate destroyed her?

### ANTIGONE

Making her clamorous tears  
manifest to all,

she brought, she brought in a rush to her sons  
as suppliant her suppliant breast.

She found them at the Electran gate  
in a clovery meadow with lances  
in common battle fighting like lions in a den,  
found upon their wounds the cold  
gore's libation already poured out,  
libation of Ares given to Hades.

Taking the bronze-beaten sword from the dead  
she plunged it into her body and in grief sank down over  
her sons' corpses.

All these woes were gathered in one day  
upon our house, father,  
by the god who has fulfilled these things.<sup>55</sup>

### [CHORUS LEADER

This day has been the beginning of many woes for the  
house of Oedipus. May our life be more fortunate!

<sup>55</sup> It is likely that from here to the end the play has been reworked for some later production, new material displacing old. I have bracketed the passage, though some of the lines in the new scene might have been salvaged from the old.

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1581 *τάδ' ὅς* Diggle: *ὅς τάδε* fere C

1582-1766 ab Euripide abiudicat Leidloff (1737-66 om. II)

## EURIPIDES

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

- οἴκτων μὲν ἤδη λήγεθ', ὡς ὦρα τάφου  
 1585 μνήμην τίθεσθαι· τῶνδε δ', Οἰδίπου, λόγων  
 ἄκουσον· ἀρχὰς τῆσδε γῆς ἔδωκέ μοι  
 Ἐτεοκλέης παῖς σός, γάμων φερνὰς διδοὺς  
 Αἴμονι κόρης τε λέκτρον Ἀντιγόνης σέθεν.  
 οὐκουν σ' ἑάσω τῆνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν ἔτι.
- 1590 σαφῶς γὰρ εἶπε Τειρεσίας οὐ μὴ ποτε  
 σοῦ τῆνδε γῆν οἰκοῦντος εὖ πράξειν πόλιν.  
 ἀλλ' ἐκκομίζου. καὶ τάδ' οὐχ ὕβρει λέγω  
 οὐδ' ἐχθρὸς ὢν σοι, διὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀλάστορας  
 τοὺς σοὺς δεδοικῶς μὴ τι γῆ πάθη κακόν.

## ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- 1595 ὦ μοῖρ', ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὡς μ' ἔφυσας ἄθλιον  
 καὶ τλήμον', εἴ τις ἄλλος ἀνθρώπων ἔφν  
 ὄν καὶ πρὶν ἐς φῶς μητρὸς ἐκ γονῆς μολεῖν  
 ἄγονον Ἀπόλλων Λαίῳ μ' ἐθέσπισεν  
 φονέα γενέσθαι πατρός· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.
- 1600 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγενόμην, αὖθις ὁ σπέρας πατῆρ  
 κτείνει με νομίσας πολέμιον πεφυκέναι  
 χρῆν γὰρ θανεῖν νιν ἐξ ἐμοῦ· πέμπει δέ με  
 μαστὸν ποθοῦντα θηρσὶν ἄθλιον βοράν·  
 οὐ σφζόμεσθα· Ταρτάρου γὰρ ὤφελεν
- 1605 ἐλθεῖν Κιθαιρῶν εἰς ἄβυσσα χάσματα,  
 ὅς μ' οὐ διώλεσ', ἀλλὰ δουλεῦσαί ἴτέ μοι†  
 δαίμων ἔδωκε Πόλυβον ἀμφὶ δεσπότην.

1600 αὖθις] αὐτὸς Nauck, ἀντίχ' Geel, εὐθὺς Seyffert



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

### CREON<sup>56</sup>

Stop lamenting now! It's time to speak of burial. Hear these words, Oedipus: your son Eteocles has given me the right to rule this land when he gave Haemon the marriage dowry and union with your daughter Antigone. Accordingly I will no longer permit you to dwell in this land: Teiresias said plainly that the city would never prosper while you dwelt here. So take yourself away. I do not say this from highhandedness or as your enemy but to prevent harm to the land from the avenging spirits besetting you.

### OEDIPUS

O fate, how miserable you have made me from the start, how wretched if any man ever was! Even before I came forth into the light from my mother's womb and was still unborn Apollo prophesied to Laius that I would be my father's murderer: O the misery! And when I was born, the father who begot me tried to kill me, regarding me as his enemy (for he was fated to be killed at my hands), and he sent me, still reaching out for the breast, to be in my misery food for wild beasts! There I was rescued. O how I wish Cithaeron had gone down into the deep chasms of Tartarus! It failed to end my life, and instead fate made me a slave in the train of my master Polybus.<sup>57</sup> Luckless man

<sup>56</sup> Creon, in the revised production, is still on stage, having entered at line 1307.

<sup>57</sup> The text here is uncertain.

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<sup>1606-7</sup> δουλεύσας γ' ἐμοὶ / αἰῶν' Stahl      post ἀλλὰ lac.  
indic. Murray (oportebat post δουλεύσαι)

## EURIPIDES

- κτανῶν δ' ἔμαντοῦ πατέρ' ὁ δυσδαίμων ἐγὼ  
 ἐς μητρὸς ἦλθον τῆς τάλαιπώρου λέχος  
 1610 παιδίας τ' ἀδελφούς ἔτεκον, οὓς ἀπώλεσα,  
 ἀρὰς παραλαβὼν Λαΐου καὶ παισι δούς.  
 οὐ γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἀσύνητος πέφυκ' ἐγὼ  
 ὥστ' εἰς ἔμ' ὄμματ' ἔς τ' ἐμῶν παίδων βίον  
 ἄνευ θεῶν του ταῦτ' ἐμηχανησάμην.
- 1615 εἶέν· τί δράσω δῆθ' ὁ δυσδαίμων ἐγώ;  
 τίς ἠγεμὼν μοι ποδὸς ὀμαρτήσῃ τυφλοῦ;  
 ἦδ' ἠ θανούσα; ζῶσά γ' ἂν σάφ' οἶδ' ὅτι.  
 ἀλλ' εὐτεκνος ξυνωρίς; ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστι μοι.  
 ἀλλ' ἔτι νεάζων αὐτὸς εὐροίμ' ἂν βίον;  
 1620 πόθεν; τί μ' ἄρδην ὦδ' ἀποκτείνεις, Κρέον;  
 ἀποκτενεῖς γάρ, εἴ με γῆς ἔξω βαλεῖς.  
 οὐ μὴν ἐλίξας γ' ἀμφὶ σὸν χεῖρας γόνυ  
 κακὸς φανοῦμαι· τὸ γὰρ ἐμόν ποτ' εὐγενὲς  
 οὐκ ἂν προδοίην, οὐδέ περ πράσσω κακῶς.

## ΚΡΕΩΝ

- 1625 σοί τ' εὖ λέλεκται γόνατα μὴ χρώζειν ἐμά,  
 ἐγὼ δὲ ναίειν σ' οὐκ ἐάσαιμ' ἂν χθόνα.  
 νεκρῶν δὲ τῶνδε τὸν μὲν ἐς δόμους χρεῶν  
 ἦδη κομίζεις, τόνδε δ', ὃς πέρσων πόλιν  
 πατρίδα σὺν ἄλλοις ἦλθε, Πολυνείκους νέκυν
- 1630 ἐκβάλετ' ἄθαπτον τῆσδ' ὄρων ἔξω χθονός.  
 κηρύσσεται δὲ πᾶσι Καδμείοις τάδε·  
 ὃς ἂν νεκρὸν τόνδ' ἢ καταστέφω ἀλῶ  
 ἢ γῆ καλύπτω θάνατου ἀνταλλάσσεται

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

that I am, having killed my own father I came to my poor mother's bed and begot sons who were brothers. These I have now destroyed, putting on my children the curses I received from my father. For of course I am not so lacking in sense that I brought this ruin on my own eyes and the lives of my sons without the prompting of some god.

Well, then, what am I to do, wretch that I am? Who will come and guide my blind footsteps? The dead woman here? I am sure she would have were she alive. My two lovely sons then? They are mine no longer. Am I still vigorous enough to find my own livelihood? Where? Why are you destroying me so utterly, Creon? It will be my death if you banish me from the country. Yet I will not entwine my arms about your knees and show myself to be base. I shall never betray the noble blood that once was mine, even though I fare so ill.

### CREON

Your not grasping my knees—that was well said. I shall never permit you to live in this land.

As for these dead men, we must take one of them into the palace, but this one, the corpse of Polynices, who came with allies to sack his native city—cast him unburied beyond the country's boundaries. This proclamation will be made to all the citizens of Cadmus: whoever is caught garlanding this corpse or covering it with earth will receive

EURIPIDES

1635 *ἔαν δ' ἄκλαυτον, ἄταφον, οἰωνοῖς βοράν.  
σὺ δ' ἐκλιπούσα τριπτύχους θρήνους νεκρῶν  
κόμιζε σαυτήν, Ἀντιγόνη, δόμων ἔσω  
καὶ παρθενεῖον τὴν ἰοῦσαν ἡμέραν  
μένουσ', ἐν ἧ σε λέκτρον Αἴμονος μένει.*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1640 *ὦ πάτερ, ἐν οἴοις κείμεθ' ἄθλιοι κακοῖς.  
ὡς σὲ στενάζω τῶν τεθνηκότων πλέον·  
οὐ γὰρ τὸ μὲν σοι βαρὺ κακῶν, τὸ δ' οὐ βαρὺ,  
ἄλλ' εἰς ἅπαντα δυστυχῆς ἔφυς, πάτερ.  
ἀτὰρ σ' ἐρωτῶ τὸν νεωστὶ κοίρανον·  
τί τόνδ' ὑβρίζεις πατέρ' ἀποστέλλων χθονός;  
1645 τί θεσμοποιεῖς ἐπὶ τάλαιπύρῳ νεκρῶ;*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

*Ἐτεοκλέους βουλευματ', οὐχ ἡμῶν, τάδε.*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

*ἄφρονά γε, καὶ σὺ μῶρος ὃς ἐπίθου τάδε.*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

*πῶς; τάντεταλμέν' οὐ δίκαιον ἐκπονεῖν;*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

*οὐκ, ἦν πονηρά γ' ἧ κακῶς τ' εἰρημένα.*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1650 *τί δ'; οὐ δικάίως ὄδε κυσὶν δοθήσεται;*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

*οὐκ ἔννομον γὰρ τὴν δίκην πρᾶσσεσθέ νιν.*

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

death as his reward: leave him unwept, unburied, as food for birds.

You, Antigone, leave off lamenting these three corpses and take yourself into the palace. Live as an unmarried girl, waiting for the day that is coming, the day of your marriage to Haemon.

ANTIGONE

Father, in what miseries we are sunk! I grieve more for you than for the dead! For it is not that one of your misfortunes is heavy while another is not: no, you are miserable in everything, father.

But I ask you, the new ruler: why do you commit outrage against my father in banishing him from the land? Why legislate for a miserable corpse?

CREON

This was Eteocles' decision, not my own.

ANTIGONE

And a foolish decision it was, and you are a fool for following it.

CREON

What? Is it not right to carry out orders?

ANTIGONE

Not if they are bad and badly given.

CREON

Is it not justice to give this man to the dogs?

ANTIGONE

No: the penalty you exact from him is not lawful.

EURIPIDES

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἴπερ γε πόλεως ἐχθρὸς ἦν οὐκ ἐχθρὸς ὦν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐκουν ἔδωκε τῇ τύχῃ τὸν δαίμονα†;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

καὶ τῷ τάφῳ νυν τὴν δίκην παρασχέτω.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1655 τί πλημμελήσας, τὸ μέρος εἰ μετῆλθε γῆς;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἄταφος ὄδ' ἀνὴρ, ὡς μάθης, γενήσεται.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἐγὼ σφε θάψω, κὰν ἀπεννέπη πόλις.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σαντὴν ἄρ' ἐγγὺς τῷδε συνθάψεις νεκρῷ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἀλλ' εὐκλεές τοι δύο φίλῳ κείσθαι πέλας.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1660 λάζυσθε τήνδε κὰς δόμους κομίζετε.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ τοῦδ' οὐ μεθήσομαι νεκροῦ.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔκριν' ὁ δαίμων, παρθέν', οὐχ ἂ σοὶ δοκεῖ.

1653 τὴν δίκην τῷ δαίμονι Purgold

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CREON

Yes it is: though no enemy, he became his city's enemy.

ANTIGONE

Has he not paid the penalty to the god?<sup>58</sup>

CREON

So let him pay the penalty in the manner of his burial as well.

ANTIGONE

What was his fault if he came to get his share of the land?

CREON

To tell you plainly, this man shall not be buried!

ANTIGONE

I shall bury him, though the city forbid it.

CREON

You will dig your own grave, then, next to his.

ANTIGONE

Well, it is a glorious thing for two relatives to lie close together.

CREON

*(to his retinue)* Seize her and bring her into the house!

ANTIGONE

*(falling to her knees and holding Polynices)* No: I shall not let go of this corpse.

CREON

Fate has decided this matter, maiden, differently from you.

<sup>58</sup> I translate Purgold's conjecture without any confidence that it is right.

EURIPIDES

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

*κακείνο κέκριται, μὴ ἔφυβρίζεσθαι νεκρούς.*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

*ὡς οὔτις ἀμφὶ τῷδ' ὑγρὰν θήσει κόνιν.*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1665 *ναί, πρὸς σε τῆσδε μητρὸς Ἰοκάστης, Κρέον.*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

*μάταια μοχθεῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἂν τύχοις τάδε.*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

*σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ νεκρῷ λουτρὰ περιβαλεῖν μ' ἔα.*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

*ἐν τούτ' ἂν εἶη τῶν ἀπορρήτων πόλει.*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

*ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ τραύματ' ἄγρια τελαμῶνας βαλεῖν.*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1670 *οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως σὺ τόνδε τιμήσεις νέκυν.*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

*ὦ φίλτατ', ἀλλὰ στόμα γε σὸν προσπτύξομαι.*

ΚΡΕΩΝ

*οὐ μὴ ἐς γάμους σοὺς συμφορὰν κτήση γόοις;*

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

*ἦ γὰρ γαμοῦμαι ζῶσα παιδὶ σῷ ποτε;*

1672 *οὐ μὴ Kirchhoff: οὐκ C*



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

ANTIGONE

This too has been decided: no outrage for the dead.

CREON

No one shall put moist earth about this man.

ANTIGONE

By my mother Jocasta here, yes they will, Creon.

CREON

You toil to no purpose: you will never win consent for this.

ANTIGONE

Well, at least let me wash the body.

CREON

That would be one of the things the citizens may not do.

ANTIGONE

Well, at least let me bandage these cruel wounds.

CREON

Never shall you honor this corpse!

ANTIGONE

Dear brother, I will at least embrace and kiss you. (*She kisses him.*)

CREON

No: you court disaster for your marriage by your lamentation.

ANTIGONE

What? Shall I live to marry your son?

EURIPIDES

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πολλή σ' ἀνάγκη· ποῖ γὰρ ἐκφεύξῃ λέχος;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1675 νὺξ ἄρ' ἐκείνη Δαναίδων μ' ἔξει μίαν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

εἶδες τὸ τόλμημ' οἶον ἐξωνείδισεν;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἴστω σίδηρος ὄρκιόν τέ μοι ξίφος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' ἐκπροθυμῇ τῶνδ' ἀπηλλάχθαι γάμων;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

συμφεύξομαι τῷδ' ἀθλιωτάτῳ πατρί.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

1680 γενναιότης σοι, μωρία δ' ἔνεστί τις.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ ξυνθανοῦμαί γ', ὡς μάθης περαιτέρω.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἴθ', οὐ φονεύσεις παῖδ' ἐμόν, λίπε χθόνα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, αἰνῶ μὲν σε τῆς προθυμίας.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἄλλ' εἰ γαμοίμην, σὺ δὲ μόνος φεύγεις, πάτερ;

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<sup>59</sup> The daughters of Danaus on their wedding night murdered their cousins, the sons of Aegyptus, whom they were forced to marry.

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CREON

You must: where will you go to escape marriage?

ANTIGONE

My marriage night will make me one of the Danaids.<sup>59</sup>

CREON

Do you see the effrontery of her insults?

ANTIGONE

Iron be my witness and the sword of oath!

CREON

Why do you take care to be quit of this marriage?

ANTIGONE

I will join this poor father of mine in exile.

CREON

That is noble of you but a bit foolish.

ANTIGONE

Yes, and what's more I will die with him.

CREON

Go, you will not kill my son: leave the land.

*(?) Exit CREON with retinue into the skene. Antigone rises to her feet.*

OEDIPUS

Daughter, my thanks, to be sure, for your good will.

ANTIGONE

Well, what would happen if I married and you went into exile alone?

EURIPIDES

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

1685 μέν' εὐτυχοῦσα· τᾶμ' ἐγὼ στέρξω κακά.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

καὶ τίς σε τυφλὸν ὄντα θεραπεύσει, πάτερ;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

πεσὼν ὅπου μοι μοῖρα κείσομαι πέδῳ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὁ δ' Οἰδίπους ποῦ καὶ τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματα;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ὄλωλ'· ἐν ἡμάρ μ' ὄλβισ', ἐν δ' ἀπώλεσεν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1690 οὔκουν μετασχεῖν κάμῃ δέϊ τῶν σῶν κακῶν;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

αἰσχρὰ φυγὴ θυγατρὶ σὺν τυφλῷ πατρί.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὔ, σωφρονούσῃ γ', ἀλλὰ γενναία, πάτερ.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

προσάγαγέ νῦν με, μητρὸς ὡς ψαύσω σέθεν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ἰδοῦ, γεραιᾶς φιλάτης ψαῦσον χερί.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

1695 ὦ μήτερ, ὦ ξυνάορ' ἀθλιωτάτη.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οἰκτρὰ πρόκειται, πάντ' ἔχουσ' ὁμοῦ κακά.

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

OEDIPUS

Stay and be happy: I will endure my own misfortunes.

ANTIGONE

But who will tend you in your blindness, father?

OEDIPUS

I shall lie on the ground there where I am fated to fall.

ANTIGONE

Where then is Oedipus and his famous riddles?

OEDIPUS

Perished: one day made me blessed, another destroyed me.

ANTIGONE

Shall I not share then in your troubles?

OEDIPUS

For a daughter to be exiled with her blind father is disgraceful.

ANTIGONE

Not disgraceful but noble—provided she is sensible.

OEDIPUS

Take me to your mother, then, so that I may touch her.

ANTIGONE

*(leading Oedipus to her)* There! Put your hand to the dear old woman.

OEDIPUS

O mother, O wife most wretched!

ANTIGONE

She lies there pitiably, enduring all woes at once.

EURIPIDES

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

Ἐτεοκλέους δὲ πτώμα Πολυνείκουσ τε ποῦ;

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τώδ' ἐκτάδην σοι κείσθον ἀλλήλοιν πέλασ.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

πρόσθεσ τυφλὴν χεῖρ' ἐπὶ πρόσωπα δυστυχῆ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

1700 ἰδού, θανόντων σῶν τέκνων ἅπτου χερί.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ὦ φίλα πεσήματ' ἄθλι' ἀθλίου πατρόσ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὦ φίλτατον δῆτ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκουσ ἐμοί.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

νῦν χρησμός, ὦ παῖ, Λοξίου περαίνεται.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ὀ ποῖοσ; ἀλλ' ἦ πρὸσ κακοῖσ ἐρεῖσ κακά;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

1705 ἐν ταῖσ Ἀθήναισ κατθανεῖν μ' ἀλώμενον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

ποῦ, τίσ σε πύργοσ Ἀτθίδοσ προσδέξεται;

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ἱερόσ Κολωνόσ, δώμαθ' ἱππίου θεοῦ.

ἀλλ' εἶα, τυφλῶ τῶδ' ὑπηρετεῖ πατρί,

ἐπεὶ προθυμῆ τῆσδε κοινούσθαι φυγῆσ.

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

OEDIPUS

And where are the bodies of Eteocles and Polynices?

ANTIGONE

*(leading him to them)* They lie here stretched out near each other.

OEDIPUS

Put my blind hands upon their unfortunate faces.

ANTIGONE

*(doing so)* There! With your hands touch your sons who have perished.

OEDIPUS

Dear fallen ones, wretched sons of a wretched father!

ANTIGONE

O Polynices, name I love best!

OEDIPUS

Now, my daughter, the prophecy of Loxias is being fulfilled.

ANTIGONE

What prophecy? Will you speak of misery on top of misery?

OEDIPUS

That I must wander and die in Athens.

ANTIGONE

Where? What fort in Attica will receive you?

OEDIPUS

Colonus the holy, the house of the god of horses. But come, serve me, your blind father, since you are eager to share in my exile.

EURIPIDES

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- 1710 ἴθ' ἐς φυγὰν τάλαιναν· ὄρεγε χέρα φίλαν,  
πάτερ γεραιέ, πομπίμαν  
ἔχων ἔμ' ὥστε ναυσίπομπον αὔραν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- ἰδού·  
πορεύομαι, τέκνον· σύ μοι  
1715 ποδαγὸς ἀθλία γενοῦ.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

γενόμεθα γενόμεθ', ἄθλιοί  
γε δῆτα Θηβαιῶν μάλιστα παρθένων.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

πόθι γεραιὸν ἴχνος τίθημι;  
βάκτρα πόθι φέρω, τέκνον.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- 1720 τᾶδε τᾶδε βᾶθί μοι,  
τᾶδε τᾶδε πόδα τίθει,  
ὥστ' ὄνειρον ἰσχύν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- ἰὼ ἰώ, δυστυχεστάτας φυγὰς  
ἀλαινεῖν τὸν γέροντά μ' ἐκ πάτρας.  
1725 ἰὼ ἰώ, δεινὰ δεῖν' ἐγὼ τλάς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

τί τλάς; τί τλάς; οὐχ ὀρᾶ Δίκα κακούς,

<sup>1716</sup> ἄθλιοί Porson: -αί C

<sup>1722</sup> ἰσχύν Π et Σ, conl. Hermann: ἰσχὺν ἔχων C



## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

ANTIGONE

Go into miserable exile! Stretch out your beloved hand,  
dear father, and take me  
as escort, like a ship-escorting breeze.

OEDIPUS

There!  
I am going, daughter: be for me  
my luckless guide.

ANTIGONE

That I have been, have been, luckless  
beyond the lot of Theban maidens!

OEDIPUS

Where shall I put my aged foot?  
Where shall I take my staff, child?

ANTIGONE

This way, this way walk,  
this way, this way plant your steps,  
strengthless as a dream.

OEDIPUS

Ah me, ah me, for me, an old man,  
to wander in miserable exile from my land!  
Ah, ah, what terrible terrible things I have suffered!

ANTIGONE

Why, why say "suffered"? Justice does not behold the  
wicked

---

<sup>1724</sup> ἀλαΐνειν Musgrave: ἐλάυνων C

EURIPIDES

οὐδ' ἀμείβεται βροτῶν ἀσυνεσίας.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- ὄδ' εἰμὶ μοῦσαν ὃς ἐπὶ καλ-  
 λίνικον οὐράνιον ἔβαν  
 1730 <μειξο>παρθένου κόρας  
 αἰνιγμ' ἀσύνητον εὐρών.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- Σφιγγὸς ἀναφέρεις ὄνειδος;  
 ἄπαγε τὰ πάρος εὐτυχήματ' αὐδῶν.  
 τάδε σ' ἐπέμενε μέλεα πάθεα  
 1735 φυγάδα πατρίδος ἄπο γενόμενον,  
 ὦ πάτερ, θανεῖν που.

ποθεινὰ δάκρυα παρὰ φίλαισι παρθένοις  
 λιπούσ' ἄπειμι πατρίδος ἀποπρὸ γαίας  
 ἀπαρθένευτ' ἀλωμένα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- 1740 φεῦ τὸ χρήσιμον φρενῶν

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- ἐς πατρός γε συμφορὰς  
 εὐκλεᾶ με θήσει.  
 τάλαιν' ἐγὼ <σῶν> συγγόνου θ' ὑβρισμάτων,  
 ὃς ἐκ δόμων νέκυς ἄθαπτος οἴχεται  
 1745 μέλεος, ὄν, εἴ με καὶ θανεῖν, πάτερ, χρεῶν,  
 σκότια γᾶ καλύψω.

1730 <μειξο>παρθένου Wilamowitz

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

and does not requite mortal folly.<sup>60</sup>

OEDIPUS

I am the man who mounted heaven-high in victory  
over the song  
of the <part->maiden creature  
and solved her baffling riddle.

ANTIGONE

Do you renew your reproach of the Sphinx?  
Speak of your former good fortunes as you depart.  
These are the miseries that await you,  
to go from your land as an exile  
and die somewhere, my father.

Leaving to my maiden friends tears of longing  
I go far from my country  
to wander in no maiden fashion.

OEDIPUS

Oh what nobility of heart!

ANTIGONE

Yes, where my father's woes are concerned  
it will give me glory.  
Alas for the violence done against <you> and against my  
brother,  
who has perished from the house as an unburied corpse  
poor man, whom I, though I must die for it,  
shall secretly hide in earth.

<sup>60</sup> These two lines are obscure.

## EURIPIDES

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- 1749 σὺ δ' ἀμφιβωμίους λιταῖς  
1747 πρὸς ἡλικας φάνηθι σάς.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- 1748 ἄλις ὀδυρμάτων ἐμῶν·  
1750 κόρον ἔχουσ' ἐμῶν κακῶν.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

ἴθ' ἀλλὰ Βρόμιος ἵνα τε ση-  
κὸς ἄβατος ὄρεσι μαινάδων.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

- Καδμείαν ᾧ νεβρίδα  
1755 στολιδωσαμένα ποτ' ἐγὼ Σεμέλας  
θίασον ἱερὸν ὄρεσιν ἀνεχόρευσα,  
χάρην ἀχάριτον ἐς θεοὺς διδοῦσα.

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

- ὦ πάτρας κλεινῆς πολῖται, λεύσσειτ'. Οἰδίπους ὄδε,  
ὃς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἔγνω καὶ μέγιστος ἦν ἀνὴρ,  
1760 ὃς μόνος Σφιγγὸς κατέσχον τῆς μαιφόνου κράτη,  
νῦν ἄτιμος αὐτὸς οἰκτρὸς ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.  
ἀλλὰ γὰρ τί ταῦτα θρηνηῶ καὶ μάτην ὀδύρομαι;  
τὰς γὰρ ἐκ θεῶν ἀνάγκας θνητὸν ὄντα δεῖ φέρειν.

1747-9 hoc ordine Diggle

1749 ἀμφιβωμίους λιταῖς Wecklein: ἀμφὶ βωμίους λιτάς C

1761 αὐτὸς οἰκτρὸς] οἰκτρὸς οἰκτρῶς Hermann

## PHOENICIAN WOMEN

OEDIPUS

With entreaties near the altar  
appear to your agemates.

ANTIGONE

Enough of lamentations:  
they have had their fill of my troubles.

OEDIPUS

Well, then, come to the place on the maenads' mountains  
where Dionysus' untrodden grove is.

ANTIGONE

I once girt myself in his honor  
with Cadmean fawnskin  
and led upon the mountains Semele's holy company:  
my service won me no thanks.

OEDIPUS

Citizens of a glorious country, see! I, Oedipus, who solved  
the famous riddle and was a man of great stature, who  
alone checked the power of the murderous Sphinx, am  
now being driven from the land all unhonored and in pite-  
ous state. But why should I lament this and weep to no  
purpose? Being mortal, I must bear the necessities sent by  
the gods.

*Exit by Eisodos B OEDIPUS and ANTIGONE (exit CREON  
into the skene unless he has exited at 1682).*

EURIPIDES

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1765 ὦ μέγα σεμνή Νίκη, τὸν ἐμὸν  
βίον κατέχοις  
καὶ μὴ λήγοις στεφανούσα.]

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

CHORUS LEADER

Victory, may you have my life in your charge and never  
cease garlanding my head!]

*Exit CHORUS by Eisodos A.*





# ORESTES

## INTRODUCTION

*Orestes*, produced in 408, just before the poet left Athens for the court of Archelaus of Macedon, has a plot that seems to be the poet's free invention. The familiar tale of Clytaemestra's murder of her husband Agamemnon and her death in turn at the hands of their son Orestes is the background. The action picks up at the point where the poet's earlier *Electra* had left off, but minus the *deus ex machina*: in our play six days have gone by since Clytaemestra's funeral, and no divine help has appeared. Thereafter an entirely novel plot is set in motion.

The situation is set out in the prologue, spoken by Electra as her brother lies asleep in a bed set before the palace. Orestes, unlike his namesake in Aeschylus, has not gone to Delphi for purification but is still in Argos, tormented by visions of the Erinyes and by horror at what he has done. The people of Argos, stirred up by Agamemnon's enemies, are outraged at his deed, and he and his sister Electra are about to be put on trial and, if found guilty, executed by stoning. They are even being prevented from leaving the country: all the ways are guarded. Their only hope is their father's brother Menelaus, who has just returned to Greece with his wife Helen after long wanderings. Electra knows that he has arrived at the port of Nauplia and is watching for his return. Helen is already in-

## ORESTES

doors, sent ahead under cover of darkness for fear that the Argives will throw stones at her.

Instead of the expected Menelaus the first person to appear is Helen, emerging from the *skene*. Utterly selfish, she asks Electra, already preoccupied with her brother, to go to Clytaemestra's grave and make an offering on her behalf. Electra declines politely and suggests sending Helen's own daughter Hermione, who is summoned from indoors and goes off. After Helen goes back into the *skene*, Electra comments on the worthlessness of her character. The universal detestation in which Helen is held in the play will have a role in making the later attempt on her life seem excusable or even laudable.

After a Chorus of Argive women enter—amusingly, since Electra keeps hushing them so that they won't waken Orestes, and they keep loudly protesting that they are making no noise—a scene ensues in which we see the loving care of the two siblings for each other. First we see Electra's solicitude for Orestes, who has gone for six days without eating or bathing. Then Orestes suffers from a brief attack of the Erinyes, whom he puts to flight by threatening to shoot them with a bow and arrows. When the attack is over he in his turn is worried about Electra, and he sends her indoors to take some rest. This is of practical importance since the following scene features Menelaus and Tyndareus in addition to Orestes, and an Athenian dramatist had only three actors at his disposal.

After a choral ode on the Erinyes, the long-awaited Menelaus arrives. His attitude is one of almost clinical detachment as he asks for details of Orestes' situation, a hopeless one without his help. Just then Tyndareus, father of Helen and Clytaemestra, arrives. Tyndareus vituperates

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Orestes, condemning him roundly for the murder of his mother. (His reasons are somewhat complex: see below.) Orestes makes a speech of self-excuse to him, and Tyn-dareus is so enraged that he promises to take an active hand in securing Orestes' condemnation and stomps off toward the center of the city, where the trial is to take place, threatening Menelaus with expulsion from Sparta (where both live) if he helps Orestes against the Argives. After his departure Orestes appeals once more to Menelaus, but the latter all but says outright that he will not help him. Almost certainly he exits not in the direction of the city center but toward Nauplia. Orestes shouts charges of cowardice at his retreating back.

With no break we see Orestes' friend and accomplice Pylades coming down the eisodos from the city center, through which he has come on his journey from his native Phocis. Pylades has the loyalty that Menelaus so conspicuously lacks. Though he is under a sentence of banishment (his father banished him for his part in the murder of Clytaemestra), he resolves to help Orestes with his troubles. The two decide that Orestes' only hope is to try to persuade the Argives that he deserves pity. They exit, Pylades supporting Orestes in his weakness.

We learn the result of the trial from a messenger speech. Though the hero Diomedes speaks in favor of allowing him to go into exile and an anonymous Argive even goes so far as to say that Orestes should be rewarded for killing a woman whose conduct threatened the whole community, his enemies carry the day, and he and his sister are condemned to death, the only concession being that they are allowed to take their own lives.

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When Orestes and Pylades return from the assembly, the siblings plan to stab themselves and ask Pylades to bury them. But Pylades indicates that he means to perish with them. Additionally he suggests that before they die they take revenge on the cowardly and faithless Menelaus by killing Helen. This not only would pay him back for abandoning them but would also mean killing a woman who richly deserves to die, whose wantonness has caused so many deaths. Orestes approves. Then Electra makes a new suggestion: once they have killed Helen they should seize Menelaus' daughter Hermione as a hostage to force Menelaus to help them by persuading the people to let them live. The two men go in, and Electra and the Chorus of Argive women keep a watch for Hermione, who is expected to return soon from making offerings at Clytaemestra's grave.

Helen's voice is heard within, calling for help as she is being attacked. Hermione arrives and is duly sent in. Then out comes a most remarkable messenger, one of the Phrygian slaves Helen has brought back with her from Troy. He has escaped while the murder plot was in progress and tells what happened. His "report" is sung, an aria not only of enormous length but also written in a style that reads almost like a parody of late-Euripidean monody. What he has to report is that Orestes and Pylades, on the point of killing Helen, were interrupted by the escape of the slaves from their imprisonment elsewhere in the palace and by the arrival of Hermione, whom the men promptly seized. And when they resumed their attempt on Helen's life, she mysteriously vanished, stolen away, he thinks, by the gods or magic. Orestes comes out after the slave, thinks of send-

## EURIPIDES

ing him back indoors, but finally decides to let him go so that he can bring the news to Menelaus of his daughter's danger.

In the next scene Menelaus comes, convinced, despite what the Phrygian has told him, that his wife has been killed but bent on at least rescuing his daughter. He is about to attack the doors when Orestes appears on the roof holding a sword at Hermione's throat, accompanied by Pylades and Electra, who hold torches and are ready to burn the palace down. (This was what Pylades suggested doing if their attempt on Helen was not successful.) Menelaus blusters but is cowed by the threat to his daughter.

Orestes has just given the order to fire the palace, perhaps in order to force Menelaus to a decision, and Menelaus has called on the Argives to come to his aid when Apollo appears on the *mechane* along with Helen. His speech, compounded of revelations and dispositions for the future, starts out by confirming the miraculous rescue of Helen from death: she is Zeus's daughter and was used by him to foment the Trojan War and thereby reduce the population of the earth, and now she will go to live in heaven with her deified brothers. Orestes must go into exile for a year, stand trial at Athens, and be acquitted. He is to marry Hermione, at whose throat he is now holding a sword, and return to rule in Argos. Pylades is to marry Electra. Menelaus must return to Sparta, leaving Orestes to rule in Argos: Apollo will arrange a reconciliation between Orestes and the citizens since it was he who compelled Orestes to murder his mother. Orestes confesses that Apollo's oracles have proved true, drops his sword, and promises to marry Hermione as soon as her father agrees to the marriage. Menelaus likewise consents to

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Apollo's disposition and offers his daughter's hand. "Go and hold Peace, fairest of the gods, in honor," the god tells them and departs with Helen for her new abode in the stars.

There have been various ways of making sense of this most baffling play. (For a summary of the history of interpretation see Porter 1994, pp. 1–44.) Early nineteenth-century critics (most influentially A. W. Schlegel) found fault with Euripides as a decadent dramatist who abandoned classical decorum and dignity and pandered to the tastes of his audience by producing a sensational but incoherent set of melodramatic scenes. This view was essentially revived in the late twentieth century, though without the querulous tone: West and Willink in their introductions, as well as other scholars, have emphasized the novelty and excitement of the play and have seen Euripides as having principally these qualities in view rather than issues of a more serious nature.

This stance is a reaction to the concerns of earlier twentieth-century scholars, who saw in the play one or another serious purpose or *arrière pensée*. Thus in the view of Verrall 1905, Euripides is attacking the unrealistic treatment of the myth by his predecessors, showing what kind of man it would take, in the world as it actually is, to kill his mother, not a hero but a violent and anti-social criminal. Reinhardt 1960 and others see the deliberate creation of an absurd and nonsensical world, the analogue of the world of war and intellectual anguish that, it is argued, set the mood of the late fifth century.

A general interpretation of this puzzling play, which raises so many difficult questions, is beyond the scope of this introduction. Instead, I end with a list of queries, some

## EURIPIDES

of which have received little or no attention in the scholarly literature. Why does Orestes remain in Argos after the murder of his mother instead of going, as the custom was for murderers, to foreign soil (Delphi in other versions) for cleansing? Is this merely a means to allow Euripides to develop his highly original plot, or are we to see Orestes' neglect of the forms of religion as significant? Would the audience have been shocked or surprised that Orestes attends the funeral of the woman he murdered? Why do Electra and Orestes speak often (though not invariably) as if the Erinyes were purely a subjective phenomenon? In particular, why does Orestes tell Menelaus (396) that he suffers from *σύνεσις*, understanding, the consciousness of what he has done, rather than from goddesses of retribution, and why does Electra tell her brother (258-9) that his Erinyes are a hallucination? Does Orestes have a bow (268-70) given to him by Apollo (such a gift appeared in a version by the lyric poet Stesichorus), or is this a figment of his imagination? Are the Erinyes in the "mad scene" real though invisible entities, or are they projections of Orestes' psyche? If they are real, is their dispersal caused by the bow (supposing it to exist), or is their disappearance after being threatened a dramatically useful coincidence? What kind of attitude or attitudes is the audience being invited to take toward the two principals: sympathy with their plight? revulsion at the violent means they adopt? sympathy followed by revulsion in the course of the play? or some mixture of basic sympathy with a feeling that they are acting throughout on misguided presuppositions?

It is most unusual for the threat in a Greek tragedy to come from the populace as a whole, as it does here. Are the



## ORESTES

people of Argos portrayed as they are because Euripides is expressing his disgust with the excesses and irrationality of the Athenian democracy? Or are we not meant to think about the populace as such but rather about men such as Talthybius, Aegisthus' friends, and Tyndareus, who lead them to pass an unmerciful verdict on the siblings? Or are we meant to think that stoning was after all a reasonable response to Orestes' failure to observe religious custom in the matter of purification?

Aristotle complained that the character of Menelaus was baser than the plot required (*Poetics* 1454a28–9 and 1461b19–21). Many have found this judgment unintelligible: after all, Menelaus' desertion of Orestes and Electra is a prime motivation for the plot against Helen and Hermione, and so one supposes that had he not been cowardly in defense of his nephew and niece, the plot would have been impossible. Did Aristotle perhaps have a different understanding of Menelaus' role? Orestes says after the event (1058–9) that Menelaus deliberately did not intervene because he had his eye on the kingship (cf. also 1108, 1146–7, and 1596). Could Aristotle have thought that Menelaus was not only a coward but also deviously plotting to rule Argos as well as Sparta, counting on the throne's being vacant if Orestes died, and might this attempted usurpation have been the baseness unnecessary to the plot of which he complains? Is it possible to sustain this view of the action without excesses of Verrallian ingenuity?

Tyndareus' role also raises questions. The Spartan's motive in opposing help to Orestes could have been, as Pylades guesses it to be (751), anger at the death of his

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daughter. This would have been perfectly intelligible. Instead, he vituperates Clytaemestra as strongly as anyone in the play and says she has merely gotten her just deserts. He objects only to the fact that it was Orestes who killed her. He propounds some quite principled-sounding reasons for his view, claiming that killing people who have killed others leads to an endless cycle, and that in the good old days people were exiled, never executed. Curiously, execution is just what he threatens Orestes with (and ends up proposing, by proxy, in the assembly) and just what he says his daughter deserved, but perhaps Euripides did not wish us to concentrate on this contradiction. Is Tyndareus drawn the way he is to represent a principled man, the embodiment of traditional Spartan respect for law, and are we then to read in his reaction the moral revulsion decent people must take toward Orestes' deed? Or is he an irascible old man, and one who is instantly unsympathetic to the Athenian audience because of what he is, one of the hated Spartans? Or are we meant to find his explicit motivation so contradictory and confused that we look for some hidden purpose, perhaps some deep plot concocted with Menelaus to annex Argos to Sparta?

Other questions could be asked as well, but the foregoing may suffice to show that the play is a difficult one to interpret, perhaps the most difficult of all Euripidean plays that have come down to us. Not the least part of the difficulty is that the play was immensely popular in antiquity: it was repeatedly revived and hence was more exposed to interpolation than most plays we have, which complicates the interpreter's work as well as the editor's.

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*Dramatis Personae*

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ	ELECTRA, sister of Orestes
ΕΛΕΝΗ	HELEN, wife of Menelaus
ΧΟΡΟΣ	CHORUS of Argive women
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ	ORESTES, son of Agamemnon and Clytaemestra
ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ	MENELAUS, brother of Agamemnon
ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ	TYNDAREUS, father of Helen and Clytaemestra
ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ	PYLADES, kinsman and friend of Orestes
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ	MESSENGER
ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ	HERMIONE, daughter of Menelaus and Helen
ΦΡΥΞ	PHRYGIAN, one of Helen's slaves
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ	APOLLO

Nonspeaking roles: Hermione in the opening scene, and Helen, Hermione, Pylades, and Electra in the final scene.

*A Note On Staging*

The *skene* represents the royal palace of Argos. Eisodos A leads to Clytaemestra's tomb and the port of Nauplia, Eisodos B to Agamemnon's tomb and the Argive agora.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

### ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

- Οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν δεινόν, ᾧδ' εἰπεῖν ἔπος,  
οὐδὲ πάθος οὐδὲ ξυμφορὰ θεήλατος,  
ἧς οὐκ ἂν ἄραιτ' ἄχθος ἀνθρώπου φύσις.  
ὁ γὰρ μακάριος (κοῦκ ὀνειδίζω τύχας)
- 5 Διὸς πεφυκώς, ὡς λέγουσι, Τάνταλος  
κορυφῆς ὑπερτέλλοντα δειμαίνων πέτρον  
ἀέρι ποτᾶται· καὶ τίνει ταύτην δίκην,  
ὡς μὲν λέγουσιν, ὅτι θεοῖς ἀνθρωπος ὢν  
κοινῆς τραπέζης ἀξίωμ' ἔχων ἴσον,
- 10 ἀκόλαστον ἔσχε γλώσσαν, αἰσχίστην νόσον.  
οὗτος φυτεύει Πέλοπα, τοῦ δ' Ἀτρεὺς ἔφυ,

1 ὡς Blaydes

10 εἶχε Wecklein

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<sup>1</sup> Or, removing the commas in line 1, "There is no word so shocking to utter, no suffering, no god-sent affliction."

<sup>2</sup> Tantalus, king of Sipylus in Asia Minor, appears in *Odyssey* 11.582–92 as one of the great sinners in the Underworld, where he is "tantalized," his hunger and thirst tormented by fruit and water he cannot reach. Punishment by overhanging stone is mentioned in Archilochus fr. 91.14 W. His suspension in air seems to be a Euripidean invention: see below, note to line 984.

## ORESTES

*At the beginning of the play ORESTES lies asleep on a bed or pallet outside the skene, which represents the royal palace of Argos. Next to him sits ELECTRA.*

### ELECTRA

There is virtually nothing horrific, no suffering, no god-sent affliction,<sup>1</sup> whose burden man, being what he is, might not shoulder. Tantalus was a prosperous man (and I do not reproach him with his good fortune), the son of Zeus, they say: now he is suspended in the clouds, in constant fear of a rock hanging above his head.<sup>2</sup> He pays this penalty, so men say, because though enjoying, as a mortal, equal rank with the gods at their shared table, he had an unbridled tongue, a most disgraceful malady.<sup>3</sup> This man begot Pelops, who was the father of Atreus. For Atreus the Goddess,<sup>4</sup> card-

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps alluding to the story that when Zeus granted him a wish he asked for all the pleasures that the gods have (Zeus kept his promise but nullified the pleasures by suspending a rock over him); or to the story that he divulged the gods' secrets to men. Other sources say that he stole the gods' nectar and ambrosia and gave them to mortals; or that he tested the gods' omniscience by killing and cooking his son Pelops and serving him to them.

<sup>4</sup> Fate is meant. An alternative reading makes the goddess Strife the subject.

- ᾧ στέμματα ξήνασ' ἐπέκλωσεν θεὰ  
 ἔριν, Θυέστη πόλεμον ὄντι συγγόνῳ  
 θέσθαι τί τάρρητ' ἀναμετρήσασθαί με δεῖ;  
 15 [ἔδαισε δ' οὖν νιν τέκν' ἀποκτείνας Ἀτρεΰς.]  
 Ἀτρέως δέ (τὰς γὰρ ἐν μέσῳ σιγῶ τύχας)  
 ὁ κλεινός, εἰ δὴ κλεινός, Ἀγαμέμνων ἔφυ  
 Μενέλεός τε Κρήσσης μητρὸς Ἀερόπης ἄπο.  
 γαμῆ δ' ὁ μὲν δὴ τὴν θεοῖς στυγουμένην  
 20 Μενέλαος Ἑλένην, ὁ δὲ Κλυταιμῆστρας λέχος  
 ἐπίσημον εἰς Ἑλληνας Ἀγαμέμνων ἀναξ·  
 ᾧ παρθένοι μὲν τρεῖς ἔφυμεν ἐκ μιᾶς,  
 Χρυσόθεμις Ἰφιγένειά τ' Ἥλέκτρα τ' ἐγώ,  
 ἄρσην τ' Ὀρέστης, μητρὸς ἀνοσιωτάτης,  
 25 ἣ πόσιν ἀπείρω περιβαλοῦσ' ὑφάσματι  
 ἔκτειεν· ὦν δ' ἕκατι, παρθένω λέγειν  
 οὐ καλόν· ἐὼ τοῦτ' ἀσαφὲς ἐν κοινῷ σκοπεῖν.  
 Φοίβου δ' ἀδικίαν μὲν τί δεῖ κατηγορεῖν;  
 πείθει δ' Ὀρέστην μητέρ' ἢ σφ' ἐγείνατο  
 30 κτεῖναι, πρὸς οὐχ ἅπαντας εὐκλειαν φέρον.  
 ὅμως δ' ἀπέκτειν' οὐκ ἀπειθήσας θεῶ,  
 κἀγὼ μετέσχον, οἷα δὴ γυνή, φόνου  
 [Πυλάδης θ', ὃς ἡμῖν συγκατείργασται τάδε].  
 ἐντεῦθεν ἀγρία συντακεῖς νόσῳ δέμας  
 35 τλήμων Ὀρέστης ὅδε πεσὼν ἐν δερμίοις  
 κείται, τὸ μητρὸς δ' αἰμά νιν τροχηλατῆ  
 μανίαισιν· ὀνομάζειν γὰρ αἰδοῦμαι θεὰς

13 ἔριν a: Ἔρις b



## ORESTES

ing out her tufts of wool, spun a destiny of strife, that he should make war on his brother Thyestes. But why should I go over the shocking tale? [At any rate, Atreus killed Thyestes' children and made a feast for him.]

To Atreus (I pass over intervening events) were born Agamemnon the glorious, if indeed glorious he is, and Menelaus: their mother was the Cretan Aërope. Menelaus married the god-detested Helen, and king Agamemnon married Clytaemestra, a notable match in Greek eyes. To him were born three daughters, Chrysothemis, Iphigenia, and myself, Electra, and a son, Orestes, all from a single godless mother: she entangled her husband in an endless woven garment and killed him. Why she did so it does not befit a maiden to say: for discussion in public I leave this unclear.

Why should I charge Apollo with injustice? Yet he did persuade Orestes to kill the mother who gave him birth, an act not everyone found glorious. In spite of that he killed her, in obedience to the god, and I too had such part as a woman may have in this murder [as did Pylades who accomplished these things with us]. Ever since then poor Orestes here, his body wasting away with a cruel disease, has taken to his bed, whirled in madness by the blood of his mother. I shrink from naming the goddesses, the

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<sup>15</sup> del. Markland

<sup>33</sup> del. Herwerden

<sup>34</sup> δέμας Hermann: νοσεί C

## EURIPIDES

- †Εὐμενίδας† αἰ τόνδ' ἐξαμιλλῶνται φόβον.  
 ἔκτον δὲ δὴ τὸδ' ἡμᾶρ ἐξ ὄτου σφαγαῖς
- 40 θανούσα μήτηρ πυρὶ καθήγνισται δέμας,  
 ὦν οὔτε σῖτα διὰ δέρης ἐδέξατο,  
 οὐ λούτρ' ἔδωκε χρωτί· χλανιδίων δ' ἔσω  
 κρυφθείς, ὅταν μὲν σῶμα κουφισθῆ νόσον  
 ἔμφρων δακρῦει, ποτέ δὲ δεμνίων ἄπο
- 45 πηδᾶ δρομαῖος, πῶλος ὡς ὑπὸ ζυγοῦ.  
 ἔδοξε δ' Ἄργει τῶδε μήθ' ἡμᾶς στέγαις,  
 μὴ πυρὶ δέχεσθαι, μήτε προσφωνεῖν τινα  
 μητροκτονοῦντας· κυρία δ' ἦδ' ἡμέρα  
 ἐν ἧ διοίσει ψῆφον Ἀργείων πόλις
- 50 εἰ χρὴ θανεῖν νῶ λευσίμῳ πετρώματι  
 [ἢ φάσγανον θήξαντ' ἐπ' αὐχένος βαλεῖν].  
 ἐλπίδα δὲ δὴ τιν' ἔχομεν ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν·  
 ἦκει γὰρ ἐς γῆν Μενέλεως Τροίας ἄπο,  
 λιμένα δὲ Ναυπλίου ἐκπληρῶν πλάτῃ
- 55 ἀκταῖσιν ὄρμει, δαρὸν ἐκ Τροίας χρόνον  
 ἄλαισι πλαγχθείς· τὴν δὲ δὴ πολύστονον  
 Ἑλένην, φυλάξας νύκτα, μὴ τις εἰσιδὼν  
 μεθ' ἡμέραν στείχουσαν ὦν ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ  
 παῖδες τεθνᾶσιν, ἐς πέτρων ἔλθη βολάς,
- 60 προύπεμψεν ἐς δῶμ' ἡμέτερον· ἔστιν δ' ἔσω  
 κλαίουσ' ἀδελφὴν συμφοράς τε δωμαίων.  
 ἔχει δὲ δὴ τιν' ἀλγέων παραψυχῆν·

<sup>38</sup> Εὐμενίδας] ποτνιαδάς Stadtmüller v. del. Nauck, tum  
 fort. νιν pro γὰρ 37

## ORESTES

Eumenides,<sup>5</sup> who work to create this fear. This is now the sixth day since our slaughtered mother's body has been purified by the pyre. During this time he has neither swallowed food nor bathed. He lies covered in a blanket, and when his body finds relief from his malady, he is sane and weeps, while at other times he leaps from the bedding and runs about like an unyoked colt.

Argos has decreed that no one is to receive us under his roof or at his fireside or even speak to us since we are matricides. And this is the appointed day on which the city will vote whether we two must die by stoning [or someone must whet a sword and thrust it upon our necks].

But we do have *some* hope of escaping death: Menelaus has returned home from Troy. Filling the harbor at Nauplia with his fleet he lies at anchor near the headlands. He has wandered for a long time after leaving Troy. As for Helen, cause of so much woe, he waited for nightfall and sent her on ahead to our house so that those whose sons died at Troy might not see her walking by day and throw stones at her. She is now inside, weeping for her sister and for the house's misfortunes. But she does have some comfort in her grief. She left an unmarried daughter, Her-

<sup>5</sup> Electra appears to contradict herself by saying that she shrinks from naming the goddesses and then calling them the Eumenides. Possibly Euripides wrote something like "the goddess of madness," and "Eumenides" was a marginal note accidentally incorporated into the text.

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<sup>51</sup> del. Herwerden

<sup>56</sup> πολυκτόνον Musgrave

## EURIPIDES

- ἦν γὰρ κατ' οἴκους ἔλιφ', ὅτ' ἐς Τροίαν ἔπλει,  
 παρθένον ἐμῇ τε μητρὶ παρέδωκεν τρέφειν  
 65 Μενέλαος, ἀγαγὼν Ἑρμιόνην Σπάρτης ἄπο,  
 ταύτη γέγηθε κάπιλήθεται κακῶν.  
 βλέπω †δὲ πᾶσαν εἴσοδον† πότ' ὄψομαι  
 Μενέλαον ἤκουθ'· ὡς τά γ' ἄλλ' ἐπ' ἀσθενοῦς  
 ῥώμης ὀχούμεθ', ἦν τι μὴ κείνου πάρα  
 70 σωθῶμεν. ἄπορον χρῆμα δυστυχῶν δόμος.

## ELEENH

- ὦ παῖ Κλυταιμῆστρας τε κἀγαμέμνονος,  
 παρθένε μακρὸν δὴ μῆκος Ἥλέκτρα χρόνου,  
 πῶς, ὦ τάλαινα, σὺ τε κασίγνητός τε σὸς  
 τλήμων Ὀρέστης, μητρὸς ὃς φονεὺς ἔφν;  
 75 προσφθέγμασιν γὰρ οὐ μαινομαι σέθεν,  
 ἐς Φοῖβον ἀναφέρουσα τὴν ἀμαρτίαν.  
 καίτοι στένω γε τὸν Κλυταιμῆστρας μόρον,  
 ἐμῆς ἀδελφῆς, ἦν, ἐπεὶ πρὸς Ἴλιον  
 ἔπλευσ' ὅπως ἔπλευσα θεομανεῖ πότμῳ,  
 80 οὐκ εἶδον, ἀπολειφθεῖσα δ' αἰάζω τύχας.

## HΛEKTPA

Ἑλένη, τί σοι λέγοιμ' ἂν ἃ γε παροῦσ' ὄρας  
 [ἐν συμφοραῖσι τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος γόνον];  
 ἐγὼ μὲν ἄυπνος πάρεδρος ἀθλίῳ νεκρῷ  
 (νεκρὸς γὰρ οὗτος οὐνεκα σμικρᾶς πνοῆς)

67 fort. δ' ἐπ' ἀκτάς, εἰς ὁδὸν cl. 55 et 1311-2

74 ὃς Porson: ὄδε vel ὠδε C

82 del. Kirchhoff

## ORESTES

mione, at home when she sailed for Troy, and Menelaus entrusted her to my mother to raise, bringing her from Sparta. In her she takes her joy and forgets her troubles.

Now I look down every road,<sup>6</sup> wondering when I shall see Menelaus' arrival. In all else we have little strength to keep us afloat unless he lends some aid to save us. A house in misfortune is a helpless thing.

*Enter from the skene HELEN. She carries in her hands a lock of her hair and a vessel containing funeral libations.*

### HELEN

Daughter of Clytaemestra and Agamemnon, Electra, unmarried now for so long, how are you faring, poor woman, you and your brother, unhappy Orestes who murdered his mother? Speaking to you does not bring pollution upon me: I attribute any guilt to Phoebus. Yet I do lament the death of my sister Clytaemestra. After my unfortunate voyage to Ilium—a voyage caused by god-sent madness—I never saw her again, and in my bereavement I lament her sad fate.

### ELECTRA

Helen, why should I describe to you what you can see right before you [that Agamemnon's son is in trouble]? I sit here without sleep beside this luckless corpse (and a corpse is what he is except that he breathes a little). As for *his* trou-

<sup>6</sup> There are several reasons (among them, that only one of the eisodoi leads to the harbor) for thinking that this line is corrupt.

EURIPIDES

- 85 θάσσω τὰ τούτου δ' οὐκ ὄνειδίζω κακά.  
 σὺ δ' ἢ μακαρία μακαρίος θ' ὁ σὸς πόσις  
 ἦκετον ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἀθλίως πεπραγότας.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πόσον χρόνον δὲ δεμνίοις πέπτωχ' ὄδε;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐξ οὐπερ αἶμα γενέθλιον κατήνυσεν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 90 ὦ μέλεος, ἢ τεκοῦσά θ' ὡς διώλετο.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὕτως ἔχει τάδ' ὥστ' ἀπέιρηκεν κακοῖς.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πρὸς θεῶν, πίθοι' ἂν δῆτά μοί τι, παρθένε;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὄσ' ἄσυχολός γε συγγόνου προσεδρία.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

βούλη τάφον μοι πρὸς κασιγνήτης μολεῖν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

- 95 μητρὸς κελεύεις τῆς ἐμῆς; τίνος χάριν;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

κόμης ἀπαρχὰς καὶ χοὰς φέρουσ' ἐμάς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σοὶ δ' οὐχὶ θεμιτὸν πρὸς φίλων στείχειν τάφον;

<sup>93</sup> ὄσ' Herwerden: ὡς C.

ORESTES

bles I say nothing by way of reproach about them. You and your husband, both fortunate, have arrived to find us faring badly.

HELEN

How long has he been lying in bed?

ELECTRA

Ever since he shed his mother's blood.

HELEN

Poor man, and poor woman too, for the way she died!

ELECTRA

That is how our woes stand: hence his collapse.

HELEN

Maiden, I beg you: would you do me a favor?

ELECTRA

Yes, to the extent I can: I am occupied with sitting by my brother.

HELEN

Are you willing to go to my sister's tomb?

ELECTRA

You mean my mother's tomb? Why?

HELEN

To bring her a hair offering and libations.

ELECTRA

But are you not allowed to visit your sister's tomb?

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

δείξαι γὰρ Ἀργείοισι σῶμ' αἰσχύνομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὄψέ γε φρονεῖς εὖ, τότε λιποῦσ' αἰσχρῶς δόμους.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

100 ὀρθῶς ἔλεξας· οὐ φίλως δέ μοι λέγεις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αἰδῶς δὲ δὴ τίς σ' ἐς Μυκηναίους ἔχει;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

δέδοικα πατέρας τῶν ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ νεκρῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δεινὸν γὰρ Ἄργει γ' ἀναβοᾶ διὰ στόμα.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

σύ νυν χάριν μοι τὸν φόβον λύσασα δός.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

105 οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην μητρὸς ἐσβλέψαι τάφον.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

αἰσχρὸν γε μέντοι προσπόλους φέρειν τάδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ' οὐχὶ θυγατρὸς Ἑρμιόνης πέμπεις δέμας;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἐς ὄχλον ἔρπειν παρθένοισιν οὐ καλόν.

103 γ' Matthiae: τ' C



ORESTES

HELEN

No: shame prevents me from showing myself to the Argives.

ELECTRA

Your good sense comes late: previously you left your home disgracefully.

HELEN

Your words are true but unkindly spoken.

ELECTRA

But what inhibition do you feel toward the Mycenaeans?<sup>7</sup>

HELEN

I am afraid of the fathers of those who died at Troy.

ELECTRA

Yes: in Argos your name is fearsomely shouted out.

HELEN

So do me a favor and relieve me of this fear.

ELECTRA

I could not look on my mother's tomb.

HELEN

But it wouldn't be proper for servants to bring these offerings.

ELECTRA

Well, why don't you send your daughter Hermione?

HELEN

It's not good for unmarried girls to appear in public.

<sup>7</sup> Tragedy uses "Mycenae" and "Mycenean" as synonyms for "Argos" and "Argive."

## EURIPIDES

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν τίνοι γ' ἂν τῇ τεθνηκυῖα τροφάς.

## ΕΛΕΝΗ

- 110 [ὀρθῶς ἔλεξας, πείθομαι τέ σοι, κόρη.]  
 ναί, πέμφομέν γε θυγατέρ'· εὖ γάρ τοι λέγεις.  
 ὦ τέκνον, ἔξελθ', Ἑρμιόνη, δόμων πάρος  
 καὶ λαβὲ χοᾶς τάσδ' ἐν χεροῖν κόμας τ' ἐμάς,  
 ἐλθοῦσα δ' ἀμφὶ τὸν Κλυταιμῆστρας τάφον  
 115 μελίκρατ' ἄφες γάλακτος οἰνωπὸν τ' ἄχνην,  
 καὶ στᾶσ' ἐπ' ἄκρου χώματος λέξον τάδε·  
 Ἑλένη σ' ἀδελφὴ ταῖσδε δωρεῖται χοαῖς,  
 φόβῳ προσελθεῖν μνήμα σόν, ταρβοῦσά γε  
 Ἄργεῖον ὄχλον. πρευμενῆ δ' ἄνωγέ νιν  
 120 ἐμοί τε καὶ σοὶ καὶ πόσει γνώμην ἔχειν  
 τοῖν τ' ἀθλίῳν τοῖνδ', οὓς ἀπώλεσεν θεός.  
 ἂ δ' εἰς ἀδελφὴν καιρὸς ἐκπονεῖν ἐμέ,  
 ἅπανθ' ὑπισχνοῦ νερτέρων δωρήματα.  
 ἴθ', ὦ τέκνον μοι, σπεῦδε καὶ χοᾶς τάφῳ  
 125 δοῦσ' ὡς τάχιστα τῆς πάλιν μέμνησ' ὁδοῦ.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

- ὦ φύσις, ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ὡς μέγ' εἶ κακόν  
 [σωτήριον δὲ τοῖς καλῶς κεκτημένοις].  
 ἴδετε γὰρ ἄκρας ὡς ἀπέθρισεν τρίχας,  
 σῶζουσα κάλλος· ἔστι δ' ἡ πάλαι γυνή.  
 130 θεοὶ σε μισήσειαν, ὡς μ' ἀπώλεσας  
 καὶ τόνδε πᾶσάν θ' Ἑλλάδ'.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

But she would be repaying her dead aunt for raising her.

HELEN

[Your suggestion is good and I will take it, maiden.] Yes, I will send my daughter: your advice is good.

Hermione, daughter, come out in front of the house! (*Enter Hermione from the skene.*) Take these libations and my hair offering in your hands. Go to the tomb of Clytaemestra and around it pour out the milk and honey mixture and the foaming wine. Then stand on top of the grave mound and say, "These libations are a gift to you from your sister Helen. She was afraid to approach your tomb for fear of the Argive multitude." Then ask her to show a kindly spirit to me, to you, and to my husband, and also to these two luckless ones the god has ruined. Promise her all the funeral offerings it is appropriate to make for a sister. (*She hands her the offerings.*) Go quickly, my daughter, and when you have given the libations to the tomb, remember to come back with all speed.

*Exit Hermione by Eisodos A, HELEN into the skene.*

ELECTRA

O inborn nature, what a curse you are to mankind [but a salvation to those who have a good one]! See how she cut off just the ends of her hair, trying to keep her beauty unchanged! She is the old Helen still. May the gods' hatred fall upon you for ruining me and him and all of Greece!

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110 del. Sansone

unus cod., del. Klinkenberg

128 γὰρ Duport: παρ' C

111 *ναί* Paley: καὶ C

δὲ Wecklein: τε fere C

127 om.

EURIPIDES

ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ·

αἶδ' αὖ πάρεισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς θρηνήμασιν  
 φίλαι ξυνωδοί· τάχα μεταστήσουσ' ὕπνου  
 τόνδ' ἡσυχάζοντ', ὄμμα δ' ἐκτῆξουσ' ἐμὸν  
 135 δακρῦοις, ἀδελφὸν ὅταν ὄρω μεμνηότα.

ὦ φίλταται γυναιῖκες, ἡσύχῳ ποδὶ  
 χωρεῖτε, μὴ ψοφεῖτε, μηδ' ἔστω κτύπος.  
 φιλία γὰρ ἢ σὴ πρευμενῆς μὲν ἀλλ' ὅμως  
 [τόνδ' ἐξεγείραι συμφορὰ γενήσεται].

140 σίγα σίγα, λεπτὸν ἴχνος ἀρβύλας  
 τίθετε, μὴ κτυπεῖτ'·  
 ἀποπρὸ βᾶτ' ἐκεῖσ' ἀποπρό μοι κοίτας.

στρ. α

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰδού, πείθομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

145 ἄ ἄ σύριγγος ὅπως πνοὰ  
 λεπτοῦ δόνακος, ὦ φίλα, φώνει μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴδ' ἀτρεμαῖον ὡς ὑπόροφον φέρω  
 βοάν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ναί, οὕτως·

138 ὅμως Π (u.v.) et duo codd.: ἐμοὶ plerique C

139 del. Diggle praeunte Willink

## ORESTES

*Enter by Eisodos B Argive women as CHORUS.*

Oh misery! Here they are again, my friends who sing in harmony with my laments! They will awaken my brother at once from his peaceful sleep, making my eyes melt with tears when I see his insanity!

Dear friends, walk with quiet step, make no noise, let there be no clattering! To be sure, your friendship is kindly meant, yet still! [It would be a great misfortune to wake this man up.]

Softly, softly, your footsteps lightly  
place, take care to make no sound!  
Go back from the bed, please, go back!

### CHORUS

There: I am doing as you say.

### ELECTRA

Ah, ah! Please speak no louder than the breath  
of a panpipe's slender reed, my friends!

### CHORUS

See how gentle is the voice  
I bring indoors!<sup>8</sup>

### ELECTRA

Yes, that's the way:

<sup>8</sup> Or, with Musgrave's conjecture, "See how gently I utter my sporific tones!"

---

<sup>140n</sup> Electrae continuant tt: Xo. fere C

<sup>141</sup> τίθετε Hermann: τιθείτε fere C κτυπέιτ' Π u. v., t:  
κτυπέετε μηδ' ἔστω κτύπος C <sup>147</sup> ὑπνοφόρον Musgrave

EURIPIDES

150 κάταγε κάταγε, πρόσιθ' ἀτρέμας, ἀτρέμας ἴθι·  
 λόγον ἀπόδος ἐφ' ὃ τι χρέος ἐμόλετέ ποτε.  
 χρόνια γὰρ πεσῶν ὄδ' εὐνάζεται.

μεσῶδ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς ἔχει; λόγου μετάδος, ὦ φίλα·  
 τίνα τύχαν εἶπω; τίνα δὲ συμφοράν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

155 ἔτι μὲν ἐμπνέει, βραχὺ δ' ἀνασθμαίνει.  
 ἀντ. α

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί φῆς; ὦ τάλας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὀλεῖς, εἰ βλέφαρα κινήσεις  
 ὕπνου γλυκυτάταν φερομένῳ χάριν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

160 μέλεος ἐχθίστων θεόθεν ἐργμάτων,  
 τάλας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φεῦ μόχθων.  
 ἄδικος ἄδικα τότ' ἄρ' ἔλακεν ἔλακεν, ἀπό-  
 φονον ὄτ' ἐπὶ τρίποδι Θέμιδος ἄρ' ἐδίκασε  
 165 φόνον ὁ Λοξίας ἐμᾶς ματέρος.

155 ἀνασθμαίνει Musgrave: ἀναστένει C

## ORESTES

come near, come near, approach gently, gently tread,  
and tell me for what purpose you have come.  
For at long last he has fallen asleep.

### CHORUS

How do things stand with him? Share with us what you can  
tell, dear friend.  
What shall I say is his condition, his plight?

### ELECTRA

He breathes, to be sure, but draws his breath in short  
gasps.

### CHORUS

What's this? O poor man!

### ELECTRA

It will be the death of him if you disturb his closed eyes  
while he enjoys the sweet gift of sleep.

### CHORUS

Poor man, ruined by hateful deeds  
sent by the gods.

### ELECTRA

Ah, what troubles he has!  
Unjust the god, and unjust the commands Loxias<sup>9</sup> uttered,  
uttered  
when on the tripod of Themis he pronounced the doom  
of unnatural murder upon my mother.

<sup>9</sup> Another name for Apollo.

## EURIPIDES

στρ. β

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄρᾱς; ἐν πέπλοισι κινεῖ δέμας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σὺ γάρ νιν, τάλαινα,  
θωύξασ' ἔλασας ἐξ ὕπνου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὔδειν μὲν οὖν ἔδοξα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

170 οὐκ ἀφ' ἡμῶν, οὐκ ἀπ' οἴκων  
πάλιν ἀνὰ πόδα σὸν εἰλίξεις  
μεθεμένα κτύπου;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὑπνώσσει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λέγεις εὔ.

πότνια, πότνια Νύξ,

175 ὑπνοδότειρα τῶν πολυπόνων βροτῶν,  
Ἐρεβόθεν ἴθι, μόλε μόλε κατάπτερος  
τὸν Ἀγαμεμνόνιον ἐπὶ δόμον.180 ὑπὸ γὰρ ἀλγέων ὑπὸ τε συμφορᾶς  
διοιχόμεθ', οἰχόμεθ' ᾧ  
κτύπον ἀγάγεται· οὐχὶ σίγα  
σίγα φυλασσομένα185 στόμα τὸ σὸν ἀκέλαδον ἀποπρὸ λέχεος ἤ-  
συχον ὕπνου χάριν παρέξεις, φίλα;



ORESTES

CHORUS

Look! He stirs in his blankets!

ELECTRA

Yes, because you, unfeeling one,  
have driven him from sleep by your shouting.

CHORUS

But no, I think he sleeps.

ELECTRA

Will you not leave us, leave our house,  
ply your steps backwards  
and stop this clattering?

CHORUS

He slumbers.

ELECTRA

That is good.

O mistress, mistress Night,  
giver of sleep to trouble-laden mortals,  
come from Erebus, come winging  
to the house of Agamemnon.  
Because of our woes, our calamity,  
we are lost, lost. Ah,  
you made a clatter! Won't you guard  
your tongues in silence, silence, my friends,  
making no noise, far from his bed,  
and grant him the boon of quiet sleep?

---

167 *τάλαινα* Willink:  $\hat{\omega}$  τ- C

168 *ἐλασας* Willink: *ἐλάσασα* a: *ἔβαλες* b

182 *οἰχόμεθ'*.  $\hat{a}$  Willink (praeunte Biehl): *οἰχόμεθα* fere C

185 *στόμα τὸ σὸν ἀκέλαδον* Willink: *στόματος ἀνὰ κέλαδον*  
fere C *ἀποπρὸ* Musgrave: *ἀπὸ* C

ἀντ. β

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θρόει τίς κακῶν τελευτὰ μένει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

θανεῖν <νιν>, τί δ' ἄλλο;  
οὐδὲ γὰρ πόθον ἔχει βορᾶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

190 πρόδηλος ἄρ' ὁ πότμος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐξέθυσ' ὁ Φοῖβος ἡμᾶς  
μέλεον ἀπόφονον αἶμα δούς  
πατροφόνου ματρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δίκα μέν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καλῶς δ' οὔ.

- 195 ἔκανες ἔθανες, ὦ  
τεκομένα με μᾶτερ, ἀπὸ δ' ὤλεσας  
πατέρα τέκνα τε τάδε σέθεν ἀφ' αἵματος·  
200 ὀλόμεθ' ἰσονέκνες ὀλόμεθα.  
ὄδε γὰρ ἐν νεκροῖς τό τ' ἐμὸν οἴχεται  
βίου τὸ πλεον μέρος· ἐν  
στοναχαῖσι δὲ καὶ γόοισι  
205 δάκρυσί τ' ἐννυχίοις  
ἄγαμος ἄτεκνος ἔτι <βίον ἀ>βίωτον ἄ  
μέλεος ἐς τὸν αἰὲν ἔλκω χρόνον.

ORESTES

CHORUS

Tell us how his calamity will end.

ELECTRA

With <his> death, how else?  
He has no desire even for food.

CHORUS

So his fate is all too plain.

ELECTRA

Phoebus has slaughtered us for sacrifice,  
giving us the unnatural murder  
of the mother who slew our father.

CHORUS

It was justice.

ELECTRA

But digraceful.

You slew, you were slain,  
mother who bore me, but you have destroyed  
my father and the children born from your blood.  
We are dead, dead, mere corpses!  
This man is among the dead, and as for me,  
the better part of my life has vanished:  
in sighs and in lamentation  
and nightly tears  
unwed and childless I, the luckless one, still drag out  
my life <that is no life> all my days.

---

188 <νιν> Willink

201 ὄδε Weil: σὺ τε fere C

204 δὲ Willink: τε C

206 ἄγαμος Hermann: ἄ- ἐπὶ δ' C ἔτι <βίον ἄ>βίον

Willink: ἄτε βίον C

## EURIPIDES

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- ὄρα παρούσα, παρθέν' Ἥλέκτρα, πέλας,  
 μὴ κατθανών σε σύγγονος λέληθ' ὄδε·  
 210 οὐ γάρ μ' ἀρέσκει τῷ λίαν παρειμένῳ.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- ὦ φίλον ὕπνου θέλγητρον, ἐπίκουρον νόσου,  
 ὡς ἡδύ μοι προσῆλθες ἐν δέοντί τε.  
 ὦ πότνια Δήθη τῶν κακῶν, ὡς εἶ σοφή  
 καὶ τοῖσι δυστυχοῦσιν εὐκταία θεός.  
 215 πόθεν ποτ' ἦλθον δεῦρο; πῶς δ' ἀφικόμην;  
 ἀμνημονῶ γάρ, τῶν πρὶν ἀπολειφθεῖς φρενῶν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς μ' ἠΰφρανας εἰς ὕπνον πεσών.  
 βούλη θίγω σου κἀνακουφίσω δέμας;

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- λαβοῦ λαβοῦ δῆτ', ἐκ δ' ὄμορξον ἀθλίου  
 220 στόματος ἀφρώδη πελανὸν ὀμμάτων τ' ἐμῶν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰδού· τὸ δούλευμ' ἡδύ, κοῦκ ἀναίνομαι  
 ἀδέλφ' ἀδελφῆ χειρὶ θεραπεύειν μέλη.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὑπόβαλε πλευροῖς πλευρὰ καύχμῶδη κόμην  
 ἄφελε προσώπου λεπτὰ γὰρ λεύσσω κόραις.

<sup>216</sup> φρενῶν] ακων Π (unde <κ>ακῶν Willink)

ORESTES

CHORUS

Maiden Electra, you stand nearby: make sure that your brother has not died without your knowing it. His body is so slack: I don't like it.

ORESTES

*(awakening)* O sleep's enchantment, friend and helper against sickness, how sweet was your visitation, how timely! O lady Oblivion-of-woes, what a wise goddess you are, and how often those in misfortune invoke you!

What place did I leave to get here? How did I arrive? I cannot remember: my former state of mind has left me.

ELECTRA

Dearest brother, how you cheered me when you fell asleep! Shall my hands soothe your distress?

ORESTES

Yes, take hold, take hold of me, wipe the residue of foam from my luckless mouth and eyes.

*She wipes his face.*

ELECTRA

There! Such a menial task is a pleasure, and I do not refuse to tend my brother's body with sisterly touch.

ORESTES

Support my side with yours and brush back the unkempt hair from my face: I cannot see clearly.

EURIPIDES

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

225 ὦ βοστρύχων πινῶδες ἀθλίων κάρα,  
ὡς ἠγγρίωσαι διὰ μακρᾶς ἀλουσίας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κλίνόν μ' ἐς εὐνήν αὔθις· ὅταν ἀνῆ νόσος  
μανιάς, ἀναρθρός εἰμι κάσθενῶ μέλη.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

230 ἰδοῦ. φίλον τοι τῷ νοσοῦντι δέμνια,  
ἀνιαρὸν ὄντα κτῆμ', ἀναγκαῖον δ' ὅμως.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αὔθις μ' ἐς ὀρθὸν στῆσον, ἀνακύκλει δέμας·  
δυσάρεστον οἱ νοσοῦντες ἀπορίας ὕπο.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἦ καπὶ γαίας ἀρμόσαι πόδας θέλεις,  
χρόνιον ἴχνος θείς; μεταβολὴ πάντων γλυκύ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

235 μάλιστα· δόξαν γὰρ τόδ' ὑγείας ἔχει·  
κρείσσον δὲ τὸ δοκεῖν, κἂν ἀληθείας ἀπῆ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν, ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα,  
ἕως ἐῷσί σ' εὖ φρονεῖν Ἐρινύες.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

240 λέξεις τι καινόν· κεῖ μὲν εὖ, χάριν φέρεις·  
εἰ δ' ἐς βλάβην τιν', ἄλις ἔχω τοῦ δυστυχεῖν.

225 ἀθλίων Diggle: ἄθλιον C

ORESTES

ELECTRA

O filthy head of ill-starred hair, how savage you have become by being so long unwashed!

ORESTES

Lay me back down again on my bed: when my mad affliction lets up, my limbs are slack and weak.

ELECTRA

There! When a man's sick, he loves his bed: nuisance though it may be, it's what he must have.

ORESTES

Set me up straight again, turn me about: the sick are hard to please, being so helpless.

ELECTRA

Do you want me to put your feet on the ground? It is some time since you walked: change is always pleasant.

ORESTES

Yes: that has the look of health to it, and better to seem so even if it falls short of reality.

ELECTRA

Listen to me then, brother, while the Erinyes allow you your sanity.

ORESTES

You're about to tell me some news. If it's good, you will have gratitude: if it's about some trouble, I already have enough misfortune.

---

227 ὅταν Heath: ὅταν μ' C

229-30 δέμνια . . . ὄντα Hermann: δέμνιον . . . ὄν τὸ C

## EURIPIDES

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Μενέλαος ἤκει, σοῦ κασίγνητος πατρός,  
ἐν Ναυπλία δὲ σέλμαθ' ὄρμισται νεῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς εἶπας; ἤκει φῶς ἐμοῖς καὶ σοῖς κακοῖς  
ἀνὴρ ὁμογενῆς καὶ χάριτας ἔχων πατρός;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

245 ἤκει (τὸ πιστὸν τόδε λόγων ἐμῶν δέχου)  
Ἐλένην ἀγόμενος Τρωικῶν ἐκ τειχεῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰ μόνος ἐσώθη, μᾶλλον ἂν ζηλωτὸς ᾦν  
εἰ δ' ἄλοχον ἄγεται, κακὸν ἔχων ἤκει μέγα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

250 ἐπίσημον ἔτεκε Τυνδάρεως †εἰς τὸν ψόγον†  
γένος θυγατέρων δυσκλεές τ' ἂν' Ἑλλάδα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σύ νυν διάφερε τῶν κακῶν, ἔξεστι γάρ,  
καὶ μὴ μόνον λέγ' ἀλλὰ καὶ φρόνει τάδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἴμοι, κασίγνητ', ὄμμα σὸν ταρασσεται,  
ταχὺς δὲ μετέθου λύσσαν, ἄρτι σωφρονῶν.

249 ἀστῶν ψόγω Willink



ORESTES

ELECTRA

Your uncle Menelaus has arrived: his galleys are moored at Nauplia.

ORESTES

What's this you say? Has he come as a beacon of rescue to you and me in our troubles, a kinsman and one who owes my father a debt of gratitude?

ELECTRA

He has come—take this as the pledge of my words' truth<sup>10</sup>—and he brings Helen from the walls of Troy.

ORESTES

Had he survived alone, his fate would have been more enviable: if he brings his wife, he has come home bringing a great bane.

ELECTRA

Marked for censure were the daughters Tyndareus bore, ill-famed throughout Greece.

ORESTES

Take care then to be different from the wicked, since you can: do not merely mouth these sentiments but have them in your heart.

*He begins to show signs of distress.*

ELECTRA

Ah, ah, your eyes are becoming disturbed, brother! How quickly you have fallen into madness, though you were just now sane!

<sup>10</sup> Perhaps raising her hand in attestation.

## EURIPIDES

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 255 ὦ μήτηρ, ἱκετεύω σε, μὴ ἴσιέ μοι  
τὰς αἵματωπούς καὶ δρακοντώδεις κόρας.  
αὐται γὰρ αὐται πλησίον θρώσκουσ' ἐμοῦ.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μέν', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἀτρέμα σοῖς ἐν δεμνίους·  
ὄρῃς γὰρ οὐδὲν ὦν δοκεῖς σάφ' εἰδέναί.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 260 ὦ Φοῖβ', ἀποκτενοῦσί μ' αἱ κυνώπιδες  
γοργῶπες, ἐνέρων ἰέραι, δειναὶ θεαί.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὔτοι μεθήσω· χεῖρα δ' ἐμπλέξασ' ἐμὴν  
σχήσω σε πηδᾶν δυστυχῆ πηδήματα.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 265 μέθες· μί' οὔσα τῶν ἐμῶν Ἐρινύων  
μέσον μ' ὀχμάζεις, ὡς βάλης ἐς Τάρταρον.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἶ γὰρ τάλαινα, τίν' ἐπικουρίαν λάβω,  
ἐπεὶ τὸ θεῖον δυσμενὲς κεκτήμεθα;

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 270 δὸς τόξα μοι κερουλκά, δῶρα Αοξίου,  
οἷς μ' εἶπ' Ἀπόλλων ἐξαμύνασθαι θεάς,  
εἴ μ' ἐκφοβοῖενμανιάσιν λυσοθήμασιν.

<sup>257</sup> post 270 trai. Burges

<sup>268-70</sup> del. Cropp

ORESTES

ORESTES

Mother, I beg you, don't sic on me those bloody-faced, snaky maidens! Here they come leaping toward me!

ELECTRA

Poor man, keep still in your bed! You don't actually see anything you think you see!

ORESTES

Phoebus, these bitch-faced fierce-eyed ones mean to kill me, these priestesses of the dead, dread goddesses!

ELECTRA

I will not let you go.<sup>11</sup> I shall twine my arms about you and restrain you from your miserable leaping. (*She tries to restrain her brother.*)

ORESTES

Let me go! You are one of my Erinyes and have grasped me about the waist to hurl me into Tartarus! (*He breaks loose.*)

ELECTRA

O woe is me, what help can I find with heaven for my enemy? (*She covers her head with her garments.*)

ORESTES

(*speaking to an imaginary attendant*) Give me my bow of horn, gift of Loxias! Apollo told me to keep off the goddesses with it if they should frighten me with raving

<sup>11</sup> Electra's words, *outoi metheso*, are pretty clearly an allusion to the words of Apollo, *outoi prodoso*, "I will not abandon you," in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* 64 (cf. *Libation Bearers* 269).

## EURIPIDES

βεβλήσεται τις θεῶν βροτησίᾳ χερί,  
 εἰ μὴ ἕξαμείψει χωρὶς ὀμμάτων ἐμῶν.  
 οὐκ εἰσακούετ'; οὐχ ὀράθ' ἐκηβόλων  
 τόξων πτερωτὰς γλυφίδας ἕξορμωμένας;

275 ᾄ ᾄ·

τί δῆτα μέλλετ'; ἕξακρίζετ' αἰθέρα  
 πτεροῖς· τὰ Φοίβου δ' αἰτιᾶσθε θέσφατα.

ἕα·

τί χρήμ'; ἀλύω, πνεῦμ' ἀνεῖς ἐκ πλευμόνων.  
 ποῖ ποῖ ποθ' ἠλάμεσθα δεμνίων ἄπο;  
 ἐκ κυμάτων γὰρ αὐθις αὖ γαλήν' ὀρώ.

280 σύγγονε, τί κλαίεις κρᾶτα θεῖσ' ἔσω πέπλων;  
 αἰσχύνομαί σοι μεταδιδούς πόνων ἐμῶν  
 ὄχλον τε παρέχων παρθένῳ νόσοις ἐμαῖς.

μὴ τῶν ἐμῶν ἕκατι συντήκου κακῶν·

285 σὺ μὲν γὰρ ἐπένευσας τάδ', εἴργασται δ' ἐμοὶ

μητρῶον αἷμα· Λοξία δὲ μέμφομαι,  
 ὅστις μ' ἐπάρας ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον,  
 τοῖς μὲν λόγοις ἠΰφρανε, τοῖς δ' ἔργοισιν οὔ.  
 οἶμαι δὲ πατέρα τὸν ἐμόν, εἰ κατ' ὄμματα  
 ἐξιστόρουν νιν μητέρ' εἰ κτεῖναί με χρή,

290 πολλὰς γενείου τοῦδ' ἂν ἐκτεῖναι λιτὰς  
 μήποτε τεκούσης ἐς σφαγὰς ὦσαι ξίφος,  
 εἰ μὴτ' ἐκεῖνος ἀναλαβεῖν ἔμελλε φῶς  
 ἐγὼ θ' ὁ τλήμων τοιάδ' ἐκπλήσειν κακά.

καὶ νῦν ἀνακάλυπτ', ὦ κασιγνήτη, κᾶρα,

286 ἔργον ἀνόσιον τελεῖν Diggle

## ORESTES

madness.<sup>12</sup> (*threatening with an imaginary bow*) Some goddess is going to be struck by a mortal hand if she doesn't move out of my sight! Aren't you listening? Don't you see the feathered arrows darting from my far-shooting bow? No, no! No more delaying! Mount up to the upper air with your wings: it's Phoebus' oracles you should blame!

(*returning to sanity*) But what is this? I'm raving and out of breath. Where ever have I leapt to from my bed? After the storm waves I once more see calm.

Sister, why are you weeping and covering your head with your garments? I feel ashamed that I am giving you a share in my woes and causing trouble to a girl by my disease. Do not melt in tears on account of my misfortunes. Although you gave your consent, it was I who shed my mother's blood. Yet it is Loxias that I blame, seeing that he spurred me on to commit a most unholy deed, then gave me the comfort of words but not deeds. I think that if I had asked my father face to face whether I should kill my mother, he would have put out his hand repeatedly to my chin, begging me never to thrust a sword into my mother's throat since he was not going to come back to life and I in my wretchedness would have to endure ills like these.

And now, sister, uncover your head and cease your

<sup>12</sup> A scholiast tells us that in later productions of the play the actors mimed the actions of an archer with an imaginary bow. He also says that what Orestes ought properly to do (i. e. did in the original staging) was to use a real bow, presumably handed to him by Electra. Though this creates some staging difficulties, it is conceivable that he is right on both counts.

## EURIPIDES

- 295 ἐκ δακρύων τ' ἄπελθε, κεί μάλ' ἀθλίως  
 ἔχομεν. ὅταν δὲ τὰμ' ἀθυμήσαντ' ἴδης,  
 σὺ μου τὸ δεινὸν καὶ διαφθαρὲν φρενῶν  
 ἴσχυαινε παραμυθοῦ θ'. ὅταν δὲ σὺ στένης,  
 ἡμᾶς παρόντας χρή σε νουθετεῖν φίλα·
- 300 ἐπικουρίαι γὰρ αἶδε τοῖς φίλοις καλάι.  
 ἀλλ', ὦ τάλαινα, βᾶσα δωμάτων ἔσω  
 ὕπνω τ' ἄνπνον βλέφαρον ἐκταθείσα δὸς  
 σίτων τ' ὄρεξαι λουτρά τ' ἐπιβαλοῦ χροῖ.  
 εἰ γὰρ προλείψεις ἢ προσεδρία νόσον·
- 305 κτήση τιν', οἰχόμεσθα· σὲ γὰρ ἔχω μόνην  
 ἐπίκουρον, ἄλλων, ὡς ὄρας, ἔρημος ὢν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

- οὐκ ἔστι· σὺν σοὶ καὶ θανεῖν αἰρήσομαι  
 καὶ ζῆν· ἔχει γὰρ ταυτόν· ἦν σὺ κατθάνης,  
 γυνὴ τί δράσω; πῶς μόνη σωθήσομαι,  
 310 ἀνάδελφος ἀπάτωρ ἄφιλος; εἰ δὲ σοὶ δοκεῖ,  
 δρᾶν χρή τάδ'. ἀλλὰ κλῖνον εἰς εὐνήν δέμας,  
 καὶ μὴ τὸ ταρβοῦν κάκφοβοῦν σ' ἐκ δεμνίων  
 ἄγαν ἀποδέχου, μένε δ' ἐπὶ στρωτοῦ λέχους.  
 κἂν μὴ νοσῆ γάρ, ἀλλὰ δοξάζη νοσεῖν,
- 315 κάματος βροτοῖσιν ἀπορία τε γίγνεται.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

αἰαῖ·  
 δρομάδες ὦ πτεροφόροι  
 ποτνιαδες θεαί,

## ORESTES

weeping, even if our situation is bad. Whenever you see me despondent, you must cure the grim derangement of my mind and encourage me. And when *you* are groaning, I must stand by you and offer friendly admonition. Aid like this is proper for kin to offer.

So, poor woman, go into the house, give your sleepless eyelids over to rest, take some nourishment, and bathe yourself. For if you collapse or by sitting over me catch some illness, my life is over. You are the only helper I have: I have no others, as you see.

## ELECTRA

(*uncovering her head*) I cannot do it: I shall choose both death and life in your company. For it comes to the same thing: if you die, what am I as a woman to do? How can I survive all alone, being without brother, father, or friend? Still, if you think it best, I must do as you say. But lie down on the bed and try not to be too receptive to the panic that makes you run from your couch, but stay within its covers. For even if mortals are not ill but only think they are, the result is weariness and despair.

*Exit ELECTRA into the skene. Orestes returns to his bed.*

## CHORUS

Ah, ah!  
Swift-running winged ones,  
goddesses of madness,

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<sup>304</sup> προλείπει Paley cl. *Hec.* 438: π- μ' C

## EURIPIDES

- ἀβάκχεντον αἰ θίασον ἐλάχετ' ἐν  
 320 δάκρυσι καὶ γόοις,  
 μελάγχρωτες Εὐμενίδες, αἶτε τὸν  
 ταναὸν αἰθέρ' ἀμπάλλεσθ', αἵματος  
 τινύμεναι δίκαν, τινύμεναι φόνου,  
 καθικετεύομαι καθικετεύομαι,  
 325 τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος γόνον ἑάσατ' ἐκ-  
 λαθέσθαι λύσσας μανιάδος φοιτα-  
 λέου. φεῦ μόχθων οἴων, ᾧ τάλας,  
 ὀρεχθεῖς ἔρρεις,  
 τρίποδος ἄπο φάτιν ἂν ὁ Φοῖ-  
 330 βος ἔλακεν ἔλακε δεξάμενος ἀνὰ δάπεδον,  
 ἵνα μεσόμφαλοι λέγονται μυχοί.  
 ἀντ.  
 ᾧ Ζεῦ·  
 τίς ἔλεος τίς ὄδ' ἀγῶν  
 φόνιος ἔρχεται,  
 335 θοάζων σε τὸν μέλεον; ᾧ δάκρυα  
 δάκρυσι συμβάλλει  
 χορεύων τις ἐς δόμον ἀλαστόρων,  
 ματέρος αἷμα σᾶς ὅς σ' ἀναβακχεύει.  
 κατολοφύρομαι κατολοφύρομαι.  
 340 ὁ μέγας ὄλβος οὐ μόνιμος ἐν βροτοῖς·  
 ἀνὰ δὲ λαΐφος ὡς τις ἀκάτου θοᾶς  
 τινάξας δαίμων κατέκλυσεν δεινῶν



## ORESTES

who have as your portion a worshipful band, unblest by  
Bacchus,  
amidst tears and groans,  
dark-hued Eumenides, you that gallop over  
the far-spreading upper air,  
exacting, exacting the penalty for bloodshed,  
I entreat you, entreat you,  
let the son of Agamemnon  
put from his mind his raving madness,  
the wandering of his wits: poor man, what work  
you put your hand to, what ruin you suffered,  
when from the holy tripod you received  
the word that Phoebus uttered, uttered in the sacred  
precinct  
where, 'tis said, are the inner recesses of Earth's navel!<sup>13</sup>

O Zeus!

What pity, what struggle  
comes in blood  
as it spurs you on, poor man? To you tears  
upon tears he brings,  
that nameless avenging spirit dancing into the house  
who drives you to madness for your mother's murder.  
I weep, I weep for you.  
Great good fortune among mortals is not lasting:  
some god, shaking it like the sail of a swift ship,  
overwhelms it in waves of fearful trouble,

<sup>13</sup> Delphi was thought to be the navel (i.e. central point) of Earth, and the story was told that eagles released simultaneously at the eastern- and westernmost edge of the world met over Delphi.

## EURIPIDES

πόνων ὡς πόντου λάβροις ὀλεθρίοι-  
σιν ἐν κύμασιν.

- 345 τίνα †γὰρ ἔτι† πάρος οἶκον ἄλ-  
λον ἕτερον ἢ τὸν ἀπὸ θεογόνων γάμων,  
τὸν ἀπὸ Ταντάλου, σέβεσθαί με χρή;

- καὶ μὴν βασιλεὺς ὅδε δὴ στείχει  
Μενέλαος ἄναξ, πολὺς ἀβροσύνη,  
350 δῆλος ὀράσθαι τοῦ Τανταλιδῶν  
ἐξ αἵματος ὢν. ὦ χιλιόναυ  
στρατὸν ὀρμήσας ἐς γῆν Ἀσίαν,  
χαῖρ', εὐτυχία δ' αὐτὸς ὀμιλεῖς,  
355 θεόθεν πράξας ἄπερ ἠῆχον.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- ὦ δῶμα, τῇ μὲν σ' ἠδέως προσδέρκομαι  
Τροίαθεν ἐλθὼν, τῇ δ' ἰδὼν καταστένω·  
κύκλω γὰρ εἰλιχθεῖσαν ἀθλίοις κακοῖς  
οὐπώποτ' ἄλλην μᾶλλον εἶδον ἐστίαν.  
360 Ἀγαμέμνονος μὲν γὰρ τύχας ἠπιστάμην  
[καὶ θάνατον, οἶψα πρὸς δάμαρτος ὤλετο],  
Μαλέα προσίσχων πρῶραν· ἐκ δὲ κυμάτων  
ὁ ναυτίλοισι μάντις ἐξήγγειλέ μοι  
Νηρέως προφήτης Γλαῦκος, ἀψευδῆς θεός,  
365 ὃς μοι τόδ' εἶπεν ἐμφανῶς κατασταθείς·  
Μενέλαε, κεῖται σὸς κασίγνητος θανὼν,  
λουτροῖσιν ἀλόχου περιπεσὼν πανυστάτοις.  
δακρύων δ' ἔπλησεν ἐμέ τε καὶ ναύτας ἐμοῦς

## ORESTES

deadly and boisterous  
like those of the main.  
But what other house  
shall I rather honor than this, the house of Tantalus,  
descended from marriage with the gods?

*Enter MENELAUS with retinue by Eisodos A.*

### CHORUS LEADER

But look, here comes king Menelaus, resplendent in luxury: his looks mark him plainly as from the blood of the sons of Tantalus. Leader of the thousand-ship fleet to Asia, hail! All on your own you consort with Prosperity and have from the gods all the success you prayed for!

### MENELAUS

O house, I look on you in one way with pleasure, being just returned from Troy, but in another way I groan as I look at you: never have I seen another hearth more surrounded by miserable woes. I learned of the death of Agamemnon [and his murder at the hands of his wife] as I was putting into Malea: from the waves the sailors' seer announced it to me, Glaucus, prophet of Nerēus, unerring god. He appeared before my eyes and said, "Menelaus, your brother lies dead, having received his last bath from his wife." Thus he filled my sailors' eyes and mine with tears. But when

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345 δὲ τίνα Willink

349 πολλὸς Willink: πολλὸ δ' vel πολλῆ C: ποδὸς Kirchhoff

361 del. Dindorf

## EURIPIDES

- πολλῶν. ἐπεὶ δὲ Ναυπλίας ψαύω χθονός,  
 370 ἤδη δάμαρτος ἐνθάδ' ἐξορμωμένης,  
 δοκῶν Ὀρέστην παῖδα τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος  
 φίλαισι χερσὶ περιβαλεῖν καὶ μητέρα,  
 ὡς εὐτυχοῦντας, ἔκλυον ἀλιτύπων τινὸς  
 τῆς Τυνδαρείας παιδὸς ἀνόσιον φόνον.  
 375 καὶ νῦν ὅπου ἴσθιεν εἶπατ', ὦ νεάνιδες,  
 Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖς, ὃς τὰ δεῖν' ἔτλη κακά.  
 βρέφος γὰρ ἦν τότε ἐν Κλυταιμῆστρας χεροῖν  
 ὅτ' ἐξέλειπον μέλαθρον ἐς Τροίαν ἰών,  
 ὥστ' οὐκ ἂν αὐτὸν γνωρίσαιμ' ἂν εἰσιδών.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 380 ὄδ' εἴμ' Ὀρέστης, Μενέλεως, ὃν ἱστορεῖς.  
 ἐκὼν ἐγὼ σοι τὰμὰ μηνύσω κακά.  
 τῶν σῶν δὲ γονάτων πρωτόλεια θιγγάνω  
 ἰκέτης, ἀφύλλους στόματος ἐξάπτων λιτάς·  
 σῶσόν μ' (ἀφίξαι δ' αὐτὸν ἐς καιρόν) κακῶν.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- 385 ὦ θεοί, τί λεύσσω; τίνα δέδορκα νερτέρων;

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὖ γ' εἶπας· οὐ γὰρ ζῶ κακοῖς, φάος δ' ὀρώ.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὡς ἠγγρίωσαι πλόκαμον αὐχμηρόν, τάλας.

384 αὐτὸν Schaefer: αὐτὸς C

## ORESTES

we touched land at Nauplia and my wife had already set out for here, though I thought I would embrace his son Orestes and his mother with loving arms, and supposed they would be prospering, I heard from a sailor about the unholy murder of Tyndareus' daughter.

Tell me now, young women, where the son of Agamemnon is, he who brought himself to do this grievous wrong. He was a babe in Clytaemestra's arms when I left the palace on my way to Troy, so I would not know him by sight.

*Orestes leaves his couch and kneels before Menelaus.*

## ORESTES

Here, Menelaus: I am the Orestes you are looking for. I will reveal my misfortunes to you of my own accord. But as a first offering I grasp your knees as a suppliant and add the prayer of my mouth, unadorned by boughs.<sup>14</sup> Save me from disaster: you have come in the very nick of time!

## MENELAUS

Gods! What do I see, what corpse am I looking at?

## ORESTES

You are right: I am dead from my troubles, though I still see the light of day.

## MENELAUS

Poor man, how wild you look with your filthy hair!

<sup>14</sup> It is normal for a suppliant to carry a leafy bough adorned with tufts of wool. Orestes apparently keeps this suppliant posture until line 544.

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐχ ἢ πρόσοφίς μ' ἀλλὰ τ' ἄργ' ἀκίζεται.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

δεινὸν δὲ λεύσσεις ὀμμάτων ξηραῖς κόραις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

390 τὸ σῶμα φροῦδον· τὸ δ' ὄνομ' οὐ λέλοιπέ με.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παρὰ λόγον μοι σὴ φανείσ' ἀμορφία.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄδ' εἰμί, μητρὸς τῆς ταλαιπώρου φονεύς.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἤκουσα· φείδου δ', ὀλιγάκις λέγων κακά.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φειδόμεθ'· ὁ δαίμων δ' ἐς ἐμὲ πλούσιος κακῶν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

395 τί χρῆμα πάσχεις; τίς σ' ἀπόλλυσιν νόσος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἢ σύνεσις, ὅτι σύννοϊδα δείν' εἰργασμένος.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πῶς φῆς; σοφόν τοι τὸ σαφές, οὐ τὸ μὴ σαφές.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λύπη μάλιστά γ' ἢ διαφθείρουσά με . . .

<sup>388</sup> h. v. et 390 inter se trai. Willink

<sup>393</sup> λέγων Κνίτζαλα: -ειν C

ORESTES

ORESTES

It is not my looks but my deeds that mar me.

MENELAUS

How terrible is the glance you shoot from parched eyes!

ORESTES

My body is dead and gone, but my name has not left me.

MENELAUS

How unexpected it is to find you so disfigured!

ORESTES

It is I, the killer of my poor mother.

MENELAUS

So I have heard: but be sparing and do not dwell on your troubles.

ORESTES

Sparing is what I am: but the god is lavish in troubles for me.

MENELAUS

What is wrong with you? What malady is destroying you?

ORESTES

Understanding: the awareness that I have done dreadful things.

MENELAUS

What do you mean? Clarity is the wise thing, not unclarity.

ORESTES

What destroys me most of all is grief . . .

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

δεινὴ γὰρ ἡ θεός, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἰάσιμος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

400 . . . μανίαι τε, μητρὸς αἵματος τιμωρίαν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἤρξω δὲ λύσσης πότε; τίς ἡμέρα τότ' ἦν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐν ἧ τάλαιναν μητέρ' ἐξώγκουν τάφῳ.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

πότερα κατ' οἴκους ἢ προσεδρεύων πυρᾷ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐκτός, φυλάσσων ὀστέων ἀναίρεσιν.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

405 παρῆν τις ἄλλος, ὃς σὸν ὄρθενεν δέμας;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Πυλάδης γ', ὁ συνδρῶν αἶμα καὶ μητρὸς φόνον.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

φαντασμάτων δὲ τάδε νοσεῖς ποίωιν ὕπο;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔδοξ' ἰδεῖν τρεῖς Νυκτὶ προσφερεῖς κόρας.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

οἶδ' ἄς ἔλεξας, ὀνομάσαι δ' οὐ βούλομαι.

400 τιμωρίαν Diggle: -ἰαι C; τιμάοροι Renehan

404 ἐκτός Wecklein: νυκτός C



ORESTES

MENELAUS

A dread goddess but nonetheless one that can be healed.

ORESTES

... and fits of madness, in requital for my mother's blood.

MENELAUS

When did your frenzy begin? On what day?

ORESTES

The day I was heaping up a tomb for my poor mother.

MENELAUS

Were you in the house or sitting near her pyre?

ORESTES

Outdoors: I was waiting for the gathering of the bones.

MENELAUS

Was anyone else there to hold your body up?

ORESTES

Yes, Pylades, my accomplice in my mother's blood.

MENELAUS

What sort of visions cause you this malady?

ORESTES

In my imagination I saw three maidens who looked like Night.

MENELAUS

I know the maidens you mean, but I do not wish to name them.

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

410 σεμναὶ γάρ· εὐπαίδευτα δ' ἀπετρέπου λέγειν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

αὐταί σε βακχεύουσι συγγενῆ φόνον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἴμοι διωγμῶν οἷς ἐλαύνομαι τάλας.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐ δεινὰ πάσχειν δεινὰ τοὺς εἰργασμένους.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἡμῖν ἀναφορὰ τῆς συμφορᾶς . . .

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

415 μὴ θάνατον εἶπης· τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ οὐ σοφόν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

. . . Φοῖβος, κελύσας μητρὸς ἐκπράξαι φόνον.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἀμαθέστερός γ' ὢν τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ τῆς δίκης.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δουλεύομεν θεοῖς, ὅ τι ποτ' εἰσὶν οἱ θεοί.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

κᾶτ' οὐκ ἀμύνει Λοξίας τοῖς σοῖς κακοῖς;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

420 μέλλει· τὸ θεῖον δ' ἔστι τοιοῦτον φύσει.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πόσον χρόνον δὲ μητρὸς οἴχονται πνοαί;

<sup>410</sup> ἀπετρέπου Hermann: ἀποτρέπου C: ἀπετράπου Diggle

ORESTES

ORESTES

Yes, they are dread goddesses: your refusal to name them shows good breeding.

MENELAUS

These are the ones who madden you because of kindred bloodshed.

ORESTES

Ah, how they hound and pursue me in my misery!

MENELAUS

It is not monstrous that those who have done monstrous things should suffer them.

ORESTES

Well, my recourse in disaster . . .

MENELAUS

Don't say "is death": *that* isn't wise.

ORESTES

. . . is Phoebus, who ordered me to murder my mother.

MENELAUS

Yes, and little knowledge he showed of what is decent and right.

ORESTES

We are slaves of the gods, whatever "the gods" are.

MENELAUS

Then does Loxias give you no help in your troubles?

ORESTES

He bides his time: that's the way gods are.

MENELAUS

How long since your mother breathed her last?

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔκτον τόδ' ἡμαρ· ἔτι πυρὰ θερμὴ τάφου.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὡς ταχὺ μετῆλθόν σ' αἶμα μητέρος θεαί.

<ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ταχὺν πιθέσθαι γ'· ὁ δὲ θεὸς σῶσαι βραδύς.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

σοφὸς δὲ μείνας ἐκτὸς αἰτίας θεός.>

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ σοφὸς ἀληθῶς ἐς φίλους ὁ φύς κακός.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

425 πατὴρ δὲ δὴ τί σ' ὠφελεῖ τιμωρία;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐπω· τὸ μέλλον δ' ἴσον ἀπραξία λέγω.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τὰ πρὸς πόλιν δὲ πῶς ἔχεις δράσας τάδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μισούμεθ' οὕτως ὥστε μὴ προσενέπειν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐδ' ἡγνισαὶ σὸν αἶμα κατὰ νόμον χερσῶν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

430 ἐκκλήγομαι γὰρ δωμάτων ὅποι μὴ λῶ.

<sup>423</sup> post h. v. lac. indic. Kirchhoff

<sup>424</sup> ἀληθῶς Bothe (-ῶς) et Willink (del. δ'): ἀληθῆς δ' C  
ὁ φύς Willink: ἔφυσ C

ORESTES

ORESTES

This is the sixth day: her pyre is still warm.

MENELAUS

How swiftly the goddesses have pursued you for your mother's blood.

< ORESTES

Yes: I was swift to obey, but the god is slow to save.

MENELAUS

The god is wise in keeping clear of blame.>

ORESTES

No one who is unfaithful to his friends is truly wise.

MENELAUS

But really, has your avenging of your father helped you at all?

ORESTES

Not yet: in my eyes delay is the same as inaction.

MENELAUS

But the city, how do you stand with it since committing this deed?

ORESTES

I am so detested that no one speaks to me.

MENELAUS

But have you not been cleansed of the blood on your hands in the customary way?

ORESTES

No: wherever I go they shut me from their homes.

EURIPIDES

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τινες πολιτῶν δ' ἐξαμιλλῶνται τσε γῆστ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Οἶαξ, τὸ Τροίας μῖσος ἀναφέρων πατρί.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

συνῆκα· Παλαμήδους σε τιμωρεῖ φόνου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔ γ' οὐ μετῆν μοι· διὰ τριῶν δ' ἀπόλλυμαι.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

435 τίς δ' ἄλλος; ἦ πού τινες ἀπ' Αἰγίσθου φίλων;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔτοί μ' ὑβρίζουσ'· ὦν πόλις τὰ νῦν κλύει.

MENEΛΑΟΣ

Ἄγαμέμνονος δὲ σκῆπτρ' ἐᾷ σ' ἔχειν πόλις;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς, οὔτινες ζῆν οὐκ ἐῶσ' ἡμᾶς ἔτι;

MENEΛΑΟΣ

τί δρῶντες; ἦ τι σαφὲς ἔχεις εἰπεῖν ἐμοί;

431 λέγε vel τάδε Willink

435 τινες Heimsoeth: τῶν C

439 ἦ τι Hermann cl. Σ: ὅ τι καὶ C

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15 Palamedes, Oeax's brother, was framed on a charge of treason by his rival Odysseus and stoned to death.

ORESTES

MENELAUS

But which of the citizens are behind this?

ORESTES

It's Oeax: he blames my father for the hateful occurrence at Troy.<sup>15</sup>

MENELAUS

I catch your drift: he is punishing you for the murder of Palamedes.

ORESTES

Which I had nothing to do with. Three things are causing my death.<sup>16</sup>

MENELAUS

Who else attacks you? Perhaps some of Aegisthus' party?

ORESTES

Yes, they treat me outrageously. And the city now does their bidding.

MENELAUS

Does the city allow you to hold Agamemnon's scepter?

ORESTES

Scepter? They will not allow me even to live!

MENELAUS

But what are they doing? Can you tell me anything definite?

<sup>16</sup> The three are Clytaemestra's murder, Palamedes' death, and (still to be mentioned) Aegisthus' friends. Alternatively we may translate "I am ruined by it at two removes" (West), with Oeax venting his anger against Odysseus first on his commander Agamemnon and then on Agamemnon's son.

## EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

440 ψῆφος καθ' ἡμῶν οἴσεται τῆδ' ἡμέρα.

[ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

φεύγειν πόλιν τήνδ'; ἢ θανεῖν ἢ μὴ θανεῖν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θανεῖν ὑπ' ἀστῶν λευσίμῳ πετρώματι.]

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

κατ' οὐχὶ φεύγεις γῆς ὑπερβάλλων ὄρους;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κύκλῳ γὰρ εἰλισσόμεθα παγχάλκοις ὄπλοις.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

445 ἰδίᾳ πρὸς ἐχθρῶν ἢ πρὸς Ἀργείας χερός;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πάντων πρὸς ἀστῶν, ὡς θάνω· βραχὺς λόγος.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ μέλεος, ἦκεις συμφορᾶς ἐς τοῦσχατον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐς σ' ἐλπίς ἡμῆ καταφυγὰς ἔχει κακῶν.

450 ἀλλ' ἀθλίως πρᾶσσουσιν εὐτυχῆς μολῶν  
 μετάδος φίλοισι σοῖσι σῆς εὐπραξίας,  
 καὶ μὴ μόνος τὸ χρηστὸν ἀπολαβὼν ἔχε;  
 ἀλλ' ἀντιλάζου καὶ πόνων ἐν τῷ μέρει,  
 χάριτας πατρώας ἐκτίνων ἐς οὓς σε δεῖ.  
 ὄνομα γάρ, ἔργον δ' οὐκ ἔχουσιν οἱ φίλοι  
 455 οἱ μὴ ἔπι ταῖσι συμφοραῖς ὄντες φίλοι.



ORESTES

ORESTES

A vote will be taken against me today.

[MENELAUS

Banishment from the city? To be put to death or spared?

ORESTES

To be put to death by stoning at the hands of the citizens.]

MENELAUS

Then why aren't you fleeing across the border?

ORESTES

I am surrounded by panoplies of bronze.

MENELAUS

By the private forces of your enemies or an army of Argos?

ORESTES

In a word: by all the citizens, to bring about my death.

MENELAUS

Poor man, you have reached the limit of misfortune.

ORESTES

You are my hoped-for refuge from trouble!

So, since I am in misery and you arrive in prosperity, give a share of your good fortune to your kinsman! Don't take all the good and keep it to yourself but accept some trouble too in your turn by repaying to those you should the debt of gratitude you owe my father. Those who are not friends in misfortune have only the name of friendship, not its reality.

## EURIPIDES

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν γέροντι δεῦρ' ἀμιλλᾶται ποδὶ  
ὁ Σπαρτιάτης Τυνδάρεως, μελάμπεπλος  
κουρᾶ τε θυγατρὸς πενθίμῳ κεκαρμένος.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Μενέλα', ἀπωλόμεσθα· Τυνδάρεως ὄδε  
460 στείχει πρὸς ἡμᾶς, οὐ μάλιστ' αἰδῶς μ' ἔχει  
ἔς ὄμματ' ἐλθεῖν τοῖσιν ἐξεργασμένοις.  
καὶ γὰρ μ' ἔθρεψε σμικρὸν ὄντα, πολλὰ δὲ  
φιλήματ' ἐξέπλησε, τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος  
παῖδ' ἀγκάλαισι περιφέρων, Λήδα θ' ἅμα,  
465 τιμῶντέ μ' οὐδὲν ἦσσον ἢ Διοσκόρω·  
οἷς, ὦ τάλαινα καρδία ψυχὴ τ' ἐμῇ,  
ἀπέδωκ' ἀμοιβὰς οὐ καλὰς. τίνα σκότον  
λάβω προσώπῳ; ποῖον ἐπίπροσθεν νέφος  
θῶμαι, γέροντος ὀμμάτων φεύγων κόρας;

## ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

470 ποῦ ποῦ θυγατρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς ἴδω πόσιν,  
Μενέλαον; ἐπὶ γὰρ τῷ Κλυταιμῆστρας τάφῳ  
χοὰς χεόμενος ἔκλυον ὡς ἐς Ναυπλίαν  
ἦκοι σὺν ἀλόχῳ πολυετῆς σεσωμένος.  
ἄγετέ με πρὸς γὰρ δεξιὰν αὐτοῦ θέλω  
475 σταῖς ἀσπᾶσασθαι, χρόνιος εἰσιδὼν φίλον.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ, χαῖρε, Ζηνὸς ὁμόλεκτρον κᾶρα.

## ORESTES

*Enter TYNDAREUS with attendants by Eisodos A.*

### CHORUS LEADER

But look, here comes the Spartan Tyndareus, hurrying with aged step. He is dressed in black and his hair is shorn in grief for his daughter.

### ORESTES

Menelaus, I'm done for! Tyndareus is coming toward us: I feel the greatest hesitation to appear before him after what I have done. He took care of me when I was a child, showing me much affection and carrying "Agamemnon's boy" around in his arms. So did Leda, and the two of them honored me equally with the Dioscuri.<sup>17</sup> O unhappy heart, unhappy soul, I have given them no good return for their kindness. What darkness can I find to enshroud my face? What cloud can I put in front of it as I try to escape the old man's glance?

### TYNDAREUS

Where can I find my daughter's husband Menelaus? As I was pouring libations at the tomb of Clytaemestra I heard that he has arrived in Nauplia, safe and sound after many years away. Bring me forward! I want to approach Menelaus' right hand and clasp it in greeting: I have not seen my kinsman for a long time.

### MENELAUS

Old Tyndareus, who once shared your wife with Zeus, I wish you joy!

<sup>17</sup> The sons of Zeus, Castor and Polydeuces, Leda's twin sons.

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<sup>459</sup> Μενέλα', ἀπωλόμεσθα Elmsley: ἀπωλόμην, Μενέλαε C: vide *Euripidea Altera* 102-3

EURIPIDES

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σύ, Μενέλεως, κήδευμ' ἐμόν.  
 ἔα· [τὸ μέλλον ὡς κακὸν τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι.]  
 ὁ μητροφόντης ὄδε πρὸ δωμαίων δράκων  
 480 στίλβει νοσώδεις ἀστραπάς, στύγημ' ἐμόν.  
 Μενέλαε, προσφθέγγη νιν, ἀνόσιον κάρα;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί γάρ; φίλου μοι πατρός ἐστίν ἔκγονος.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

κείνου γὰρ ὄδε πέφυκε, τοιοῦτος γεγώς;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πέφυκεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχεῖ, τιμητέος.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

485 βεβαρβάρωσαι, χρόνιος ὢν ἐν βαρβάροις.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

Ἑλληνικόν τοι τὸν ὁμόθεν τιμᾶν αἰεί.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

καὶ τῶν νόμων γε μὴ πρότερον εἶναι θέλειν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πᾶν τοῦξ ἀνάγκης δουλόν ἐστ' ἐν τοῖς σοφοῖς.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

κέκτησό νυν σὺ τοῦτ', ἐγὼ δ' οὐ κτήσομαι.

478 τὸ . . . εἰδέναι del. Wecklein

ORESTES

TYNDAREUS

Joy to you too, son-in-law Menelaus!

(*catching sight of Orestes*) But what is this? [How terrible not to know the future.] Here is a mother-killing snake before the palace, with sickness in his darting glance: how I loathe him! Menelaus, are you talking to him, the godless wretch?

MENELAUS

Of course: he is the son of a man dear to me.

TYNDAREUS

Can a man like this really be *his* son?

MENELAUS

Yes, and if he is in misfortune, I must honor this relation.

TYNDAREUS

You have turned barbarian from being so long among barbarians.

MENELAUS

Well, it's a Greek custom always to honor blood relatives.

TYNDAREUS

Yes, and not to try to be above the law.

MENELAUS

The intelligent regard all actions done from compulsion as slavish.

TYNDAREUS

You hold to that opinion: I won't.

## EURIPIDES

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

490 ὀργῇ γὰρ ἅμα σου καὶ τὸ γῆρας οὐ σοφόν.

## ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

πρὸς τόνδ' ἀγών τις ἀσοφίας ἦκει πέρι·  
 εἰ τὰ καλὰ πᾶσι φανερὰ καὶ τὰ μὴ καλὰ,  
 τούτου τίς ἀνδρῶν ἐγένετ' ἀσυνετώτερος,  
 ὅστις τὸ μὲν δίκαιον οὐκ ἐσκέψατο  
 495 οὐδ' ἦλθεν ἐπὶ τὸν κοινὸν Ἑλλήνων νόμον;  
 ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἐξέπνευσεν Ἀγαμέμνων βίον  
 κᾶρα θυγατρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς πληγεῖς ὕπο  
 498 (αἴσχιστον ἔργον· οὐ γὰρ αἰνέσω ποτέ),  
 500 χρῆν αὐτὸν ἐπιθεῖναι μὲν αἵματος δίκην  
 ὅσκιαν διώκοντ', ἐκβαλεῖν τε δωμάτων  
 μητέρα· τὸ σῶφρόν τ' ἔλαβ' ἂν ἀντὶ συμφορᾶς  
 καὶ τοῦ νόμου τ' ἂν εἶχετ' εὐσεβῆς τ' ἂν ἦν.  
 νῦν δ' ἐς τὸν αὐτὸν δαίμον' ἦλθε μητέρι·  
 505 κακὴν γὰρ αὐτὴν ἐνδίκως ἠγοούμενος,  
 αὐτὸς κακίων μητέρ' ἐγένετο κτανών.

ἐρήσομαι δέ, Μενέλεως, τοσόνδε σε  
 εἰ τόνδ' ἀποκτείνειεν ὁμόλεκτρος γυνή,  
 χῶ τοῦδε παῖς αὖ μητέρ' ἀνταποκτενεί,  
 510 κᾶπειθ' ὁ κείνου γενόμενος φόνω φόνου  
 λύσει, πέρας δὴ ποῖ κακῶν προβήσεται;  
 καλῶς ἔθεντο ταῦτα πατέρες οἱ πάλοι·  
 ἐς ὀμμάτων μὲν ὄψιν οὐκ εἶων περᾶν  
 οὐδ' εἰς ἀπάντημ' ὅστις αἰμ' ἔχων κυροῖ,  
 515 φνυγαῖσι δ' ὀσιούν, ἀνταποκτείνειεν δὲ μῆ.

## ORESTES

### MENELAUS

No, there's folly in your age and irascibility.

### TYNDAREUS

It's this man who's on trial for folly: if good and bad are manifest to all, what man has ever shown himself more foolish than he has, seeing that he did not consider justice or have recourse to the common law of the Greeks? When Agamemnon breathed his last, struck on the head by my daughter (a most disgraceful deed, which I shall never condone), then he ought as prosecutor to have imposed a murder penalty consistent with piety and expelled his mother from the house. Instead of disaster he would have won praise for moderation, and he would have stuck close to the law and been god-fearing. But as it is, his lot proved to be the same as his mother's. He rightly considered her to be wicked, yet he showed himself more wicked than she was by committing matricide.

Menelaus, let me ask you just this: if Orestes were to be killed by his wedded wife, and his son in his turn kills his mother, and then *his* son requites that murder with murder, where's the limit to calamity? Our ancestors of old ordered this matter well: though they forbade anyone with blood on his hands to come into their sight or meet them, it was by exile, not retaliatory killing, that they said purity

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491 ἀσοφίας Bothe: σοφίας C: possis μορίας vel ἀμαθίας

497 κάρα . . . πληγείς ὑπο Brunck: πληγείς . . . ὑπὲρ κάρα C

499 nil omissum: hic et 719 quod numeri cum summa versuum non quadrant, id incuria veterum editorum factum est

502 ἔλαβ' ἂν Bergk: ἔλαβεν C

506 μητέρ' ἐγένετο Porson: ἐγένετο μητέρα C

## EURIPIDES

αἰὲ γὰρ εἰς ἔμελλ' ἐνέξεσθαι φόνῳ,  
τὸ λοίσθιον μίασμα λαμβάνων χεροῖν.

ἐγὼ δὲ μισῶ μὲν γυναικάς ἀνοσίους,  
πρώτην δὲ θυγατέρ', ἣ πόσιν κατέκτανεν  
520 Ἑλένην τε, τὴν σὴν ἄλοχον, οὔ ποτ' αἰνέσω  
οὐδ' ἂν προσείποιμ', οὐδὲ σὲ ζηλῶ κακῆς  
γυναικὸς ἐλθόνθ' οὔνεκ' ἐς Τροίας πέδον.  
ἀμυνῶ δ' ὅσον περ δυνατός εἰμι τῷ νόμῳ,  
τὸ θηριῶδες τοῦτο καὶ μαιφόνον

525 παύων, ὃ καὶ γῆν καὶ πόλεις ὄλλυσ' αἰεί.

ἐπεὶ τίν' εἶχες, ὦ τάλας, ψυχὴν τότε,  
ὄτ' ἐξέβαλλε μαστὸν ἱκετεύουσά σε  
μήτηρ; ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἰδὼν τὰ κεῖ κακὰ  
δακρύοις γέροντ' ὀφθαλμὸν ἐκθήκω τάλας.

530 ἐν γοῦν λόγοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὁμορροθεῖ·  
μισῆ γε πρὸς θεῶν καὶ τίνεις μητρὸς δίκας,  
μανίαις ἀλαίνων καὶ φόβοις. τί μαρτύρων  
ἄλλων ἀκούειν δεῖ μ', ἃ γ' εἰσορᾶν πάρα;

ὡς οὖν ἂν εἰδῆς, Μενέλεως, τοῖσιν θεοῖς  
535 μὴ πρᾶσσο' ἐναντί', ὠφελεῖν τοῦτον θέλων,  
[ἔα δ' ὑπ' ἀστῶν καταφονευθῆναι πέτροις  
ἢ μὴ ἴβαινε Σπαρτιάτιδος χθονός.]  
θυγάτηρ δ' ἐμὴ θανούσ' ἔπραξεν ἔνδικα·  
ἀλλ' οὐχὶ πρὸς τοῦδ' εἰκὸς ἦν αὐτὴν θανεῖν.

540 ἐγὼ δὲ τᾶλλα μακάριος πέφυκ' ἀνήρ  
πλὴν ἐς θυγατέρας· τοῦτο δ' οὐκ εὐδαιμονῶ.

530 γοῦν Schaefer: οὖν C: σὺν Willink



## ORESTES

was to be restored. Otherwise someone would always be guilty of bloodshed by taking the most recent uncleanness upon his himself.

Now I hate ungodly women, and before all others my daughter who killed her husband. I shall never praise your wife Helen, never speak to her, and I pity you for going to Troy to get back such a wicked creature. But as far as in me lies I will come to the aid of the law by trying to curb sub-human and murderous conduct like this, which always brings countries and cities to ruin.

What was in your mind, hard-hearted wretch, when your own mother supplicated you and bared her breast? Though I was not there to see this calamity, my poor aged eyes run with tears.

One fact, at any rate, supports my argument: you are clearly hated by the gods and are paying the penalty for your mother's death by wandering about in fits of madness and terror. Why should I listen to the witness of others when I can see for myself?

Menelaus, let me make my meaning plain: do not act contrary to the gods by trying to help this man. [Let him be stoned to death by the citizens! Otherwise tread no more on Spartan soil.] My daughter's death was just deserts, but her death at *his* hands was wrong. I am fortunate in all else except my daughters: there I am unlucky.

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536-7 [=625-6] del. Brunck

## EURIPIDES

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ζηλωτὸς ὅστις ἠτύχησεν ἐς τέκνα  
καὶ μὴ ἰσθήμους συμφορὰς ἐκθήσατο.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- ὦ γέρον, ἐγὼ τοι πρὸς σέ δειμαίνω λέγειν  
545 [ὄπου σε μέλλω σὴν τε λυπήσειν φρένα]:  
ἐγῶδ', ἀνόσιός εἰμι μητέρα κτανῶν,  
ὄσιος δέ γ' ἕτερον ὄνομα, τιμωρῶν πατρί.  
ἀπελθέτω δὲ τοῖς λόγοισιν ἐκποδῶν  
τὸ γῆρας ἡμῖν τὸ σόν, ὃ μ' ἐκπλήσσει λόγου,  
550 καὶ καθ' ὁδὸν εἶμι· νῦν δὲ σὴν ταρβῶ τρίχα.  
τί χρῆν με δρᾶσαι; δύο γὰρ ἀντίθετες δυοῖν·  
πατὴρ μὲν ἐφύτευσέν με, σὴ δ' ἔτικτε παῖς,  
τὸ σπέρμ' ἄρουρα παραλαβοῦσ' ἄλλου πάρα.  
[ἄνευ δὲ πατρὸς τέκνον οὐκ εἶη ποτ' ἄν.  
555 ἐλογισάμην οὖν τῷ γένους ἀρχηγέτη  
μᾶλλον μ' ἀμῦναι τῆς ὑποστάσης τροφάς.]  
ἢ σὴ δὲ θυγάτηρ (μητέρ' αἰδοῦμαι λέγειν)  
ιδίοισιν ὑμεναίοισι κοῦχί σώφροσιν  
ἐς ἀνδρὸς ἦει λέκτρ' ἐμαντόν, ἣν λέγω  
560 κακῶς ἐκείνην, αἴσχυρ' ἐρῶ· λέξω δ' ὅμως·  
Αἴγισθος ἦν οἱ κρυπτός ἐν δόμοις πόσις.  
τοῦτον κατέκτειν', ἐπὶ δ' ἔθυσσα μητέρα,  
ἀνόσια μὲν δρῶν, ἀλλὰ τιμωρῶν πατρί.  
[ἐφ' οἷς δ' ἀπειλείς ὡς πετρωθῆναί με χρῆ,  
565 ἄκουσον ὡς ἄπασαν Ἑλλάδ' ὠφελῶ.  
εἰ γὰρ γυναικες ἐς τόδ' ἤξουσιν θράσους,

## ORESTES

### CHORUS LEADER

Enviably is the man who has been lucky in his children, not got ones who are disasters for all to mark!

### ORESTES

(*rising to his feet*) Old sir, I am afraid to speak to you [where I am likely to vex you and your heart]. I realize that I am unholy since I killed my mother, yet by another description I am holy for avenging my father. But let your reverend old age no longer stand in the way of my speech, and I can go on, though at this moment I stand in awe of your gray head. (*Tyndareus motions for him to proceed.*)

What should I have done? Set two facts against two others. My father engendered me, and my mother, ploughland receiving the seed from another, gave me birth. [Without a father there could never be a child. I reckoned that I should come to the defense of the author of my begetting rather than of her who gave me nourishment.] But your daughter (I cannot bring myself to call her mother) with nuptials private and unchaste went to a man's bed. If I speak ill of her my words will bring disgrace on myself, but nonetheless I shall speak: Aegisthus was her secret husband in the house. Him I killed, and after that made a sacrifice of my mother, doing an unholy act, to be sure, but avenging my father. [As for those deeds for which you say I deserve stoning, hear what a service I am rendering all of Greece. If women are going to be brazen enough to kill

545 del. Paley cl. 608

546 ἐγὼ δ' Hermann: ἐγὼ δ' C

548 δὲ Paley: δὴ C

554-6 del. Paley (554 iam Nauck)

560 αἰσχρὸν ἐρῶ Kovacs: ἐξέρῶ C

561 οἱ Nauck: ὁ C

v. del. Reeve

564-71 del. Kovacs

## EURIPIDES

- ἄνδρας φονεύειν, καταφυγὰς ποιούμεναι  
 ἐς τέκνα, μαστοῖς τὸν ἔλεον θηρώμεναι,  
 παρ' οὐδὲν αὐταῖς ἦν ἂν ὀλλύναι πόσει  
 570 ἐπίκλημ' ἐχούσαις ὅ τι τύχοι. δράσας δ' ἐγὼ  
 δεῖν', ὡς σὺ κομπεῖς, τόνδ' ἔπαυσα τὸν νόμον.]  
 μισῶν δὲ μητέρ' ἐνδίκως ἀπώλεσα,  
 ἦτις μεθ' ὄπλων ἄνδρ' ἀπόντ' ἐκ δωμάτων  
 πάσης ὑπὲρ γῆς Ἑλλάδος στρατηλάτην  
 575 προὔδωκε κούκ ἔσωσ' ἀκήρατον λέχος·  
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἄμαρτοῦσ' ἦσθετ', οὐχ αὐτῇ δίκην  
 ἐπέθηκεν, ἀλλ', ὡς μὴ δίκην δοίη πόσει,  
 ἐζημίωσε πατέρα κάπέκτειν' ἐμόν.  
 πρὸς θεῶν—ἐν οὐ καλῶ μὲν ἐμνήσθην θεῶν,  
 580 φόνου δικαστῶν· εἰ δὲ δὴ τὰ μητέρος  
 σιγῶν ἐπήγουν, τί μ' ἂν ἔδρασ' ὁ καθθανών;  
 οὐκ ἂν με μισῶν ἀνεχόρευ' Ἐρινύσιν;  
 ἢ μητρὶ μὲν πάρεισι σύμμαχοι θεαί,  
 584 τῶ δ' οὐ πάρεισι, μᾶλλον ἠδικημένῳ;  
 588 [ὄρας, Ὀδυσσέως ἄλοχον οὐ κατέκτανεν  
 Τηλέμαχος· οὐ γὰρ ἐπεγάμει πόσει πόσιν,  
 590 μένει δ' ἐν οἴκοις ὑγιὲς εὐνατήριον.]  
 ὄρας Ἀπόλλω γ', ὃς μεσομφάλους ἔδρας  
 ναίων βροτοῖσι στόμα νέμει σαφέστατον  
 καὶ πειθόμεσθα πάνθ' ὅσ' ἂν κείνος λέγῃ;  
 τούτῳ πιθόμενος τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἔκτανον.  
 595 ἐκείνον ἠγγείσθ' ἀνόσιον καὶ κτείνετε  
 ἐκείνος ἦμαρτ', οὐκ ἐγώ. τί χρῆν με δρᾶν;

## ORESTES

their husbands, taking refuge with their children, appealing for pity by showing their breasts, it would be a trifle for them to kill their husbands for any grievance whatever. By doing dread deeds, as you proclaim them to be, I put a stop to this practice.] I had just cause to hate my mother and kill her. Her husband was away from home under arms, leading all of Greece. She betrayed him and did not keep the chastity of her bed. And when she realized that she had sinned, she did not lay a penalty on herself but, so that she would not be punished by her husband, she punished my father with death.

In the gods' name—it is untimely of me to mention the gods, who sit in judgment over murder, but still—if I had acquiesced in my mother's actions, what would the dead man have done to me? Would he not hate me, and would not *his* Erinyes be making me leap about? Does my mother have goddesses to fight for her while he, having suffered greater wrongs, has none? [Do you see? Telemachus did not kill Odysseus' wife: she did not take an additional husband but remained a faithful wife.]

Do you see Apollo, who dwells in his sanctuary at the earth's navel<sup>18</sup> and gives utterance most reliable to mortals, and whom we obey in all he says? It was in obedience to him that I killed my mother. Consider *him* unholy, put *him* to death! It was he who acted wrongfully, not I. What

<sup>18</sup> See note to line 331 above.

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580 φόνου δικαστῶν Willink: φόνου δικάζων C: φόνου  
δικαιῶν Weil 588-90 del. Hartung

591 Ἀπόλλω γ' Willink: -λλων' C

593 καὶ Weil: φ̂ C v. del. Nauck

## EURIPIDES

ἢ οὐκ ἀξιοχρεως ὁ θεὸς ἀναφέροντί μοι  
 μίασμα λῦσαι; ποῖ τις οὖν ἔτ' ἂν φύγοι,  
 599 εἰ μὴ κελεύσας ῥύσεται με μὴ θανεῖν;  
 585 σύ τοι φυτεύσας θυγατέρ', ὦ γέρον, κακὴν  
 ἀπώλεσάς με· διὰ τὸ κείνης γὰρ θράσος  
 587 πατρὸς στερηθεῖς ἐγενόμην μητροκτόνος.  
 600 ἀλλ' ὡς μὲν οὐκ εὖ μὴ λέγ' εἴργασται τάδε,  
 ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς δράσασιν οὐκ εὐδαιμόνως.  
 [γάμοι δ' ὅσοις μὲν εὖ καθεστᾶσιν βροτῶν,  
 μακάριος αἰὼν· οἷς δὲ μὴ πίπτουσιν εὖ,  
 τά τ' ἔνδον εἰσὶ τά τε θύραζε δυστυχεῖς.]

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

605 αἰεὶ γυναικες ἐμποδὼν ταῖς συμφοραῖς  
 ἔφυσαν ἀνδρῶν πρὸς τὸ δυσχερέστερον.

## ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

ἐπεὶ θρασύνη κούχ ὑποστέλλη λόγῳ,  
 οὕτω δ' ἀμείβη μ' ὥστε μ' ἀλγῆσαι φρένα,  
 μᾶλλον μ' ἀνάψεις ἐπὶ σὸν ἐξελθεῖν φόνον·  
 610 καλὸν πάρεργον δ' αὐτὸ θήσομαι πόνων  
 ὦν οὐνεκ' ἦλθον θυγατρὶ κοσμήσων τάφον·  
 μολῶν γὰρ εἰς ἔκκλητον Ἀργείων ὄχλον  
 ἐκούσαν οὐκ ἄκουσαν ἐπισείσω πόλιν  
 σοὶ σῆ τ' ἀδελφῆ, λεύσιμον δοῦναι δίκην.  
 615 μᾶλλον δ' ἐκείνη σοῦ θανεῖν ἔστ' ἀξία,  
 ἢ τῆ τεκούσῃ σ' ἠγγρίωσ', ἐς οὓς αἰεὶ  
 πέμπουσα μύθους ἐπὶ τὸ δυσμενέστερον,

## ORESTES

should I have done? Is the god not sufficient to clear my pollution if I cite his authority? Where can anyone take refuge if the god, having given me the order, will not save me from death?

It was you, old sir, who were my undoing since you begot a wicked daughter. Because of her wantonness I was deprived of my father and became a matricide. So say not that this was a bad deed, only that it turned out miserably for the doer. [For mortals whose marriages are established on a good footing, life is blessed. But if marriage does not turn out well, their affairs both within and without are unblest.]

### CHORUS LEADER

Women are always an encumbrance to the affairs of men and make life harder to manage.

### TYNDAREUS

Since you are brazening it out, not curbing your tongue but answering me so as to wound my heart, you fire me up all the more to go after your death. Here's a fine extra to the task I came here to do, the task of adorning my daughter's tomb: I shall go to the Argive assembly and incite the city to attack you and your sister with all their will, so that you are stoned to death. She deserves to die more than you do. She put you in a mad rage against your mother by always whispering stories in your ear to make you hate her, telling

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599 *μη* Porson: *μη* *ο* C

585-7 ante 600 trai. Kovacs, post 578 Diggle, del. Reeve

602-4 del. Herwerden

613 *οὐχ* *ἐκούσαν* Canter

## EURIPIDES

ὄνειδος ἀγγέλλουσα τὰγαμέμνονος  
καὶ τοῦθ' ὃ μισήσειαν Αἰγίσθου λέχος  
620 οἱ νέρτεροι θεοί (καὶ γὰρ ἐνθάδ' ἦν πικρόν),  
ἕως ὑφήψε δῶμ' ἀνηφαίστῳ πυρί.

Μενέλαε, σοὶ δὲ τάδε λέγω δράσω τε πρόσ·  
εἰ τοῦμὸν ἔχθος ἐναριθμῆ κῆδός τ' ἐμόν,  
μὴ τῶδ' ἀμύνειν φόνον, ἐναντίον θεοῖς,  
625 ἕα δ' ὑπ' ἀστῶν καταφονευθῆναι πέτροις,  
ἢ μὴ ἴβιαινε Σπαρτιάτιδος χθονός.  
τοσαῦτ' ἀκούσας ἴσθι, μηδὲ δυσσεβεῖς  
ἔλη, παρώσας εὐσεβεστέρους φίλους·  
ἡμᾶς δ' ἀπ' οἴκων ἄγετε τῶνδε, πρόσπολοι.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

630 στείχ', ὡς ἀθορύβως οὐπιὼν ἡμῖν λόγος  
πρὸς τόνδ' ἴκηται, γῆρας ἀποφυγῶν τὸ σόν.

Μενέλαε, ποῖ σὸν πόδ' ἐπὶ συννοία κυκλείς,  
διπλῆς μερίμνης διπτύχους ἰὼν ὁδοῦς;

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἕασον· ἐν ἐμαυτῷ τι συννοούμενος  
635 ὄπη τράπωμαι τῆς τύχης ἀμηχανῶ.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μή νυν πέραινε τὴν δόκησιν, ἀλλ' ἐμοὺς  
λόγους ἀκούσας πρόσθε βουλευέου τότε.

618 ὄνειδος Willink: ὀνείρατ' C

624 ἀμύνων . . . ἐναντιοῦ Broadhead



## ORESTES

you reproachfully of Agamemnon's fate and Clytaemestra's affair with Aegisthus (may the gods below visit it with their hatred since even up here it was hard to bear) until she set the whole house alight with a fire not of Hephaestus' making.

Menelaus, these are my words to you, and I will make them good: if you set any store by my hostility, the hostility of a father-in-law, do not protect Orestes from death in opposition to the gods. Let him be stoned to death by the citizens! Otherwise, tread no more on Spartan soil. Mark that you have heard this much from me, and do not choose unholy friends and thrust aside godly ones. Servants, lead me away from this house!

*Exit TYNDAREUS with attendants by Eisodos B. Menelaus paces back and forth in thought.*

## ORESTES

*(to Tyndareus' retreating back)* Be off! That way my next words to Menelaus can proceed without interruption, freed from your aged presence!

Menelaus, why are you walking back and forth so lost in thought, treading the twofold path of dilemma?

## MENELAUS

Let me be: I am pondering something within me and at a loss which path to take in what has happened.

## ORESTES

Well don't keep on pondering: first hear what I have to say and then deliberate.

## EURIPIDES

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

λέγ'· εὖ γὰρ εἶπας· ἔστιν οὐ σιγῇ λόγου  
κρείσσων γένοιτ' ἄν, ἔστι δ' οὐ σιγῆς λόγος.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 640 λέγοιμ' ἄν ἤδη. τὰ μακρὰ τῶν σμικρῶν λόγων  
ἐπίπροσθέν ἐστι καὶ σαφῆ μάλλον κλυεῖν.  
ἔμοι σὺ τῶν σῶν, Μενέλεως, μηδὲν δίδου,  
ἃ δ' ἔλαβες ἀπόδος πατρὸς ἐμοῦ λαβὼν πάρα.  
οὐ χρήματ' εἶπον· χρήματ', ἦν ψυχὴν ἐμὴν  
645 σώσης, ἅπερ μοι φίλτατ' ἐστὶ τῶν ἐμῶν.  
ἀδικῶ λαβεῖν χρή μ' ἀντὶ τοῦδε τοῦ κακοῦ  
ἄδικόν τι παρὰ σοῦ· καὶ γὰρ Ἀγαμέμνων πατῆρ  
ἀδίκως ἀθροίσας Ἑλλάδ' ἦλθ' ὑπ' Ἴλιον,  
οὐκ ἐξαμαρτῶν αὐτὸς ἀλλ' ἀμαρτίαν  
650 τῆς σῆς γυναικὸς ἀδικίαν τ' ἰώμενος.  
652 ἀπέδοτο δ', ὡς χρή τοῖς φίλοισι τοὺς φίλους,  
τὸ σῶμ' ἀληθῶς, σοὶ παρ' ἀσπίδ' ἐκπονῶν,  
ὅπως σὺ τὴν σὴν ἀπολάβοις ξυνάορον.  
655 ἀπότεισον οὖν μοι ταῦτ' ἐκεῖ λαβῶν,  
μίαν πονήσας ἡμέραν, ἡμῶν ὑπερ  
657 σωτήριος στάς, μὴ δέκ' ἐκπλήσας ἔτη.  
651 ἐν μὲν τόδ' ἡμῖν ἀνθ' ἐνὸς δοῦναί σε χρή.  
658 ἃ δ' Αὐλῖς ἔλαβε σφάγι' ἐμῆς ὁμοσπόρου,  
ἔω σ' ἔχειν ταῦθ'· Ἑρμιόνην μὴ κτείνε σύ.  
660 δεῖ γάρ σ' ἐμοῦ πράσσοντος ὡς πράσσω τὰ νῦν  
πλέον φέρεσθαι καμὲ συγγνώμην ἔχειν.  
ψυχὴν δ' ἐμὴν δὸς τῷ τάλαιπῶρῳ πατρί

## ORESTES

### MENELAUS

That is good advice. Speak: sometimes speech is better than silence, sometimes silence than speech.

### ORESTES

Then I will speak. Long speeches are better than short ones, more convincing to listen to.

Menelaus, do not offer me anything of your own, but merely give back to me what you received from my father. I do not mean possessions: if you save my life, that is the dearest of my possessions.

What I have done is wrong. It is fair that I receive some wrong at your hands in return for this evil. And in fact my father Agamemnon did wrong when he mustered Greece and went to Troy: he did not go astray himself but was trying to put right the straying and wrongdoing of your wife. And he made over his person to you, the way one kinsman should to another, by standing next to your shield in battle so that you might get your wife back. Repay to me the favor you received at Troy by toiling for a single day, not ten years, and standing as champion on my behalf.

This is a gift you must give me in exchange for a gift. As for the victim that Aulis exacted in my sister, I give you leave to keep it: no need to kill Hermione.<sup>19</sup> You are bound to get the better of me in my present circumstances, and I am bound to acquiesce. But grant to my unlucky father the

<sup>19</sup> I. e. Menelaus need not sacrifice his daughter as Agamemnon did his.

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638  $\xi\sigma\tau\omega$  Kirchhoff:  $\xi\sigma\tau\iota$   $\delta'$  C      640-1 del. Bothe cl.  $\Sigma$   
644-5 del. Diggle      651 post 657 trai. Paley

## EURIPIDES

- [κάμῃς ἀδελφῆς, παρθένου μακρὸν χρόνον].  
 θανὼν γὰρ οἶκον ὀρφανὸν λείψω πατρός.
- 665 ἑρέϊς· ἀδύνατον. αὐτὸ τοῦτο· τοὺς φίλους  
 ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς χρῆ τοῖς φίλοισιν ὠφελεῖν·  
 ὅταν δ' ὁ δαίμων εὖ διδῶ, τί δεῖ φίλων;  
 ἀρκεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς ὠφελεῖν θέλων.  
 φιλεῖν δάμαρτα πᾶσιν Ἑλλησιν δοκεῖς·
- 670 κούχ ὑποτρέχων σε τοῦτο θωπεία λέγω·  
 ταύτης ἰκνοῦμαι σ'—ὦ μέλεος ἐγώ, κακὸν  
 ἐς οἶον ἤκω. τί δέ; ταλαιπωρεῖν με δεῖ·  
 ὑπὲρ γὰρ οἴκου παντὸς ἰκετεύω τάδε.  
 ὦ πατὴρ ὄμαιμε θεῖε, τὸν κατὰ χθονὸς
- 675 θανόντ' ἀκούειν τάδε δόκει, ποτωμένην  
 ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ σοῦ, καὶ λέγειν ἀγὼ λέγω.  
 [ταῦτ' ἔς τε δάκρυα καὶ γόους καὶ συμφορὰς]  
 εἶρηκα κἀπήτηκα, τὴν σωτηρίαν  
 θηρῶν, ὃ πάντες κοῦκ ἐγὼ ζητῶ μόνος.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 680 κἀγὼ σ' ἰκνοῦμαι καὶ γυνή περ οὔσ' ὅμως  
 τοῖς δεομένοισιν ὠφελεῖν· οἶός τε δ' εἶ.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- Ὅρέστ', ἐγὼ τοι σὸν καταιδούμαι κἀρα  
 καὶ ξυμπονῆσαι σοῖς κακοῖσι βούλομαι.  
 καὶ χρῆ γὰρ οὔτω τῶν ὄμαιμόνων κακὰ
- 685 συνεκκομίζειν, δύναμιν ἦν διδῶ θεός  
 [θνήσκοντα καὶ κτείνοντα τοὺς ἐναντίους].  
 τοῦ δ' αὖ δύνασθαι πρὸς θεῶν χρῆζω τυχεῖν·

## ORESTES

gift of my life [and that of my sister, so long a maiden]. For if I die, I leave my father's house orphaned.

You will say "Impossible." Precisely: it is in hard times that near and dear should help near and dear. When heaven is blessing you, what need for friends? The god's willingness to help is enough by itself.

All Greece thinks that you love your wife: and I do not say this to wheedle or flatter you. (*kneeling in supplication*) In her name I beg you—O poor me, to what misery I have come! But what of it? I must endure misery and make this supplication for the sake of the whole house. Uncle, my father's own brother, imagine that the dead man beneath the earth hears all this! Imagine him as a soul hovering over you, speaking my words!

[These things for tears and sighs and misfortunes] I have spoken, I have made my plea, trying to save my life, a thing all men, and not I alone, try to win.

### CHORUS LEADER

I too beseech you, though I am a woman, to come to the aid of those who ask it: it lies in your power.

### MENELAÛS

Orestes, of course I respect your claims, and I want to share your misfortunes with you. For that is the way one *should* endure one's relatives' troubles, if heaven gives one the power [by fighting the enemy to the death]. But the power to do so—that I need to get from the gods.

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663 del. Paley

671 *κακὸν* Wecklein et Σ: *κακῶν* C

677 suspectum hab. Wecklein, del. Biehl

686 del. Hermann

## EURIPIDES

- ἦκω γὰρ ἀνδρῶν συμμάχων κενὸν δόρυ  
 ἔχων, πόνοισι μυρίοις ἀλώμενος,
- 690 σμικρᾷ σὺν ἀλκῇ τῶν λελειμμένων φίλων.  
 μάχη μὲν οὖν ἂν οὐχ ὑπερβαλοίμεθα  
 Πελασγὸν Ἄργος· εἰ δὲ μαλθακοῖς λόγοις  
 δυναίμεθ', ἐνταῦθ' ἐλπίδος προήκομεν.  
 [σμικροῖσι †μὲν γὰρ τὰ† μεγάλα πῶς ἔλοι τις ἂν
- 695 πόνοισιν; ἀμαθὲς καὶ τὸ βούλεσθαι τάδε.]  
 ὅταν γὰρ ἠβᾶ δῆμος εἰς ὄργην πεσὼν,  
 ὅμοιον ὥστε πῦρ κατασβέσαι λάβρον·  
 εἰ δ' ἠσύχως τις αὐτὸν ἐντείνοντι μὲν  
 χαλῶν ὑπέικοι καιρὸν εὐλαβούμενος,
- 700 ἴσως ἂν ἐκπνεύσειεν· ὅτε δ' ἀνῆή πνοάς,  
 τύχοις ἂν αὐτοῦ ῥαδίως ὅσον θέλεις.  
 [ἔνεστι δ' οἶκτος, ἔνι δὲ καὶ θυμὸς μέγας,  
 караδοκούντι κτῆμα τιμιώτατον.  
 ἐλθὼν δὲ Τυνδάρεών τέ σοι πειράσομαι
- 705 πόλιν τε πείσαι τῷ λίαν χρῆσθαι καλῶς.]  
 καὶ ναῦς γὰρ ἐνταθείσα πρὸς βίαν ποδὶ  
 ἔβαψεν, ἔστη δ' αὐθις ἦν χαλᾷ πόδα.  
 μισεῖ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰς ἄγαν προθυμίας,  
 μισοῦσι δ' ἀστοί· δεῖ δέ μ' (οὐκ ἄλλως λέγω)
- 710 σῶζειν σε σοφία, μὴ βία τῶν κρεισσόνων.  
 ἀλκῇ δέ σ' οὐκ ἂν, ἧ σὺν δοξάζεις ἴσως,  
 σώσαιμ' ἂν· οὐ γὰρ ῥάδιον λόγῃ μιᾷ  
 στηῆσαι τροπαία τῶν κακῶν ἢ σοι πάρα.  
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἐκ τ' ἄργου γ' ἂν ἐς τὸ μαλθακὸν
- 715 προσηγόμεσθα· νῦν δ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει

ORESTES

The spear I came home with lacks allies, and I have but little defense in my few remaining comrades: I have been a wanderer beset with many troubles. So we cannot beat Pelasgian Argos in a fight. Whether we might do so with soothing words—that is as far as my hope extends. [How can one overcome great things by slender efforts? Even to try is foolish.] When the common people fall into a rage and feel their vigor, it is like trying to put out a raging fire. But if in the face of their fury you yourself slacken and give way, watching for the proper moment, their rage may blow itself out, and then when the storm has let up, you can get whatever you want from them. [There is pity there, and there is also towering rage, a most valuable thing for a man who waits. I will go and try to persuade Tyndareus and the city to make good use of their excessiveness.] For a ship too, if its sheet is too vigorously tightened, goes under, but slacken it and the ship will right itself. Heaven hates excessive zeal, and so do the citizens. And I must save you (I cannot deny it) not in the teeth of superior force but by clever words. I cannot save your life by armed might, as you perhaps suppose. It's no easy feat to master by a single spear the woes that are besetting you. I would not be led to adopt such a soft policy <out of> idleness: but as things stand it is

694-5 del. Weil (695 iam Brunck)

698 ἀντῶ τις Markland 700 ὅτε Kirchhoff: ὅταν C

702-3 del. Hartung 704-5 del. Kovacs

705 πείσας Hermann

711-3 suspectos habuit Wecklein

714 <ἐκ τ>ἀργού Willink (ἀργού γρΣ): Ἄργους C γ' ἀν

Willink: γαῖαν C

## EURIPIDES

δούλοισιν εἶναι τοῖς σοφοῖσι τῆς τύχης.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- ὦ πλὴν γυναικὸς οὐνεκα στρατηλατεῖν  
 718 τᾶλλ' οὐδέν, ὦ κάκιστε, τιμωρεῖν φίλοις,  
 720 φεύγεις ἀποστραφεῖς με, τὰ δ' Ἀγαμέμνονος  
 φρουᾷ; ἄφίλος ἦσθ' ἄρ', ὦ πάτερ, πράσσω κακῶς.  
 οἴμοι, προδέδομαι, κούκέτ' εἰσὶν ἐλπίδες  
 ὄπη τραπόμενος θάνατον Ἀργείων φύγω  
 οὔτος γὰρ ἦν μοι καταφυγὴ σωτηρίας.  
 725 ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ τόνδε φίλτατον βροτῶν  
 Πυλάδην δρόμῳ στείχοντα Φωκέων ἄπο,  
 ἠδέϊαν ὄψιν· πιστὸς ἐν κακοῖς ἀνήρ  
 κρείσσω γαλήνης ναυτίλοισιν εἰσορᾶν.

## ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

- θάσσον ἢ μ' ἐχρῆν προβαίνων ἰκόμην δι' ἄστεως,  
 730 σύλλογον πόλεως ἀκούσας ὄντ', ἰδὼν δ' αὐτὸς  
 σαφῶς,  
 ἐπὶ σέ σύγγονόν τε τὴν σῆν, ὡς κτενοῦντας αὐτίκα.  
 τί τάδε; πῶς ἔχεις; τί πράσσεις, φίλταθ' ἠλίκων  
 ἐμοὶ  
 καὶ φίλων καὶ συγγενείας; πάντα γὰρ τάδ' εἰ σύ  
 μοι.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἰχόμεσθ', ὡς ἐν βραχεῖ σοι τὰμὰ δηλώσω κακά.

719 vide ad. 499

730 ὄντ' Cron: τὸν δ' C

731 del. Herwerden



## ORESTES

necessary for the wise to take orders from fortune.

*Exit MENELAUS by Eisodos A, breaking Orestes' suppliant grasp.*

## ORESTES

*(rising to his feet)* Coward, no good at defending your kin except by leading an army to get back a woman, are you turning away from me and running? Have Agamemnon's favors to you vanished? So you really are friendless, father, in your misfortune! Oh, I have been abandoned! I have no hope, no place I can turn to escape an Argive death! He was my life-saving refuge.

*Enter PYLADES, running, by Eisodos B.*

But here I see Pylades, my dearest friend, coming at a run from Phocis! A welcome sight he is: when you are in trouble a loyal friend is a fairer sight than clear skies to a sailor.

## PYLADES

Exceeding all proper speed I have come through the town. I heard that an assembly of the citizens was taking place—and I saw it with my own eyes—against you and your sister, and that they mean to kill you right away. What is going on? How are you faring, what's your state, dearest of agemates and friends and kinsmen? You are all that to me.

## ORESTES

I am done for: you have my plight in brief.

EURIPIDES

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

735 συγκατασκάπτοις ἂν ἡμᾶς· κοινὰ γὰρ τὰ τῶν  
φίλων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Μενέλεως κάκιστος ἐς ἐμὲ καὶ κασιγνήτην ἐμήν . . .

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

εἰκότως, κακῆς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα γίγνεσθαι κακόν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

. . . ὥσπερ οὐκ ἐλθὼν ἔμοιγε ταῦτόν ἀπέδωκεν  
μολῶν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἦ γάρ ἐστιν ὡς ἀληθῶς τήνδ' ἀφιγμένος χθόνα;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

740 χρόνιος· ἀλλ' ὅμως τάχιστα κακὸς ἐφωράθη φίλοις.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

καὶ δάμαρτα τὴν κακίστην ναυστολῶν ἐλήλυθεν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἐκείνος· ἀλλ' ἐκείνη κείνον ἐνθάδ' ἤγαγεν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ποῦ ἔστιν ἡ πλείστους Ἀχαιῶν ὤλεσεν γυνὴ μία;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐν δόμοις ἐμοῖσιν, εἰ δὴ τούσδ' ἐμοὺς καλεῖν χρεῶν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

745 σὺ δὲ τίνας λόγους ἔλεξας σοῦ κασιγνήτῳ πατρός;

ORESTES

PYLADES

You bring me crashing down as well if that is true: friends share everything.

ORESTES

Menelaus, cowardly where my sister and I are concerned

...

PYLADES

It's only to be expected that a bad woman should have a bad husband.

ORESTES

... has come, but he's done me as little good as if he'd stayed away.

PYLADES

Has he really arrived in this country?

ORESTES

He was long in coming: but in no time he has been shown up as disloyal to his kin.

PYLADES

And has he come with his vile wife in tow?

ORESTES

No, not he: it was *she* who brought *him* here.

PYLADES

Where is she, the one woman who killed so many of the Achaeans?

ORESTES

In my house, if one may call it mine.

PYLADES

What pleas did you make to your father's brother?

EURIPIDES

ΠΥΛΛΑΔΗΣ

*μη̄ πρὸς θεῶν.*

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

*δάκρυα γοῦν γένοιτ' ἄν.*

ΠΥΛΛΑΔΗΣ

*οὔκουν οὔτος οἰωνὸς μέγας;*

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

*δηλαδὴ σιγᾶν ἄμεινον.*

ΠΥΛΛΑΔΗΣ

*τῷ χρόνῳ γὰρ κερδανεῖς.*

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

790 *κεῖνό μοι μόνον πρόσαντες . . .*

ΠΥΛΛΑΔΗΣ

*τί τόδε καινὸν αὖ λέγεις;*

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

*. . . μη̄ θεαί μ' οὔστρω κατάσχωσ'.*

ΠΥΛΛΑΔΗΣ

*ἀλλὰ κηδεύσω σ' ἐγώ.*

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

*δυσχερὲς ψαύειν νοσοῦντος ἀνδρός.*

ΠΥΛΛΑΔΗΣ

*οὐκ ἔμοιγε σοῦ.*

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

*εὐλαβοῦ λύσσης μετασχεῖν τῆς ἐμῆς.*

ORESTES

PYLADES

In heaven's name, no!

ORESTES

Well, she would shed tears for me.

PYLADES

Would this not be a powerful omen of woe?

ORESTES

Clearly better to say nothing.

PYLADES

Yes, it saves us time.

ORESTES

There is only one problem in my way . . .

PYLADES

What new thing are you speaking of?

ORESTES

. . . the fear that the goddesses may seize me with frenzy.

PYLADES

Well, I will take care of you.

ORESTES

It is disgusting to touch a sick man.

PYLADES

Not for me to touch you.

ORESTES

Take care you don't catch my madness.

EURIPIDES

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τόδ' οὖν ἴτω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἄρ' ὀκνήσεις;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ὄκνος γὰρ τοῖς φίλοις κακὸν μέγα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

795 ἔρπε νυν οἶαξ ποδός μοι . . .

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

φίλα γ' ἔχων κηδεύματα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

. . . καί με πρὸς τύμβον πόρευσον πατρός.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ὡς τί δὴ τόδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὥς νιν ἱκετεύσω με σῶσαι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τό γε δίκαιον ᾧδ' ἔχει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μητέρος δὲ μὴ 'σίδοιμι μνήμα.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

πολεμία γὰρ ἦν.

ἀλλ' ἔπειγ', ὡς μή σε πρόσθε ψῆφος Ἀργείων  
ἔλη,

800 περιβαλὼν πλευροῖς ἐμοῖσι πλευρὰ νωχελῆ νόσφ'

ORESTES

PYLADES

Dismiss the thought!

ORESTES

So, you won't show reluctance?

PYLADES

Friends consider reluctance a great evil.

ORESTES

Be off then, steering oar of my steps . . .

PYLADES

I will, with a dear friend in my care.

ORESTES

. . . and take me to my father's tomb.

PYLADES

Why so?

ORESTES

So that I can entreat him to save my life.

PYLADES

And right it is that he should.

ORESTES

As for my mother's grave, may I never look on it!

PYLADES

No: she was a foe.

But hurry so that you are not convicted by the Argive vote before you get there! Wrap your body, sluggish with

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<sup>798</sup> μὴ σίδοιμι F. W. Schmidt: μῆδ' ἴδοιμι fere C

EURIPIDES

ὡς ἐγὼ δι' ἄστεώς σε, σμικρὰ φροντίζων ὄχλου,  
οὐδὲν αἰσχυνθεὶς ὀχήσω. ποῦ γὰρ ὦν δεῖξω φίλος,  
εἴ τι μὴ ἔνδρα δειναῖσιν ὄντι συμφοραῖς ἐπαρκέσω;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τοῦτ' ἐκείνο, κτᾶσθ' ἐταίρους, μὴ τὸ συγγενὲς  
μόνον·

805 ὡς ἀνὴρ ὅστις τρόποισι συντακῆ, θυραῖος ὦν,  
μυρίων κρείστων ὁμαίμων ἀνδρὶ κεκτῆσθαι φίλος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

ὁ μέγας ὄλβος ἄ τ' ἀρετὰ  
μέγα φρονούσ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδα καὶ  
παρὰ Σιμωντίοις ὀχετοῖς  
810 πάλιν ἀνήλθ' ἐξ εὐτυχίας Ἀτρείδαις  
πάλαι παλαιᾶς ἀπὸ συμφορᾶς δόμων,  
ὁπότε χρυσέας ἔρις ἀρ-  
νὸς ἦλθε Ταυταλίδαις,  
οἰκτρότατα θοινάματα καὶ  
815 σφάγια γενναίων τεκέων·  
ὄθεν πόνῳ πόνος ἐξαμεί-  
βων δι' αἵματος οὐ προλεί-  
πει δισσοῖσιν Ἀτρείδαις.

803 τι . . . ὄντι Blaydes: σε . . . ὄντα C

811 πάλαι] πάλιν Hartung

813 ἦλθε Hermann: ἦλυθε C

816 πόνῳ πόνος Willink: φόν- φόν- C



## ORESTES

your illness, about mine. I will carry you through the city, paying slight attention to the crowd, feeling no embarrassment. Where else could I demonstrate that I am your friend if I do not come to your aid when you are in direst trouble?

## ORESTES

This proves it: get comrades, not just blood kin! An outsider whose character fuses with yours is a better friend to have than countless blood relations!

*Exit ORESTES and PYLADES by Eisodos B.*

## CHORUS

Great wealth and prowess,  
thinking proud thoughts throughout Greece  
and by Simois' waters,  
has now been reversed—their good fortune vanished—for  
the house of Atreus,  
because of an age-old woe in the house,  
when strife about a golden lamb  
came over the Tantalids,  
feastings most grim  
and slaughtering of high-born children:<sup>20</sup>  
from this source trouble in exchange for trouble  
runs never failing throughout the bloodline  
of the two sons of Atreus.

<sup>20</sup> For the slaughter of Thyestes' children see note on line 1000 below.

## EURIPIDES

ἀντ.

τὸ καλὸν οὐ καλόν, τοκέων

820 πυριγενεῖ τεμεῖν παλάμα  
 χροά· μελάνδεται δὲ φόνῳ  
 ξίφος ἐς αὐγὰς ἀελίοιο δειῖξαι,  
 τόδ' αὖ κακούργων ἀσέβεια ποικίλα  
 κακοφρόνων τ' ἀνδρῶν παράνοι'.

825 Ἄϊδα γὰρ ἀμφὶ φόβῳ  
 Τυνδαρις ἰάχησε τάλαιν'.  
 Ἄ, τέκνον, οὐ τολμᾶς ὅσια  
 κτείνων σὰν μητέρα· μὴ πατρώ-  
 αν τιμῶν χάριν ἐξανά-  
 830 ψη δύσκειαν ἐς αἰεί.

ἐπωδ.

τίς νόσος ἢ τίνα δάκρυα καὶ  
 τίς ἔλεος μείζων κατὰ γᾶν  
 ἢ ματροκτόνον αἶμα χειρὶ θέσθαι;  
 οἶον ἔργον τελέσας

835 βεβάκχενται μανίαις,  
 Εὐμενίσι θήραμα, φόβον  
 δρομάσι δινεύων βλεφάροις,  
 Ἄγαμεμνόσιος παῖς.  
 ὦ μέλεος, μητρὸς ὄτ' ἐκ  
 840 χρυσεοπηγήτων φαρέων

820 τεμεῖν Porson: τέμνειν C

823 τόδ' αὖ κακούργων

Weil: τὸ δ' αὖ κακούργεῖν (κακούργον γρσ) C

824-5 παράνοι' Ἄϊδα Willink: παράνοια· θανάτου C

## ORESTES

That exploit is no exploit, to cut  
a parent's flesh with fire-forged violence;  
and to display the sword, dark with blood,  
to the rays of the sun—  
this is the elaborately dressed godlessness of knaves,  
and the mad behavior of fools.

For<sup>21</sup> in fear of death

Tyndareus' luckless daughter shrieked  
"No, my son: unhallowed is the deed you dare to do,  
killing your mother! Do not, by honoring  
a father's benefit, fasten on yourself  
disgrace for evermore!"

What malady, what tears,  
what pitiful fate is greater in the world  
than to take a mother's blood upon one's hands?  
From doing such a deed  
he has been driven wild with fits of madness,  
the Eumenides' quarry, his darting eyes  
rolling in fear,  
he, Agamemnon's son.  
Unhappy man: when from his mother's  
robes of golden weave he saw

<sup>21</sup> The words of those on the point of death were thought to be inspired, hence Clytaemestra's admonition has probative force here.

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826-7 *τάλαινα*. <sup>2</sup>A Willink: *τάλαινα* C

836 *φόβον* Koenen dubitanter, Diggle: *φόβω* vel *φόνω* fere C

839 *ὄτ' ἐκ* Willink: *ὄτε* C

## EURIPIDES

μαστὸν ὑπερτέλλοντ' ἐσιδὼν  
σφάγιον ἔθετο  
ματέρα, πατρώων παθέων ἀμοιβάν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

845 γυναῖκες, ἧ που τῶνδ' ἀφώρμηται δόμων  
τλήμων Ὀρέστης θεομανεῖ λύσση δαμείς;

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἦκιστα· πρὸς δ' Ἀργεῖον οἴχεται λεῶν  
[ψυχῆς ἀγῶνα τὸν προκείμενον πέρι  
δώσων, ἐν ᾧ ζῆν ἢ θανεῖν ὑμᾶς χρεῶν].

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἴμοι· τί χρήμ' ἔδρασε; τίς δ' ἔπεισέ νιν;

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

850 Πυλάδης· ἔοικε δ' οὐ μακρὰν ὄδ' ἄγγελος  
λέξειν τὰ κείθεν σοῦ κασιγνήτου πέρι.

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

[ὦ τλήμων, ὦ δύστηνε τοῦ στρατηλάτου]  
Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖ, πότνι' Ἠλέκτρα, λόγους  
ἄκουσον οὓς σοι δυστυχεῖς ἦκω φέρων.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

855 αἰαῖ, διοιχόμεσθα· δῆλος εἶ λόγῳ.  
[κακῶν γὰρ ἦκεις, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἄγγελος.]

847-8 del. Willink (848 iam Kirchhoff)

852 del. Paley

856 del. Brunck

ORESTES

the breast rise to his gaze,  
he slaughtered his mother,  
making requital for his father's woes.

*Enter ELECTRA from the house.*

ELECTRA

Women, has Orestes set out from home, overcome by a fit  
of god-sent madness?

CHORUS LEADER

No: he has set off for the Argive assembly [to engage in  
the present life struggle in which you two must either live  
or die].

ELECTRA

Ah, ah! Why did he do that? Who persuaded him?

CHORUS LEADER

Pylades. But it looks as if this bringer of news will soon tell  
what happened there concerning your brother.

*Enter by Eisodos B an old man as MESSENGER.*

MESSENGER

[Poor woman, unhappy general's child,] Agamemnon's  
daughter, lady Electra, hear the unfortunate tale that I  
have come to bring you.

ELECTRA

Ah, ah, we are done for! Your words made all plain. [You  
come, it seems, as a bearer of bad news.]

## EURIPIDES

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ψήφῳ Πελασγῶν σὸν κασίγνητον θανείν  
καὶ σ', ὦ τάλαιν', ἔδοξε τῆδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἶμοι· προσῆλθεν ἐλπίς, ἦν φοβουμένη  
860 πάλαι τὸ μέλλον ἐξετηκόμην γόοις.  
ἀτὰρ τίς ἀγών, τίνες ἐν Ἀργείοις λόγοι  
καθεῖλον ἡμᾶς καπεκύρωσαν θανείν;  
λέγ', ὦ γεραιέ· πότερα λευσίμῳ χερὶ  
ἢ διὰ σιδήρου πνεῦμ' ἀπορρηξαί με δεῖ,  
865 κοινὰς ἀδελφῶ συμφορὰς κεκτημένην;

## ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐτύγχανον μὲν ἀγρόθεν πυλῶν ἔσω  
βαίνων, πυθέσθαι δεόμενος τά τ' ἀμφὶ σοῦ  
τά τ' ἀμφ' Ὀρέστον· σῶ γὰρ εὐνοίαν πατρὶ  
αἰέ ποτ' εἶχον, καὶ μ' ἔφερβε σὸς δόμος  
870 πένητα μὲν, χρῆσθαι δὲ γενναῖον φίλοις.  
ὄρῳ δ' ὄχλον στείχοντα καὶ θάσσοντ' ἄκραν,  
οὗ φασι πρῶτον Δαναὸν Αἰγύπτῳ δίκας  
διδόντ' ἀθροῖσαι λαὸν ἐς κοινὰς ἔδρας.  
ἀστῶν δὲ δὴ τιν' ἠρόμην ἄθροισμ' ἰδών·  
875 Τί καινὸν Ἄργει; μῶν τι πολεμίων πάρα  
ἄγγελμ' ἀνεπτέρωκε Δαναϊδῶν πόλιν;  
ὁ δ' εἶπ'· Ὀρέστην κείνον οὐχ ὄρας πέλας  
στείχοντ', ἀγῶνα θανάσιμον δραμούμενον;  
ὄρῳ δ' ἄελπτον φάσμ', ὃ μήποτ' ὄφελον,  
880 Πυλάδην τε καὶ σὸν σύγγονον στείχονθ' ὁμοῦ,

## ORESTES

### MESSENGER

By the vote of the Pelasgians it was resolved that you, poor woman, and your brother must die today.

### ELECTRA

Ah, ah! It has come, what I expected! Fear of this made me lament my future! But what was the trial like? What speeches made before the Argives destroyed us and ratified our death sentence? Tell me, old sir: must I breathe my last by stoning or by the sword, sharing in my brother's misfortunes?

### MESSENGER

I happened to be making my way from the country to the citadel since I wanted to learn your situation and that of your brother. I always felt good will toward your father: your house gave me sustenance, a poor man, to be sure, but one who treats his friends honorably. I saw a crowd that came and took their seats on the hill where they say that Danaus, prosecuted by Aegyptus, first gathered the people and made them sit together. I saw this gathering and asked one of the townsmen, "What's happening now at Argos? Has some message from enemies set the city of Danaus' sons aflutter?" And he said, "Don't you see Orestes approaching over there? He is about to run a deadly race."

I saw an apparition I did not expect, one I wish I had never seen: Pylades and your brother were walking along

## EURIPIDES

τὸν μὲν κατηφῆ καὶ παρειμένον νόσῳ,  
τὸν δ' ὥστ' ἀδελφὸν ἴσα φίλῳ λυπούμενον,  
νόσημα κηδεύοντα παιδαγωγία.

- ἐπεὶ δὲ πλήρης ἐγένετ' Ἀργείων ὄχλος,  
885 κῆρυξ ἀναστὰς εἶπε· Τίς χρήζει λέγειν,  
πότερον Ὀρέστην κατθανεῖν ἢ μὴ χρεῶν,  
μητροκτονοῦντα; καπὶ τῷδ' ἀνίσταται  
Ταλθύβιος, ὃς σῶ πατρὶ συνεπόρθει Φρύγας.  
ἔλεξε δ', ὑπὸ τοῖς δυναμένοισιν ὧν αἰεί,  
890 διχόμυθα, πατέρα μὲν σὸν ἐκπαγλούμενος,  
σὸν δ' οὐκ ἐπαινῶν σύγγονον, καλοὺς κακοὺς  
λόγους ἐλίσσων, ὅτι καθισταίη νόμους  
ἔς τοὺς τεκόντας οὐ καλοῦς· τὸ δ' ὄμμ' αἰεὶ  
φαιδρωπὸν ἐδίδου τοῖσιν Αἰγίσθου φίλοις.  
895 τὸ γὰρ γένος τοιοῦτον· ἐπὶ τὸν εὐτυχῆ  
πηδῶσ' αἰεὶ κήρυκες· ὅδε δ' αὐτοῖς φίλος,  
ὃς ἂν δύνηται πόλεος ἔν τ' ἀρχαῖσιν ἦ.  
ἐπὶ τῷδε δ' ἠγόρευε Διομήδης ἀναξ·  
οὗτος κτανεῖν μὲν οὔτε σ' οὔτε σύγγονον  
900 εἶα, φυγῆ δὲ ζημιοῦντας εὖσεβεῖν.  
ἐπερρόθησαν δ' οἱ μὲν ὡς καλῶς λέγοι,  
οἱ δ' οὐκ ἐπήνον.

- καπὶ τῷδ' ἀνίσταται  
ἀνὴρ τις ἀθυρόγλωσσος, ἰσχύων θράσει·  
[Ἀργεῖος οὐκ Ἀργεῖος, ἠναγκασμένος,  
905 θορύβῳ τε πίσυνος κάμαθῆι παρρησία,  
πιθανὸς ἔτ' αὐτοὺς περιβαλεῖν κακῶ τινι.  
ὅταν γὰρ ἠδύς τις λόγοις φρονῶν κακῶς



## ORESTES

together, the latter downcast and slack-limbed with his disease, the former, like a brother, sharing his friend's distress in equal measure and caring for his malady by leading him along as if he were a child.

When the Argive assembly had fully gathered, a herald got up and said, "Who wishes to speak about whether Orestes should die for killing his mother, or be allowed to live?" At this Talthybius got up, who had helped your father destroy the Phrygians. He is subservient to whoever is in power, and so he spoke ambiguously, greatly admiring your father but dispraising your brother by whirling to and fro words fair-seeming and base: Orestes, he said, was establishing a bad precedent toward parents. He kept turning an obsequious face toward Aegisthus' friends. That is what his kind are like. Heralds are always leaping over to join those in prosperity: whoever has power in the city and enjoys high office is their friend.

After him king Diomedes spoke. He was opposed to killing either you or your brother but said that exiling you would satisfy piety's demands. The crowd murmured in response, some saying that the advice was good, others showing disapproval.

Then there stood up a man with no check on his tongue, strong in his brashness; [he was an Argive but no Argive, suborned, relying on noise from the crowd and the obtuse license of his tongue, persuasive enough to involve them in the future in some misfortune. When someone of pleasing speech but without sense persuades the people, it is a great

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895-7 del. Dindorf

904-13 del. Hartung

906 ἀστούς Valckenaer

907 τις Musgrave: τοῖς C

- πείθῃ τὸ πλῆθος, τῇ πόλει κακὸν μέγα·  
 ὅσοι δὲ σὺν νῶ χρηστὰ βουλευούσ' αἰεί,  
 910 κὰν μὴ παραντίκ', αὐθίς εἰσι χρήσιμοι  
 πόλει. θεᾶσθαι δ' ᾧδε χρῆ τὸν προστάτην  
 ἰδόνθ'· ὅμοιον γὰρ τὸ χρῆμα γίγνεται  
 τῶ τοὺς λόγους λέγοντι καὶ τιμωμένῳ.]  
 ὃς εἶπ' Ὀρέστην καὶ σ' ἀποκτείνει πέτραις  
 915 βάλλοντας· ὑπὸ δ' ἔτεινε Τυνδάρεως λόγους  
 [τῶ σφῶ κατακτείνονται τοιούτους λέγειν].  
 ἄλλος δ' ἀναστὰς ἔλεγε τῶδ' ἐναντία,  
 μορφῇ μὲν οὐκ εὐωπός, ἀνδρείος δ' ἀνὴρ,  
 ὀλιγάκις ἄστῃ κἀγορᾶς χραίνων κύκλον,  
 920 αὐτουργός, οἷπερ καὶ μόνοι σφάζουσι γῆν,  
 ξυνετὸς δὲ χωρεῖν ὁμόσε τοῖς λόγοις θέλων,  
 ἀκέραιον ἀνεπίπληκτον ἡσκηκῶς βίον·  
 ὃς εἶπ' Ὀρέστην παῖδα τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος  
 στεφανοῦν, ὃς ἠθέλησε τιμωρεῖν πατρί,  
 925 κακὴν γυναικα κᾶθεον κατακτανών,  
 ἣ κείν' ἀφήρει, μὴθ' ὀπλίζεσθαι χέρα  
 μῆτε στρατεύειν ἐκλιπόντα δώματα,  
 εἰ τᾶνδον οἰκουρήμαθ' οἱ λελειμμένοι  
 φθεροῦσιν, ἀνδρῶν εὐνιδας λωβώμενοι.  
 930 καὶ τοῖς γε χρηστοῖς εὖ λέγειν ἐφαίνετο·  
 κούδεις ἔτ' εἶπε. σὸς δ' ἐπήλθε σύγγονος,  
 ἔλεξε δ'· ὦ γῆν Ἰνάχου κεκτημένοι,  
 [πάλαι Πελασγοί, Δαναῖδαι δεύτερον,]

913 τῶ τ' ἰωμένῳ Musgrave

## ORESTES

misfortune for the city. But those who always give good counsel with intelligence are useful to the city in the long run, if not immediately. One should look at the leader this way: the same thing applies to the public speaker as to the holder of offices;] he proposed putting you and Orestes to death by stoning. But it was Tyndareus who had supplied the arguments [for the man trying to kill you to deliver, like this].

Another man got up and made precisely the opposite proposal. He was not handsome to look at but a brave man, one who rarely had anything to do with the city or the market circle, a man who farmed with his own hands, the sort who alone keep the land from destruction, yet clever enough to grapple in argument when he wanted: he has lived a life of integrity, above reproach. His proposal was that Orestes, son of Agamemnon, should be given a garland<sup>22</sup> for being willing to avenge his father by killing a wicked and godless woman. This woman, he said, was depriving us of all this: there would be no more taking the sword in the hand, no more leaving home to go on campaign if the men left behind would then subvert domestic order by outrageously seducing the soldiers' wives. The better sort of people thought his proposal was good.

No one else spoke. But your brother came forward and said, "You possessors of the land of Inachus, [formerly Pelasgians, later sons of Danaus,] it was in defense of you

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<sup>22</sup> Like an athletic victor or a public benefactor.

916 del. Weil

929 *φθερούσω* Wecklein: *φθείρονσω* C

933 del. Musgrave

## EURIPIDES

- ὑμῖν ἀμύνων οὐδὲν ἦσσον ἢ πατρὶ  
 935 ἔκτεινα μητέρ'. εἰ γὰρ ἀρσένων φόνος  
 ἔσται γυναιξὶν ὅσιος, οὐ φθάνοιτ' ἔτ' ἂν  
 θνήσκοντες, ἢ γυναιξὶ δουλεύειν χρεών.  
 [τοῦναντίον δὲ δράσετ' ἢ δρᾶσαι χρεών  
 νῦν μὲν γὰρ ἢ προδοῦσα λέκτρ' ἐμοῦ πατρὸς  
 940 τέθνηκεν· εἰ δὲ δὴ κατακτενεῖτ' ἐμέ,  
 ὁ νόμος ἀνείται, κοῦ φθάνοι θνήσκων τις ἄν  
 ὡς τῆς γε τόλμης οὐ σπάνις γενήσεται.]  
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔπειθ' ὄμιλον, εὖ δοκῶν λέγειν  
 νικᾷ δ' ἐκείνος ὁ κακὸς ἐν πλήθει χερῶν,  
 945 ὃς ἠγόρευσε σύγγονον σέ τε κτανεῖν.  
 μόλις δ' ἔπεισε μὴ πετρούμενος θανεῖν  
 τλήμων Ὀρέστης· αὐτόχειρι δὲ σφαγῇ  
 ὑπέσχετ' ἐν τῇδ' ἡμέρᾳ λείψει βίον  
 σὺν σοί. πορεύει δ' αὐτὸν ἐκκλήτων ἄπο  
 950 Πυλάδης δακρύων, σὺν δ' ὁμαρτοῦσιν φίλοι  
 κλαίοντες, οἰκτίροντες· ἔρχεται δέ σοι  
 πικρὸν θέαμα καὶ πρόσοψις ἀθλία.  
 ἀλλ' εὐτρέπιζε φάσγαν ἢ βρόχον δέρη,  
 ὡς δεῖ λιπεῖν σε φέγγος· ἠγύγεια δὲ  
 955 οὐδέν σ' ἐπωφέλησεν, οὐδ' ὁ Πύθιος  
 τρίποδα καθίζων Φοῖβος, ἀλλ' ἀπώλεσεν.

## [ΧΟΡΟΣ

ᾧ δυστάλαινα παρθέν', ὡς ξυνηρεφὲς  
 πρόσωπον ἐς γῆν σὸν βαλοῦσ' ἄφθογγος εἶ,  
 ὡς ἐς στεναγμοὺς καὶ γόους δραμουμένη.]

## ORESTES

no less than of my father that I killed my mother. For if it is allowable for women to kill their menfolk, you had better hurry up and die or you must be slaves to women. [You will be doing the opposite of what you should be doing. For at present she who betrayed my father's bed lies dead. But if you put me to death, established custom is nullified and one might as well be dead: for there will be no lack of this kind of effrontery.]”

Yet he did not persuade the crowd, sensible though his speech seemed. That fellow, the base one, was victorious in the counting of hands, the one who proposed putting you and your brother to death. Poor Orestes barely persuaded them that he should not be stoned to death. He promised to leave his life by his own hand today, and you with him. Pylades, in tears, is bringing him back from the assembly, and his friends are with him weeping and lamenting. It is as an unwelcome spectacle and a vision of misery that he comes to you.

So get the sword ready, or the noose for your neck, since you must leave the daylight behind. Your noble birth has done you no good, nor has Pythian Phoebus who sits on the tripod: instead he has destroyed you.

*Exit MESSENGER by Eisodos B.*

### [CHORUS LEADER

O unfortunate maiden, how downcast to earth is your clouded countenance! How silent you are as if about to break forth into wailing and lamentation!]

938-42 del. Wecklein

955 Πύθιον West

944 χερῶν Wecklein: λέγων fere C

957-9 del. Kirchhoff cl. Σ

## EURIPIDES

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

960 κατάρχομαι στεναγμόν, ὦ Πελασγία,  
τιθείσα λευκὸν ὄνυχα διὰ παρηίδων,  
αἵματηρὸν ἄταν,  
κτύπον τε κρατός, ὃν ἔλαχ' ἄ κατὰ χθονὸς  
νερτέρων καλλίπαις ἄνασσα.

965 ἰαχείτω δὲ γὰ Κυκλωπία,  
σίδαρον ἐπὶ κára τιθείσα κούριμον,  
πήματ' οἴκων.

ἔλεος ἔλεος ὄδ' ἔρχεται  
τῶν θανουμένων ὑπερ,

970 στρατηλατᾶν Ἑλλάδος ποτ' ὄντων.

ἀντ.

βέβακε γὰρ βέβακεν, οἴχεται τέκνων  
πρόπασα γέννα Πέλοπος ὃ τ' ἐπὶ μακαρίοις  
ζήλος ὢν ποτ' οἴκοις·

φθόνος νιν εἶλε θεόθεν ἃ τε δυσμενῆς

975 φοινία ψήφος ἐν πολίταις.

ἰώ, ὦ πανδάκρυτ' ἐφαιμέρων

ἔθνη πολύπινα, λεύσσεθ' ὡς παρ' ἐλπίδας  
μοῖρα βαίνει.

ἕτερα δ' ἕτερον ἀμείβεται

960<sup>n</sup> Xo. Weil: Ἥλ. C: Ἥλ. καὶ Xo. Willink

961 λευκᾶν ὄνυχι post Hartung (λευκῶν) Diggle

964 καλλίπαις ἄνασσα Heimsoeth: Περσέφασσα καλλί-  
παις θεά C

## ORESTES

### CHORUS

I lead off the lamentation, O Pelasgian land,  
drawing my white nails along my cheeks  
in bloody disfigurement  
and beating my head, an act that falls to the lot of her  
below,  
the fair-child goddess who rules the dead.<sup>23</sup>  
Let the Cyclopean land<sup>24</sup> loudly proclaim,  
sheering its tresses with iron blade,  
the house's woes!  
Lamentation, lamentation here comes forth  
for those doomed to die,  
who once led the hosts of Greece!

Perished, perished and gone  
is the whole clan of Pelops and the enviable lot  
that once rested on his blessed house.  
It was destroyed by the ill will of heaven and the hateful  
murderous vote of the citizens.  
Ah, ah, you race of mortals, full of tears, trouble-laden,  
see how fate  
defeats your expectations!  
Different woes come by turns to different men

<sup>23</sup> Persephone.

<sup>24</sup> The fortifications of Mycenae and Tiryns were thought to have been built by the Cyclopes.

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967 *πήματ'* Musgrave: *τῶν Ἀτρειδῶν π-* fere C

973 *ζῆλος . . . οἴκοις* Musgrave: *ζηλωτὸς . . . οἶκος* C

979 *ἕτερον* West: *ἑτέροις* C

## EURIPIDES

- 980 πῆματ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῶ,  
βροτῶν δ' ὁ πᾶς ἀστάθμητος αἰών.

< ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ >

- μόλοιμι τὰν οὐρανοῦ  
μέσον χθονός <τε> τεταμέναν  
αἰωρήμασιν  
πέτραν ἀλύσεσιν χρυσείαις,  
φερομέναν δίναισι  
βῶλον ἐξ Ὀλύμπου,  
985 ἴν' ἐν θρήνοισιν ἀναβοάσω  
γέροντι πατέρι Ταντάλῳ,  
ὃς ἔτεκεν ἔτεκε γενέτορας ἐμέθεν, δόμων  
ἄς κατείδον ἄτας·  
ποτανὸν μὲν δίωγμα πῶλων,  
990 τεθριπποβάμονι στόλῳ  
Πέλοψ ὅτ' ἐπὶ πελάγεσι διε-  
δίφρευσε Μυρτίλου φόνον  
δικῶν ἐς οἶδμα πόντου,  
λευκοκύμοσιν πρὸς Γεραιστίαις  
ποντίων σάλων

982n <Ηλ.> Weil

982b <τε> Hermann

984a δίναις <ἀε>ί Diggle

988 ἄς Burges: οἶ C

989 ποτανὸν Porson: τὸ πτανὸν C

991a ὅτ' ἐπὶ Burges: ὅτε vel ὁπότε C



## ORESTES

over the length of days,  
and beyond our power to reckon is the whole course of  
human life.

### < ELECTRA >

O that I might go  
to the rock hung aloft  
between heaven <and> earth  
from golden chains,  
a rocky mass from Olympus  
borne on the heavens' rotation!<sup>25</sup>  
There in lamentation would I loudly proclaim  
to old Tantalus, my ancestor,  
who sired, who sired my forefathers,  
what ruin I have seen in the house.  
First, the flight of winged colts  
when with chariot and four  
Pelops rode over the waves  
and threw Myrtilus to his death  
in the swelling deep,  
driving his chariot  
from the surf

<sup>25</sup> See above, notes to lines 7 and 10. Tantalus' rock (here a fragment of Olympus) and he himself are held aloft by means partly poetic and mythical (for the golden chains see *Iliad* 8.19) and partly redolent of fifth-century science (*δίνη*, "rotation," was a favorite word of fifth-century cosmological speculation). To explain how a rock could hover perpetually over Tantalus' head both the rock and Tantalus are conceived as rotating about Olympus like heavenly bodies.

## EURIPIDES

- 995 αἰόσιν ἄρματεύσας  
 ὄθεν δόμοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς  
 ἦλθ' ἀρὰ πολύστονος,  
 λόχευμα ποιμνίοισι Μαιάδος τόκου,  
 τὸ χρυσόμαλλον ἀρνὸς ὀπότη<sup>2</sup>  
 ἐγένετο τέρας ὁλοὸν Ἀτρείος
- 1000 <ἀγροῖς ἐν> ἵπποβώτα  
 ὄθεν Ἔρις τό τε πτερωτὸν  
 ἀλίου μετέβαλεν ἄρμα  
 τὰν πρὸς ἐσπέραν κέλευθον  
 οὐρανοῦ, προσαρμόσασα  
 χιονόπωνλον Ἀῶ,
- 1005 ἐπταπόρου τε δράμημα  
 Πλειάδος εἰς ὁδὸν ἄλλαν [Ζεὺς μεταβάλλει].  
 †τῶνδ' ἐτ' ἀμείβει θανάτους θανάτων  
 τά τ' ἐπώνυμα δειπνα Θυέστου  
 λέκτρα τε Κρήσσης Ἀερόπας δολί-
- 1010 ας δολίοισι γάμοις· τὰ πανύστατα δ'

1000 <ἀγροῖς ἐν> Diggle (<ἐν> iam Willink)

1004 χιονόπωνλον West: μονόπωνλον ἐς C

1006 Ζεὺς del. Weil, μεταβάλλει del. Biehl

1007 τῶ δ' ἔπ' Willink (τῶ δ' iam Musgrave)

<sup>26</sup> In the familiar version Pelops wins his bride from Oenomaus of Elis (in the Peloponnesus, near Olympia), whose custom is to pursue his daughter's suitors in a chariot and kill them if he can overtake them. Pelops bribes Oenomaus' charioteer Myrtilus to sabotage his master's chariot but then cheats him of his reward by throwing him off a cliff. Here Pelops has a winged char-

## ORESTES

by the white-waved beach of Geraestus.<sup>26</sup>  
From this deed for my house  
came a curse laden with groaning,  
when, brought to birth in the flocks of the son of Maia,  
there came the famous lamb with fleece of gold,  
a portent of ruin  
<in the fields> of horse-pasturing Atreus.<sup>27</sup>  
Thereupon Strife changed  
the sun's winged car  
to a westward course,  
yoking to it  
Dawn with her snowy horses,  
changed the path of the seven-starred  
Pleiades onto a different road [Zeus changed it].  
And now she brings deaths in requital for deaths,  
the feast named for Thyestes,  
and the Cretan Aërope's bed of love,  
crafty woman in a crafty marriage. Last,

iot, and he appears to be crossing the Aegean and landing at Geraestus in Euboea. We do not know what role Myrtilus (whose name suggests Asia Minor or Lesbos) had in this story before his death in the waves.

<sup>27</sup> The son of Maia is Hermes, who was Myrtilus' father. The lamb caused strife between Atreus, to whom it belonged, and his brother Thyestes, who seduced Atreus' wife to win possession of it, since it marked its possessor as rightful king. In revenge Atreus killed Thyestes' children and served them to him at a feast. In some versions of the story, the sun changes course (to its present east to west path) in horror at these deeds; in others (and perhaps here) Thyestes says he will not relinquish the lamb unless the sun changes course, which it proceeds to do, ratifying Atreus' claim to the throne.

## EURIPIDES

εἰς ἐμὲ συγγενέταν τ' ἐμὸν ἦλθε δόμων  
πολυπόνοισ ἀνάγκαις.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὄδε σὸς σύγγονος ἔρπει  
ψήφῳ θανάτου κατακυρωθείς,  
ὃ τε πιστότατος πάντων Πυλάδης,  
1015 ἰσάδελφος ἀνὴρ, <δεῦρ' > ἰθύνων  
νοσερὸν κῶλον,  
ποδὶ κηδοσύνῳ παράσειρος.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἷ ἄγω· πρὸ τύμβου γάρ σ' ὀρώσ' ἀναστένω,  
ἀδελφέ, καὶ πάροιθε νερτέρον πυρᾶς.  
1020 οἷ ἄγῳ μάλ' αὐθις· ὡς σ' ἰδοῦσ' ἐν ὄμμασιν  
πανυστάτην πρόσσοψιν ἐξέστην φρενῶν.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ σίγ' ἀφείσα τοὺς γυναικείους γόους  
στέρξεις τὰ κρανθέντ'; οἰκτρὰ μὲν τάδ', ἀλλ' ὅμως  
[φέρειν σ' ἀνάγκη τὰς παρεστώσας τύχας].

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1025 καὶ πῶς σιωπῶ; φέγγος εἰσορᾶν θεοῦ  
τόδ' οὐκέθ' ἡμῖν τοῖς ταλαιπώροις μέτα.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σὺ μὴ μ' ἀπόκτειν'. ἄλις ὑπ' Ἀργείας χερὸς  
τέθνηχ' ὁ τλήμων· τὰ δὲ παρόντ' ἔα κακά.

1011 συγγενέταν τ' Willink: καὶ γενέταν C ἦλθε Brunck,  
Porson: ἦλυθε C

## ORESTES

against me and my brother has it come  
by the toil-laden doom of our house.

*Enter by Eisodos B ORESTES and PYLADES supporting  
him.*

### CHORUS LEADER

But look, here comes your brother, a death sentence  
passed against him, and loyal Pylades, a man like a brother,  
who on caring feet guides Orestes' infirm step <toward us>  
like a trace horse.

### ELECTRA

Ah, ah! I see you in front of your tomb, brother, and before  
the pyre of the dead, and I weep! Ah, ah yet again! My eyes  
take their last look of you, and I am not right in my mind!

### ORESTES

Stop these womanish laments and endure in silence what  
has been ordained! To be sure, these things call for tears,  
but nevertheless! [You must endure the present misfor-  
tunes.]

### ELECTRA

How can I keep still? We in our misery can no longer look  
on the god's sunlight here.

### ORESTES

Don't *you* be the death of me: I am already dead enough at  
the hands of the Argives. Let my present woes be.

---

1015 <δευρ'> Willink

1016 κῶλον unus cod., conl. Elmsley: κ- 'Ορέστου ceteri codd.

1019 νερτέρων πύλης Jacobs

1024 del. Kirchhoff cl. Σ

## EURIPIDES

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1030 ὦ μέλεος ἤβης σῆς, Ὀρέστα, καὶ πότμου  
θανάτου τ' ἄωρου. ζῆν ἐχρῆν σ', ὅτ' οὐκέτ' εἶ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν μοι περιβάλης ἀνανδρίαν,  
ἐς δάκρυα πορθμεύουσ' ὑπομνήσει κακῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

θανούμεθ'· οὐχ οἶόν τε μὴ στένειν κακά.  
πᾶσιν γὰρ οἰκτρὸν ἢ φίλη ψυχὴ βροτοῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1035 τόδ' ἡμαρ ἡμῖν κύριον· δεῖ δ' ἢ βρόχους  
ἄπτειν κρεμαστοὺς ἢ ξίφος θήγειν χερί.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σύ νύν μ', ἀδελφέ, μὴ τις Ἀργείων κτάνη,  
ὑβρισμα θέμενος τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος δόμον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1040 ἄλις τὸ μητρὸς αἵμ'· ἐγὼ δέ σ' οὐ κτενῶ,  
ἄλλ' αὐτόχειρι θνήσχ' ὅτῳ βούλη τρόπῳ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔσται τάδ'· οὐδὲν σοῦ ξίφει λελείψομαι.  
ἄλλ' ἀμφιθεῖναι σῆ δέρη θέλω χέρας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τέρπου κενὴν ὄνησιν, εἰ τερπνὸν τόδε  
θανάτου πέλας βεβῶσι περιβαλεῖν χέρας.

1032 ὑπομνήσει Musgrave: ὑπόμνησιν C

ORESTES

ELECTRA

How luckless you are, Orestes, for your youth, your fate, and your untimely death! You ought to be living, but you live no more!

ORESTES

Don't cover me with cowardice by making me weep with the recitation of my woes!

ELECTRA

I am about to die and cannot help lamenting my woes. All mortals find their own dear lives a matter for tears.

ORESTES

This is the day fixed for us: our hands must either fasten hanging nooses or sharpen a sword.

ELECTRA

*You* kill me then, brother, not one of the Argives, which would be an insult to the house of Agamemnon.

ORESTES

My mother's blood is enough. I shall not kill you: rather die by your own hand any way you like.

ELECTRA

It shall be so: I shall ply the sword and follow close after you. But I want to put my arms about your neck.

ORESTES

Enjoy the empty pleasure of an embrace, if pleasure it is to those so close to death.

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<sup>1041</sup> ξίφει Wecklein: -ovs C

## EURIPIDES

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1045 ὦ φίλτατ', ὦ ποθεινὸν ἠδιστόν τ' ἔχων  
τῆς σῆς ἀδελφῆς ὄμμα καὶ ψυχὴ μία.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔκ τοί μ' ἔτηξας· καί σ' ἀμείψασθαι θέλω  
φιλότῃτι χειρῶν. τί γὰρ ἔτ' αἰδοῦμαι τάλας;  
[ὦ στέρν' ἀδελφῆς, ὦ φίλον πρόσπτυγμ' ἐμόν,  
1050 τὰδ' ἀντὶ παίδων καὶ γαμηλίου λέχους  
προσφθέγματ' ἀμφοῖν τοῖς τάλαιπώροις πάρα.]

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φευ·

πῶς ἂν ξίφος νῶ ταυτόν, εἰ θέμις, κτάνοι  
καὶ μνημα δέξαιθ' ἔν, κέδρου τεχνάσματα;

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἠδιστ' ἂν εἴη ταυθ'. ὄρας δὲ δὴ φίλων  
1055 ὡς ἐσπανίσμεθ', ὥστε κοινωνεῖν τάφου.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐδ' εἶφ' ὑπὲρ σοῦ μὴ θανεῖν σπουδὴν ἔχων  
Μενέλαος ὁ κακός, ὁ προδότης τοῦμοῦ πατρός;

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐδ' ὄμμ' ἔδειξεν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ σκήπτροις ἔχων  
τὴν ἐλπίδ' ἠύλαβεῖτο μὴ σώξειν φίλους.  
1060 ἀλλ' εἰ' ὅπως γενναῖα κάγαμέμνονος  
δράσαντε κατθανούμεθ' ἀξιώτατα.

1046 ὄμμα Tyrwhitt: ὄνομα C ψυχὴ μία Weil: -ην μίαν C

1047 μ' ἔτηξας unus cod., cóni. Bothe: με τήξεις ceteri codd.



ORESTES

ELECTRA

O dearest one, possessor of your sister's longed-for and dearest joy, one in soul with her!

ORESTES

You have made me melt, you know! I want to return your embrace. Why let myself, poor man that I am, be checked by shame? [O sister's bosom, O dearest of embraces to me, these words for both of us luckless ones take the place of children and the marriage bed.]

*They embrace, then separate.*

ELECTRA

Ah, how I wish, if it's right to ask, that the same sword could kill us both, and that a single tomb, carved in cedar wood, could receive our bodies!

ORESTES

That would be most welcome! But you see how short we are of kin: there's no one to bury us.

ELECTRA

Did he not even speak on your behalf to prevent your death, Menelaus the base, the betrayer of my father?

ORESTES

He didn't even show his face. His hopes are set on the kingship,<sup>28</sup> and he took care not to save his kin. But come now, see to it that before we die we may do noble deeds worthy

---

<sup>28</sup> Probably he means kingship over Argos as well as Sparta.

1049-51 del. Harberton (1051 iam Nauck, 1050-1 Oeri)

## EURIPIDES

καὶ γὰρ μὲν εὐγένειαν ἀποδείξω πόλει,  
 παίσας πρὸς ἦπαρ φασγάνῳ· σὲ δ' αὖ χρεῶν  
 ὅμοια πράσσειν τοῖς ἐμοῖς τολμήμασιν.

- 1065 Πυλάδῃ, σὺ δ' ἡμῖν τοῦ φόνου γενοῦ βραβεύς,  
 καὶ κατθανόντων εὖ περίστειλον δέμας  
 θάψον τε κοινῇ πρὸς πατρὸς τύμβον φέρων.  
 καὶ χαῖρ'· ἐπ' ἔργον δ', ὡς ὀράς, πορευόμαι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

- 1070 ἐπίσχος. ἐν μὲν πρῶτά σοι μομφὴν ἔχω,  
 εἰ ζῆν με χρήζειν σοῦ θανόντος ἥλπισας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί γὰρ προσήκει κατθανεῖν σ' ἐμοῦ μέτα;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἦρον; τί δὲ ζῆν σῆς ἑταιρίας ἄτερ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔκτανες σὺ μητέρ', ὡς ἐγὼ τάλας.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

σὺν σοί γε κοινῇ ταῦτὰ καὶ πάσχειν με δεῖ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 1075 ἀπόδος τὸ σῶμα πατρί, μὴ σύνθνησκέ μοι.  
 σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἔστι πόλις, ἐμοὶ δ' οὐκ ἔστι δῆ,  
 καὶ δῶμα πατρὸς καὶ μέγας πλοῦτου λιμῆν.  
 γάμων δὲ τῆς μὲν δυσπότημον τῆσδ' ἐσφάλης,  
 ἦν σοι κατηγγύησ' ἑταιρίαν σέβων
- 1080 σὺ δ' ἄλλο λέκτρον παιδοποίησαι λαβών,  
 κῆδος δὲ τοῦμὸν καὶ σὸν οὐκέτ' ἔστι δῆ.

ORESTES

of Agamemnon. I will show my nobility to the city by striking myself to the heart with the sword. Your brave deed must be just like mine.

Pylades, you must preside over our death: when we have died, clothe our bodies for burial, take us to our father's tomb, and bury us together. Farewell! As you see, I'm headed off to do the deed.

*He turns to go indoors.*

PYLADES

Stop! First, I have one complaint to make of you, that you suppose I will want to live when you are dead.

ORESTES

Why on earth must you die along with me?

PYLADES

What a question! Why must I *live* without your friendship?

ORESTES

You have not killed a mother, as I, poor wretch, have done.

PYLADES

Yes I have, together with you. Now I must suffer the same as you.

ORESTES

Take yourself back to your father, don't die with me. You have a city, while I have none, you have a father's house and the great refuge wealth provides. To be sure, you have lost your marriage to my ill-starred sister here, whom I gave you to keep in honor of our friendship. But take another wife and have children! Your marriage tie with me is over.

## EURIPIDES

ἀλλ', ὦ ποθεινὸν ὄμμ' ὀμιλίας ἐμῆς,  
χαῖρ'· οὐ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐστί τοῦτο, σοὶ γε μὴν·  
οἱ γὰρ θανόντες χαρμάτων τητώμεθα.

## ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

- 1085 ἦ πολὺν λέλειψαι τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων.  
μήθ' αἰμά μου δέξαιτο κάρπιμον πέδον,  
μὴ λαμπρὸς αἰθήρ, εἴ σ' ἐγὼ προδούς ποτε  
ἐλευθερώσας τοῦμὸν ἀπολίπομι σέ.  
καὶ συγκατέκτανον γάρ, οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι,  
1090 καὶ πάντ' ἐβούλευσ' ὦν σὺ νῦν τίνεις δίκας·  
καὶ ξυνθανεῖν οὖν δεῖ με σοὶ καὶ τῆδ' ὀμοῦ.  
ἐμὴν γὰρ αὐτήν, ἧς <γε> λέχος ἐπήνεσα,  
κρίνω δάμαρτα· τί γὰρ ἐρῶ καλὸν ποτε  
γῆν Δελφίδ' ἐλθῶν, Φωκέων ἀκρόπτολιν,  
1095 ὃς πρὶν μὲν ὑμᾶς δυστυχεῖν φίλος παρή,  
νῦν δ' οὐκέτ' εἰμὶ δυστυχοῦντί σοι φίλος;  
οὐκ ἔστιν· ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν κάμοι μέλει  
ἐπεὶ δὲ καθθανούμεθ', ἐς κοινούς λόγους  
ἔλθωμεν, ὡς ἂν Μενέλεως συνδυστυχή.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 1100 ὦ φίλτατ', εἰ γὰρ τοῦτο καθθάνοιμ' ἰδῶν.

## ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

πιθοῦ νυν, ἀνάμεινον δὲ φασγάνου τομάς.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μενῶ, τὸν ἐχθρὸν εἴ τι τιμωρήσομαι.

1092 <γε> Porson

ORESTES

So, friend I long to look upon, fare you well: you may fare well, though I cannot, since we who have died are stripped of all joys.

PYLADES

You have badly misjudged my thinking. May the fruitful earth not receive my blood, nor the bright upper air my spirit if I ever betray you and free myself by abandoning you! I joined in the killing and will not deny it, plotted the whole deed for which you are now being punished. So I also ought to die with you and with her. For since I consented to marry her, I consider her my wife. If I came to Delphi, the central city of the Phocians, what could I say to my credit, I who stood by you as a friend before your trouble but now that trouble visits you am your friend no longer? It cannot be: your fate is my concern as well. But since we are going to die, let us plan how Menelaus may suffer with us.

ORESTES

Dearest friend, if only I could see this happen and then die!

PYLADES

Do as I say then: wait a bit for the thrust of the sword.

ORESTES

I will wait if I can take revenge on an enemy.

EURIPIDES

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

σίγα νυν· ὡς γυναιξὶ πιστεύω βραχύ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μηδὲν τρέσης τάσδ'· ὡς πάρεις' ἡμῖν φίλαι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

1105 Ἑλένην κτάνωμεν, Μενέλεω λύπην πικράν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς; τὸ γὰρ ἔτοιμον ἦνεσ', εἴ γ' ἔσται καλῶς.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

σφάξαντες· ἐν δόμοις δὲ κρύπτεται σέθεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μάλιστα· καὶ δὴ πάντ' ἀποσφραγίζεται.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐκέθ', Ἄιδην νυμφίον κεκτημένη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1110 καὶ πῶς; ἔχει γὰρ βαρβάρους ὀπάονας.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τίνας; Φρυγῶν γὰρ οὐδέν' ἂν τρέσαιμ' ἐγώ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἴους ἐνόπτρων καὶ μύρων ἐπιστάτας.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τρυφὰς γὰρ ἤκει δεῦρ' ἔχουσα Τρωικάς;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡς Ἑλλὰς αὐτῇ σμικρὸν οἰκητήριον.

ORESTES

PYLADES

Softly then: I have little confidence in women.

ORESTES

Have no fear of these women: they are here as my friends.

PYLADES

Let's kill Helen and cause Menelaus sharp grief.

ORESTES

How? I approve your eagerness provided the outcome is successful.

PYLADES

Cut her throat. She is hiding in your house.

ORESTES

Yes. In fact she is putting the whole house under her seal.

PYLADES

She won't do that any longer: her new husband is Hades.

ORESTES

How can that be? She has foreign slaves.

PYLADES

What slaves? I'm not afraid of anyone from Phrygia.

ORESTES

Men fit to hold her mirror and myrrh bottles.

PYLADES

What? Has she brought luxuries with her from Troy?

ORESTES

Know this: Greece is too small an abode for her.

---

1106 ἦνεσ' Willink: ἔσττω C

EURIPIDES

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

1115 οὐδὲν τὸ δούλον πρὸς τὸ μὴ δούλον γένος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ μὴν τόδ' ἔρξας δις θανεῖν οὐχ ἄζομαι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐγὼ μὴν, σοί γε τιμωρούμενος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὸ πρᾶγμα δήλου καὶ πέραιν', ὅπως λέγεις.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

εἴσιμεν ἐς οἴκους δῆθεν ὡς θανούμενοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1120 ἔχω τοσοῦτον, τὰπίλοιπα δ' οὐκ ἔχω.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

γόους πρὸς αὐτὴν θησόμεσθ' ἂ πάσχομεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὥστ' ἐκδακρῦσαί γ' ἔνδοθεν κεχαρμένην.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

καὶ νῶν παρέσται ταῦθ' ἄπερ κείνη τότε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔπειτ' ἀγῶνα πῶς ἀγωνιούμεθα;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

1125 κρύπτ' ἐν πέπλοισι τοισίδ' ἔξομεν ξίφη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πρόσθεν δ' ὀπαδῶν τίς ὄλεθρος γενήσεται;



ORESTES

PYLADES

Slaves are nothing in comparison to free men.

ORESTES

Well, when I have done this, I do not shrink from dying twice.

PYLADES

Nor do I, provided I can avenge you.

ORESTES

Carry on and explain the deed: what do you mean?

PYLADES

We enter the house as if about to die.

ORESTES

That much I understand, the rest not.

PYLADES

We bewail our plight to her.

ORESTES

Yes, so that she will weep while inwardly being glad.

PYLADES

The same will be true for us as for her.

ORESTES

And how do we then fight our fight?

PYLADES

We'll have swords hidden in these garments of ours.

ORESTES

How will the attendants be got rid of first?

## EURIPIDES

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἐκκλήσομέν σφας ἄλλον ἄλλοσε στέγης.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ τόν γε μὴ σιγῶντ' ἀποκτείνειν χρεών.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

εἴτ' αὐτὸ δηλοῖ τοῦργον οἱ τείνειν χρεών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1130 Ἐλένην φονεύειν· μανθάνω τὸ σύμβολον.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἔγνωσ' ἄκουσον δ' ὡς καλῶς βουλευόμαι.  
 εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἐς γυναῖκα σωφρονεστέραν  
 ξίφος μεθείμεν, δυσκλεῆς ἂν ἦν φόνος·  
 νῦν δ' ὑπὲρ ἀπάσης Ἑλλάδος δώσει δίκην,  
 1135 ὧν πατέρας ἔκτειν', ὧν δ' ἀπώλεσεν τέκνα,  
 νύμφας τ' ἔθηκεν ὀρφανὰς ξυναόρων  
 ὀλολυγμὸς ἔσται, πῦρ τ' ἀνάψουσιν θεοῖς,  
 σοὶ πολλὰ κάμοι κέδν' ἀρώμενοι τυχεῖν,  
 κακῆς γυναικὸς οὐνεχ' αἶμ' ἐπράξαμεν.

1140 ὁ μητροφόντης δ' οὐ καλῇ ταύτην κτανών,  
 ἀλλ' ἀπολιπὼν τοῦτ' ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον πεσῆ,  
 Ἐλένης λεγόμενος τῆς πολυκτόνου φονεύς.  
 οὐ δεῖ ποτ', οὐ δεῖ Μενέλεων μὲν εὐτυχεῖν,  
 τὸν σὸν δὲ πατέρα καὶ σὲ κάδελφὴν θανεῖν,  
 1145 μητέρα τ' . . . ἐὼ τοῦτ'· οὐ γὰρ εὐπρεπὲς λέγειν  
 δόμους δ' ἔχειν σουσ δι' Ἀγαμέμνονος δόρυ  
 λαβόντα νύμφην· μὴ γὰρ οὖν ζώην ἔτι,  
 εἰ μὴ 'π' ἐκείνη φάσγανον σπάσω μέλαν.

ORESTES

PYLADES

We'll lock them up in various rooms of the palace.

ORESTES

Yes, and any who won't keep quiet we must kill.

PYLADES

Thereafter the task itself makes plain where we must go.

ORESTES

Yes, killing Helen. I understand what your words imply.

PYLADES

You take my meaning. But hear what a good plan I am concocting. If we were to take the sword to a woman of greater virtue, the bloodletting would bring disgrace on us. As things are, she'll be paying for her crimes against all of Hellas, those whose fathers she slew and whose sons she destroyed while depriving brides of their husbands. There will be shouts of joy, they will light altar fires for the gods and pray many blessings on your head and mine for killing a wicked woman! You won't be known as "the matricide" once you kill her: you'll leave all that behind for a better lot and be called "the killer of deadly Helen." It is not right, no it is not, that Menelaus should prosper while your father, your sister, and you perish, and your mother—but I leave that topic alone since it is a disgrace to speak of it—and that he should have your house, having got his wife back through Agamemnon's spear. May I live no longer if I don't draw my dark sword against her! Well, if we don't succeed

## EURIPIDES

- 1150 ἦν δ' οὖν τὸν Ἑλένης μὴ κατάσχωμεν φόνον,  
 πρήσαντες οἴκους τούσδε καθανούμεθα.  
 ἐνὸς γὰρ οὐ σφαλέντες ἕξομεν κλέος,  
 καλῶς θανόντες ἢ καλῶς σεσωμένοι.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

πάσαις γυναιξὶν ἀξία στυγεῖν ἔφν  
 ἢ Τυνδαρις παῖς, ἢ κατήσχυεν γένος.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 1155 φεῦ·  
 οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν κρεῖσσον ἢ φίλος σαφής,  
 οὐ πλοῦτος, οὐ τυραννίς· ἀλόγιστον δέ τοι  
 τὸ πλῆθος ἀντάλλαγμα γενναίου φίλου.  
 σὺ γὰρ τά τ' εἰς Αἴγισθον ἕξηῦρες κακὰ  
 καὶ πλησίον παρήσθα κινδύνων ἐμοί,  
 1160 νῦν τ' αὖ δίδως μοι πολεμίων τιμωρίαν  
 κοῦκ ἐκποδῶν εἶ· παύσομαί σ' αἰνῶν, ἐπεὶ  
 βάρος τι κὰν τῷδ' ἐστίν, αἰνεῖσθαι λίαν.  
 ἐγὼ δὲ πάντως ἐκπνέων ψυχὴν ἐμὴν  
 δράσας τι χρήζω τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐχθροὺς θανεῖν,  
 1165 ἵν' ἀνταναλώσω μὲν οἷ με προὔδοσαν,  
 στένωσι δ' οἵπερ κάμ' ἔθηκαν ἄθλιον.  
 Ἀγαμέμνονός τοι παῖς πέφυχ', ὃς Ἑλλάδος  
 ἦρξ' ἀξιοθής, οὐ τύραννος, ἀλλ' ὅμως  
 ῥώμην θεοῦ τιν' ἔσχ'· ὃν οὐ καταισχυνῶ  
 1170 δούλον παρασχὼν θάνατον, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρως  
 ψυχὴν ἀφήσω, Μενέλεων δὲ τείσομαι.  
 ἐνὸς γὰρ εἰ λαβοίμεθ', εὐτυχοῖμεν ἄν·

## ORESTES

in killing Helen, we'll set fire to this house and then perish. We will be successful at one or the other of these and win renown either by gloriously dying or by gloriously saving our lives.

### CHORUS LEADER

Tyndareus' daughter deserves the hatred of all women. She has disgraced her sex.

### ORESTES

Ah ah! There is nothing greater than a firm friend, not money, not kingly power! The value of a true friend is incalculably great!<sup>29</sup> It was you who devised death for Aegisthus and stood by me when danger was near, and here again you provide me with vengeance against my enemies: you won't run for cover. But I must stop praising you since excess in praise, as in other things, is irksome.

Now since I am in any case going to breathe out my life, I want to do something to my enemies before I die so that I can repay with destruction those who have betrayed me and so that those who have made me miserable may smart for it. I am, after all, the son of Agamemnon, who ruled Greece not by right of kingship but because he was thought deserving (though he did acquire a certain god-like might). I shall not bring disgrace on him by dying a slavish death. Rather I shall expend my life like a free man and punish Menelaus. For if I can grasp one of my goals, I

<sup>29</sup> Or "It would be a fool's bargain to take the favor of the crowd in exchange for a single true friend."

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1161 fort. *παύσομαι δ' αἰῶν σ'*

## EURIPIDES

- κέῖ ποθεν ἄελπτος παραπέσοι σωτηρία  
 κτανούσι μὴ θανούσιν, εὐχομαι τάδε.  
 1175 ὁ βούλομαι γάρ, ἦδὺ καὶ διὰ στόμα  
 πτηνοῖσι μύθοις ἀδαπάνως τέρψαι φρένα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγώ, κασίγνητ', αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἔχειν δοκῶ,  
 σωτηρίαν σοι τῶδέ τ' ἐκ τρίτων τ' ἐμοί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- θεοῦ λέγεις πρόνοιαν. ἀλλὰ ποῦ τόδε;  
 1180 ἐπεὶ τὸ συνετόν γ' οἶδα σῆ ψυχῇ παρόν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν, καὶ σὺ δεῦρο νοῦν ἔχε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λέγ'. ὡς τὸ μέλλειν ἀγάθ' ἔχει τίν' ἡδονήν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Ἐλένης κάτοισθα θυγατέρ'; εἰδότη' ἠρόμην.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἶδ', ἦν <γ'> ἔθρεψεν Ἑρμιόνην μήτηρ ἐμή.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

- 1185 αὕτη βέβηκε πρὸς Κλυταιμῆστρας τάφον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί χρῆμα δράσουσ'; ὑποτίθης τίν' ἐλπίδα;

1173 κεί Willink: εἶ C

1175 ὁ] οὐ Σ, unde οὐ Willink

1184 <γ'> West

ORESTES

will be a lucky man. And if somehow I receive my life unexpectedly as a bonus and can kill without being killed—well, that is my prayer. Where wishing is concerned it is sweet to gratify the mind by winged words that cost nothing to utter.

ELECTRA

Dear brother, I think I have the very thing you speak of, rescue from death for you, for him, and thirdly for me.

ORESTES

Divine providence, you mean. But where is that to be found? I ask you since I know that you have good brains in your head.

ELECTRA

Hear me then. (*to Pylades*) And you listen as well.

ORESTES

Speak then: what pleasure is there in delaying our blessings?

ELECTRA

You know Helen's daughter? How could you not?

ORESTES

<Yes,> Hermione, whom my mother raised.

ELECTRA

She has gone off to Clytaemestra's tomb.

ORESTES

To do what? What hope are you holding out?

## EURIPIDES

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

χοὰς κατασπείσουσ' ὑπὲρ μητρὸς τάφῳ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ δὴ τί μοι τοῦτ' εἶπας ἐς σωτηρίαν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ξυλλάβεθ' ὄμηρον τήνδ', ὅταν στείχη πάλιν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1190 τίνος τόδ' εἶπας φάρμακον τρισσοῖς φίλοις;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Ἐλένης θανούσης ἦν τι Μενελεύς σε δρᾶ  
ἢ τόνδε κάμῃ (πᾶν γὰρ ἐν φίλον τόδε),  
λέγ' ὡς φονεύσεις Ἑρμιόνην· ξίφος δὲ χρῆ  
δέρη πρὸς αὐτῇ παρθένου σπάσαντ' ἔχειν.

1195 καὶν μὲν σε σῶζῃ μὴ θανεῖν χρήζων κόρην

[Μενέλαος Ἐλένης πτώμ' ἰδὼν ἐν αἵματι],  
μέθες πεπᾶσθαι πατρὶ παρθένου δέμας·  
ἦν δ' ὄξυθύμου μὴ κρατῶν φρονήματος  
κτείνη σε, καὶ σὺ σφάζε παρθένου δέρην.

1200 καὶ νιν δοκῶ, τὸ πρῶτον ἦν πολὺς παρῆ,  
χρόνῳ μαλάξειν σπλάγχχνον· οὔτε γὰρ θρασύς  
οὔτ' ἄλκιμος πέφυκε. τήνδ' ἡμῖν ἔχω  
σωτηρίας ἔπαλξιν· εἶρηται λόγος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1205 ὦ τὰς φρένας μὲν ἄρσενας κεκτημένη,  
τὸ σῶμα δ' ἐν γυναιξὶ θηλείαις πρέπον,  
ὡς ἀξία ζῆν μᾶλλον ἢ θανεῖν ἔφυς.



ORESTES

ELECTRA

To pour libations on the tomb on her mother's behalf.

ORESTES

And how does what you are saying relate to our survival?

ELECTRA

You must seize her as a hostage when she returns.

ORESTES

Your words—what cure do they effect for us three kinsmen?

ELECTRA

If Menelaus, after Helen's death, tries to do anything to you, him, or me (we're all one in kinship here), threaten to kill Hermione: you must hold your drawn sword right up against the girl's neck. And if he saves your life for love of the girl, [Menelaus having seen Helen's dead body lying in blood,] give him back his daughter to keep. But if he fails to conquer his pride and anger and tries to kill you, you must proceed to the cutting of the girl's throat. If he comes on violent at first, I think he will calm down in time. He's not a bold or brave man. That is the means of survival I have thought of. That is all I have to say.

ORESTES

O woman with the heart of a man, yet with a beauty of body outstanding among women, how richly you deserve to live

## EURIPIDES

Πυλάδῃ, τοιαύτης ἄρ' ἀμαρτήσῃ τάλας  
γυναικὸς ἢ ζῶν μακάριον κτήσῃ λέχος.

## ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

εἰ γὰρ γένοιτο, Φωκέων δ' ἔλθοι πόλιν  
1210 καλοῖσιν ὑμεναίοισιν ἀξιουμένη.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἦξει δ' ἐς οἶκους Ἑρμιόνη τίνος χρόνου;  
ὡς τᾶλλα γ' εἶπας, εἶπερ εὐτυχήσομεν,  
κάλλισθ', ἐλόντες σκύμνον ἀνοσίου πατρός.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ δὴ πέλας νιν δωμάτων εἶναι δοκῶ·  
1215 τοῦ γὰρ χρόνου τὸ μῆκος αὐτὸ συντρέχει.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καλῶς· σὺ μὲν νυν, σύγγον' Ἥλέκτρα, δόμων  
πάρος μένουσα παρθένου δέχου πόδα,  
φύλασσε δ' ἦν τις, πρὶν τελευτηθῆ φόνος,  
[ἢ ξύμμαχός τις ἢ κασίγνητος πατρός,]  
1220 ἐλθὼν ἐς οἶκους φθῆ, γέγωνέ τ' ἐς δόμους,  
ἢ σανίδα παίσασ' ἢ λόγους πέμψασ' ἔσω·  
ἡμεῖς δ' ἔσω στείχοντες ἐπὶ τὸν ἔσχατον  
ἀγῶν' ὀπλιζώμεσθα φασγάνῳ χέρας  
[Πυλάδῃ· σὺ γὰρ δὴ συμπονεῖς ἐμοὶ πόνουσ].

1225 ὦ δῶμα ναίων Νυκτὸς ὀρφναίας πάτερ,  
καλῶ σ' Ὀρέστης παῖς σὸς ἐπίκουρον μολεῖν  
[τοῖς δεομένοισι· διὰ σέ γὰρ πάσχω τάλας  
ἀδίκως, προδέδομαι δ' ὑπὸ κασιγνήτου σέθεν,  
δίκαια πράξας· οὐ θέλω δάμαρθ' ἐλὼν

ORESTES

rather than to die! Poor Pylades, such is the wife whom you will be bereft of—or whose bed, should you survive, will make you blessed!

PYLADES

I pray that may happen and that she may come to the land of Phocis, celebrated by lovely bridal songs!

ORESTES

But when will Hermione return? All else you have said is excellent provided we can succeed in catching this whelp of a godless sire.

ELECTRA

Well, I suppose she is quite near the house. The length of her absence in itself supports this.

ORESTES

Good! Therefore, Electra my sister, you must stay in front of the house and await the girl's arrival. And be on guard in case someone [either an ally or a brother of your father] should come to the house before the murder is complete, and let us know inside, either by pounding on the door or by sending word. As for us, since we are going in to face our final struggle, let us put swords in our hands [Pylades, since you are joining me in the work].

O father, dwelling in the halls of dark Night, I your son Orestes call on you to come to my aid [to those who need you. For it is on your account that I suffer misery unjustly, and I have been abandoned by your brother though I acted

---

1219 del. Herwerden

1224 del. Hermann

1226 *καλῶ* Herwerden: -εἶ C

1227-30 del. Nauck cl. Σ

## EURIPIDES

1230 κτεῖναι· σὺ δ' ἡμῖν τοῦδε συλλήπτωρ γενοῦ].

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ πάτερ, ἰκοῦ δήτ', εἰ κλύεις ἔσω χθονὸς  
τέκνων καλούντων, οἳ σέθεν θνήσκουσ' ὕπερ.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ὦ συγγένεια πατρὸς ἐμοῦ, κάμας λιτάς,  
Ἄγάμεμνον, εἰσάκουσον· ἔκσωσον τέκνα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1235 ἔκτεινα μητέρ' . . .

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἠψάμην δ' ἐγὼ ξίφους.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἐγὼ δέ γ' ἐπέκλευσα κάπेलυσ' ὄκνου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

. . . σοί, πάτερ, ἀρήγων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐδ' ἐγὼ προῦδωκά σε.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

οὔκουν ὄνειδη τάδε κλυὼν ῥύση τέκνα;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δακρύοις κατασπένδω σ'.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγὼ δ' οἴκτοισί γε.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

1240 παύσασθε, καὶ πρὸς ἔργον ἐξορμώμεθα.

ORESTES

justly. I want to take his wife and kill her. But you be my helper]!

ELECTRA

Father, come, if you hear deep in earth the voices of your children calling you, children who are being killed because of you!

PYLADES

Agamemnon, kinsman of my father, hear my prayer as well: save your children!

ORESTES

I killed my mother . . .

ELECTRA

And I put my hand to the sword.

PYLADES

And I urged him on and overcame his hesitation.

ORESTES

. . . in aid of you, father.

ELECTRA

I did not abandon you either.

PYLADES

Will you not listen to these reproaches and save your children?

ORESTES

To you I pour a libation of my tears.

ELECTRA

And I of my laments.

PYLADES

Stop now and let us set off for our work. If prayers reach

## EURIPIDES

εἶπερ γὰρ εἶσω γῆς ἀκοντίζουσ' ἀραί,  
κλύει. σὺ δ', ὦ Ζεῦ πρόγονε καὶ Δίκης σέβας,  
δότη' εὐτυχῆσαι τῷδ' ἐμοί τε τῆδέ τε  
τρισοοῖς φίλοις γὰρ εἰς ἀγών, δίκη μία.

1245 [ἢ ζῆν ἅπασιν ἢ θανεῖν ὀφείλεται.]

στρ.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Μυκηνίδες ὦ φίλιαι,  
τὰ πρῶτα κατὰ Πελασγὸν ἔδος Ἀργείων . . .

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίνα θροεῖς ἀνδάν, πότνια; παραμένει  
1250 γὰρ ἔτι σοι τόδ' ἐν Δαναϊδᾶν πόλει.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

. . . στῆθ' αἰ μὲν ὑμῶν τόνδ' ἀμαξήρη τρίβον,  
αἰ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἄλλον οἶμον ἐς φρουρὰν δόμων.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δέ με τόδε χρέος ἀπύεις;  
ἔνεπέ μοι, φίλα.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1255 φόβος ἔχει με μή τις ἐπιδὼν κάσιν  
σταθέντ' ἐπὶ φοῖνιον αἶμα  
πήματα πήμασιν ἐξεύρη.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ Α

χωρεῖτ', ἐπειγώμεσθ'. ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τρίβον  
τόνδ' ἐκφυλάξω τὸν πρὸς ἡλίου βολάς.

## ORESTES

within the earth, he hears us. But, Zeus our progenitor and holy Justice, grant good fortune to this man, to this woman, and to me. For we three kinsmen face a single trial and a single judgment. [All of us must either live or die.]

*Exit ORESTES and PYLADES into the house.*

### ELECTRA

Dear women of Mycenae,  
who rank high in the Pelasgian land of the Argives . . .

### CHORUS

What are you saying, my lady? For that  
is still your title in the city of the sons of Danaus.

### ELECTRA

. . . stand, some of you, on the carriage road here,  
and the rest on this other path, to guard the house.

### CHORUS

Why this cry, this task for me?  
Tell me, dear friend.

### ELECTRA

I am afraid that someone might see my brother  
poised for the bloody deed  
and invent new woes on top of old.

### LEADER OF CHORUS A

Come on now, let's hurry! I shall guard  
this path here, the one toward the sun's rays.

---

1245 del. Nauck

1246 φίλαι Hermann: φίλαι C

1255-6 ἐπιδὼν κάσιν / σταθέντ' Willink: ἐπὶ δόμασι / σταθεὶς  
fere C

EURIPIDES

ΧΟΡΟΣ Β

1260 καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ τόνδ', ὃς πρὸς ἐσπέραν φέρει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δόχμιά νυν κόρας διάφερ' ὀμμάτων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐκεῖθεν ἐνθάδ' εἶτα πάλιν σκοπιὰν  
1265 ἔχομεν, ὡς θροεῖς.  
ἀντ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐλίσσετέ νυν βλέφαρον,  
κόρας διάδοτε πάντα διὰ βοστρύχων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ Α

ὄδε τις ἐν τρίβῳ, πρόσεχε· τίς ὄδ' ἄρ' ἀμ-  
1270 φὶ μέλαθρον πολεῖ σὸν ἀγρότας ἀνήρ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀπωλόμεσθ' ἄρ', ὦ φίλαι· κεκρυμμένας  
θήρας ξιφήρεις ἀντίκ' ἐχθροῖσιν φανεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ Α

ἄφοβος ἔχε· κενός, ὦ φίλα,  
στίβος ὃν οὐ δοκεῖς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1275 τί δέ; τὸ σὸν βέβαιον ἔτι μοι μένει;  
δὸς ἀγγελίαν ἀγαθάν τιν',  
εἰ τάδ' ἔρημα τὰ πρόσθ' αὐλᾶς.

1267 κόρας διάδοτε Canter cl. Pho. 1371: κόραισι δίδοτε C



ORESTES

LEADER OF CHORUS B

And I this westward one.

ELECTRA

Sideways turn the glance of your eyes.

CHORUS

From that side to this and then back again  
we turn our watchful gaze, as you command.

ELECTRA

Wheel your eyes about,  
turn your glance in all directions through the locks of your  
hair.

CHORUS A

Here is someone in the path, take heed! What rustic is this  
who comes to your palace?

ELECTRA

We are done for then, my friends: he will reveal  
to our enemies the stealthy sword hunt.

CHORUS A

Have no fear: the path is empty,  
though you thought it was not.

ELECTRA

And you? Is your side still secure?  
Give a report, a good one,  
say whether all is empty before the house.

---

1268-9 *πρόσχε* Seidler: *προσέρχεται* C

EURIPIDES

ΧΟΡΟΣ Β

καλῶς τά γ' ἐνθένδ'. ἀλλὰ τὰπὸ σου σκόπει·  
ὡς οὔτις ἡμῖν Δαναϊδῶν πελάζεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ Α

1280 ἐς ταῦτὸν ἤκεις· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ τῆδ' ὄχλος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φέρε νυν ἐν πύλαισιν ἀκοὰν βάλω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί μέλλεθ' οἱ κατ' οἶκον ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ  
1285 σφάγια φοινίσσειν;  
ἐπωδ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ εἰσακούουσ'· ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ κακῶν.  
ἄρ' ἐς τὸ κάλλος ἐκκεκώφηται ξίφη;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάχα τις Ἀργείων ἔνοπλος ὀρμάσας  
1290 ποδὶ βοηδρόμῳ μέλαθρα προσμείξει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σκέφασθέ νυν ἄμεινον· οὐχ ἔδρας ἀγῶν·  
ἀλλ' αἱ μὲν ἐνθάδ', αἱ δ' ἐκεῖσ' ἐλίσσετε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1295 ἀμείβω κέλευθον σκοπεύουσα πάντα.

<sup>1278</sup> τὰπὸ Blomfield: τὰπὶ fere C

<sup>1293</sup> ἐκεῖσε λεύσσετε van Gent

<sup>1294-5</sup> σκοπεύουσα Nauck: σκοπούσα C

ORESTES

LEADER OF CHORUS B

All is well here. But take a look at your side:  
no sons of Danaus are approaching me.

LEADER OF CHORUS A

I have nothing different to report: no crowd comes this  
way either.

ELECTRA

Come, let me listen at the gates.

CHORUS

You in the house, why are you so slow, when all is quiet,  
to stain your victims red?

*There is a pause as all listen.*

ELECTRA

They do not hear us! O misery for me!  
Have their swords been blunted by her beauty?

CHORUS

Soon some Argive in full armor  
will rush on rescuing feet and approach the house.

ELECTRA

Keep better watch, then. This is no time to sit around:  
some of you wheel about in this direction, others in that.

*The two semichoruses change positions.*

CHORUS

I move along the path, spying in all directions.

EURIPIDES

ΕΛΕΝΗ

(ἔσωθεν)

ὦ Πελασγὸν Ἄργος, ὄλλυμαι κακῶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἠκούσαθ'· ἄνδρες χεῖρ' ἔχουσιν ἐν φόνοφ·  
Ἑλένης τὸ κώκυμ' ἐστίν, ὡς ἀπεικάσαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1300 ὦ Διὸς ὦ Διὸς ἀέναον κράτος,  
ἔλθ' ἐπικούρος ἐμοῖσι φίλοισι πάντως.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

(ἔσωθεν)

Μενέλαε, θνήσκω· σὺ δὲ παρών μ' οὐκ ὠφελεῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καίνετε, καίνετε, θείνετ' ἀπόλλυτε,  
δίπτυχα δίστομα φάσγαν' ἐκ χερὸς ἰέμενοι  
1305 τὰν λιποπάτριδα λιπογάμετον, ἃ πλείστους  
ἔκανεν Ἑλλάνων  
δορὶ παρὰ ποταμὸν ὀλομένους,  
ὅθι δάκρυα δάκρυσι πέσε σιδαρέοις  
1310 βέλεσιν ἀμφὶ τὰς Σκαμάνδρου δίνας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σιγᾶτε σιγᾶτ'· ἤσθόμην κτύπου τινὸς  
κέλευθον ἐσπεσόντος ἀμφὶ δώματα.

1302<sup>n</sup> Ηλ. καὶ Χο. Di Benedetto cl. 1314

1302 καίνετε καίνετε unus cod.: φονεύετε κ- fere ceteri codd.  
ἀπόλλυτε Wecklein: ὄλλυτε C

ORESTES

HELEN

(*within*) Help, Pelasgian Argos! Foul murder!

ELECTRA

Did you hear? The men have their hands in blood!  
That was Helen's cry, I think.

CHORUS

O unfailing power of Zeus, Zeus,  
come by all means to help my friends!

HELEN

(*within*) They're murdering me, Menelaus! You are not  
here to help me!

CHORUS

Slay, slay, smite, destroy her,  
plying at close range your twin double-edged swords,  
slay the betrayer of country and husband, who killed  
so many Greeks  
by the spear at the river's edge,  
where iron weapons made tears fall on tears  
by Scamander's eddies!

CHORUS LEADER

Silence, silence! I heard someone's footfall, someone coming  
along the path near the palace!

*Enter by Eisodos A HERMIONE.*

---

<sup>1305</sup> λιποπάτριδα Herwerden: -πάτρα fere C λιπο-  
γάμετον West: λιπόγαμον fere C

<sup>1309</sup> πέσε Willink: ἔπεσε vel συνέπεσε(ν) vel συνέπεσεν  
ἔπεσε C

## EURIPIDES

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

- ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ἐς μέσον φόνου  
 ἦδ' Ἐρμιόνη πάρεσσι· παύσωμεν βοήν.  
 1315 στείχει γὰρ ἐσπεσοῦσα δικτύων βρόχους.  
 καλὸν τὸ θήραμ', ἦν ἀλῶ, γενήσεται.  
 πάλιν κατάστηθ' ἡσύχῳ μὲν ὄμματι,  
 χροιά δ' ἀδήλω τῶν δεδραμένων πέρι·  
 κὰγὼ σκυθρωποὺς ὀμμάτων ἕξω κόρας,  
 1320 ὡς δῆθεν οὐκ εἰδυῖα τάξειργασμένα.  
 ὦ παρθέν', ἦκεις τὸν Κλυταιμῆστρας τάφον  
 στέψασα καὶ σπείσασα νερτέροις χροάς;

## ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

- ἦκω, λαβοῦσα πρενμένειαν. ἀλλά μοι  
 φόβος τις εἰσελήλυθ', ἦντιν' ἐν δόμοις  
 1325 τηλουρὸς οὔσα δωμάτων κλύω βοήν.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ'; ἄξι' ἡμῖν τυγχάνει στεναγμάτων.

## ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

εὔφημος ἴσθι· τί δὲ νεώτερον λέγεις;

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

θανεῖν Ὀρέστην κᾶμ' ἔδοξε τῆδε γῆ.

## ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

μὴ δῆτ', ἐμοῦ γε συγγενεῖς πεφυκότας.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

- 1330 ἄραρ'· ἀνάγκης δ' ἐς ζυγὸν καθέσταμεν.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

Dearest women, here comes Hermione into the middle of the slaughter. We must stop our shouting: she has fallen right into the toils of our net and is approaching! She'll be a fine catch if catch her we can.<sup>30</sup> Compose yourselves: make your expressions calm and let your color betray nothing of what has happened. And I shall put on a crestfallen look and not let on that I know what has happened.

Hermione, have you come from garlanding Clytemnestra's grave and making a libation to the dead?

HERMIONE

I have: I have won her good will. But I am frightened at the shouting I heard in the palace when I was far off.

ELECTRA

Well, things that call for tears have befallen us.

HERMIONE

Speak no ill-omened word! But what new thing do you mean?

ELECTRA

This land has decreed that Orestes and I must die.

HERMIONE

Say not so: you are my kinsmen!

ELECTRA

It is fixed: we find ourselves in necessity's yoke.

<sup>30</sup> An animal might be in the nets but still escape capture.

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<sup>1315-6</sup> in *suspicionem* voc. Diggle

<sup>1315</sup> ἐσπαίσομαι Wecklein cl. *Rh.* 560

EURIPIDES

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

ἦ τοῦδ' ἕκατι καὶ βοή κατὰ στέγας;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ικέτης γὰρ Ἑλένης γόνασι προσπεσὼν βοᾷ . . .

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

τίς; οὐδὲν οἶδα μᾶλλον, ἦν σὺ μὴ λέγῃς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

. . . τλήμων Ὀρέστης, μὴ θανεῖν, ἐμοῦ θ' ὑπερ.

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

1335 ἐπ' ἀξίοισί τ' ἄρ' ἀνευφημεί δόμος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

περὶ τοῦ γὰρ ἄλλου μᾶλλον ἂν φθέγξαιτό τις;

ἀλλ' ἐλθὲ καὶ μετάσχεσ ἰκεσίας φίλους,

σῆ μητρὶ προσπεσοῦσα τῇ μέγ' ὀλβία,

Μενέλαον ἡμᾶς μὴ θανόντας εἰσιδεῖν.

1340 ἄγ', ὦ τραφείσα μητρὸς ἐν χεροῖν ἐμῆς,

οἴκτιρον ἡμᾶς κάπικούφισον κακῶν.

ἴθ' εἰς ἀγῶνα δεῦρ', ἐγὼ δ' ἠγήσομαι

σωτηρίας γὰρ τέρμ' ἔχεις ἡμῖν μόνη.

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

ιδού, διώκω τὸν ἐμὸν ἐς δόμους πόδα.

1345 σῶθηθ' ὅσον γε τοῦπ' ἔμ'.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ κατὰ στέγας

φίλοι ξιφήρεις, οὐχὶ συλλήψεσθ' ἄγραν;



ORESTES

HERMIONE

Is that why there was shouting in the house?

ELECTRA

Yes: falling as suppliant before Helen's knees and crying out . . .

HERMIONE

Was who? I know nothing more unless you tell me.

ELECTRA

. . . was poor Orestes: his plea was that he not die, and for me he pled as well.

HERMIONE

So there is good reason for the house to wail aloud.

ELECTRA

Yes: what better reason to cry out? But come and take part with your kin in the entreaty, falling at the feet of your most prosperous mother, begging that Menelaus not watch us be put to death. Come, you who were brought up by my mother, take pity on us and relieve us from trouble. Come to the contest: I shall lead the way. You alone are our final salvation.

HERMIONE

There, I am going quickly into the house! Be rescued—as far as depends on me!

*Exit HERMIONE into the house. Electra stands just outside the door looking in.*

ELECTRA

My sword-bearing friends within the house, seize your prey!

## EURIPIDES

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

οὐ γὰρ τίνας τούσδ' εἰσορώ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σιγᾶν χρεῶν·

ἡμῖν γὰρ ἤκει, οὐχὶ σοί, σωτηρία.

ἔχεσθ' ἔχεσθε· φάσγανον δὲ πρὸς δέρη

1350 βαλόντες ἠσυχάζεθ', ὡς εἰδῆ τόδε

Μενέλαος, οὐνεκ' ἄνδρας, οὐ Φρύγας κακοῦς,

εὐρῶν ἔπραξεν οἷα χρῆ πράσσειν κακοῦς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ.

ἰὼ ἰὼ φίλαι,

κτύπον ἐγείρετε, κτύπον καὶ βοᾶν

πρὸ μελάθρων, ὅπως ὁπραχθεὶς φόνος

1355 μὴ δεινὸν Ἀργείοισιν ἐμβάλῃ φόβον,

βοηδρομῆσαι πρὸς δόμους τυραννικούς,

πρὶν ἐτύμως ἴδω τὸν Ἑλένας φόνον

καθαιμακτὸν ἐν δόμοις κείμενον,

ἢ καὶ λόγον του προσπόλων πυθώμεθα·

1360 τὰ μὲν γὰρ οἶδα συμφορᾶς, τὰ δ' οὐ σαφῶς.

διὰ δίκας ἔβα θεῶν

νέμεσις ἐς Ἑλέναν.

δακρύοισι γὰρ Ἑλλάδ' ἅπασαν ἐπλήρωσεν

διὰ τὸν ὀλόμενον ὀλόμενον Ἰδαῖον

1365 Πάριν, ὃς ἄγαγ' Ἑλλάδ' εἰς Ἴλιον.

1347n Ηλ. Π, u. v., conl. Lachmann: Ορ. C

1363 ἐπλήρωσεν Diggle: ἔπλησε C

ORESTES

HERMIONE

*(within)* Ah, ah, who are these men I see?

ELECTRA

No more talk! You have come to save our lives, not yours! Take hold, take hold of her! Place the sword against her neck and bide your time, so that Menelaus may see that he has met with real men, not cowardly Phrygians, and has fared as a coward ought to fare!

*Exit ELECTRA into the house.*

CHORUS

Come, come, my friends,  
stamp your feet, your feet, and raise a shout  
before the house so that the Argives  
may not take dreadful fright at murder just done  
and come to the palace to help her  
before I see for sure Helen's murdered body  
lying bloodied in the palace,  
or hear some report from a servant:  
part of what has happened I know well, part not well.  
By the justice of the gods has come  
retribution upon Helen:  
she filled all Hellas with weeping  
because of that accursed, accursed man of Ida,  
Paris, who brought Hellas to Troy.

*Enter from the skene a PHRYGIAN, one of Helen's retinue.*

## EURIPIDES

—ἀλλὰ κτυπεῖ γὰρ κλῆθρα βασιλείων δόμων·  
σιγήσατ', ἔξω γάρ τις ἐκβαίνει Φρυγῶν,  
οὐ̄ πευσόμεσθα τὰν δόμοις ὅπως ἔχει.

## ΦΡΥΞ

- Ἄργείον ξίφος ἐκ θανάτου  
πέφευγα βαρβάροις ἐν εὐ-  
1370 μάρισιν κεδρωτὰ πα-  
στάδων ὑπὲρ τέραμνα  
Δωρικός τε τριγλύφους,  
φρούδα φρούδα, Γᾶ Γᾶ,  
βαρβάροισι δρασμοῖς.  
1375 αἰαῖ· πᾶ φύγω, ξένοι, πολιὸν αἰ-  
θέρ' ἀμπτάμενος ἢ  
πόντον, Ὀκεανὸς ὄν  
ταυρόκρανος ἀγκάλαις  
ἐλίσσων κυκλοῖ χθόνα;

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 1380 τί δ' ἔστιν, Ἑλένης πρόσπολ', Ἰδαῖον κᾶρα;

## ΦΡΥΞ

- Ἴλιον Ἴλιον, ὦμοι μοι,  
Φρύγιον ἄστν καὶ καλλίβωλον Ἴ-  
δας ὄρος ἱερόν, ὡς σ' ὀλόμενον στένω  
[ἀρμάτειον ἀρμάτειον μέλος]  
1385 βαρβάρῳ βοᾷ δι' ὀρνιθόγονον  
ὄμμα κυκνοπτέρου καλλοσύνας, Δήδας  
σκύμνον Δυσελέναν Δυσελέναν,

1366-8 histrionibus imputat Σ

## ORESTES

### CHORUS LEADER

But the bars of the palace gate are clanging. Hush, here comes one of the Phrygians, from whom we shall learn how matters stand indoors.

### PHRYGIAN

From the realm of death I have escaped  
the Argive sword in my barbarian slippers,  
passing beyond the bedchamber's  
cedar timbers  
and their Doric triglyphs,  
gone, gone, O Lady Earth, Earth,  
in my barbarian flight!  
Ah, ah! Where shall I run, foreign ladies? Shall I fly  
up to the white upper air  
or to the sea, which Ocean,  
the bull-headed river god, encircles  
in his arms as he goes around the earth?

### CHORUS LEADER

What is it, worthy Idaean, Helen's servant?

### PHRYGIAN

Ilium, Ilium, ah me, ah me,  
the Phrygian citadel and the lovely ground  
of Ida's holy mount, how I lament  
[the chariot, chariot melody]  
with barbarian cry your destruction through the bird-  
begotten  
vision of swan-plumed loveliness, Leda's  
whelp Ill-helen, Ill-helen, Erinys

---

1384 om. t, del. Murray cl. Σ      1385 δι' Porson: διὰ τὸ τὰς C

1386 κυκνοπτέρου Scaliger: κυκνόπτερον C

1387 Δυσσελέναν bis Kirchhoff: -νας bis fere C

## EURIPIDES

ξεστῶν περγάμων Ἄπολ-  
λωνίων Ἐρινύν.  
ὄτοτοτοῖ·

- 1390 ἰαλέμων ἰαλέμων  
Δαρδανία τλάμων,  
Γανυμήδεος ἵπποσύνα, Διὸς εὐνάτα.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

σαφῶς λέγ' ἡμῖν αὐθ' ἕκαστα τὰν δόμοις.  
[τὰ γὰρ πρὶν οὐκ εὐγνωστα συμβαλοῦσ' ἔχω.]

## ΦΡΥΞ

- 1395 αἴλινον αἴλινον ἀρχὰν θρήνου  
βάρβαροι λέγουσιν,  
αἰαῖ, Ἀσιάδι φωνᾶ, βασιλέων  
ὅταν αἶμα χυθῆ κατὰ γὰν ξίφεσιν  
σιδαρέοισιν Ἄϊδα.  
1400 ἦλθον <ἦλθον> ἐς δόμους,  
ἴν' αὐθ' ἕκαστά σοι λέγω,  
λέοντες Ἑλλανες  
δύο διδύμῳ <ῤυθμῶ>  
τῷ μὲν ὁ στρατηλάτας  
ἐκλήζετο πατήρ,  
ὁ δὲ παῖς Στροφίου, κακόμητις ἀνὴρ  
οἶος Ὀδυσσεύς, σιγαῖ δόλιος,  
1405 πιστὸς δὲ φίλοις, θρασὺς εἰς ἀλκάν,

1394 om Π, iam del. Kirchhoff cl. Σ

1395 θρήνου Hartung: θανάτου C

1400a <ἦλθον> Willink

## ORESTES

of the adze-smoothed towers  
built by Apollo!  
Ah, ah!  
Luckless the land of Troy  
in its dirges, dirges,  
riding place of Ganymede, Zeus's bedmate!<sup>31</sup>

### CHORUS LEADER

Tell us exactly what happened indoors. [For your previous words were not clear, and I could not interpret them.]

### PHRYGIAN

*Ailidon*, *ailidon* the outlanders say  
at the beginning of their lament,  
ah me, in Asian accents, when kings' blood  
is shed on the ground by the murderous  
sword of iron.  
There came, <there came>, into the house—  
I tell you all exactly—  
Greek lions  
two of them with twofold <motion>.  
One was said  
to have the general for his father,  
the other was the son of Strophius, a guileful fellow  
like Odysseus, silently crafty,  
but loyal to friends, bold for the fight,

<sup>31</sup> For Ganymede, a beautiful Trojan prince taken up to Olympus to serve as the gods' cupbearer and male concubine, see *Trojan Women* 820–4.

---

1401b <ῥύθμῶ> Diggle

1402b ἐκλήζετο πατήρ Willink: π- ἐ- C

## EURIPIDES

- ξυνετὸς πολέμον, φόνιός τε δράκων·  
 ἔρροι τὰς ἡσύχου  
 προνοίας κακοῦργος ὦν.  
 οἱ δὲ πρὸς θρόνους ἔσω  
 μολόντες ἄς ἔγημ' ὁ το-  
 1410 ξότας Πάρις γυναικός, ὄμ-  
 μα δακρύοις πεφυρμένοι,  
 ταπείν' ἔζονθ', ὁ μὲν  
 τὸ κείθεν, ὁ δὲ τὸ κείθεν, ἄλ-  
 λος ἄλλοθεν δεδραγμένοι.  
 περὶ δὲ γόνυ χέρας ἰκεσίους  
 1415 ἔβαλον ἔβαλον Ἑλένας ἄμφω.  
 ἀνὰ δὲ δρομάδες ἔθορον ἔθορον  
 ἀμφίπολοι Φρύγες·  
 προσεῖπεν δ' ἄλλος ἄλ-  
 λον πεσῶν ἐν φόβῳ,  
 1420 μὴ τις εἴη δόλος·  
 καδόκει τοῖς μὲν οὔ,  
 τοῖς δ' ἐς ἀρκυστάτων  
 μηχανὰν ἐμπλέκειν  
 παῖδα τὰν Τυνδαρίδ' ὁ  
 ματροφόντας δράκων.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 1425 σὺ δ' ἦσθα ποῦ τότ'; ἢ πάλαι φεύγεις φόβῳ;

## ΦΡΥΞ

Φρυγίοις ἔτυχον Φρυγίοισι νόμοις



## ORESTES

skilled in war, and a deadly snake:  
a curse on his cool planning,  
that villain!  
Once inside they went to the throne  
of the woman who was bride  
of the archer Paris,  
and their faces were smeared with weeping:  
all lowly they sat, the one  
on this side, the other on the other,  
grasping her from this side and that,  
the both of them casting, casting  
their suppliant hands about her knees.  
They came on a run, leaping, leaping,  
the Phrygian slaves,  
and one would speak to another,  
as he grew afraid  
that there was some guile.  
Some thought there was not,  
but others suspected  
that Tyndareus' daughter  
was being entwined in the crafty hunting net  
by that matricidal snake.

### CHORUS LEADER

Where were you at that time? Or were you already taking  
to your heels in fear?

### PHRYGIAN

I happened in Phrygian, Phrygian style

---

1412a ταπείν' Willink: ταπεινοὶ C

1413 δεδραγμένοι Shilleto: πεφραγμένοι C

1422 ἀρκυστάτων Blomfield: -ταν C

- παρὰ βόστρυχον αὔραν αὔραν  
 Ἑλένας Ἑλένας εὐπάγι κύκλω  
 πτερίνω πρὸ παρῆδος αἰσσω  
 1430 βαρβάροις νόμοισιν.  
 ἅ δὲ λίνε' ἠλάκατα  
 δακτύλοις ἔλισσε, νῆ-  
 μα δ' ἴετο πέδω,  
 σκύλων Φρυγίων ἐπὶ τύμβον ἀγάλ-  
 1435 ματα συστολίσαι χρήζουσα λίνω,  
 φάρεα πορφύρεα, δῶρα Κλυταιμῆστρα.  
 προσεῖπεν δ' Ὀρέστας  
 Λάκαιναν κόραν· ὦ Διὸς παῖ,  
 θὲς ἵχνος πέδω δεῦρ'  
 1440 ἀποστᾶσα κλισμοῦ,  
 Πέλοπος ἐπὶ προπάτορος ἔδρανα  
 παλαιᾶς ἐστίας,  
 ἵν' εἰδῆς λόγους ἐμούς.  
 ἄγει δ' ἄγει νιν· ἅ δ' ἐφείπετ',  
 1445 οὐ πρόμαντις ὦν ἔμελ-  
 λεν· ὁ δὲ συνεργὸς ἄλλ' ἔπρασσ'  
 ἰαχῶν κακὸς  
 Φωκεύς· Οὐκ ἐκποδῶν;  
 ἴτ' ἄλλα, κακοὶ Φρύγες.  
 ἔκλησεν δ' ἄλλον ἄλ-  
 λοσε στέγας, τοὺς μὲν ἐν

1428 εὐπάγι Hermann: εὐπαγεί fere C

1430 del. Hartung

## ORESTES

to be wafting a breeze, a breeze toward the locks  
of Helen, Helen with a disk of well-set plumes,  
wafting them past her cheek  
in outland fashion.  
And she in her fingers twirled  
the linen distaff strands,  
and the thread sank down to the floor.  
From the Phrygian spoils she wanted to stitch with her  
thread  
adornments for burial,  
robes of purple as a gift to Clytaemestra.  
But Orestes addressed  
the woman of Sparta: "Zeus's daughter,  
put your feet on the ground and come here,  
leaving your couch behind,  
to the seat by the ancient hearth  
of Pelops my ancestor,  
so you may learn what I have to say."  
And he led her, led her, and she followed,  
with no foreknowledge of what was to be.  
But his accomplice was tending to other business,  
the wicked Phocian, shouting,  
"Clear off, won't you?  
Go elsewhere, you cowardly Phrygians!"  
And he locked them up, in this part of the house  
and in that, some

---

1431 *λίνε' ἠλάκατα* Willink: *λίνον ἠλακάτα* C

1446b *ἰαχῶν* Diggle: *ἰὼν* C

1447b *ἄλλα* unus cod., u. v. (coni. Scaliger): *ἀλλ' αἰεὶ* ceteri  
codd.

## EURIPIDES

- 1450 σταθμοῖσιν ἵππικοῖσι, τοὺς δ'  
 ἐν ἐξέδραισι, τοὺς δ' ἐκεῖσ'  
 ἐκεῖθεν [ἄλλον ἄλλοσε] διαρμόσας  
 ἀποπρὸ δεσποίνας.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί τοῦπὶ τῷδε συμφορᾶς ἐγίγνετο;

## ΦΡΥΞ

- Ἰδαία μάτερ μάτερ,  
 ὀβρίμα ὀβρίμα, αἰαῖ <αἰαῖ>  
 1455 φονίων παθέων ἀνόμων τε κακῶν  
 ἄπερ ἔδρακον ἔδρακον ἐν δόμοις τυράννων.  
 ἀμφιπορφύρων πέπλων  
 ὑπὸ σκότου ξίφη σπάσαν-  
 τες ἐν χεροῖν ἄλλοσ' ἄλ-  
 λοθεν δίνεον ὄμ-  
 μα, μή τις παρῶν τύχοι.  
 1460 ὡς κάπροι δ' ὀρέστεροι  
 γυναικὸς ἀντίοι σταθέν-  
 τες ἐννέπουσι. Καθθανῆ καθθανῆ·  
 κακός σ' ἀποκτείνει πόσις,  
 κασιγνήτου προδοῦς  
 ἐν Ἄργει θανεῖν γόνον.  
 1465 ἃ δ' ἀνίαχεν ἴαχεν ὦμοι μοι.  
 λευκὸν δ' ἐμβαλοῦσα πῆχυν στέρνα  
 κτύπησεν κᾶρα <τε> μέλεον πλαγάν,

1451 ἄλλον ἄλλοσε del. Burges

1454b <αἰαῖ> Hartung

## ORESTES

in the stables, some  
in the arcades, while others he moved  
from here to there [each severally], keeping them  
far from their mistress.

### CHORUS LEADER

And what happened after that?

### PHRYGIAN

Mother, mother of Ida,  
mighty, mighty goddess, alas <alas>  
for the murderous sufferings, the lawless woes  
I have seen, have seen in the royal palace!  
From beneath the concealment  
of purple-bordered robes  
they took swords in their hands  
and whirled their glances from one side to the other  
to see that no one was there.  
Like wild boars of the mountain  
they halted before the woman  
and said, "You will die, you will die!  
Your slayer is your cowardly husband,  
who abandoned his brother's son  
to death in Argos."  
And she cried out, cried out, "Ah, ah me!"  
And plying her pale forearm she made  
her chest <and> head resound with a pitiable blow,

---

1458-9a ἄλλοσ' ἄλλοθεν Burges: ἄλλος ἄλλοσε C

1466 στέρνα Weil: -οις C

1467 κάρα <τε> Willink (<τε> iam Weil): κρᾶτα C

## EURIPIDES

- φυγάδι δὲ ποδὶ τὸ χρυσεοσάμβαλον ἵχνος  
 ἔφερον ἔφερον ἐς κόμας δὲ δακτύλους  
 1470 δικῶν Ὀρέστας, Μυκηνίδ' ἀρβύλαν  
 προβάς, ὧμοις ἀρι-  
 στεροῖσιν ἀνακλάσας δέραν,  
 παίειν λαιμῶν ἔμελ-  
 λεν εἴσω μέλαν ξίφος.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῦ δ' ἦτ' ἀμύνειν οἱ κατὰ στέγας Φρύγες;

## ΦΡΥΞ

- ιαχῆ δόμων θύρετρα καὶ σταθμοὺς  
 1475 μοχλοῖσιν ἐκβαλόντες, ἐνθ' ἐμίνομεν,  
 βοηδρομοῦμεν ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν στέγας,  
 ὁ μὲν πέτρους, ὁ δ' ἀγκύλας,  
 ὁ δὲ ξίφος πρόκωπον ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων.  
 ἔναντα δ' ἦλθεν Πυλάδας ἀλίαςτος,  
 1480 οἶος οἶος Ἔκτωρ  
 ὁ Φρύγιος ἦ <καὶ> τρικόρυθος Αἴας,  
 ὃν εἶδον εἶδον ἐν πύλαις Πριαμίσι φασ-  
 γάνων δ' ἀκμὰς συνήψαμεν.  
 τότε δὴ τότε διαπρεπεῖς  
 Φρύγες ὅσσον Ἄρεως ἀλκὰν <ἀλκὰν>  
 1485 ἦσσονες Ἑλλάδος ἐγενόμεθ' αἰχμᾶς,  
 ὁ μὲν οἰχόμενος φυγάς, ὁ δὲ νέκυς ὦν,  
 ὁ δὲ τραῦμα φέρων, ὁ δὲ λισσόμενος,

<sup>1468</sup> φυγάδι Facius: *φυγᾶ fere C*

<sup>1481</sup> <καὶ> Diggle metri causa

## ORESTES

then with fleeing foot her gold-sandaled step  
she bore away, away. But Orestes  
darted his fingers to her hair,  
putting his Mycenaean boot ahead,  
and yanking her neck back to his left shoulder  
meant to thrust his dark  
sword into her throat.

## CHORUS LEADER

And where were you to defend her, you Phrygian house  
slaves?

## PHRYGIAN

As the house reechoed the sound we with crowbars  
forced out the doorposts and frames where we were being  
held  
and ran to her aid from here and there in the palace,  
one man carrying stones, another a curved bow,  
another a drawn sword in his hand.  
But to meet us there came Pylades, unyielding  
as Hector, Hector  
the Phrygian or <even> triple-helmeted Ajax,  
whom I saw, I saw, at Priam's gates.  
We joined sword points.  
And then, then it was clear  
how much, in the fight, <the fight> of Ares,  
the Phrygians were born inferior to Greek war might:  
one of us fled away, one lay dead,  
one was wounded, and another fell to entreaty

---

<sup>1484</sup> Φρύγες post Herwerden Diggle: ἐγένοντο Φρύγες C  
<ἀλλὰν> West

## EURIPIDES

- θανάτου προβολάν·  
 ὑπὸ σκότον δ' ἐφεύγομεν.  
 [νεκροὶ δ' ἐπιπτον, οἱ δ' ἔμελλον, οἱ δ' ἔκειντ'.]
- 1490 ἔμολε δ' ἅ τάλαιν' Ἑρμιόνα δόμους  
 ἐπὶ φόνῳ χαμαιπετεῖ ματρὸς ἅ  
 νιν ἔτεκεν τλάμων.  
 ἄθνησοι δ' οἶά νιν  
 Βάκχαι σκύμνον ἐν χεροῖν  
 ὀρέϊαν ξυνήρπασαν·  
 πάλιν δὲ τᾶς Διὸς κόρας  
 ἐπὶ σφαγὰν ἔτεινον· ἅ δ'
- 1495 ἐγένετο διαπρὸ δωμαίων ἄφαντος,  
 ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ Γᾶ καὶ Φῶς καὶ Νύξ,  
 ἦτοι φαρμάκοις  
 ἦ μάγων τέχναις ἦ θεῶν κλοπαῖς.  
 τὰ δ' ὕστερ' οὐκέτ' οἶδα· δραπέταν γὰρ ἐξ-  
 ἐκλεπτον ἐκ δόμων πόδα.
- 1500 πολύπονα δὲ πολύπονα πάθεα Μενέλας  
 ἀνσχόμενος Τροίαθεν ἀνόνατ' ἔλαβε  
 τὸν Ἑλένας γάμον.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

- καὶ μὴν ἀμείβει καινὸν ἐκ καινῶν τόδε·  
 ξιφηφόρον γὰρ εἰσορῶ πρὸ δωμαίων
- 1505 βαίνοντ' Ὀρέστην ἐπτοημένῳ ποδί.

1489 del. Willink

1493a Βάκχαι Willink: δραμόντε(s) B- C

1494a τᾶς . . . κόρας Paley: τὰν . . . κόραν C



## ORESTES

to save his life.

We fled into the shadows.

[Some were falling dead, others were about to, and others lay dead.]

But poor Hermione came into the house just as the luckless mother who bore her was being killed and sinking to earth.

Like bacchantes without thyrsos falling upon a mountain whelp they rushed and seized her in their grasp.

Then back they turned to the slaying of Zeus's daughter. But she

was nowhere to be seen throughout the house—

O Zeus and Earth, O Daylight and Dark Night—  
either because of drugs

or magicians' contrivance or stolen away by the gods.

What happened thereafter I do not know: I stole my feet from the house and ran.

Though Menelaus has endured trouble and toil, toil, it was all in vain that from Troy he brought home Helen his wife.

*Enter ORESTES, sword in hand, from the house.*

### CHORUS LEADER

But see, one strange thing succeeds another: I see Orestes, armed with a sword, coming out in front of the house with agitation in his step.

---

1494b á δ' Wilamowitz: á δ' ἐκ θαλάμων C

1500 Μενέλας Willink: Μενέλαος C

1501 Τροίαθεν ἀνόνατ' Willink: ἀνόνητον ἀπὸ Τροίας C

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ποῦ ἔστιν οὗτος ὃς πέφενγε τοῦμὸν ἐκ δόμων ξίφος;

ΦΡΥΞ

προσκυνῶ σ', ἄναξ, νόμοισι βαρβάροισι  
προσπίτνων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἐν Ἰλίῳ τάδ' ἐστὶν ἀλλ' ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονί.

ΦΡΥΞ

πανταχοῦ ζῆν ἠδὲ μᾶλλον ἢ θανεῖν τοῖς σώφροσιν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1510 οὔτι που κραυγὴν ἔθηκας, Μενέλεω βοηδρομεῖν;

ΦΡΥΞ

σοὶ μὲν οὖν ἔγωγ' ἀμύνειν· ἀξιώτερος γὰρ εἶ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐνδίκως ἢ Τυνδάρειος ἄρα παῖς διώλετο;

ΦΡΥΞ

ἐνδικώτατ', εἶ γε λαιμοὺς εἶχε τριπτύχους τεμεῖν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δειλία γλώσση χαρίζη, τᾶνδον οὐχ οὔτω φρονῶν.

ΦΡΥΞ

1515 οὐ γάρ, ἦτις Ἑλλάδ' αὐτοῖς Φρυξὶ διελυμήνατο;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄμοσον (εἰ δὲ μή, κτενῶ σε) μὴ λέγειν ἐμὴν χάριν.

1512 διώλλυτο West: -ώλετ' ἄν Herwerden

1513 τεμεῖν post F. W. Schmidt (θανεῖν) Kovacs: θανεῖν C

ORESTES

ORESTES

Where is the man who fled from the house before my sword?

PHRYGIAN

*(bowing down before him)* I prostrate myself before you, my lord, bowing down in Asian fashion.

ORESTES

We're not in Ilium now: this is Argos.

PHRYGIAN

Everywhere the prudent find it sweeter to live than to die.

ORESTES

Were you by chance trying to raise help for Menelaus?

PHRYGIAN

Oh no, help for you! You deserve it more!

ORESTES

So it was just that Tyndareus' daughter perished?

PHRYGIAN

Oh, most just, even if she had three throats to cut!

ORESTES

You're a coward, trying to curry favor with your tongue: this is not what you really think.

PHRYGIAN

No? When she has ruined Greece—and the Phrygians too?

ORESTES

Swear an oath (or I'll kill you) that you're not just saying so to please me.

EURIPIDES

ΦΡΥΞ

τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν κατώμοσ', ἣν ἂν εὐορκοῖμ' ἐγώ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦδε καὶ Τροία σίδηρος πᾶσι Φρυξὶν ἦν φόβος;

ΦΡΥΞ

ἄπεχε φάσγανον· πέλας γὰρ δεινὸν ἀνταυγεί φόνον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1520 μὴ πέτρος γένη δέδοικας ὥστε Γοργόν' εἰσιδών;

ΦΡΥΞ

μὴ μὲν οὖν νεκρός· τὸ Γοργούς δ' οὐ κάτοιδ' ἐγὼ  
κάρα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δούλος ὢν φοβῆ τὸν Ἄϊδην, ὅς σ' ἀπαλλάξει  
κακῶν;

ΦΡΥΞ

πᾶς ἀνὴρ, καὶ δούλος ἦ τις, ἤδεται τὸ φῶς ὀρώων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὖ λέγεις· σώζει σε σύνεσις. ἀλλὰ βαῖν' ἔσω  
δόμων.

ΦΡΥΞ

1525 οὐκ ἄρα κτενεῖς μ'·

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀφείσαι.

ΦΡΥΞ

καλὸν ἔπος λέγεις τόδε.

ORESTES

PHRYGIAN

I swear by my life—and I'd not swear falsely by that!

ORESTES

Were you Phrygians so afraid of the sword even in Troy?

PHRYGIAN

Move your sword away from me: close up it has grim death in its gleam.

ORESTES

Afraid that you'll turn to stone, like one who has seen a Gorgon?

PHRYGIAN

No, that I'll turn to a corpse: I know nothing about this Gorgon person.

ORESTES

Do you fear death, slave that you are, a death that will release you from misery?

PHRYGIAN

Everyone, even a slave, takes pleasure in looking on the light.

ORESTES

Well said! Your good sense is your salvation. But go into the house.

PHRYGIAN

So you won't kill me?

ORESTES

You have been spared.

PHRYGIAN

What you say is good news.

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλὰ μεταβουλευσόμεσθα.

ΦΡΥΞ

τοῦτο δ' οὐ καλῶς λέγεις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μῶρος, εἰ δοκεῖς με τλήναί σ' ἂν καθαιμάξαι δέρην·  
οὔτε γὰρ γυνὴ πέφυκας οὔτ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν σύ γ' εἶ.  
τοῦ δὲ μὴ στήσαι σε κραυγὴν οὐνεκ' ἐξήλθον  
δόμων·

1530 ὄξ' ἂν γὰρ βοῆς ἀκούσαν Ἄργος ἐξεγείρεται.  
Μενέλεω δ' οὐ τάρβος ἡμῖν ἀναλαβεῖν ἔσω ξίφους.  
ἀλλ' ἴτω ξανθοῖς ἐπ' ὤμων βοστρύχοις  
γαυρούμενος.

εἰ δέ γ' Ἀργείους ἐπάξει τοῖσδε δώμασιν λαβῶν,  
τὸν Ἑλένης φόνον διώκων, καμὲ μὴ σώει θανεῖν  
1535 σύγγονόν τ' ἐμὴν φίλον τε τὸν τάδε ξυνδρῶντά μοι,  
παρθένον τε καὶ δάμαρτα δύο νεκρῶ κατόψεται.  
ἀντ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰὼ τύχα·

ἕτερον εἰς ἀγῶν' ἕτερον αὖ δόμος  
φοβερὸν ἀμφὶ τοὺς Ἀτρεΐδας πίτνει.  
τί δρῶμεν; ἀγγέλλωμεν ἐς πόλιν τάδε;  
1540 ἢ σίγ' ἔχωμεν; ἀσφαλέστερον, φίλαι.  
ἴδε πρὸ δωμάτων ἴδε προκηρύσσει

1526 fort. μεταβουλευόμεσθα

1527 σ' ἂν Monk: σὴν C

ORESTES

ORESTES

But I shall adopt a new plan.

PHRYGIAN

That's not good news.

ORESTES

Fool, do you think that I would deign to bloody your neck? You're not a woman by birth nor yet do you count as a man. But it was to stop you raising a cry that I came out of the house: Argos is keen when roused, once it has heard a shout. Yet after all I'm not afraid of catching Menelaus at sword range. Let him come in all his pride over his shoulder-length golden locks! But if he brings Argives against this house, intent upon avenging Helen's murder, and won't save me, my sister, and my friend and accomplice from death, he will see both his daughter and his wife lying dead.

*Exit the PHRYGIAN by Eisodes A, ORESTES into the skene.*

CHORUS

Ah, ah, fate!

Into another fearful trial, another, concerning the Atridae the house again falls.

What shall we do? Shall we bear this news to the city or keep silent? Silence is safer, my friends.

See, before the house, see, leaping high into the air

---

1533-6 del. Seidensticker dubitanter (1535 iam Paley)

1533 δέ γ' Willink: γὰρ C

1534 σώσει θανεῖν Blaydes: σώση θ- a: σώζειν θέλη ceteri  
codd. 1535 φίλον Weil: Πυλάδην C

## EURIPIDES

θοάζων ὄδ' αἰθέρος ἄνω καπνός.  
 ἄπτουσι πεύκας, ὡς πυρώσοντες δόμους  
 τοὺς Ταυταλείους οὐδ' ἀφίστανται πόνου.

- 1545 τέλος ἔχει δαίμων βροτοῖς,  
 τέλος ὅπα θέλη.  
 μεγάλα δέ τις ἅ δύναμις καὶ ἀλαστόρων  
 ἔπεσ' ἔπεσε μέλαθρα τάδε δι' αἱμάτων  
 διὰ τὸ Μυρτίλου πέσημ' ἐκ δίφρου.

- ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ τόνδε λεύσσω Μενέλεων δόμων πέλας  
 1550 ὀξύπουν, ἤσθημένον που τὴν τύχην ἢ νῦν πάρα.  
 οὐκέτ' ἂν φθάνοιτε κληῖθρα συμπεραίνοντες μοχλοῖς,  
 ὦ κατὰ στέγας Ἀτρεΐδαι. δεινὸν εὐτυχῶν ἀνήρ  
 πρὸς κακῶς πράσσοντας, ὡς σὺ νῦν, Ὀρέστα,  
 δυστυχεῖς.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

- ἦκω κλυῶν τὰ δεινὰ καὶ δραστήρια  
 1555 δισοοῖν λεόντων· οὐ γὰρ ἄνδρ' αὐτῶ καλῶ.  
 ἦκουσα μὲν γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν ξυνάορον  
 ὡς οὐ τέθνηκεν, ἀλλ' ἄφαντος οἴχεται,  
 κενὴν ἀκούσας βάξιν, ἣν φόβῳ σφαλεῖς  
 ἦγγειλέ μοί τις. ἀλλὰ τοῦ μητροκτόνου  
 1560 τεχνάσματ' ἐστὶ ταῦτα καὶ πολλὸς γέλως.  
 ἀνοιγέτω τις δῶμα· προσπόλοις λέγω  
 ὠθεῖν πύλας τάσδ', ὡς ἂν ἀλλὰ παῖδ' ἐμὴν  
 ῥυσώμεθ' ἀνδρῶν ἐκ χερῶν μαιφόνων

1544 πόνου a: φόνου b

1547 καὶ West: δι' C



## ORESTES

smoke is bringing a first message.  
They are lighting torches in order to set fire  
to the house of Tantalus, they do not rest from toil.  
The outcome for mortals is sent by God,  
the outcome as he wishes.  
But great too is the power of avenging spirits.  
This house has been thrown, been thrown into the midst  
of blood  
by Myrtilus' fall from the chariot.

*Enter MENELAUS with retinue by Eisodos A.*

### CHORUS LEADER

But here I see Menelaus approaching the house with hurried step: he must have heard about what has happened. You in the house, Atreus' descendants, it's high time you finished bolting the doors with bars! A prospering man is a dangerous thing when he comes against those with misfortunes like yours, Orestes!

### MENELAUS

I have come here because I have heard of the terrible and violent deeds of these twin lions: I do not call them "men." To be sure, what I have heard is that my wife has disappeared, not been killed. That was an idle tale, reported to me by someone confused by fear. In reality this is a piece of the matricide's trickery, and an absurd story it is.

Open up the house, someone! Attendants, I order you to push in these gates so that at least I may rescue my daughter from the hands of the murderers [and so that I

---

1550 del. Nauck

1556 μὲν γὰρ Kirchoff: γὰρ δὴ C

## EURIPIDES

[καὶ τὴν τάλαιναν ἀθλίαν δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν  
 1565 λάβωμεν, ἧ δεῖ ξυνθανεῖν ἐμῇ χειρὶ  
 τοὺς διολέσαντας τὴν ἐμὴν ξυνάορον].

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔτος σύ, κλήθρων τῶνδε μὴ ψαύσης χειρὶ·  
 Μενέλαον εἶπον, ὃς πεπύργωσαι θράσει·  
 ἢ τῶδε θριγκῶ κρᾶτα συνθραύσω σέθεν,  
 1570 ῥήξας παλαιὰ γείσα, τεκτόνων πόνον.  
 μοχλοῖς δ' ἄραρε κλήθρα, σῆς βοηδρόμου  
 σπουδῆς ἅ σ' εἶρξει, μὴ δόμων ἔσω περᾶν.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἔα, τί χρῆμα; λαμπάδων ὀρῶ σέλας,  
 δόμων δ' ἐπ' ἄκρων τούσδε πυργηρουμένους,  
 1575 ξίφος δ' ἐμῆς θυγατρὸς ἐπίφρουρον δέρη.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πότερον ἐρωτᾶν ἢ κλύειν ἐμοῦ θέλεις;

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐδέτερό· ἀνάγκη δ', ὡς ἔοικε, σου κλύειν.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μέλλω κτανεῖν σου θυγατέρ', εἰ βούλη μαθεῖν.

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

Ἐλένην φονεύσας ἐπὶ φόνῳ πράσσεις φόνον;

1564-6 suspectos habuit Wecklein, del. Harberton

ORESTES

might get hold of my poor suffering wife, who must be joined in death by those who destroyed my wife!

*Menelaus' servants are approaching the gates when ORESTES, Electra, Pylades, and Hermione appear on the roof of the skene. Orestes holds a sword to the throat of Hermione, and Pylades and Electra hold smoking torches.*

ORESTES

You there, keep your hands off those doors! I mean you, Menelaus, so towering in your pride! Or with this coping stone, broken off from the ancient cornice masons have made, I shall smash your head! The doors are made fast with bars, and they will keep you from going in and trying to rescue anyone.

MENELAUS

Ah, ah, what is this? I see the gleam of torches, these men besieged on the top of the house, and a sword standing guard at my daughter's neck!

ORESTES

Do you want to ask questions or listen to me?

MENELAUS

Neither, but it seems I must listen to you.

ORESTES

If you'd like to know, I am about to kill your daughter.

MENELAUS

Having murdered Helen are you compounding murder with murder?

## EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1580 εἰ γὰρ κατέσχον μὴ θεῶν κλεφθεῖς ὕπο.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἀρνήη κατακτὰς κάφ' ὕβρει λέγεις τάδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λυπρὰν γε τὴν ἄρησις· εἰ γὰρ ὄφελον . . .

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί χρῆμα δρᾶσαι; παρακαλεῖς γὰρ †ἐς φόβον†.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὴν Ἑλλάδος μιάστορ' εἰς Ἄιδου βαλεῖν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1585 ἀπόδος δάμαρτος νέκυν, ὅπως χῶσω τάφω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θεοὺς ἀπαίτει. παῖδα δὲ κτενῶ σέθεν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὁ μητροφόντης †ἐπὶ φόνω πράσσεις φόνον†;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὁ πατρὸς ἀμύντωρ, ὃν σὺ προὔδωκας θανεῖν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἤρκεσέν σοι τὸ παρὸν αἷμα μητέρος;

1583 fort. ἐς στόνον vel ἐκ φόβον

1587-8 suspectos habuit Wecklein, del. Wilamowitz, propter 1579: sed fort. ex 1579 huc irrepserunt verba ἐπὶ . . . φόνον, extrusis quae antiquitus hic steterunt, e.g. συγγενεῖς κτείνεις αἰεί

1589-90 ante 1585 trai. West

ORESTES

ORESTES

How I wish I had accomplished that and not been robbed of it by the gods!

MENELAUS

Are you denying you killed her and saying this to mock me?

ORESTES

Yes, and an unwelcome denial it is: if only I had managed

...

MENELAUS

To do what? Your words make me weep.

ORESTES

... to cast that defiler of Hellas into Hades!

MENELAUS

Give me back my wife's body so that I may pile a grave mound on it!

ORESTES

Ask the gods for her. But I shall kill your daughter.

MENELAUS

Will you, the mother killer, keep on killing?

ORESTES

Yes, I the father avenger, whom you abandoned to his death!

MENELAUS

Your mother's blood already on your hands was not enough for you?

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1590 οὐκ ἂν κάμοιμι τὰς κακὰς κτείνων αἰεί.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἦ καὶ σύ, Πυλάδῃ, τοῦδε κοινωνεῖς φόνου;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φησὶν σιωπῶν· ἀρκέσω δ' ἐγὼ λέγων.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἄλλ' οὔτι χαίρων, ἦν γε μὴ φύγῃς πτεροῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ φευξόμεσθα· πυρὶ δ' ἀνάφομεν δόμους.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1595 ἦ γὰρ πατρῶον δῶμα πορθήσεις τόδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡς μὴ γ' ἔχῃς σύ, τήνδ' ἐπισφάξας πυρί.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

κτείν'· ὡς κτανών γε τῶνδέ μοι δώσεις δίκην.

[ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔσται τάδε.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ᾶ ᾶ, μηδαμῶς δράσῃς τάδε.]

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1599 σίγα νυν, ἀνέχου δ' ἐνδίκως πράσσων κακῶς.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1608 ἄπαιρε θυγατρὸς φάσγανον.

ORESTES

ORESTES

I won't grow weary of always killing wicked women.

MENELAUS

Pylades, are you also taking part in this murder?

ORESTES

By his silence he says yes. It is enough that I do the talking.

MENELAUS

But you'll pay for your crime unless you escape on wings.

ORESTES

We will not escape: we're going to set fire to the house.

MENELAUS

Will you really sack this house that was your father's?

ORESTES

Yes, to keep you from getting it! And I'll cut her throat over the flames!

MENELAUS

Kill away! You'll pay the penalty for her murder to me!

[ORESTES

I'll do it.

MENELAUS

Ah, ah, don't!]

ORESTES

Say no more then and endure the bad fortune you have deserved!

MENELAUS

Remove the sword from my daughter!

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ψευδῆς ἔφους.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1609 ἀλλὰ κτενεῖς μου θυγατέρ';

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ ψευδῆς ἔτ' εἶ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1610 οἴμοι, τί δράσω;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πεῖθ' ἐς Ἀργείους μολὼν . . .

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1611 πειθὼ τίν';

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἡμᾶς μὴ θανεῖν αἰτοῦ πόλιν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1612 ἦ παῖδά μου φονεύσεθ';

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ᾧδ' ἔχει τάδε.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1600 ἦ γὰρ δίκαιον ζῆν σε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ κρατεῖν γε γῆς.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ποίας;



ORESTES

ORESTES

Ah, so you were dissembling.

MENELAUS

But will you kill my daughter?

ORESTES

Now you're being truthful.

MENELAUS

Ah, ah, what am I to do?

ORESTES

Go and persuade the Argives . . .

MENELAUS

Persuade them of what?

ORESTES

Ask the city that we not be killed.

MENELAUS

Or you'll kill my daughter?

ORESTES

That's the way things stand.

MENELAUS

Can it be right for you to live?

ORESTES

Yes, and to rule the country.

MENELAUS

What country?

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐν Ἄργει τῶδε τῶ Πελασγικῶ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

εὖ γοῦν θίγοις ἂν χερνίβων . . .

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δὴ γὰρ οὐ;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

. . . καὶ σφάγια πρὸ δορὸς καταβάλοις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σὺ δ' ἂν καλῶς;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἄγνός γάρ εἰμι χεῖρας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ τὰς φρένας.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1605 τίς δ' ἂν προσείποι σ';

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὅστις ἐστὶ φιλοπάτωρ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὅστις δὲ τιμᾷ μητέρ';

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὐδαίμων ἔφν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1607 οὐκουν σύ γ'.

ORESTES

ORESTES

Pelasgian Argos here.

MENELAUS

You would be just the man to handle the lustral basin . . .

ORESTES

Well, why not?

MENELAUS

. . . and make sacrifices before battle!

ORESTES

But *you* would be better?

MENELAUS

Yes: my hands are pure.

ORESTES

But your heart is not.

MENELAUS

But who would speak to you?

ORESTES

Anyone who loves his father.

MENELAUS

And anyone who honors his mother?

ORESTES

He's a lucky man.

MENELAUS

Which *you* at any rate are not.

EURIPIDES

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ γὰρ ἀνδάνουσιν αἱ κακαί.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1613 ὦ τλήμον Ἑλένη . . .

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τάμα δ' οὐχὶ τλήμονα;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

. . . σφάγιον ἐκόμισά σ' ἐκ Φρυγῶν . . .

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰ γὰρ τόδ' ἦν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

1615 . . . πόνους πονήσας μυρίους.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πλήν γ' εἰς ἐμέ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πέπονθα δεινά.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τότε γὰρ ἦσθ' ἀνωφελής.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἔχεις με.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σαυτὸν σύ γ' ἔλαβες κακὸς γεγώς.

ἀλλ' εἰ, ὕφαπτε δώματ', Ἥλέκτρα, τάδε:

σύ τ', ὦ φίλων μοι τῶν ἐμῶν σαφέστατε,

1620 Πυλάδη, κάταιθε γείσα τειχέων τάδε.

ORESTES

ORESTES

No: I don't like wicked women.

MENELAUS

O my luckless Helen . . .

ORESTES

Am I not luckless?

MENELAUS

. . . I brought you home from Troy only to have your throat cut . . .

ORESTES

I wish it were so!

MENELAUS

. . . after toiling without measure!

ORESTES

But no toiling on my behalf.

MENELAUS

I have suffered terribly.

ORESTES

Yes: because you would not help us.

MENELAUS

You have captured me.

ORESTES

You captured yourself by your own cowardice.

Come then, Electra, set this house on fire! And you, Pylades, most faithful of friends to me, set alight these battlements!

---

1617 fort. εἰλές με

## EURIPIDES

## ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ γαῖα Δαναῶν ἰππίου τ' Ἄργου κτίται,  
 οὐχ εἶ ἐνόπλω ποδὶ βοηδρομήσετε;  
 πάσαν γὰρ ὑμῶν ὄδε βιάζεται πόλις  
 ζῆν, αἶμα μητρὸς μυσαρὸν ἐξειργασμένος.

## ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

- 1625 Μενέλαε, παῦσαι λῆμ' ἔχων τεθηγμένον·  
 Φοῖβός σ' ὁ Λητοῦς παῖς ὄδ' ἐγγὺς ὦν καλῶ·  
 σύ θ' ὄς ξιφήρης τῆδ' ἐφεδρεύεις κόρη,  
 Ὅρέσθ', ἔν' εἰδῆς οὐς φέρων ἦκω λόγους.  
 Ἐλένην μὲν, ἣν σὺ διολέσαι πρόθυμος ὦν
- 1630 ἤμαρτες, ὀργὴν Μενέλεω ποιούμενος,  
 [ἣδ' ἐστίν, ἣν ὀράτ' ἐν αἰθέρος πτυχαῖς,  
 σεσωμένη τε κοῦ θανοῦσα πρὸς σέθεν.]  
 ἐγὼ νιν ἐξέσωσα χυτὸ φασγάνου  
 τοῦ σοῦ κελευσθεὶς ἦρπασ' ἐκ Διὸς πατρός.
- 1635 Ζητὸς γὰρ οὔσαν ζῆν νιν ἄφθιτον χρεῶν,  
 Κάστορί τε Πολυδεύκει τ' ἐν αἰθέρος πτυχαῖς  
 σύνθακος ἔσται, ναυτίλοις σωτήριος·  
 [ἄλλην δὲ νύμφην ἐς δόμους κτῆσαι λαβών.]  
 ἐπεὶ θεοὶ τῷ τῆσδε καλλιστεύματι
- 1640 Ἕλληνας εἰς ἐν καὶ Φρύγας συνήγαγον  
 θανάτους τ' ἔθηκαν, ὡς ἀπαντλοῖεν χθονὸς  
 ὕβρισμα θνητῶν ἀφθόνου πληρώματος.

1631-2 suspectos habuit Paley, del. Murray

1638 del. Wilamowitz

## ORESTES

### MENELAUS

Ho, land of the Danaans! Ho, settlers in horse-loving Argos! Arm yourselves and come on the run to help! This man, who has committed the abominable murder of his mother, is winning his life by violence against your whole community!

*Enter by Eisodos B armed Argive citizens on the run. APOLLO appears with Helen on the mechane. His first words cause the running citizens to halt in their tracks.*

### APOLLO

Menelaus, blunt the keen edge of your heart's anger! I am Apollo, son of Leto, and I am calling you from nearby. And you, Orestes, who menace this girl, sword in hand, do likewise so that you can hear the message I am bringing.

As for Helen, whom you were eager to kill in your anger at Menelaus but could not: [here she is, she whom you see in heaven's recesses, not killed by you but safe and sound:] I saved her from under your very sword and spirited her away. Those were the orders of Zeus my father. For she is Zeus's daughter and so must live<sup>32</sup> an imperishable life, and with Castor and Polydeuces in heaven's recesses she will be enthroned as a savior to seafarers.<sup>33</sup> [Take another wife into your house.] For it was by her beauty that the gods brought Greeks and Phrygians to one place and caused deaths, in order to relieve the earth of the rank growth of mortals' boundless population.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> There is a wordplay between *Zenos* (genitive of Zeus) and *zen*, "to live."

<sup>33</sup> This was Castor and Polydeuces' role: cf. *Electra* 1347-55. Giving this role to Helen is apparently an innovation of Euripides.

<sup>34</sup> See note on *Helen* 41.

## EURIPIDES

- τὰ μὲν καθ' Ἑλένην ᾧδ' ἔχει· σὲ δ' αὖ χρεῶν,  
 Ὀρέστα, γαίας τῆσδ' ὑπερβαλόνθ' ὄρους  
 1645 Παρράσιον οἰκεῖν δάπεδον ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον.  
 κεκλήσεται δὲ σῆς φυγῆς ἐπώνυμον  
 [Ἀζᾶσιν Ἀρκάσιν τ' Ὀρέστειον καλεῖν].  
 ἐνθένδε δ' ἔλθων τὴν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν  
 δίκην ὑπόσχεσ αἵματος μητροκτόνου  
 1650 Εὐμενίσι τρισσαῖς· θεοὶ δέ σοι δίκης βραβῆς  
 πάγοισιν ἐν Ἀρείοισιν εὐσεβεστάτην  
 ψῆφον διοίσουσ', ἐνθα νικῆσαί σε χρή.  
 ἐφ' ἧς δ' ἔχεις, Ὀρέστα, φάσγανον δέρη,  
 γῆμαι πέπρωταί σ' Ἑρμιόνην· ὅς δ' οἶεται  
 1655 Νεοπτόλεμος γαμῆν νιν, οὐ γαμῆι ποτε.  
 θανεῖν γὰρ αὐτῷ μοῖρα Δελφικῷ ξίφει,  
 δίκας Ἀχιλλέως πατρὸς ἕξαιτοῦντά με.  
 Πυλάδῃ δ' ἀδελφῆς λέκτρον, ᾧ ποτ' ἤνεσας,  
 δός· ὁ δ' ἐπιὼν νιν βίοτος εὐδαίμων μένει.  
 1660 Ἄργους δ' Ὀρέστην, Μενέλεως, ἕα κρατεῖν,  
 ἐλθὼν δ' ἄνασσε Σπαρτιάτιδος χθονός,  
 φερνὰς ἔχων δάμαρτος, ἧ σε μυρίοις  
 πόνοις διδοῦσα δεῦρ' αἰὲ διήνυσεν.  
 τὰ πρὸς πόλιν δὲ τῷδ' ἐγὼ θήσω καλῶς,  
 1665 ὅς νιν φονεῦσαι μητέρ' ἐξηνάγκασα.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ Λοξία μαντέε, σῶν θεοπισμάτων  
 οὐ ψευδόμαντις ἦσθ' ἄρ', ἀλλ' ἐτήτυμος.

1647 del. Paley



## ORESTES

That is how things stand with Helen. But you, Orestes, must cross this land's frontier and for the circuit of a year live in the plain of Parrhasia. It will receive a name from your exile there [for the Azanes and Arcadians to call it Oresteum].<sup>35</sup> From there go to the city of Athens and allow yourself to be prosecuted for matricide by the three Eumenides. On the Areopagus the gods as judges in the case will cast their votes most piously for either side, and there you are fated to be victorious.

Orestes, you are destined to marry Hermione, the woman at whose neck you are holding a sword: Neoptolemus, the man who thinks he will marry her, will never do so. He is fated to perish by a Delphian sword when he demands satisfaction from me for the death of his father Achilles. Give your sister in marriage to Pylades, the man to whom you promised her. The life that awaits him will be a blessed one.

Menelaus, in Argos allow Orestes to be king, and go rule the land of Sparta, enjoying it as a dowry from your wife, who to this present hour has constantly presented you with trouble. This man's relations with the city I shall set to rights, since it was I who compelled him to kill his mother.

## ORESTES

O prophetic Loxias, you are not after all false in your prophecies but truthful! Yet at the time I was worried that

<sup>35</sup> In Parrhasia, in southern Arcadia, there was a town called Orestheion or Oresthasion. The similarity to Orestes' name gave rise to the legend of his exile there. Euripides, here and at *Electra* 1275, alludes to the city without giving its name, and it was an interpolator who supplied 1647.

EURIPIDES

καίτοι μ' ἔσῃει δεῖμα, μή τινος κλύων  
ἀλαστόρων δόξαίμι σὴν κλύειν ὄπα.

- 1670 ἀλλ' εὖ τελεῖται, πείσομαι δὲ σοῖς λόγοις.  
ἰδού, μεθίημ' Ἑρμιόνην ἀπὸ σφαγῆς,  
καὶ λέκτρ' ἐπήνεσ', ἠνίκ' ἂν διδῶ πατήρ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ Ζηνὸς Ἑλένη χαῖρε παῖ· ζηλῶ δέ σε  
θεῶν κατοικήσουσαν ὄλβιον δόμον.

- 1675 Ὅρεστα, σοὶ δὲ παιῖδ' ἐγὼ κατεγγυῶ,  
Φοίβου λέγοντος· εὐγενῆς δ' ἀπ' εὐγενοῦς  
γῆμας ὄναιο καὶ σὺ χῶ διδοὺς ἐγῶ.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

χωρεῖτέ νυν ἕκαστος οἱ προστάσσομεν,  
νείκουσ τε διαλύεσθε.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πέιθεσθαι χρεῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 1680 κἀγὼ τοιοῦτος· σπένδομαι δὲ συμφοραῖς,  
Μενέλαε, καὶ σοῖς, Λοξία, θεσπίσμασιν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἴτε νυν καθ' ὁδόν, τὴν καλλίστην  
θεῶν Εἰρήνην τιμῶντες· ἐγὼ δ'

- 1685 Ἑλένην Δίοις μελάθροισ πελάσσω,  
λαμπρῶν ἄστρων πόλον ἐξανύσας,  
ἔνθα παρ' Ἥρα τῇ θ' Ἡρακλέους

1674 κατοικήσουσαν Weil: -σασαν C

## ORESTES

I heard the voice of some avenging spirit and thought I was hearing yours. Still, it is turning out well, and I will do as you say.

See, I am releasing Hermione from slaughter. And I accept marriage with her whenever her father shall give her.

## MENELAUS

Helen, daughter of Zeus, I wish you joy! And I count you blessed that you will go to live in the gods' blessed home.

Orestes, I give my daughter to you at Phoebus' command. Nobleman that you are, marrying into a noble house, may you have joy of it, both you and I who give her!

## APOLLO

Go, each of you, where I have told you to go, and end your quarrel.

## MENELAUS

We must obey.

## ORESTES

That is my view too. I make peace with what has happened and with your oracles, Loxias.

*The characters on the roof descend into the skene and emerge from its door.*

## APOLLO

Go your ways, then, holding Peace, loveliest of the gods, in honor. I shall bring Helen to the halls of Zeus, journeying to the bright starry sky. There by the side of Hera and

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1684 Δίους Nauck: Ζηνὸς vel Διὸς C

EURIPIDES

Ἦβη πάρεδρος θεὸς ἀνθρώποις  
ἔσται σπονδαῖς ἔντιμος ἀεὶ  
σὺν Τυνδαρίδαις τοῖς Διός, ὑγρᾶς  
1690 ναύταις μεδέουσα θαλάσσης.

[ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ μέγα σεμνή Νίκη, τὸν ἐμὸν  
βίοντον κατέχεις  
καὶ μὴ λήγεις στεφανούσα.]

1691-3 del. Blomfield

## ORESTES

Heracles' bride Hebe she will sit enthroned as a goddess for men, always worshiped with libations together with Zeus's sons, the Tyndarids, and will rule over the sea waves to the benefit of sailors!

[CHORUS LEADER

Victory, may you have my life in your charge and never cease garlanding my head!]

*Exit APOLLO and Helen by the mechane, ORESTES, Hermione, MENELAUS and retinue by Eisodos A, and Electra, Pylades, and CHORUS by Eisodos B.*